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Foreign Puppets, Christian Mothers or  
Revolutionary Martyrs? The Multiple  
Identities of Missionary School Girls  
in East China, 1917-1952

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## ABSTRACT

My PhD thesis examines the experience of girls who attended missionary middle schools in East China 1917-1952. I look at four schools across three cities: In Shanghai, St. Mary's founded by the American Episcopal Church in 1881 and McTyeire, an American Methodist school founded in 1892. In Ningbo and Hangzhou, I focus on two union schools for girls established by the North American Presbyterian and Baptist Missions; Riverside Academy established in Ningbo in 1923 and Hongdao, established in Hangzhou in 1912. Using pupils' writings in their school magazines, alongside interviews with ex-pupils, missionary reports and newspaper sources, the thesis seeks to understand missionary school girls' agency in shaping and influencing new forms of modernity emerging in early twentieth century China. How did they navigate their school environment and negotiate their identities as both Christian and Chinese within an increasingly nationalistic setting, characterised by anti-imperialist and anti-Christian movements in the 1920s? How did mission school pupils use a gendered Christian rhetoric to fashion their identities within debates about women's roles in a newly emerging public sphere in the Republican era? What can the experience of missionary school girls tell us about the relationship between Christianity, Communism and the Women's Movement in China? This research breaks new ground by examining the missionary enterprise from the point of view of pupils who attended missionary schools rather than from the missionary perspective. By placing the experience of pupils at the centre of enquiry, we can see how Chinese women were active agents in the creation of a transnational modernity in treaty port East China. I argue that the hybrid cultural environment at missionary schools unintentionally created a free space or 'laboratory' where girls could experiment with more fluid gender identities, which challenged traditional binaries and allowed them to forge new conceptions of Chinese womanhood.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

BHA	Baptist Historical Archive
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CMS	Church Missionary Society
CWTU	Christian Women's Temperance Union
HCA	Hangzhou City Archive
NCA	Ningbo City Archive
NHA	Nanjing Historical Archive
NLM	New Life Movement
MMS	Methodist Missionary Society
PHS	Presbyterian Historical Society
SMA	Shanghai Municipal Archives
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association

## A NOTE ON CHINESE SOURCES

This thesis makes use of Chinese language sources. I have used Hanyu Pinyin to transliterate these throughout the thesis with the exception of names which are well known in Wade-Giles such as Chiang Kai-shek. When possible I have included alumnae's names in Chinese characters and pinyin alongside their own spelling of names in the local dialect.

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## INTRODUCTION

On a sunny day in February 1992 a group of McTyeire alumnae, dressed in blue to represent their class colour, posed for a photo in front of their old dormitory, Lambuth-Clopton Hall, a neo-gothic style building built in 1922, and today known as May First Hall (*Wuyi Tang* 五一堂). This was an immensely special day for the alumnae, who had come from all over the world to the Shanghai Number Three Girls' School to celebrate the centenary of its missionary school forerunner, McTyeire (*Zhongxi nüzhong* 中西女中), founded in 1892 by the American Methodist Missionary Society. Earlier in the day they had once again assembled in Richardson Hall, now May Fourth Hall (*Wusi Tang* 五四堂), to remember their school history. A baby grand piano, their gift to the school, stood proudly covered in velvet, untouched on the stage, while their old headmistress, Xue Zheng 薛正, now ninety-three years old and honorary principal of Number Three Girls' School, beamed proudly at the achievements of her old girls. After the ceremony they filed outside through the entrance hall, where the stained glass windows pooled yellow and orange light onto their whitening hair, out onto the immaculate lawns for the photoshoot. Alumnae clutched at the green and gold gas-filled balloons emblazoned with the McTyeire coat of arms and motto: 'Live, Love and Grow' while current pupils of the Number Three Girls' School stood around, shyly watching and offering help to the alumnae who were their counterparts of a different age: honoured bearers of the school's newly prestigious missionary past. Rosalyn Koo (Chen Jinming 陳晉明, McTyeire class of 1947) remembered: 'It was an all-day affair and at night we

had glow sticks. And we walked around, singing music. Xue Zheng was so happy.’<sup>1</sup>(See fig. 1).

Sitting in her comfortable living room in a San Mateo retirement community in November 2016, Rosalyn Koo explained to me how the centennial celebration of McTyeire had come about. In 1977 Rosalyn, like many other overseas Chinese who had left before the Communist takeover in 1949, returned to China to try to find relatives who they had not seen in almost three decades. On her trip, she encountered not only her family members, but also her old principal, Xue Zheng, in Shanghai. Rosalyn recalled:

I found my favourite uncle, the radio operator, looking so old. Like my principal, Xue Zheng, looked so old. Everybody looks so old, a terrible life. And I just opened the suitcase, and I said ‘take everything.’ And then I said okay, nothing I can do, except I can do something for Xue Zheng. And she was down in the mouth, you know, not married, no kids. And I decided, well, she was abused during the Cultural Revolution, they broke her legs and all that. And so I thought, well the time has changed. So, somehow, I am going to restore your old glory. <sup>2</sup>

After being invited by Rosalyn to visit the McTyeire San Francisco Alumnae Association in 1979, Xue Zheng was given the position of honorary principal of the Number Three Girls’ school on her return to China. In the era of China’s reform and opening up, both headmistress and alumnae saw an opportunity to recapture their school’s history and direct its future through their financial investment in the school. The first step was to reinstate Music and English, and then crucially to restore the school to being an all-girls’ institution. Rosalyn explained:

I said [to Xue Zheng], ‘alright from now on, whatever you want I will go and find it for you’. And I said ‘okay, let’s restore Music and English. Take my word for it that is what you must do, and get rid of the

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Rosalyn Koo, 05.11.16, San Mateo, USA 02:56.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Rosalyn Koo, 05.11.16, San Mateo, USA, 01:57:00.

boys...Now if you get rid of the boys, I will bring the alumnae in.’ And so we hurried up and got organised, and I had my draftsman design some stationery with a letterhead. I went in 77, in 79 she [Xue Zheng] came, and in 81 the boys left and the school became a girls’ school. They called it an experimental school.

Did the boys go to another school?

I don’t care, just go! (Laughing)

The Alumnae were getting ready to return and we organised the centennial, and the first thing we did was to repair the gymnasium. And then what do you want? Okay, A computer. Wang Laboratory, Wang’s wife was class of 1936. Okay, what else do you want? I said I want to restore Music. So, in Taiwan this lady, class of 1934 I think, gave a hundred thousand USD, and the principal Mr Chen was so flabbergasted. And so they brought brass instruments to form a band. And then in 1992 all of us went back, for the centennial.<sup>3</sup>

Through their financial support the McTyeire alumnae thus succeeded in reclaiming their school history, restoring it to an all-girls’ school. It is today the only government-run all-girls’ school in Shanghai, and one renowned for producing girls who are both academically and musically outstanding, much like the *guixiu* 閩秀 or accomplished upper-class young ladies who graduated from the school before 1949.

What was it about their experiences at school, or their memories of those experiences, which drove alumnae to want to recapture their school history and determine its future? This is a story not just about a nostalgia for a homeland long departed, a display of wealth and power, or even about a sense of guilt and wanting to help those who were left behind to suffer during the Cultural Revolution. For Rosalyn at least, there may have also been a sense of wanting to repay a personal debt to her former headmistress: In 1944 Xue Zheng had very nearly expelled her for rebelling against an English teacher, but chose not to, allowing Rosalyn to graduate

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<sup>3</sup> Interview with Rosalyn Koo, 05.11.16, San Mateo, USA, 01:57:00.

and go on to higher education in the USA. Something about their experience at school and the relationship between pupil and head teacher had made a lasting impact on Rosalyn and her fellow McTyeire alumnae, which motivated them to restore their headmistress and their school to its former glory. This sense of pride in their school history is palpable in the reunions that take place annually in alumnae chapters across the world from Shanghai and Beijing to New York and San Francisco. A desire to capture and preserve their school's prestigious past for posterity has recently resulted in the publication of a three-volume school history, composed of memoirs written by alumnae themselves.<sup>4</sup> This history is by no means a straightforward one, and many different versions of their story could be told. It is also a highly political and personal one, as every member of the school had different experiences and took a different path upon graduation. Collectively, alumnae's memories allow us a unique insight into how girls experienced mission education in Shanghai at the beginning of the twentieth century and how these experiences influenced their lives and later careers.

### **Historiography: Changing narratives about missionary schools**

From missionary claims of 'uplift' and 'enlightenment', to Maoist-era accusations of 'foreign occupation' and 'brainwashing', to nostalgia and commercialisation in the era of economic reforms and opening, the story of missionary schools in China has been reinvented many times with the momentous political and social changes that have marked China's twentieth century. In much of the early literature on missionary education in China, missionaries themselves have taken centre stage, and Chinese women were presented as the passive recipients of a 'modernising' western education, which unbound their feet and raised them from their traditionally

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<sup>4</sup>Chen Jingyu, *Zhongxi nüzhong 1892~1952*, 3 vols. (Shanghai, 2016).

portrayed ‘downtrodden position’ within the Confucian family system.<sup>5</sup> At the turn of the twentieth century, as Chinese reformers such as Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1873-1929), Kang Youwei 康有為 (1858-1927) and Song Shu 宋恕 (1862-1910) started to advocate female education as a means of national strengthening, reform-minded members of the gentry-elite started to send their daughters to missionary schools or set up their own schools for their daughters and those of their friends and relatives.<sup>6</sup> As the desirability of female education gained ground in the May Fourth era, missionary schools gained popularity with the upper classes. By the 1920-40s the most wealthy and influential families of the republican society sent their daughters to missionary schools, where they could receive a western-style English language education. Graduates such as the Song Sisters, and daughters of other leading businessmen and politicians, earned missionary schools such as St. Mary’s (an American Episcopal School for girls founded in 1881) and McTyeire the reputation of being ‘elite’ or ‘aristocratic’ schools. In 1946 a Shanghai newspaper described McTyeire as ‘Shanghai’s most aristocratic school for girls.’<sup>7</sup>

This elite image has been a persistent one. In 1989 the Shanghai Film Studio produced a film entitled *The Last Aristocrats* (*Zuihou de guizu* 最後的貴族), based on the novel *Zhexian ji* 謫仙記 by Bai Xianyong 白先勇, which tells the story of four wealthy missionary school girls (apparently based on McTyeire pupils) who leave Shanghai for higher education in the USA shortly before 1949.<sup>8</sup> During the republican era their ‘elite’ status was used as a selling point and many middle-class families aspired to send their daughters to St. Mary’s or McTyeire to make them

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<sup>5</sup> Margaret Burton, *The Education of Women in China* (London 1911), p. 38.

<sup>6</sup> By 1912 the number of girls in these private or government run schools nationwide exceeded the enrolment in missionary schools. See Paul Bailey, *Gender and Education in China: Gender discourses and women’s schooling in the early twentieth century* (London, 2007), p.85.

<sup>7</sup> Sha Luo, ‘Zhongxi nüxiao hao fengguang,’ *Shanghai Texie*, 1946 (20), p.7.

<sup>8</sup> Jin Xie, (1989) *The Last Aristocrats*, Shanghai Film Studio. (1989)

more desirable in the urban marriage market. However, after 1949 this elite image has contributed to the most enduring negative narrative of missionary schools since their foundation (which has persisted throughout the twentieth century, and particularly during the Mao years): that they were tools of cultural imperialism and foreign brainwashing.<sup>9</sup> In more recent decades, as China has opened up to the West, missionary schools have again become legitimate objects of scholarly enquiry in the People's Republic of China (PRC), being celebrated as early sites of Sino-foreign cultural interaction. The western-style architecture of formerly dilapidated missionary school compounds in East China has been spruced up, rebuilt and commercialised as shopping centres, pubs and museums, as local governments strive to highlight the global history of their cities and preserve and repackage their cultural heritage (See fig. 2).

The history of these interpretations is a cyclical one, as Chinese society oscillated between hostility and openness to foreigners and foreignness in the process of nation building and resisting imperialism throughout the twentieth century. Missionary schools provide an important lens through which we can explore the self-searching modes in which Chinese society has grappled with its relationship to different forms of western modernity, welcoming, rejecting, appropriating and experimenting with their relationship to 'others' in a self-conscious search for what it means to be 'Chinese', a negotiation that is still going on today. The accusation or fear that Chinese citizens who come into contact with western ideas either through Christian churches or international schools have become 'denationalised' by this exposure is still current and perhaps growing in China today. This study which highlights the history of these identity negotiations is therefore of contemporary

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<sup>9</sup> See collections such as: Li Chucai (ed.), *Diguo zhuyi qinhua jiaoyushi ziliao: Jiaohui xuexiao* (Beijing, 1987)

relevance to churches and Sino-foreign schools in China, whose members tend to defend their identity as Chinese citizens through overt displays of patriotism much as missionary students did in the 1920s. Although these narratives have swung from left to right, from colonial to post-colonial in their political interpretations, very few have sought to understand and put at the centre the stories and identities of pupils who attended mission schools themselves.

This thesis is an attempt to discover the voices of missionary school pupils, placing at its centre their own understanding of what it meant to be female, Chinese and sometimes Christian during the first four decades of China's turbulent twentieth century. In particular, it pays attention to how Chinese women had agency to make use of the many different influences and experiences they were exposed to at these schools including Christianity, feminism and Communist ideology. They rejected, combined and assimilated different aspects of these for their own ends, forging in the process their own unique understandings of Chinese modernity. I argue that although founded on conservative Victorian notions of femininity for the purpose of creating Christian wives and mothers, the missionary school in the hands of later generations of students, unintentionally became a 'laboratory' or free space where girls could experiment with new and more fluid gender identities, which helped them to negotiate and redefine their place as Chinese women in the early twentieth century.

### **Case Studies**

In the thesis I look at four schools across three different cities: In Shanghai; St. Mary's (Sheng Maliya nǚxiao 聖瑪利亞女校) founded by the American Episcopal Church in 1881 and McTyeire (Zhongxi nǚzhong 中西女中), an American Methodist school founded in 1892. In Ningbo and Hangzhou I focus on two union schools for girls; Riverside Academy (Yongjiang nǚzhong 甬江女中) established in

Ningbo in 1923 by the Northern Presbyterians and Northern Baptists (and in 1934 joined by the English Methodists), and Hangzhou Union Girls' School (Hongdao nüzhong 弘道女中) established by a merger of the Northern Presbyterian and Northern Baptist girls schools in Hangzhou in 1912. A history of these schools can be found in appendix two.

These schools were chosen as case studies for several reasons. Firstly, in post-Cultural Revolution-era China very few documents relating to missionary schools have survived. The schools chosen are ones which have both administrative documents and student yearbooks extant in the provincial archives. Moreover, by choosing to study union schools in Ningbo and Hangzhou, the extent of missionary correspondence is also greater, and documents relating to these schools can also be found in the Presbyterian Historical Society Archives in Philadelphia, Baptist Archives held at Mercer University in Atlanta and Methodist Mission Archives held at SOAS in London. In Shanghai, McTyeire and St. Mary's became the largest and most prestigious missionary schools for girls, and their histories became linked when the two schools were merged in 1952 to become the Shanghai Number Three Girls' School. As we shall see in chapter two, although they are by no means representative of the average missionary school in East China, I have selected St. Marys and McTyeire because of the strong alumnae associations which still exist around the world. By tapping into these international alumnae networks I have been able to conduct oral history interviews with alumnae across the world, which both complicates and enriches our understanding of how these elite girls experienced their education in missionary schools. Finally, selecting a range of schools founded by different missions in different locations enables us to draw comparisons between the types of missionary education options available to girls across the region, and

highlight the difference that existed in terms of curriculum, academic standards, fees and girls' family background. This approach allows us to contextualise the educational situation in Shanghai. Shanghai has received a disproportionate amount of attention from scholars; however, we must be aware that because of the socio-economic environment, missionary schools in Shanghai were attended by girls from much wealthier and more elite backgrounds than the schools in Hangzhou and Ningbo. These differences in students' socio-economic background will be highlighted in chapter two.

### **Research Aims and Questions**

Using pupils' writings in their school magazines, alongside interviews with ex-pupils, missionary reports and newspaper sources, the thesis probes how missionary school girls in republican-era East China experienced their education and what gender values were inculcated. What did going to a missionary school mean to these girls and how was this experience different from going to a government or Chinese-run private school? Although missionary schools, starting from 1844, were the first formal educational options available to girls, Chinese reformers started schools for girls in 1897.<sup>10</sup> In 1907 the Qing government formally sanctioned female education and started to belatedly set up normal and middle schools for girls in an attempt to strengthen China after the Boxer Uprising. I explore how mission school pupils envisioned their roles within discourses on nation building and conversely how they were viewed by society. How did they navigate their school environment and negotiate their identities as Christian and Chinese within an increasing nationalistic

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<sup>10</sup> We have evidence that elementary schooling for girls within the home was carried out by Chinese Christian virgins (supervised by Catholic missionaries) in various parts of China in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, predating formal Protestant missionary schooling for girls which developed in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. See Robert Entenman, 'Christian Virgins in Eighteenth Century Sichuan', in Daniel D. Bays (ed.), *Christianity in China from the eighteenth century to the present*. (Stanford, 1996), pp. 8-23. R.G. Tiedeman has also written about the important educational work undertaken by Catholic virgins in Shandong and Guangdong. See R. G. Tiedemann, 'Controlling the Virgins: Female propagators of the faith and the Catholic hierarchy in China', *Women's History Review*, 17.4 (2008), pp. 501-520.

setting, characterised by anti-imperialist and anti-Christian movements in the 1920s? How did mission school pupils use a gendered Christian rhetoric to fashion their identities within debates about women's roles in a newly emerging public sphere in the republican era? What can the experience of missionary school girls tell us about the relationship between Christianity, Communism and the Women's Movement in China? The lived experience of missionary school pupils provides us with a lens on how Chinese women created their own modernity – from intersecting ideas of Christianity, nationalism and feminism.

### **Framework and Arguments**

This research breaks new ground by examining the missionary enterprise from the point of view of pupils who attended missionary schools rather than from the missionary perspective. Missionary schools, seen from the perspective of students who went there, were sites of (gendered) experimentation and (cultural) mediation. Founded on conservative principles of Victorian womanhood imported by western missionaries to produce 'Christian wives for Christian men,' in the hands of later generations of Chinese teachers and students, they un-intentionally became spaces of refuge and free sites of experimentation. New generations of educated Chinese women used them as 'laboratories' where they could experiment with overlapping Chinese, Christian and gendered identities and in doing so forge new and radical visions of their future roles in Chinese society. Pupil Tsu Tsung Kyung 朱春景 (McTyeire class of 1923) writes in the 1921 *McTyerian*: 'When I came to the mission school I became familiar with Christ. I found I was greatly mistaken in my attitude towards the problems of life. A new spirit within me glowed and now I feel that the world is a pregnant *laboratory* in which to make *experiments*.'<sup>11</sup> This idea of

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<sup>11</sup> Tsu Tsung Kyung, 'What Christ means to me', *The McTyerian* (Shanghai, 1921), p. 72.

the school as a laboratory for trying out new ‘experiments’ was also reiterated by Rozalyn Koo in her description of the school’s recovery as an all-girls school in post-revolution era Shanghai.

The idea of the school as a ‘laboratory’ in which to ‘make experiments’ can be traced to John Dewey’s ‘laboratory school’ which he set up attached to the University of Chicago in the late nineteenth century. Dewey’s conception of the school as a ‘laboratory’ was purely as a pedagogical research tool to make progress in educational thinking. According to Dewey, the laboratory school had a ‘scientific aim... the conduct of a laboratory comparable to other scientific laboratories, can furnish a reason for the maintenance by a university of an elementary school.’<sup>12</sup> In this thesis I do not use the term ‘laboratory’ in the sense of top down pedagogical experimentation that Dewey implied. Instead, I focus on how missionary girls had agency to use their school as a laboratory for their own purposes, creatively combining different ideas about Christianity, nationalism and women’s position in society, rather than simply being the passive subjects of their teachers’ ‘experiments’. However, that being said, in certain situations we can see similarities between Dewey’s idea and the ‘experiments’ in education taking place in late nineteenth and early twentieth century China. As chapter two explores, missionary schools for girls were started as an ‘experiment’ by the first female missionaries to China in order to find the best way of inculcating Christianity. Moreover, as we shall see in chapter four, missionary school girls were encouraged to try out different pedagogical tactics in the schools for poor children which they established in the vicinity of their elite boarding schools. Dewey’s thinking was influential in China amongst Chinese

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<sup>12</sup> John Dewey, *The School and Society* (Chicago, 1899), p. 76. See Laurel N. Tanner, *Dewey’s Laboratory School, Lessons for Today* (New York, 1997), p.19.

Christian educators in the early twentieth century and Dewey completed a lecture tour encompassing 200 lectures across Chinese cities in 1921-1923.<sup>13</sup>

In his work on middle schools in the lower Yantzi delta region, Robert Culp explores how the school acted as a ‘workshop’ where students could combine different notions of citizenship circulating in society, to forge their own understanding of modern Chinese citizenship in republican China: ‘As these multiple forms of Citizenship intersected in secondary schools, educators, teachers and students tried to relate them in ways which they found meaningful and practical. In this way, schools served as workshops in which educated Chinese elites experimented with how to fashion a coherent form of modern citizenship from bricolage of borrowed foreign and retooled indigenous ideas and practices.’<sup>14</sup> Similarly, in my thesis I explore how female missionary school pupils had agency to draw on different Christian, Nationalistic and feminist ideas circulating in society of how to be a ‘modern woman’, to forge their own unique formulations of modern Chinese womanhood which were useful and meaningful to them. In particular, they creatively and consciously deployed the rhetoric of ‘service’ – with its overlapping Christian, nationalist and gendered connotations - to effectively widen their sphere of operation in society. However, Culp excludes missionary schools from his analysis on the grounds that the vast majority of middle schools in the lower Yantzi region were government-run and that he is ‘most concerned with how Chinese actors defined and promoted modern Citizenship.’<sup>15</sup> This statement overlooks the fact that for girls, missionary schools were the earliest public institutions open to women and

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<sup>13</sup> For more on the influence of Dewey’s ideas on modern Chinese educators and reformers such as James Yen see Charles Hayford, *To the people: James Yen and Village China* (New York, 1990), p. 38. See also: Barry Keenan, *The Dewey Experiment in China*, (Harvard, 1977).

<sup>14</sup> Robert Culp, *Articulating Citizenship: Civic Education and Student Politics in South-eastern China, 1912-1940* (London, 2007), p. 7.

<sup>15</sup> Culp, *Articulating Citizenship*, p. 20.

continued to lead the way in provision of middle school level education for girls into the mid-1920s (see chapter two). Moreover, while Culp states that he is concerned with *Chinese* students' agency in combining these different notions of citizenship circulating in society, he overlooks the fact that all students and, after 1927 the majority of teachers, at missionary schools were Chinese. Moreover, many of the teachers who staffed private and government schools in the 1920s had been through the missionary education system at middle and university level, and many had studied for degrees at European and American universities, thus informing their pedagogical approach.

In this way, Culp does not consider an important notion of citizenship circulating in China at this time: a Chinese Christian notion of citizenship. Ryan Dunch has shown how male Fuzhou Protestants combined their Christian and patriotic beliefs to become leaders in nation building efforts in Fuzhou in the first two decades of the twentieth century.<sup>16</sup> However, Dunch does not consider the role of Christian-educated Chinese women in this process. Therefore, both Culp and Dunch do not pay much attention to how these notions of citizenship circulating in republican era society were gendered. This is a significant gap, as Joan Judge reminds us: 'Modern Chinese conceptions of citizenship were consciously and inextricably connected to notions of gender'.<sup>17</sup> How did girls at missionary school adapt and borrow from an internationally circulating gendered Christian rhetoric and apply it to their vision of women's roles in Chinese society?

Henrietta Harrison, Ryan Dunch and Robert Culp have highlighted how these notions of modern Chinese citizenship were performed through 'rituals' and 'rites of

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<sup>16</sup> Ryan Dunch, *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of Modern China, 1857-1927* (New Haven, 2001).

<sup>17</sup> Joan Judge, 'Citizens or Mothers of Citizens? Gender and the Meaning of Modern Citizenship in China,' in Merle Goldman, Elizabeth J. Perry (eds.), *Changing meanings of citizenship in modern China*, (Cambridge, 2002), p. 23.

passage’, and displayed through ‘signs and symbols’ of nationalism.<sup>18</sup> My thesis will also look at how girls performed their gendered, national, Christian and school identities, through signs and symbols of loyalty to nation, school and class. In particular, in addition to looking at how a national identity was inculcated at missionary schools for girls through their participation in patriotic ceremonies, I also pay attention to how rituals and rites of passage were important in transmitting another layer of girls’ identity: a loyalty to school and class. I explore how female pupils transmitted their unique school identities symbolically to the next generation, through rites of passage consisting of school songs, class flowers, rings and mottos. Despite periodic ‘flashpoints’ of anti-foreign hostility, when missionary schools were denounced as tools of cultural imperialism, girls clung to these enduring symbols of school identity, which have stood the test of time and are now once more proudly used by alumnae to articulate their unique school identities in China today as markers of difference and membership of a social elite.

By placing the experience of pupils at the centre of the enquiry we can see how Chinese women were active agents in the creation of a transnational modernity in East China. Isabella Jackson uses the term ‘transnational colonialism’ to define the operations of the Municipal Council in Shanghai (SMC). Jackson defines transnational colonialism as ‘the co-operation of individuals belonging to different nations and networks’ in an institution which thereby transcended national borders.<sup>19</sup> My thesis explores how this transnational colonialism was experienced by missionary school pupils who lived in this cosmopolitan world of East China. While Jackson looks at the creation of ‘transnational colonialism’ in Shanghai from an

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<sup>18</sup> See Henrietta Harrison, *The Making of the Republican Citizen, Political Ceremonies and Symbols in China, 1911-1929* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 2-4, Dunch, *Fuzhou Protestants*, pp. 112-147, Culp, *Articulating Citizenship*, pp. 209-241.

<sup>19</sup> Isabella Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai: Colonialism in China’s Global City* (Cambridge, 2017), p. 26.

institutional perspective, my thesis looks at this from the perspective of the girls themselves. I argue that missionary school girls were both a constituent part of, and active agents in the creation of a 'transnational modernity' in East China.

There have been myriad studies of the formation of 'cosmopolitanism' in republican era Shanghai.<sup>20</sup> While Hanchao Lu has argued that this cosmopolitanism was not experienced in the daily lives of ordinary Chinese residents, Jackson argues that the SMC's role reached down to have a dramatic impact on the lives of Chinese living in the international settlement via their public works and health initiatives.<sup>21</sup> For the elite upper classes (my interviewees) this cosmopolitan modernity was a lived reality. Girls spent their free time shopping in the commercial district on Nanjing Road, or attending theatres and cinemas with their friends showing the latest American films; they appeared on the front covers of fashionable magazines in western-style dresses; they acquired a dual set of knowledge about how to run their households and polite manners based on both western and Chinese social norms and equipped themselves for their studies abroad by polishing their western table manners, posture and deportment. Girls communicated to each other within the school in three languages and made jokes based on their reading of Western literature and Chinese cultural habits.

Ryan Dunch has critiqued the use of the term 'cultural imperialism' in defining the missionary encounter in China. Instead, he uses the notion of 'global modernity', to better describe these dynamic and fluid interactions: 'We need a more dynamic and interactive framework, one that recognises not just imposition, loss and resistance, but multiple possibilities, fluid frontiers, and creative potential in cultural

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<sup>20</sup> See for example, Leo Ou-fan Lee, *Shanghai Modern: The flowering of a new urban culture in China, 1930-1945* (London, 1999) and Hanchao Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights, Everyday Shanghai in the Early Twentieth Century* (London, 1999).

<sup>21</sup> Hanchao Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights*, p. 121 and Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, pp. 33-34.

interaction. Emphasis on the receptors rather than the transmitters, on ingenuous agency in the missionary/indigenous encounter, is a methodological key to this, and the recognition that homogenization and differentiation are simultaneously and mutually conditioning dimensions of globalization provides useful leverage.’<sup>22</sup> Building on Dunch’s work, my thesis asks how was this vision of a Christian ‘global modernity’ for China inflected by new ideas about what it meant to be a (man or) woman. By paying attention to the voices of missionary school girls in republican East China, we can see how this construction of a Christian inspired ‘global modernity’ was a highly gendered vision of modernity and discover Chinese women’s agency in this process. Girls used their schools as laboratories to experiment with more fluid gender roles and as platforms or stepping stones to new career opportunities, widening their sphere of operation in society. The thesis seeks to understand missionary schoolgirls’ agency in shaping and influencing these new forms of modernity emerging in early twentieth century China.

This social history of an elite group highlights the unintended outcomes of missionary education: girls found in their school environment a free space to experiment with more fluid gender identities which transgressed traditional norms. For the first generations of missionary students (1890-1920s) the school could represent an escape from marriage, a chance to pursue a higher education and maybe a career as a teacher or doctor. For later generations (my interviewees, graduates of the 1930-40s) the schools continued to represent an escape from a family environment which treated girls unequally to boys and a society which still held firmly to highly gendered expectations of women’s roles.<sup>23</sup> Within this ‘refuge’ – an

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<sup>22</sup> Ryan Dunch, ‘Beyond Cultural Imperialism: Cultural Theory, Christian Missions and Global Modernity’, in *History and Theory* (October, 2002), 41.3, p. 325

<sup>23</sup> For more on different generations of missionary educated Chinese women abroad see: Weili Ye, ‘Nü Liuxuesheng; The Story of American Educated Chinese Women 1880-1920s’, *Modern China*,

all-female space, free from the gender expectations of society – women could experiment with new roles which would traditionally be considered ‘male.’ Girls were conscious of this gender fluidity during their time at school; some dressed as boys, others enjoyed acting male roles in the school play, girls courted each other and had the opportunity to become organisers and leaders in their school societies and extra-circular activities. They equally pursued and excelled at science subjects alongside languages, humanities and arts, free from the gender biases that still exist around the world today. Some students aspired to revolutionary and military participation, challenging the conservative boundaries held in place by an older generation of missionary teachers and government discourses which deemed this ‘inappropriate’ and ‘unfeminine’ behaviour. Interviews with girls who attended the schools in the 1930-40s reveal how they aspired to ‘do it all’; to simultaneously become ‘good wives and mothers’, independent ‘new women’ and revolutionary participants.

Although republican newspapers depicted them as ‘aristocratic schools’ where elite girls received a foreign-style education, interviews reveal that students themselves rejected this label. Rather than being ‘brainwashed’ pawns of foreigners, girls blended Chinese and western cultural influences, skilfully combining Christian aspects of their missionary education such as the rhetoric of ‘service’ with gendered discourses on women’s roles in nation building to widen their sphere of operation in society. I argue that the daily practices and lifestyles within the hybrid cultural environment of missionary schools fostered in girls’ new identities which influenced their aspirations and later careers. This hybrid cultural identity, explored in chapter

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20.3, (1994), pp. 315-346. Ye identified three groups of Chinese Women studying in America between 1880-1920 which she broadly defines as: ‘The Doctors’ (1880-1900), ‘The good wives and mothers’ (1900-1915) and ‘the May Fourth Generation’, (1915 onwards). While there were changes in ideas about appropriate roles for women during this time, the May Fourth generation were still bound by the ‘doctrine of domesticity’ and the conflict between pursuing a career and marriage.

two, was articulated in myriad ways: from signs and symbols of a school identity, which was inculcated and passed down through rites of passage such as the big-sister, little-sister (*jie-mei* 姊妹) system and production of the school yearbook, to the jokes, daily routines and the multi-lingual language environment of their schools. The cultural hybridity of their school experience equipped them with the skills to successfully navigate and become fluent interpreters or mediators of a cosmopolitan world, which they were at once participants in and creators of. A fluency in English, western social graces, membership of Christian churches and sometimes a foreign degree, admitted them as members of a new western-educated Chinese elite which emerged in the republican era. Graduates of missionary schools worked alongside western women as teachers in missionary schools and later became the leaders of these schools and of international Christian organisations for women such as the YWCA. In the process they forged their own vision of a Christian social-gospel-inspired modernity for Chinese women which became more left-wing and radical as its focus turned to the plight of working class women in the 1930s-40s.

In this thesis I discuss the experience of female missionary students using the term ‘girls’ to refer to female pupils at missionary middle schools. In the emerging literature on youth and childhood in China there has been much debate about how we should treat ‘childhood’ or ‘youth’ in China as categories of historical analysis, in dialogue with western definitions of the terms.<sup>24</sup> In the middle schools used as case studies in this thesis – Riverside, Hongdao, St. Mary’s and McTyeire - girl’s ages ranged from nine to twenty-one years old, with the majority of middle school students aged fifteen to sixteen years old on average. Therefore, these girls could

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<sup>24</sup> See Limin Bai, *Shaping the Chinese Child: Children and Their Primers in Late Imperial China* (Hong Kong, 2005), pp. 311, Ping-Chen Hsiung, *A Tender Voyage: Children and Childhood in Late Imperial China* (Stanford, 2005).

most accurately be described as ‘Teens’. For some students who entered McTyeire early due to their precocious levels of English, such as Ellen Cao (whose story is discussed in chapter six), her young age (nine) was particularly important in her social and political formation at school. As Ellen’s example suggests, age is an important factor here, as it affected how girls saw the world and interacted with their peers, the extent to which they were aware of wider political events and the maturity or naiveté with which they expressed their hopes, fears and daydreams on the pages of their school magazines. It is also important to note that these annual magazines, while containing compositions by girls in lower classes, were generally dominated by articles written by girls in the graduating classes (approximately 18 years old). It is therefore mainly young women who are expressing their thoughts and feelings on the pages of these yearbooks. Meanwhile, in my interviews with alumnae, many students who graduated in the years 1945-1952 refer to their war and pre-war experiences when they were in their Junior years and thus only eleven to fourteen years old on average. The reader should be aware of the significant differential in age range of female students’ experience covered under the broad term ‘girls’ under discussion in this thesis.

### **Literature Review**

There have been many studies of the role of influential Chinese male reformers who received a ‘modern’ or ‘western-style’ education in Japan and the West at the turn of the twentieth century in bringing back new ideas about how to strengthen and ‘modernise’ China in order that she may defend herself from encroaching imperialist powers. However, very little research has focused on the role of Christian-educated Chinese women in this exchange, with the exception of a few examples of

extraordinary women.<sup>25</sup> For example, Hu Ying's examination of Ida Khan and Mary Stone has drawn attention to the role played by missionary-educated Chinese women who stepped outside the domestic sphere in the creation of the Chinese New Woman.<sup>26</sup> Another pertinent, but less well-known example, is Zeng Baosun 曾寶蓀, who attended the Church Missionary Society (CMS) Mary Vaughan High School in Hangzhou. She became the first Chinese woman to receive a degree from the University of London and became a leading promoter of women's education in republican China, founding the Yi Fang Girls' school in Changsha in 1918, one of the earliest examples of a Chinese-established Christian school in China.<sup>27</sup> Wang Zheng's book *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment* provides valuable case studies of how individual Chinese women in the republican period were influenced by Christianity.<sup>28</sup> In particular, school principal Lu Lihua (1900-1997) and educator Chen Yongsheng (1900-1997) are both good examples of how Christianity served as a tool and stepping stone for Chinese women in their successful and varied careers.<sup>29</sup>

Biographical studies of American female missionaries working in China include Kathleen Lodwick's *Educating the Women of Hainan* (1995), William Hutchinson's *Errand to the World* (1987), Jane Hunter's *The Gospel of Gentility* (1984) and Irwin Hyatt's *Our Ordered Lives Confess* (1976).<sup>30</sup> Historians debate the

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<sup>25</sup> Stacy Biler, *Patriots or Traitors: A History of American Educated Chinese Students* (New York, 2009). See also her 'Zeng Baosun: Embracing Chinese Ideals and Christian Education', in Carol Lee Hamrin and Stacey Bieler (eds.), *Salt and Light Volume 3: More Lives of Faith that Shaped Modern China* (Oregon, 2011), pp. 93-115.

<sup>26</sup> Hu Ying, 'Naming the First New Woman', *Nan Nu: Men, Women, and Gender in Early and Imperial China*, 3. 2 (2001), pp. 196 - 231.

<sup>27</sup> See Thomas L. Kennedy (trans.), 'Confucian Feminist: Memoirs of Zeng Baosun' (1893-1978), in *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 92. Pt.1 (Philadelphia, 2002).

<sup>28</sup> Wang Zheng, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment, Oral and Textual Histories* (London, 1999).

<sup>29</sup> Wang, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment*, pp. 145-187 and pp. 259-287.

<sup>30</sup> Kathleen Lodwick, *Educating the Women of Hainan: The Career of Margaret Moninger in China 1915-1942* (Kentucky, 1995); William Hutchinson, *Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions* (London, 1987), Jane Hunter, *The Gospel of Gentility: American Women Missionaries in Turn-of-the-Century China* (London, 1984), and Irwin Hyatt, *Our Ordered Lives Confess: Three Nineteenth Century American Missionaries in Eastern Shantung* (London, 1976).

extent to which missionaries attempted to transform the position of women in Chinese society according to Western social norms. Gael Graham, Irwin Hyatt, and Arthur Schlesinger have argued that the elevation of women was a direct aim of female missionaries who were conscious participants in the cultural imperialism of the late nineteenth century.<sup>31</sup> In contrast, Jane Hunter has argued that missionaries did not set out to transform the position of women in Chinese society, but that this was the unintended outcome of their attempts to evangelise Chinese women.<sup>32</sup> My study furthers Hunter's arguments on these unintended outcomes of missionary education. Using both mission records and the writings and actions of Chinese pupils I probe the divergence between gender values imparted by teachers at mission schools and how Chinese pupils responded to this education.

The development of Christian education in China has received scholarly attention. In particular, Jesse Gregory Lutz's *China and the Christian Colleges, 1850-1950* (1971), and more recently Daniel H. Bays and Ellen Widmer's *China's Christian Colleges: Cross Cultural Connections* (2009) have challenged older interpretations, which characterised Chinese education as 'backwards' and 'stagnant' before the arrival of western missionaries.<sup>33</sup> In contrast, these studies stress the continuity, mutual borrowing and reciprocal development between Chinese and western education in terms of textbooks, pedagogy and curriculum. Similarly, Evelyn Rawski's study of primary education in the late Qing has helped to break down

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<sup>31</sup>Gael Graham, *Gender, Culture and Christianity: American Protestant Mission Schools in China* (New York, 1995), p. 2. See also Hyatt, *Our Ordered Lives Confess*, p. ix and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr, 'The Missionary Enterprise and Theories of Imperialism' in John K. Fairbank (ed.), *The Missionary Enterprise in China and America* (Cambridge, 1974), p. 7.

<sup>32</sup>Hunter, *The Gospel of Gentility*, p. 174. Hunter also explores the ways in which American missionaries drew on a traditional rhetoric of 'service' and 'domesticity' to justify their foray into the non-domestic realms which missionary work entailed. See Chapter 4, pp. 269-270.

<sup>33</sup>Jesse Gregory Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges, 1850-1950* (New York, 1971), and Daniel H. Bays and Ellen Widmer (eds.), *China's Christian Colleges: Cross Cultural Connections* (Stanford, 2009). See also Stephen Uhalley and Xiaoxin Wu (eds.), *China and Christianity: Burdened Past Hopeful Future* (New York, 2001).

monolithic and reductionist approaches to the history of Chinese education, by highlighting the fact that missionaries often appropriated Chinese primers such as The Trimetric Classic (三字經 *Sanzijing*) as the most effective means of teaching elementary literacy.<sup>34</sup> As my study will show, by 1922, although missionary schools for girls were still leading the way in providing secondary education for girls, enabling a few to progress to university, they were facing increasing competition from private and government schools for girls and falling behind in their provision of normal (teacher training) schools. After registering with the GMD government in 1927, some missionary girls' schools struggled to compete academically in the provincial examinations and lagged behind their government counterparts, in terms of facilities, equipment and teachers' pay.

This literature on Christian education in China includes several influential case studies of Christian higher educational institutions for women, such as Jin Feng's study of Ginling College in Nanjing.<sup>35</sup> However, this research has focused on the establishment of missionary higher education institutions and comparatively little research has been undertaken on missionary middle schools for girls.<sup>36</sup> Middle schools were however a vital part of the missionary educational enterprise in China, and can help us understand the foundational education experience of women who

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<sup>34</sup> Evelyn Rawski, 'Elementary education in the mission enterprise' in Susan Barnett and John King Fairbank (eds.), *Christianity in China: Early Protestant Missionary Writings* (Harvard, 1985), p. 135. For more on late Qing Literacy see: Evelyn Rawski, *Education and Popular literacy in the Late Qing* (Ann Arbor, 1979).

<sup>35</sup> Jin Feng, *The Making of a Family Saga: Ginling College* (New York, 2009).

<sup>36</sup> Few studies of missionary middle schools for girls exist. These include: Heidi A. Ross 'Cradle for female talent': The McTyeire Home and School for Girls: 1892-1937' in Daniel D. Bays (ed.), *Christianity in China from the Eighteenth Century to the Present*, (London, 1996). Judith Liu and Donald Kelly, 'An Oasis in a Heathen Land': St Hilda's School for Girls Wuchang, 1928-1936' in Daniel D. Bays (ed.), *Christianity in China from the Eighteenth Century to the Present*, (London, 1996). Judith Liu, *Foreign Exchange: Counterculture Behind the Walls of St. Hilda's School for Girls, 1929-1937* (Bethlehem, PA, 2011). A recent history of the Shanghai Number Three Girls school also provides many details of the changes to St. Mary's and McTyeire from their foundation: Liu Xiaoyan, *The Changing face of Women's education in China: A Critical History of St. Mary's Hall, McTyeire School and Shanghai No. 3. Girls Middle School*, (Heidelberg, 2015).

went on to become leading members of Chinese society. Moreover, while only a handful of Chinese women went to university, more Chinese women in the republican era had the experience of attending a Christian middle school. In 1923, only 218 women were enrolled at university compared to 3,249 at middle schools.<sup>37</sup> The study of missionary middle schools in East China will therefore provide historians with a fuller picture of the missionary enterprise in China, helping us to better understand the connections between different missionary establishments and the impact of Christianity on a broader group of Chinese women. As chapter two explores, while the government was beginning to open normal schools for women in the first two decades of the twentieth century, it was lagging behind missionary schools in its provision of girls' middle school education. In 1917-1918, the number of girls in missionary middle schools in China was 2,679 compared to 9,201 boys, and in government middle schools there were just 622 girls compared to 69,598 boys.<sup>38</sup> Although on average running smaller schools, missionary societies continued to make more provision for girls at the middle school level than their government counterparts throughout the 1920s.<sup>39</sup> Moreover, missionary institutions were the only places where women could acquire a university level education until 1919.

The existing studies provide a fascinating insight into the lives, motivations and aspirations of female missionaries working in China in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. There has been comparatively little work done, however,

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<sup>37</sup> Chindon Yiu Tang, 'Women's Education in China', Bulletin 9 in *Bulletins on Chinese Education issued by the Chinese National Association for the Advancement of Education*, Vol. 2 (Shanghai, 1923), pp.23-26.

<sup>38</sup> Milton T. Stauffer (ed.), *The Christian Occupation of China: A General Survey of the Numerical Strength and Geographical Distribution of the Christian Forces in China, Made by the Special Committee on Survey and Occupation, China Continuation Committee, 1918-1921* (Shanghai, 1922), p. 404.

<sup>39</sup> For example, in 1922-1923, there were 25 government middle schools educating 3, 249 girls, only 3.14 percent of the government middle school population. Missionary statistics reveal that in 1920 there were 87 schools for girls across 15 provinces with a total of 2,698 students, comprising 20 percent of the missionary middle school population. See Tang 'Women's education in China' p. 16 and Stauffer (ed.), *The Christian Occupation of China*, xciv.

on Chinese women's experience of Christianity and missionary education. As Kwok Pui-Lan highlights, although there is a proliferation of English language missionary writings, it is very difficult, due to a lack of relevant sources in mission archives, to know how Chinese women themselves experienced and responded to missionary education.<sup>40</sup> As a result, historians of missions to China have focused on missionary accounts, bearing in mind that their impressions may have little to do with the reality of Chinese women's experience. Recently, Haywood Choi has sought to address this imbalance in her study of Protestant mission education for women in Korea. Choi attempts to look at the missionary educational enterprise in Korea from both sides of the encounter and in doing so uncovers the often unintended impact (such as the decision to remain single) of missionary evangelical efforts on Korean women.<sup>41</sup> Similarly, my study attempts to recover the voices of Chinese Christian women who attended missionary schools in East China. The writings of mission school pupils provide the historian with a valuable insight into the seldom heard voices of Christian women themselves. Through an analysis of students' writings from school magazines and through conducting interviews with former mission school students, my thesis helps to bridge this gap in the literature, to understand missionary students' experiences at these schools. Having a better understanding of how missionary school girls received their education is essential for a more balanced picture of the missionary enterprise in China and would allow us to place the impact of missionary education further into perspective.

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<sup>40</sup> Pui-Lan, Kwok, 'Chinese Women and Protestant Christianity at the Turn of the Century', in Daniel H. Bays (ed.), *Christianity in China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (California, 1996). p. 12.

<sup>41</sup> Hyaeweol Choi, *Gender and Mission Encounters in Korea: New Woman, Old Ways* (London, 2009).

The literature on the Chinese women's movement to date has not paid much attention to the role of Christianity.<sup>42</sup> The experience of missionary-educated women does not neatly fit and therefore has largely been left out of the dominant narratives of nation building and women's liberation in early twentieth century China. As Ryan Dunch has pointed out, the role of Christianity in the narrative of women's liberation in the post-May Fourth period has been systematically downplayed in communist histories.<sup>43</sup> These histories have drawn upon the writings of Chinese feminists in the early communist women's movement. For example, Xiang Jingyu dismisses the Christian women's movement in China as a handmaiden of imperialism and one that cannot provide any real, lasting support to a true Chinese nationalist women's movement: 'in terms of organisation, method, technology, qualified personnel, and resources undoubtedly they have international backing and leadership; it is really not Chinese women's own strength...we fear that in the end it could become a mechanism of foreign capitalism, and it is not what is needed in the Chinese National people's revolution movement namely: an independent women's movement.'<sup>44</sup> In fact, Xiang's attempt to discredit these early bourgeois Christian women's organisations shows that she did consider them influential. Scholars have explored how the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) became an increasingly left wing organisation in the 1930-40s.<sup>45</sup> The international networks, identities, and

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<sup>42</sup> See Elisabeth Croll, *Feminism and Socialism in China* (London, 1978); Davin, Delia, *Woman-work: women and the Party in revolutionary China* (London, 1979); Emily Honig, *Sisters and Strangers: Women in the Shanghai cotton mills, 1919-1949* (Stanford, 1986); Christina Gilmartin K. *Engendering the Chinese Revolution: Radical women, communist politics, and mass movements in the 1920s* (London, 1995).

<sup>43</sup> Ryan Dunch, 'Mothers to Our Country: Conversion, Education, and Ideology amongst Chinese Protestant Women, 1870-1930,' in Jessie G. Lutz, ed., *Gender and Christianity in China* (Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, 2010), p. 328. See also Jessie Gregory Lutz, *Pioneer Chinese Christian Women: Gender, Christianity, and Social Mobility* (Bethlehem, PA, 2010).

<sup>44</sup> Xiang Jingyu, "Zhongguo zuijin funü yundong" in Zhongguo funü guanli ganbu xueyuan, (ed.), *Zhongguo funü yundong wenxian ziliao huibian: vol.1: 1918-1949*, Beijing: Zhongguo funü chubanshe, 1988, pp. 92-100.

<sup>45</sup> Gao Wangzhi, 'Y.T. Wu: A Christian leader under Communism', in Daniel D. Bays (ed.), *Christianity in China from the eighteenth century to the present* (London, 1996), pp. 338-353.

leadership skills which the YWCA was so keen to instil in its student members became a useful tool of the Chinese Communist Party as the Association's networks were infiltrated by underground members of the CCP.<sup>46</sup> Much of the literature on the YWCA's infiltration by the CCP has focused on individual YWCA secretaries' underground activities with working class women, such as the night schools for Shanghai's cotton mill workers.<sup>47</sup> Karen Gardner has documented how the American YWCA Secretary, Maud Russel, who worked in China in 1917-1943, became increasingly sympathetic to the Communist cause.<sup>48</sup> Wang Zheng has also shown how the underground Communist party learnt from the organisational structure and recruiting techniques of Christian women's organisations such as the YWCA.<sup>49</sup> Several YWCA secretaries, such as Cora Deng, became leading members of the All China Women's Federation after 1949.<sup>50</sup> Similarly, Li Dequan, wife of the 'Christian General' Feng Yuxiang was educated at Bridgeman Middle School in Beijing, worked there as a teacher and as a YWCA student secretary before becoming the PRC's first Minister for Health in 1949.<sup>51</sup> My thesis will build on this work, particularly in chapters four and five which highlight the role of the YWCA in convincing socially-minded missionary school students to turn towards Communism as a solution to the inequalities they witnessed in society during the war and civil war period.

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<sup>46</sup> Elizabeth A. Littell-Lamb, 'Going Public: The YWCA, 'New Woman' and Social Feminism in Republican China', PhD diss., Carnegie Mellon University, 2002.

<sup>47</sup> See Zhao Xiaoyang, 'Jidujiaohui yu laodong wenti –yi Shanghai jidujiao nü qingnianhui gongyexiao wei zhongxin' in *Xingbie yu lishi: jindai Zhongguo funü yu jidujiao*, ed. Tao Feiya, (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2007), pp. 183- 209. Niu Shengni, 'Lingyi zhong funü yundong – yi Zhonghua jidujiao nü qingnianhui de nonggong shiye wei li (1904-1933), in *Xingbie yu lishi: jindai Zhongguo funü yu jidujiao*, ed. Tao Feiya, (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2007), pp. 234 -282.

<sup>48</sup> Karen Garner, *Precious Fire: Maud Russell and the Chinese Revolution* (Boston, 2003).

<sup>49</sup> Wang Zheng, *Finding Women in the State: A Socialist Feminist Revolution in the People's Republic of China, 1949-1964* (Berkeley, CA, 2016).

<sup>50</sup> Emily Honig, 'Christianity, Feminism and Communism: The life and times of Deng Yuzhi', in Daniel D. Bays (ed.), *Christianity in China from the eighteenth Century to the present* (London, 1996).

<sup>51</sup> Kate Merkel-Hess, 'A New Woman and Her Warlord: Li Dequan, Feng Yuxiang, and the Politics of Intimacy in Twentieth Century China', *Frontiers of History in China*, 11.3 (2016), pp. 431 – 457.

Therefore, in both the literature on Chinese women and in mission studies the experiences of ordinary Chinese Christian women have largely been ignored. As Dunch asserts: ‘it is a significant silence, because it is rooted in the history of Chinese feminism and nationalism going back to the May Fourth period, and like all silences it can help us to see what has been foregrounded and what has been obscured in that history.’<sup>52</sup> By paying attention to the previously marginalised voices of Chinese Christian girls in mission schools in East China, this study can help us to uncover new aspects of the missionary enterprise in China and understand the impact of Christianity on an influential generation of Chinese women, who would become future leaders of Chinese society.

### **Methodology**

This study will draw upon theories and methods from several fields, including global, gender and postcolonial studies. In particular I draw upon the work of Gail Hershatter and Wang Zheng, who have examined the usefulness of ‘gender’ as a category of analysis in Chinese history using theories of gender formulated by Joan W. Scott.<sup>53</sup> Drawing on the work of Michel Foucault, Scott critiques the synonymous use of ‘gender’ and ‘women’ in previous historical studies, defining gender as ‘a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes’, and ‘a primary way of signifying relationships of power.’<sup>54</sup> By historicising the way we think about the human body and breaking down the notion of ‘men’ and ‘women’ as fixed categories, Scott demonstrates how gender can become an extraordinarily powerful tool of historical analysis: ‘If we treat the opposition between male and female as problematic rather than known, as something

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<sup>52</sup> Dunch, ‘Mothers to Our Country’, p. 328.

<sup>53</sup> Gail Hershatter and Wang Zheng, ‘Chinese History: A Useful Category of Gender Analysis’, *The American Historical Review*, 113.5, (2008) pp. 1404-1421. Joan W. Scott, ‘Gender: A useful category of historical analysis’, *American Historical Review*, 91.5, (1986).

<sup>54</sup> Scott, ‘Gender: A useful category of historical analysis’, p. 1067.

contextually denied, repeatedly constructed, then we must constantly ask not only what is at stake in proclamations or debates that invoke gender to explain or justify their positions but also how implicit understandings of gender are being invoked and re-inscribed.’<sup>55</sup>

A wealth of new work on masculinity, queer theory and transgender studies demonstrates how far the field has moved away from fixed biological determinism in recent years.<sup>56</sup> Historicising what it was to be ‘female’ in early twentieth century China cannot be adequately addressed without considering new definitions and conceptions of masculinity that were emerging in this period. As Madeleine Y. Dong points out, in republican era China, the ‘modern woman’ played a central role in defining modern masculinity: ‘The desires, fantasies and disillusionments of young women and men of the post-May fourth period were not separated but deeply entangled.’<sup>57</sup> Shih Shu-Mei has explored how the western ‘modern girl’ played an important role in Chinese men’s anxieties as they struggled to re-configure their identities in the semi-colonial environment of treaty port Shanghai.<sup>58</sup> Similarly, in her analysis of satirical cartoons published in 1920-30s Shanghai, Dong argues that men are represented as victims within the new dynamics of gender power relations: ‘In contrast to the confident Modern Girl who is totally at ease with and in command of modern urban life, her male counterpart seems to have difficulty living up to her challenge.’<sup>59</sup> Very little attention has been paid to how Christian education may have formed and influenced the changing power dynamics in gender relationships.

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 1074.

<sup>56</sup> See Howard Chiang (ed.), *Transgender China* (London, 2012).

<sup>57</sup> Madeleine Y. Dong, ‘Who is Afraid of the Chinese Modern Girl’, in *The Modern Girl around the World* (Durham, NC, 2008), p.195.

<sup>58</sup> Shih, Shu-Mei, ‘Gender, Race, and Semicolonialism: Liu Na’ou’s Urban Shanghai Landscape’, *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 55, No. 4 (1996).

<sup>59</sup> Dong, ‘Who is Afraid of the Chinese Modern Girl’, p. 212.

As Wang Zheng and Hershatter point out, terms such as ‘gender’ and ‘feminism’ do not translate easily when they are applied to the Chinese context, loaded as they are with ideas and concepts which have developed in western scholarship in the past several decades. In particular, the concept of ‘gender’, which is translated in Chinese as *xingbie* 性别 focuses on biological definitions of sex and does not describe the socially constructed and performative nature of the term implied in western scholarship.<sup>60</sup> Dorothy Ko and Wang Zheng also explore the different translations of ‘feminism’ in China today as *niquan zhuyi* 女權主義 or *nüxing zhuyi* 女性主義.<sup>61</sup> They assert that while the former connotes ‘a man-hating he-woman hungry for power’, the latter can also be taken to promote popular stereotypes of femininity and thus reinforce gender distinctions.<sup>62</sup> It is important to recognise these semantic and translational difficulties when studying the emergence of new types of female agency in modern Chinese history and to avoid simplistic application of western terms such as ‘feminism’ to the Chinese context, bearing in mind the multiple and divergent ways in which this word could be applied.

Similarly, Tani Barlow has explored how the word *funü* 婦女 was deployed in China during the twentieth century to describe a new type of Chinese womanhood.<sup>63</sup> In her attempt to critically rethink and historicise assumptions made in western Anglophone studies, Barlow charts how definitions of ‘woman’ were produced by the state for various purposes throughout modern Chinese history. In pre-modern China, women were defined entirely through their kinship status within

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<sup>60</sup> Hershatter and Zheng, ‘Chinese History: A Useful Category of Gender Analysis’, p. 1417.

<sup>61</sup> Ko Dorothy and Wang Zheng, ‘Introduction: Translating Feminisms in China’ in Ko Dorothy and Wang Zheng, (Eds.), *Translating Feminism In China Gender: A Special issue of Gender and History*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), 1-12.

<sup>62</sup> Ko and Zheng, ‘Translating Feminisms in China,’ p.1.

<sup>63</sup> Tani Barlow, ‘Theorizing Woman: Funu, Guojia, Jiating’ (Chinese Woman, Chinese State, Chinese Family), in Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan eds., *Scattered Hegemonies: Postmodernity and Transnational Feminist Practices* (London, 1994), pp. 173-196.

the Confucian family system; they were either *nü* 女 unmarried daughters or *fu* 婦 married women. Therefore, Barlow argues the category ‘woman’ in Chinese did not exist outside of family relations in pre-modern China, rather *funü* was constructed by Chinese intellectuals in response to western modernity at the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>64</sup> It is important to consider how divergent meanings of the term *funü* to signify ‘woman’ were tested and deployed for political ends throughout the 1920-1940s. As Barlow points out the term *nüxing* to signify ‘woman’ emerged as a site of intellectual struggle amongst Chinese writers in reaction to the semi-colonial modernity that they encountered in treaty port China of the 1920s. *Nüxing* was thus implicated with western modernity and labelled ‘bourgeois’ by the Communist women’s movement of the 1930s and 1940s, who reinvented women as *funü*, situating her at the heart of their discourses on the Chinese State and family.<sup>65</sup> How did mission school pupils position themselves within these broader continuums of gender in republican era China? As Barlow suggests, breaking down ‘woman’ as a fixed category of analysis and historicising the meaning of womanhood in China, allows us to explore in finer detail the multiple and divergent meanings that were projected onto the body of the ‘modern woman’ in the republican era. How did mission schoolgirls interpret, negotiate and play with these overlapping and contested images to create new spaces and justify new roles for themselves within society? My study will pay attention to how mission schoolgirls responded to and interacted with these debates and deployed these terms themselves, to carefully negotiate new identities in this period of flux, forging both new and old notions of womanhood into unique and radical conceptions of their relationship to family and state.

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<sup>64</sup> Barlow, ‘Theorizing Woman’, pp. 173-174. NB: Should be *Chuantong* rather than *Quantong*

<sup>65</sup> Barlow, ‘Theorising Woman’, pp. 174.

It is important to bear these epistemological difficulties in mind when exploring the role of mission schools in China, and the impact that different examples of family and women's roles had on changing Chinese conceptions of gender relations. This is particularly true when analysing western missionary accounts of their efforts in China. As Antoinette Burton highlights, the rhetoric of an international "sisterhood" of women was often simply a device for foreign women to claim a stake in the governing of Empire, by proclaiming the need for western missionary women to represent their downtrodden "sisters" in the East.<sup>66</sup> As Mrinalini Sinha has shown, however, missionary women's understanding of gender norms was filtered through an imperialist and orientalist gaze which often misunderstood and misrepresented the gender practices of Eastern societies, while at the same time sought to reassure themselves of their own comparatively liberated status.<sup>67</sup> I will pay attention to these warnings when analysing my primary missionary sources for information on Chinese women's status and the international women's movement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. While highly problematic, these sources are invaluable in presenting us with an insight into the aims and motivations of women who founded missionary schools for girls in China and provide a key starting point in analysing the divergence between missionary goals and the realities of Chinese women's experiences of Christian education.

Despite these epistemological and translational difficulties, in recent years a plethora of works on the history of Chinese women have successfully re-centred

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<sup>66</sup> Antoinette Burton, *Burdens of History: British Feminists, Indian Women and Imperial Culture* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1994).

<sup>67</sup> See Mrinalini Sinha, 'Suffrage and internationalism: The enfranchisement of British and Indian women under an imperial state', *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, 36.4 (1999), pp 461-484 and Mrinalini Sinha, 'Refashioning Mother India: Feminism and Nationalism in Late-Colonial India' in *Feminist Studies* 26.3 (2000), pp. 623-644. Sinha, Mrinalini, *Specters of Mother India: the global restructuring of an Empire* (New Dehli, 2006).

women in the heart of the narrative of nation building in Chinese history. Hershatter argues for the need to personalise and politicise the experience of gender in modern Chinese history.<sup>68</sup> In accordance with Hershatter's advice, this study will use 'gender' not as a totalising category of analysis, but rather as a lens or tool with which to re-examine the dynamic interplay between Christianity and nationalism in the formation of missionary schoolgirls' identities, in their experiences at school, and in their later lives. By doing so we can break down totalising meta-narratives of nationalism that have dominated modern historical writing. As Choi asserts: 'It is these different realities experienced by women and men that help us go beyond the boundaries of meta-narratives such as nationalism. In so doing, we can uncover not only gender-specific experiences of the modern but also partial strategies of gendering the modern.'<sup>69</sup>

This study will also draw upon ideas and concepts developed in the field of global historical studies. By exploring how networks for educated Christian Chinese women emerged in local, national and transnational contexts, I will build upon new scholarship which explores transnational histories of feminism and internationalism.<sup>70</sup> Although global historical studies have proliferated in recent years, very few have adopted a global approach to gender topics.<sup>71</sup> Merry Wiesner-Hanks has recognised the need for such studies that combine global and gender perspectives, emphasising the extraordinary analytical power of this approach: "Gender' and 'Global' are two lenses that have been used, largely separately, to revision history in the last several decades, putting them together allows us to create

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<sup>68</sup> Gail Hershatter, 'Disquiet in the House of Gender', *Journal of Asian Studies*, 71.4 (2012), p. 877.

<sup>69</sup> Choi, *Gender and Mission Education in Korea*, p.16.

<sup>70</sup> For more on internationalism during the interwar years see: M. Goswami, "Imaginary Futures and Colonial Internationalisms," *The American Historical Review* 117, no. 5 (December, 2012).

<sup>71</sup> See Merry E Wiesner, 'World History and the History of Women, Gender and Sexuality', *Journal of World History*, 18.1, (2007), pp. 53-67.

both telescopes and microscopes, to see further and find new things where never seen before and to see very familiar things in completely new ways.<sup>72</sup> In tracing networks for educated Christian women at multiple scales, this study will explore how notions of gender and nationalism intersected with Christianity in both a local and global context.

This study will build upon new scholarship which explores how Christianity was appropriated by local people in different ways at specific historical moments. In her work on female mission education in Korea, Choi explores the notion of a ‘Christian modernity’ which emerged as a global framework in which missionary women understood their work. Choi defines ‘Christian modernity’ as ‘an ideology that advocated the idea of an inevitable historical movement towards material and technological modernity’ that ‘places the moral, cultural, and spiritual role of Christianity at the core of that enterprise.’<sup>73</sup> Building on Choi’s work, my study will explore how the notion of ‘Christian modernity’ developed in China through mission middle schools for girls.

I will use gender as a global framework/tool to understand how different conceptions of modernity were articulated in early twentieth century China by Christian girls. In recent years, scholars of global history, dissatisfied with the limitations of the nation state for writing the history of the modern, have attempted to show how the local and global were mutually constructed. Rather than seeing ‘globalisation’ and ‘modernity’ as one-way hegemonic forces that flow from West to East, Arjun Appadurai stresses the culturally constructed, imaginative and subjective nature of these processes: ‘globalisation is itself a deeply historical, uneven and even localizing process. Globalization does not necessarily or even frequently imply

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<sup>72</sup> Wiesner, ‘World History and the History of Women’, p. 67.

<sup>73</sup> Choi, *Gender and Mission Encounters in Korea*, p.10.

homogenization or even Americanisation ... different societies appropriate the material of modernity differently.’<sup>74</sup> Drawing on Appadurai’s work, this study aims to explore how the ‘local’ and ‘global’ were mutually constructed in the mind-set of mission school girls in China. Recent scholarship has shown how the ‘Modern Girl’ emerged as a global phenomenon in different local cultural contexts in the early twentieth century: ‘The modern girl was distinguished from other female figures and representations by her continual incorporation of local elements with those drawn from elsewhere.’<sup>75</sup> Following their advice, I will use the emergence of the ‘modern girl’ as a heuristic device to explore how girls at mission schools combined nationalism with Christianity in their writings, within these gendered global frameworks. Drawing on these scholars who have attempted to synthesise the local and the global, I will question how the Christian education received by girls at mission school contributed to the formation of their subjectivities as Modern Women, Chinese national citizens and members of an international Christian community. By looking at mission education for girls as a prism through which to think about the processes of nation building in China, my thesis aims to put the history of Chinese modernity into a broader global framework.

Chapter one introduces the oral and documentary sources which I use in the thesis. Chapter two contextualizes the development of missionary education for girls within the educational landscape of East China, including the development of private and government schools for girls. Utilizing local newspaper sources, chapter three probes how missionary school students reconciled their identities as Christians and National citizens during the waves of anti-Christian hostility that swept China during

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<sup>74</sup> Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity At Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis, 1996), p. 17.

<sup>75</sup> The Modern Girl around the World Research Group et al., *The Modern Girl Around the World: Consumption, Modernity, and Globalization* (Durham, NC, 2008), p. 4.

the 1920s. Chapters four and five examine what gender values missionaries sought to inculcate in students and how the hybrid cultural environment of missionary schools unintentionally created a space where girls could experiment with more fluid gender identities. Chapter six explores how the YWCA functioned within mission schools to inculcate in girls identities as part of an international Christian sisterhood in the interwar years. The final chapter of the thesis examines the experience of girls who attended missionary schools in wartime Shanghai, and their engagement with politics during the civil war period. In the conclusion and epilogue I explore the changes and continuities at missionary schools during the period of transition to communist control.

## CHAPTER ONE

### **Discovering Students' Own Voices: Documentary and Oral Sources**

How can we discover the voices of female students who attended missionary schools in republican era East China? In this chapter I introduce my primary source materials along with theoretical and methodological issues of using these documentary and oral sources to discover students' own voices. I firstly discuss my documentary sources, in particular the yearbooks produced by missionary schools. Although the plays, poetry, artwork and creative writing in these magazines provide a rich source for understanding the creative imaginations, daydreams and aspirations of missionary schoolgirls, these sources also present challenges when used as a source to understand girls' primary concerns and identity formation. I will consider questions of audience and voice: Who were these magazines written for and for what purposes were students writing in them? Drawing on the advice of Michel Foucault and Ann Laura Stoler in the methodology section, I discuss the ways in which I endeavour to read my archival documents. This chapter will also address the practical, methodological, and theoretical issues of conducting oral histories with missionary school alumnae and the opportunities and pitfalls of using memory as a historical source, drawing particularly on insights provided by Gail Hershatter. Although both oral and archival sources suffer from the same omissions, distortions and biases, used critically and in dynamic combination, oral and archival narratives can provide powerful and complementary tools for understanding girls' identity formation. As alumnae today reflect on their past-selves writing in these magazines, they produce new narratives and reflections on their identities; identities which are constantly in flux, and reimagined in different ways with each retelling of the story of their lives in missionary schools in early twentieth century East China.

## Documentary Sources

This study draws on a wealth of primary materials ranging from printed sources such as republican era newspapers and magazines, to archival documents and missionary correspondence held in archives across the UK, China and the USA. In particular, the thesis draws heavily upon the writings of pupils in the extant issues of missionary school annual magazines. These include: Yongjiang's *Riverside Echo* (*Yongjiang Sheng* 甬江聲) Hongdao's *Hongdao* (弘道) St. Mary's *The Phoenix* (Fengzao, 鳳藻) and McTyeire's *The McTyeirean* (Moti, 墨梯). Although the basic function and format of these annual magazines was the same: to showcase the artistic, scholarly and sporting achievements of the school (particularly girls of the graduating class) to parents, mission boards and other interested parties, the magazines greatly vary in form and content as well as number of volumes extant in the archives.<sup>76</sup>

Wealthier missionary schools in Shanghai, McTyeire and St. Mary's, could afford to produce higher quality publications. Printed on thick, glossy paper, they were often leatherbound with gold embossed front covers (see fig. 3). While McTyeire relied on the proceeds of tickets sales from their annual senior play, (an elaborate production to showcase McTyeire girls' talents to parents and Shanghai notables), St. Mary's relied mainly on advertisements to fund their annual magazine. As a result, there tend to be more pages of advertising in the *Phoenix*. It is likely that the rivalry which existed between St. Mary's and McTyeire fuelled competition to produce attractive and high-quality publications, which were also publicity for the schools. In contrast, the magazines produced by smaller and less affluent mission

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<sup>76</sup> See bibliography. I employed a horizontal reading of my magazine sources, for more on the horizontal method see p. 48-49 of this thesis.

schools outside of Shanghai, such as Yongjiang and Hongdao, produced more modest, thread-bound annual magazines with fewer photographs.

In terms of the content, the magazines all have a broadly similar format. After the editorial and content pages there was usually a section for photographs (normally depictions of the campus, staff, graduating class and school societies), followed by compositions by students including essays (*wen* 文), short stories (*xiaoshuo* 小說), poetry (*shi* 詩) and plays (*ju* 劇). The *McTyeirean* and *Phoenix* also include a page or half-page introducing each girl of the graduating class, usually including her photograph, a self-chosen quotation and a comment by a friend or teacher (see fig. 4). There is also a ‘class history’ which narrates the chief events (both internally to the school and on a local and national level in Chinese society) that have impacted the girls in the graduating class. The *Phoenix* and *McTyeirean* are therefore much more akin to graduation yearbooks than *Riverside Echo* and *Hongdao*, which reflected the life of the whole school.

Most of the yearbooks produced by the schools were bilingual. However, the quality and quantity of English materials varied between schools as well as changing over time. In the case of the *Phoenix* and *McTyeirean*, the volume of English articles decreased from roughly seventy percent in 1917 to only twenty percent by 1947.<sup>77</sup> By the 1930s, the majority of Chinese compositions were in vernacular (*baihuawen* 白話文) rather than Classical Chinese.<sup>78</sup> In contrast, *Hongdao* and *Riverside Echo* only included a few articles in English in 1925 and by 1931 all of the content of *Riverside Echo* was in Chinese. As will be explored in chapter two, the reasons for these differences lie in not only the higher English level of girls who attended

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<sup>77</sup> The *McTyeirian* (Shanghai, 1917) has 50 pages of English out of a total of 70 pages. In contrast The *McTyerian* (Shanghai, 1947) has only 26 pages of English out of a total of 139.

<sup>78</sup>Chen Jingyu (ed.), *Zhongxi nü zhong*, 1892~1952 (Shanghai, 2016), p. 142.

schools in Shanghai, but are also a result of the political changes. New education policy formulated by the Guomindang (Nationalist Party), which came to power in 1927, resulted in increased sinicisation and secularisation of mission schools. The 1931 and 1933 *Riverside Echo* are unusual in the fact that the Chinese text is printed in a western format, horizontally from left to right, rather than vertically, from right to left, as was typical of most printed Chinese material of the republican era. The reason for this early use of a horizontal printing technique is not explicitly stated in the magazine. As a missionary school, Yongjiang may have wanted to differentiate itself from other schools in Ningbo by producing its magazine in a western style print format.

While the physical form and layout of the yearbooks varied over time and between schools, the content of pupils' writing is broadly similar. Girls' writings range from descriptions of their school campus and their daily lives, to humorous stories and practical jokes they play on each other, to romantic stories penned by day-dreaming teenagers, to more serious articles about the status of women in China, the current national political situation and their duty as students. At crucial points of national upheaval and turmoil, such as the May Fourth Movement starting in 1919 or the Japanese invasion of China (1931-1945), their sense of anguish and urgent duty to save their country comes through strongly on the pages of this school magazine. While the content of the magazines and concerns of the girls reflect the changing contemporary political situation in China, in general, we see a shift in the content of the magazines over time from a heavily political content which was very concerned with women's rights in the May Fourth period, to a focus on charitable and relief activities during the war years, to more conservative and inward-looking discussions focusing on concerns of daily life at school in the 1940s. The number of articles

which deal directly with Christianity also decline from the 1920s to 1940s, as a result of the increasing secularisation of the school curriculum and daily life.

In order to trace these shifts in content I employed a ‘horizontal’ reading method of my magazine sources. This involved reading each magazine from cover to cover, in order to understand the main content and themes of each issue, rather than a ‘vertical’ reading of each issue for a particular theme. The horizontal method, as Joan Judge explains: ‘aims to identify the range of materials in a journal, including images, poetry and advertisements in addition to articles, that directly or indirectly address a particular topic ... Situating that topic within the ecology of the journal rather than positioning it within a discursive trajectory of the scholars own making, this approach is attentive to the ways ideas resonate and conflict within different cultural registers – linguistic, visual and literary – and to the interactions among these different registers.’<sup>79</sup> Missionary school magazines are well suited to such an approach. By taking the magazine production as a whole, and by paying attention to the relationship between girls’ articles, the photographs, cartoons, artwork and advertisements afford a better understanding of the school culture and the psychology of the girls that put them together. These magazines, unlike professional women’s magazines of the republican era, such as *The Women’s Eastern Times* (*Funü Shibao*, 婦女時報) were not large-scale commercial publications for a wide audience. Instead, they are personal to the class and editorial team that put them together. They are also transmitters of class and school traditions, and as such are uniquely valuable in giving us an insight into the school culture and pupils’ identities. As Judge advises, I pay particular attention to the minutiae of the magazines, the ‘flotsam and jetsam’, small cartoons, students’ artwork, jokes, and later additions

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<sup>79</sup> Joan Judge, *Republican Lens: Gender, Visuality and Experience in the Early Chinese Periodical Press* (Oakland, California, 2015), p. 40.

such as graffiti and doodles, which are important for better understanding of pupils' relationships to each other as well as their creative imaginations. By employing a horizontal reading method, taking each magazine as a whole, I have endeavoured to let students' own concerns inform my research questions and guide my selection of primary materials quoted in this thesis.

The articles are a rich primary source, which provides the historian with a unique insight into the creative imaginations and worldview of the girls who attended missionary schools in the early twentieth century. Despite this wealth and diversity of content, using missionary school magazines to understand the anxieties, imaginations, and identities of missionary schoolgirls in this period is not unproblematic, and they raise several questions, prompting us to use these sources with caution: Who were the magazines for? How were girls' writings selected? How much control did their teachers have over the content?

Firstly, we might ask: Why have a school magazine? How, why, and when did these publications start? Much like school magazines produced today, missionary school magazines in East China were mainly conceived as a portrait of school life, a memento for the graduating class, and as a way of keeping interested parties and supporters of the school, including teachers, parents, missionary boards and, crucially, the alumnae, up to date. They were also important for school publicity: showcasing the artistic, literary and personal achievements of the school and its pupils to the wider public. The first edition of the *McTyeirean* explains:

The *McTyeirean* asks for a place in the growing family of school magazines in China ... It has been our desire for a long time to begin this magazine but we lacked courage to do so until we began to see how scattered our students were throughout America and China and how much we need some bond of union and means of communication. We hope that each girl who has been to *McTyeire* will use the magazine to

keep in touch with her former school mates and with what is going on at her Alma Mater.<sup>80</sup>

There was a dedicated ‘Alumnae section’ in the St. Mary’s and McTyeire yearbooks, which details the activities, experiences and achievements of the alumnae. This was crucial at elite schools such as McTyeire, whose alumnae were often married to the political and commercial elite, providing graduates with an important network of social and later career opportunities upon graduation as well as garnering financial support for the school via its wealthy and well-connected alumnae.

In the May Fourth era, ideas about student participation in democracy, social works and self-expression came to the fore, and students started demanding a bigger say in the running of their schools, forming Student Self-governing Associations or Student Unions. In the 1910s-20s, school magazines were founded in many schools and universities across China to provide students with a forum to express their opinions about school affairs and issues of national importance. At some schools, (such as Wuben Girls School in Shanghai), the Student Union had its own dedicated magazine to represent students’ voices.<sup>81</sup> This was particularly important for female students who were stepping into the public realm via the new print media for the first time in Chinese history. Starting from 1899 with the publication of the first Chinese women’s journal, Chen Xiefen’s 陳擷芬 *Nü Bao* 女報, several Chinese women’s journals emerged in the late Qing and early republican press between 1899 and 1912.<sup>82</sup> By the May Fourth period there existed a plethora of women’s magazines

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<sup>80</sup> ‘Forward’, *The McTyerian*, (Shanghai, 1917), p. 1.

<sup>81</sup> *Wuben nü zhongxue xuesheng zizhahui bannian kan* (Shanghai, 1936).

<sup>82</sup> For more on evolution of women’s print culture in the Republican era see: Judge, Joan, Mittler, Barbara and Hockx, Michel, ‘Introduction: Women’s Journals as Multi-generic artifacts’ in Michel Hockx, Joan Judge and Barbara Mittler (eds.). *Women and the periodical press in China’s long twentieth Century: A space of their own?* (Cambridge, 2018), 1-18. See also: Nanxiu Qian, ‘The mother Nü Xuebao versus the daughter Nü Xuebao: Generational differences between 1898 and 1902 women reformers’ in Nanxiu Qian, Grace S. Fong and Richard J. Smith (eds.), *Different worlds of discourse: Transformations of Gender and Genre in Late Qing and Early Republican China*. (Leiden, 2008), p. 257-292.

written by and for both women and men to discuss the ‘woman question’: pressing questions of the day concerning women’s suffrage, rights to education, position in the family system, free-choice marriage, calls for ending concubinage, little daughters-in-law and foot binding, amongst other issues. Missionary schoolgirls’ magazines were formed in conscious dialogue with these larger debates about women’s position and participation in national affairs. Amongst educated women, there was a growing demand for women to represent themselves in these debates, which had hitherto been dominated by male writers’ own anxieties and concerns about their own gender identities via a discussion of the ‘woman question’.<sup>83</sup> However, very few women were writing as professional journalists in the 1910-20s. Therefore, girls conceived of their school magazines as a ‘developmental’ or ‘experimental’ space where they could hone their literary skills at school, enabling them to participate in debates of national import in the burgeoning national print media of the republican era upon graduation. As the *McTyeirean* of 1917 states:

Another purpose that made us undertake this work was that of helping in a small way, to fit ourselves for making contributions to the many magazines and newspapers that are influencing the thought and action of our country. Because of lack of training, women have not done their part in this respect, but they should be as able to serve in this way as in the ordinary professions of teaching and home-making.<sup>84</sup>

Missionary schoolgirls did contribute to women’s magazines of the republican period, and although they sometimes wrote under pseudonyms or anonymously, they were

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<sup>83</sup> Susan L. Glosser, ‘The Truths I have Learned’: Nationalism, Family Reform and Male Identity in China’s New Culture Movement, 1915-1923’, in Susan Brownell and Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom (eds.), *Chinese Femininities, Chinese Masculinities: A Reader* (Berkeley, 2002). Ching-kiu Stephen Chan, ‘The Language of Despair: Ideological Representations of the ‘New Woman’ by May Fourth Writers’, in Tani E. Barlow (ed.), *Gender Politics in Modern China: Writing and Feminism* (London, 1993), p. 14.

<sup>84</sup> ‘Forward’, p. 1.

often identified by the names of their schools.<sup>85</sup> As Siao-chen Hu has shown, the editors of women's magazines in this period, such as *The Ladies Journal* (*funü zazhi*, 婦女雜誌), also conceived of these publications as a pedagogical space, where female students and educators could hone their literary talents and exchange opinions, forming a network of educated women.<sup>86</sup> As we shall explore in chapter four, girls at missionary schools read magazines for women in this period, including the popular *Linglong* 玲瓏 (Elegance) in the 1930s, and elite girls at McTyeire even occasionally appeared on the front covers of republican era print media (see fig. 33-34). They also contributed to Christian women's journals of this period including the YWCA's *Green Year*, discussed later in this chapter. It is therefore important to explore further the function and form of missionary schoolgirls' magazines, as they consciously developed in imitation of and in dialogue with new forms of print culture for women in the 1910-20s. By doing so we can gain a better understanding of the dynamic cross-fertilisation and developmental pathways between different types of print media in the republican era.

The idea that participation in their school magazine could provide a stepping stone to help widen women's opportunities as journalists and editors was not empty talk or idle ambition. Indeed, as we shall see below, for some students, participation on the school magazine board provided them with editorial experience which enabled them find work upon graduation. We know that the magazines were produced by an editorial team usually composed of the oldest class of senior girls. The production of the *McTyeirean* and *Phoenix* magazines was an elaborate affair, with girls from the graduating class dividing the work into Chinese, English, Art, and Business sections

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<sup>85</sup> Fu Saiying (Ningbo Yongjiang nüzhong), 'Zhongguo funü yingyou de renshi' *Shanghai funü*, 2.7, (1939), p. 23.

<sup>86</sup> Siao-Chen Hu, 'Voices of Female Educators in Early Twentieth Century Women's Magazines', in Michel Hockx, Joan Judge, and Barbra Mittler (eds.), *Women and the periodical press in China's long twentieth century, A space of their own?* (Cambridge, 2018), p.180,

(see fig. 3). Xu Meizhen 徐美貞 (McTyeire class of 1946), who acted as Editor-in-Chief for the 1946 *McTyeirean*, remembers that she was elected to this position of responsibility by her classmates, and stayed at school during the summer vacation to complete the task. According to Xu Meizhen, professional photographers were employed to take photographs and everything was done to the highest standard with no expense spared.<sup>87</sup> In the 1932 *Phoenix* there is a photograph of the editorial team, set up like an office scene with the foreign missionary advisor and St. Mary's student Ouyang Airong 歐陽愛容 (St. Mary's class of 1932) seated in the middle as Editor-in-Chief (see fig. 5). Each year, several foreign and Chinese faculty members were appointed as advisors to the editorial team, in the case of the 1932 *Phoenix*, Miss Catherine Barnaby, who sits in the centre next to Ouyang Airong. The photo is carefully choreographed to stage the fun and enjoyment girls had as editors, as well as the valuable work experience that a position on the board gave, asking classmates to submit essays, designing the layout and artwork, budgeting for the magazine and helping to raise money by securing advertisements. For at least one McTyeire student, helping to produce the school magazine gave girls the practical work experience needed to secure a job after graduation. For example, Renee Kwang Ming Nieh (Nie Guangming 聶光明, McTyeire class of 1933), recalled:

I was the business manager of the *McTyeirean*. Probably we sold it for, I don't know how much, three or four dollars, I don't remember. Printing's quite expensive. I don't know where the money came from. I've forgotten. Anyway, being the business manager changed my life. My mother died the same year. And we had so many children. My mother died in September 1933. My mother had a stroke. Before my mother died I was already thinking I don't want to go to college, it's hard to get into college. Then, just because I was business manager for the yearbook, I noticed an

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<sup>87</sup> Interview with Xu Meizhen, 15 April 2016, Shanghai.

American lady. She's the one who has the printing press. Every year she published a book like the yellow pages, but it had lists of all the companies, and she sells advertisements. And she says, "Why don't you come and work for me?" I thought, "What can I lose?" But my family was much against it. Well, nobody really made a big deal that I had to go to college, though. And, also, I think that the McTyeire education is probably at least as good as a junior college or even a college. The company paid me \$80 a month for getting advertisements, like a salesman, you know. And a private rickshaw came to the house, waited for me in the morning, took me to the office, and then I got to keep ten percent of whatever I can sell. At that time for a girl in 1933 or maybe 1934, to make eighty dollars! That was a very good salary. And I don't have to spend a cent, you see.<sup>88</sup>

The new career paths which were opening to missionary school graduates will be further explored in chapters four and five. We must also question to what extent the Chinese and foreign advisors had an editorial input in the magazine, helped to set the theme and censor and edit the content. It is reasonable to assume the English faculty advisor had some editorial responsibilities, such as correcting girls' English prior to publication. Moreover, the process by which students' writings were chosen for the magazines remains unclear. Were the girls whose writing appears in the magazine chosen because they were Christian pupils, students with strong political and social convictions, or particularly active leaders in school life? For example, in the afterword of the 1931 *Riverside Echo* magazine, the editor, Xu Yunying 徐雲英, explains that the articles included in the magazine were compositions written by students on a Saturday morning for their Chinese language teacher.<sup>89</sup> It is also important to consider how far the writings of the pupils which were selected for the school magazine represented their true opinions and sentiments. We may question

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<sup>88</sup> Renee Kwang Ming Nieh in McTyeire Almeneia Association (eds.), 'Telling Women's Lives: In Search of McTyeire, 1892-1992', (San Mateo, 1992). (Unpublished oral history collection).

<sup>89</sup> Xu Yunying, 'Bianhou', *Yongjiang Sheng* (1933), pp. 1-2.

whether they were simply writing what was expected by their teachers and to what extent were their topics of their own choosing? We must therefore be cautious when exploring these writings as evidence of the primary concerns of pupils.

When analysing the magazines as evidence of girls' desires, anxieties and aspirations, it is also important to consider the potential audience for these magazines: mainly their peers, parents and teachers. Although most of the articles strike a candid and sometimes even critical tone, when it came to their opinions of school affairs, we must assume there would have been a certain amount of self-censorship in the views which they expressed and stories which they told.<sup>90</sup> From the Yongjiang headmistress's report of 1929 we know that a copy of the school magazine was sent to each of the school missionary board members.<sup>91</sup> The wealth of information on student life, societies, sports meets and other extracurricular activities included in the section on 'school news' indicates that it was intended to keep friends and family members up to date and showcase the school to the wider public.<sup>92</sup> When analysing the content of these magazines we therefore need to be aware of how this potentially diverse readership might have influenced the initial selection of those students whose writing was accepted for publication, what topics were selected for inclusion and how the girls expressed themselves. It is thus difficult to unpick the true sentiments and concerns of the girls writing these articles.

I also draw upon republican era newspapers and magazines, including *Shishi gongbao* 時事公報 held at the Ningbo Archives and Shanghai Library. I use these sources (which are introduced in chapter three) to glean an insight into the shifting

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<sup>90</sup> This was particularly the case during the 1940s as some members of the student body became politicised. For example, Chen Tianmi (McTyeire class of 1950), remembered that she wrote an article in English entitled 'Why I don't want to write about Christmas', which was not included in the School annual magazine. Interview with Chen Tianmi, 17 May 2016, Beijing, 2:25:00 – 2:33:00. See chapter seven for details.

<sup>91</sup> Principal's report, May 25 1929, NCA, 日 10- 1- 307. pp. 80-81.

<sup>92</sup> Pang Shanzhang, 'Xuexiao dashiji', *Yongjiang Sheng* (1931).

impressions and representations of mission schoolgirls in local society. What kinds of activities were mission school pupils involved in? What were the links between mission and non-mission girls' schools? How were they represented in contrast to government-run schools for girls? Following the work of Benedict Anderson, there has been much work in recent years on the role of newspapers in the political and cultural creation of national identity.<sup>93</sup> When using newspapers, magazines and gazetteers as sources of information on how mission schoolgirls were perceived by local society we must bear in mind the disjuncture between representations and reception and the lived reality of missionary schoolgirls' experiences in this period. As Lin Chun suggests, the internalisation of information and ideas is a very individual undertaking.<sup>94</sup> I will therefore analyse these sources as various representations of mission school pupils rather than as concrete information on the perceptions of mission schoolgirls within local society.

As scholars including Joan Judge, Michel Hockx and Barbara Mittler have explored, women's magazines are a rich multivocal and multigeneric source for exploring representations of women and their subjective identity formation in the republican era.<sup>95</sup> A plethora of women's journals which were published during the early twentieth century can provide clues about how mission schoolgirls were viewed within changing debates about the purpose of women's education at the national level. According to a survey by *Linglong*, in June 1933 there were over twenty-three women's periodicals of various kinds published nationally.<sup>96</sup> These journals provide

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<sup>93</sup> See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, 1991).

<sup>94</sup> Lin Chun, 'Towards a Chinese Feminism: A Personal Story', in Jeffery N. Wasserstorm (ed.), *Twentieth Century China: New Approaches* (Oxford, 2005).

<sup>95</sup> Joan Judge, Barbara Mittler, and Michel Hockx, 'Introduction: Women's Journals as Multi-generic artifacts' in Michel Hockx, Joan Judge and Barbara Mittler (eds.), *Women and the periodical press in China's long twentieth Century: A space of their own?* (Cambridge, 2018), p. 1.

<sup>96</sup> Yunxiang Gao, 'Nationalist and Feminist Discourses on Jianmei (Robust Beauty) during China's 'National Crisis' in the 1930s' in Dorothy Ko and Wang Zheng (eds.), *Translating Feminism In China*

a valuable insight into the type of literature mission schoolgirls would have read, helping us to understand the formation of their complex views on the ‘New Woman’ (see chapter four). In particular, I draw upon magazines aimed at female Christian students such as the YWCA’s *The Green Year* (*Qingnian nübao* 青年女報) which was published in Shanghai from 1916 to 1937.<sup>97</sup> This magazine not only provides a fascinating insight into the changing roles and concerns of Christian women in society, but can also help illuminate the wider networks and career opportunities which existed for mission schoolgirls. I use such sources to understand how Christian ideas merged with nation building discourses and changing views about women’s education within the Christian community. These magazines also provide an insight into how Chinese Christian women envisioned their roles and used the gendered Christian rhetoric of ‘international motherhood’ to try and overcome the paradoxes and tensions between nationalism and internationalism in the interwar years.

Contemporary missionary publications on the status of education in China are used in conjunction with Chinese language materials to trace the development of mission education for women in the transforming educational landscape of republican China. In particular, I draw on *The Reports of the China Educational Commission*, *The Educational Directory of China* and *Bulletins on Chinese Education* to gain a statistical and geographical picture of mission education for women at both the provincial and national level.<sup>98</sup> These survey studies are

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*Gender: A Special issue of Gender and History*, (Oxford, 2007), p. 107. Some of the most popular magazines for women included: *Nüzi shijie* 女子世界 (Women's World, 1904-07), *Funü shibao* 婦女時報 (The Women's Eastern Times, 1911-17), *Funü zazhi* 婦女雜誌 (The Ladies' Journal, 1915-31), and *Linglong* 玲瓏 (Elegance, 1931-37).

<sup>97</sup> Shanghai Municipal Archives (SMA) hold copies of the *Green Year* (*Qing nian nü bao*, 青年女報) from 1916-1937.

<sup>98</sup> See *Christian Education in China, The Report of the Educational Commission of 1921-1922*, (Shanghai, 1922), *The Educational Directory of China*, (Shanghai, 1917) and *Records of the Triennial Meeting of the Educational Association of China* (Shanghai, 1893). Chen Xuexun (ed.). *Zhongguo*

particularly helpful to gain a statistical view of how these mission schools for girls changed over time and in providing detailed information on the changing nature of missionary educational work in the three locations I am looking at and placing this within a broader perspective of changing government and private provision for women's education. Such sources must be treated with caution, reading through the imperialist/orientalist lens that underlie such works. These sources often use militaristic language to describe their efforts in China. For example, the not very subtly entitled *The Christian Occupation of China*, was a survey study on the statistical strength of the various Protestant missions operating in China made the by China Continuation Committee in 1922.<sup>99</sup> While providing a valuable overview of all the missions working in China, there are naturally exclusions and inconsistencies. Rivalry between missions may have encouraged some churches to inflate their data, and sometimes no data for a particular school is forthcoming. There is also no reliable continuous data on government and private run schools or Catholic schools included in such sources. It would, moreover, have been in Protestant missions' interests to present a seemingly unlimited field of opportunity for Christian expansion, to play down rivalries and Chinese hostility to Christian encroachment in civic affairs.

Finally, in order to gauge how missionary schools were responding to the changes sweeping society in the 1920-1940s and what gender values missionaries were aiming to impart, I also consulted a wide variety of missionary correspondence and publications. In particular, I draw upon correspondence of missionaries who

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*jindai jiaoyu da shi ji*, (Shanghai, 1981), Hangzhou shi jiaoyu weiyuanhui bianzuan (eds.). *Hangzhou jiaoyu zhi* (Hangzhou, 1994). Ningbo shi jiaoyu weiyuanhui bian, *Ningbo shi xiaoshiji*, (Ningbo, 1989). Zhejiang zhe jiaoyu zhi weiyuanhui bianzuan, *Hangzhou Zhejiang zhe jiaoyu zhi* (Hangzhou, 2003). Zhang Bin, *Zhejiang jiaoyu shi*, (Hangzhou, 2006).

<sup>99</sup> Milton T. Stauffer (ed.), *The Christian Occupation of China: A General Survey of the Numerical Strength and Geographical Distribution of the Christian Forces in China, Made by the Special Committee on Survey and Occupation, China Continuation Committee, 1918-1921* (Shanghai, 1922).

taught at the four schools studied in this thesis. As Hongdao and Riverside Academy were union institutions run by several different missions, it was fruitful to consult the archives of each mission to access the correspondence of various missionaries stationed at the schools at different times. At the United Methodist Archives at Drew University, New Jersey, I consulted the correspondence of Laura Haygood (1884-1900) and Sallie Lou Mackinnon (1917-1932), who worked as headmistresses at McTyeire.<sup>100</sup> The Presbyterian Archives in Philadelphia hold the correspondence of Esther Gauss who taught at Yongjiang from 1923-1950.<sup>101</sup> In Atlanta, I used the correspondence of Baptist missionaries Dora Zimmerman (headmistress of Yongjiang, 1923-1927) and Florence Webster who taught at both Hongdao and Yongjiang from 1922-1949.<sup>102</sup> Finally SOAS, University of London, holds the correspondence of Doris Coombs, an English Methodist missionary who worked at Yongjiang from 1934-1951, and whose correspondence provides fascinating details of the changes to missionary schools after 1949.<sup>103</sup> Despite previously discussed problems of an imperialist/orientalist gaze which infuses these writings, such sources provide an invaluable insight into missionary goals for women's education, and can be used to uncover the divergence between what mission educators hoped to achieve and what values Chinese girls actually took away from their education. They also provide important information (from a missionary perspective) on the changes to the schools taking place during the wartime (1937-1945), and in the period of transition

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<sup>100</sup> At the Methodist Archives and History Centre (MAHC), Laura Haygood's correspondence is available on microfilm: 1131. For correspondence of Sallie Lou MacKinnon see: MAHC 1265-5-1-24, 2193-3-7-101, 2599-4-1-16.

<sup>101</sup> For the personnel file of Esther Mary Gauss see Presbyterian Historical Society Archives: PHS – RG82-360-32-8. The main bulk of Gauss's correspondence can also be found amid the partially catalogued collection of incoming correspondence from China: PHS- RG82-2-10 to RG82-66-5.

<sup>102</sup> The Baptist Historical Archives at Mercer University in Atlanta hold the correspondence of Northern and Southern Baptist missionaries to China on Microfilm. For Dora Zimmerman see: BHA – 264-5-6 and 307-3-6. For Florence Webster see 262-3-8, 306-1-3, 306-1-4, and 352-1-3.

<sup>103</sup> SOAS, University of London holds the archives of the Methodist Missionary Society. MMS- Box 1326 - Women's Work Ningbo, 1946-1950, MMS- Box 1218 – Special Series Notes and Transcripts, MMS – FBN7 – Women's work – correspondence- China – 1933-1945.

to communist control in 1949-1952, where Chinese archival materials concerning the schools are limited and difficult to access.

### **Archival Methodology**

In conducting my primary research I am confronted by several problems of methodology that attend archival work. Issues arise due to the fragmentary and uneven numbers of magazines currently extant in the archives. A relatively complete set of the *McTyeirean* (1917-1947) and *Phoenix* (1919-1943) are held at the Shanghai Municipal Archives, Shanghai Library and Shanghai Number Three Girls School.<sup>104</sup> There are, however, just five issues of the *Riverside Echo* held in the Ningbo City archives (1931, 1933, 1948) and Zhejiang Provincial Library (1925, 1948 anniversary edition), and six volumes of *Hongdao* held at the Hangzhou City library (1932) and Zhejiang provincial libraries (1923, 1934, 1937, 1937 anniversary edition, 1948).<sup>105</sup> In the case of *Yongjiang* and *Hongdao* it is difficult to know if only these few editions of the magazine were produced, or why only these few issues have survived the political turbulence of China's twentieth century. As we shall see in chapter five, during the Second Sino-Japanese war the schools were forced to move site or temporarily close, and no yearbooks were produced by the schools after the USA entered the Second World War (1942-1945). *McTyeire* retrospectively published a combined volume so that girls graduating in the classes of 1942-1946 would have a yearbook, but *St. Mary's* did not resume publication after 1941. *McTyeire* and *St. Mary's*, as well-funded schools, could perhaps better afford to produce a higher number of magazines on an annual basis. As older, more established schools with long traditions and strong alumnae networks, more

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<sup>104</sup> See Bibliography.

<sup>105</sup> Ningbo City Archives (NCA), 10- 1-227, x1.1 – 1, 10- 1-401. 10- 1- 307/308. Hangzhou City Archives (HCA), 36-1-12.

documents have been saved in an effort to preserve their schools' histories. In 1952, McTyeire and St. Mary's were merged to become the Shanghai Number Three Girls' School, and their archives were combined into one office which still remains on the campus of the Number Three Girls' School today.<sup>106</sup>

In recent decades historians have expounded the importance of reading archival sources critically 'against the grain', and the need to pay attention to the 'gaps' and 'silences' within the archival record. As Michel Foucault warns, 'the archive does not have the weight of tradition; it does not constitute the library of libraries, outside time and place ... it reveals the rules of practice ... its threshold of existence is established by the discontinuity that separates us from what we can no longer see.'<sup>107</sup> More recently however, Ann Laura Stoler has stressed the importance of adopting a more humble stance. She advocates the need 'to explore the grain with care and read along it at first' before we read against it: 'reading along the archival grain draws our sensibilities to the archive's granular rather than seamless texture, to the rough surfaces that mottles its hue and shapes its form. Working along the grain is not to follow a frictionless course but to enter a field of force and will to power, to attend to both the sound and sense therein and their rival and reciprocal energies.'<sup>108</sup>

In accordance with Stoler's advice, I try to let the natural flows and energies of the archive guide my research, to discover the 'pulse of the archive ... its steady and feverish rhythms of repeated incantations, formulae and frames', by allowing the students' own primary concerns to inform the formulation of my research questions.<sup>109</sup> Following Kathleen Lodwick's example, I have endeavoured to let my

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<sup>106</sup> The Shanghai Number Three Girls' School (Shanghai shi di san nüzi zhongxue, 上海市第三女子中學) is located on 155 Jiangsu Road, Shanghai.

<sup>107</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (London, 1969), p. 129.

<sup>108</sup> Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Oxford, 2009), p. 53.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.

subjects 'speak for themselves', using pupils own words as much as possible.<sup>110</sup> At the same time, I am acutely aware of both the gaps within the archival record, and the mass of information that must be left unread due to practical constraints.<sup>111</sup>

While recognising that what we are presented with in the archives are simply the tiniest, most incomplete fragments of the historical records that survive, it is also important to question the apparent innocence of some of the gaps within the archival record. This is particularly true of conducting archival research in China, and we must question why the very few documents which survived China's turbulent twentieth century of wars and revolutions were preserved. The foreign researcher in China also has to contend with practical difficulties of gaining access to and photocopying this material, particularly for republican era documents. As Steedman advises: 'in the archive you cannot be shocked at its exclusions, its emptiness's, at what is not catalogued, at what was – so the returned call-slip tells you – 'destroyed by enemy actions during the Second World War.'<sup>112</sup> In other situations we find the archive more consciously and sinisterly distorted. For example, in the 1948 anniversary magazine, the photo of Riverside Principal Shen Yixiang is crossed through with a red line, and we know that in 1952 Principal Shen was denounced for her close ties to an imperialist American missionary organisation.<sup>113</sup> As Mary Douglas warns us: 'institutions create shadowed places in which nothing can be seen and no questions asked. They make other areas show in finely demarcated detail, which is closely scrutinized and ordered. History emerges in an unintended shape as a result of practices directed to immediate practical ends.'<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Lodwick, *Educating the Women of Hainan*, p. 10.

<sup>111</sup> Carolyn Steedman, *Dust* (Manchester, 2001), p. 18.

<sup>112</sup> Steedman, *Dust*, p. 68.

<sup>113</sup> Feng Zhenqun (ed.), *Yin xian sili yongjiang nüzi zhongxue nianwu zhou jinian kan* (Ningbo, 1948), NCA, 10- 1-401, p.16.

<sup>114</sup> Mary Douglas cited in Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain*, p. 25.

The organisation of the archive and of my own use of it is therefore an exercise in the power of knowledge in the Foucauldian sense.<sup>115</sup> As Steedman points out, the historian's authority as a writer derives from her first-hand knowledge of the sources and power to manipulate them rather than from the documents themselves: 'there is a story put about that the authority comes from the documents themselves and the historian's obedience to the limits they impose on any account that employs them ... but really, it comes from having been there ... so that then and only then can you present yourself as moved and dictated by the sources telling a story the way it has to be told.'<sup>116</sup> It is with these limitations and warnings in mind that I have attempted to analyse the writing of mission schoolgirls, telling their story in admittedly only one of several versions that might have been told, and structuring my analysis around these incomplete fragments of the past. I hope nevertheless to illuminate how their writings can provide us with a fascinating, if incomplete insight into the changing position of Chinese women and female education in China during this period of dynamic transformation.

### **Oral history and the problems of memory**

Magazine and other archival sources, while providing a wealth of information about students and teachers creative imaginations anxieties and concerns, are however, defined and produced from institutional perspectives. They therefore contain some problematic gaps and silences, eliding negative or subversive accounts of the school experience. There is also a gap in chronology: Magazine production was mainly halted for the period during the Japanese invasion of China 1937-1945, and only St. Mary's produced yearbooks during these years.<sup>117</sup> In order to compliment and

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<sup>115</sup> Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, pp. 127-131.

<sup>116</sup> Steedman, *Dust*, p. 145.

<sup>117</sup> See Chapter Six for more information.

complicate my documentary sources I also undertook oral history interviews with missionary school alumnae living in China and the United States. As explored below, I use both documentary and oral sources critically and in combination to try to uncover a more nuanced account of girls' missionary school experience.

This study is also based on seventy-five oral history interviews conducted with ex- missionary school pupils from McTyeire (thirty), St. Mary's (thirty-two), Riverside (eight) and Hongdao (five) in the period September 2015 – August 2018 (See appendix one for list of interviewees). I found interviewees through contacting the current schools' alumnae organisations, and through churches in Shanghai, Ningbo and Hangzhou, using a snowball sampling technique. The relative strength of the McTyeire and St. Mary's alumnae associations meant that I was able to connect with many more alumnae in Shanghai than in Ningbo and Hangzhou, where the school alumnae associations were weaker and less active. From October 2016 – December 2016, I undertook doctoral fieldwork based at East China Normal University (ECNU). In November 2016 I had the opportunity to attend the St. John's 16<sup>th</sup> bi-annual world reunion, which was organised by the ECNU alumnae association and held at the old St. John's campus on the north side of Zhongshan Park.<sup>118</sup> This was an incredibly helpful first step in my efforts to contact alumnae as I had the opportunity to chat with alumnae from St. Mary's. As St. Mary's and St. John's were both founded by the American Episcopal Church, and many girls who graduated from St. Mary's went on to study at St. John's University, the alumni associations often run their reunions jointly. St. Mary's alumnae were incredibly helpful and supportive of my research, introducing me to other alumnae networks in Beijing, Shanghai and the USA, where I had the chance to attend their annual

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<sup>118</sup> Today the old campus of St. John's is the East China University of Political Science and Law.

reunions and conduct further interviews. The majority of my interviewees were happy to be recorded on a digital voice recorder and gave me consent to use their names in my dissertation. However, in some cases, my interviewees requested to remain anonymous and I have therefore omitted their names or used their English names.

Gail Hershatter's refreshingly candid discussion of the methodological problems and ethical issues that attend oral history research has also informed my approach. Following Hershatter's advice, I had a set of questions or topics I wanted to explore in the interviews, but tried to adapt myself to each individual's style of talking and way of representing themselves, trying to let the interview flow as freely as possible, directed by the interviewee. This technique often led the flow of the conversation to new and surprising directions and prompted me to correct and revise my assumptions, as well as the questions I was asking. In cases where my interviewee was clearly a little nervous, or needed more prompting, I started by asking biographical questions which they could easily answer, such as their date and place of birth. As Hershatter has explored, memory and the ways in which we recall and narrate the past is also highly inflected by our gendered identities. It is difficult to ask women to fashion a narrative of their lives out of their individual memories when they are not in the habit of doing so.<sup>119</sup> Hershatter's interviewees could not situate their lives within broader political and national events, but rather by the births of their children and the Chinese lunar calendar. Although my interviewees were from a much wealthier background, had a high level of education and strong understanding of the political narrative of Chinese history, my respondents also narrated their lives through personal events, rather than political landmarks. Their

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<sup>119</sup> Gail Hershatter, *The Gender of Memory, Rural Women and China's Collective Past* (Berkeley, 2014), p. 21.

accounts were frequently interspersed by temporal slippages between their childhood in the republican era, their adult lives in Maoist China and their present-day concerns. Interviews did not end neatly in 1949 or 1952 and, once started, interviewees were keen to tell me about their whole lives. Many of my respondents had been interrogated and persecuted as a result of their wealthy family background and missionary school education during the Cultural Revolution. This negative effect of having gone to a missionary school will be discussed in the epilogue. I was conscious of my status as a foreigner, and the fact that some of these questions about their family background may have been painful or sensitive. However, many of them did not hold back, but were keen to tell me about this troubled time.<sup>120</sup> However, the persecution they experienced made itself felt in temporal slippages in their narratives in interesting ways. For example, when I asked questions about how people in local society regarded their school, many of them told me they were criticised for having attended ‘foreign’ missionary school, which was an ‘aristocratic’ or ‘*Guizu xuexiao*’ 貴族學校, as a result of the political criticism they had received after 1949. So engrained was this message, I often had to clarify whether they were referring to their school’s reputation pre- or post-1949. While McTyeire and St Mary’s certainly had an ‘aristocratic’ reputation, there was not the same level of hostility linked to mission schools in the 1940s, as the stigma they carried after 1949.

Although the practice of oral history is itself an ancient tradition, often predating written sources, since the 1970s it has come under criticism as a process of historical enquiry. At the core of these criticisms was the assertion that memory deteriorated over time, and was distorted by nostalgia in old age. It was rendered unreliable by the bias of both the narrator and interviewer and was influenced by

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<sup>120</sup> My interviewees in China used the familiar politicised dichotomies in their language of ‘before’ and ‘after’ liberation and ‘old’ and ‘new’ societies to narrate their story.

changing collective and retrospective versions of the past.<sup>121</sup> In more recent years, social scientists and anthropologists have turned such criticisms on their head, suggesting it is these very reasons which make oral history valuable as a source. As Hershatler puts it: ‘Oral narratives are as contaminated as any other retrievable fragment of the past. It requires cultivating an interest in and respect for that contamination.’<sup>122</sup> By paying attention to the gaps and silences, what is remembered and what is forgotten, the very way in which people selectively narrate their past gives historians an important insight into human subjectivity and how individuals on a micro-level experienced larger national events, experiences which sometimes do not fit into or challenge our grand narratives. Moreover, as many historians have pointed out, written documents are subject to the same narrative biases and elisions that oral histories suffer from. As Hershatler suggests, by using both oral history and documentary sources in dynamic combination, paying attention to the disjuncture and interplays between them, we can write better histories: ‘Oral and written sources are both fragmented; neither is wholly reliable... Different types of sources talk back to, ignore, or interrupt one another, and awareness of this is crucial to the crafting of a good-enough story that does not smooth over such dissonances.’<sup>123</sup> In accordance with Hershatler’s advice, I have tried to pay attention to such dissonances and ruptures in both my oral and documentary sources, wherever possible, using both in dynamic interplay. For example, when conducting an interview I sometimes showed my interviewee written articles that they had composed at school for their school magazine. While this elicited a range of reactions from complete blankness and nonchalance to excitement and further recollections, the responses of my

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<sup>121</sup> P. O’ Farrell, ‘Oral history: Facts and fiction,’ *Oral History Association of Australia Journal*, no.5 (1982-3), pp. 3-9.

<sup>122</sup> Hershatler, *The Gender of Memory*, p. 24.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

interviewees to their past-teenage selves, were interesting in themselves. The exercise also highlighted how much the stories I was being told were partial narratives, filtered through the lens of experiences and influences accumulated over a lifetime.

The unreliability of memory has been viewed by some historians as a resource rather than a hindrance for historical interpretation and reconstruction. In 1972, Michael Frisch argued against the idea that oral memory was “history as it really was” and asserted that memory “personal and historical, individual and generalized” should be moved to centre stage “as the object, not merely the method, of oral history”.<sup>124</sup> The ways in which people recall their past and the forms of narrative are often as revealing as what is actually said. Alessandro Portelli concluded that: “what is really important is that memory is not a passive depository of facts, but an active process in the creation of meaning”<sup>125</sup> Thomson asserts that: “through working with memories – both reliable, and unreliable – oral history allows us to explore the relationship between past and present, between experience and meaning and between individual and collective memory”.<sup>126</sup>

That memory is fragile and fallible, always shifting, and is constantly created afresh in each retelling, as the teller seeks to project themselves differently to a specific audience in a specific time and place, has been noted by several prominent oral historians. As Gail Hershatter writes: ‘Memory appears to be created anew whenever it is called upon, as the teller actively creates new meanings. It entails constantly rearranging one’s understanding of what one remembers in such a way

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<sup>124</sup> M. Frisch, *A shared authority: Essays on the craft and meaning of oral and public history* (New York, 1990), p. 188.

<sup>125</sup> A. Portelli, ‘What makes oral history different’ in Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson, (eds.) *The oral history reader* (London, 2006), p. 69.

<sup>126</sup> Alistair Thomson, ‘Making the Most of Memories: The Empirical and Subjective Value of Oral History’ in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Vol. 9 (1999), p. 301.

that the colouring of the memory may shift. Every telling enacts a loss, because as memory is restarted and resituated, it moves further away from the sensuous experience and teller's earlier understanding of an event.<sup>127</sup> That being said, during several of my interviews I was aware that many of the stories had the feeling of being rehearsed – i.e. my respondent had told this story several times before in exactly the same words. Indeed, considering the age of my interviewees (the majority of whom were in their 80-90s) it is unsurprising they sometimes repeated the same stories, in exactly the same words within the space of an hour-long interview. Rather than being disheartened by evidences of a failing memory, I took this as a sign that these early memories of their school days were so deeply rooted to have become 'archival'. Psychologists have found that long term memory can be very resilient even after years of repression. Alice and Howard Hoffman found in their research that the first time an experience is recounted it is remembered again in much greater detail. They concluded that memories required rehearsal to go into long-term store, but once they are stored are very stable. The Hoffmans termed this permanent and immutable memory as 'archival' which is 'reliable to the point of being set in concrete. They cannot be disturbed or dislodged. It was virtually impossible to change, to enhance, or to stimulate new memories by any method we could devise.'<sup>128</sup> In some cases, however, what appears to be 'archival' memories, can actually be false ones. As Hans Stofels has explored, 'false' memories are not true memories, but ones which have been created through retelling by a third party: 'Memory is not an objective retrieval of former events but a process of active production in every new moment of remembering. It is not recall but restructuring

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<sup>127</sup> Hershatter, *Gender of memory*, p. 33.

<sup>128</sup> A.M Hoffman, and H.S Hoffman, 'Reliability and validity in oral history: the case for memory', in J Jeffrey and G. Edwall (eds.), *Memory and History: Essays on Recalling and Interpreting Experience* (Oxford, 1994), p. 124.

depending on social expectations, the present context, and subjective wishes. Memories can quite easily be induced from the outside.’<sup>129</sup> It is normally very difficult for people themselves to distinguish between real and false memories. In one unusual case my interviewee alerted me to the fact that the vivid memory she had just told me of experiencing fleeing to the international settlement during the War, was actually not her own memory, as she explained she would have been too young to remember it. However her mother had described it to her so vividly many times when she was younger it felt like her own ‘real’ memory.<sup>130</sup> This is also the case with conventional archives to some extent; consciously or unconsciously created, they are never entirely true to what ‘really’ happened.

The problematic relationship between individual and collective memory and the dynamic interplay between the two has also attracted attention from anthropologists, sociologists and historians.<sup>131</sup> In the case of my interviews, the tension between individual and collective memory was often an important point to consider, particularly in the case of group interviews.<sup>132</sup> Group interviews were helpful in triggering discussion, reminiscence of past activities, alerting me to themes that were of interest, and understanding the relationship dynamic between the alumnae and, on occasion, the dynamic between alumnae and their teachers. It also alerted me to pay attention to inconsistencies and contradictions. For example, one point of contestation was about whether chapel attendance was compulsory or not at McTyeire. Although many thought it was compulsory, a few disagreed. In fact,

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<sup>129</sup> Hans Stoffels, ‘False Memory’ in *Hurting Memories and Beneficial Forgetting Posttraumatic Stress Disorders, Biographical Developments, and Social Conflicts* (London, 2013), p. 105-114.

<sup>130</sup> Interview with Yang Zhiling, 20 July 2016, Beijing.

<sup>131</sup> See Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory* (Chicago, 1992).

<sup>132</sup> On 11 May 2016 I did a focus group interview in Beijing with four St. Mary’s alumnae including Zhao Fengfeng 趙風風 (class of 1948), Zhu Wenqing 朱文倩 (class of 1953), Gu Meicheng 顧美誠 (class of 1948) Wu Qihui 吳其慧 (class of 1947) along with their former teacher, Yu Huigeng 俞慧耕 (Politics teacher at St. Mary’s 1949-1952).

although chapel attendance was made non-compulsory under the new regulations formulated by the Nationalist government in 1927, the school continued to foster a culture of chapel attendance into the 1930-40s, which resulted in alumnae remembering it was still compulsory. In this case conflicting individual memory within a group setting provided important clues about the religious atmosphere of the school at the time.<sup>133</sup>

Group interviews also had several drawbacks. Aside from the practical difficulties in recording and questioning that group interviews pose, less confident members of the group often did not get much chance to speak. There was also less space for negative memories in a formal setting, and interviewees were unwilling to critique their school fellows, teachers or the school administration. I was also aware that by contacting interviewees via the alumnae associations, to a large extent my pool of interviewees was self-selecting and biased towards those who had positive memories of their school days, and hence maintained an active interest in and contact with their respective alumnae networks. Only a couple of my eighty-one interviewees had mainly negative impressions to relay of their time at school, and positive memories have also been reinforced by the projects of collective memory in the school history volumes instigated and edited by alumnae themselves with the approval of the school authorities. In one individual interview, an alumna had said something critical of the summer camp for Christian students she had attended in 1950, describing it as ‘brainwashing’, but when this topic was discussed it again in a two-person interview a few days later, she did not speak critically of the camps. Such self-censorship is bound to occur in the official collective setting of the alumnae reunions, and alumnae are anxious to preserve the ‘face’ of the school and their own

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<sup>133</sup> St. Mary’s group interview 11 May 2016, Beijing.

reputation as good students. This complex and conflicting interplay between collective and individual memory can particularly be seen in the context of the volumes of their school history produced by the McTyeire and St. Mary's alumnae associations respectively.<sup>134</sup> While meticulously researched and extremely valuable collections which preserve the individual memories of alumnae in their own words, we must bear in mind that this is an officially sponsored version of the school history. Conflicts such as the petty rivalries, jealousies, snobbery and perhaps even stealing and bullying that we would have naturally expected from a school environment are elided from this official history, created to preserve and honour their schools' prestigious past. In light of the practical as well as the theoretical and methodological challenges posed by group interviews, I sought to individually interview everyone who had taken part in a group interview. This not only allowed me to get to know individuals personally, but also afforded a wealth of data from shyer interviewees who were less willing to talk in a group setting in front of their classmates.

This leads me to a discussion of my own relationship with the interviewees and how my responses as a listener and identity as a young, female, English, student may have affected the interviews. My status as a foreign researcher undoubtedly had an influence on the course of my research. Sometimes this was a stumbling block. For example, when contacting potential interviewees by phone, my accented and imperfect Mandarin would immediately betray me as a foreigner, leading to a lack of trust and unwillingness to be interviewed. In other cases my status as an outsider was a clear advantage, leading to a level of confidence and openness that may not have

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<sup>134</sup> For McTyerie these three volumes of the school history include: Chen Jingyu (ed.), *Zhongxi nü zhong*, 1892~1952 (Shanghai, 2016). Zhang Long (ed.), *Huiyi Zhongxi nü zhong*, 1900-1948 (Shanghai, 2016) and Chen Jingyu, and McTyeire school history group (eds.), *Huiyi Zhongxi nü zhong*, 1949-1952 (Shanghai, 2016). For St. Mary's there are also three volumes of the school history: Xu Yongchu (ed.), *Sheng Maliya nü xiao*, 1881-1952 (Shanghai, 2014). Xu Yongchu (ed.), *Zhuiyi Sheng Maliya nüxiao* (Shanghi, 2014) and Xu Yongchu, (ed.), *Zhuixun sheng maliya nü xiao you zuji* (Shanghai, 2014).

been forthcoming in other settings. Hershatter has remarked on ‘the oft-noted phenomena that people chose to say things to an outsider they would not say to their next-door neighbour because the outsider, a transient, will not reveal their secrets locally.’<sup>135</sup> Another condition which encouraged openness was the age differential between myself and the interviewee. As a young female graduate student, who had an introduction from the university in China that now runs their alumnae association (ECNU), I was accepted and trusted as a *tongxue* 同學 – a classmate from the same school. Many of the alumnae who I interviewed had become teachers and their desire to impart knowledge and help a younger student (who was more than half a century their junior) was clear in their manner and narratives. They spoke slowly (as to a younger person and foreigner), and explained political events in Chinese history, often assuming I did not know what these were. I was thus able to gain an insight into their understanding of these events. Although there was clearly a didactic and student-teacher relationship dynamic in the interviews, my foreign status may have allowed me to ask more probing and personal questions that may have been considered impertinent if I were a Chinese student. Many of my interviewees were extremely generous and kind-hearted people, who treated me with great hospitality and openness.

Another factor which affected the course of my interviews was the language they were conducted in. Some interviewees, who had had few chances to speak English since leaving school, were keen to practise their English with a native speaker. Many spoke impeccable English, having had careers as translators, interpreters or English language teachers. Indeed, St. Mary’s and McTyeire graduates had the reputation of having a very high level of English and were therefore sought

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<sup>135</sup> Hershatter, *Gender of Memory*, p. 20.

after to fulfil such roles after 1949. Some interviewees clearly enjoyed speaking in English, and were perhaps less inhibited speaking in a foreign language than they may have been in Chinese. In others, we used a mixture of English and Mandarin throughout the course of our conversations. A few were initially embarrassed and unwilling to be interviewed because they could not speak English or their English was very rusty and were relieved when I told them I was able to do the interview in Mandarin. In the case of missionary school students, interviewing in a mixture of the two languages was a productive experience, helping them to recall their days at school when they used English on a daily basis. This mixture of language is also complementary to my documentary sources, where pupils often wrote articles in both English and Chinese for their school magazine. On a few occasions, such as large alumnae reunions, my lack of understanding of Shanghainese was problematic, as alumnae naturally used this to communicate with each other, switching into Mandarin to address me directly. I was thus conscious of being doubly an outsider, and of not wanting to interrupt the natural flows of conversation, which I could only partially understand.

Language inevitably affects the course and rhythm of the interviews, as does the process of transcription, where much of the humour, manner and energy of the interviewee cannot be conveyed. I used a digital recorder, and made detailed notes during and after the interviews. I chose not to transcribe the entirety of every interview for several reasons. This was not only a result of practical considerations (including time and financial restraints), but I also made an active decision to listen repeatedly to the interviews instead, to remind myself of the tone and character of the interviewee. I listened to the interview several times, and chose to transcribe the relevant parts when I wanted to quote directly. When writing these shorter

transcriptions I endeavoured to mark humour, pauses, and emphasis. Much of the texture and tonality of the interview is inevitably lost in the process of putting it down on paper. I have tried to inflect these nuances by using *italics* to indicate emphasis, and mark laughter or pauses. To aid this process I also consulted my original notes, where immediately after the interview I wrote down all my initial impressions of the interviewee, their manner, appearance and mode of expression. I also asked permission to take a photograph of the interviewee in order to remember their physical appearance. I have lightly edited the interviews, such as deleting repeated words, to aid the flow of the writing. However, when quoting directly, I have endeavoured to put down as much of the interview verbatim, to convey the personality of the interviewee and their individual mode of expressing themselves.

One of the most striking features that emerged from my interviews was the differences in narratives told to me by interviewees who were currently living in China and those living in the United States. In November 2016, thanks to an introduction by Zhang Long 张龙 (McTyeire class of 1947), I was invited by Rosalyn Koo to attend the annual reunion of the California chapter of the McTyeire alumnae association in San Mateo. I was honoured to attend as their keynote speaker. Rosalyn was a very generous and gracious host. It also afforded me the opportunity to interview nine graduates during my stay. Unsurprisingly, the interviewees who I spoke to in the USA, most of whom had left China shortly before or after 1949, had different political views and life experiences to those who had remained in China. Although many of them were not Christian at school, the American alumnae were more likely to talk about Christianity in their recollections of school life, some of them having become Christian since arrival in the USA. The difficult undertaking of a collective oral history of an institution and the fact that memory cannot be

separated from the politics of the succeeding decades, was highlighted by Rosalyn when she told me about her efforts in putting together the three volumes on McTyeire history. She was responsible for collecting narratives from the alumnae in America. According to Rosalyn, as the alumnae in China wanted to write about becoming communist at school and the American alumnae wanted to write about becoming Christian at school, they had had to agree to talk about neither politics nor religion, such were the differences in ideological opinions that underlay the task.<sup>136</sup>

Rosalyn also very kindly gave me access to an unpublished oral history collection, 'Telling Women's Lives', compiled in 1992 to celebrate the school's centenary.<sup>137</sup> This is an extremely valuable resource, compiled by Rosalyn Koo and Heidi Ross, comprising translated interview transcripts with twenty seven alumnae who graduated between 1918 and 1947. The interviews were conducted in Chinese, and then transcribed and translated into English. Many of the alumnae whose memories are preserved in this volume are no longer living, and it is thus an extremely valuable resource for understanding early alumnae's experiences and perceptions of their school. This unpublished collection was only distributed to McTyeire alumnae in the USA. It represents a more balanced, and at times critical approach to the school history, highlighting the tensions that existed, both personal and political, between staff and students, foreigners and Chinese, school and society, tensions that have largely been smoothed out from the three official volumes.

Finally, a word must be said about my own relationship with the interviewees. Over the past year and a half I had the great privilege to get to know and interview many remarkable alumnae who attended missionary schools. At the St. John's biannual world reunion in 2016, I was immediately impressed by the grace,

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<sup>136</sup> Interview with Rosalyn Koo, 5 November 2016, San Mateo, USA.

<sup>137</sup> McTyeire Alumnae Association (eds.), 'Telling Women's Lives: In Search of McTyeire, 1892-1992', (San Mateo, 1992). (Unpublished oral history collection).

eloquence, and talent of these ladies, some of whom were in their early nineties, but were still formidably sharp, both physically and mentally. Rosalyn Koo told me she could always identify a McTyeire girl when she entered the room, and the more I got to know the alumnae, the more I started to appreciate what she said.<sup>138</sup> As Zhang Luoluo 张罗罗 (McTyeire class of 1947) put it, there was something different about McTyeire and St. Mary's girls, something in the way that they carried themselves and spoke, and with many a great force of personality underlay their polished manners.<sup>139</sup> Whether or not this was result of the training they received at school will be unpicked in this thesis, but although trying to maintain the cool, detached eye of a researcher, I myself could not but succumb to their charm, wit and generosity. I felt myself under great obligation to do justice to the rich memories they had so generously and candidly shared with me, while knowing that trained as a historian, I must unpick their narratives and be critical of the ways in which they presented themselves and their schools. I have endeavoured to honour the trust they placed in me, situating their memories within the social and political changes happening around them. I hope the result will be both true and sensitive to my interviewees' desire for self-representation, while unpicking the social, political, personal and historical circumstances that lay behind their narratives.

I have thus undertaken a qualitative analysis of both of my magazine and interview data sets. Interview materials complemented, supplemented and at times challenged and undermined the image of the missionary school and girls' experiences that are presented to the reader in their school magazines. In a very straight forward sense, where I did not have many sources from missionary school magazines (i.e. experiences of girls during the war years 1937-1945 and the period

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<sup>138</sup> Interview with Rosalyn Koo, 5 November 2016, San Mateo, USA

<sup>139</sup> Interview with Zhang Luoluo, 8 November 2016, San Mateo, USA.

from 1949-1952) I draw heavily on interview materials in these chapters. As the large majority of my interviewees graduated from school in the 1940s and 1950s, the missionary schools had already become much more secular by this point and girl's narratives were less concerned with Christianity. Indeed, some did not feel that their schools were very religious at all by the post-war period. This shift in religious environment (which will be explored in the next chapter) can also be discerned from the changing topics of students' writings within the magazine. As with my magazine sources, I have tried to let students' own concerns guide my research questions and selection of interview materials to quote in the thesis. Of the 75 individuals who I conducted interviews with, I draw heavily and quote directly from interviews with 35 alumnae. Those who are not quoted directly may have taken part in group discussions or informal conversations. These group discussions played an important part in forming my understanding of how they remember their time at school, the on-going group dynamics, and significance of these school experiences to alumnae today. Some interviews were particularly rich and some alumnae I was able to interview on more than one occasion. I therefore draw more heavily on these interviews to quote in my thesis as they contain a large amount of relevant information. As it was impossible to interview graduates from the period 1920-30s, I rely on the transcript of a previously compiled oral history entitled 'Telling Women's Lives', the advantages and shortcomings of which have been previously discussed.

In conclusion, as I attempt to analyse the wealth of narratives, both oral and archival, collected for this project, I am keeping in mind Hershatter's advice: 'Oral narratives, then, are called forth under particular circumstances, unevenly recorded, selectively remembered, and artfully deployed ... as indirect commentary on a

troubled present. Oral narratives told in the present about the past need to be valued as history of the present precisely for the ways they slip older moorings of meaning and re-lodge to engage new situations. The challenge is not to fix meaning and interpretation, but to keep track of what accounts for changing meanings and interpretations.’<sup>140</sup> There are many different contradictory and overlapping narratives, which lend themselves to telling many different versions of the schools’ history and the stories of girls who went there. Historical writing, like oral histories and archival sources, is subject to the same silences and distortions by both the teller and listener. Using oral narratives critically and in conjunction with documentary sources, paying attention to the weaknesses and exclusions of both, the aim of this thesis is to glean a more complicated, nuanced and multifaceted history of the schools, shedding light on what it meant to be a young female student attending a missionary school in early twentieth century East China, what it means to those individuals today, and how their experiences at school have influenced alumnae’s subjective identities throughout their lives.

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<sup>140</sup> Hershatter, *Gender of Memory*, p. 23.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Development of Missionary Schools for Girls in East China

#### Introduction

This chapter contextualises the development of missionary education for girls within the broader educational landscape of East China, including the development of private and government-run schools for girls in the period 1844-1952. Part one firstly outlines missionary societies' rationale for female education and explores how missionary schools developed across the region in the period 1844 -1900s. I then explore the development of non-missionary educational options for girls in the period 1900-1927 including government and private schools and outline the changes that took place at missionary schools after they were forced to register with the Nationalist government in 1927. The second half of this chapter draws comparisons between missionary and non-missionary schools for girls in the region in terms of students' family background, curriculum and school identities, based on evidence from school magazines and yearbooks. The four schools that serve as case studies in this thesis: Riverside Academy in Ningbo, Hangzhou Union Girls School and St. Mary's and McTyeire in Shanghai, are introduced in appendix two.

While missionary schools were the pioneers and continued to lead the way in the provision of girls' education at the middle school level, allowing some women to pursue higher education abroad or in China, the government focused on providing normal education for women so that they were equipped to become primary and middle school teachers; one of the few career options deemed appropriate for women at this time. Government normal school training for girls provided free tuition and board in return for serving as a teacher upon graduation.<sup>141</sup> Thus, while missionary

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<sup>141</sup> Tang, 'Women's Education in China', p. 16.

schools were giving girls the option to pursue a higher education, and arguably from there expand their roles in society, government schools were providing girls from less privileged backgrounds with a practical means of pursuing a career outside the home for the first time. As we shall see, Shanghai, with its concentration of wealthy commercial families, stands out from the educational pattern compared to other cities in East China. Shanghai could support a higher number of schools, attracting girls from elite backgrounds who could afford extremely high tuition fees. Mission schools such as St. Mary's and McTyeire grew into wealthy and prestigious institutions offering a 'western style' education which far outstripped their counterparts in Ningbo and Hangzhou in terms of income, teachers' pay, facilities and resources. Like elite private schools around the world today, they also fostered stronger campus cultures and school identities, passed down from generation to generation through rites of passage and signs and symbols of loyalty to school and class (rings, mottos, class colours and songs) which marked them as members of an elite group.

### **1844-1900: Difficult Beginnings: The start of missionary education for girls**

#### *Debates about the place of education within the Missionary Enterprise*

Although by 1922 an independent educational commission asserted: 'The Christian middle schools are at this stage the most vital part of the whole Christian enterprise', the place of education within the evangelical effort in China was vigorously debated amongst missionaries in the late nineteenth century.<sup>142</sup> Many of the pioneer missionaries in China regarded education as a secondary and rather dubious secular enterprise which was a drain on precious mission resources.<sup>143</sup> Over time, however,

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<sup>142</sup> *Christian Education in China: A Study made by an Educational Commission Representing the Mission Boards and Societies Conducting Work in China* (New York, 1922), p.88.

<sup>143</sup> Ryan Dunch, 'Science, Religion and the Classics' in Daniel H. Bays and Ellen Widmer (eds.), *China's Christian Colleges, Cross Cultural Connections 1900-1950* (Stanford, 2009), p. 60.

Chinese indifference to Christianity forced missionaries to turn to education in order to secure an audience for their message. When CMS missionary Matilda Laurence arrived in Ningbo in 1869 to start a school for girls, Protestant converts in China only numbered 5,753 and missionary tracts were being sold as waste paper or being made into shoes.<sup>144</sup> As Lutz asserts: ‘they found a permanent audience by drawing a few ragamuffins off the streets, furnishing them with room and board and instructing them in the Bible and Chinese.’<sup>145</sup> In this way, numerous tiny schools were established haphazardly, and as they could frequently only attract students by providing full food and board, these often evolved into boarding schools, such as Laurence’s school for girls in Ningbo.

The educational effort was furthered by the need to train Chinese Christians as preachers, teachers and bible women for evangelical work. Chinese Bible women proved essential to the mission effort as they could often gain access to Chinese homes, rent buildings, and negotiate contracts, where westerners were barred by anti-foreign feelings. Moreover, by capitalising on Chinese respect for education and popular desires for literacy, missionaries sought to combat widespread hostility to the foreign religion.<sup>146</sup> Thus, education was gradually accepted as a legitimate tool of evangelising within the missionary enterprise. Therefore, although at the Shanghai Mission conference of 1877, education was barely discussed and had to be vigorously defended by a few missionary educators, by the conference of 1890, almost all agreed upon the value of mission education and much time was spent on discussing methods, curriculum and textbooks.<sup>147</sup> By 1922, a study made by an

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<sup>144</sup> Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China* (London, 1929), p. 479

<sup>145</sup> Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges*, p. 14.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, p.15.

<sup>147</sup> At this conference, The Educational Association of China was established by a group of missionary educators to co-ordinate the production of textbooks for mission schools and a triennial meeting of the association was established. See *Records of the General Conference of the Protestant Missionaries of*

educational commission representing the mission boards and societies conducting work in China could confidently declare: ‘we firmly believe that evangelistic and educational work are both included in our great commission and that the success of evangelistic work largely depends on the efficiency of educational work.’<sup>148</sup> It is important to note, however, despite the growing popularity and acceptance of mission schools, their primary purpose in the late nineteenth century remained to evangelise.

*Women’s Work and the rationale for female education*

Historians have stressed the importance of ‘women’s work’ – both in terms of statistical strength (by 1890 over fifty percent of the mission force in China was female) and in terms of the unique access female missionaries could gain to the inner, exclusively female sphere of Chinese homes.<sup>149</sup> Female medical missionaries were especially useful in this function and could even gain access to the upper-class homes from which all other missionaries were barred.<sup>150</sup> The importance of ‘women’s work’ was founded on the theory that by evangelising women, Christianity would be spread to the rest of her family, producing self-perpetuating generations of Chinese converts. Seen as more susceptible to folk religions, women appeared likely targets for Christian evangelical efforts: ‘If wives and mothers could be won, the theory went, their men might well follow them to Christianity.’<sup>151</sup> As Irwin Hyatt has pointed out, however, this theory, based upon western cultural misconceptions about the position of women in Chinese society, was problematic.<sup>152</sup> CMS Missionary Matilda Laurence, working in Ningbo in the 1870s, reports on the frequent failure of this

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*China, held at Shanghai, May 10-14, 1877* (Shanghai, 1878), and *Records of the General Conference of the Protestant Missionaries of China Held at Shanghai, May 7-20, 1890* (Shanghai, 1890).

<sup>148</sup> *Christian Education in China*, p. 317.

<sup>149</sup> Dana L. Roberts, (ed.) *Gospel Bearers: Gender Barriers: Missionary Women in the twentieth century* (New York, 2002), p. 5.

<sup>150</sup> Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China*, p. 408.

<sup>151</sup> Hyatt, *Our Ordered Lives Confess*, p. 70.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92.

larger scheme. While she continues to try to reach individual souls for their own sake she is sceptical about the supposed power of Chinese women to convert their male family members. Indeed, she reports one horrific incidence of abuse of a woman whose son persecuted her ceaselessly for refusing to worship the ancestors and converting to the foreign religion.<sup>153</sup>

Moreover, with the growing number of male Chinese Christian graduates from missionary schools, missionary societies began to recognise the need to produce Christian-educated women to be their wives. Indeed, some missionaries such as Laurence and Aldersey went as far as to usurp the role of match-maker in local society, acting as a go-between for girls and asking parents to sign contracts giving up betrothal rights for their daughters, to ensure that they married Christian men upon leaving their schools.<sup>154</sup> Laurence stressed that only ‘one in ten’ pupils at missionary schools should be trained to ‘become useful teachers for their own sex’ and that the ‘vast majority’ should become ‘intelligent and exemplary wives and mothers.’<sup>155</sup> As will be explored in chapter four, mission education for women was thus founded not for the sake of raising Chinese women’s position in society, but to produce Christian wives and mothers, who were trained in the latest principles of western domestic education, health and hygiene and would rear healthy Christian sons, and create self-propagating generations of Chinese Christian families. This conservative tendency remained a characteristic of missionary education well into the twentieth century.

While mission schools for boys took off relatively quickly, fuelled by Chinese desires for educated sons, girls’ missionary schools developed more slowly

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<sup>153</sup> CMS CCH O 56/12, Annual letter from Laurence to Mr. Fenn, 21 December 1875.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>155</sup> Laurence M., ‘Female Boarding Schools’ in *Records of the General Conference of the Protestant Missionaries of China held at Shanghai, May 10-17, 1877* (Shanghai, 1877), p. 469.

and encountered numerous difficulties in their establishment and in attracting students.<sup>156</sup> Female missionary educators not only had to persuade the Chinese parents that public schooling for girls was of value, they also had to overcome widespread anti-foreign sentiment and fears of the nefarious purposes of missionary designs for girls.<sup>157</sup> For example, Mary Ann Aldersey, founder of the first mission school for girls in China in Ningbo in 1844, had to dispel rumours she had murdered all her own children and was now attempting to kill Chinese girls.<sup>158</sup> Although as Susan Mann, Dorothy Ko and Ellen Widmer have highlighted, there were many avenues for literary and vocational learning for women in late imperial China, female missionaries faced great challenges in persuading parents that it was a good idea to send their daughters to mission schools alongside their sons.<sup>159</sup> As girls were barred from the official examination system, Chinese parents simply did not see the point of public schooling for girls, who would never be able to bring the family honour as officials. Moreover, as girls would soon leave home to become the property of their husbands' families, education for girls was regarded as a waste of families' resources. Girls' time was thus better spent in helping contribute to the family resources through spinning and needlework at home or manual labour in the field. It was also widely feared that schooling would spoil girls for their future role as wives and mothers. As a result of these fears, missionaries in the early period could only recruit

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<sup>156</sup> *Christian Education in China*, p. 256.

<sup>157</sup> Burton, *The Education of Women in China*, p.35.

<sup>158</sup> White, E. Aldersey, *A Woman pioneer in China: The Life of Mary Ann Aldersey* (London, 1932), p. 38.

<sup>159</sup> In particular, revisionist historians Dorothy Ko, Susan Mann, Grace Fong and Ellen Widmer have done much to challenge the supposed incompatibility between female virtue and learning in China. See Susan Mann, 'The Education of Daughters in the Mid-Ch'ing period' in Alexander Woodside and Benjamin A. Elman (eds.), *Education and Society in Late Imperial China, 1600-1900*, (London, 1994). Dorothy Ko demonstrates how elite literary women known as Nüshi or female scholars were effectively able to transcend the strict inner/ outer boundaries of their society's gender norms, through their production, publication and circulation of poetry in the Yangtze Delta region in the seventeenth century. See Dorothy Ko, 'Pursuing Talent and Virtue: Education and Women's culture in seventeenth and eighteenth century China', *Late Imperial China*, 13.1, (1992). See also Widmer, Ellen, (ed.), *Writing Women in Late Imperial China*, (California, 1997).

girls from the very poorest families, who were eager to ease themselves of the burden of having to support their daughters. Not only did Laurence and other missionary educators have to feed, clothe and provide all school material for these girls, they were also impelled to pay the girls to attend their schools.<sup>160</sup> Although by the late 1880s many schools were beginning to stop these payments and schools for girls were becoming more self-sufficient, paying pupils to attend appears to have been a very common arrangement in girls' mission schools in the 1860-80s.<sup>161</sup> Overall, therefore, mission education for girls in the late nineteenth century remained a difficult and marginal enterprise.

*Chronological and Spatial development of Missionary Schools:*

Although the earliest Protestant missionary work in China began with the arrival of Robert Morrison in Macau in 1807, it was not until 1842 that the treaty of Nanjing opened five treaty ports of Shanghai, Ningbo, Fuzhou, Xiamen and Guangzhou to western trade and missionary activity. These ports thus became the earliest centres for missionary work on the Chinese mainland and the most concentrated locations of churches, schools and hospitals in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In East China the earliest work began in Shanghai when Dr. W. H. Medhurst of the London Missionary Society visited in Shanghai in 1837. In 1845 Bishop Boon of the American Episcopal Church took up residence in Shanghai, and in 1879 St. John's University was founded by the Episcopal mission. By 1922 there were a total of thirty-one missionary societies operating in Shanghai with thirteen mission middle schools for boys and nine for girls.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> Laurence to Mr. Fenn, 30 May 1883, CMS G1 CH/O 1883/ 164

<sup>161</sup> Laurence to Mr Fenn, 9 February 1886, CMS G1 CH2/O 1886/ 39

<sup>162</sup> Stauffer (ed.), *The Christian Occupation of China*, p. iii and xx.

Ningbo, as one of the first five treaty ports opened to western trade after the treaty of Nanjing, became the earliest hub for missionary activity in Zhejiang Province. The first missionaries to arrive in Ningbo were the American Baptists and Presbyterians in 1844, shortly followed by CMS in 1848, and in 1857 Hudson Taylor began to work in Ningbo.<sup>163</sup> By 1905 Ningbo had five missionary girls' middle schools, including schools run by American Northern Baptist (Chongde), American Northern Presbyterian (Shengmo), MMS (Feidi), CMS St. Catherine's, and Christian Missions Girls' School.<sup>164</sup> The treaty of Tianjin (1858), which partly concluded the Second Opium War, extended missionaries extraterritorial privileges and allowed them to move inland, using the dense river network of the lower Yangtze for their proselytising work. Hangzhou developed as a missionary centre with the arrival of China Inland Mission (CIM) in 1867, and by 1922 there were two missionary schools for boys: an American Baptist School and a Union school run by the Northern and Southern Presbyterians, and two for girls: Mary Vaughan (CMS), and Hangzhou Union School for Girls (ABF, PN, PS).

By the late nineteenth century missionary societies were starting to carve missionary work in China into designated 'spheres of influence' in order to avoid competition for converts and duplication of efforts. By 1910 there were eleven Anglican dioceses in China: North China and Shantung had been designated an SPG sphere; Hunan was controlled by the Canadian church; central China, Shanghai, Nanjing and Anhui was dominated by the protestant Episcopal Church, while the CMS Mission concentrated its efforts in the south west. The province of Zhejiang was divided into two spheres of influence after the death of CMS Bishop Russell in 1879. The north was recognised as a sphere of the SPG (Society for the Propagation of the

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<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50.

<sup>164</sup> Gee, *Educational Directory of China*, 1905.

Gospel) and the south became known as the 'mid-China' mission of the CMS. By 1892 four main centres in Zhejiang province had been established: Ningbo (1848), Shaoxing (1870), Taizhou (1892) and Hangzhou (1892).<sup>165</sup> Although Jiangsu province became part of the American Episcopal sphere of influence, a wealth of missionary societies continued to operate out of the cosmopolitan hub of Shanghai for ease of access to transport, communications, postal services and, crucially, the concentration of printing presses for publication of bible tracts (see fig. 6).

### **1900-1927: Period of Expansion and development of private and government schools for Girls**

Rather than taking a cautious approach in the aftermath of the 1901 Boxer Rebellion, missionary efforts were redoubled in the first two decades of the twentieth century with an unprecedented level of foreign funding and support for missions. A wave of support for British and American missions at home saw the rapid expansion of mission activity in China in the early years of the twentieth century with 6,890 schools founded across 21 provinces by 1922.<sup>166</sup> As Dana Robert has explored, this was the peak of the American women's mission movement. The Student Volunteer Movement encouraged women across campuses in the United States to sign up for missionary work and by 1916 female missionaries in China outnumbered their male counterparts.<sup>167</sup>

Although mission schools for girls were the earliest public institutions for female education, it was not until Chinese reformers started to advocate women's education as key to national strengthening that demand for missionary education for

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<sup>165</sup> Stock, *The History of the Church Missionary Society: Its Environments, Its Men and Its work*, 3 Vols. (London, 1899), p. 569. See Also, Gordon Hewitt, *The Problems of*

*Success: A History of the Church Missionary Society* (London, 1977), p. 246.

<sup>166</sup> See 'Appendix I: Table 1: Christian Elementary and Secondary Schools', in *Christian Education in China, The Report of the China Educational Commission of 1921-1922* (Shanghai, 1922), p.317.

<sup>167</sup> Dana Lee Robert, *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice* (Mercer University Press, 1996), p. 5.

girls began to take off. In the early decades of the twentieth century, missionary schools for girls started to become popular, were able to start attracting girls from reform-minded elite families and started charging tuition fees. The period 1900-1920 saw increasing enrolment numbers and dramatic expansion of facilities, with many schools moving to larger premises to cater for increasing demand. For example, the Mary Vaughan High School was opened in 1909 by CMS mission in order to cater to the new demands for female education from the upper classes. Shanghai, as the emerging cultural and commercial hub was able to support a much higher number of female schools, as demand for girls' education from westernised and newly wealthy commercial families was much greater than in Hangzhou and Ningbo (see fig.13).

In the late nineteenth century Chinese reformers such as Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1873-1929), Kang Youwei 康有為 (1858-1927) and Song Shu 宋恕 (1862-1910), stressed the need for female education as key to national strengthening. Drawing on ideas of Chinese foetal education and social Darwinist principles, Liang Qichao (1873-1929) directly related the position of women's education with the strength and vitality of the nation: 'education for women will enable them to assist their husbands on the one hand and instruct their sons on the other; in the short-term it will benefit the household, in the long term it will benefit the race.'<sup>168</sup> In what became known as the Hundred Days Reforms, Chinese reformers persuaded the Guangxu Emperor to adopt a series of sweeping reforms of the military, economy, and education system. Although swiftly crushed by the reactionary faction led by Empress Dowager Cixi, many of these reforms were implemented by the Qing Government in the aftermath of the Boxer Rebellion during the Xinzheng reform period 1901-1911.

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<sup>168</sup> Liang Qichao cited by Paul John Bailey, *Gender and Education in China: Gender Discourses and Women's Schooling in the Early Twentieth Century* (New York, 2007) p. 21.

### *Private Schools*

Although formal provision for female education within the new school system was not made until 1907, prior to this a number of private schools for girls were set up by Chinese reformers. For example, in 1898 The Chinese School for Girls (*Jingzheng Nü shu* 經正女塾) was formally opened by a group of likeminded reformers in Shanghai, and in 1902 ‘The Patriotic Girls’ School’ (*Aiguo Nü xiao* 愛國女校) in Shanghai was established ‘to cultivate model mothers’ so that they would be able to ‘train future citizens.’<sup>169</sup> By 1906 there were 245 private Chinese girls’ schools nationwide with a total enrolment of 6,791 students.<sup>170</sup> In 1907, in Zhejiang province, there were 32 schools for girls (at all levels) out of a total 1,120 with female students comprising 2.6 percent of total enrolment.<sup>171</sup>

As we shall see in chapter four, due to fears about the propriety of female education, the beginnings of public education for women in China faced many difficulties and, similar to missionary schools, private and government schools for girls were justified on the grounds of the need to train ‘good wives and wise mothers.’ As Joan Judge has explored, some of the earliest schools for girls were established as family or lineage schools, to give elite girls a higher-level education within the safe confines of the family circle. For example, Wu Huaijiu 吳懷久, who in the absence of any sons established Wuben Girls School 務本女塾 on the site of his family home at Xicang bridge 西倉橋 in Shanghai in 1902 in order to educate his own daughters.<sup>172</sup> Such schools were seen as a ‘safe option’ for other prospective parents – reform-minded elite. Judge asserts that the success of these lineage or family schools ‘could in a large part be attributed to the grounding of this

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<sup>169</sup> Baily, *Gender and Education*, p. 25.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>171</sup> Zhang Bin, *Zhejiang jiaoyu shi* (Hangzhou, 2006) p. 371.

<sup>172</sup> ‘Xiao Shi’, *Shanghai Shili Wuben nüzi zhongxue gaikuang* (Shanghai, 1934), p. 1.

controversial new project – the public schooling of young girls and women – in the most trusted Chinese social infrastructure: private kinship relations.’<sup>173</sup>

The establishment of private, non-missionary schools for girls varied greatly from region to region, as did the level of tuition, funding and number of students. In some areas in East China, private schools for girls predated the founding of missionary middle schools and spurred them to compete in terms of facilities and resources. For example in Hangzhou, Manchu noblewoman Hui Xing 惠興女士 established a school for girls Zhenwen nüxue, 貞文女學, (which later became known at the Huixing Girls’ School, 惠興女子中學) as early as 1904.<sup>174</sup> Fearing to lose out on pupils, the CMS Mary Vaughan High school in Hangzhou, which opened in 1909, was consciously trying to compete academically and in terms of facilities with other schools in the province for upper class pupils.<sup>175</sup>

Increasing competition from private and government schools also appears to have damaged enrolment figures from missionary schools in other parts of China. For example, CMS missionary, Annie Wolfe, who ran a day school for girls at the north gate of Fuzhou, writes in 1918: ‘The day school for girls still exists but does not flourish as I would like it to. One simply cannot compete with all the government schools. There is one about five minutes’ walk from here in this direction and then about ten minutes’ walk in another direction.’<sup>176</sup> The fact that missionary schools were responding to a growing Chinese demand and competing for a limited pool of female students in the early decades of the twentieth century challenges the

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<sup>173</sup> Judge, *Republican lens*, p. 151.

<sup>174</sup> Huixing nüzi zhongxue, ‘Ben xiao zhi lue shi’ in *Zhejiang Hangzhou shi sili Huixing nüzi chujì zhongxue yilan* (Hangzhou, 1937), p.1.

<sup>175</sup> Louise Barnes to Mr. Baring-Gould, 30 November, 1908, CMS/G1/CH2 /O /1908/198.

<sup>176</sup> CMS G1 AL 1917-34 WJ- 2

conventional image of missionary schools as leading the way in female education in this period.<sup>177</sup>

As we have explored, Shanghai, which emerged as the commercial and cultural capital of East China in the republican period, in many respects differed dramatically from other centres of missionary activity in East China, such as Ningbo and Hangzhou. Shanghai developed as an international entrepôt and emerged as the economic and cultural capital of China during the republican era. Its international concessions which truncated the city were policed by foreign forces and developed their own unique hybrid of western and Chinese culture. Not just a commercial centre, Shanghai became a capital of cultural and literary production, a metropolis renowned for its entertainment venues, coffee houses, dancehalls, theatres and cinemas.<sup>178</sup> As a result, a huge amount of wealth became concentrated in the city, which received waves of migration from surrounding Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Anhui provinces. Merchants from these provinces used their native place and lineage networks and societies to establish their commercial enterprises. For example, as Susan Mann Jones has shown, Ningbo bankers known as the ‘Chekiang financial clique’ drew on their native place networks in establishing and conducting their business transactions in Shanghai, becoming the most powerful financial group in the city.<sup>179</sup> Against this backdrop, it is unsurprising that the development of missionary schools was atypical of the rest of East China. English language education became highly desirable for the newly wealthy and westernised commercial elite who wanted their sons to gain lucrative employment in foreign firms, banking, postal, railways and customs services. Consequently, the demand for missionary education in

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<sup>177</sup> John Cleverly, *The Schooling of China* (London, 1985), p. 21.

<sup>178</sup> See for example, Leo Ou-fan Lee, *Shanghai Modern: The flowering of a new urban culture in China, 1930-1945*, (London, 1999).

<sup>179</sup> Susan Mann Jones, ‘The Ningbo Pang and Financial power at Shanghai’ In Mark Elvin and G. William Skinner (eds.), *The Chinese City between Two Worlds* (Stanford, 1974), pp. 73-69.

Shanghai was higher than in any other city in China. In 1922 Shanghai had twenty-two missionary schools (thirteen for boys and nine for girls), far exceeding the numbers in neighbouring cities of Hangzhou which had four (two boys and two girls' schools) and Ningbo eight (five for boys and three for girls). Nanjing, which became the political and administrative capital of China after the foundation of the GMD government in 1927, followed Shanghai with eight schools (four for boys and four for girls).<sup>180</sup> As a result of this greater demand, missionary schools in Shanghai were able to expand independently, and there were fewer mergers of missionary schools in the 1920 -1930s than in Ningbo and Hangzhou, where schools had to compete for students and pool their resources in order to survive.

By 1917 there were several private schools across the region, including two private girls' schools in Hangzhou and eight in Shanghai (see fig.7). By the 1920s many of these private non-missionary schools for girls were being founded by the first generation of missionary-educated graduates, and their schools, while not directly linked to any missionary society, were influenced by their Christian educational background and often had a Christian educational environment. This was particularly common at the primary school level with many graduates of missionary middle schools going on to directly found their own primary schools. For example, Juemin Primary School 覺民小學 in Shanghai was a feeding school for McTyeire and St. Mary's, founded in 1918 by Ni Fengmei 倪鳳美 a St. Mary's graduate of 1910.<sup>181</sup> Students who attended Juemin recall that they could easily adapt to the Christian environment upon entering St. Mary's because they had become used to it at primary level. Their English was also up to scratch having studied it from the third grade at Juemin. Thus, the private mission and non-missionary schools to some

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<sup>180</sup> Stauffer (ed.), *The Christian Occupation of China*, p. iii and xx.

<sup>181</sup> Xu Yongchu (ed.), *Shengmaliya nü xiao*, vol.1, p. 273.

extent formed a network and symbiotic relationship, at least as feeding schools at the primary – middle school level.

The need to compete for enrolment for daughters from elite families with emerging private and government school counterparts, led to an unprecedented level of co-operation between missionary societies. Missionary societies realised that they could achieve stronger schools by pooling their resources and working together rather than competing for female students at smaller and more poorly resourced schools. Moreover, with pressures of limited resources on mission societies after the end of the First World War, mission schools were merged together to make them more efficient and some became co-educational institutions. In 1936 the China Educational Association voted ‘that in view of the rapid progress of education in China and the decreasing financial support from abroad for Christian schools, this Council recommends the development of strong, well equipped schools and the merging or elimination of weak schools.’<sup>182</sup>

In 1905 there were nine mission schools in Ningbo including four schools for girls: two American Presbyterian Schools: *Chongde nüxiao* 崇德女校 and *Shengmo nüxiao* 聖模女校, an American Baptist school *Zhongxi Chongzheng nüxiao tang* 中西崇正女校堂, and CMS St. Catherine’s *Rende nüxiao* 仁德女校.<sup>183</sup> By 1934, there were only three mission schools in Ningbo and Yongjiang, formed out of the merger of the American schools, and the English Methodist Girls’ School was the only all-girls school remaining.<sup>184</sup> A similar pattern can be seen in Hangzhou, where in 1912 the Northern American Presbyterian, Southern American Presbyterian and Baptists

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<sup>182</sup> Earl Herbert Cressy, ‘Christian Middle Schools Fourth Annual Statistics, 1935-1936’ *China Christian Educational Association, Bulletin no. 39*, (Shanghai, 1936), p.7.

<sup>183</sup> See Zhang, *Zhejiang Jiaoyushi*, p. 324.

<sup>184</sup> The other two surviving mission schools in Ningbo in 1934 included: American Presbyterian school Union, *Zhedong* 浙東, and newly co-educational British CMS Trinity school *sanyi zhongxue* 三一中學. See Cressy, ‘Christian Middle Schools’, p. 9.

churches merged their schools to form Hangzhou Union Girls' School. On the provincial level, the number of Christian schools in Zhejiang declined from twenty-nine in 1905 to nineteen in 1934, and the number of female mission schools dropped from nine in 1905 to six in 1934.<sup>185</sup> Therefore, while the total number of mission schools declined in the period, this can be seen as more reflective of a consolidation of resources and tactical alliances. A noticeable exception to the trend of mergers can be seen in Shanghai, where an unprecedented level of demand for western-style missionary education and the English language training it offered, meant that missionary societies could afford to maintain their own schools independently. Moreover, in Shanghai schools could charge high fees from students of wealthy merchant families, and this became a lucrative source of funding for the mission enterprise as a whole. As a result, Shanghai maintained a much higher number of mission schools for girls and boys throughout the period 1905-1932 than its neighbouring centres of missionary activity in Ningbo and Hangzhou (see fig.7).

#### *Government Schools*

After the establishment of the Republic in 1912 a new educational system was introduced which made provision for women's public secondary education.<sup>186</sup> The government school system in 1912 provided three types of schools for boys and girls: Middle schools, Normal schools (teacher training) and Industrial schools (fig. 8). This can be compared to the missionary system which included middle schools, normal schools and vocational schools, as well as seminaries and bible schools which

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<sup>185</sup> See Zhang, *Zhejiang jiaoyu shi*, p. 324. These remaining six all female mission schools included: two schools in Hangzhou: CMS Mary Vaughan School, *fenggshi nüxiao* 馮氏女校 The American Presbyterian Union school for girls *hongdao nüxiao* 弘道女校, Ningbo: American Prystbytiaan and Baptist, *yongjiang nüzhong* 甬江女中, In Huzhou: Virginia School *hujun nüxiao* 湖郡女校, In Jinhua: *Cheng mei nüxiao* 成美女校. See Cressy, 'Christian Middle Schools', p. 9.

<sup>186</sup> Tang, 'Women's Education in China', p. 4. University level education for women was not sanctioned by the Chinese government until 1919 with the founding of Beijing Women's Normal, and in 1920 Beijing University started to enrol women. See pp. 98-99 for more.

were dedicated to training its future workers. In 1922 the Provincial Educational Associations adopted a new education system which theoretically put girls' education on an equal footing with that of boys (see fig. 9). This system consisted of six years elementary education, three years junior middle education, three years senior middle education and four years of college education.<sup>187</sup> By 1923 the total number of female students in China had risen to 418,170 (6.1 percent of total school enrolment).<sup>188</sup> Co-education at the lower primary level was sanctioned by the government as early as 1907 and the majority of missionary schools were co-educational at the primary level.<sup>189</sup> After the establishment of the Nationalist Government in 1927, in keeping with ideas of educational modernisation at the time, a strong push was made for schools to become co-educational, especially at the higher education level. Therefore, by the 1930s, many government-run schools and universities in China admitted both male and female students. Despite mounting pressures from both the government and male missionary establishment, many female mission schools such as Ginling College staunchly defended their autonomy, fearing women would lose out in terms of remuneration and promotion in a co-education environment.<sup>190</sup> Indeed in 1923, Chindon Yiu Tang was quick to point out the shortcomings of a co-educational middle school environment for girls:

A number of boys' middle schools are co-educational now. In fact, this is only a spontaneous response to the demand for a wider field in girls' secondary education, in view of the small number of girls' middle schools. But the middle school girls have their specific needs in courses of study, and their psychological and physiological development is also different. In the co-educational middle schools the great majority of

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<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>190</sup> Feng, *The Making of a Family Saga*, p.142.

principals and teachers are men, the curriculum is planned for boys, and even the school equipment is for boys. Where there are a few women teachers, they have little authority. With the great inequality of the number of boy and girl students, the girls have a very strained school life, and can never take full advantage of the educational opportunities provided for by the school. How can these young girls, who are quick in response, keen in observation, good in character, rich in sociability, alert and active, earnest and sincere, have the fullest development under such conditions! No matter how many coeducational middle schools there might be, we still want to have many more good girls' middle schools.<sup>191</sup>

Tang's views on co-education for girls at the middle school level accorded with those held by the majority of missionary educators at the time. In his 1936 essay E.H. Cressy comments: 'One of the most significant developments of the last few years is the increase in coeducational schools. Such schools will not be a success if dominated by men. Only nineteen per cent of women teachers is not enough. It does not give girl students sufficient opportunities for personal contacts with teachers. There should be a determined effort to get more women in administrative positions in coeducational schools.'<sup>192</sup> Therefore, despite the trend towards co-education in government and missionary schools in the 1920s and 1930s, most missionary girls' middle schools in East China remained single-sex institutions for the duration of their history. As we will explore in chapter three, interviews with alumnae who attended schools for girls in this period also stressed the advantages of single-sex middle school education for girls. For example, Lucy Hong (Hong Lüming 洪侶明), after attending McTyeire from 1943-46, transferred to government-run Co-educational Datong Middle School (*Datong Zhongxue*, 大同中學) for the last two years of senior high school, where her father worked as a teacher. Lucy found it a

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<sup>191</sup> Tang, 'Women's Education in China', pp. 31-32.

<sup>192</sup> See Cressy, 'Christian Middle Schools' p.18.

daunting experience to be one of only a handful of girls in each class and she remembered that girls and boys sat separately. Although her teachers were excellent, the class sizes were much bigger and students received less individual attention from the teachers.<sup>193</sup>

As Fig. 7 and Fig. 10 show, although government schools developed later than missionary schools, by 1922 there was a growing number of government normal schools for girls. Moreover, while missionary schools for girls still exceeded government schools in total number, they were more evenly spread out across the provinces than missionary schools, which tended to be more densely clustered in centres of missionary activity (see fig. 11-18 for distribution of mission and government schools in Zhejiang and Jiangsu provinces and across the whole of China). One of the most striking facts revealed by the survey data published in 1922 is that while there was a growing number of government normal schools for girls (teacher training schools), there was a continued lack of provision of government middle school level education for girls (see fig. 10). For example, in 1919 there were only ten government middle schools for girls nationwide and in 1922 in Zhejiang province there were no government middle schools for girls.<sup>194</sup> As Cong Xiaoping highlights, resistance to female education from conservative factions within local governing elites meant that government middle schools for girls grew very slowly and more energy was placed on founding normal schools for girls, as teaching was considered one of the only appropriate careers open to women at this time.<sup>195</sup> Fig. 10 reveals this disparity in provision of girls' education between the missionary and government systems. The 1922 survey remarks on this disparity: 'the mission schools of all grades are giving the girls of China a far better chance than the

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<sup>193</sup> Interview with Lucy Hong, 7 December 2015, Shanghai.

<sup>194</sup> Cong Xiaoping, *Teachers' Schools and the Making of Modern China* (Vancouver, 2007), p. 91.

<sup>195</sup> Cong, *Teachers Schools*, p.90.

government schools and are thus setting a standard which the non-mission schools of China will have to respect or meet the condemnation of the rising generation of Chinese women. It appears to be an ideal among mission schools to provide education through at least middle school grade for boys and girls equally.<sup>196</sup> Indeed, in her 1923 survey of the status of women's education in China, Tang warns of the problem of a continued lack of provision of middle school education for girls: 'If we pay attention only to girls' elementary education and co-educational college, and neglect girls' secondary education, it is just like expecting a person to go to the top floor of a building without providing a stairway. Girls' secondary education will be the key to our new educational system. If it is properly promoted elementary education will become more prosperous, and college education more successful.'<sup>197</sup>

While some sources credit missionary schools as the model for government education, for example the 1922 commission claims that: 'The mission schools have not been copied, but they have been studied and in a hundred ways imitated by government schools', by the 1920s it is clear that missionary schools were endeavouring to conform to government standards in curriculum, facilities and staff pay in order to ensure their smooth operation in China and cooperation with the provincial education authorities.<sup>198</sup> As Rev. H. W. Luce, Associate Secretary of the China Christian Educational Association (CCEA) writes in 1922: 'Three reasons have been given for conforming as far as possible to the curricula established by the government: 1) It will be easier for government inspectors to understand what they see in a mission school. 2) We thus emphasise the fact that the mission schools are in

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<sup>196</sup> Stauffer (ed.), *Christian Occupation of China*, p. 404.

<sup>197</sup> Tang, 'Women's Education in China', p.16.

<sup>198</sup> Stauffer (ed.), *Christian Occupation of China*, p. 404.

sympathy with the plans of the government. 3) It facilitates the transfer of students to and from the mission and government schools.<sup>199</sup>

Despite the rhetoric of aiming for equality in education of girls and boys at the middle school level, the fact remains that in the 1920s the provision for boys' education was still far outstripping girls, in both the missionary and government school systems. For example, in 1917-1918 the number of girls in missionary middle schools in China was 2,679 compared to 9,201 boys, and in government middle schools there were just 622 girls compared to 69,598 boys.<sup>200</sup> In Jiangsu province there were 618 female middle mission school pupils compared to 2,705 male counterparts and 500 female government normal school students compared to 3,119 male government normal school students. At the tertiary level, provision for girls' education was even worse. Up until 1919 there were only three institutions offering university courses open to women: Yenching College in Beijing, Ginling College in Nanjing and Huanan College in Fuzhou. All of these universities were missionary institutions, and it was not until 1919 that Beijing Women's Normal University was established, following which government universities started accepting female students, starting with Peking University in 1920.<sup>201</sup> China, however, was not far behind global trends in provision of girls' tertiary education. The USA led the way, establishing the first women's colleges in the 1830s. In Great Britain, although day and boarding middle schools for girls became common in the mid-nineteenth century, the University of London did not admit women for examination until 1868, and it was not until 1920 that Oxford and Cambridge allowed women to be awarded degrees. Japan, although leading the way in Asia by providing state-sponsored

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<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 408.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 404

<sup>201</sup> Cong, *Teachers Schools*, p. 93.

middle schools for girls during the Meiji reforms of the 1880s, did not sanction women to obtain university degrees until the post-war period.<sup>202</sup>

### **1927-1937: Period of Chinese Control**

After the establishment of the GMD government in Nanjing in 1928, missionary schools were required to register with the provincial education authorities. Registration required missionary schools to conform to minimum government standards in facilities, academic levels and staff pay. More importantly, the principal of the school had to be Chinese, and over half of the school board members had to be Chinese. Bible classes and worship services became non-compulsory activities. The issue of registration was hotly debated by missionary societies in the late 1920s and early 1930s, and while most schools chose to eventually register, others opted to close, fearing they would struggle to meet the new requirements or would have to abandon their original evangelical purpose.

As we shall see in chapter three, the problem of registration was a particularly thorny issue at union schools for girls due to the different stance adopted by various missionary societies running the schools. A notable exception to this trend was St. Mary's which did not register with the government until 1947.<sup>203</sup> Consequently, St. Mary's graduates' high school diplomas were not recognised by the government and girls could not take the entrance exams for government-run universities. Therefore, the majority of its graduates went on to study in the missionary universities, or abroad, and in the 1930s and 1940s top students were guaranteed automatic entry to St. John's University.<sup>204</sup> Not registering with the government was not an option for smaller and independent missionary schools of other missions outside of Shanghai.

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<sup>202</sup> Peter Zarrow, *Educating China, Knowledge, Society and Textbooks in a Modernizing World, 1902-1937* (Cambridge, 2015), p. 25 and Kumiko Fujimura-Fanselow, 'Women's Participation in Higher Education in Japan' *Comparative Education Review*, Vol. 29, No. 4 (Nov., 1985), p. 473.

<sup>203</sup> Liu, *The Changing face of Women's education in China*, p.66.

<sup>204</sup> St. Mary's group interview 11 May 2016, Beijing.

St. Mary's, linked with prestigious St. John's University, could run the risk of not registering, knowing it had the resources, infrastructure and reputation necessary to survive and, crucially, that its graduates were guaranteed a place to study at St. John's. As a result, St. Marys and St. Johns became a favourite option for students with church and commercial family backgrounds, who did not desire to place a son in the government bureaucracy. The commercial families' were drawn to the school, both for its elite reputation, links to St. John's and the bilingual language and musical training it provided. For example, the Guo 郭 family who owed the Yong'an department store in Shanghai (上海永安百貨公司) sent seven of its eight daughters to St. Marys.<sup>205</sup> As a result of its non-registered status, St. Mary's (like St. John's) retained a much higher number of foreign teachers on staff, kept English as the main language of instruction and did not elect a Chinese Principal until forced to do so in 1942 due to interment of American missionary teachers during the Second World War (see appendix two for more details).

As a result of registration, most missionary schools became more secular, foreign staff decreased and English ceased to be the primary language of instruction after 1929. Another consequence was a shift in the power dynamic between missionary teachers and Chinese staff, as schools came under the leadership of Chinese principals and control of the schools was passed to a board of governors made up of a majority of Chinese members. Despite these administrative changes most societies put in place headmistresses and board members who were graduates of their schools, members of their missions, and had received higher degrees from the USA or UK. They were thus trusted to be sensitive and loyal to the desires of the missionary societies who continued to fund the schools. For example, Esther Sing

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<sup>205</sup> Xu Yongchu, *Shengmaliya nüxiao*, vol. 1, p. 56

(Shen Yixiang, 沈貽蕓), Sarah Chow (Zhou Juemei 周昧), and Xue Zheng 薛正, the headmistresses at Yongjiang, Hongdao and McTyerie respectively, all came from merchant (and in the case of Esther Sing and Sarah Chow, Christian) family backgrounds and were educated at missionary schools. They graduated from missionary universities and had experience of teaching at missionary middle schools in positions of responsibility, such as Dean, before they were selected as headmistresses by the mission boards after 1927. Esther Sing and Xue Zheng received missionary funding to study for higher degrees in Education in the United States in the course of their careers in the 1930s.<sup>206</sup>

Registration also caused difficulties for some missionary schools and there is evidence that missionary schools were falling behind their government counterparts in terms of academic standards, facilities and teachers' pay. For example, a close reading of the headmistresses' reports from 1927-1937 reveal that Riverside Academy in Ningbo was under increasing pressure to conform to new government regulations and indeed was often lagging behind the expected requirements.<sup>207</sup> The school was registered with the provincial education authority in September 1931.<sup>208</sup> As a note included in the 1936 board meeting revealed: 'The government, since schools are registered, has assumed a certain absolute authority. This even reaches down to the question of dress and hair cutting etc. It has the power. It makes certain demands. It puts on the pressure. It orders all schools to compete and prepare to compete.'<sup>209</sup> After registration, religious classes at Yongjiang were available as

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<sup>206</sup> See individual school history in Appendix for more information.

<sup>207</sup> Principal's report, May 9 1928, NCA, 10- 1-307

<sup>208</sup> Principal's report, April 16 1932, NCA, 10- 1-307

<sup>209</sup> BMS H.R. J Benjamin to School Board, 'Notes re Sunday Games', Nov 27, 1936, NCA, 10- 1-307, p 129.

elective only and all religious activities at the school had to be conducted outside of the regular school day.<sup>210</sup>

The records of the school from the period 1931-1937 reveal that chronic problems of limited finances meant that Yongjiang was struggling to keep up with rising national standards in terms of facilities and resources. For example, in 1935 the headmistress reports that, after a government inspection of the school, it was deemed as deficient in library books, laboratory and PE equipment, and teachers' salaries were too low.<sup>211</sup> Indeed in 1935 the senior high school was threatened with closure if this situation was not improved. Principal Shen reported with concern:

You can see that we have tried our best to further the progress of the school, but we realise the difficulty of meeting different conditions through the deficit of finance ... seeing this hindrance to the school's efficiency, the government has warned that such conditions cannot be continued. The government orders that unless board members plan to increase the salary of teachers, the school must close the senior high school. Therefore the prospect does not look promising under the present conditions to cope with government schools unless there are some ways out.<sup>212</sup>

More worryingly, the academic success of the school was called into question in 1933 when the senior class of Yongjiang girls failed in the provincial examinations.<sup>213</sup> Despite the flurry of activity to prepare the students for the examination, Yongjiang did very poorly in the first round of examinations after the school's registration. As Principal Shen reports:

The senior middle school was not passed by the government. The failures for the most part were in history, geography, arithmetic and science. No one failed in English or Chinese. Two factors entered into their failure. Up until the time of registration of the school, all four of these subjects had been electives. The

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<sup>210</sup> Principals report April 16, 1932, NCA, 10- 1-307.

<sup>211</sup> Principals Report May 9, 1935, NCA, 10- 1-307.

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

<sup>213</sup> Principals Report 1933-34, NCA, 10- 1-307

majority of those in last year's class had not elected those subjects. Though they made an effort to make up these studies it was impossible for them to do in such a short time all that other students had done who had studied the subjects as regular courses.<sup>214</sup>

Moreover, there was a problem in the textbooks used at the school compared to the government texts: 'Second, the textbooks we used are those which emphasised material useful for living and were quite different in some instances from those used in government schools. The examination questions were based on the texts used in the public schools.'<sup>215</sup> We must bear in mind that these reports were written for the mission boards in England and America and therefore might be emphasising the financial (and subsequent academic) difficulties that Yongjiang faced as a means to secure additional funds for the school. However, her statement reveals that until this point some missionary schools for girls continued to place more emphasis on vocational training for girls, compared to a more academic emphasis at government schools. As we shall see in chapter three, the original rationale behind missionary education for girls: to train good wives and wise mothers, continued to exert a strong influence in the missionary school curriculum throughout the 1930s, especially during the New Life Movement after 1934.

Despite the damage done to the school's reputation, the career prospects of Yongjiang girls remained as bright as ever. Principal Shen reassured the board in 1934: 'Though the failure of last year's seniors in the provincial examinations was a severe blow to our pride and enrolment and therefore our budget ... The demand for the girls in this year's graduating class is as great as ever.'<sup>216</sup> Indeed we know that Yongjiang girls often went on to successful careers in such prestigious

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<sup>214</sup> Principals Report 1933-34, NCA, 目 10- 1-307

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*,

establishments as Ginling College.<sup>217</sup> The fact that Yongjiang was often trying to respond to and catch up with government standards can help us to complicate the picture of mission education at the forefront of modernising trends in China's educational system in the early twentieth century.

### **Missionary and Non-Missionary Schools for Girls Compared**

Although, because of the wide variations in missionary, private and government schools it is difficult to make broad generalisations, some comparisons can be drawn between missionary and non-missionary schools for girls in East China in terms of the students' backgrounds, curriculum, and campus cultures by examining the yearbooks produced by these schools.

#### *Fees, students family background and catchment area*

Firstly, evidence about fees, students' family backgrounds and catchment area suggests that missionary and non-missionary schools drew from a similar pool of upper and middle-class students, mainly from government, commercial and educational family backgrounds (see fig.19). As the case studies of individual schools show (see appendix two), missionary schools for girls in Shanghai drew from a much wealthier and more elite group of students than their counterparts in Hangzhou and Ningbo. Both St. Mary's and McTyeire were significantly more expensive than any other schools in East China. For example, in 1926-1927, McTyeire was the most expensive school for girls, with an annual tuition fee of 156 dollars for senior boarders, followed by St. Mary's at 120 dollars. This was significantly higher than the next most expensive school for girls in Shanghai, Baptist Eliza Yates Academy, which had fees of 112 dollars, and well above the average tuition fees in East China of 74 dollars. As their reputations as elite schools

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<sup>217</sup> Principals Report, May 9, 1931, NCA, 10-1-307.

grew, McTyeire and St. Mary's were able to charge such high fees. Both schools were also significantly larger than other schools in the region. In 1928-1929 there were 235 girls enrolled at McTyeire, and 295 at St. Mary's compared to an average enrolment of 80 across the region. The schools were thus much wealthier than the average missionary school in East China. McTyeire's total income in 1926-1927 was 74,000 dollars and St. Mary's was 90,000 dollars suggesting that St. Mary's received a very large appropriation from the Episcopal mission.<sup>218</sup> They were also better equipped in terms of building, science equipment, music equipment and library books. According to the statistics for 1926-1927, the total value of St. Mary's School (including land, buildings, furniture, science equipment, musical instruments and books) was 612,000 dollars and of McTyeire 572,560 dollars.<sup>219</sup>

Private schools in Shanghai, much like their missionary counterparts, developed into much larger and more elite institutions due to the extraordinarily high demand for girls' education from wealthy commercial and gentry families. Wuben Girls School (mentioned above), established in 1902, was one of the earliest Chinese run schools for girls in Shanghai.<sup>220</sup> In 1912 the school came under the control of the Shanghai government.<sup>221</sup> The Wuben biannual student magazines of December 1934 and June 1935 reveal that the students who attended this elite school had much in common with their upper-class counterparts at missionary schools in Shanghai, such as St. Mary's and McTyeire. The magazines contain images of beautiful western style buildings where elite girls received an expensive education.<sup>222</sup> According to Culp, during the Nanjing Decade the average annual tuition and boarding fees for

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<sup>218</sup> Cressy, 'Middle School Standards, Second Study', p. 8.

<sup>219</sup> Cressy, 'Middle School Standards, Second Study', p. 77.

<sup>220</sup> The earliest Chinese run school for girls was The Chinese School for Girls (*Jingzheng Nü shu* 經正女塾) formally opened in 1898 by a group of likeminded reformers in Shanghai.

<sup>221</sup> See 'Xiao shi', pp. 1-2.

<sup>222</sup> See *Wuben nüzhong xuesheng zizhahui bannian kan* (Shanghai, 1934). *Wuben nüzhong xuesheng zizhahui bannian kan* (Shanghai, 1935).

government middle schools in East China ranged widely from 52 to more than 130 yuan, not dissimilar to their missionary school counterparts (see fig. 20). As Culp points out, therefore, only a tiny section of the emerging urban professional classes or rural elite could have afforded to send their children to missionary, private or government-run middle schools in this period.<sup>223</sup> Missionary schools also tended to attract members of the elite who had converted to Christianity, or less well-to-do Christian families working for the mission as educators or priests. St. Mary's offered scholarships for students from Christian family backgrounds in financial need, plus the incentive of automatic entry to St. John's University for graduates during the 1930s.<sup>224</sup> Similarly, Chinese Christians employed by the mission as teachers or priests could sometimes send their daughters to the schools run by their mission for free or at a discounted rate.<sup>225</sup>

At the same time, the magazines also reveal several differences between missionary and non-missionary schools. While St. Mary's and McTyeire had a majority of female teachers, including foreign English language teachers, Wuben's faculty is made up of mainly Chinese male staff. In December 1930 thirty-two out of the forty-four teachers were male and there are no foreign teachers in the faculty.<sup>226</sup> This finding points to a lack of suitably qualified female Chinese teachers in the government school system during the 1930s. Missionary schools often drew upon their own pool of missionary educated female graduates to staff their middle schools (see fig. 24). As we have explored, missionary schools were making a greater provision for female education in the early twentieth century compared to their government school counterparts. Missionary school graduates may have preferred to

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<sup>223</sup> Culp, *Articulating Citizenship*, p. 26.

<sup>224</sup> See 'The Alumnae Scholarship', *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1932), p.92.

<sup>225</sup> Interview with Gu Meicheng, 12 May 2016, Beijing. Gu Meicheng's father, Gu Conghe 顧淙和 was a teacher of World History at St. John's University.

<sup>226</sup> *Shanghai Shili wuben nüzi zhong xuexiao gaikuang* (December, 1930).

teach within the missionary school system, particularly if they had converted to Christianity at school.<sup>227</sup>

The available data also helps us to understand the catchment area of the schools and students' family backgrounds. Evidence from the magazines suggests that catchment area depended on the size and reputation of the school. For example, Wuben School in Shanghai drew its students from a similar geographical reach to larger missionary schools for girls such as Hongdao, with the majority coming from Jiangsu (65 percent) and Zhejiang (17 percent) in 1926 (see figs. 21-22). Wuben School also attracted girls mainly from merchant, government and educational family backgrounds. In contrast, smaller private schools such as Huixing girls' Junior Middle School in Hangzhou had more localised catchment areas than larger missionary middle schools in East China. Evidence from the Huixing 1934 yearbook reveals that sixty percent of students came from Wu Xing county (吳興) (Huzhou), followed by ten percent from neighbouring Chang Xing (長興) country. Only five students came from outside of Zhejiang province (from Guangde 廣德 in Anhui).<sup>228</sup> These statistics suggest that the school did not have the same reputation as larger and more elite missionary schools such as Hongdao, which, tied to a wider network of other schools via the missionary societies, drew their students from a much wider catchment area (see fig. 21). Another key difference between Huixing and its missionary counterparts in Hangzhou was that Huixing only offered girls' education up to junior middle school level. After finishing Junior three, girls in Hangzhou would have had to transfer to either the Government Hangzhou Normal Women's

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<sup>227</sup> Cressy, 'Middle School Standards, Second Study' *East China Studies in Education*, No.5 (Shanghai, 1929) p. 87.

<sup>228</sup> 'Xuesheng jiguan tongji biao' *Huixing sili nüzi chuji zhongxue zuijin gaikuang* (Hangzhou, 1934), p.6.

School or the Missionary run Mary Vaughan or Hongdao Union high schools in order to continue their education.

### *Curriculum*

A comparison of the school magazines also reveals several similarities in the curriculum of missionary and non-missionary schools for girls. For example, in 1937 girls at Huixing studied a similar curriculum to their missionary school counterparts at the junior middle school level, with English and Chinese given roughly similar weighting in a curriculum that also included, mathematics, science, civics, hygiene, home economics, physical education, art and music. Like their missionary school counterparts, sciences were broken down and progressively introduced, starting with biology in year 1, physics in year 2 and chemistry in year 3. By 1929 the curriculum for missionary boys' and girls' schools was broadly the same, with the exception that the boys' curriculum included bookkeeping and typewriting, and the girls' curriculum music, art and home economics.<sup>229</sup> In both the missionary and government school curricula a roughly equal amount of time per semester was devoted to the study of English and Chinese language, at both the junior and senior level. For example, at Wuben girls spent six hours per week studying English and Chinese at junior level followed by five hours per week at senior high level.<sup>230</sup> In 1929 Missionary schools for girls averaged nineteen hours of Chinese and eighteen hours of English per semester, and twenty-one hours of Chinese and nineteen hours of English at the senior level.<sup>231</sup>

The major difference between missionary and non-missionary schools for girls in East China during this period was in the level of English language and the use of English as the language of instruction. In government schools for girls the

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<sup>229</sup> Cressy, 'Middle school standards, second study', p. 40.

<sup>230</sup> *Shanghai xianli wuben nüzi zhongxuexiao gaikuang* (Shanghai, 1934), pp. 2-4.

<sup>231</sup> Cressy, 'Middle school standards, second study', p. 44.

language of instruction was entirely Chinese (with the exception of English), whereas in missionary schools for girls many subjects continued to be taught in English well into the late 1920s.<sup>232</sup> Despite missionaries' early reluctance to introduce English into the curriculum, ironically, the fact that English was the main language of instruction became a selling point for missionary schools in the 1920-30s. Some missionary educators, were reluctant to embrace the demand for English, fearing that it would alienate the Chinese from their own culture and result in their graduates being seduced into commercial employment in the treaty port cities rather than in the Christian churches. Over time, English became justified in the mission school curriculum because of the opportunity it presented to attract large numbers of students and start charging tuition fees. English language instruction was also becoming an indicator of class status for girls, and many mission teachers who sought to attract upper class students consequently emphasised English language in their curriculum. For example, when McTyeire opened its doors in 1892, it highlighted its multi-lingual curriculum (which included English, Latin and music) as a means of attracting upper class students.<sup>233</sup> By the early twentieth century most missionaries had accepted with some reservation this pragmatic justification for teaching English.

By the 1920s, elite mission schools for girls in Shanghai, such as St. Mary's and McTyeire, offered a curriculum entirely in English. All subjects apart from Chinese language, history and geography were taught in English. Interviewees who attended these schools in the 1930-40s remembered that the level of English was a defining feature of missionary schools for girls. Their fluency in English marked out

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<sup>232</sup> With the exception of Chinese language and history. See Cressy, 'Middle school standards, second study', p. 42.

<sup>233</sup> 'The Anglo-Chinese School for Girls', *The North China Daily News*, Friday 18<sup>th</sup> March, 1892, p. 247.

McTyeire and St. Mary's girls from the crowd. St. Mary's and McTyeire were also distinguished by their higher level of English than other mission schools in the region. The difference in students' levels of English is visible in students' English compositions in the school yearbooks. On average, students at St. Mary's and McTyeire commanded a much higher register of vocabulary than girls at Riverside and Hongdao. They also used longer and more complicated sentence structures, rarely made grammatical mistakes, and their compositions have a native level of fluency and mode of expression. *The Phoenix* and *McTyeiran* yearbooks also contain a larger proportion of articles written in English than the *Riverside Echo* and *Hongdao Magazines*.

Similar comparisons can be drawn with English compositions in non-missionary girls' school yearbooks. As we might expect, the yearbooks produced at Wuben in the 1930s were mainly written in Chinese with a handful of essays in English under the 'English' Section, rather than being bilingual publications.<sup>234</sup> A closer reading of these articles also reveals that the average level of written English was much lower at government schools. This is hardly surprising, as with no foreign teachers on the staff, girls at Wuben would not have been exposed to the native English environment of missionary schools, and would not have native speakers proof read their articles before publication.<sup>235</sup> Although this points to higher level of English fluency amongst students at missionary schools, this is not to say that English was badly taught at government schools. Indeed, after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour and the internment of their foreign teachers during the second Sino-Japanese War, girls at missionary schools in Shanghai remember their Chinese teachers of English to be excellent and sometimes better than their missionary

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<sup>234</sup> *Wuben nüzhong xuesheng zizhahui bannian kan* (Shanghai, 1935), p. 2.

<sup>235</sup> 'Yingwen Lan' *Wuben nüzhong xuesheng zizhahui bannian kan* (Shanghai, 1935), pp. 84-88.

counterparts. Indeed, missionary teachers, chosen for their evangelical zeal, were not necessarily equipped with the skills of teaching English as a foreign language. For example Ling Yourong 凌又融, remembered that her Chinese teachers were better at explaining the intricacies of English grammar than the missionary teachers.<sup>236</sup> Similarly, Zhu Yonglin 朱永琳 (McTyeire class of 1950) thought that grammar was not well taught at McTyeire, as she came across a book which explained it more clearly than her missionary teacher, who taught the girls English by simply perching on the front of her desk and reading Shakespeare to the girls.<sup>237</sup>

The high level of English required at St. Mary's and McTyeire is evident in the failure rates of entry exam into the schools. Many girls were disqualified from entering the school on the grounds that their English was not good enough. Students who failed to get into McTyeire would often retry at St. Mary's (where the academic requirements were slightly lower, and a greater emphasis was put on music and arts in the school curriculum). Those who did not quite make the cut at St. Mary's were offered the opportunity to improve their English in two grades of preparatory classes, colloquially known by the girls as 'p.1' and 'p.2' before they could proceed to Junior 1. The level of the English texts used in the St. Mary's English curriculum also reveals the high levels girls were expected to obtain. Gwendolyn Jie (届李葵, St. Mary's Class of 1952) remembered the curriculum progressed from: *Heidi* (Junior 1), *Hansel and Gretel* (Junior 2), *Rebecca* (Junior 3), *Merchant of Venice* (Senior 1), *A Tale of Two Cities* (senior 2). In her Senior 3 year (1951-52), due to the outbreak of the Korean War the curriculum changed to a Russian novel.<sup>238</sup>

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<sup>236</sup> Interview with Ling Yourong, 7 November 2016, San Mateo. Ling Yourong attended McTyeire from 1947-1949, at which point her family fled to Hong Kong, so she did not graduate from McTyeire.

<sup>237</sup> Interview with Zhu Yonglin, 13 November 2016, Shanghai.

<sup>238</sup> Interview with Gwendolyn Jie, 17 October 2015, Shanghai.

Although interviewees remembered their school's excellence in English with great pride, entrance into the foreign language environment of missionary school could be a daunting and humiliating experience for girls. Those who came up through the McTyeire and St. Mary's primary schools or Juemin were already well equipped with English.<sup>239</sup> New entrants from non-mission schools, however, found themselves totally at sea, and reliant on the kindness and pity of their more fluent classmates. For example, Lydia Zhu (Zhu Wenqing 朱文倩, St. Mary's class of 1953) remembers:

I was at St. Mary from age thirteen to eighteen. The biggest influence going to St. Marys had on me was just that, apart from Chinese language which was taught by a Chinese teacher, all the other classes, Maths, Home Economics, all were taught in English and I did not understand one bit! But there were some classmates who already understood ... Even 'Stand up' I couldn't understand. So when my classmates stood up, I quickly followed them and stood up, when they all sat down, I also quickly sat down. But my classmates were very caring, they did not tease or bully me, but helped me. When I started the classes I didn't even understand ten per cent of what the teacher was saying, I couldn't remember any of the vocabulary... it was really pitiful. You could say I was the worst in the class!<sup>240</sup>

Other students, whose parents or elder siblings who had been to missionary schools, studied abroad or worked for foreign firms or universities in China, had an advantage because they were exposed to English at home from an early age. For example, Zhao Feng Feng's (趙風風, St. Mary's Class of 1948), father Zhao Shen 趙深 was a graduate of Tsinghua University and then obtained a scholarship to study in Philadelphia for two years. Her aunties were all McTyeire graduates. With exposure

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<sup>239</sup> Interview with Theresa Chen, 10 November 2016, San Mateo.

<sup>240</sup> Zhu Wenqing, St. Marys Group Interview, 11 May 2016, Beijing, 13:00-15:00.

to English at home and having attended Juemin primary school Zhao Fengfeng had no problem in English class upon entering St. Mary's.<sup>241</sup>

Other alumnae also felt that their Chinese was weaker compared to girls who studied at government schools. Although they were well versed in American history and geography, they were comparatively weak in Chinese history. For example, Ruth Lea Tsai (McTyeire class of 1924) admitted: 'When we went to McTyeire everything was in English except the Chinese lesson. We had one Chinese teacher and one Chinese course every day. I never entered a Chinese government school. From the beginning I went to American missionary school I really had the foreign interest in English. And for me it was easier to write in English than Chinese. I am sorry to say that. But some of my friends who when to Chinese government schools, they had a better chance.'<sup>242</sup> Similarly, one McTyeire alumna in the class of 1947 remembered that English was much more desirable than Chinese language as a subject of study at school: 'We were awful to every teacher who taught Chinese – we bullied them. It was terrible in retrospect. Almost cruel, and the way we treated them, they had to leave. Thinking back, it was cruel. Primarily the Chinese language teachers. Nobody did any work, just acted up, and Xue Zheng had to come. I think because of the environment we didn't pay any attention to Chinese language. We were daughters of westernised families.'<sup>243</sup> Kuan Yu Chen (Chen Guanyu, 陳觀裕, McTyeire class of 1936) goes further explaining that despite missionary efforts, girls at McTyeire were not interested in learning about their own culture and English and western music were preferred:

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<sup>241</sup> Interview with Zhao Fengfeng, 14 June 2016, Beijing.

<sup>242</sup> Ruth Lea Tsai in 'Telling Women's Lives'.

<sup>243</sup> Joint recollections, the class of 1947 at their Fiftieth Anniversary of entering McTyeire in 'Telling Women's lives'.

Musically, we were very good in Chorus, in all kinds of western music. We had a travelling Chorus. We were very famous, gave very sophisticated piano concerts, but we never learned anything Chinese. An American missionary teacher who came about one year before liberation thought that she should be appreciating Chinese culture and teaching Chinese Students about Chinese culture. So she tried to teach the student Chinese folk songs and the students refused to learn. At that time, ever since the overthrow of the Manchu Dynasty, anything old was bad ... so we absolutely criticized our own culture. Modern things, you know. We wanted Western music; we never played Chinese instruments at all.<sup>244</sup>

While missionary schools might have offered a higher level of English training and western musical education, when it came to elective courses, vocational and teacher training opportunities, missionary schools were falling behind their government counterparts. For example, in 1934, Wuben offered ten elective options including Chinese national culture, the history of Chinese literature, practical writing for English, English rhetoric, analytical chemistry, calculus, botany, economics, traditional Chinese painting and western painting.<sup>245</sup> In 1926-1927 only fifty percent of missionary girls' schools were offering any elective courses, and of these only a small number of elective subject options were available.<sup>246</sup> Smaller missionary schools may not have had the resources or expertise to offer such in-depth and academic elective subjects that government schools could offer, and weaker schools ended up pooling their resources and merging to strengthen their curriculum, resources and ability to attract students.<sup>247</sup>

Wuben School, which also had a teacher training department (established in 1930), allows us to draw comparisons between the government normal school

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<sup>244</sup> Kuan Yu Chen in 'Telling women's lives'.

<sup>245</sup> *Shanghai xianli wuben nüzi zhongxuexiao gaikuang* (Shanghai, 1934), p. 5.

<sup>246</sup> Cressy, 'Middle school standards, second study', p. 43.

<sup>247</sup> Cressy, 'Middle School standards, second study', 1929, p. 43.

training and the teacher training offered by missionary schools.<sup>248</sup> As Culp has indicated, middle schools for both boys and girls diversified to include ‘normal’ or teacher training departments in the 1930s to meet the growing demand for primary and lower middle school teachers.<sup>249</sup> For example, in 1934, Wuben’s normal school curriculum consisted of three years. While slightly less time was devoted to the regular compulsory curriculum, including civics, sciences, mathematics, English, history and geography, the normal track had additional compulsory courses specifically on education. Normal elective courses included early childhood education, history of education, village education, and English.<sup>250</sup>

Missionary statistics reveal that by the 1920s missionary schools were falling far behind their government counterparts in the provision of teacher training. For example, in 1922 there were only fifty normal mission schools in China, with 320 female and 440 male trainee teachers. In comparison, the government was running 212 normal schools which were training approximately 150 students each.<sup>251</sup> Missionary middle schools for girls did include some teacher training in their curriculum (on average, 8 hours per semester), and girls were routinely exposed to informal teacher training practice in the schools for poor children which many female mission middle schools established. For example, the establishment of an orphanage connected with St. Mary’s in 1884 (which by 1924 became known as ‘Little St. Mary’s’), provided girls at St. Mary’s with an ideal teacher training forum at the primary level, and led to the establishment of a primary teacher training department within the school by 1908.<sup>252</sup> Before the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War, many female missionary school graduates considered teaching as the

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<sup>248</sup> ‘Xiao Shi’, Shanghai Shili Wuben nüzi zhongxue gaikuang, (Shanghai, 1934), p.2.

<sup>249</sup> Culp, *Articulating Citizenship*, p. 21.

<sup>250</sup> *Shanghai shili Wuben nüzi zhongxuexiao gaikuang* (Shanghai, 1934), pp. 6-8.

<sup>251</sup> Stauffer (ed.), *The Christian Occupation of China*, p. 411.

<sup>252</sup> Chen Jingyu (ed.), *Shengmaliya nüxiao*, vol 1, pp. 111-112.

most desirable and natural alternative to marriage upon graduation. As fig. 23 shows, the majority of Hongdao graduates either became teachers (36 percent) or homemakers (36 percent) in the period 1912-1932, with a significant and increasing minority going to college (11 percent). Hongdao's data on graduate careers accords with the trend identified by Tang in her 1922 study of women's education: 'The statistics show that graduates of these larger schools continue to study. About one third that are represented are going on. As much larger proportion go into teaching. The medium is 70 percent and a large number of girls who do not graduate teach for some time before or after marriage.'<sup>253</sup> By the 1930s new educational and career options were opening to educated upper and middle class girls in China, allowing them to pursue a career or further academic study before marriage. Moreover, the high proportion of graduates going into education, points not only to Hongdao's strong normal training department, but also to the networks of career opportunities which existed for missionary educated female students upon graduation. The connection between Union schools for girls, run by the same missionary societies, had a mutually supporting and strengthening effect on each other. Not only did they share personnel in terms of missionary staff, but they also used their graduating students to staff other missionary schools for girls within the network of missionary schools in East China (see fig. 24. for more details of missionary school teachers' backgrounds).

McTyeire alumnae data also suggests that missionary school graduates were likely to be employed by other missionary schools in the region, thus forming a network of teaching career opportunities for female graduates, a few of whom might receive missionary sponsorship to study abroad to prepare them as future

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<sup>253</sup> Tang, 'Women's education', p.14.

headmistresses.<sup>254</sup>In contrast, male missionary school students, who hoped to gain lucrative employment in the treaty ports through their advanced English, were averse to going into teaching and practically no time was made for teacher training the boys' missionary school curriculum. The 1922 report complains: 'The rewards for even a modest amount of English are large, and a college course opens out into medicine, commercial pursuits, and politics. The whole spirit of the boys' middle school today is against preparation for elementary school teaching ... With girls the case is totally different. If they do not marry, elementary teaching is almost the only career opening doors of greater opportunity to them.'<sup>255</sup>

Despite this informal teacher training inculcated by most mission middle schools for girls, well-equipped and well-funded missionary normal schools were hard to find in China, as the 1922 report warns: 'Even in such important, wealthy, and literary provinces as Chihli, Shantung, and Kiangsu, where mission work has been long established, and Christian education has obtained a very deep hold, well equipped Christian normal schools cannot be found. The only one known to the committee is the Laura Haygood Normal School at Suchow.'<sup>256</sup> There was a clear sense of alarm amongst missionaries about the lack of teachers they were producing, for the future of their schools as well as lagging behind their government school competitors:

These schools must be the equal in every respect of the best government schools ... We know of no mission school or college today in China which professes to have as high a grade of Chinese instruction as the government schools; much less to be able to train a single class as specialists in teaching Chinese. Our present normal schools are doing their very best with the resources at their command; what they need is

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<sup>254</sup> See Alumnae Sections in the *McTyerian Yearbooks*, 1924-1932.

<sup>255</sup> Stauffer (ed.), *The Christian Occupation of China*, p. 413.

<sup>256</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 412.

higher standing in the Chinese community as institutions of learning ... There is no possible supply of Christian teachers in China unless the missions train them. The peculiar message of the Christian Church to China can only be taught by those especially fitted and trained.<sup>257</sup>

Failing to produce teachers would mean that Christianity would not be able to penetrate government schools via their Christian trained teachers, but also, perhaps more urgently, they would struggle to find suitably qualified Christian teachers for their own schools:

If 200 of the students studying education in some form or another in mission schools graduate each year, and if they all go into teaching, the demand would exceed the most sanguine supply fifteen-fold ... Figures taken from three of the most favoured provinces indicate that not over two percent of the Christian elementary school teachers profess any sort of normal preparation for their work. Some interior middle schools are able to induce their graduates to go out into day school teaching. They learn to teach by being “thrown in”... In probably the greater part of China, the main supply of teachers is still drawn from the old-style men who are possessed of little western education and little Christianity... It must said, however unpleasant reading it makes, that the common practice on the part of most missions and missionaries is to give no systematic or farsighted thought whatever to their future supply of teachers, or if they do, this is not manifest in funds or workers for normal schools or less formal teacher training.<sup>258</sup>

In this way, we can see that while Christian schools were leading the way in provision of middle school level education for girls in China in the first two decades of the twentieth century, in fact as far as vocational teacher training went (bearing in mind that teaching was one of the very few vocations open to women at this time) missionary schools were actually lagging behind their normal government school counterparts in terms of provision, quality of training and resources. As will be

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<sup>257</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 414.

<sup>258</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 411.

explored in chapter four, in the 1920s missionary middle schools for girls were mainly designed to produce highly educated and polished homemakers with the desirable accomplishments of western music, English language and foreign social graces, who would make appropriate Christian wives for the newly emerging middle class of missionary educated Chinese men.

Another key difference in the curriculum between missionary and non-missionary schools for girls was in the various means by which the schools sought to mould students into moral Chinese citizens. As Robert Culp has highlighted, civics education in the government school system from 1912 consisted of ‘moral cultivation’ classes which taught students ‘personal conduct, how to treat others, and their duties to the nation, society, their families, themselves, humankind, and all living creatures, while also giving them a general introduction to the study of ethics and ‘the special characteristics of Chinese ethics.’<sup>259</sup> After the establishment of the GMD government in 1927 the new government sought to systematically politicise the civics curriculum in schools. Loyalty to the party and nation was inculcated in the civics curriculum based on the Three People’s Principles (*Sanmin zhuyi* 三民主義) of Sun Yatsen, Sun’s 1924 lectures on nationalism, political organisation and the management of modern socio-economic systems.<sup>260</sup> During the Nanjing Decade the content of civics textbooks became increasingly tightly censored by the GMD government. After 1934, ‘Scouting’ (*tongzijun*, 童子军) became a compulsory subject in all government lower middle schools, and was a key organisation through which the nationalist government sought to inculcate state sanctioned notions of citizenship, public responsibility and cultivation of personal and civic virtue, which

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<sup>259</sup> Culp, *Articulating Citizenship*, p.32.

<sup>260</sup> *Ibid.*, p.39.

reinforced the tenets of the New Life Movement (see chapter four).<sup>261</sup> Scouting was also highly gendered. While girls learned first aid and outdoor survival skills along the same lines as boys in the scouts, when it came to military training, nursing rather than direct military drill was advocated.<sup>262</sup> Scouting jamborees and summer camps served to connect government schools throughout the lower Yangzi region and were also a key tool for infiltration of political ideas by the nationalist and communist parties. Evidence from Huixing middle school suggests that the scouts functioned along the same lines as the Christian fellowship and YWCA societies at missionary schools, and was divided into internal and external activities with internal activities including socials to foster cohesion and harmony within the student body, and external activity which focused on charity work.<sup>263</sup> Outdoor exercise, scouting and military training appears to be a core part of student life at the school, as in the 1937 whole school photograph girls appear dressed in their scouts' uniforms alongside a marching band. As we will explore in chapter five, Christian middle schools in East China provided an alternative gendered Christian network for women, where at YWCA summer camps and regional conference girls learned to articulate a vision of modern Christian citizenship for educated Chinese women and demonstrate their patriotism through distinctly Christian modes of social service.

In contrast, at missionary schools for girls, although 'civics' or (*gongmin xue*, 公民學) was included in the curriculum, the GMD government had less control over the content and delivery of these classes and, according to alumnae, 'moral education' at missionary schools was delivered mainly via the religious education

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<sup>261</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 178.

<sup>262</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 202.

<sup>263</sup> 'Tongjun huodong', *Zhejiang Hangzhou shi sili Huixing nüzi chujing zhongxue yilan* (Hangzhou, 1937), p79.

that girls received, through bible study classes, daily church services and prayers.<sup>264</sup> As we shall see in the next chapter, during the anti-imperial and anti-Christian movements of the 1920s, a common charge levelled at missionary schools was that they were ‘denationalising’ their students by forcing them to imbibe a ‘foreign’ religion. It is therefore pertinent to briefly consider here to what extent the atmosphere at mission schools for girls was a religious one. Evidence suggests that during the early period, missionary schools’ emphasis on religion in the curriculum was strong and chapel attendance was compulsory. For example, when McTyeire opened in 1892 its Christian purpose was strongly emphasised: ‘It is therefore, a distinctly Christian school, and although no undue influence will be used upon the minds of its pupils to induce them to profess Christianity, still its prime object will be as to teach and guide them that they shall be constrained of their own accord to believe in Jesus as the Saviour of the world. No girls are desired as pupils whose parents object to this.’<sup>265</sup> Even though chapel attendance remained compulsory until 1927, evidence from alumnae also suggests that many students at the school were not particularly interested in religion. Kuan Yu Chen admitted: ‘When I was in McTyeire chapel was compulsory, it was a time for me to wander. My mind would wander when the preacher began to talk. It was such a habit that it was terrible.’<sup>266</sup>

After the Northern Expedition of 1927, new government regulations stated that religious classes and chapel attendance must be voluntary. By the 1930s-1940s many McTyeire alumnae did not feel their school to be a particularly religious one. For example, Zhang Long (McTyeire class of 1947) recalled: ‘The Christian atmosphere of the school was not strong. I think all of the articles written here

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<sup>264</sup> ‘Civics’ appears to be part of the compulsory curriculum for girls according to student record cards from 1926-1938. See Number Three Middle School Archives. Box 7 – ‘Xueji ka’.

<sup>265</sup> ‘The Anglo-Chinese School for Girls’ in *The North China Daily News*, Friday 18<sup>th</sup> March, 1892, p. 247.

<sup>266</sup> Kuan Yu Chen in ‘Telling women’s lives’.

[referring to the McTyeire Alumnae history volumes] all had the same feeling, that the religious atmosphere was not strong in McTyeire ... I think maybe during the early days of McTyeire, that the Christian influence was stronger, but by our time it was not so obvious anymore.’<sup>267</sup>

Despite the increasing secularisation of the schools over time, evidence suggests that the Christian message was inculcated in students in more subtle ways. For example, although chapel attendance was voluntary, the culture of missionary schools meant that all students attended chapel as a matter of course, to the extent that some students remembered that it was compulsory, even after the schools had registered with the government. Zhang Long revealed that, although students were not forced to attend chapel at McTyeire, the school culture was for everyone to attend Chapel, so all the girls went: ‘We were not forced to attend, but actually we all went. And we were happy to have those services, because we learned a lot of things even if we were not baptised, but I think we were quite influenced ... Nothing was forced on us, we were left to choose our own way of living, but actually I think it gave us the influence, which in fact we kept all our lives, such as we should love our neighbours. I think that is a very strong influence, although we did not say we were Christians.’<sup>268</sup>

Similarly, Theresa Chen (Chen Zongci 陳宗慈, McTyeire class of 1947) remembers that, although McTyeire was not a very religious school (she cannot remember religion classes bible study), Christian moral values were inculcated in girls in various ways, through a system which encompassed moral, academic and physical aspects (德智體). Christian values were conveyed through music, hymns and plays (such as the story of Barabbas) and through contact with their teachers:

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<sup>267</sup> Interview with Zhang Long, 6 July 2016, Shanghai, 1:08.

<sup>268</sup> Interview with Zhang Long, 6 July 2016, Shanghai, 1:10.

My own Christianity from McTyeire that really depends on the teacher ... My second-grade teacher (J2), she was amazing. She would pray at the beginning of the day, and would get the children to do spontaneous prayer, so that was how I learned to pray. Junior 2, she would cry if the kids were not behaving, and her image is still deeply imprinted in mind, I can still see her all red and upset, she was very emotional, but the emotion that was passed on to us was amazing ... On Friday we would gather and each teacher would assume the role of assembly leader ... There were no hymns, there was just academics, and on Friday before we took off, one teacher would take a whole school assembly and give an inspiring story. So it was method teaching, so that was the moral and Christian value part, there was no bible study or anything. Maybe at the gathering there may have been some prayer, but the story, that's the bit I can remember.<sup>269</sup>

Other subtler ways Christian life was continued at missionary schools included the Christmas and Easter plays and pageants performed by students. The best parts in the Christmas and Easter plays and pageants went to the Christian students, and those who wanted to join the choir must be baptised. Indeed, sometimes the girls' choice to receive baptism was an arbitrary or pragmatic decision. Zhang Luoluo 張羅羅 (McTyeire Class of 1947), from an official family background in Beijing, was good at speaking the national language. One of her teachers asked her to help the pastor translate and practise giving the sermon in Mandarin and she was baptised in order to become a member of the chapel committee. She remembered this, ironically, as she did not really believe in Christianity at this time, but was willing to be baptised more out of loyalty to help her teacher:

She was a Christian, and I liked her, she was such a good teacher, so when she appointed me to do this thing, I thought I should take this responsibility, I didn't want to let her down in her hopes towards me. Actually, my knowledge of religion at that time was not really sufficient,

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<sup>269</sup> Interview with Theresa Chen, 10 November 2016, San Mateo, 38:00.

it really wasn't because I wanted to get closer to Christianity that I received baptism...So if you ask me am I very religious, I can say not very devoutly. I wanted to repay her teaching. I needed to stand in for her, to do a job for her, so that why I received baptism, so I could fill that position. So later, I helped in the church; In senior three I was the head of the Haygood Church worship committee. I liked this work because I got to see Miss Butler about once a week. Miss Butler would write the bible stories and then I and the teacher would translate them, I would teach my classmates and the pastor how to read them properly. I would correct his pronunciation.<sup>270</sup>

Some mission school students were therefore converted to Christianity, not through overt efforts by teachers, but via more subtle ways, creating a Christian environment in the schools and leading by example. For example, Lian Shu Tsao 舒麗安 (McTyeire class of 1937) remembers: 'When students went into McTyeire maybe they were not Christians, but most McTyeire students left being Christians. Because we had a very strong Christian education. It's not forced upon us. You don't have to go to the prayer meetings. And for the religions we learned all of them, we studied comparative religion. And the teachers' examples, they were so well-liked by everybody. All of the teachers went to worship. Whenever we went they were. They never forced anything on you. That's the good part. They just lived Christian lives.'<sup>271</sup> Similarly, Zhang Luoluo remembered that these Christian values were slowly inculcated day by day, year by year in the school environment and example of teachers and classmates:

So what I want to say about Christianity at McTyeire is that, you don't have to be Christian, you just learned to be a good student and good person. This was just a gradual process that you came to a realisation inside this big family you should act in a certain way, this wasn't forced

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<sup>270</sup> Interview with Zhang Luoluo, 8 November 2016, San Mateo, 51:00.

<sup>271</sup> Lian Shu Tsao, 'Telling women's lives'.

on you, but you were in an environment where you slowly realised how to act. This is my own feeling. There really was not anyone telling me how to act. This was an influence of the school environment and the classmates. For example, in the first year when I didn't understand, a classmate came and taught me the set text, Heidi, so I wouldn't fall behind, and I could move up with everyone else. She wasn't a friend or family member, but she came to help me. So of course you learn that you should help other people. So slowly, slowly you grew up inside of this big family. She saw me, this little girl who couldn't speak English or Shanghainese and decided to help me.<sup>272</sup>

Therefore, although by 1940s many students did not define themselves as Christian, they embraced the Christian atmosphere of the school as part of its unique identity within the educational milieu of treaty port East China.

#### *School Identity and Campus culture*

Finally, looking at the sections of the magazine devoted to student life, we can also glean an impression and draw some broad comparisons of the differences in school daily life and campus cultures between mission and non-mission schools. As Culp has explored, in Republican China middle schools 'Self-governing Student Associations' (*Xuesheng zizhahui* 學生自治會) or Student Unions (SU), functioned as important forums where students could put leadership, democracy and organisational skills into practice: essential in their training as young citizens.<sup>273</sup> As we shall see in the discussion of the YWCA as it functioned within missionary schools for girls in chapter six, this training was especially important for women, who used their student-led societies as spaces free from the social pressures and highly gendered expectations of their roles in outside society, where they could

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<sup>272</sup> Interview with Zhang Luoluo, 8 November 2016, San Mateo, 44:57.

<sup>273</sup> Culp, *Articulating Citizenship*, p.98.

experiment with new notions of citizenship and had opportunities to hone and practise their skills as future leaders and organisers of society.

In China, as in the United States, Student Unions were first conceived as a means to improve student behaviour via peer to peer monitoring, and to give students a practical lesson in democracy and leadership. In the May Fourth period, western liberal intellectual ideas, including democracy and the importance of full social and political participation in society as advocated by influential speakers such as Dewey, who visited China, led to calls for student self-government, and student governments were rapidly established in middle schools and universities across the country.<sup>274</sup> The *McTyeiran* of 1918 reveals that the Student Union was founded in that year with a similar rationale of improving the conduct of the school, giving girls a chance to test and hone their leadership and organisational skills, and practise democracy within the safe confines of the school. Pupil Tsao Zok Tung (Cao Shuzhen 曹淑珍, McTyerie class of 1920) explains: ‘Of recent years student government has been very popular in the western world and though it seems strange to the conservative east, yet McTyeire wanted to make a trial of it. Our aims in adopting it are the better organization of the school, the higher development of the students in the ideals of womanhood and the creation of a spirit of democracy. From these purposes we hope to attain self-respect, self-control, and also a liberal spirit for our later lives.’<sup>275</sup> Founded on the suggestion of their teachers, the McTyeire Student Government of the 1910’s was keen to stress its role in improving students’ deportment, discipline and moral character. It gave students a practical lesson in democracy and leadership by electing their president, secretary and committee members, but by no means sought to challenge the power of the teachers. Indeed,

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<sup>274</sup> Culp, *Articulating Citizenship*, p.106.

<sup>275</sup> Tsao Zok Tung, ‘The Student Council’, *The McTyeriean* (Shanghai, 1918), p. 39.

most of the Student Government's activities outlined in Tsao's article are about students defining their own code of rules, how to enforce them and what the penalties would be if a classmate broke a rule by being late to breakfast or talking in the study hall. The SU secretary would also keep a record of infractions in a student's department, such as running in the corridors.<sup>276</sup>

As Horowitz has pointed out, in the case of women's colleges in the United States, as time went by these autonomous student bodies grew into powerful student-led organisations, and provided an important forum where girls had agency to develop their own campus cultures and school identities which were radically different from the founder's original visions and intentions for women's education: 'While different conceptions shaped the varied plans of women's colleges, each institution projected a vision of an ordered college community where protected young women, guided by professors and books, grew in intellectual power. By the turn of the century, however, events rudely shattered those dreams. Students developed their own culture which gave meaning to their college experience and reshaped their consciousness.'<sup>277</sup> This was certainly the case at McTyeire, where although founded with quite conservative aims in mind, students developed their own distinctive campus culture around their student organised activities via the student union which quickly diversified into many different student-led clubs and societies, with the SU reaming the most powerful coordinating student body. Similarly, by 1920 St Mary's students ran a Student Union, Patriotic Club (Guoguanhui 國光會), Christian Fellowship Association (Qingxinhui, 清心會), Girls Guides Association, Athletic Clubs and four Music Clubs (Including Senior,

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<sup>276</sup> Tsao, 'The Student Council', pp. 39-40.

<sup>277</sup> Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, *Alma Mater: Design and Experience in the Women's Colleges from Their Nineteenth-Century Beginnings to the 1930s* (New York, 1984), p. 145.

Junior, Choir, and Glee Club).<sup>278</sup> As we shall see in the following chapters, these student-led organisations provided girls with a space where they could test and hone their skills as leaders, develop their own distinctive campus cultures and school identities, experiment with new gendered identities and put their Christian, patriotic and feminist ideals into action.

During the 1930s it appears that Student Self-governing Associations in government schools were much more tightly controlled by the GMD than in missionary schools.<sup>279</sup> An incident which took place at Wuben school in 1933 illustrates this point. Wuben, like its missionary counterparts, had a student self-governing association which was in charge of organising all aspects of school life. The Wuben SU had different sections within it, which organised various aspects of girls' school life and were mainly academic and administrative in focus: Secretary, Academic section, PE section, and Work section.<sup>280</sup> Wuben SU was also powerful and politically radical, and would not hesitate to challenge their own teachers in representing the concerns of the students to the school authorities. In November 1933, student discontentment with the promotion of their civics teacher to the position of Dean of Studies at Wuben spiralled into a full-scale revolt by the SU which was violently suppressed by the education commissioner of Shanghai, Fan Gongchan (潘公展) with the aid of police, in which four girls were seriously injured and twenty were wounded. The incident, which is reported in the left-wing publication *China Forum*, occurred on 13 November 1933, and can be seen as part of a broader student discontent at the control of the curriculum and student activities by the 'blue jackets'

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<sup>278</sup> *The Phoenix*, (Shanghai, 1920).

<sup>279</sup> Culp, *Articulating Citizenship*, p. 125.

<sup>280</sup> 'Shangahi shili wuben nüzi zhong xuexiao xuesheng zizhahui zhangcheng', *Shanghai shili wuben nüzi zhongxuexiao gaikuang* (Shanghai, 1935), pp. 42-45.

– Chiang Kai-shek’s far right cultural police force, who during the 1930s aimed to stamp out growing left-wing and communist sentiments amongst students.<sup>281</sup>

Revealingly, the case of the rebellion at Wuben also highlights a similarity in missionary school and non-missionary schools for girls. As we will see in the discussion of student nationalism in chapter three, while pupils at missionary schools increasingly objected to having to study the bible, at non-missionary schools pupils were equally fed-up with having to imbibe the doctrine of Sun Yat-sen for similar reasons:

Kuomintang education runs between Confucius, San Min Chu I and Jesus Christ ... The Wu Pen Girls middle school struggle reflects the intensification of the reactionary movement in the educational world. There is nothing new about student despising the bible like and empty San Min Chu I. It is not only Kiang Wen-Pao, the San Min Chu I teacher at Wu Pen, who has to look out at a dozing class during his lessons! His colleagues in schools all over the country do the same everyday – at it is no surprise that the students should resist the elevation of such a teacher to be Dean!<sup>282</sup>

However, the violent suppression of female students by police would have been almost unheard of in the missionary school context. Protected by extraterritoriality, it is unlikely that the GMD police would have been able to enter a missionary school for girls and carry out such violent suppression. As we shall see in chapter three, girls were keen to express their patriotic sentiments and join the student rallies and protests of May Fourth and May Thirtieth Movements. Moreover, there were examples of students walking out or being expelled for their rebellious behaviour against the school (most notably in the McTyeire walk-out of 1915).<sup>283</sup> While their

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<sup>281</sup> Tsao, ‘Wu Pen Girls Fight against Blue jacket “Cultural Control”’ in *China Forum* (3.2), 30 Nov 1933, p. 9.

<sup>282</sup> Tsao, ‘Wu Pen Girls Fight against Blue jacket “Cultural Control”’, p. 10.

<sup>283</sup> See Appendix two.

missionary teachers were by no means sympathetic to such left-wing political leanings, they would not have tolerated their students to be directly molested by the police, but sought to protect girls within their own bubbles of extraterritoriality and impress upon girls principles of female gentility through their own example.

Another indication of the perhaps freer environment that girls enjoyed at missionary schools was the fact that missionary schools were not exposed to the same political persecution and direct interference that government school students faced. Indeed, missionary school library books were not censored by the government and contained many more English books than their government school counterparts. Some students remember first coming into contact with Marxist ideas through their school library, a vital part of their political formation, eventually leading them to join the underground communist party while still at school.<sup>284</sup> Girls' political identity formation will be discussed in detail in chapter seven. Another indication of the freer atmosphere at missionary schools can be seen in girls' dress. While government school students had to conform by wearing school uniforms (by the mid-1930s this tended to be a scout's uniform, particularly for girls' junior middle schools) missionary schools often did not have uniforms, thus allowing girls a greater scope to express their individuality through their dress at school.<sup>285</sup>

A final contrast between the campus culture at missionary schools and their government school counterparts is also revealed in school traditions and markers of identity. While girls at Wuben were more politically, and perhaps more academically, inclined than their missionary school counterparts, evidence from the yearbooks suggests that missionary schools manifested stronger markers of school traditions

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<sup>284</sup> Qu mingming 'Zhongxi nüzhong aiguo xuesheng yundong de huigu' in He Yanan (ed.), *Bai nian nü zhong – xian gei yibaiyishi zhou nian xiao qing*, (Shanghai, 2002), pp. 121 -127. See also Cao, 'Sanshi nian dai de zhong xi nüzhong', pp. 66-68.

<sup>285</sup> *Zhejiang Hangzhou shi sili Huixing nüzi chuji zhongxue yilan* (Hangzhou, 1937).

than their government school counterparts. Henrietta Harrison has argued that the ‘Signs’ and ‘Symbols’ of nationalism played a large role in the formation of Chinese national identity in the early Republic.<sup>286</sup> Similarly, Ryan Dunch has shown that these signs and symbols, including hymns, national flags and songs were used by missionary schools in Fuzhou to inculcate a sense of national identity in their students in the early years of the Republic.<sup>287</sup> Robert Culp has also highlighted how in government and private middle schools in the Lower Yangzi region, participation in rituals and ceremonies, including saluting the flag and military drill during national day celebrations and commemorations of national humiliation, were important tools for inculcating notions of citizenship in students.<sup>288</sup> According to Culp, such performances of citizenship were increasingly militarised and orchestrated by the GMD in the 1930s.<sup>289</sup>

As we shall explore in chapter three, at Protestant mission schools for girls in East China, like their government school counterparts, girls learned about their national identity through participation in patriotic activities, ceremonies and rituals, including national day events. At missionary schools for girls another new layer was added to this formulation: a loyalty to their school inculcated via symbols of class and school loyalty and fraternity. This unique school identity was inculcated in many ways. A big part of fostering the school identity was in the transmission of school traditions, handed down to each class via the school magazines, and in rites of passage such as graduation ceremonies and other signs and symbols of class loyalty and school identity. Unsurprisingly perhaps, at McTyerie and St. Mary’s many of these school traditions and rites of passage,

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<sup>286</sup> Harrison, *The Making of the Republican Citizen*, p. 60.

<sup>287</sup> Dunch, *Fuzhou Protestant*, p. 317.

<sup>288</sup> Culp, *Articulating Citizenship*, p. 212.

<sup>289</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 241.

such as the 'Big Sister-Little Sister' system, step-singing ceremonies, signs and symbols of class loyalty, such as class mottos, colours, flowers and rings, were modelled on American women's colleges, where their teachers had been educated. The school magazines, *The Phoenix* and *McTyeirean*, give us a sense of how these traditions were created, and how the passing down of these identities through rites of passage strongly played into forming a girl's identity as a McTyeire student or St. Mary's girl.

Following their American college counterparts, a 'Big Sister - Little Sister' jie-mei (姐妹) system functioned within St. Mary's and McTyeire, where older girls were matched with younger students to help them settle into the school and mentor them through their academic life. This system (which does not appear to have functioned within non-missionary schools for girls) also served to reinforce and transmit school cultures and traditions to the next generation of students. Another important rite of passage in the lives of missionary school students were the privileges and responsibilities entailed in becoming a 'senior'. Much like American colleges for women, girls at St. Mary's and McTyeire enjoyed the use of a 'senior parlour' or 'common room' when they entered their final year. This could be used for extra-curricular meetings and activities, informal meeting of friends, eating snacks or entertaining guests (normally relatives). It was also the senior class who were responsible for the leadership and administration of student clubs and societies, including the student union, putting together the annual edition of the school yearbook and taking part in the senior play.

Similar to American women's colleges, in addition to a school motto, each year group had their own class motto, class advisor, class flower and class

colour.<sup>290</sup> These symbols would be worn on special occasions, such as junior and senior graduation ceremonies. For example, Gong Zhengguan 龔正冠 (McTyeire class of 1952) remembered that their class colour was purple and their flower was a violet: She recalled with delight wearing this white qipao with purple flowers at her junior high graduation: ‘This is my junior graduation photograph ... You see at that time, we were wearing a white dress with a violet flower, when we graduated from (senior) high school, it was a violet dress with a white flower. You see every class has their special colour, green, blue, red, or violet. Four different colours and our colour was violet. This was 1949. So this was the last time we could wear this. When I graduated from senior high it was white shoes and blue trousers.’<sup>291</sup> (See Fig. 25). Many graduates felt sad that these specific symbols of class and school identity were abolished after 1949. Today alumnae try to relive these traditions, wearing their class colour and class flower to their annual reunions as an important marker of class loyalty and identity. For example, in the 2002 class reunion Gong Zhengguan and her classmates all wore purple shawls symbolising their continued class loyalty and sisterhood (see figs. 25-26).

The mottos chosen by each class were reflected throughout the yearbook, in colourful illustrations and girls’ creative writing (see fig. 27). For example, the McTyeire class of 1924, whose motto was ‘Ad Astra’, reflected this theme of interstellar travel in girls’ creative writing.<sup>292</sup> The class motto also sometimes reflected the current political situation in China. The Class of 1946 chose the motto ‘Conqueror’, perhaps reflecting girls’ experiences during the war time years

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<sup>290</sup> For McTyeire the School Motto was: ‘Live, Love and Grow’. St. Mary’s Motto was ‘Justice and Wisdom’.

<sup>291</sup> Interview with Gong Zhengguan, 9 May 2016, Beijing, 47:00.

<sup>292</sup> *The McTyeriean*, (Shanghai, 1924), p.5.

and relief that China had come through the Second World War.<sup>293</sup> At McTyeire these signs of sisterhood were taken even further in the class badge or ring. For example, the 1947 class ring bears the class motto ‘Magnanimity’ and the class year ‘47’ on a green (class colour) horse shoe (for good luck), and a chain (symbolising fraternity) surrounds it (see figs. 28 and 29). Rosalyn Koo explained: That’s our class ring. It has a lucky horseshoe, and someone in our class designed it. Every class had a ring and a class colour. You see, there were four colours: green, blue, lavender and red. And every four years it was repeated, but we didn’t have a ring until our senior three year.’<sup>294</sup>

Perhaps one of the most potent and lasting means of inculcating school identity was through the school and class songs. In the case of McTyeire, the first two stanzas of the school song inculcate a sense of loyalty to the school, alongside the message of the Christian uplift of China via her educated women:

(1)

Near the mighty Yangtze River  
In the heart of old Shanghai  
There’s a school for China’s Daughters  
Bringing truth and freedom nigh.

(2)

May she live and grow forever,  
Scatter knowledge far and near  
Till all China learns the lessons  
That we learn at old McTyeire.<sup>295</sup>

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<sup>293</sup> *The McTyeriean*, (Shanghai, 1946).

<sup>294</sup> Interview with Rosalyn Koo, 5 November 2017, San Mateo.

<sup>295</sup> McTyeire School Song, *The McTyeriean*, (Shanghai, 1933).

Thus, a distinctly gendered Christian School identity was inculcated alongside a sense of national identity at McTyeire. St. Mary's girls vividly recall 'Step Singing', where girls sang their school and class song on the steps outside the main hall. As the official St. Mary's School history volume details: 'At St. Mary's every year group all had a class song ... Every year there was a tradition of 'Step Singing', every class sang their own class song, and other songs, and conducted an important ceremony: The senior three girls gave a shield with the school motto 'Justice and Wisdom' written upon it to the senior two class of girls, symbolising that it was now their turn to take the lead at being at the top of the school, just as the elder daughter leaving the school and the receiving class must take the responsibility to lead the school.'<sup>296</sup> According to the memories of alumnae this was an important rite of passage and the singing of school songs and western classical hymns was accompanied by piano music. As Horowitz has highlighted, the ritualisation of these school traditions was an important marker of an independent student culture as they passed down and built on these student-led traditions to the next generation: 'College rituals which gave form to communal life cast a special aura over the landscape ... the final step singing, where seniors passed on their power to the class beneath them, the senior play, the festive dinner, and finally commencement itself, celebrated the success of the graduating class and framed their transition to the world outside.'<sup>297</sup>

As a result, a girl's school identity as a 'St. Mary's Girl' or a 'McTyeiran' was very strong throughout the 1920-40s. Such traditions gave girls a stable identity and sense of security during a period of unprecedented political and social upheaval. School traditions and rites of passage, as can be seen around the world in elite private schools, are vital part of students' identity formation and a bond of loyalty tying

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<sup>296</sup> Xu, *Shengmaliya nü xiao*, vol. 2, p. 182.

<sup>297</sup> Horowitz, *Alma Mater*, pp. 173-174.

them to their school and class. Girls at missionary schools in East China were active agents in this creative process, imaginatively combining and experimenting with different aspects of their experience at school, to create unique identities for themselves. These traditions, such as mottos, coats of arms, songs and colours gave students a sense of identity in something bigger and beyond them, allowing them a sense of transcendence from the real world and difficult conditions of the society and time in which they lived. The sense of tradition and history in transmitting such symbolic markers of identity is also of vital importance, as it is through their history and longevity that such traditions derive their legitimacy.<sup>298</sup>

Missionary schools' alumnae networks were also central in transmitting and ensuring the longevity of these unique school identities and traditions. Not only did they foster a sense of loyalty to school and class, alumnae were also key supporters of missionary schools financially. Indeed, the McTyeire yearbook was primarily established for the purpose of keeping alumnae up to date and interested in their alma mater's activities.<sup>299</sup> There is a dedicated 'Alumnae Section' in the St. Mary's and McTyeire yearbooks, which details the activities, experiences and achievements of the alumnae. Similarly, the Hongdao yearbooks stress the importance of alumnae in the creation of a network for Christian women upon graduation. Helen G. Siu, graduate of Hongdao in 1918, and later teacher at the school writes in 1932:

Though the school is only a middle school, it is a big school in Hangchow... Moreover, a great many graduates have now graduated from college or universities, and some have even gotten higher degrees, and some have married men who have high positions in society. If the Alumna members have a closer relationship with the school, it would not be hard to find funds for the school. I am glad that we have just raised

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<sup>298</sup> For more on how these traditions and rites of passage were created at private schools see Horowitz, *Alma Mater*, pp. 147-178.

<sup>299</sup> 'Forward', *The McTyeriean*, (Shanghai, 1917), p. 1.

several hundred dollars from the Alumnae members for a gift to present at the twentieth anniversary of the school to show the loyalty of the graduates to their mother school.<sup>300</sup>

St Mary's alumnae established a scholarship for Christian students in financial need, and donations from alumnae helped pay for repairs to McTyeire after the Second World War. During the republican era, wealthy and well-connected alumnae not only provided valuable financial support for the school, but also helped to bolster the school's reputation. The successful and prestigious careers and high social position of alumnae also provided girls with aspirational role models, and McTyeire alumnae were often invited to contribute to the school magazines. McTyeire missionary teacher Jean Craig recalled:

There were role models aplenty – alumnae distinguishing themselves in colleges and universities in China and overseas; alumnae on our faculty and in other schools; alumnae in Shanghai: in the home, in the church, in medicine, in business and even in Law. Zung Sieu Ling, class of 1920, graduated from Soochow university Law school and became China's first woman Lawyer. Another graduate opened and operated the Woman's Bank on Nanking Road.<sup>301</sup>

The alumnae association thus formed a network of support and influential contacts which girls could access upon graduation to gain higher education and career opportunities. Therefore, although at first developed in competition with each other for pupils and converts, by 1920-30, missionary schools for girls constituted a mutually supporting and reinforcing network for educated Christian women, especially between schools run by the same missions (such as Hongdao and Riverside Academy) which employed each other's graduates and pooled resources to

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<sup>300</sup> Helen G. Siu 'The Union Girls School as I see it', Anniversary Publication, Union Girls School, (Hangzhou, 1932), pp. 14-15.

<sup>301</sup> Jean Craig, 'A Brief History of McTyeire School for Girls, Shanghai, China' (1982), p. 8. YDS A236.08

send promising teachers abroad for further training.<sup>302</sup> Moreover, although the character, size, style, equipment and campus culture of each school varied greatly, missionary school graduates came out with a shared set of values, educational experiences and exposure to Christianity that allowed them to access this network and develop their own careers within it. Girls graduating from missionary schools could tap into this influential network of women in pursuing their future careers and social lives. Moreover, for those who aspired to become headmistresses, missionary societies afforded their graduates opportunities to gain higher degrees abroad, thus improving their own international networks, career opportunities and earning potential upon their return. For example, Hongdao principal Ellen J. Peterson explained in her letter of 13 November 1925 the need to provide international education opportunities for a Hongdao graduate, Chen Meiyu who she considered to have the potential to become a headmistress: ‘Miss Chen is very anxious to have a year or two of further study in America. She ought to have that if we are sometime to make her principal of our school, or some other school.’<sup>303</sup>

Thus, these networks of Christian educated women not only proved a vital resource for women in the republican era as they attempted to move from school into society, but also acted as networks of friendship, support and survival during the turbulent decades of the Cultural Revolution (when many graduates who remained in China were persecuted for having attended a ‘foreign’ school) and beyond. When tensions between nationalism and Christianity arose, girls’ school identities remained strong, and they used these identities and their alumnae networks to strengthen themselves during times at which their school came under attack from hostile forces in society. This creation of a strong school identity, therefore, in some ways helped

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<sup>302</sup> See Appendix 2.

<sup>303</sup> Ellen J. Peterson to Miss McVeigh, November 13 1925, BHS – 253-3-4.

girls to reconcile the tensions between nationalism and internationalism and navigate the changing political circumstances outside of the school (see chapter 3).

A desire to perpetuate their school traditions and identities can clearly be seen at the alumnae reunions of missionary schools today. Indeed, these networks of support and influence have survived to this day, as old girls remember their school in alumnae reunions all over the world. Today, it is the school and class songs, and signs and symbols of class and school loyalty which serve to connect alumnae to their school history and identity as McTyeire and St. Mary's students. Annual and semi-annual reunions for the schools are usually opened and closed by old-girls singing the school song and group photos of each graduating class. The McTyeire alumnae association also includes graduates of the Shanghai Number Three Girls' School at their reunions and the desire to carry forward their school history and its traditions is tangible at such events.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the missionary schools for girls which developed across East China in the period 1844-1949 varied greatly in terms of students' family backgrounds, fees, enrolment, curriculum, funding, and campus culture. Although in the early period (1844-1900) missionary schools grew gradually and could only attract the poorest students, by the early years of the Republic, a growing demand for female education meant that missionary schools rapidly expanded in numbers, equipment and curriculum. Smaller schools were merged and consolidated into union institutions in order to pool resources and compete more effectively for students. By 1920-30s, missionary schools were able to attract elite students of merchant and government family backgrounds. With the regional landscape of East China, Shanghai stands apart from Ningbo and Hangzhou, for its high number of schools, elite pupil

backgrounds, fees, level of funding and academic standards, particularly in the case of St. Mary's and McTyeire.

While missionary schools were the earliest educational options for girls and continued to provide a comparatively high proportion of middle school level education for girls, by the 1920s government schools for girls were outstripping missionary schools in their geographical spread, enrolment figures and provision of normal training. Mission schools were distinguished from government schools by their higher level of English, and strong school identities, bred through long-standing school traditions and influential alumnae networks. These networks of support meant that missionary schools' graduates had access to local, national and international opportunities through missionary school contacts and networks upon graduation. Missionary schools employed each other's graduates throughout this period, particularly between schools of the same denomination. In the case of St. Mary's, which did not register with the GMD government in the 1920s, the opportunities it provided for higher education at St. John's was not just a drawing point, but also a necessity if their graduates were to receive a higher education. As we shall see in the next chapter, although in the 1920s mounting nationalism characterised by anti-foreign and anti-Christian hostility took a toll on student enrolment, most schools recovered from these turbulent periods and the majority proceeded to register with the GMD government after 1927. Although becoming more secular in the 1930s, missionary schools retained their distinctive campus culture and strong alumnae networks, which were the outstanding features of these schools. The following chapters will explore in more detail the experiences of girls at missionary schools outlined above and how they negotiated their Christian, national and gendered identities within the turbulent events of the early twentieth century.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Christian Patriots or Foreign Puppets? Christianity and Nationalism in the Identities of Mission Schoolgirls in the 1920s

#### Introduction

In 1927 Margaret Fan (Fan Boli 范博理), former student of Riverside Academy, Ningbo, ran away from home to join the Northern Expedition, which was in the process of reuniting China under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek. Her father, Fan Mianqing 范冕卿, a Methodist pastor from Ningbo pursued her from Ningbo to Shanghai to Suzhou, always arriving just after the army had moved on. When he finally caught up with her in Nanjing he was shocked; she wore a torn military uniform, she was ill.<sup>304</sup> Margaret's story, which we shall return to at the end of this chapter, is reminiscent of the life of Xie Bingying 謝冰瑩, a student from a middle-class family in Hunan, who became a well-known writer in republican China. In her *Autobiography* and *War Dairies* Xie describes her motivation to join the Northern Expedition and her training at the Whampoa military academy in Wuchang.<sup>305</sup> As Louise Edwards has explored, Xie, along with the several thousand male and female students who joined Chiang Kai-Shek's Northern Expedition out of a burning patriotic conviction, took a truly radical step in the history of women's military participation in China. By becoming part of the first group of women to receive formal military training they challenged the gender norms that excluded women from military service.<sup>306</sup> However, while Xie was running away from a tyrannical mother who tried to deny her an education and wanted to force her into an arranged marriage,

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<sup>304</sup> Interview with Pastor Fan Aisi, 27 November 2015, Ningbo, 54:30.

<sup>305</sup> Tsui Chi (Trans)., *Autobiography of A Chinese Girl, A Genuine Autobiography by Hsieh Ping-Ying* (London, 1943) and Xie Bingying, *Xin congjun riji* (Hangkou, 1938).

<sup>306</sup> Louise Edwards, *Woman Warriors and Wartime Spies of China* (Cambridge, 2016), pp. 66-90.

what could have driven Margaret, a model missionary school student from a liberal Christian family to undertake such a radical step?

To answer this question we must consider the waves of nationalism and student protest which rocked Chinese society in the 1920s. We must also consider the local situation at Riverside Academy in Ningbo where Margaret had been a student. There are other parallels between Margaret's and Xie's stories. Xie had been expelled from a Norwegian missionary school in Yi Yang, Hunan, for defying the school authorities and leading her schoolmates to parade on the anniversary of May 7<sup>th</sup> (in memory of the Twenty-one Demands for extensive territorial and economic concessions in Manchuria, Shandong and Inner Mongolia forced upon the Chinese government on May 7<sup>th</sup> 1915 by a Japanese ultimatum during the First World War)). As Xie puts it: 'The result of my being patriotic was to be expelled'.<sup>307</sup> Similarly, Margaret was also prevented from graduating from Riverside Academy, having refused to publicly deny her participation in a patriotic rally in the aftermath of May Thirtieth, when it was reported in the local newspaper. Her brother believes that the decision of the Baptist principal, Dora Zimmerman, to expel his sister, radicalised Margaret, leading her to join the Northern Expedition. For this reason, it was also a decision that the headmistress later admitted to have regretted.<sup>308</sup>

These tensions between Christianity and nationalism, which arise out of Margaret's story are rooted in a rising nationalism, characterised by anti-foreign hostility, which rocked Chinese society throughout the 1920s. For Riverside Academy in Ningbo, where Margaret had been a student, the Northern Expedition of 1927 marked the climax of anti-Christian and anti-foreign feelings which had been simmering in society through the 1920s, occasionally exploding in episodes such as

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<sup>307</sup> Tsui Chi (Trans)., *Autobiography of A Chinese Girl*, p. 68.

<sup>308</sup> Interview with Pastor Fan Aisi, 27 November 2015, Ningbo, 54:30.

the May Thirtieth Incident of 1925.<sup>309</sup> Christian institutions, particularly missionary schools and churches, were targeted as highly visible manifestations of continued foreign ‘occupation’ of China, based on a series of unequal treaties. By the 1920s the growth in the social role of Christianity in Chinese society and its monopoly of China’s educational, medical and philanthropic institutions became increasingly concerning to Chinese intellectuals; it was a contributing factor in the formation of the anti-Christian movement which was launched in 1922 in response to the World Student Christian Federation Meeting held at Tsinghua University in January that year.<sup>310</sup> Patriotic left-wing students and intellectuals labelled missionary students as the ‘brainwashed’ puppets of foreigners who were facilitating the continued economic and cultural invasion of China by foreign forces. Nor were missionaries humble in their predictions of impending success, or cautious in the rhetoric they used to describe their efforts in China. In 1922 a survey of Protestant missions and their affiliated institutions was published under the inflammatory title *The Christian Occupation of China* by the China Continuation Committee.<sup>311</sup> Zealous missionaries often employed militaristic language in describing their efforts in China, referring to themselves as ‘God’s soldiers’, who were ‘doing battle’ with the ‘forces of heathenism’ and would bring about the impending ‘Christian conquest of China’. For example, the 1919 information booklet advertising the newly built Hangzhou Christian College (later Zhejiang University), includes pictures of the reconstructed Lingying Temple near the West Lake and the constructed Six Harmony Pagoda near the college site, under the caption ‘some of the opposing forces’, followed by images

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<sup>309</sup> For more on the Anti-Christian Movement See Jessie Gregory Lutz, *Chinese Politics and Christian Missions: The Anti-Christian Movements of 1920-1928* (London, 1988), and Ka-Che Yip, *Religion, Nationalism, and Chinese Students: The Anti-Christian Movement of 1922-1927* (Washington, 1980). See also Han Shu, ‘Shouhui jiaoyuquan yundong zai shen guan – cong shengyuehan daxue dao guanghua daxue’, in Li Ling and Xiao Qinghe (eds.), *Jidujiao yu jindai zhongguo jiaoyu* (Shanghai, 2018).

<sup>310</sup> Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges*, p. 219.

<sup>311</sup> Stauffer (ed.), *The Christian Occupation of China*, (Shanghai, 1922).

of the College's new laboratories and library, under the heading 'equipment to help overcome the opposing forces of superstition and ignorance.'<sup>312</sup> Statements such as these make it easy to understand how Christianity became intrinsically linked to foreign aggression and cultural imperialism, and as such became a prime target in the waves of nationalism and anti-foreignism which emerged with great force in the early twentieth century. In 1924 these anti-Christian left-wing students and intellectuals started the movement to take back educational rights (shouhui jiaoyu quanli yundong 收回教育權利運動). The movement started as a protest and walk-out by missionary school students in Trinity College in Guangzhou and spread to other missionary schools across the whole country, gaining momentum at particular moments of anti-foreign hostility such as May Thirtieth 1925 and the Northern Expedition of 1926-1927. Missionary schools had to tread carefully to ensure their survival in this turbulent period, and many chose to close their schools temporarily, re-opening when the situation had quietened.

This chapter will probe the ambiguities of being a pupil at a missionary school and how the lived reality of being a pupil at such a school defied the binary expectations of political discourses. How did female missionary middle school students in Shanghai, Ningbo and Hangzhou respond to and participate in the patriotic movements of the 1920s? Within such a fraught and contested environment, how did mission schoolgirls position themselves and negotiate their own roles? How did students reconcile the anti-imperial, anti-foreign and anti-Christian sentiment sweeping the country in the 1920s with their own identity as students at a foreign-run missionary school? How did they attack or defend their schools, distance themselves from them, and negotiate their own identities as Christians and patriotic Chinese

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<sup>312</sup> 'Hangzhou Christian College: Information and Illustrations', 1918, PHS- RG431-2-8

citizens? By looking closely at the writings of female middle school pupils we can glean a unique insight into how mission school students made sense of these competing and overlapping identities.

The story of rising student nationalism across the 1920s is a familiar one told by many scholars. Some have argued that missionary school pupils were essentially cut off from society, that their schools were ‘islands of extraterritoriality’ that isolated students, dissuaded and punished them for participation in patriotic movements sweeping China in the 1920-30s.<sup>313</sup> Although some missionary educators did seek to curb girls’ patriotic activities, for fears about the safety of their pupils and their schools, this did not stop missionary schoolgirls defying their teachers and becoming active participants and leaders in the movements in East China. Indeed, in some cases their status as missionary school students made them more conscious of their position and anxious to display their patriotism even more zealously. Ryan Dunch has shown how male Chinese Protestants became leaders in emerging social and political organisations in Fuzhou in the 1920s.<sup>314</sup> Dunch does not explore the role of female Chinese Protestants and this chapter builds on Dunch’s work by exploring how female students in East China used a gendered rhetoric of female service and self-sacrifice to reinforce their Christian and patriotic identities. Moreover, while most literature on the anti-Christian movements of the 1920s have focused on representations of missionary schools in this period, and on the schools’ reactions to these attacks on an institutional level, few studies have considered how female pupils at missionary schools responded to these movements. This chapter puts at the centre female students’ own voices and considers how students had agency to

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<sup>313</sup> Yeh, *Alienated Academy*, p. 211

<sup>314</sup> Dunch, *Fuzhou Protestants*, p.137

forge their own vision of a Christian nationalism in the face of and in response to such challenges.

This chapter argues that faced by hostile forces in society, missionary school students had agency to reject, combine and assimilate many of these discourses to forge their own understanding of how to be a patriotic Chinese Christian in this period. While students' reactions ranged from defence, to distancing and revolt against schools, they were not the 'brainwashed pawns' or 'running dogs' of foreigners that contemporary newspapers and later historical narratives have depicted them as. Far from being cut off from the concerns of local and national society, mission school students were deeply concerned with the local and national, social and political situation in the 1920s. In order to defend themselves and their schools from hostile forces in local society, missionary school students were keen to display their patriotism even more urgently than their non-missionary school counterparts. In their political and charitable activities they were able to demonstrate their Christianity and patriotism in new ways which were highly inflected by their gendered identities which, as will be explored in chapters four and five, were forming within shifting discourses on gender in this period.

This chapter will explore missionary schoolgirls' reactions to the various flashpoints or peaks in nationalism and anti-foreign sentiment throughout the 1920s, moving across space as well as time. We start in Shanghai, exploring St. Mary's and McTyeire students' responses to the May 4<sup>th</sup> protest. A close reading of their writings in the schools' magazines reveals them to be deeply influenced by their missionary educators' Christian and gendered values, in their pragmatic tactics and efforts to spread the patriotic message to their 'downtrodden and benighted sisters' in inner Chinese provinces. We will then move to Ningbo and Hangzhou to consider how

Riverside and Hongdao students responded to the hostility against missionary schools which flared up in the aftermath the May 30<sup>th</sup> incident of 1925, when unarmed Chinese protestors were shot by British police in Shanghai. Through the lens of their missionary teachers' correspondence we see how teachers often struggled to contain girls' patriotic spirits and, in some cases, sympathised with their students' cause. Finally, we will come back to Margaret Fan in Ningbo and consider how Riverside girls reacted to the climax of these tensions during the Northern Expedition of 1927-1928 and the movement to restore educational rights, during which time many missionary schools were occupied and forced to close, some of which did not recover.

### **Missionary schoolgirls' participation in the May Fourth Movement in Shanghai**

The hostility towards foreign intrusions in China can be traced back to their foundation upon the unequal treaties in the aftermath of the opium wars. As explored in appendix two, these anti-foreign tensions can be seen in the earliest days of McTyeire's history. However, in examining responses of missionary schoolgirls to the patriotic movements of the 1920s, it is helpful to start with the May Fourth Movement of 1919, as these are some of the earliest records we have of missionary schoolgirls' involvement and reaction to national politics. This was a time of great fluidity and openness to new ideas and possibilities. American YWCA Secretary, Eleanor MacNeil, writing in a supplement to the Shanghai YWCA *Green Year Magazine* in 1925, captures this sense of flux and great change sweeping through Chinese society: 'Education, family life, religious ideals, economic life, personal freedom are all being revised and in many cases radically changed. There is nothing stable and visible above the horizon; everything is in flux. Every new theory, every new educational experiment, every lately developed conception of sociology, every

radical criticism of the established order is making its way to China, and this heady mixture is the daily diet of a great many students.’<sup>315</sup> May Fourth intellectuals, influenced by positivist thinkers, used science and reason to do battle with the forces of ‘ignorance’ and ‘superstition’, and all forms of religion became a target of attack. For example, the February 1921 issue of *Young China* (Shaonian Zhongguo 少年中國) included a speech by Bertrand Russell, then on a lecture tour in China and articles by young Chinese left-wing scholars: Wang Xingong (王星拱), Li Shizeng (李石曾), Yun Daiying (恽代英) and Tu Xiaoshi (屠孝實), who argued that scientific thought was a better foundation for progress than religious dogma which infringed on freedom of thought.<sup>316</sup>

Scholars debate the extent to which mission school students were politically active in the student movements of the 1920s compared to their government school counterparts. For example, Wenxin Yeh argues: ‘it was missionary colleges like Hujiang and St. John’s that actively sought to erect barriers between the city and the campus that created an inward-directed student culture in the midst of urban distraction.’<sup>317</sup> In contrast, Ryan Dunch, in his study of Fuzhou Protestants, has shown how Protestants in Fuzhou were at the forefront of nation building efforts, and were not just active participants, but leaders of new government and civic organisations emerging in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Missionary schools in Fuzhou, Dunch argues, were at the forefront of inculcating a nascent

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<sup>315</sup> Eleanor MacNeil ‘The situation in Shanghai’ in *Supplement to the Green Year: Concerning the Events on and Since May 30 in Shanghai*, July 1 1925, p. 4.

<sup>316</sup> Lutz, *Chinese Politics and Christian Missions*, p. 34.

<sup>317</sup> Wen-hsin Yeh, *The Alienated Academy: Culture and politics in Republican China, 1919-1937*, (London, 1990), p. 211. Yeh sites evidence from the student handbook at Hujiang University to show how tightly the college administration sought to control students’ social life, gatherings and extra-circular activities. Students at Hujiang were not allowed to leave campus (aside from Saturdays) without permission. My findings for missionary schools show that in spite or in some cases because of such restrictions missionary schoolgirls were determined to go out in public to display their patriotism and show they were not ‘cut off’ from local or national concerns. As we shall see, missionary educators’ attitudes towards girls’ participation on such public displays of patriotism varied.

national identity in their students by appropriating the signs and symbols of nationalism in their daily routines of school life, such as saluting the flag and singing patriotic songs.<sup>318</sup>

Evidence from missionary schoolgirls in Shanghai during the early period of the May Fourth movement, confirms Dunch's finding for male Protestants in Fuzhou. Far from being 'cut off' or 'isolated' in their foreign-run schools, girls at McTyeire and St. Mary's were deeply concerned with the national situation. Evidence from the student yearbooks at missionary schools during the early 1920s reveals the extent to which students' concerns were tied to the national situation and their zeal to demonstrate their patriotic sentiments comes through strongly. The 1920 edition of the St. Mary's annual magazine, *The Phoenix*, includes several articles detailing students' involvement in the May Fourth movement taking place in the previous academic year. In her article, magazine editor Wong We-Kyoen (Huang Huijuan, 黄慧鵑), describes how girls at St. Mary's first heard of the student protest in Beijing and their reaction to it:

The sun of May seventh had not yet shone upon St. Mary's. While we were walking in front of our school waiting for the morning service to come, a great noise was heard from over the wall, from St. John's playground. This kept us wondering all morning. At twelve o'clock, as we were rushing from our classrooms, we saw a newspaper, with half a column marked in dark blue, put on a big board in the hall. This paper told us of the political unrest in Peking.<sup>319</sup>

St. Mary's students' first reaction to the news was to form their own club: 'St Mary's Student Association', but they did not consider joining the newly formed Shanghai Student Union because of its distance from their school. However, when they were criticised for not joining in they elected two students from their school and the

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<sup>318</sup> Dunch, *Fuzhou Protestants*, p.137

<sup>319</sup> Wong We-Kyoen, 'St Mary's and the student movement' in *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1920), p. 53.

principal approved of sending these representatives to the Shanghai Student Union. Girls at St. Mary's eagerly joined in the anti-Japanese boycott. Their representatives returned from the meeting of the Shanghai Student Union with lengths of cloth, and undertook to make at least 500 cotton cloth hats to replace the Japanese straw hats universally worn in the summer. The girls asked for a day's holiday to achieve this goal and again were given permission by their teachers to have a holiday.

Although their foreign teachers did not join them in their industrious work over the next two days, the foreign staff at St. Mary's appear to have supported their students in their patriotic activities and made no move, at least at first, to prohibit their participation in public meetings and events. Wong recalls: 'Saturday was the day of the memorial meeting for Kuo Chung-Kwang 郭欽光, the first student who died for his country since the student movement began. Nearly all the girls went – only the little ones were kept in the school. Standing on the recreation ground with thousands of unknown students we still had one thing in common; that is, an aspiration to copy the deceased in his noble attitude towards his country.'<sup>320</sup> (fig. 30 shows the student participation in these patriotic activities).

Strikes continued over the next few days and girls at St. Mary's busily employed themselves in making 'handkerchiefs, moneybags and lace, hoping to get some money for the Student's Union.'<sup>321</sup> However, the administration, fearing that the strike would not end, closed the school early for the summer: 'But it was not long that we could work this way, for while we were putting away our sewing one evening, the president ran into the room saying that St. Mary's was going to be closed. The news was too sad to be true! We ran into the hall, and alas! We found that the news was true. The abruptness which all our work ended and that situation of

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<sup>320</sup> Wong, 'St Mary's and the student movement', p. 54.

<sup>321</sup> Ibid.,

our country made us very sad indeed.’<sup>322</sup> The efforts of missionary educators to curb girls’ patriotic activities were ultimately unsuccessful, and girls remained keen to demonstrate their patriotism. Despite their disappointment, throughout the summer of 1919 St. Mary’s girls continued their patriotic work, and when the school resumed in September they balanced their studies and their devotion to the patriotic cause well: ‘The students studied their lessons and attended their regular student meetings. Their representatives went to meetings in town and then returned to their desks.’<sup>323</sup>

In her article ‘October 10 1919’, student Eur Yang-Sih (Ouyang Xue, 歐陽雪) describes with pride her school’s participation in the National Day celebration in 1919 along with other missionary and government schools in Shanghai:

‘The sky was blue, the sun was bright and the weather was mild; people were happy and children joyous. Our national flags were hung at the gates of shops, while flower towers and lanterns were seen everywhere. Celebrations were held in nearly every school and in every society. A holiday was given to the people of our nation as well as to the students. Do you know what that day was? That was our National Day of 1919 ... The central celebration was held in the Public Recreation Ground, West Gate, where all people gathered. Inside the ground there was a stage in each of the four corners, and there gathered four schools – Government First commercial college, Ming-ze-yah-wei, Government second Normal college, and Pootung middle school. Each stage was decorated with flowers, foliage, and flags. Everywhere there were many peddlers selling small flags; in the centre of the ground there were two great national flags.’<sup>324</sup>

National and school flags feature prominently in Eur’s narrative of the day’s events along with the singing of patriotic songs. In the evening the students proceeded through the streets with lanterns: ‘When we turned into a street we all gave three

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<sup>322</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>323</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>324</sup> Eur Yang-Sih, ‘October 10 1919’ in *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1920), p. 58.

cheers for the Republic of China. On the way we sang our national song and patriotic songs.’<sup>325</sup> National flags, school flags and songs fill the writings of another St. Mary’s girl, Tsang Kyi-ying (Zhang Jiying, 張繼英), who in the *Phoenix* of 1920 describes the memorial service held at Public Recreation Ground in May 1920 in memory of Guo Qinguang 郭欽光, the Peking University student (mentioned above) who died after being wounded by police during the May Fourth demonstrations, becoming the first student martyr of the May Fourth movement (see fig. 3):

It was a gloomy day at the end of May and the sun was too sad to appear. In the Public Recreation Ground, Shanghai, eighty-two bodies of students, both boys and girls, were standing solemnly in lines of exquisite order before an elevated platform on which was hung the portrait of a gallant youth, amid wreaths and memorial writings. National flags, school flags, and memorial couplets from each students’ body waved in the air. Tennis hats, used by every student in place of Japanese hats or parasols, formed a wave of white. This was a memorial meeting in honour of a brave patriot.<sup>326</sup>

Henrietta Harrison has explored how symbols of nationalism were vital in forging the identity of modern Chinese citizens. As Harrison asserts: ‘during the early twentieth century in China rituals and ceremonies were part of the process through which a sense of national identity was constructed.’<sup>327</sup> It was through participating in such ceremonies and parades, that St. Mary’s schoolgirls felt deeply connected to other schools in Shanghai society in their patriotic concern for the nation. In the St. Mary’s yearbook for 1920, Eur is described by her classmates as: ‘A lady who has a fair knowledge of political affairs. Enthusiasm fills her heart and radicalism characterises her actions.’<sup>328</sup>

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<sup>325</sup> Eur Yang-Sih, ‘October 10 1919’, p. 58.

<sup>326</sup> Tsang Kyi Ying, ‘A Memorial Meeting’, *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1920) p. 59.

<sup>327</sup> Harrison, *The Making of the Republican Citizen*, p. 4.

<sup>328</sup> ‘The Class of 1920’, *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1920), p. 7.

However, tensions and hostility towards foreign presence in China are also evident in Eur's narrative. She expresses her anger that the procession was not allowed to pass through the international settlement by the Shanghai Municipal Council: 'Afterwards the procession marched out to walk through all the streets in the native city. At first we decided to walk through the concessions too, but the Municipal Council did not allow our procession to pass. We were angry at first, but we were also thinking that if we wanted to succeed, we must be patient, so we marched again to the Recreation Ground, and closed the morning meeting.'<sup>329</sup> In both Eur and Wong's writings students display their awareness of the fact that foreign institutions in China are posing a threat to their patriotic endeavours. In Wong's article, it was the school administration which cut their protest short, while in Eur's article it is Shanghai Municipal Council which ran the international settlement. However, in both narratives, students come to a compromise, deciding to bide their time in order to ultimately achieve their ends and be able to display their patriotism. The girls' more pragmatic approach here departs from a more radical stance taken by an early generation of Chinese feminists, such as Tang Qunying 唐群英, who in the course of their suffragette activities in 1911 disrupted parliamentary sessions, verbally abused and physically assaulted male politicians who had betrayed their cause.<sup>330</sup> Eur's narrative show that some St. Mary's girls may have been more sympathetic to the Chinese suffragists, such as Zhang Zhaohan 張昭漢, who pushed for gradual change, a view which their conservative missionary educators were more

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<sup>329</sup> Eur, 'October 10 of 1919', p. 58.

<sup>330</sup> David Strand, *An Unfinished Republic, Leading by Word and Deed in Modern China* (Berkeley, 2011), pp. 82-120.

in sympathy with.<sup>331</sup> The intersection of girls' Christian, national and gendered identities will be further explored in the next chapter.

What were missionary teachers' attitudes towards student participation in patriotic activities? As Jessie Gregory Lutz has explored, many missionary educators, although initially welcoming of the movement as a chance to show their solidarity with the other educational institutions, soon became tired of the academic disruption this caused, and wary of where these strikes would lead.<sup>332</sup> At missionary schools for girls, reactions to student participation in the patriotic rallies varied, while some administrators chose to close their schools to prevent student unrest, others took a more lenient view. An important shift in ideas about 'appropriate feminine behaviour' had also taken place since the First World War and the suffrage movement in the West. While missionary educators were shocked at the 'unfeminine' participation of female students in the 1911 revolution, by the May Fourth period of 1919, teachers at girls' schools appeared to have supported their students' participation in public rallies as an important step in the fight for female independence and suffrage. The importance of May Fourth as a ground-breaking step for the public participation of women in political rallies was not lost on St. Mary's students. For example, in her article 'The Student Movement in Shasi' Kyun Ming-Ge describes the struggle of female students in Shashi 沙市 in Hubei province to be allowed to participate in patriotic activities alongside their male patriots:

On the thirteenth of May, 1919, an innocent telegram from Peking came to the students of Shasi, a small city of Hupeh. The boys of the commercial school called a meeting and decided to go out to wake up the girl students and the other boy students in Shasi, so they might form an association like that of the Shanghai students. After this meeting all of

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<sup>331</sup> Strand, *Unfinished Republic*, p. 108.

<sup>332</sup> Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges*, p. 212.

them went to the principals of the girls' schools established by the American Episcopal Church mission, the Roman Catholic Church Mission, and the Swedish Church Mission, asking them to permit their girls to join the association for the sake of China. All the girls' students were allowed to join the boys.<sup>333</sup>

Despite the female students of Shashi being chaperoned by their teachers, the reaction of local society to these female students (some of whom had bound feet) in public was far from welcoming:

These girls had their teachers for their leaders who walked before them. When this procession was on the streets many people came around the girls as if they were seeing a strange sight. Most of the people criticised them and said evil against them ... but the funniest thing was the strange action the girl students themselves. Some of them stumbled on the streets paved with stones, as their feet were very small and they were not able to walk on such a rough road. Some had faces blushing as roses when they passed through the immense crowd. Many who had bound feet called sedan chairs and rode in them as brides who have joined the procession ... The people of Shashi were cold-blooded indeed ... in addition to paying no attention the Students Movement, they said evil things against the girls and prevented many of them from going to school again or attending meetings with boys.<sup>334</sup>

According to Kyun Ming-Ge, it was only after the arrival of several mission-educated women from Shanghai, Beijing, Xiamen and other metropolitan areas that the movement was effective:

After one month's silence in the Student Association many girls who were the students of St. Mary's, McTyeire, St. Hilda's, Ginling College, and Peking Normal school for Women came back to Shashi for their vacations. The minds of these patriotic students were inflamed. As they wanted to help the students of Shashi to stand on a higher plain they called

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<sup>333</sup> Kyung Ming-ge, 'The student meeting in Shasi', *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1920), p. 63.

<sup>334</sup> Kyung, 'The student meeting in Shasi', p. 63.

a meeting at Miss Zi's house and formed a temporary union ... Having obtained help from the ladies who came back to Shasi from other places, the students again held meetings regularly. People in Shasi again stopped buying Japanese goods. These ladies not only aroused patriotism by making speeches, but by making jokes as well. As there were many people who still wore the straw hats made in Japan, Miss Kyung [the author] one of these six ladies, put one of the same straw hats on the head of a dog and walked through all the streets with this dog in order to scorn all those who wore Japanese straw hats. Wherever this dog went, crowd after crowd came to find out what was the matter. After seeing this many people burned up their hats made in Japan because they thought that they were dogs if they put on that kind of hat again. Indeed this joke helped the students' movement a great deal. It awakened the dull minds of the ignorant people of Shasi.<sup>335</sup>

Kyung's article shows her conviction of the importance of the role of educated female students (such as herself) in arousing effective patriotism, in true missionary style. Indeed, her article shows how St. Mary's girls applied a missionising flair in their patriotic activities. According to Kyung, the people of Shasi are pitied for their lack of patriotic zeal and backward attitude towards women. It is the responsibility of mission-educated elite women to awaken them, and uplift their foot-bound sisters into a position of political activism and independence, much as their missionary teachers were aiming to inculcate in them a Christian zeal for reform. Patriotism replaces Christianity in this student's solution to how the women of Shasi can be uplifted, and the tone of the article is strikingly reminiscent of the sense of mission and conviction of their own cultural, educational and social superiority, held by many female missionary educators. Missionary educated girls thus positioned themselves at the forefront of the patriotic women's movement in this period. An alliance of enlightened missionary school educated girls could save their ridiculed

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<sup>335</sup> Kyung, 'The student meeting in Shasi', p. 65.

foot-bound sisters and elevate and educate the populace of their national duty: ‘After the six well-educated ladies came from other schools, patriotism was once more developed among the people of the different classes in Shasi. Everyone wished to be a true citizen and was willing to promote the welfare of China.’<sup>336</sup>

While female missionary students’ responses to the May Fourth Movement ranged from radical protest to thoughtful reflection, their desire to help their country and take active part in protests and rallies comes through strongly. Indeed, while they weigh up the multiplicity of ideas being circulated during this moment of great fluidity, the solution, as it appears to students at St. Mary’s and McTyeire, is the need for education as key for national strengthening and women’s suffrage. As McTyeire student Tsu Tsung Kyung (Zhu Chunjing, 朱春景) advocates in her 1922 article, ‘The present situation of popular democracy in China’:

The students’ movement in 1919 against the signing away of Shantung, and the boycott of Japanese goods are the reaction produced by this genuine nationalism and patriotism. Now her people are busy with the redemption of the kiaochoo-Tsinan Railway. The right of suffrage has not been extended yet for the majority of her people have not been educated. The women of Canton are demanding the right of suffrage but it has not been granted. I do hope that the day will soon come when Chinese women can vote.<sup>337</sup>

Kyung thus links the patriotic student movement to the women’s movement by suggesting that China can only become strong by allowing women to participate in politics. Chinese women, and in particular (according to girls at McTyeire and St. Mary’s), missionary educated Chinese women, are thus presented as the solution to China’s national problems. Tsao Ming Zok 趙敏淑 (McTyeire class of 1922) writes:

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<sup>336</sup> Kyung, ‘The student meeting in Shasi’, p. 65.

<sup>337</sup> Tsu Tsung Kyung, ‘Present situation of Popular Democracy in China’, *The McTyerian* (Shanghai, 1922).

‘It is not too much to say that China’s future is in the hands of present day women ... The call for women leadership of the highest order is a call for advanced learning, a call for betterment of the home and society, then a call for social service. The need in all spheres of life is a challenge to every trained women to-day. But those who have received special training will better meet the opportunity.’<sup>338</sup> Christian educated Chinese women thus saw themselves as a chosen group whose ‘special training’ conferred both power and responsibility. By virtue of their Christian education it was their moral and patriotic duty to uplift their backward and uneducated counterparts and bring them to a realisation of their patriotic duty and rights as women in the cause of strengthening the nation and resisting imperialism. Thus, in their Christian education Chinese women found the imperative to help their downtrodden sisters, and while borrowing the methods of their missionary teachers, adapted the message by harnessing the mutually reinforcing goals of patriotism and the women’s movement to Christianity. Christian women’s social service activities and leadership roles, which missionary school for girls encouraged, will be further explored in chapter six.

### **‘Running dogs of the imperialists’: Missionary schools in the aftermath of May 30<sup>th</sup> 1925 in Ningbo and Hangzhou.**

During the patriotic student activities of May Fourth anti-foreign hostility was directed mainly towards Japan, and foreign imperial aggression against China in general, rather than at missionary schools and churches as institutions. Girls at missionary schools expressed their patriotism by contributing to the student rallies organised by their local student unions, writing articles to express their patriotic sentiments and via a boycott of Japanese-made goods. This situation was to change a few years later as the anti-foreign and anti-Christian sentiments circulating in society

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<sup>338</sup> Tsao Ming Zok, ‘The Call for Women Leaders’, *The McTyerian* (Shanghai, 1922), p. 34.

came to a head in 1925 in the aftermath of the May Thirtieth Incident in Shanghai. The shooting of a Chinese factory worker at a Japanese-run cotton mill led to student protests and demonstrations in Shanghai. When a group of students was arrested, their fellow students marched on the police station on Nanjing Road, in support of their classmates. The British police force, alarmed by the size and momentum of the crowd, opened fire on the unarmed protesters, killing and wounding dozens. News of the shooting sent shockwaves throughout the country, stirring up of old grievances about the extra-territorial privileges that foreigners enjoyed in China under the system of unequal treaties. Students in cities across China began to stage their own protests and demonstrations.

In Ningbo, news of the massacre dominated the papers for several months after the incident. The public comment section of the Ningbo *Shishi Gongbao*, 時事公報 was filled with debates about the extent to which Christianity could be divorced from imperialism. *Shishi gongbao* was established in June 1920 in the aftermath of the May Fourth Movement by Jin Runxiang 金潤庠, a native of Ningbo and a leader of the group for National Salvation in Zhejiang (Jiuguo shi ren tuan, 救國十人團). The newspaper thus had a left-leaning political orientation from its foundation and its editors were strongly influenced by May Fourth ideology. Indeed, its founder Jin Runxiang had been expelled from Presbyterian Feidi middle school (*Feidi Zhongxue* 斐迪中學) for a rebellion against his foreign missionary teachers. The newspaper had a wide readership amongst the commercial classes in Ningbo, with a daily print run of 15,000 copies by 1940.<sup>339</sup> We must bear in mind the educational experiences and political orientation of the editors and owners of these newspapers when using them to glean information on the relationship between missionary schools and

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<sup>339</sup> Wu Weinong, 'Jin Zhenxiang yu shishi gongbao' in *Ningbo wenshi ziliao*, vol. 3. (Ningbo, 1985), pp. 182-192.

society in Ningbo. It is unsurprising that we find many voices critical of Christianity and missionary schools at flashpoints of anti-imperialist tension. For example, on 8 August 1925, a certain Zhang Chuanshen, 張傳申 critiques the hypocrisy of missionaries for expounding the values of equality, universal love and freedom, while their governments murder his compatriots and refuse to allow students to participate in patriotic activities:

Christian truth includes equality, universal love and freedom. Today the British Empire and Japan use their strength to bully the weak, not only have they killed our students, workers and merchants, but they have also gathered a fleet of battleships for war. Is this universal love? No matter how our government has resisted, not only have they never compromised, they even blame our government for not protecting the foreigners who live here. Is this equality? Moreover, they obstruct our people from speaking in public, and prohibit our people to strike. Is this freedom? You, Christian States, always talk about peace and human rights. Such liars!<sup>340</sup>

Chinese Christian voices can also be heard in *Shishi Gongbao*, trying to defend themselves by attempting to divorce Christianity from imperialism. For example, Lin Wentian 林聞天, explains that Chinese Christians are also deeply concerned for the patriotic movement and complains how his countrymen ‘take all of the evils in society and blame them on Christianity ... Actually every country’s government has imperialistic tendencies, industry is also imperialistic, however only Christianity completely lacks the taint of imperialism. The bravest of those who resist imperialism, we Christians are also Chinese citizens, we were never unpatriotic.’<sup>341</sup> Lin critiques the rash and unthinking nationalism that some radicals were advocating. Moreover, to his detractors’ scorn and annoyance no doubt, he advocates that

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<sup>340</sup> Zhang chuanshen, ‘Jidu zhenli he zai?’ *Shishi Gongbao*, 1925.08.08.

<sup>341</sup> Lin Wentian ‘Jidujtu duiyu shiju de ganxiang he taidu’, *Shishi gongbao*, 1925.9.4

Chinese Christians use Jesus's teaching 'love your enemies' to bring others to a realisation of the Christian truth and thus neutralise those who were currently attacking them.<sup>342</sup>

Lin's comments are intended to directly refute other voices in the paper who were fiercely attacking missionary schools, denouncing them as primary tools in the Christian cultural invasion of China. In his article *Fu Lue 傅掠* clearly links Christian missionary education with imperial invasion of China by capitalist countries. Fu explains how Christian schools are creating a class of English educated 'lackeys' of foreigners who willingly do their bidding in the commercial industries of the treaty ports and are thus aiding foreigners' economic invasion of China. He calls on missionary school students to leave their schools rather than become the tools of foreign invasion:

Missionary schools are not only a form of cultural invasion; they are also a tool of economic invasion. An example will follow: Missionary schools focus on English. Because of the principals' recommendation to foreign companies and foreign services, after graduation, under the false name of spreading religion, they actually cultivate workers for economic invasion. In this way, missionary schools and economic invasion actually have a very close relationship ... my countrymen, after this massacre, how can we still allow missionary schools to exist? What is the remedy to this situation? It is to call on those students who are at schools under the control of foreigners to leave.<sup>343</sup>

Christian education came under sharp attack as a means of indoctrinating and denationalising students. One father, writing in *Shishi Gongbao*, explains he fears that his son has become 'westernised' through his education at the Presbyterian boys school in Ningbo: 'Just look at my young son, he received an education in Siming

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<sup>342</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>343</sup> Fu Lue, 'Jiaohui xuexiao yu jingji qinlue', *Shishi Gongbao*, 1925.08.07.

middle school (四明中學), for less than three years, and now is almost completely westernised, apart from his little knowledge of English of knowing ABCD, as for other classes, he has not obtained any achievement, only Protestant bible stories and American songs and how to pray and such things.’<sup>344</sup> Such a statement reveals the mercantile and utilitarian motivations of the Ningbo middle classes for sending their children to missionary schools in this period: in order to equip them with a high level of English which would help them secure a lucrative job in the treaty port economy upon graduation. Similarly, Zhang Ruiyun 張瑞雲 (St. Mary’s, class of 1952) remembered that her grandfather allowed her father to study at American Episcopal missionary school in Suzhou, (*Taowu zhongxue*, 桃塢中學) on the condition that he was expressly forbidden to imbibe Christianity. Zhang Ruiyun explained that their family were not Christians and her grandfather feared that his son might change his lifestyle and habits, or more worryingly perhaps be convinced to devote his life to the Church.<sup>345</sup> Ironically, having a student body from mainly non-Christian merchant families who were uninterested in religion (or actively anti-Christian) was the very outcome that missionaries feared when they debated the pros and cons of introducing English into their curriculum (see chapter two).

The most damning indictment against the missionary schools came from ex-missionary pupils themselves. For example, in his article entitled ‘A few important reasons to leave missionary school’, former missionary pupil Lin Shiguang, 林時光 details his reasons for leaving missionary school: Religion should not be obligatory in the missionary school curriculum, he has suffered from having to study the bible

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<sup>344</sup> Wang Qixian, ‘Wo he jiaohui xuexiao xuesheng de fuxiong tan Hua’, *Shishi Gongbao*, 1925.08.01

<sup>345</sup> Interview with Zhang Ruiyun, 10 May 2016, Beijing.

which is unscientific and been forced to listen to priests' lectures which are dull and boring:

We believe that education is education and religion is religion. Education and religion should not be mixed ... We in missionary schools have bible study classes, maybe some people think that the bible is interesting; however the majority think it is boring, and dry, a waste of time. In addition, the teachers who teach the bible, most of them, their way of thinking is outmoded and they do not have any scientific knowledge; they cannot use a scientific method to understand the facts of the bible. We wish bible study was not included in the curriculum, but those westerners who are zealous Christians, are stubborn, and unwilling to remove this bible study class, we feel that to negotiate with them is almost impossible, so until today we are still far from reaching a point of negotiation. We are greatly disappointed; therefore, we have left the mission school. Those people, who believe in Christianity, admittedly they should worship God, but those who do not believe should not be compelled to worship. Inside missionary schools, all the students have to worship, no matter if you believe or not, they force everyone to go to worship, this has made us extremely discontented ... Because we have undergone all of these hardships, we have decided to leave missionary schools.<sup>346</sup>

Lin feels that Christian schools must be forced to register with the government and religious classes and services made non-compulsory. Similarly, Gan Mengxiong 干孟雄, a former missionary school student writes to those students who have not left yet, urging them to leave, otherwise they will certainly be labelled the 'running dogs of the imperialists':

I am a missionary school student. I am not going to be defeated by those religious restrictions, and following the outside world's censure I have immediately withdrawn myself ... 'Missionary Schools' these four characters, to my mind, have become an out-dated phrase. To my

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<sup>346</sup> Lin Shiguang, 'tuoli jiaohui xuexiao de ji zhong yuanyin', *Shishi Gongbao*, 1925.9.14 (3.2)

surprise a few days ago, after reading the article of one of the columnists in this newspaper, ‘that the students who were dismissed from the missionary school, already fifty of the students have again registered themselves at that place’, suddenly my blood surged like a tide. Having read this article, I wept and want to tell those students who still remain in missionary schools: ‘You students who have not left missionary schools – Just think about this massacre in Shanghai, it has made a stir across the whole country, the cause was the maltreatment of Chinese labourers by foreigners.’ In this way I can say directly, apart from England and Japan who are clearly our enemies, America, France and Italy, are also in a despicable position. You young people, no matter what country established your school, you must not return to them, otherwise, you will be cursed as running dogs of the imperialists, and traitors of your countrymen, and that is how it should be.<sup>347</sup>

Gan explains that in Ningbo many of the students of several schools have already left, including English Methodist Feidi middle school (斐迪), CMS Trinity boys’ school (三一) Yongjiang (甬江), Presbyterian Chongjing (崇敬) and Baptist girls’ school Chongde (崇德). He even claims that missionary teachers were trying to violently stop their students from leaving: ‘but the foreigners protest to the extreme, do not allow any request to participate [in the patriotic movement] and take this as an insult. For example, one missionary school headmaster who destroyed a national flag, another school headmaster used a gun [to threaten students].’<sup>348</sup> He goes on to explain that some students may be under the foreigners’ control because they receive a scholarship for their studies. However, he cannot understand how the parents of these students are not yet awakened to the danger and admonishes them: ‘Recovering educational rights certainly is a patriotic imperative, since the May Fourth Movement we have heard this kind of call, now it is also being implemented in Ningbo ... Those

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<sup>347</sup> Gan Mengxiong, ‘Fenggao na hai liu bu li jiaohui xuexiao de tongxue ji juhua’, *Shishi gongbao*, 1925.08.06, 3.2

<sup>348</sup> *Ibid.*,

fathers of the missionary school students who allow their sons to remain in the missionary schools, they soon turn their heads and look back, ah! How can you still not have left yet? Why do you not quickly leave?’<sup>349</sup> He points out that in Ningbo there many other educational institutions to which they could send their sons, and tries to shame family heads into removing their sons by highlighting that only three types of family would still send their sons to missionary school – Christian families, poor families and criminals.<sup>350</sup>

Similarly, in Shanghai missionary school students at St. John’s and St. Mary’s responded with their feet to the heavy-handed way in which their principals dealt with the May 30<sup>th</sup> incident. At St. John’s, when President Francis Lister Hawks Pott refused to admit outside representatives of the student movement to speak on campus or allow the National flag to be flown at half-mast when classes were not in session, over half the college students and three-quarters of the middle school students chose to leave the university. They formed their own rival institution, Hua Guang University 光華大學– literally meaning ‘The glory of China’.<sup>351</sup> The walk-out included nearly all of the Chinese faculty.<sup>352</sup> St. Mary’s and McTyeire also suffered a severe drop in students after the incident. For example, student enrolment fell from 360 in 1925 to 280 in 1926 at St. Mary’s.<sup>353</sup>

In Hangzhou, girls at Hongdao were keen to express their patriotism and protest against foreign extraterritorial privileges in China after the May Thirtieth

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<sup>349</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>350</sup> Gan Mengxiong, *Fenggao na hai liu bu li jiaohui xuexiao de tongxue ji juhua*, Shishi gongbao, 1925.08.07, 3.2

<sup>351</sup> Elizabeth J. Perry, ‘Managing Student Protest in Republican China: Yenching and St. John’s Compared’, in *Frontiers of History in China*, 8.1 (2013), p.8.

<sup>352</sup> Yeh, *Alienated Academy*, p. 84.

<sup>353</sup> ‘Ben xiao sanshi nian mou renshu bijiao biao’, *Sheng Maliya nü xiao wushi zhou jinian te kan* (Shanghai, 1931).

incident. Baptist missionary teacher, Florence Webster, reveals in a letter dated 12 July 1925 the troubled situation at Hongdao:

As far as our school was concerned, we had no real trouble but things were very tense and we didn't know what minute the girls might just take a notion to walk out, in fact we had a letter one night warning us that they were going the next day. So we felt that we were on a volcano which might break forth any time. Not that we were in any danger but just that everything was so uncertain, we worried so for fear the girls would do things they would be sorry for and which their parents would not want them to do. Their first mass meeting was held the day the other students in Hangchow were parading as a protest against the shooting in Shanghai and as they were meeting other students were marching around the compound yelling such things as "foreign slaves", "Down with the Mission Schools", and it was no wonder the girls got almost frantic. One girl got up and made a very impassioned speech whereat the other girls with one accord bowed their heads and wept, and some stamped their feet. I felt sorry for the poor things and was glad when it was decided to let them go out to parade. Marching in the hot sun for three hours may not be the best way of showing one's patriotism, but to me it seemed a pretty good way of letting off steam, and if they had been forced to hold in their seething feelings I think their reaction later might have been more serious. As it was they came back at noon, hot and tired but too good sports to admit it, and went to afternoon classes as usual. The girls sent delegates daily to the students' union, had a campaign in school to raise funds for the strikers, and also went out on the streets between 4 and 6 for the same purpose, but all classes with the exception of singing, handwork and gym went on as usual.<sup>354</sup>

While Webster uses a somewhat patronising tone to describe girls' participation in the patriotic movements organised by students in Hangzhou, she is not without sympathy for their feelings and believes it wise for Christian educators to allow girls

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<sup>354</sup> Florence Webster to Mabel Rae McVeigh, Mokanshan, 12 July 1925, BHS – BMI – Pre WW2-G1-75-9.

to take part in patriotic activities, for fear that the ‘volcanoes’ of feeling could erupt if they tried to contain them. She also demonstrates an understanding that girls’ identities as missionary school students were far from straightforward during this period.

However, student unrest did not quickly die down at Hongdao after students had expressed their patriotic feelings in public as Webster had hoped. Webster writes on 29 January 1926, at the time when registration of the school was being discussed, that girls complained about having to attend bible study and religious services: ‘There is some unrest now amongst the non-Christian girls in the school. They ask, “Why do we have to go to church when we are not Christians?” “Why do we have to study the bible when we don’t believe in it?”. So we cannot tell when this may cause trouble and can only hope that our Bible classes and religious services may be made of real interest to them and that the issue may not come up.’<sup>355</sup> In the same letter Webster reports she is worried about the ‘low ebb of Christianity’ amongst the students and the fact that only one quarter of the girls come from Christian backgrounds.<sup>356</sup>

Webster’s letter reveals the uncertain and difficult conditions under which missionary schools tried to operate in this period. How did the missionary school educators in East China respond to the unrest in missionary schools in 1925? Some missionaries admitted that there had been a conflation between western values and Christianity in many educators’ minds. A general acknowledgement amongst missionaries that more must be done to end the system of extra-territoriality, encourage their students in their patriotic activities and give over control of the schools and churches to their Chinese counterparts, prevailed amongst liberal minded

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<sup>355</sup> Florence Webster to McVeigh, 29 January 1926, Hangzhou, China, BHS- MF 262-3-8.

<sup>356</sup> *Ibid.*,

missionaries. For example, Rev. Harris E. Kirk of Baltimore, in his address to the Washington missionary convention, admitted the need for a ‘confession on our part that we have not fully understood Christianity, and furthermore that perhaps we have defiled it by allowing it to be too closely associated with something that is not essentially Christian at all – Western Civilization ... The time has happily gone, let us hope for ever, when we shall be sending out crowds of inexperienced enthusiasts, impregnated with the idea that our civilization is not only the best, but a normal expression of Christianity itself.’<sup>357</sup> Kirk was not a lone voice in urging missionaries to move away from the position that Christianity was synonymous with western culture and civilisation. Similarly, Webster declared in the aftermath of the May Thirtieth Incident: ‘I want to go on record as against extraterritoriality and unequal treaties because they are a hindrance to the spread of the gospel and express the hope that the Christian forces of America will do all in their power to right the wrong and injustice ... Of course I realize the difficulties in the way because of the lack of a strong Central Government in China but hope my native country will find herself a real friend of my adopted country.’<sup>358</sup> A few months later, in January 1926, she reiterated her feelings to the Baptist mission secretary: ‘I have already expressed myself as being very strongly for abolishing all the clauses which make missionary work dependant on armed force and as being willing to trust my life and safety to God ... Christianity has enough handicaps in China without the added inconsistency of trying to preach the gospel of peace and good will backed by the gun.’<sup>359</sup>

However, while they were quick to condemn the system of extra-territorial privileges and promote the idea of a Chinese run and supported church, missionaries’

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<sup>357</sup> Rev. Harris E. Kirk of Baltimore, ‘New Mission Philosophy’, An extract from an address at Washington Missionary Convention, in *Supplement to The Green Year: Concerning the Events on and since May 30 in Shanghai*, July 1 1925 (Shanghai, 1925) p.18.

<sup>358</sup> Florence Webster to Miss McVeigh, Mokanshan, 12 July 1925, BHS – BMI – Pre WW2- G1-75-9.

<sup>359</sup> Florence Webster to Miss McVeigh, 29 January 1926, Hangzhou, China, BHS – MF 262-3-8.

thoughts and actions sometimes failed to match up. Chinese Christians criticised missionaries for talking about equality and ending a system of foreign privilege, but failing to carry this through in their actions.<sup>360</sup> Chinese Christian students were quick to use the teachings of Christianity to shame foreign missionaries into a realisation that their actions were against the true principles of their religion. For example, B.S. Siao, of Hangzhou Christian College writes in an appeal on 6 June 1925: ‘The missionaries have been cursed as the tools of imperialism, and we, the co-workers with them, have been cursed as the tools of the tools. We cannot argue with them by words, we must show ourselves by deeds. To them I beg to offer the following suggestions: They should exchange their ideas with Chinese co-workers in a sportsman like spirit ... they should know they are Christians first and citizens second. If it is necessary to sacrifice nationalism in order to save Christianity they should do so.’<sup>361</sup>

While clearly expressing their support for their Chinese colleagues in their patriotic activities, most missionary educators adopted a cautious approach and ambivalent response to patriotic protests that broke out at missionary schools in the wake of May Thirtieth. For example, in Hangzhou Union Girls’ School the girls, having been allowed to participate in a patriotic rally with other schools in Hangzhou, were prevented by their teachers from going on a three-day strike, with the threat that the school would close if they did so. Despite her sympathy for the students’ anxiety and willingness for them to demonstrate their patriotism (albeit as a means to prevent an ‘erupting volcano’), Florence Webster shows that she is ultimately not in favour

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<sup>360</sup> The Chinese Members of the Administrative and teaching staffs of the Suzhou University college of arts and sciences, and Suzhou university middle school no1, ‘Our message to the missionaries in China’ in *Supplement to The Green Year: Concerning the Events on and Since May 30 in Shanghai*, July 1 1925, (Shanghai, 1925) p 13.

<sup>361</sup> B. S. Siao, ‘An Appeal to All Concerned’ in *Supplement to The Green Year: Concerning the Events on and since May 30 in Shanghai*, July 1 1925, (Shanghai, 1925) p.12.

of allowing students to go on strike, because of the risks and responsibility it represented for the teachers. She has no qualms about telling students that the school would close if they chose to strike:

The Students' Union tried to get them to declare a three day-strike to go out to the smaller villages to tell the story and collect money but they were not in favour of it themselves and we just couldn't take the responsibility either for their health or conduct. They were just wrecks as it was with the worry and extra work. Then again the faculty had made it plain that if school didn't go on as usual we would just declare school closed and send them home. They knew that would mean scattering and that the movement would lose its impetus so they were anxious to stay. So they reviewed, took final exams and had graduation as planned. By that time they were ready and willing to go home and we drew a sigh of relief when the responsibility was off our shoulders. We feel rather proud that we came through as well as we did considering that some other Christian schools have been broken up because of the bad spirit existing. In all probability the greater part of our girls will come back in the fall, at least we didn't hear anything to the contrary. We feel that a great deal of credit is due to our Chinese staff, Miss Dzen Mei-yu in particular, (She is a Ginling graduate, daughter of our Shaohsing pastor), for the saneness of attitude and fine spirit of the school.<sup>362</sup>

While Webster presents herself as having the girls' best interests at heart, she is unequivocal about the fact that the school forced girls to curtail their patriotic activities with the threat of closure. There is also a palpable sense of relief in her writing that the school has survived this turbulent period (where many other schools did not). Her stance is indicative of the wariness missionary school teachers felt about letting girls participate in such activities for fear the tide would turn against their own schools. Her relief was somewhat premature, however, as in the summer of

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<sup>362</sup> Florence Webster to Mabell Rae McVeigh, Mokanshan, 12 July 1925, BHS – BMI – Pre WW2-G1-75-9

1927 missionary schools were to face an even greater challenge to their survival in the aftermath of the Northern Expedition.

### **Crisis Point: The Northern Expedition and the movement to take back educational rights 1927-1928**

The hostility towards foreign missionary establishments, gaining momentum in the aftermath of May 30th 1925, peaked in the wake of the Northern Expedition of 1926-1927 which saw the military reunification of China under Chiang Kai-shek and the establishment of the Nationalist Government in Nanjing.<sup>363</sup> During the military conquest, radical left-wing forces used the revolution to vent longstanding grievances at foreigners in China.<sup>364</sup> Violence against foreigners in the wake of the expedition was widespread, most notoriously during the ‘Nanjing Incident’ on 24 March 1927. As Nationalist forces entered the city, the British, American and Japanese consulates were looted, the British Consul was wounded and several foreigners were killed, including the President of the University of Nanjing, Dr. John Williams.<sup>365</sup> In Ningbo in the summer of 1927 the political situation was precarious and the city was ‘turned over’ to northern and southern control several times. Missionary schools, including Yongjiang, came under attack, as a group calling itself the ‘committee for the quick taking back of educational rights’ composed of local left middle school teachers came to occupy the school. The incident was well documented in newspapers and missionary correspondence as well as within the girls’ writings in their magazine, providing us with varying viewpoints on how local society, missionary schools and their female pupils reacted to the unrest.

In March 1927 after the Nanking incident all Presbyterian missionaries stationed at Ningbo were evacuated to Shanghai for safety and Chinese Christians

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<sup>363</sup> Julia C. Strauss, *Strong Institutions in Weak Polities: State Building in Republican China, 1927-1940* (Oxford, 1998).

<sup>364</sup> Lutz, *Chinese politics*, p.214

<sup>365</sup> Feng, *The Making of a Family Saga*, p. 114.

were left in charge of the school and the pupils. Despite the political turmoil and evacuation of missionaries to Shanghai, Riverside Academy opened in March 1927 with half enrolment. However, the spring term of 1927 proved to be an extremely difficult one for the school, which narrowly avoided being 'taken over' by left-wing forces in Ningbo, as Gauss details in her letter from Shanghai dated 9 May 1927:

The most cheering thing I have met since coming to Shanghai is the news that comes to us regularly from Ningbo. The Christians have suffered there. Early in March a number of our country chapels were closed or taken over by a group of men who travelled about from town to town, claiming to have official authority to take over all property held by religious organizations, treating Buddhists and Christians alike. April 10<sup>th</sup> was set as the day when all Christian schools in Ningbo were to be taken over by the so-called "local government" headed up by three very radical men. Early in March our own school, Riverside Girls Academy, had opened up with one-half enrolment of our most earnest pupils. Our strong Christian faculty had been organised to carry on in case it became necessary for Miss Zimmerman to leave. Naturally our school became one of the main targets of attack by anti-Christian organizations. Repeated attempts were made to stir up internal discord between pupils and the teachers. This failing, the bold plan for April 10<sup>th</sup> was launched. Our teachers and pupils prayed earnestly, and deliverance came just at the hour set for the disrupting of the school. On the morning of April 10<sup>th</sup> a mass meeting of "citizens" was called by the "local government", at which meeting activities in connection with "taking over" Christian schools were to begin. While the meeting was in progress, General Wong, appointee of Chang Kai-shack, suddenly came to the city with his soldiers and went directly to the grounds where the meeting was being held. He arrested the three leaders of the local movement and put their followers to flight. Several young men were killed in the struggle that took place. Schools were urged to keep in session and promised

protection. New men were elected to carry on the city government, and all has been peaceful, though under strict martial law.<sup>366</sup>

According to Gauss's letter, the students who remained at the school, the most earnest Christian ones, were thankful that their school had thus been delivered:

One of our pupils in her letter telling me about the above incident said, "They planned cunning plans to close Christian schools. But – God helped us (to remain) in Peace." Other pupils wrote, "Suddenly there came General Wang's Soldiers. At last they couldn't close our school. Do you think it is God's blessing us? I think it is truly that God has blessed us, day by day and night." One of our most outstanding Christian pupils was chosen as representative to the Student Union. She wrote me, "This week I have had four meetings (to attend). I really do not like that kind of meeting but I had no method but to go. If I do not attend they will oppose our school. On this Monday they wanted to hold a meeting against Christ (anti-Christian). Then I stood up and said, 'Freedom of religious belief is in the Three People's Principles. I confess I am a Christian. I cannot oppose Christ! They heard it. They couldn't speak any word for five minutes. Later they changed the name of the (proposed) meeting.'<sup>367</sup>

Although we must bear in mind that she is writing to her missionary teacher, who is then reporting the incident to the missionary board, Gauss's letter reveals the difficult situation which missionary students faced in this moment of vehement anti-Christian hostility. Newspaper records suggest that this student who acted as representative of Riverside to the Student Union was Chen Aizhen 陳愛貞.<sup>368</sup> While she defends her school, she realises it is expedient to attend such meetings to avoid becoming a target of attack. She successfully diverts hostility from her school by an overt display of her patriotism and Christianity, attending the meeting and quoting Sun Yat-Sen, the deceased leader and figurehead of the Nationalist revolution. As we shall see,

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<sup>366</sup> PHS – RG82-32-10- Esther E. Gauss, Letter to friends from Shanghai, 9 May 1927.

<sup>367</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>368</sup> 'Yongjiang nvzhong shuqing xuban' *Shishi gongbao*, 1927, 8.24. (3.2)

although she is acutely aware of society's hostility to her school, in Chen's own mind there is no contradiction between her patriotism and Christian faith.

Students' thanks and rejoicing was premature however, as Yongjiang was yet to face the most serious challenge to its survival later during that same summer 1927, when in July a group of local left-wing middle school teachers calling themselves 'the society for the quick taking back of educational rights' occupied the school. As in the case of the Anti-Christian Movement of 1922, the Movement to Restore Educational Rights (Shouhui jiaoyu quanli yundong 收回教育權運動) was sparked by the publication of a missionary commissioned publication, *Christian Education in China* (1922) which, although calling for the schools to become more 'Chinese' in leadership and fiscally independent of the mission boards, added fuel to Chinese fears of an increasingly co-ordinated Christian 'invasion' of the Chinese educational system.<sup>369</sup> The left-wing intellectuals who launched the campaign were those who had participated in the anti-Christian movement of 1922, and they often drew on similar texts and debates in their new attack.<sup>370</sup> As Lutz has explored, the movement consisted of a 'two pronged attack': while an older generation worked to influence statesmen and put pressure on provincial educational associations to enforce school registration, make religion non-compulsory and have a majority of Chinese administrators, a younger generation of students targeted specific schools.<sup>371</sup> The first protests occurred within missionary schools themselves when, in the summer of 1924, students at Trinity College in Guangzhou called for the Restoration of China's educational rights, and the movement was quickly given support and publicity by the

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<sup>369</sup> Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges*, p. 233.

<sup>370</sup> The movement made use of quotations from *Christian Education in China* and the slogan 'Restore Education Rights' was first coined by Yu Chia-Chu in his article 'The question of religious education' published in the journal *Chinese Education Review* in 1923. See Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges*, p. 236.

<sup>371</sup> Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges*, p. 238.

left-leaning Guangzhou Student Union.<sup>372</sup> Attempts by the school to stop the movement by expelling its ring-leaders added fuel to the flames, and the movement quickly spread across China sparking student protests in missionary schools in Nanjing, Suzhou, Fuzhou and Shanghai.<sup>373</sup> The movement gathered momentum during the May Thirtieth incident, and the most serious disruption came during the violence of the Northern Expedition which enabled radicals to enter and occupy missionary campuses across China. For example, in Fuzhou on 18 January 1927 mission stations and churches were ransacked.<sup>374</sup> Lingnan College in Canton, Yali in Changsha Huazhong in Wuchang and Ginling College in Nanjing all suffered disruption from protests within and outside the school in this period. In Hankou a group of Chinese Christians formed an Association of Christian Revolutionaries and petitioned the government to take over the missionary schools.<sup>375</sup> For Riverside Academy in Ningbo the crisis point came in the wake of the Northern Expedition in July 1927 when a group of local middle school teachers tried to take over the school. At Riverside, staff and several students responded to the threat to their school's survival in a pragmatic way. In an attempt to stop the school from falling into the hands of the anti-Christian forces, a summer school was held at Yongjiang in July 1927. The Anti-Christian group moved in to set up their own summer school called Yongguang 甬光 and tried to force the Yongjiang group to leave, occupying a floor of the school. Both sides refused to move out and appealed to higher authorities who sealed the school. In her 1928 annual report the Headmistress of the school, Shen

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<sup>372</sup> See 'Guangdong xueshenghui shouhui jiaoyu quanli yundong weiyuanhui xuanxin' *Xiang dao*, (1924) in Li Chucai (ed.), *Diguo zhuyi qin hua jiaoyu shi ziliao – jiaohui xuexiao*, (Beijing, 1987), pp. 583-585.

<sup>373</sup> Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges*, p. 240.

<sup>374</sup> Dunch, *Fuzhou Protestants*, p.192.

<sup>375</sup> Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges*, p. 255.

Yixiang 沈貽蕓 (Esther. Y. Sing), relayed the events of the previous summer to the mission board:

Last summer our school suffered most bitter attacks from outside ... The organisation that occupied part of our school building was named “The committee for the quick taking back of Educational Rights” and its members were mostly teachers in various middle schools in Ningbo ... A few hours after the intrusion they sealed most of the rooms and with the help of policemen, ordered us to move out immediately. When they found we were not to be easily driven out, they got the city Government to come in as a middle party, ordering both parties to move out and the building was to be sealed for safe guarding ... The attitude of the city government was not at all favourable to us but, with God’s help, we were ready to face any danger.<sup>376</sup>

This group of women who held out at the school against the intruders are pictured in the Annual Report of the American Presbyterian Mission in East China of 1926-27, and are praised in the report as: ‘Our five teachers stuck by the school, absolutely loyal and brave, living in a few third floor bedrooms and also conducting their summer school in the same rooms. The twenty or more students were and loyal and helpful.’<sup>377</sup> (see fig. 31).

Debates about the legality of the takeover raged in the local Ningbo newspaper, *Shishi Gongbao*. Most reports were unsympathetic to Yongjiang. An article entitled ‘An announcement that the movement for the quick taking back of educational rights is enrolling students at Yongjiang’ headlined in the newspaper on 24 August 1927:

Missionary schools are the basis of cultural invasion. During the revolutionary process, taking back educational rights and controlling them ourselves is inevitable. For example, in the case of Yongjiang Girls School, on the surface the school has been taken over by the education

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<sup>376</sup> Yongjiang Board of Director’s Minute Meetings and Principal’s Reports, NCA, 卣 10- 1- 307/308. P. 11.

<sup>377</sup> Central China Mission, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A, Annual report, 1926-1927, PHS – MR7-PA-ZCAS, p.15

committee. In fact, the power is in the hands of missionaries and foreigners so that they can poison the young people ... Everything is a lie. In order not to let students fall into this trap, this committee is revealing the truth in this newspaper.’<sup>378</sup>

Meanwhile, within the pages of same newspaper, different parties expressed their opinions, fiercely battling for control of public opinion. On 24 August 1927, the group who were occupying Yongjiang claimed that principal Shen was trying to manipulate the provincial government order by illegally advertising to enrol students at the school: ‘It is the headteacher Shen Yixiang, who has misinterpreted the provincial order and placed the advertisement. Moreover, she even published the advertisement on the 21<sup>st</sup> August in the Guomin ribao (國民日報) newspaper with the same contents intending to mislead the public. What should we do to stop her? We have attached a detailed statement along with two copies of the advertisement to the court of justice and ask them to reveal the truth to the public.’<sup>379</sup>

On the same day Yongjiang student Chen Aizhen, complained that their school had been illegally occupied, and requested that Yongjiang be allowed to continue: ‘Chen Aizhen, the representative from Yongjiang Female Middle School at Yin County has asked the provincial government to stop the illegal pioneering committee and resume Yongjiang Female Middle School which has already fallen into the hands of Chinese so that the government can protect the girls’ educational rights.’<sup>380</sup> Although Frank Millican, headmaster of the Ningbo Presbyterian Boys’ Middle School (Siming zhongxue 四明中學), appealed to the Provincial Commissioner of Education in Hangzhou, Chang Mong-Ling, Millican’s efforts failed to effect an immediate resolution to the problem of the occupied school and it

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<sup>378</sup> ‘Shouhui jiaoyu quan jijin hui wei yongjiang zhao sheng gao min ju’ *Shishi Gongbao*, 1927.08.24. (1.1)

<sup>379</sup> ‘Yongjiang xiaozhang nie zao sheng ling’, *Shishi gongbao*, 1927.08.24.

<sup>380</sup> ‘Yongjiang nvzhong shuqing xuban’ *Shishi gongbao*, 1927, 8.24. (3.2)

was Ester Sing (Shen Yixiang, 沈貽蕓), the newly appointed headmistress of Yongjiang, who played a crucial role in securing the school's survival by paying a personal call to General Chiang Kai-shek who resided in his villa near Ningbo.<sup>381</sup> Ester Sing was an old family friend of Chiang, and they were both natives of Fenghua 奉化 in Zhejiang province. The report of the mission for 1926-27 states clearly that it was due to principal Shen's involvement that the invading group was finally thrown out: 'As a final resort, the Chinese principal Miss Sing made a personal visit to General Chiang Kai-Shek who was in retirement near Ningbo. A letter from him brought about the removal of the outside group but did not prevent the sealing of most of the rooms used by them.'<sup>382</sup> Chiang himself had converted to Christianity upon his marriage to his wife Song Meiling who was from a devout Christian family and educated at McTyeire. Given his wife's Christian educational and family background it is unsurprising that Chiang was sympathetic to the plight of Yongjiang. The Generalissimo donated over \$1,000 to Riverside Academy, and his calligraphic inscription dedicated to Riverside prefaces the 1931 *Riverside Echo* Yearbook.<sup>383</sup> As we shall see in the next chapter, conservative ideas about the purpose of female education embodied in the New Life Movement launched by Chiang were to be stressed at Riverside in the subsequent Nanjing decade.

Hongdao Girls' School in Hangzhou faced a similar situation to Riverside during the academic year of 1926-1927, as the political turmoil provided an opportune moment for the local anti-Christian movement and supporters of the movement to restore educational rights to attempt to take over the school. According to annual reports of the Presbyterian mission, the societies running the school also

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<sup>381</sup> Millican, 'Data and reflections'.

<sup>382</sup> Central China Mission, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A, Annual report, 1926-1927, PHS – MR7-PA-ZCAS, p.15.

<sup>383</sup>Front Matter, *Riverside Echo* (Ningbo, 1931).

felt it best to try to keep their school running during the summer vacation, for fear that their building would be occupied if left vacant:

After much discussion it was decided to open the school in self-defence as empty buildings would immediately be seized by the military... The demands of the Student Union, strikes, etc., kept the school in a constant uproar. The buildings were demanded many times by various school or political organizations. A summer school was started in order to try to keep the buildings from being occupied but to no avail and the main class hall, the main dormitory, gymnasium and kitchen were occupied by a Propagandist school. These buildings were occupied until the time for opening the fall term, 1927. In spite of these building being occupied the school was opened in the foreign teachers' residence, the new dormitory and the kindergarten buildings with an enrolment in the kindergarten, primary, intermediate and high school departments of two hundred and fifty. The buildings were all evacuated by the protagonist school about the last of October.<sup>384</sup>

The Ningbo Presbyterian Boys Middle School, Riverbend (*Siming Zhongxue*, 四明中學) suffered comparatively less disruption than Riverside, although it was still faced with anti-Christian hostility. This may be due to the fact that it had already appointed a Chinese principal, Mr. J. M. Wong, and was thus seen as less of a 'foreign controlled school' or because of its comparatively safe location within the Presbyterian missionary compound.<sup>385</sup> Similarly, schools which were already transitioning to Chinese leadership, such as Mary Farnham School in Shanghai 'weathered the storm' comparatively well, mainly thanks to the 'tact, wisdom and patience' of the Chinese leadership of the school. Other Presbyterian boys' schools, including The Vincent Miller Academy in Suzhou and the Laurie Institute in Shanghai, also suffered disruption. The schools were occupied by hostile local forces,

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<sup>384</sup> Central China Mission, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A, Annual report, 1926-1927, PHS – MR7-PA-ZCAS, p.13-14.

<sup>385</sup> *Ibid.*, 14-15.

students presented their demands to the school, refused to attend bible and study sessions and boycotted classes. All these schools closed for short periods during critical moments of fighting before reopening.<sup>386</sup>

Although with the establishment of the Nationalist Government in Nanjing, the left-wing faction within the Nationalist Party was purged and the violence towards foreign missionaries and their property subsided, the tide had turned and there was no going back on the point of registration of missionary schools with the government. The issue of registration that had first emerged during the movement to take back educational rights, was by 1927 an urgent issue that all mission societies were forced to consider. Schools which did not register with the new government would suffer, as their graduates would not be eligible to apply for government universities, appointments in the civil service, or overseas scholarships. As the president of the China Christian Educational Association, Timothy Tingfang Lew explained, in order to register with the government, private schools (including missionary schools) must meet several conditions: the headmaster and majority of the school board must be Chinese and Chinese must be the primary language of instruction; the school must also meet certain criteria in terms of teachers' salaries, equipment and facilities as well as academic standards.<sup>387</sup> As Florence Webster, a teacher at Hongdao pointed out, most missionaries did not see any difficulty in meeting the majority of requirements. It was, however, somewhat more difficult to gain a consensus from missionaries to agree to the idea of non-compulsory religious courses or that the aim of the school should be a non-religious one. Webster points this out in January 1926:

The most immediate problems as far as out school is concerned are those of registration and the compulsory religious services and Bible teaching.

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<sup>386</sup>*Ibid.*, 16-18.

<sup>387</sup> Timothy Tingfang Lew, 'The interpretation of Clause five for the government registration of mission schools in China', *China Christian Educational Association*, Message No.3. (Shanghai, 1925).

A mission school without registration is branded as an accessory of foreign imperialism and the graduates of unrecognised middle schools are ineligible for entrance into recognised colleges and for entrance into civil service or government scholarships abroad. On the other hand to have government registration means to comply with six regulations. The first four are easily complied with but the fifth states that the aim of the school shall not be the propagation of religion and the sixth that there shall be no required religious courses. At present it is not a burning issue in our school because the effect of non-registration is less for girls, but there is a strong feeling among Christian Chinese that all school should be registered and there is no telling when the issue may come up.<sup>388</sup>

Since the movement for the recovery of educational rights had been launched in 1924, the issues of registration had been hotly debated amongst missionaries. While some were in favour, others felt that such a move would negate the essential purpose of their schools. By 1927, with the establishment of the Nationalist Government and the promulgation of new educational regulations, the issue had come to a head and many missionaries saw it as a choice to ‘comply with regulations and register or close.’<sup>389</sup> Although several schools chose to close, the majority embarked on the process of registration, hoping that by maintaining a Christian staff, they could maintain a Christian environment at the school. For example, Florence Webster on the issue registration wrote: ‘Personally I feel that even with only electing courses in Bible and voluntary Church and chapel attendance the Christian character of the school would not necessarily be lost if we could maintain a staff of Christians who were thoroughly evangelistic and willing to be used of God.’<sup>390</sup>

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<sup>388</sup> Florence Webster to McVeigh and friends of the board, January 29 1926, Hangzhou, BHS – 262-3-8.

<sup>389</sup> Esther Gauss, to Mission Board, January 21 1927, Ningbo, PHS –RG82-32-10.

<sup>390</sup> Florence Webster to McVeigh and friends of the board, January 29 1926, Hangzhou, BHS – 262-3-8.

Missionaries debated at length the issue of registration and looked to models around the world as to how to function.<sup>391</sup> For example, Esther Gauss was sympathetic to her Chinese Christian colleagues' point of view and acknowledges that it is hypocritical for missionaries to complain about registration, as the USA would never tolerate foreign schools:

The Nationalists' promulgated regulations in regard to private schools are aimed against what they regard as foreign domination. The left-wing is anti-Christian, but the right-wing is not and says they do not want to injure Christian schools, though also stand on the principle that the conduct of all private schools should be under Chinese and not foreign control. Our young Chinese Christian educators are many of them in positions of responsibility and leadership in our Christian schools and not a few of them feel that Christian schools should comply with the coming government's regulations that religion may not be a required subject in the curriculum of any school. If the southern government really comes into control, it may be that the only alternative will be to comply or to close. Now this seems very drastic and rather surprising, but not for a minute would the U.S.A tolerate her middle schools to be controlled by foreign agencies, and some of the Chinese say that they neither will they. Of course, those who drew up these regulations have no real desire that Christianity should flourish – some of them quite the contrary – but they have not forbidden religious instruction in the schools. It may be given, but attendance may not be required. If we come under a government that enforces such regulation, we shall be face to face with the necessity of making decisions for which human wisdom is altogether insufficient.<sup>392</sup>

Although almost all the Chinese staff at mission schools were in favour of registration, the difficulty for Union schools (such as Riverside and Hongdao) lay in getting members of different missions to vote for it when the official stance of the

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<sup>391</sup> See Edward Willison Wallace, 'The Place of Private schools within a National System of education', *China Christian Educational Association, Bulletin No.5*, (Shanghai, 1925), Henry B. Graybill, 'The New System Curriculum within the Christian School', *China Christian Educational Association, Bulletin No.10*, (Shanghai, 1925).

<sup>392</sup> Esther Gauss, to Mission Board, January 21 1927, Ningbo, PHS –RG82-32-10.

mission towards registration was still unclear. In the case of Riverside Academy, Frank Millican explained that, although the Baptists were for registration, the Presbyterians were still undecided on the matter and Millican feared that they might vote against registration for the sake of following the official mission policy.<sup>393</sup> Despite the misgivings of some Presbyterian missionaries, registration of Riverside Academy was voted for by a majority of seven to two on 2 August 1927 and control of the school was ceded to a new Board of Directors of Riverside Academy. The Board had a majority of Chinese members and one representative from each mission was to be stationed at the school: Esther Gauss (Presbyterian) and Florence Webster (Baptist).<sup>394</sup> Similarly at Hongdao, Ni Xuemei (倪雪梅) was elected principal in October 1927.

Having explored how missionary societies responded to the anti-Christian movements in the 1920s, this section will consider students' responses to the hostility towards Christian schools in society. How did they reconcile their identities as Christians and national citizens? While students' responses varied from defence, distancing and attack of their own institutions, missionary school pupils were far from the passive tools of foreign imperialism that their critics labelled them as. Indeed, in an environment of mounting hostility to missionary schools, students were keen to demonstrate both their Christian and patriotic sensibilities, perhaps with even greater urgency than their government school counterparts. Through the social service activities of their school Student Unions they sought to simultaneously demonstrate their Christian and patriotic motivations.

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<sup>393</sup> F. R. Millican, 'Data and Reflections on the Situation in Chekiang provinces re the future of mission Schools', July 27, 1927, PHS RG82 -32-10.

<sup>394</sup> F.R. Millican, 'Further reflections on the Educational situation.' 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 1927 PHS RG82-32-10.

Some mission school students did not hesitate to defend their schools and the contribution of missionary schools in society. For example, Chen Aizhen, one of the twenty students who helped to hold Yongjiang during the summer of 1927, wrote an article in the 1931 edition of the student magazine, the *Riverside Echo*, entitled ‘The smallest contribution of mission schools for girls towards modern China’:

Lately the outside world’s opposition to mission schools for girls has been extremely thick. Their attack of us is truly very harmful, we know that they want to blot out in one stroke our mission schools for girls, to sweep them away. In the summer of 1927, this school also suffered this kind of intimidation. In Ningbo prefecture (Zhejiang province) there were several schools, in a similar situation to us ... Was their interference in the end correct or incorrect? ... What value did our missionary school still have? ... I fear that they wrongly blamed us, now we will narrate our special contribution.<sup>395</sup>

Her article then goes on to outline three ways in which missionary schools for girls have made a great contribution to China: By educating women who would previously be denied an education, cultivating girls who create happy Christian homes, and primary school teachers for poor village children.<sup>396</sup> Interestingly, Chen Aizhen's justifications for missionary education for girls are exactly the same as those used by missionary educators, suggesting that their message was hammered home clearly amongst some students. Christian language and imagery suffuses her essay in the 1931 school magazine, and Chen borrows from her Christian teachers the language of ‘service’ and ‘self-sacrifice’: ‘there are many female students who after graduation, based on the principle of self-sacrifice, wish to serve society, for the happiness of mankind, go to the rural villages to instruct children, becoming primary school teachers.’<sup>397</sup>

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<sup>395</sup>Chen Aizhen, ‘jiaohui nuxiao duiyu xiandai zhongguo zui shao xiandu de gongxian’, *Yongjiang Sheng* (Ningbo, 1931), p. 42.

<sup>396</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 43

<sup>397</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 43

As Chen Aizhen outlines, her fellow classmates were able to express their patriotism in a way that benefited the nation, through their charitable and social service activities. In her article defending missionary schools she deliberately points to the Sunday school for street children established by Yongjiang girls in their school gymnasium: ‘There were many children deprived of an education. Because we follow Jesus Christ’s spirit and love for mankind, we therefore invited them to come and receive knowledge. Moreover, often the local area has no primary schools for the common people. This school can also act as an example. In the upper floor of our new gymnasium a school for common children was started, there are over forty students.’<sup>398</sup>

Education work amongst the masses was a particularly strong concern for both pupils and teachers at Yongjiang. As we shall explore in chapters four and five, this focus on education sprang not only from their Christian environment and nation building sentiments, but also from the prevailing gender ideology which reinforced education as a sanctioned arena in which women could contribute to the nation building process. Yongjiang girls’ active participation in local charitable relief projects and wider national movements reveals the extent to which they were connected to both local society and the national political situation. Yongjiang’s high level of integration with wider society challenges the image of mission schools as being self-contained entities that Yeh presents us with.<sup>399</sup> In troubled times, teachers and students at Yongjiang were concerned not to present the school as cut off from, but as intimately connected to local Ningbo society. By highlighting their local contribution to nation building efforts, students and staff at Yongjiang sought to

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<sup>398</sup> Chen, ‘jiaohui nuxiao duiyu xiandai zhongguo zui shao xiandu de gongxian’, p. 43.

<sup>399</sup> Yeh, *Alienated Academy*, p. 211.

defend themselves from attack as an American missionary establishment in the increasingly hostile environment of the 1920-30's.

While some students at Riverside, such as Chen Aizhen, sought to defend their schools, others, reacting to missionary teachers' opposition to their patriotic activities, dissented and rebelled. Here we return to the case of Margaret Fan, the daughter of a Methodist minister and model Christian student at Yongjiang, who was swept up in the patriotic protests during the May 30<sup>th</sup> Incident, was consequently expelled from school and joined the Northern Expedition. Her story nicely illustrates some of the tensions that existed in missionary schoolgirls' identities. Margaret's story was narrated to me by her younger brother, Fan Aishi 范愛侍, who became a prominent clergyman in Ningbo. A member of the Riverside Board of Directors, denounced as a counter-revolutionary and sentenced to hard labour during the Cultural Revolution, he was later influential in the recovery of the Christian Church in Ningbo in the 1980s. When I interviewed Pastor Fan in 2016 he was 101 years old, still active in church work, with a remarkably youthful face and almost flawless spoken English. While second-hand oral history narratives must be treated with caution, Margaret's story reveals an important and little documented aspect of mission schoolgirls' identities: their struggle to reconcile their devout Christianity and loyalty to their school with their patriotic fervour. Margaret was a Christian but also extremely patriotic, she was expelled from school for her involvement in the 1925 student protests and later joined the army to help unify the country during the Northern Expedition.

Margaret Fan was born circa 1909 into a Christian family of three generations. Her paternal grandfather, Fan Sanduo, 范三多 was a carpenter in Zhenhai 鎮海 in a coastal region of Zhejiang province, near Ningbo. During the Taiping rebellion he

fled to Shipo fishing harbour 石浦漁港 120 kilometres from Ningbo where he worked as a carpenter mending boats for the fishermen. It was in Shipo fishing village that he was converted to Christianity by an American Methodist missionary. Her grandfather later established a small congregation at Zhenhai, and his son, (Margaret's father), Fan Mianqing 范冕卿, also became a clergyman. Margaret's mother, Gu Xiuzhen 顧秀貞, also came from a Christian family. She was educated at the Sarah Bachelor Memorial School for Girls in Ningbo, the Baptist forerunner to Riverside, (Chongde nuxiao, 崇德女校), and after graduation she went to Zhenhai to start her own school for girls which was named Zhenxiu Girls' School 正修女校. Margaret's mother, as an early mission-educated woman, was quite a figure in Zhenhai. As the only female teacher in the town she was asked by local Qing officials to help establish a government school for girls. Government employees carried her in a chair from her school to the government school where she taught in the afternoon. She also helped her husband in the church at the weekend, playing the organ for him. Margaret's parents were introduced through the church and they had several children, all of whom were educated at missionary schools.<sup>400</sup>

Margaret attended Yongjiang from approximately 1924 to 1926. Her writings in the 1925 edition of the school magazine, *The Riverside Echo*, reveal her to be a deeply spiritual and patriotic student. In her article 'Church activities in China' she details the meeting of the Baptist preacher's conference held in the first week of December 1924. The conference was attended by local clergy, visiting preachers, university professors and representatives from other schools in Ningbo. She explains the programme of the conference focused on three themes: China's need for hygiene, agricultural improvement and spirituality. The guest speakers at the event gave talks

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<sup>400</sup> Interview with Pastor Fan Aisi, 27 November 2015, Ningbo.

on these issues. In Margaret's analysis, the Church is directly involved in solving China's social and economic problems.<sup>401</sup> In another article Margaret further reveals both her strong Christian faith and patriotism in her left-wing views and social concern for the welfare of local factory workers. During this period mission organisations in China emphasised the need to help ordinary working-class and rural people, based on the ideas of the Social Gospel. Margaret and her classmates, conscious of their privileged position as educated students, on Christmas Day in 1924 decided to visit workers at a local match factory:

In China, all the labourers are struggling under economic pressure. If we want people to have equal treatment and social standing, we must emphasise what Jesus said, that He came for all the world and take steps to realise it. We need very much to have more intimate knowledge of industry. Therefore, we are anxious to seek a way to come close to the labourers in order that we may get acquainted with their condition. From another point of view, we feel that the hearts of the young people are big enough for both love and duty. They always face duty with fresh courage and realised the necessity of seeking service before happiness. With the above motive we couldn't keep silent on Christmas day so we opened a meeting in a local match factory. Many of the schoolmates were full of sweet sympathy and joy to give up their Christmas gifts to friends and made an offering of money.<sup>402</sup>

The students spent thirty dollars in buying gifts for the workers. They also used the money which was left over to pay them for two hours' wages – the time it took to conduct the programme which included: 'singing, reciting Bible verses, telling stories, and giving short speeches about salvation through Jesus Christ. If you had been there you would have been so surprised to see the sudden change on the anxious faces of more than two hundred people. I found they need Christ so much.' After the

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<sup>401</sup> Margaret Van, 'Church activities in China' *Riverside Echo*, (Ningbo, 1925). p. 5.

<sup>402</sup> Margaret Van, 'A meeting at the Factory', *Riverside Echo*, (Ningbo, 1925) pp. 6-7.

programme ended, each received gifts: 'Men and boys got towels, women and girls got soap. And the pennies were paid to each of them for their wages, then raisins, biscuits, candies, and peanuts were given them in small packets for refreshment.'<sup>403</sup>

In Margaret's article we can see a neat convergence between her Christian, nationalist and socialist inspired ideals. Margaret prefaces her article with her concern for the national situation and the plight of workers in particular. She then goes on to show how Christianity can help China via uplifting her workforce. The focus on 'duty' and 'self-sacrifice' of female students is consistent with the rhetoric that female missionary schoolgirls imbibed from their teachers and used as tool to justify their widening sphere of operation within society. Moreover, in Margaret's mind there is no distinction between girls' evangelical and social welfare activities. Not only are she and her schoolmates helping to spread the gospel, by doing so she is materially and spiritually improving the lives of her countrymen in need. The money and gifts of towels and soap also reinforce missionaries' emphasis on cleanliness and hygiene, thus improving their material as well as spiritual condition. She and her friends are thus taking action to improve the condition of China's masses in line with the social gospel. From Margaret's writing we can understand how many socially-minded Christians through their social service and welfare activities became drawn to the Communist cause in China, a theme which will be explored further in chapters six and seven.

Despite being a model Christian student from a thoroughly Christian family background, Margaret's desire to help her country and display her patriotism led her into difficulty at school when she became caught up in the patriotic student movement in the aftermath of the May Thirtieth Incident in 1925. Her brother

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<sup>403</sup> Margaret Van, 'A meeting at the Factory', p. 7.

narrated the events that led to her expulsion by the American Baptist principal of Yongjiang, Dora Zimmerman:

My elder sister attended Yongjiang ... When she was at school she was very patriotic. So she always attended the patriotic movement and the American principal did not like this much, about her attending. The newspaper reported, we had a meeting yesterday, and those people who were present [at the meeting] and they put my sister's name in. In fact she was not there, but people put her name in the newspaper. And when the principal saw it, she was told by the Chinese teachers, 'Margaret Fan has attended this meeting', she asked [my sister] 'have you gone there?' And she [my sister] said: 'no, I did not go.' And so she [the principal] said, 'you must write to the newspaper to correct this false news saying you didn't attend'... But my sister said, 'it's not fair for me to deny the patriotic movement', and she refused to say anything. And then the principal excluded her from graduation. It was a punishment.<sup>404</sup>

Whether or not Margaret actually attended this meeting is impossible to ascertain. The main issue at stake is that Margaret felt that she should have had the right to exercise her patriotism if she had wanted to. Indeed, she would have felt ashamed to publically deny her patriotism by correcting the newspaper. This story reveals the external pressures and compromises that existed students who sought to express their Christianity in patriotic ways. It was the heavy-handed reaction of the American principal that brought these tensions to light and denied Margaret her graduation diploma.

It appears that Dora Zimmerman later regretted her decision to expel Margaret, as she admitted to her brother who was attending the Ningbo Siming Boys' School: 'Ten years later I went to the best middle school and in my senior class, that American principal, my sister's principal, Miss Zimmerman, she came to teach bible at the boys' senior middle school, she knew I was the brother of Margaret,

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<sup>404</sup> Interview with Pastor Fan Aisi, 27 November 2015, Ningbo, 54:30.

she said: If I think now, I would not punish her, so she regretted. If it happened now, I would not have punished her so severely.’<sup>405</sup> As we have seen, Margaret’s exclusion from school certainly had a dramatic impact on her life. She became more radicalised as a result and ran away from home to join the Northern Expedition. Her brother remembered: ‘There was the Northern Expedition, my sister went to join in this expedition; she had already been out of Yongjiang, teaching for a while. In 1926 she went to participate, my father went to find her, he went to Shanghai, he went to Suzhou, finally he went to Nanjing. When he finally caught up with her he was shocked, her clothes were torn, she looked like a soldier. She was ill.’<sup>406</sup> Later Margaret settled down to become a school teacher in Shanghai, and eventually married Luo Gang 羅剛, a professor from the University for Nanjing, who was a returned student from Columbia. They moved to Taiwan in 1948, and Margaret passed away there in the 1980s.

Margaret’s story reveals the tensions that existed within mission schoolgirls’ identities and the problems that even the most Christian of students could encounter when they attempted to express their patriotic concerns in the 1920s. Although there may have been no contradiction between her nationalist and Christian identities, (indeed, her writings reveal that her Christian spirit actually fuelled her patriotism), Margaret’s story highlights the fact that by 1925 real tensions did exist between the foreign missionary-run church and the patriotic concerns of ordinary Chinese Christians. Moreover, while many liberal-minded Christians critiqued the system of unequal treaties that underpinned their presence and privileges in China, very few missionary educators were unconcerned at Chinese students participating in patriotic events, especially in the heightened atmosphere in the aftermath of the May Thirtieth

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<sup>405</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>406</sup> Ibid.,

Incident, for fear that their students would come to see their own schools as legitimate targets of attack.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the period 1919-1929 was a turbulent one for missionary schools in East China. The anti-Christian movement which started in 1922 reached a peak during the May Thirtieth Incident in 1925. By the time of the Northern Expedition of 1927, anti-Christian hostility, strengthened by the Movement to Restore Educational Rights, forced missionary schools and their students to reevaluate their own position in society and identities as Christians and national citizens. Responses to these attacks by missionary institutions varied, and while some schools alienated their pupils (in the case of Margaret Fan) by not allowing students to freely express their patriotism, more liberal minded missionaries recognised that the days of a foreign dominated church were numbered. They were quick to condemn the extra-territorial privileges that underlay their presence in China and keen to accede to Chinese demands that the future church leadership be handed over into their own hands. However, for many Chinese Christians this was too little, too late.

While individual students' reactions varied, ranging from defence to distancing and sometimes even attack of their own institutions, Christian pupils did not fail to believe that a Chinese Christian church could benefit China (albeit without foreign control). As Gan Mengxiong urges his missionary school counterparts, the way forward for patriotic Chinese Christians would be to establish their own church, free from foreign control: 'dear reader, if you want to be a true Christian, you can yourself found a Chinese Christian church, all you need to do is to put into practice

Jesus's teachings.<sup>407</sup> Despite overt hostility within society, which labelled them as 'the running dogs of foreigners', girls rejected this label. In the face of such attacks they strove to display both their Christian and national identities by participating in local charitable relief and broader national patriotic movements. Although contemporary critiques and later scholars classified missionary schools' campus culture as 'inward-looking' and 'isolated' from society, pupils' writings in their school magazines reveal that in the 1920s and early 1930 girls were extremely concerned for China's national situation and keen to demonstrate their patriotic sensibilities. By appropriating the Christian rhetoric of serving society, mission school pupils were able to defend their identities as socially conscious Christians and national citizens. This emphasis on the 'duty', 'sacrifice' and 'service' of missionary school pupils not only helped missionary students to defend their schools and reconcile their own identities, but was also deeply intertwined with a gender ideology at missionary schools, as the next chapter will explore.

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<sup>407</sup> Gan Mengxiong, 'fenggao na hai liu bu li jiaohui xuexiao de tongxue ji juhua', in *Shishi Gongbao*, 8 August 1925, (3.2).

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Missionary and Government discourses on Women's Education 1919-1937

#### Introduction

“A woman in society will gradually ruin society,” he had said.

“A woman's as good and useful as a man,” she had retorted.

“As useful? What have they done? Who built up the nation? Men. Who is governing it? Men. Who will improve it? I tell you, men! A woman's place is in the home. She has nothing to do with society. What does she know about politics? About banking? About finance, about farming, mining, engineering? Nothing! She is made for the home and is useful in it. What can education do for her? She will but meddle in men's affairs.”<sup>408</sup>

In the 1930 edition of *The McTyeirean*, Pupil Tsong Tuh Wei (Zhang Dewei 章德衛, McTyeire class of 1930) writes a fictional story about a McTyeire graduate named Ming Tsung who longs to continue her education to university level, but is being prevented by her father who objects to the higher education of women. In the essay Tsong describes how a McTyeire graduate might feel at the cusp of leaving the safe environment of the school and about to enter society: ‘She stood for a moment before its open door like one who was afraid to enter some unknown abyss. In that brief moment she dreamed over all the dreams of her happiness on that peaceful campus, the deep green trees under those wide-spread branches she had lain on quiet Sunday afternoons, the dark winding pathway where she had waited for the moon, memories of the past surged up and captured her. She sighed in painful weariness.’<sup>409</sup> Later that day the words of her teacher, who encourages her to gain an education so she will be better placed to help society, echo in her ears as she tries to convince her father to let her go on to university:

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<sup>408</sup> Tsong Tuh Wei, ‘The two wills’, *The McTyeirean*, (Shanghai, 1930), p. 185.

<sup>409</sup> Tsong Tuh Wei, ‘The two wills’ p.184.

‘She pictured herself in their palaces, labouring, bearing, and torn down by children, without freedom, will power of their own, but slaves of their ignorance. She saw them as the playthings of men and her soul rose up against the injustice of people. She saw them as dependants on men and her heart cried forth that she would undertake to teach them to work, help them to a better living and enable them to support themselves. She would help them to be economically independent.

Then she thought of her teachers and words came back to her, words that aroused her ambition. “Miss Tsung, you’re going to college after school?”

She had expressed her doubts.

“Indeed you ought to. I’m sure your father will be proud to prepare you for work. Think how much China needs women, well educated women. I tell you have a big task before you.”

These words had stirred her. She was needed and was glad to carry that burden. Her teacher trusted in her and she must do her best.

But how was she to do it?

Tsung’s desires for higher education are not for herself, but for the sake of serving society. Having quashed her ambitions and volunteered to stay at home, the story ends happily as her father, moved by her filial piety, changes his mind and sends her off to study at Yanjing with her classmate.<sup>410</sup> The moral of the story is that it is through subordinating your own desires to a higher cause and ultimately respecting your place within the Chinese family system, you can achieve your end.

This story delves to the heart of the tensions and paradoxes inherent in the position of the educated women in early twentieth century China: Missionary schools provided girls with a unique environment to learn, grow and imagine the limitless possibilities for their future roles in society. However, faced with the social realities of the time, how did they negotiate their places and curb their ambitions to achieve

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<sup>410</sup> Ibid., pp. 185-186.

their ends? Tsong's self-reflective article shows how girls positioned themselves, and used a gendered rhetoric of 'duty', 'responsibility' and 'sacrifice' learned from their missionary teachers to justify their rights to an independent lifestyle and carve out new positions in society.

In these next two chapters I focus on the gendered rhetoric of 'service' to analyse the roles, identities and values that were modelled to students by their female Christian teachers. Throughout the chapters I try to unpick how the gendered roles, identities and values that missionaries attempted to inculcate in girls (through the curriculum, environment of the school and their own example), were defined by their own experience of attempting to escape the unequal power relations in their own society and how these culturally and socially constructed values were interpreted by the girls themselves. In particular, I explore how girls used missionary notions of 'women's work' and gendered linguistic categories of 'service', 'duty' and 'sacrifice' as a tool to carve out for themselves new roles in Chinese society. Girls used a gendered rhetoric of women's social service responsibilities and duties in tandem with nationalism to push the boundaries of what women could do in Chinese society. As Mrinalini Sinha has shown, for white British imperial feminists in India, who used the image of their benighted and helpless 'sisters in the East' to claim a larger role for themselves in the running of empire, Chinese mission-educated, middle-class women used the image of the downtrodden and helpless rural 'sisters' to similarly widen their sphere of operation within society.<sup>411</sup>

If, as Judith Butler asserts, gender is an embodied and performative act which is repeated, how does the space of an all-girls missionary school set the stage for new

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<sup>411</sup> Sinha, 'Suffragism and internationalism', p. 464.

ways of enacting gendered identities?<sup>412</sup> What kinds of gendered performance did the environment of a missionary school promote? How did girls use their school as a forum to experiment with the performance of new, more fluid and potentially subversive gender identities? The next two chapters probe the disjuncture between the conservative Victorian vision of femininity and domesticity that missionary schools were founded on, and how students used their schools as a space to perform more fluid gender identities which went beyond, and sometimes radically transgressed, the aims of their founders. I argue that the all-girls environment of missionary schools unintentionally created safe space in which girls could test, challenge and invert gender norms, fostering in girls new gendered identities, and influencing their aspirations and later careers. Interviews with girls who attended the schools in the 1930-40s reveal how they combined nationalism, Christianity and feminism to aspire to become 'good wives and mothers', independent and professional 'new women' and revolutionary participants.

This chapter will explore how missionary and government goals for women's education intersected in this period in their aim to produce 'good wives and wise mothers'. It will probe how missionary and government educators sought to professionalise women's domestic roles via the missionary discourses of creating 'Christian homes' concretized in the home economics curriculum. It will explore how the New Life Movement was implemented in missionary schools for girls and highlight the extent to which the tenets of the movement which stressed temperance, hygienic modernity and martial discipline intersected and reinforced the goals of missionary education for women. I explore how female pupils adopted this discourse of creating 'Christian homes' and, by harnessing it to nationalism, pushed at the

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<sup>412</sup> Judith Butler, 'Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory', *Theatre Journal*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (Dec., 1988), pp. 519-531.

boundaries of what women could do in society in their social service activities. The next chapter will then explore the unintended outcomes of missionary education by examining the gendered identities which girls constructed for themselves at missionary schools.

### **‘Good Wives and Wise Mothers’ or ‘Christian Wives for Christian Men’**

As we have seen in chapter two, missionary schools for girls were a difficult and marginal enterprise in this period, and Chinese women at the frontier of establishing schools for girls in the late Qing dynasty faced similar challenges to their missionary counterparts in their efforts to found public schools for girls. For example, in 1904 Hui Xing 惠興女士, a Manchu noblewoman decided to establish a school for girls in Hangzhou called Zhenwen Female School (Zhenwen nǚxue, 貞文女學). She gained the agreement of several prominent and wealthy entrepreneurs in the city to financially sponsor her school. However, when she went to them to ask for the promised funds her sponsors refused to pay. In desperation, Hui Xing committed suicide, becoming a martyr to the cause of women’s education. Moved and shamed by her sacrifice, the funds for the school were soon forthcoming and the Hui Xing female middle school (Hui xing nǚzi zhongxue, 惠興女子中學) was established in her memory. The story captured the attention of the local press and was also widely repeated in missionary circles.<sup>413</sup>

The introduction of modern education for girls and their entry into the public sphere for the first time in Chinese history, sparked much debate amongst Chinese intellectuals about the position of the ‘New Woman’ in a rapidly changing Chinese society. As many scholars have explored, the ‘Woman Question’ came to dominate Chinese reformers’ discourses in the early twentieth century in their negotiations on

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<sup>413</sup> Huixing nǚzi zhongxue, ‘Ben xiao zhi lǚe shi’ p.1. Juniata Ricketts, ‘A Suicide or a Heroine?’ PHS-RG82-4-10- Hangzhou Union Girls School.

China's fraught and complex relationship to western modernity.<sup>414</sup> It is important to consider these debates about women's roles in nation building taking place in wider society when attempting to understand the formation of mission schoolgirls' conceptualisation of their place in China's future. The intense debates about the 'Woman Question' can be traced to longstanding discussions about the purpose of women's education in the late nineteenth century.

Although by the early twentieth century it was almost universally accepted that women should receive an education, questions remained as to the goals of this education. Should women be trained to become 'good wives and wise mothers' (*Liangqi xianmu* 良妻賢母) of patriotic citizens, equal and active citizens, or radical independent revolutionary participants? Conservative statesmen Zhang Zhidong 張之洞 (1837-1909) and Zhang Baixi 張百熙 (1847-1907) argued that women could best serve their country as 'good wives and mothers' in the home, and should not be concerned with wider political affairs.<sup>415</sup> Radical Anarcho-feminist revolutionaries such as He Zhen 何震 (1884-1920) emphasised that women should and could strive to transcend these roles by becoming active political citizens themselves.<sup>416</sup> Paul Bailey and Joan Judge have also highlighted how these reforming ideas about female education stemmed not only from the West but also from rapidly modernising Meiji Japan, which was leading the way in reforming female education in Asia.<sup>417</sup> In Japanese discourses about female education, women in Meiji Japan were expected to contribute to national prosperity through the efficient and skilled running of the

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<sup>414</sup> Tani E. Barlow, *The Question of Women in Chinese Feminism* (New York, 2004); Susan Brownell and Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, *Chinese Femininities, Chinese Masculinities: A Reader* (Berkeley, 2002); Christina K. Gilmartin, Gail Hershatter, Lisa Rofel and Tyrene White (eds.), *Engendering China: Women, Culture, and the State* (Cambridge, Mass, 1994).

<sup>415</sup> Judge, 'Citizens or Mothers of Citizens?' p. 25.

<sup>416</sup> Peter Zarrow, 'He Zhen and Anarcho-Feminism in China', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 47.4, (1988).

<sup>417</sup> Bailey, *Gender and Education*, p. 32.

household. This new kind of domesticity based upon the ideal of *ryōsai kenbao* ‘good wife and worthy mother’ was very influential in China at the turn of the century. For example, Shimoda Utako who founded the Jissen School for Chinese overseas students in 1899, aimed to inculcate traditional feminine virtues and domestic education from a strongly social Darwinian perspective.<sup>418</sup> In order to strengthen the race, Shimoda placed great emphasis on domestic and physical education for girls in her school curriculum. Many of Shimoda’s pupils, such as Kawahara Misiko (1875-1945) and Hattori Shigeko, became teachers in China and thus played an important role in popularising the idea of education for women as essential training as ‘mothers of citizens’.<sup>419</sup> Joan Judge has shown how female students studying in Japan after the 1898 reform period also expressed their views on female education in student journals such as Chen Xiefen’s 陳擷芬 *Nüxue Bao* 女學報.<sup>420</sup> Some of these radical writers went so far as to suggest that women should be educated not only to become mothers of strong educated citizens, but also to become independent, active political citizens themselves. For example, radical feminist reformer Chen Yiyi (1898-1949) argued: ‘males and females are both members of humankind and therefore should receive the same level of education ... Then equality and equal rights would no longer be empty words, and it would be possible for women’s education and women’s rights to develop.’<sup>421</sup>

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<sup>418</sup> Judge, *The Precious Raft of History*, p. 113.

<sup>419</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 114. However, Gael Graham has also shown how female students used physical education in ways which were not anticipated or desired by their western missionary teachers. See: Gael Graham, ‘Exercising Control: Sports and Physical Education in American Protestant Mission Schools in China, 1880-1930’, *Signs: Journal of women in culture and society*, 20.1, (1994), pp. 23-48.

<sup>420</sup> *Nüxue Bao*, originally entitled *Nü Bao*, was published in Shanghai from 1899. See Nanxiu Qian, ‘The mother Nü Xuebao versus the daughter Nü Xuebao: Generational differences between 1898 and 1902 women reformers’, in Nanxiu Qian, Grace S. Fong and Richard J. Smith (eds.), *Different worlds of discourse Transformations of Gender and Genre in Late Qing and Early Republican China*, (Oxford, 2016), p. 257.

<sup>421</sup> Chen Yiyi cited by Judge ‘Reforming the feminine’, p. 177.

The complex and contradictory position occupied by the 'New Woman' is nicely illustrated in a statement by Confucian and Christian educator Zeng Baosun 曾寶蓀 (1893-1978): 'for the modern Chinese woman, let her freedom be restrained by self-control, her self-realization be coupled with self-sacrifice, and her individualism be circumscribed with family duty.'<sup>422</sup> It is interesting that even highly educated Christian women at this time circumscribed their notions of female emancipation with overlapping Christian and Confucian ideals of service to family and state.

As Jacqueline Nivard has explored, debates about appropriate roles for the 'New Woman' raged in an increasing plethora of women's magazines published during the early twentieth century, such as *Women's Times* (婦女時報 *Funü shibao*), *The Ladies Journal* (婦女雜誌 *Funü zazhi*), *New Femininity* (新女性 *Xin nüxing*) and *The Voice of Women* (婦女聲 *Funü sheng*).<sup>423</sup> In particular, the emergence of the 'female student', highly visible in the public sphere with her modern bobbed hair, leather shoes and school uniform, sparked particularly fierce debates in these magazines.<sup>424</sup> For example, in an article entitled 'Ideal female students', one commentator in the *Ladies Journal* in 1915 remarked: 'As soon as she becomes a student she becomes lazy and refuses to cook and do laundry. She becomes a good-for-nothing. Before, people said that female students dressed plainly, not like other women, but now this is not so.'<sup>425</sup> As Joan Judge has explored, students were a particular target of anxiety and discussion as one of the first group of

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<sup>422</sup> Tseng Pao-sun, 'The Chinese Woman Past and Present', in Li Yu-ning (ed.), *Chinese Women Through Chinese Eyes* (New York, 1992), p. 86.

<sup>423</sup> Jacqueline Nivard, 'Women and the Women's Press', *Republican China*, 10, no. 1b, (November, 1984), pp. 33-55.

<sup>424</sup> Paul Bailey, 'Unharnessed fillies': discourse on the 'modern' female student in early twentieth-century China', in *Women and culture in modern China 1600-1950*, (Taipei, 2003).

<sup>425</sup> Piao Ping Nüshi, 'Lixiang zhi nüxuesheng' (The Ideal Female Students) *Funü zazhi* (The Ladies Journal), 1.3, (1915) cited in Wang Zheng, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment*, p. 72.

women to step into the public sphere: ‘The most public and the most photographed of Republican Ladies, they were, literally on the front lines of institutional, social, cultural and ... sexual change. They embodied both the highest cultural aspirations and the most dreaded moral dangers of the new Republic. As such, they were a prime target for discussion, admonition, praise and blame in the period.’<sup>426</sup> As Judge explores, there were two common tropes for representing female students in republican era print media: The patriotic female students who would become mothers of citizens, or the westernised ‘tarted-up flirts’ with high heels and make up who challenged social and moral codes in their dress and behaviour.<sup>427</sup> The next chapter, which examines how missionary schoolgirls internalised and positioned themselves within the context of these discourses, helps us to complicate these tropes. As we will see, students at missionary schools were keen to assert their own subjectivity in relation to these debates, at once guarding themselves from moral censure in their strict dress and behaviour, they were also keen to show that they were not only capable of becoming mothers of Chinese citizens, but could also help the nation in their own right as independent national consumers, producers, and activists.

That missionary schools’ attempted to allay Chinese fears that an education would make their daughters unfit for their roles as dutiful wives and mothers can be seen clearly in the story of McTyeire’s opening. In 1892 the opening ceremony of McTyeire took place on two consecutive days, 15 and 16 March. On the first day, the afternoon of 15 March, male family members and supporters of the school had been in attendance, consequently the principal, Laura Askew Haygood, had not attended the formal opening because of the strict rule about gender segregation in Chinese society at that time. Her greetings, and the objects and aims of the school had been

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<sup>426</sup> Judge, *Republican Lens*, pp. 56 -57.

<sup>427</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58.

delivered by a man, the Rev. Dr. Edkins.<sup>428</sup> By asking a man to give the opening day address and remaining absent herself, Haygood had reassured the school's supporters and the girls' parents, who were all from the upper echelons of society, that the school meant to uphold their promise to keep girls safe and segregated from men. Haygood promised parents that while school was in session, 'no man' would be allowed to set foot upon the school campus.<sup>429</sup>

Over time, with the relaxation of gender segregation in Chinese society, men did eventually enter McTyeire as teachers. By 1936 there were two male teachers (both Chinese literature teachers) working at McTyeire out of a staff of fifty.<sup>430</sup> The reputation of missionary schools as comparatively 'safe' and 'conservative' institutions throughout their history is borne out by interviews with pupils who attended missionary schools in the 1940s. For example, at St. Mary's Girls visitors were strictly monitored, with visiting times enforced, and no males who were not close relatives could visit.<sup>431</sup> Even into the 1940s the strict rules that forbade men (who were not teachers or family members) to enter missionary schools were in place. In 1946 one commentator joked that it was a pity that men would never get to enjoy the beautiful 'scenery' of McTyeire, referring to the sight of the girls who went there.<sup>432</sup> At McTyeire, having a 'boyfriend' was discouraged and any correspondence that girls received was strictly censored. Amy Siao Yen, a McTyeire graduate of the class of 1928 remembered: 'During our time, one of the girls was very pretty. She had a boyfriend and had received one or two letters from the boyfriend and was

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<sup>428</sup> 'The Anglo-Chinese School for Girls' in *The North China Daily News*, Friday 18<sup>th</sup> March, 1892, p. 247.

<sup>429</sup> Craig, 'A Brief History of McTyeire', pp. 4-5.

<sup>430</sup> See *The McTyeirean*, (Shanghai, 1936), pp.13-17. These Chinese literature teachers were: Jia Yiyi 賈季英 and Lu Guiliang 陸規亮. There was also male secretary Wang Peizhi 汪培之 and a male pastor Xie Songsan 謝頌三 on the staff.

<sup>431</sup> Interview with Gu Meicheng, 12 May 2016, Beijing, 50:00.

<sup>432</sup> Sha Luo, 'Zhongxi nüxiao hao fengguang', *Shanghai Texie*, 1946 (20), p.7.

punished. She couldn't go home for half a year.'<sup>433</sup> Boys at missionary schools such as St. John's Middle School were also held to the same standards and were occasionally punished for trying to correspond with girls. Mamie Siao Tai, (Dai Yikui 戴憶逵 McTyeire class of 1930) remembers that a boy at St. John's was expelled for throwing a letter to a girl in the St. Mary's compound.<sup>434</sup> Although Chinese government and private schools for girls also prescribed very strict rules on student dress, behaviour and deportment, evidence suggests that by the 1930-40's elite Missionary schools in Shanghai had developed a reputation for being particularly strict on such issues. When asked why their parents selected missionary schools, many graduates from the 1940s whom I interviewed responded that as all girls' schools they were seen as safer and stricter than government schools, many of which were co-educational by the 1940s. For example, Gu Meicheng 顧美誠 (St. Mary's class of 1948) remembered that her younger sister, Gu Meizhong 顧美忠, was a rebellious child and did not want to attend St. Mary's as it was too strict for her:

Normally on Monday we started class, from Monday when the family head took our classmates to school, or we walked to school, all the way until Saturday afternoon, after class, only then could you leave the campus, the gatekeeper would not let you out of the school gate before that time, and we were monitored extremely strictly. In the middle of the week, if you wanted to go out, to buy something, to play, this was all not allowed ... My little sister was not suitable for this kind of school. She did not want to go to St. Mary's. She wanted to go to a government school which was freer and did not pay such close attention to their homework.<sup>435</sup>

The environment of missionary schools also re-enforced conservative gender ideas about how women should conduct themselves as young ladies. Ex-pupils remember

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<sup>433</sup> Amy Siao Yen in 'Telling Women's Lives'.

<sup>434</sup> Mamie Siao Tai in 'Telling Women's Lives'.

<sup>435</sup> Interview with Gu Meicheng, 12 May 2016, Beijing, 52:00.

being taught how to sit, how to stand and walk, and they were often reprimanded for unladylike manners such as running in the corridors. For example, Dong Yue 董悅 (St. Mary's class of 1951), remembered Deaconess Ashcroft reprimanding her for running in the corridor, telling her to come back and walk more slowly, to 'walk like a lady.'<sup>436</sup> Similarly, Wu Qihui 吳其慧 (St. Mary's class of 1947) remembers being instructed in deportment, how to sit, how to walk and how to act in society. These social graces were apparently what distinguished girls from St. Mary's and McTyeire from other schools and also earned them the reputation as an 'aristocratic school' (*guizu xuexiao*, 貴族學校): 'They paid great attention to manners at our school, they told us, when you sit, you must sit very straight and upright, when walking, you mustn't walk in a casual way, that is to say, when you enter a particular society, naturally not in the company of working people, it's a formal occasion so you must act in a certain way. You could tell a St. Mary's girl by the way she carried herself. The girls who came out of this school were not the same, along with McTyeire girls, we were more polite.'<sup>437</sup> Thus, missionary schools for girls inculcated a very specific vision of how to be a woman in modern China based on the intersections of gender, class and sino-foreign cultural influences.

Missionary educators thus sought to allay parents' fears that a missionary education would make their daughters unfit for their future roles in society, by creating a cloistered and conservative environment where domestic education and loyalty to family was stressed above all else. The conservative gender values of missionary women, who were themselves paradoxically chafing under and seeking escape from the restrictive gendered norms of their own societies, has been explored by many historians of the women's missionary movement. Although attempting to

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<sup>436</sup> Interview with Dong Yue, 21 November 2016, Beijing.

<sup>437</sup> Interview with Wu Qihui, 15 June 2016, Beijing, 2:16:16 – 2:16:48.

create Christian families, paradoxically, missionary education provided girls with the means and first-hand example of independent womanhood, and some of their graduates chose to continue their studies and careers instead of marriage. As Susan Thorne puts it: ‘Part of the transformative power of the missionary project was its sanctioning of transgressive behaviour as religious exceptions to gender rules.’<sup>438</sup> As we shall see, although founded on very conservative principles of domesticity and republican motherhood, missionary schools for girls, in the hands of later generations of Chinese students and Christian educators, unintentionally became freer spaces where women could experiment with new ways of being a woman in Chinese society, consciously borrowing from their missionary educators gendered rhetoric in order to achieve their goals.

### **Making Christian Homes and the Paradoxes of Domesticity**

Historians have explored how the efforts of female missionaries came to be centred on the ideal of ‘making Christian homes’ along the lines of a very Victorian ideal that placed the wife, with her training in cleanliness and hygiene, at the centre of the Christian home with the power to transform and Christianise Chinese society. As Hyaeweol Choi has highlighted, missionary women used the home as an informal ‘pulpit’; they capitalised on native women’s curiosity about western homes, lifestyles and material goods to attract them to their homes and thus secure opportunities for evangelism.<sup>439</sup> Missionary teachers did not miss opportunities to capitalise on Chinese students’ curiosity about their lifestyles by inviting them (sometimes individually and sometimes in small groups) to visit the missionary teachers’

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<sup>438</sup> Susan Thorne, ‘Missionary Imperial Feminism’, in Mary Taylor Huber and Nancy Lutkehaus (eds.), *Gendered Missions: Women and Men in Missionary Discourse and Practice* (Ann Arbor, 1999), p. 50.

<sup>439</sup> Hyaeweol Choi, ‘The Missionary Home as a pulpit: Domestic Paradoxes in Early Twentieth Century Korea’, in Margaret Jolly and Hyaewol Choi, (eds.), *Divine Domesticities: Christian Paradoxes in Asia and the Pacific* (Canberra, 2014), pp. 29-55.

residences where they held small afternoon tea parties or evening prayers. Such gatherings, from the missionary teacher's perspective provided perfect opportunities for evangelism while giving the girls a concrete example and object lesson in how a modern, clean, moral Christian home should be ordered and run. In some respects, the missionary ideal of the home having the power to transform society was not far from the long-standing Chinese idea of the family as the microcosm of the nation. Mid-Qing statesman, Chen Hongmou 陳宏謀 (1696-1771), an early advocate of women's education in his *Bequeathed Guidelines for the Education of Women* wrote: 'a wise daughter will make a wise wife. And wise mothers rear wise sons and daughters. The process of transformation therefore begins in the women's apartments and a family's future advancement is tied to the purity and education of its women, hence education is of the utmost importance.'<sup>440</sup>

The paradox of female missionaries' elevation of domesticity has not been lost on historians. As Dana Roberts has explored, this domestic model of Christianising through the home provided missionary women with a powerful rationale 'for the participation of women in all aspects of mission work, including home making, evangelism, fund-raising, teaching and even social reform, work which necessarily took missionary women, especially single female missionary educators, well beyond the boundaries of the 'domestic' realm.'<sup>441</sup> As we shall see, missionary schoolgirls were quick to follow their teachers' examples, using the domestic as a sanctioned sphere of activity to extend what was possible for them to do in society.

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<sup>440</sup> Chen Hongmou cited by Mann, 'The Education of Daughters', p. 22.

<sup>441</sup> Dana Robert, 'The 'Christian home' as a cornerstone of Anglo-American missionary thought and practice', in Dana Robert (ed.), *Converting Colonialism: Visions and Realities in Mission History, 1706-1914* (Grand Rapid, 2008), p. 136.

At missionary schools for girls, this training to become model Christian housewives was concretised in the routines of school dormitory life and via domestic training, which was later developed into the home economics curriculum (*Jiazheng ke* 家政課). As Laura Prieto has explored in her work on Christian missions in the Philippines, dormitory life presented Christian women with a fantastic opportunity of instilling Christian values and a space for teaching domestic skills and hygienic practices to girls.<sup>442</sup> Domestic education was a key ingredient of the missionary school's curriculum for girls from its earliest foundations. Both boys and girls were expected to perform a variety of chores and technical skills that was designed to educate them about their future roles in life. Chores for girls included washing, sewing and mending their clothes, cooking, cleaning and gardening. Making students perform household chores also helped missionary educators to dispel common fears and criticisms that schooling for girls would make them ill-equipped and disdainful of performing these duties as wives and mothers in later life. Laurence explained: 'It would be a fatal mistake to treat them as Ladies, to have every kind of menial work performed for them. They must be taught needlework, cooking and everything that will make them useful women. They must be taught practically and be made to take their turn in the various branches of household work.'<sup>443</sup> This fear that education would unfit girls for their future domestic roles was not unique to China, and female education in both China and the West thus conformed to a similar gender ideology in the late nineteenth century.<sup>444</sup> Girls at mission schools also received advanced training in sewing, embroidery and other forms of needlework.<sup>445</sup> Such activities

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<sup>442</sup> Laura Prieto, 'Bibles, Baseball and Butterfly Sleeves: Filipina Women and American Protestant Missions, 1900-1930' in Margaret Jolly and Hyaewol Choi, (eds.), *Divine Domesticities: Christian Paradoxes in Asia and the Pacific*, (Canberra, 2014), p. 387.

<sup>443</sup> Laurence, 'Female Boarding Schools', p. 469.

<sup>444</sup> Graham, *Gender, Culture and Christianity*, p. 51.

<sup>445</sup> CMS Archive, CMS CCH 056/14, Laurence annual letter to Mr. Fenn, December 1877, p. 2.

were designed to equip students with skills that would make them more attractive brides and enable them to contribute to the family income.<sup>446</sup> Needlework had long served as a form of non-literate education for Chinese women and was compatible with the conventional virtues of ‘womanly work.’<sup>447</sup> In this way, we can see that missionary education in many ways conformed to Chinese values about the appropriate forms of education for women and that the ultimate goals of this education to produce efficient and hardworking wives and mothers intersected.

The home economics curriculum at missionary schools for girls was developed over time and differentiated according to the needs and social and economic background of girls who attended the school. At elite schools such as St. Mary’s and McTyeire in Shanghai, girls lived privileged lives and would expect to marry into a class where domestic tasks such as sewing, cooking and cleaning were performed for them by an army of servants. Therefore, at these schools by the 1920-30s, girls’ home economics courses consisted of learning skills which were more suited to their position in society. They learned to bake cakes and other western delicacies, how to set a table for a dinner party and how to match their clothes according to which colours best suited them. At McTyeire a domestic science department was established in 1914, and Pupil Zung Seu Ling (Cheng Xiuling 程修齡, McTyeire class of 1920) explains how, by teaching girls to cook a western-style dinner and lay a table for a dinner party, domestic science also served as a conduit for inculcating western cultural norms:

In half the course, we are taught to prepare the usual foreign dishes. As a review of the whole year’s work we cook a foreign dinner ... While the dinner was cooking, we were taught how to arrange and decorate a foreign table, and also table etiquette. There is quite a contrast at table

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<sup>446</sup> *Christian Education in China: A Study*, p. 258.

<sup>447</sup> See Mann, ‘The Education of Daughters’, p. 22

between our polite custom of stooping forward and the foreign custom of sitting straight ...The weeks before Christmas, lessons on cakes and candies are taught, so that we can enjoy them with our brothers and sisters before our fireplace at home. Besides those, last Christmas, a box full of candies was sent to each mother as a Christmas present and as a sample of a part of her daughter's work.<sup>448</sup>

Girls were aware of the cultural differences being inculcated through their missionary school education in learning western cultural norms of polite table manners, posture and deportment, but they did not denigrate their own cultural habits as missionary educators might have done. Girls thus developed a hybrid/dual cultural knowledge of polite manners and deportment which in the course of their missionary school education they learned to use as easily and interchangeably as they slipped between Mandarin, English and their home dialects. Moreover, by making Christmas gifts of girls' domestic science work, Christian educators were also spreading western religious and cultural influences and Christian holidays into pupils' homes. By the 1930s and 1940s, such etiquette and quotidian practices had been internalised by many students. Kuan Yu Chen (Chen Guanyu 陳觀裕, McTyeire class of 1936) remembered: 'We learned how to be polite. We came from better families, some very wealthy. First of all, good family background, and then westernized, and modernized in a way, and courtesy. You learned how to dress, pay attention to your appearance.'<sup>449</sup> Western-style manners have become essential elements in Kuan Yu Chen's vision of how a 'modern' Chinese woman should behave. These cultural influences were not only inculcated through the school, but also the semi-colonial treaty port environment in which they lived and via their parents and elder siblings,

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<sup>448</sup> Zung Seu Ling, 'The Science of Homemaking', *The McTyeirean*, (Shanghai, 1918), p. 46.

<sup>449</sup> Kuan Yu Chen in 'Telling women's lives'.

many of whom were students returned from US universities (see fig. 32 of Domestic Science Class at McTyeire, 1918).

In other missionary schools outside of Shanghai, where pupils came from less elite backgrounds, the Home Economics curriculum was developed along more practical lines. For example, at Yongjiang, the curriculum included: hygiene, sewing, nursing and cooking. Moreover, girls were expected to clean their own dormitories and, unlike their wealthier counterparts at McTyeire and St. Mary's, they did not have maids to carry out chores for them.<sup>450</sup> Yongjiang also invested a significant amount of money in its domestic education facilities. In 1923 the school spent \$2000 dollars on a 'Model Chinese Home' and in 1931 a new domestic science hall was built.<sup>451</sup> The conservative rationale behind the development of the home economics curriculum at Yongjiang is revealed by Esther Gauss, an American Presbyterian missionary teacher who worked at Yongjiang (1923-1950) in a letter to the mission board:

I have only just mentioned the model Chinese home that appears on the plans. We have as yet no estimate as to its cost. In money outlay it will be a very small item compared to the cost of the other buildings, but we plan for it to play a very large part in sending out girls fitted to make Christian homes in China. And that after all is the big thing we are here to do. Our plan is to make this model home in style of architecture and appointments not above the means of the average girl in the school; and that every girl before she leaves the school shall have had the opportunity of living in the house for several months, a member of a group not too large to suggest the family group. And that while in the same house each girl by actual experience in every branch of homemaking shall have learnt the different ways in which she can make her own and other humble homes in China sanitary, pure, and lovely, as Christ would have

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<sup>450</sup> 'Faculty 1935 Fall' in Principals report, March 27 1936. NCA 10-1-307.

<sup>451</sup> Minutes of the Board of Directors, April 17, 1923, and Principals reports May 9, 1931, NCA 10-1-307.

them. A student recently returned from America was asked what had most impressed him, and he had replied without hesitation, “The Christian homes”. It is our hope and prayer that the graduates of the Riverside Girls Academy may be filled with the love of Christ and go out eager and well-equipped to do much for Christ and their country in establishing Christian homes. Sir Michael Sadler, adviser to the British government as to educational matters, says “The future civilisation of the world depends in no small degree on the kind of education China develops in the next two or three decades.” And if that education does not include the making of Christian homes then not only is China doomed but in the opinion of the above speaker we are face-to-face with a serious menace to the Christian civilisation of the world. How shall we cope with this? Is not the responsibility yours and mine?<sup>452</sup>

As Susan Rigdon has highlighted, the idea that Christianity was an essential tool and precondition for spreading democracy to non-western states was a strong belief held by many missionary educators in the inter-war years.<sup>453</sup> *The Church School of Citizenship*, a teacher training text published by a University of Chicago theology professor, asserted: ‘To clarify the import of democracy as Christian ethics and to Christianize patriotism for national and world service is an educational task.’<sup>454</sup> Thus, for Christian women educators their role in this endeavour was centred on establishing Christian homes and, by extension, Christianising the nation. Evidence suggests that some students at Yongjiang did imbibe these ideals of Christian homemaking. For example, Chen Aizhen 陳愛貞, (who had staunchly defended Yongjiang when it was occupied during the Northern Expedition), writes in 1931:

Building the new family is women’s new mission. After we break away from student life, we should either enter society to serve the people, or

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<sup>452</sup> Esther M. Gauss to Mr. Speer, 26 February 1920, PHS RG82 – 18 – 17.

<sup>453</sup> Susan Rigdon, ‘National Salvation: Teaching Civic Duty in China’s Christian Colleges’, Daniel Bays and Ellen Widmer (eds.), *China’s Christian Colleges, Cross Cultural Connections, 1900-1950* (Stanford, 2009), p. 200.

<sup>454</sup> Rigdon, ‘National Salvation’, p. 200.

establish new families. All around I can see new families very happily developing. For example, at female mission schools housewives can receive foreign education and accomplishments. She can properly manage the household, determine artistic and religious thinking, can protect and raise children. She can use American education to cultivate children in sleep, play, eating, and study, all have equivalent lengths of time ... In ordinary families the husband always works outside all day, for the sake of the family to have adequate food and clothing. When he returns home to his family, he can see a clean and tidy courtyard, loyal and lively children. Although his day's work is very tiring, however, upon entering into this happy environment, he quickly forgets his hard and exhausting work, and has a charming and gentle, able and virtuous wife to keep him company, and it seems to him as if he has already ascended to paradise. However, if he has received a missionary education he can also sympathise with her, knows that she works busily for the family, the small children bother and pester her, at supper she has established family worship, and the care of daily matters she gives up to the lord on high. Moreover, she entreats God to bless the love between husband and wife and let it daily grow. In leisure time, the family reunites at the table to talk and laugh. Such a happy and good family, ah!<sup>455</sup>

In this passage we can see that Chen Aizhen has clearly imbibed the principal aims of missionary education for women. Using her advanced training in domestic science, a missionary educated woman can best serve society by establishing a clean and Christian home, structuring her children's learning with religion. Moreover, the ultimate ideal of making Christian families also comes through strongly in this passage, as her Christian educated husband is able to sympathise and help her. The western ideals of the nuclear family and conjugal love between husband and wife are also emphasised. These ideals of strengthening China via the reformation of the

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<sup>455</sup> Chen Aizhen, 'jiaohui nüxiao duiyu xiandai zhongguo zui shao xiandu de gongxian', in *Yongjiang Sheng*, (1931), p. 43.

Chinese family system had been expounded by Chinese intellectuals and reformers since the May Fourth period. Chinese male reformers, many of whom had suffered from unwelcome arranged marriages themselves, attacked the traditions of the Confucian family system, advocating free choice marriage, an end to concubinage, little daughters in law and the establishment of nuclear family (*Xiao jiating*, 小家庭) based on the ideal of love between husband and wife.<sup>456</sup>

By the 1920 and 1930s, the professionalisation of women's domestic roles had expanded into the development of the home economics curriculum. In her book *Keeping the Nation's House*, Helen Schneider explores the development of the home economics curriculum in China as part of the professionalisation of women's domestic roles in the republican era.<sup>457</sup> Schneider argues that while this education prepared women to fulfil the roles of wife and mother in a professional domestic setting, this training did not limit them to these roles. Indeed, the domestic training given to women at mission schools equipped them with knowledge, skills and experience which enabled them to access new spaces beyond the home for the first time in Chinese history: 'Whether they were teachers, child welfare workers, nationalists, or environmental researchers, the discipline of home economics provided women with skills they could use to improve society well beyond the traditional boundaries of the home.'<sup>458</sup> Mission schoolgirls were able to step into wider society in a variety of social work activities in the 1930 and 40s which were

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<sup>456</sup> Susan Glosser, *Chinese Visions of Family and State, 1915-1953*, (London, 2003).

<sup>457</sup> Helen M. Schneider, *Keeping the Nation's House: Domestic Management and the Making of Modern China* (Vancouver, 2011).

<sup>458</sup> Helen Schneider, 'The Professionalization of Chinese Domesticity: Ava B. Milan and Home Economics at Yenching University' in Daniel H. Bays and Ellen Widmer, (eds.), *China's Christian Colleges: Cross Cultural Connections* (Stanford, 2009), p. 145.

justified as both Christian endeavours and an extension of women's natural caring roles.<sup>459</sup>

As Schneider has explored for women who attended Ginling College, by the 1920s girls at St. Mary's and McTyeire middle schools had already imbibed the values of creating model Christian homes as expounded by their missionary educators and now saw their 'task' or 'duty' as to pass the message on to other less fortunate women in China. In so doing, Chinese girls were, like their missionary educators before them, borrowing from the Christian rhetoric of building Christian homes to effectively expand the field of permissible forms of female activity in republican China. As Schneider puts it: 'Like the missionaries who constructed images of backward and heathen Chinese, Ginling women constructed a group of individuals less advanced than themselves – rural Chinese women, who needed saving and guidance out of a condition of ignorance.'<sup>460</sup> This aim can clearly be seen in the writings of missionary school- girls at McTyeire and St. Mary's. For example, in her article 'A Study of the Village Life around McTyeire High School' author Chang E. Tsung (Zhang Aizhen 張藹真, McTyeire class of 1920) explains her mission to study and improve the living conditions of poor families in villages in the environs of McTyeire based on her superior training as a missionary educated student:

It has always been the desire of the Missionary Society of our school to do something for the betterment of the villages during our leisure time ... Through the casual talks and visits to the villages and observations of the need of reforms we are all inspired to apply our ethical convictions to the social needs and home life in these villages where life has become hard

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<sup>459</sup> Helen Schneider 'Raising the Standards of Family Life: Ginling Women's College and Christian Social Service in Republican China', in Hyaewool Choi and Margaret Jolly (eds.), *Divine Domesticities: Christian Paradoxes in Asia and the Pacific*, (Canberra, 2014).

<sup>460</sup> Schneider, 'Raising the Standards of Family Life', p. 139.

and uninteresting. It is our sincerest desire to take these villages as our *laboratory* where we can make an *experiment* in different reforms by investigating, assimilating and adopting certain phases of western civilization to our Chinese village life ... The work of social welfare and improvement in these villages depends on the personal initiative and financial aid of groups of devoted students. It is certainly a privilege for us all to take part in this activity. Let us do the work and make these villages the model villages of China.<sup>461</sup> [Emphasis mine]

Interestingly, as missionary schools had been the experiment of their missionary teachers, missionary schoolgirls now defined themselves as the active agents in continuing this experiment, using the village school as a ‘laboratory’, for ‘investigating’, testing and creating new forms of Sino-western and Christian inspired social modernity for women in China. Like their missionary educated college counterpart at Ginling, girls at the middle school level already saw it as their ‘duty’ to extend the privilege of their Christian education to other, less fortunate Chinese women. The author is clearly influenced by the social science and rural village studies which were being undertaken in China by foreigners, missionaries and Chinese reformers recently returned from overseas studies in the 1920s. The most famous example of these studies was perhaps carried out by James Yen, a native of Sichuan, who graduated from Yale and Princeton universities, and whose rural work later developed into the Mass Education and Rural Reconstruction Movements.<sup>462</sup> In a similar vein to these studies, Tsang uses a scientific ‘village study’ model to document the hardships villagers face, before diagnosing the causes of their hardships and suggesting solutions.<sup>463</sup> In her article Tsung discusses the system of village leadership, agricultural production, and the conditions of people’s homes,

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<sup>461</sup> Chang E. Tsung, ‘A study of the village life around McTyeire high school’, *The McTyeirean* (Shanghai, 1921), p. 115.

<sup>462</sup> For more on James Yen’s work see Charles Hayford, *To the People: James Yen and Village China* (New York, 1990).

<sup>463</sup> Tsung, ‘A study’, p. 111-112.

child rearing practices and the amusements of the villagers based on her observations. After documenting the problems that villages face under the subheadings: 'Lack of real homes', 'Superstition', 'Lack of sanitation', 'Child Labour', and 'The absence of social gatherings', she then suggests implementing several Christian inspired projects to help overcome these problems including: 'Visiting families', 'A full day school and playgrounds should be established', 'Public lectures' and 'Mothers meetings or social gatherings should be organised'. Above all, the article reveals the extent to which she has imbibed her missionary educator's message of 'saving China' and 'uplifting Chinese women' via Christianising the home:

Home is one of the most sacred words in the human vocabulary because the home is and must be the centre of our holiest emotion. The parents are needed to create and keep the home fires burning and to make a homey atmosphere without which a family may have a lodging place, but can hardly be said to have a home, in the best sense of the term. Husbands and wives do not know what real love is, nor how to enjoy real life. They do not help each other in the best spirit. When money is plentiful drinking and smoking are the amusements and when money is lacking the children suffer.<sup>464</sup>

There is a certain element of 'self-orientalising' going on here as Chinese students internalise missionary assumptions about the superiority of western cultural norms, living habits and childrearing practices. Building on Said's notion of Orientalism, Arif Dirlik suggests self-orientalism is the process by which 'Euro-American images of Asia may have been incorporated into the self-images of Asians.'<sup>465</sup> This can be seen clearly in Tsung's quite patronising critique of her compatriots for failing to have an innate grasp of ideas of western child-rearing habits and domestic hygiene: 'That the parents should take part with their children or even engage with them in

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<sup>464</sup> Tsung, 'A Study', p. 113.

<sup>465</sup> Arif Dirlik, 'Chinese history and the question of orientalism', *History and Theory* 35.4 (December, 1996), p. 104.

any game whatever, is, so far as I can see, a thing wholly outside their wildest imagination.<sup>466</sup> Nevertheless, missionary educated girls did not hesitate to use the justification that with their advanced training in health, hygiene and home economics, Christian educated women could ‘uplift’ their miserable and downtrodden sisters, in order to widen their roles in society well beyond the domestic sphere. Ting Me-lung (McTyerie class of 1914) explains:

After seeing the schools and homes of America, one begins to realize the inefficiency of our educational system and home life. Our school and home education does not produce either a good housekeeper and wise mother, or a practical and scientific teacher. It would be profitable to every perspective student to know something of American home life before coming to this country. “Home is the Cradle of a nation’s Civilization.” All the practical arts we learn at home are stepping stones to scientific training and higher knowledge.<sup>467</sup>

Making the perfect home, and by doing so transforming society, is again thus used by missionary school pupils to justify their higher education. Similarly, At McTyeire pupil Yen Wei Tsing (Yan Wanqing 顏婉清, McTyeire class of 1921) put it in 1919: ‘If we want to make our future government perfect, we must first make our homes perfect. Since a woman’s influence is strongest in her home, one cannot have a perfect home unless it is supervised by a perfect woman, who must be well educated.’<sup>468</sup>

As Helen Schneider has highlighted, the expansion of women’s ‘natural’ caring roles and responsibilities to wider society was an important justification in the

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<sup>466</sup> Tsung ‘A study’ p. 112.

<sup>467</sup> Me lung Ting, ‘What a girl should know before going abroad for study’, *The McTyeirean* (Shanghai, 1918), p. 21.

<sup>468</sup> Yen Wei Tsing, ‘Chinese Women’, *The McTyeirean* (Shanghai, 1919), p. 46.

establishment of sociology as an academic discipline in Ginling College.<sup>469</sup> At Ginling, sociology became one of the most popular majors in the period 1945-1948.<sup>470</sup> Students were able to gain practical experience for their future careers as social workers in the Child Welfare Station, Model Home at the Rural Service Station at Hsiung Ya-na which was established in 1939 during the Second World War when Ginling moved to Chengdu.<sup>471</sup> Similarly, at Yongjiang School girls seem to have imbibed this rhetoric of ‘service’ and duty to help their less fortunate sisters who had not had the chance to receive an education. They are acutely aware of the social injustices and wealth disparity within Chinese society. In their fortunate position as educated women, they have imbibed the rhetoric of their ‘duty’ and ‘responsibility’ to help their less fortunate sisters by combining this rhetoric with nationalism and Christianity. For example, in her article entitled ‘What can I do to help China?’ in the 1925 Magazine *Riverside Echo*, Pupil Lillian Zia explained:

What I hope to do is to make the women of our population realise they are human beings with personality. We all know that we have four hundred million people, but half of them are regarded as machines, toys, slaves, animals! When have no position in society, people look down upon women as they would look down upon mean things. But we should realise that Chinese women can be equal with men. I have made up my mind to help China by raising the position of women.<sup>472</sup>

As we will explore in the next chapter, through organisations such as the YWCA, missionary schools offered many outlets for pupils to put this rhetoric of helping ‘their less fortunate sisters’ into effect. Similar to Ginling College, social work or

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<sup>469</sup> Helen Schneider ‘Raising the Standards of Family Life: Ginling Women’s College and Christian Social Service in Republican China’, in Hyaeweol Choi and Margaret Jolly (eds.), *Divine Domesticities: Christian Paradoxes in Asia and the Pacific*, (Acton, AU, 2014).

<sup>470</sup> Nanjing Archive, Ginling College File 668-33 – Sili ginling nüzi wenli daxueyuan jiaoyuan mingce, September 1940 – November 1949.

<sup>471</sup> Nanjing Archives, Ginling College File 668– 12 – Ginling nüzi wenli xueyuan renshou xiangcun fuwu chuli gongzuo jihua ji xiangxi qingxing baogaoshu, January 1941 – September 1943.

<sup>472</sup> Lillian Zia, ‘What Can I do to help China?’ *Riverside Echo*, 1925, p. 12.

charity work was a feature of all middle missionary schools for girls in the period 1920-1937. St. Mary's, Yongjiang, Hongdao and McTyeire all ran Sunday schools for poor children in their local area and engaged in charity work conducting collections for flood and famine relief at times of natural disaster. For example, in 1931 the Yongjiang Student Union organised a collections and donations movement to help provide funds for relief of the flood on the Yangtze River 1931, a national disaster affecting the most populous provinces of China, during which hundreds of thousands died and were made homeless, with some historians suggesting that 53 million people were affected.<sup>473</sup> Conscious of their privileged position, girls at McTyeire also participated alongside other schools in Shanghai in collecting more to alleviate the famine in northern China in 1921.<sup>474</sup> Over time, girls' charitable and social service activities became formalised in student-run organisations which coordinated and mobilised classmates for charity work, such as the 'Missionary Society' and 'Sent On Service' (McTyeire, which were merged into the McTyeire YWCA in 1922), YWCA (Hongdao and Riverside) and Qing Tsing hui or 'Pure Heart Society' (Qingxinhui 清心會) at St. Mary's.<sup>475</sup> As we shall explore in chapter six, such activities not only provided girls with ideal opportunities to demonstrate their patriotism and Christianity, they also helped them gain leadership and organisational skills, while broadening the sphere of acceptable female activity under the rhetoric of 'service'.

As Charles Hayford has explored, the craze for social service and missionary work was sweeping American campuses in the 1920s as the 'social gospel' was expounded by inspirational speakers such as Sherwood Eddy, John Mott and John

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<sup>473</sup> Chris Courtney, *The Nature of Disaster: The 1931 Yangtze River Flood*, (Cambridge, 2018), p. 4.

<sup>474</sup> Bau Vong Mei, 'Tag day in Shanghai', *The McTyeirean* (Shanghai, 1921), pp. 91-92.

<sup>475</sup> *The McTyeirean* (Shanghai, 1922), p. 36.

Dewey. Influenced by these thinkers, who also visited China on lecture tours, and spearheaded by Christian organisations such as the YM/YWCA (staffed by returned students from America and Europe such as James Yen), by the 1920s May Fourth liberals started to channel their patriotic zeal into improving the lives of their impoverished rural and urban countrymen through factory work and rural education drives.<sup>476</sup> This type of social work activity was not limited to Christian schools. Paul Monroe, a prominent educator from Columbia Teacher College, reported that ‘in 1921, when I visited government and private schools in ten of the provinces, scarcely a school was found, even among those of an elementary character, that was not conducting a free school for poor children, taught and supported by teachers or pupils or both.’<sup>477</sup> What distinguished the social service activities at Christian schools for girls is the way in which pupils harnessed Christianity to their patriotic and feminist concerns in their writings. As Sung Kyung Shien (Sun Jinxian 孫錦織, McTyeire class of 1922) writes in her article describing the McTyeire organisation ‘Sent On Service’: ‘Our motive it to develop physically, mentally and spiritually, so as to make ourselves ready for service ... millions of people in China are uneducated and superstitious; alcoholism, opium, and nicotine are sinking China to the very bottom of the world states; thus the needs of our country are incalculable. China is calling for women’s cooperation, but are we women awakening? No matter whether one is a member of SOS or not, service is a good idea to carry through life.’<sup>478</sup>

Some of the articles in the *McTyeirean* and *Phoenix* lead us to question to what extent girls participated in these social service activities out of true Christian and patriotic zeal, and to what extent it was simply expected of them within the context

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<sup>476</sup> Hayford, *To the people*, p. 38.

<sup>477</sup> Paul Monroe cited in Hayford, *To the people*, p.38.

<sup>478</sup> Sung Kyung Shien, ‘S.O.S’ *The McTyieran*, (Shanghai, 1919), p. 47-48.

of the missionary school environment. For example, we know that at some schools it was compulsory for students to join the YWCA before the senior year.<sup>479</sup> Some students may have even taken part in charity work and social service in order to impress or curry favour with their missionary teachers. For example, in the 1922 *McTyeirean* a large proportion of the articles are devoted to the topic of service, and in one article entitled 'Is the village school worthwhile?' two students debate the point of having such schools. While pupil Yoeh Wo believes her time would better be spent on studying so she can go to university and thus later in life make more of an impact on society, her classmate Tsung Ling eventually convinces her that these schools are worthwhile:

Tsung Ling: Is there a better way of getting our minds clear than to walk over there, and at the same time doing a little service in starting the education of our less fortunate future citizens? ... Moreover, experience is part of our training. Before we can take part in social work, we must know the conditions of society. To teach in a village is a good chance to inspect these conditions, therefore it is the first step for our future success.

Yoeh Wo: Then, if it is trying doing them this much good, why should I not also do my part in helping them? I will go with you to render my *service*, for I am willing to *sacrifice* some of my pleasure and time if I can *save* somebody out of *darkness*.<sup>480</sup> [Emphasis mine].

Such articles reveal that, at times, some students may have needed a little reminder or 'push' from classmates and teachers about the value of undertaking such activities. Yoeh Wo consciously borrows from her missionary teachers language, deploying the mutually reinforcing Christian, patriotic and gendered language of 'service' while adapting it to her own understanding of China's needs and her role in society. The article also reveals that girls encountered the same problems as their missionary

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<sup>479</sup> SMA-U121-0-30-1- National Committee, Young Women's Christian Association of China, *Student Handbook: Constitution and Organisation of a Student Y.W.C.A.*, (Shanghai, 1924), p.14.

<sup>480</sup> Tsu Tsung Ling and Wong Yoeh Wo, 'Is the village school worthwhile?' in *The McTyeirean* (Shanghai, 1922), pp. 56-57.

teachers in attempting to teach and convert their less fortunate counterparts. Indeed, in her article entitled ‘An account of our factory work’, Chen Chi Ye (Chen Jiye 陳紀彝 McTyeire class of 1923) explains that women and girls working at a local textile factory had no appetite or aptitude to study basic literacy due to the fact they were too tired from finishing their work at night. McTyeire student teachers therefore switched to teaching boys, an activity that many female missionaries had been barred from by their own missionary societies due to rules about gender propriety in the late nineteenth century.<sup>481</sup> Similar to their missionary school teachers’ earlier endeavours, they struggled to convince local parents that there was a point in letting their daughters receive an education and were regarded as ambiguously gendered due to their position as educated Chinese women in a society where very few women could receive an education.<sup>482</sup> Successful conversions are also showcased in missionary-style ‘vignettes’ written from the perspective of these working women, which were a common format employed by missionary educators to tell their home societies about the fruits of their labour overseas.<sup>483</sup>

While the creation of such societies was the fulfilment of missionary teachers’ greatest hopes, and girls no doubt were heavily influenced by their missionary teachers in their motivations to join such activities, girls were not simply pawns of their teachers or mirror copies of them. Indeed, they borrowed from their missionary educators’ methods (i.e. the rhetoric of ‘service’) but adapted the content of the message to suit their own ends, according to their own understanding of China’s needs. By inflecting their language and activities with nationalism, some girls asserted their desire for the establishment of an independent Christian Church in

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<sup>481</sup> Chen Chi Ye, ‘An account of our factory work’, *The McTyeirean*, (Shanghai, 1922), pp. 48-50.

<sup>482</sup> Hunter, *The Gospel of Gentility*, p. 214.

<sup>483</sup> Bang Vung Tsien ‘How I am brought into the Light’, *The McTyeirean* (Shanghai, 1922) pp. 52-54.

China, free from missionary control. For example, Chang E. Tsung 張藹真 (McTyeire, class of 1920) writes in the 1918 *McTyeirean*: ‘Thus, we hear the cries of women and children. The agony of oppressed humanity has become greater and it is the part of social service to relieve it ... We have just begun the work but we hope that in several months they will have become greatly interested in the bible and will be willing to accept Jesus Christ as their saviour. We do all this missionary work so that the establishment of an indigenous Church of Christ in China may be made possible.’<sup>484</sup>

### **The New Life Movement at Yongjiang**

The aim of Christian teachers to transform society via the training of modern, moral Christian housewives with advanced training in home economics, converged neatly with the nationalist government gender ideology of the 1930s, most prominently during the New Life Movement (NLM) (*xin shenghuo yundong* 新生活運動), which was launched by Chiang Kai-shek’s government in 1934.<sup>485</sup> Drawing on elements of Confucianism, Christianity and anti-communism, the NLM was a political campaign aimed at the rejuvenation of Chinese society via moral values such as filial piety and personal habits of cleanliness, discipline, deportment and temperance.<sup>486</sup> The movement reinforced women’s roles as household managers who were responsible for improving the moral fibre of the family (and nation) through their modern domestic training in hygiene, cleanliness and citizenship.<sup>487</sup> Chiang Kai-shek’s government sought support from Christian societies such as the YMCA in their efforts to implement the NLM at local level.<sup>488</sup> Responses of Christians in China to

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<sup>484</sup> Chang E. Tsung ‘Our Missionary Society’, *The McTyeirean* (Shanghai, 1918), p. 38.

<sup>485</sup> Frederica Ferlanti, *The New Life Movement in Jiangxi Province, 1934-1938*, *Modern Asian Studies* 44.5 (2010).

<sup>486</sup> Ferlanti, *The New Life Movement*, p.963.

<sup>487</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 978.

<sup>488</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 974.

the NLM varied. While some missionaries were cautious and tried to distance themselves from what they viewed as fascist-inspired elements in the Movement, other Christian groups and churches welcomed and embraced the movement. For example, the Chinese Christian Women's Temperance Union (*Zhonghua jidujiao funü jiezhahui*, 中華基督教婦女節制會), since its origins in 1894 in Chongzhen Girls School (崇貞女學) in Zhenjiang, Jiangsu, had been working to try and stamp out the vices of gambling, smoking and drinking in Chinese society and even claimed to be the 'Grandmother of the New Life Movement' in an article published in their quarterly magazine in 1934:<sup>489</sup>

Last year, in Nanchang, Jiang Jieshi promoted the New Life Movement. Not one year has passed but almost the whole of China has been thoroughly implementing it. Currently in Nanchang, everyone is already dressing well, refined and courteous, on the streets there is no one who is smoking or quarrelling etc ... However, everybody believes the New Life Movement was only started last year after Jiang Jieshi promoted it. Was it really only started last year when Jiang Jieshi promoted it? Has the new life movement only in such a short one year period of history, had such a great effect? No, actually, its origin is quite long ago, the new life movement has an old grandmother here, in the Chinese Christian Women's Temperance Union!<sup>490</sup>

Yongjiang School, which openly declared its support for the NLM and tried to incorporate the Movement into all aspects of school life, provides a good example of how the NLM was implemented at a grassroots level and can shed light on the convergence between nationalist and Christian goals for women's education in this period. From the Principal's reports we know that the staff at Yongjiang emphasised women's roles in domestic management that was at the forefront of the NLM.

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<sup>489</sup> Liu Wang Liming, 'Sishi nian lai zhongguo funü jiezhai yundong', *Zhonghua funü jiezhai xiehui nian kan*, (1934), p. 2.

<sup>490</sup> Feng Ling, 'Xin shenghuo yundong de zumu', *Zhonghua funü jiezhai xiehui nian kan*, (1934), p. 7.

Principal Shen reports in 1934: ‘We are now in the midst of stressing Gen. Chiang Kai-shek’s New Life Movement and are trying to make it practical enough for the students to follow naturally ... our present plan is to have each class, in consultation with its advisor, decide what special phase of the New Life Movement they will stress in each two week period.’<sup>491</sup> The principles of the NLM were put into effect at Yongjiang in several practical ways. Students were expected to keep their dormitories and classrooms spotless and their personal appearance neat and tidy and prizes were awarded for keeping their belongings in good order. In 1933 Principal Shen reports: ‘Miss Chiao, our matron, is helping students to take care of their dormitories and classrooms. She is using different ways to encourage them to keep themselves and their belongings clean and orderly. The classroom which ranks the first for cleanliness and neatness is given a banner to hang on the wall for a week.’<sup>492</sup> Similarly, at St. Mary’s the NLM was implemented to improve students’ cleanliness and hygiene in their dormitories. Whereas previously students were allowed to store and eat snacks and food parcels from home in their dormitories, after the New Life Movement was launched, a snack room was created and students were only allowed to eat these treats at certain times. Ting Nyoen-tzuh (Ding Yuanzhe 丁元哲, St. Mary’s class of 1936) explains the results in the pages of the 1936 *Phoenix*: ‘So this new life movement seems to encourage the students to work hard so as to get some chance to enjoy a good time with their friends after work. Moreover, by limiting the time and place, overeating is prevented, time is saved, and thanks to this New Life Movement, the naughty rats and birds annoy the students’ dormitories no more!’<sup>493</sup> Somewhat more realistically, students who attended school in the late 1930-40s

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<sup>491</sup>Principals Report, 1933-1934, NCA 卹 10-1-307.

<sup>492</sup>Principals Report, 1932-1933, NCA 卹 10-1-307.

<sup>493</sup> Ting Nyoen-Tzuh, ‘New Life Movement in St. Mary’s Hall’, *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1936) p. 52.

recall running to the snack rooms and ‘stuffing’ themselves at break times, behaviour quite at odds with the refrained, dignified, ladylike deportment and anti-glutinous behaviour that missionary educators and NLM government administrators were hoping to achieve.<sup>494</sup>

Discipline, another aspect of the NLM, was also stressed at Yongjiang. There was a Dean of Discipline for each year group, and particular attention was paid to punctuality and absences.<sup>495</sup> Students were expected to line up in perfect silence at meal times and conduct themselves with decorum, walking slowly in the corridors in between classes. In 1948 Zhou Yuyin describes the perfect orderliness of the students lining up for breakfast: ‘The breakfast bell sounds, the girls line up in orderly ranks, calmly and silently enter the dining room, listen! They are all silent ah! ... They are a much disciplined group.’<sup>496</sup> There was also an annual prize for students for their deportment.<sup>497</sup> The emphasis on health, hygiene, deportment and discipline at Yongjiang simultaneously reinforced both Christian principles of homemaking and the goals of the NLM, which placed women as effective household managers and exemplars of family morality at the forefront of Chinese national rejuvenation.

Another aspect of the NLM that was embraced at Yongjiang was the need to strengthen women’s bodies through physical exercise. The emphasis on physical education in the missionary school curriculum was linked to the early missionary anti-footbinding campaigns.<sup>498</sup> During the 1920-40s physical education for women, which had first been advocated from a social-Darwinian perspective by Chinese

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<sup>494</sup> St. Mary’s group interview, 11 May 2016, Beijing.

<sup>495</sup> Principal’s report, 7 June 1930, NCA 10-1-307

<sup>496</sup> Zhou Yuyin, ‘Shenghuozai Yongjiang’, *Yinxian sili yongjiang nüzi zhongxue nianwu zhounian jinian kan*, (1948), p. 15.

<sup>497</sup> Principal’s report, April 16, 1932, NCA 10-1-307.

<sup>498</sup> Alison Drucker, ‘The Influence of Western Women on the Anti-footbinding Movement, 1840-1911’, in Richard W. Guisso and Stanley Johannesen (eds.), *Women in China: Current Directions in Historical Scholarship* (New York, 1981).

reformers such as Liang Qichao, continued to be stressed and was put into effect by both missionary and Chinese educators on a large scale. The active and efficient housewife needed to be strong and able-bodied in order to carry out her domestic duties effectively. At Yongjiang physical education formed an essential part of the curriculum throughout the 1920-1940s. As Principal Shen reported in 1936: 'physical education has always been an important course in this school ... the students are becoming more interested in physical education.'<sup>499</sup> The chiming of the bell told students to exercise two times each day: before breakfast and after lunch.<sup>500</sup> As Yeh explores, this was a common practice in many colleges in China at the time. Students at Qinghua, locked out of their dormitories and classrooms at 4.00pm every day, had no alternative but to go to the sports stadium.<sup>501</sup> Yongjiang spent a large amount of money on sports equipment; in 1930 a new gymnasium was built and in 1935 new basket and volleyball courts were added on.<sup>502</sup> In 1948 Zhou Yuyin revealed that the sports offered at Yongjiang included: basketball, ping pong, volleyball, and athletics.<sup>503</sup> The school also had winning basketball and volleyball teams (see figs. 13 and 14). In 1933 Principal Shen proudly reported the sporting achievements of Yongjiang girls: 'We won in three inter-school basketball tournaments. In Ningbo inter-middle school tournament we won the championship. Our JMS also were the champions in the tournament hosted by the Y.W.C.A. We also beat the Hangchow Middle School girls' team, though they had held the championship throughout the province. We therefore feel that in physical education we are decidedly on the map in Chekiang.'<sup>504</sup>

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<sup>499</sup> Principal's report, May 9, 1935, NCA 10-1-307.

<sup>500</sup> Zhou Yuyin, 'Shenghuozai Yongjiang', p. 15.

<sup>501</sup> Yeh, *Aianated Academy*, p. 231.

<sup>502</sup> Principal's reports, June 7, 1930 and May 9, 1935, NCA 10-1-307.

<sup>503</sup> Zhou Yuyin, 'Shenghuozai Yongjiang', p. 15.

<sup>504</sup> Principals report, 1933-1934, NCA 10-1-307.

Yongjiang girls also imbibed this rhetoric of the importance of health, hygiene and exercise for building a healthy body. In the 1931 Yongjiang magazine Ke Hailun writes: ‘We are already Modern Women, a rich young girl who resides all day long cloistered in a stuffy dwelling, is averse to the needs of modern society. For this reason we must do all we can to protect our most treasured possession, our health.’<sup>505</sup> One of the principal movements of the Yongjiang Student Union was a ‘health movement’ (*weisheng yundong* 衛生運動).<sup>506</sup> As Tu Fengyun explained: ‘Building healthy bodies is the most crucial thing in our lives: If we lose our health, our bodies will suffer from many different kinds of pain, our social and financial resources will also suffer great devastation, therefore in people’s lives, health has the most important position.’<sup>507</sup> In her article ‘military preparation and the drilling of the body’, Lin Mixuan (林米軒) reveals the extent to which Yongjiang girls imbibed this rhetoric of the crucial link between healthy bodies and a healthy nation that was so pervasive in nationalist discourses at this time: ‘my China seems to need to revitalise its national strength, firstly it needs to implement physical training of the body for its citizens, to make every one of our siblings healthy, only then can we prepare our military forces.’<sup>508</sup>

## Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has highlighted how the rationale for missionary education for girls coincided with longstanding Chinese reformers’ ideas about the

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<sup>505</sup>Ke Hailun, ‘funu yu guonan’, *Yongjiang sheng* (1933), p. 45.

<sup>506</sup>Tu Fengyun, ‘Ben xiao de xueshenghui’, *Yongjiang sheng* (1931), p. 178.

<sup>507</sup>Tu, ‘Ben xiao de xueshenghui’, p. 178.

<sup>508</sup>Lin Mixuan, ‘Wuli zhunbei yu shenti xunlian’, *Yongjiang sheng* (1933), p. 48. Gael Graham has charted the shifting ideas amongst missionary educators and Chinese students about the gender values that were embedded in the physical education curriculum. Although first proposed as a way of strengthening women’s bodies (mainly via calisthenics), a goal that late nineteenth century Chinese reformers also supported, some conservative missionaries became alarmed at what they perceived as an abandonment of propriety as Chinese girls foray into physical education went beyond the boundaries of what they considered appropriate feminine behaviour. Gael Graham, ‘Exercising Control’, pp. 45-46.

purpose and justification for women's education: the need to produce educated wives and mothers who could rear the next generation of strong and healthy Chinese sons capable of defending the nation (for Chinese reformers) or carrying on the work of the Church (for missionaries). Thus, education for women was founded on conservative evangelical or nationalistic goals rather than for the uplift of Chinese womanhood for her own sake. This convergence between missionary and nationalist government goals for women's education can perhaps be seen most prominently during the New Life Movement. In this period we can see a neat alliance between the Christian emphasis on health, hygiene and the goals of the New Life Movement, which similarly stressed women's domestic responsibilities as the foundation for a rejuvenated national culture. Due to these overlapping ideas, Christian educators at Yongjiang were able to employ the values of New Life Movement to simultaneously advance the mutually reinforcing Christian and national goals of women's education: to create ideal homemakers who would provide the moral force to strengthen the nation.

Paradoxically however, missionary educators stress on domestic education and social service provided the justification and tools for Chinese women to pursue new roles in society well beyond the boundaries of the domestic sphere. By employing a mutually reinforcing Christian, Gendered and Patriotic rhetoric of 'service', 'duty' and 'sacrifice', girls were able to justify their ambitions to become teachers, nurses and social workers, much as their missionary educators had done. The next chapter will probe to what extent mission schoolgirls accepted these roles and imbibed this dominant discourse of female service to the nation through the professionalisation of their domestic roles. As young women growing up in the post-May Fourth Era, how did they reformulate and imagine their future roles in society?

## CHAPTER FIVE

### **‘Ad Astra’ or ‘Doing it all’: Female missionary school students’ gendered experiments 1920-1940s**

#### **Introduction**

Having explored the gender values missionary and government educators hoped to inculcate in students in chapter four, this chapter will explore how girls themselves fashioned their own gendered identities within the specific cultural environment of missionary schools. In particular, I will focus on the intersection of missionary schoolgirls’ class and gender identities in their views of how to be a ‘New Woman’, their changing attitudes to marriage, performance of ‘male’ roles and aspirations for their future careers. As Barbara Solomon and Helen Horowitz have highlighted in their studies of the foundations of women’s colleges in America, although founded on very conservative principles of Victorian womanhood, emphasising the teacher-pupil relationship as key, over time students had agency to create their own campus cultures and peer to peer social spaces. These produced student bodies with very different views on how to be a woman than the founders anticipated. As Horowitz puts it: ‘Chapel speakers sought to influence students, and corridor teachers attempted to monitor behaviour according to the rules, but students developed their own ideas about how they ought to behave and what they should feel.’<sup>509</sup>

I argue that missionary schools unintentionally provided girls with a free space or ‘laboratory’ where they could imagine limitless possibilities for their roles in China’s future society, and where new and more fluid notions of gender could be performed and experimented with. Students used the freedom of their single sex environment to experiment with new identities that transgressed traditional gender

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<sup>509</sup> Horowitz, *Alma Mater*, p. 68. Barbara Solomon, *In the company of Educated Women: A History of Women and Higher Education in America*, (London, 1985).

binaries. In the 'safe' all-girls environment of the missionary school girls could play with and perform traditionally 'male' roles in their dress, academic endeavours, extra-circular activities and social relationships to each other. This chance to experiment with their identities and freedom to express themselves away from the patriarchal structure of Confucian family life afforded girls new opportunities to pursue leadership roles and fostered in them the ambition to transcend the domestic sphere. At the same time, the school also equipped girls with the practical skills, motivations and networks they needed to successfully carve out new roles for themselves in the outside world.

This chapter will also underline the paradoxes and tensions girls faced in their transition from the safe environment of the school to the sobering realities they faced in society which still dictated that their primary roles should be 'good wives and wise mothers.' Although by the outbreak of the second Sino-Japanese War the roles it was permissible for women to pursue in society had expanded from homemakers to teachers and nurses, and in a few exceptional cases business women and lawyers, girls continued to harness a gendered Christian rhetoric of 'service' to the pressing demand of Chinese nationalism in order to justify these new roles. By using the gendered rhetoric of 'service', 'duty' and 'self-sacrifice', girls were able to widen their sphere of operation in society, much as their missionary educators had done. However, girls went further than their teachers in their experiments with a more fluid notion of gender, which encompassed traditionally male roles and martial activities. They even envisioned a society where they, as educated Chinese Christian women leaders, could teach something to their American counterparts.

### **Girls' views on the 'New Woman' in Chinese Society**

As many scholars have shown, by reviling the status of the 'old woman' in Chinese society, (characterised by her footbound, uneducated, and cloistered status), May Fourth writers created a false and simplistic binary between the 'new' and 'old' women in Chinese history. As Shi Xia asserts in her dissertation on the traditions of philanthropy in early twentieth century China, this binary was in fact far from clear cut and many of the *guixiu* or genteel women of the past, rather than being cloistered in the inner quarters, were actually very much engaged in public life through their philanthropic endeavours.<sup>510</sup>

Missionary school students' writings on the 'Old' and 'New' woman also complicate these binaries. They did not wholly repudiate the old or seek to emulate the new. Instead, their class status and cultural environment fostered new visions of how the modern Chinese woman should dress and comport herself. Girls writing about the 'old' woman in Chinese society challenge some of the stereotypes. Although they pity her footbound and uneducated status in the tradition of May Fourth iconoclasm, the older woman is also respected for her seniority in the family and for her sacrifice of her own happiness for the higher ideal of the family. A good example of the ambivalence missionary schoolgirls felt towards the older generation of Chinese women is nicely summed up in an article entitled 'My Great-grandmother' written by St. Mary's pupil Soong Jung-Wo (McTyeire class of 1925) in the 1923 *Phoenix*: 'My Great-grandmother was very old fashioned and superstitious; on the other hand, she was diligent and thrifty.'<sup>511</sup> Soong goes on to explain her opinion that while some of her grandmother's views were old fashioned: 'She agreed with other old-fashioned people that girls should have bound feet,

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<sup>510</sup> Shi Xia, 'Reconfiguring Traditions: Gender, Philanthropy, and Public Life in Early Twentieth-Century China' (PhD diss., UC Irvine, 2013).

<sup>511</sup> Soong Jung-wo, 'My Great-Grandmother', *The Phoenix*, (Shanghai, 1923), p. 6.

otherwise it would be very hard to get her a husband. “Why should girls study like boys?” was her question always. To learn housekeeping, to be a gentle wife and a timid daughter-in-law, was her ideal for girls.<sup>512</sup> Soong, however, could still admire her grandmother’s devotion, strength and ability to run the household well: ‘She got up very early to inspect the servants in their work. She went to bed after she looked all around to see whether doors were well locked, domestic animals were carefully kept, and whether there was a fire in the kitchen.’<sup>513</sup> In this way, Soong suggests that modern women should not abandon these ideas of thrift, hard work and self-sacrifice.<sup>514</sup>

Missionary school pupils’ views on the ‘New Woman’ were by no means straightforward. Indeed, students’ views on western culture and the public interaction of men and women reflect some of their Christian educators’ ambivalence about the state of ‘New’ Chinese womanhood. This disdain for the ‘fake’ or ‘commodified’ ‘pseudo-new woman’ of treaty port society, is evident in the writings of girls at McTyeire and St. Mary’s, where girls of the upper classes regarded themselves as setting the trend and as arbiters of good taste. Moreover, coming from wealthy and famous families, they were conscious that they were always in the public eye. Their photographs can be found on the front cover of popular pictorial magazines and women’s journals including *The Eastern Times Photo Supplement* (*Shibao tuhua zhoukan*, 時報圖畫周刊) *The Pictorial Weekly*, published by the China Photographic Society, (*Zhongguo sheying xuehui huabao*, 中國攝影學會畫報), and *Modern Women* (*Jindai funü*, 近代婦女) in the 1920-1940s. For example, in September 1933

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<sup>512</sup> Soong, ‘My Great-Grandmother’, p. 6.

<sup>513</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>514</sup> For more on the virtues of the ‘traditional’ Chinese woman see the memoir of Zeng Jifen 曾纪芬 (1852-1942). Thomas Kennedy (Trans.), *Testimony of a Confucian Woman: The Autobiography of Mrs Nie Zeng Jifen 1852-1942* (Georgia, 1993).

and October 1934 McTyeire students Lu Peibao's 陸佩寶 and Shen Xiuxue's 沈修學 portraits appear on the front cover of the *Pictorial Weekly* respectively.<sup>515</sup> (see figs. 33 and 34).

As Joan Judge has explored, the appearance of upper class women's photographs in public media at the beginning of the twentieth century was an important subjective marker for women who were asserting their own identity in new public media discourses as educated 'republican ladies'.<sup>516</sup> By the 1920-1930s, women's images swamped republican era media, and missionary schoolgirls were often in the spotlight, either for their academic, athletic, musical or dramatic accomplishments or as beautiful and eligible female graduates poised to enter society and available in the urban marriage market of Shanghai. With fashionably bobbed or waved hair, ears adored with jewels in white western style dresses with frilled sleeves and a high collars, McTyeire girls epitomised the image of the upper class elite educated woman in Shanghai's republican era society.

Although by the 1930s it had become acceptable for elite women to be in the public eye, McTyeire students themselves were very guarded over their own reputation, and in some instances girls went as far as to critique their teachers if they felt they were not keeping up the reputation of the school. Moreover, when it came to the issue of the 'fake' and over-commercialised or 'pseudo-new woman,' students were quick to express their disapproval. McTyeire students' elitist ideas about what constituted 'proper' or acceptable modes of behaviour and dress for women in this period can be seen in their treatment of a Chinese teacher who broke the rules by dressing in a way that did not conform to McTyeire girls' expectations about how a

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<sup>515</sup> See front cover Image: 'Zhongxi nüxiao Lu Peibao nüshi' *Zhongguo shying xuehui huabao*, (September, 1933). See front cover image: 'Zhongxi nüxiao Shen Xiuxue nüshi', *Zhongguo shying xuehui huabao*, (October, 1934).

<sup>516</sup> Judge, *Republican Lens*, p. 1.

respectable woman of their class should comport herself. During the Second Sino-Japanese War one class took exception to their Chinese teacher because of her tight qipao, red-lipstick and high heels, which did not belong in the environment of McTyeire. The teacher also did not endear herself to the students by belittling their knowledge of the situation in China. Nicknamed ‘High-heeled Wang’, students with a patrician sense of superiority, rejected her as an affront to McTyeire’s reputation. The class, led by three students, refused to co-operate and Principal Xue Zheng was called in. Although one of the student leaders was expelled, ‘High-heeled Wang’ did not return to McTyeire the following semester. Rosalyn Koo (McTyeire class of 1947), one of the leaders of the class protest remembers:

They hired a modern Chinese teacher of Chinese for the first time. And lipstick, and we were teenagers, and she came in, and she really did not think much of us, the wealthy people, saying, you don’t know what is going on outside ... and for some reason I felt she was totally unjust, you know, the first day in they say, you are no good, I mean you are ignorant, not serious, so we refused to cooperate, and the Principal came in again and nabbed three leaders, I am one of the three leaders. So I got a D minus in conduct.

Rosalyn clarified why she objected so strongly to the teacher’s dress: ‘all the other teachers are old maids and wore very plain clothing right, and no makeup.’<sup>517</sup>

Although Rosalyn and her fellow leaders took offence to the teacher’s attitude towards them, her classmate, Zhang Long, also remembers this incident as clearly an issue about the way in which Miss Wang dressed:

This was also during the Japanese war, maybe it was difficult for them to find good teachers for us and once there came, a Chinese teacher, Miss Wang, to teach us Chinese. She dressed herself in a very unusual way, not the way McTyerian would do, she came with full high heels, lipstick,

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<sup>517</sup> Interview with Rosalyn Koo, 5 November 2016, San Mateo 49:20

and we did not like her. She wore her Qipao very tight, and very full high heels, we did not like that, because no teacher was dressed like that. So that was why some students said, we did not like her. But I think Xue Zheng understood that she was not actually a good teacher for us, so at the beginning of the next semester we did not see her.<sup>518</sup>

Thus, missionary schoolgirls' ideas of how to be a 'new woman' were highly inflected by their class identity. Zhang Long also remembers that McTyeire girls tended to dress more modestly and even the wealthiest students did not wear too luxurious clothes to school. They were never allowed to wear makeup or jewellery and the teachers were strict in enforcing this rule:

We did not use any make-up and I remember once a student in our class, one Monday morning when she came to school she had her nails painted red and the teacher was Chen Laoshi, Chen Guanyu and she was also person that we admired, Chen Guanyu saw that and she ordered her to go back, and wash off the paint and come back again. So it's rather strict. We never used makeup and we never dressed too fantastically. We were allowed to curl our hair but we didn't maybe until senior [high].<sup>519</sup>

Both oral history and magazine sources confirm that girls at St. Mary's dressed more conservatively than those at McTyeire, and the school was regarded as stricter and more pious than McTyeire.<sup>520</sup> In the 1932 edition of *The Phoenix* Dzung We-Kyuin explains how a new student could be picked out at St. Mary's because she had not become used to the school's 'old-fashioned' style of dressing yet:

We could easily recognize the new girls from the old. Whenever I saw a group I could point out who the new were by their style of dressing though they might be as free as the old. You know that our school has been considered and also called several strange names, such as convent, conservative or Eighteenth-century School, and so on. Those who come from outside of course will seem different from us. First of all we have

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<sup>518</sup> Interview with Zhang Long, 6 July 2016, Shanghai, 57:58

<sup>519</sup> Interview with Zhang Long, 6 July 2016, Shanghai, 59:53.

<sup>520</sup> Interview with Zhang Long, 6 July 2016, Shanghai, 01:01:43.

either short hair or pigtails, as once my old teacher in another school said that she had met a girl whom she did not know on Yu Yuen Road, but by her short hair and old-fashioned dress she could recognise her as a St. Mary's girl. Most young folks are likely to be fond of wearing high heels but our school forbids them and only permits us to wear soft shoes while our home-made Chinese shoes, which in fact are more comfortable and economical, will especially please our principal. It is not only because they have become acquainted with the old but also mostly because they have been converted to St. Mary's styles. I should like to say that though we are young both in mental and actual ages, yet we are surely strong in will; that is, we never have been influenced to change our dear old St. Mary's style which might be unpopular outside yet quite welcome in our own dear school.<sup>521</sup>

Thus, girls at St. Mary's were to some extent imbibing the conservative styles of dressing and modes of behaviour set for them by their Chinese Christian teachers. St. Mary's girls appear much less frequently in the pictorial magazines of the era than their more fashionable McTyeire counterparts, and when they do appear this is in reference to their sporting and musical achievements rather than on front cover images.<sup>522</sup> Not only was this a reflection of the conservative gender values of their teachers, girls at famous missionary schools such as McTyeire chose to uphold these values, and even dared to critique their teachers who did not conform to their notions of female propriety. By doing so they not only defended their schools from censure by society, they also created a 'gang identity', a gendered school identity and campus culture, which could only be accessed by members of their own class.

These concerns with the vanity and frivolity of the 'modern' women are not simply a reflection of the conservative gender values implanted by their teachers but are also closely linked to students' patriotic concerns. At Yongjiang, pupils objected

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<sup>521</sup> Dzung We-Kyuin, 'New students in the eyes of an old one', *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1932), p. 25.

<sup>522</sup> See 'Nü xiao xinwen', *Zhongguo sheying xuehui huabao*, 34 (1926).

to the wasteful and consumer-driven lifestyles of the 'New Woman' as an affront to their nationalist and feminist concerns. By wasting their time and money on the frivolous trappings of a western life-style, such women were not contributing to the development of national society. Indeed, Yongjiang pupil Ke Hailun (可海倫), in her article 'Women and the National Crisis' published in the 1933 *Riverside Echo*, clearly expressed her disdain for the vanity of modern women:

They must eliminate vanity: What a pity there is so much of it! ... There are many girls who all willingly conform to men's trifles, who all day long adorn themselves to become as refined and precious as jade. What debased thinking! Ah! Sisters! We must be like men, use our hands and feet to work, if not we will have a lifestyle as the useless playthings of men. This kind of life has no value!<sup>523</sup>

Students' active participation in the National Products Movement also demonstrates their rejection of this image of women as consumers who frittered away national resources rather than producing anything for the nation. As Yongjiang Student Tu Fengyun explains in 1931: 'The national goods movement is to encourage our classmates to love to use national products, to do their utmost to boycott foreign commodities, for the purpose of establishing a patriotic and powerful national determination.'<sup>524</sup> As Karl Gerth has explored, women's responsibilities as the nation's consumers were particularly emphasised in wider national campaigns to boycott foreign goods.<sup>525</sup> For example, in her article 'True Citizens of China' in the 1926 edition of *The Phoenix*, Tsu Vung-Hwo (Xu Huifang 徐惠芳 St. Mary's, class of 1929) writes: 'We should wear Chinese cloth and silk which is very famous throughout the whole world.'<sup>526</sup> Indeed some students expressed their rejection of the

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<sup>523</sup>Ke, 'funü yu guo nan', p. 46.

<sup>524</sup> Tu, 'ben xiao de xueshenghui', p.178.

<sup>525</sup> Karl Gerth, *China Made: Consumer Culture and the Creation of the Nation* (London, 2003), p.285.

<sup>526</sup> Tsu Vung-Hwo, 'True Citizens of China', *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1926), p. 30.

‘unnatural’ western makeup and clothes worn by the modern woman of the treaty ports in derisive and sarcastic language:

There are some girls who actually go as far as to resemble a fox spirit, painting their face to appear smooth as a white wall, their waists bound to make tiny and small, upon their feet they wear a pair of high-heeled leather shoes, deep and graceful, this really is a beautiful girl, ah! These girls are very easy to find in the street, however, in my eyes it seems as if they are ghosts. I am not sure why they want to act like this, what are they looking for? Why do they want to show off their beauty?<sup>527</sup>

Women who used their education primarily as a form of social adornment were equally at fault in this student’s view. Yongjiang girls attacked the sort of women, ‘who do not take the true educational road; they believe that studying is a kind of decoration.’<sup>528</sup> A woman who used her education as an adornment (alongside her western-style clothes and makeup) to attract a husband was of no use to society and actually wasted valuable time and resources. In 1931 Yongjiang student Chen Xingying 陳杏英, expressed her disdain for this type of upper class student: ‘There are many upper-class students, whose goal in entering school is not for the purpose of studying, merely to create a stir, for the purpose of making friends; so in this way they received a middle school or university diploma. They cheat their way into this excellent position, or perhaps by getting to know a beautiful man or woman.’<sup>529</sup> Indeed, a general disdain for this type of women who became dependent on their husband after marriage can be seen in many missionary girls’ writings.<sup>530</sup>

As we have seen in chapter two, in the 1910-20s going to missionary school became a route for elite women to access higher education abroad, and many of the early graduates of St. Mary’s and McTyeire studied in the United States upon

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<sup>527</sup> Chen Aizhen, ‘Zai qiuxue lichang shang shuo ji ju hua’, *Yongjiang Sheng* (1931), p. 46.

<sup>528</sup> Ke, *funu yu guonan*, p. 46.

<sup>529</sup> Chen Xingying, ‘Jiaoyu geming de husheng’, *Yongjiang Sheng* (1931), pp. 20-21.

<sup>530</sup> Ke, ‘funu yu guo nan’, p. 46.

graduation. In the 1918 *McTyeirean*, alumna Ding Me-iung (McTyeire class of 1910), writes that in her experience of college life in America, many Chinese students ‘are here with no definite aim or are anxious simply to get a “society culture”. The latter consists of having a few popular songs, a number of piano pieces, and a speaking knowledge of English.’ Ding’s suggestion is: ‘if you are coming to America, get something which will be of real value to our country ... seeing the need of our country, knowing the condition of our people, and appreciating the age in which we are living, every intelligent and patriotic daughter of China cannot fail to ask herself, “How can I best prepare myself to serve my country?”’ Ding suggests that what China needs is vocational education for women: ‘After high school graduation, girls of ambition should be encouraged to pursue further studies as teachers, musicians, doctors, secretaries, evangelists, Bible teachers, translators, writers, domestic science teachers, interior decorators, pharmacists, lecturers, nurses, dietitians, directors of primary schools, college professors, etc.’<sup>531</sup> Ding thus broadens the remit of what Chinese women could do in society, using the categories of homemaking, education and social service, which were becoming sanctioned spheres of female activity via combining a Christian rhetoric of ‘service’ and nationalism. Ding herself set up the first Chinese-run Obstetrics and Gynaecology Clinic in Tianjin.<sup>532</sup>

The concern of St. Mary’s students to distinguish themselves from the ‘trifling’ and ‘frivolous’ pseudo-modern new woman is also visible in the cartoons which appear throughout *The Phoenix* magazines of the 1920s. For example, in the 1923 magazine the student who is departing for New St. Mary’s Hall is depicted equipped with ‘knowledge’ and thoughts of ‘the bible is interesting’ and ‘I will study history’, taking leave of her old-fashioned classmate who is concerned with

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<sup>531</sup> Ting, ‘What a girl should know’, pp. 23-24.

<sup>532</sup> Interview with Ding Yuming, 9 November 2016, San Mateo, 3:49.

frivolities such as her appearance and social engagements: ‘Does my hair look alright?’ ‘Wasn’t that a grand Party’ (see fig. 35).<sup>533</sup> Thus, students elevated a form of nationalism, which advocated a patriotic and productive independent female womanhood. Their complex views on how to be a ‘New Woman’ in Chinese society were therefore by no means straightforward, but highly inflected by their class identities and educational backgrounds. It was not enough for the ‘New Woman’ to have received a western style education, she must also show her patriotic concerns in her modest dressing and behaviour, pursuing higher education abroad, not for herself as a social adornment, but to better equip herself to serve the needs of her less fortunate sisters at home.

### **Views on Marriage**

As we have explored, early missionary educators saw the primary goal of their schools as a means to produce ‘Christian wives for Christian men’, and were therefore very keen to make sure girls were equipped with the skills necessary to make them good housewives and mothers. Paradoxically, however, the physical example of missionaries as independent single female role models and the skills provided by missionary education, offered girls for the first time a practical means of staying single, the chance to pursue higher education and an independent lifestyle. For the first generation of missionary-educated graduates, not getting married to continue their education or work as teachers, doctors, nurses and social workers was a radically new and sometimes a highly desirable opportunity when the alternative was an unwelcomed arranged marriage. Some of the earliest graduates even used their school as a physical refuge to escape an arranged marriage. For example, Ding Maoying 丁懋英, (McTyeire class of 1910) did not want to marry the man her family

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<sup>533</sup> Cartoon in *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1923).

had chosen for her as he was addicted to opium. Sympathetic to her plight, the principal of McTyeire, Helen Richardson, helped her to escape the day before she was to be married and to gain a scholarship to study at Mt. Holyoke College in the United States, thus avoiding getting married. Her great-niece, Ding Yuming 丁毓明, (McTyeire class of 1941) remembered:

Ding Maoying, my grand-aunt went to McTyeire. The reason why my grand-aunt went to McTyeire even though my family is very traditional Chinese is because, my great-grandfather was a traditional doctor of Chinese medicine, and he believed that women should have an education, so he sent my grand-aunt to McTyeire to study, very early ... So she finished high school and my great-grandfather wanted her to get married to a young man that the family had fixed for her. This young man smoked opium ... and my grand-aunt said, 'no' I am not going to marry this man, I don't want a husband who smokes opium. So with the help of a missionary teacher from McTyeire, a Methodist missionary from Mississippi, she was able to escape before the day she was going to get married. They helped her get out, and they financed her to apply and come to Mount Holyoke College in the United States. She is first one to get out of China with the help of some kind of scholarship from Mount Holyoke College, then she finished her studies at the University of Michigan medical school. At that time her father did not want to give her any money, so they gave her a Barbour Scholarship for Oriental Women.<sup>534</sup>

The passage above shows that, although reform-minded Chinese literati such as Ding Maoying's father had sanctioned women's education as key to national strengthening since the late nineteenth century, these 'liberal' reformers vision had not extended to the free-choice marriage of their children by 1913. Upon her graduation from Michigan, Ding Maoying returned to China to start the first obstetrics and gynaecology hospital for Chinese women in Tianjin, which later developed a

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<sup>534</sup> Interview with Ding Yuming, 9 November 2016, San Mateo, 3:49.

paediatrics department. Ding Yuming was inspired by her aunt's example (and perhaps the family tradition of studying medicine) to follow in her footsteps. Upon graduating from McTyeire, Ding Yuming also obtained a scholarship from Mt. Holyoke College and then, with the help of her aunt's friends in America, she also applied successfully for the Barbour Scholarship at Michigan. Although she intended to come back to China and practice obstetrics and gynaecology with her aunt in Tianjin, the communist takeover meant that Ding Yuming chose to stay in the United States where she later practised diagnostic radiology as a career.<sup>535</sup> From this story, it seems that although missionary educators publicly stressed marriage, motherhood and filial piety as the highest ideals to which girls should aspire (to placate conservatives who believed that educating a woman would cause her to rebel against these traditional roles), privately, missionary teachers were not above helping girls in whom they saw great potential escape from what they deemed harmful and damaging marriages. By the May Fourth period girls at missionary schools had clearly imbibed their right to a free-choice marriage and expressed such sentiments in their school magazines, presumably with their missionary teachers' approval. For example, in her article entitled 'A Broken Engagement' pupil Tseu Mei Yuin (McTyeire class of 1921) writes a fictional story where the heroine escapes from an unwanted arranged marriage to pursue a medical degree in America. Her choice, which stuck her family as a 'death blow', is justified when she returns several year later, and 'the prodigal daughter' is received with 'tears and forgiveness'. The fictional heroine works diligently for her countrymen, saving a village from an epidemic and finding a husband in a doctor who works alongside her.<sup>536</sup> Thus, the ideal of being able to

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<sup>535</sup> Interview with Ding Yuming, 9 November 2016, San Mateo, 8:00.

<sup>536</sup> Tseu Mei Yuin, 'The Broken Engagement', *The McTyeirean* (Shanghai, 1921), pp. 77-81.

pursue marriage and career is clearly in the vision of girls at missionary schools by 1921, if not yet a reality.

However, while girls imagined rejecting their suitors to fulfil more interesting careers in the pages of their magazines, the reality for most girls who graduated from missionary schools in the 1920-30s was marriage and motherhood, whether they wanted it or not. For example, Ling Van Chang Tang (Zhang Lingfan 張令范, McTyeire class of 1930) remembered: 'I have two other sisters, I am the middle one. We all went to McTyeire. I married after I graduated. I had to marry. I didn't want to marry. I would like to go to school. My two sisters had arranged marriages too.'<sup>537</sup> Although the opportunities for girls to continue their education to college level did increase over time, as women's education became more widely accepted and popular amongst the elite, pressure to marry early and well remained strong according to interviewees who attended school in the 1930-1940s. As many graduates remember, a shift took place for women who graduated in the 1930s on the eve of the second Sino-Japanese War, as women demonstrated their ability to work in society alongside men. For example, Kuan Yu Chen (Chen Guanyu 陳觀裕, McTyeire graduate of 1936) remembers this shift in opportunities:

In those days all the girls were preparing themselves to get married and not a career. Well, I already belonged to a later generation. I am thinking of those students of the twenties and early thirties. Of my generation, I would say half of us prepared to go to college. To be so mature already and so sophisticated as ladies. They were married, and no one worked. It was not because of McTyeire, but because of the whole society at that time. There was no opportunity for women to work. But hard times came, the Japanese came.<sup>538</sup>

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<sup>537</sup> Ling Van Chang Tang (1930) in 'Telling women's lives'.

<sup>538</sup> Kuan Yu Chen (1936) in 'Telling women's lives'.

Indeed, in 1937 Dou Xueqian, a sociology major at Yanjing University, documented how the number of working women and professions opening up to women were increasing. According to Dou, by 1937 women could work as teachers, librarians, doctors, nurses, editors, journalists, translators, interpreters, lawyers, lab assistants, pharmacists, accountants, secretaries, typists, stenographers and telephone operators. Social attitudes towards married women working was also changing, and it no longer carried the stigma of economic desperation that it had before the war.<sup>539</sup> Although in the post war period, as in Europe, there were patriarchal calls for women to ‘return to the home’ and women were the first to lose their jobs when post-war unemployment replaced the wartime demand for their skills and labour, as Esherick reminds us, women’s wartime experience of the workplace was a dramatic turning point: ‘The war offered women meaningful public roles in service to the nation – and from that time forwards, any return to traditional notions of domesticity became impossible.’<sup>540</sup>

As many graduates recall, missionary schools did not always reflect the reality of the outside world. Rosalyn Koo recalls this paradox that girls who received an education in the 1920-30s had to face:

So my mother and my aunts went to college, ahead of time, so they came back, they were frustrated, why, because women cannot get good jobs could not work anyway, and if you divorce the children go to the father. So in a way, the women would not divorce. Because then what? They couldn’t work and have no children. So women would get frustrated. But they got educated. See this is the unfortunate thing. You educate a woman, to think more of herself and then the society supresses them, and said you’re no good, you just get married, have kids, and in the meantime the husbands could have girlfriends and concubines, that’s okay, the man

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<sup>539</sup> Dou Xueqian, ‘Zhongguo funü de diwei jiaoyu yu zhiye’ cited in Zhao Ma, *Runaway wives, Urban Crimes, and survival tactics in Wartime Beijing, 1937-1949* (Cambridge, Mass, 2015), p. 52.

<sup>540</sup> Joseph Esherick, ‘War and Revolution, Chinese Society during the 1940s’, *Twentieth Century China*, 27.1 (November, 2001), p. 22.

is dominant throughout history of China, men! So growing up I felt very inferior being a girl, but the thing is I don't feel that I am inferior, why should I be inferior, you know, so I think, it is important that I went to McTyeire. It gives you a refuge. A refuge from the outside society, the outside pressure, the war. I felt safest at McTyeire, because it was a boarding school we were living in school five days and come home two days. I was grateful, see I would go home, and here would come the unequal treatment of men and women. The real world right? <sup>541</sup>

Rosalyn's description of her mother and auntie's plight is reminiscent of the words of Lu Xun, who in a talk given to Beijing Women's Normal College students in 1923, pointed out that it was cruel to 'awaken' women by giving them an education when society did not yet offer them sufficient avenues to fulfil their talents and ambitions: 'The most painful thing in life is to wake up from a dream and find no way out. Dreamers are fortunate people. If no way out can be seen, the important thing is not to awaken the sleepers.'<sup>542</sup> Lu Xun often used the metaphor of 'Sleeping' and 'Dreamers' to describe the state of the Chinese people in the May Fourth period, and it is a motif we will return to at the end of this chapter as we explore to what extent the dreams that girls envisioned for themselves within missionary school could be realised in the 'real world'.

Although Rosalyn already belonged to a later generation, and grew up in the wartime and post-war society of the 1940s that did allow women to work in many more professions than had been opened to women of her mother's generation, she still felt acutely the gender discrimination which existed in Chinese society and her own family.<sup>543</sup> Prevalent throughout alumnae memories is the discourse of the

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<sup>541</sup> Interview with Rosalyn Koo, 6 November 2011, San Mateo, 12:31.

<sup>542</sup> Lu Xun, 'What happens after Nora leaves home?', Originally given as a talk at Beijing Women's Normal College on December 26, 1923. Cited in Hua Lan and Vanessa Fong (eds.), *Women in Republican China: A Sourcebook* (London, 1999) pp. 176-181

<sup>543</sup> For more on the professions opening up to women in the period 1919-1949 see: Deng Yongfu and Lü Meiyi, *Zhongguo funü tong shi, minguo juan* (Hangzhou, 2010).

'family' environment which missionary school provided. Many students who were unhappy in their own family situation, like Rosalyn, saw their schools as a 'refuge' where they could just 'be themselves'. Moreover, at school they could be equal members of this all-female family in contrast to their lowly position as daughters within the traditional Confucian family hierarchy. Rosalyn Koo remembered how she saw her school as a haven, an escape from her home where her father ignored his wife and sons were treated differently from daughters: 'I was eager to get back to school after the weekend. To see my friends. Because it was no fun staying at home – I was alone ... I was also very disappointed. Disappointed in my parents for not recognising me as a person. They put me in a category – you are a girl. It's alright if I made a mistake, you don't expect much from girls. Now, if my brothers should make a mistake like that, they would get reprimanded but not me.'<sup>544</sup> Similarly, Jean Koo Lea (McTyeire class of 1929) spoke of her unhappy home life: 'I am glad I went to school, because I did not like it at home. I was the only one who graduated from college. My parents did not love me.'<sup>545</sup>

Considering the unhappy family situation of many students, with fathers who kept concubines, aunties and sisters with unhappy arranged marriages, it is perhaps unsurprising that they should have a negative view of marriage and regard their school as a refuge from a society which did not treat women as equals. Celia Zung (Cheng Xiuling 程修齡), a McTyeire graduate of 1920 who became China's first female lawyer (graduating from Suzhou University Law School) remembered:

My Aunt killed herself because of a bad marriage. She died long before I was born. And her life-size picture is in my home, the castle. And one wing of the castle was her living quarters. So her life-size picture was hung on the wall. To a little girl walking into that room, you can see the

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<sup>544</sup> Rosalyn Koo (1947) in 'Telling women's lives'.

<sup>545</sup> Jean Koo Lea (1929) in 'Telling women's lives'.

impression on the girl. And then my sister married and her husband took all her money to keep three women on the side. My sister returned home after her husband spent all her money. My sister was eleven years older than I. So she was grown up when I was a child. My sister returned home because he had used all her money. So when the husband came, I said “Don’t talk to me, you are a beast. Don’t talk to me you are a beast.” I called him a beast. “You use my sister’s money and you keep three women,” I made up my mind I would have nothing to do with boys.<sup>546</sup>

At missionary school girls could forge strong familial relationships in a safe environment which encouraged them to learn, grow and develop without the overt discrimination which they witnessed at home and in society. Many alumnae described the close relationships they formed with classmates and teachers at school, invoking the rhetoric of a ‘family’ to describe their campus environment. For example, Amy Siao Yen (McTyeire class of 1928) remembered: ‘Most of the teachers were graduates from the school so we were very friendly ... Just like friends, like family almost, I feel that way.’<sup>547</sup> As Jin Feng has explored, the discursive language of family was prevalent in many all-women’s educational institutions in this era. This discourse of ‘family’ not only helped missionaries to feel at home in a foreign land, and forge close bonds between students and teachers at Ginling, it also provided Chinese women with a safe environment in which they could forge new relationships and identities, removed from the Confucian family hierarchy.<sup>548</sup> The need for a caring family environment was perhaps even more pressing at the middle school level, as girls formed their ideas about life and took their peers and teachers as examples of what independent womanhood could be. Granted this freedom to try out new roles and identities in the relatively ‘safe’ environment of a missionary school,

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<sup>546</sup> Celia Zung (1920) in ‘Telling women’s lives’.

<sup>547</sup> Amy Siao Yen (1928) in ‘Telling women’s lives’.

<sup>548</sup> Jin Feng, *The Making of a Family Saga*, p. 8.

girls learned how to negotiate their place as women in a rapidly changing Chinese society.

### **Inverting gender binaries: Playing men's roles**

As we have explored, missionary students often saw their schools as a surrogate 'family' or 'refuge'; a unique and caring environment where they could express themselves away from the pressures, expectations and judgement of their own home lives. Some educational research suggests that all-girls schools, particularly in the environment of a boarding school, afford girls more scope to experiment with their identities in a gender-neutral setting.<sup>549</sup> Studies of modern single-sex education for girls have shown that girls' schools provide an environment where society's expectation for girls' and boys' gendered roles are not as apparent as in mixed-sex schools. In such an environment some girls will perform what was traditionally considered 'male roles' in their choice of subjects and are given more chances to exercise and develop leadership abilities. For example, in co-educational schools a higher proportion of male students choose to study 'hard' science and maths subjects which are traditionally viewed as male subjects. In contrast, a higher proportion of girls tend to choose 'soft' subjects such as arts, humanities and languages. This stereotypical gendered division does not exist in an all-girls educational setting and consequently a higher proportion of girls from all-girls schools go on to study these subjects at university.<sup>550</sup> Moreover, in an all-girls environment, girls have more scope to demonstrate leadership ability, and some studies suggest that they tend to perform better academically.<sup>551</sup> McTyeire Principal Xue Zheng, having experienced the introduction of boys to the school during the Cultural Revolution, still firmly

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<sup>549</sup> Horowitz, *Alma Mater*, p. 109.

<sup>550</sup> Jannette Elwood and Caroline Gipps, *Review of recent research on the achievement of girls in single-sex schools*, (London, 1999), pp. 37-40.

<sup>551</sup> Elwood and Gipps, *Review*, p. 7.

believed in the advantages of an all-girls education: 'But when the girl students are with their male peers they don't dare do anything. They are quite timid. For instance, one of the parents came to me and said that he is very happy that his second daughter is in a girls' school, because the first daughter went to a co-ed school and in biology class when they were dissecting frogs the boys worked, the girls watched. But the second girl didn't stand on the side-lines. So he said he is so happy to have the girl in a girl's school. I also think the age of middle school the girls should be separated. In college they can be together.'<sup>552</sup>

Alumnae who attended missionary schools for girls in the 1920-40s also believed that an all-girls environment was beneficial for their development in a number of ways. For example, Kuan Yu Chen (McTyeire graduate of 1936) and later principal of True Light School for Girls in Hong Kong, approved of girls' schools as giving girls a forum to develop their leadership skills without the distraction of male classmates: 'I approve of girls' schools. It avoids social and peer pressures. You don't have those distractions. At least you can spend your adolescence in a very free and healthy way. If your family encourages you, you can do it outside. Also leadership. You have more chance to have leadership positions. You might say that it is not natural. Well McTyeire girls never had any trouble getting married. They can adjust very well in college.'<sup>553</sup> Anita Li Chun (McTyeire class of 1943), growing up at home with ten siblings including six elder brothers, felt it a relief to escape from her male dominated family environment to the companionship of her female friends at school: 'I am glad I went to a girls' school. I did not want to be bothered by the boys, I had so many older brothers. And also, my brothers got so many friends coming in and out of the house. Enough is enough! I'd rather have peace and

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<sup>552</sup> Xue Zheng in 'Telling women's lives'.

<sup>553</sup> Kuan Yu Chen (1936), in 'Telling women's lives'.

quiet.’<sup>554</sup> Similarly, Rosita Li Wang (McTyeire class of 1946) felt that an all-girls environment contributed to the sense of family or belonging experienced by many of the graduates. She remembered: ‘I am glad I went to an all-girls school. Our school at that time, at that age at least, when you were young, well, coeducation was not that important. It’s a school where you have more unity if you have all girls. If you have both boys and girls the feeling is very different. There is a lot of distraction. And here it was much more unified, you feel much more a sense of belonging. You can always have co-education in college. That makes college life more exciting, because now you are going to a different world. We’re really grown up, we’re going to meet men, working shoulder to shoulder. A twelve-year-old girl does not need all that boyfriend business.’<sup>555</sup>

Although the majority of alumnae interviewed felt that an all-girls environment was ‘freeing’ for them, there were some who felt it hindered them in later life as they felt uncomfortable and did not know how to interact with boys. For example, Mae Yih (McTyuere class of 1946) remembered: ‘So the only drawback about an all-girls school is that they don’t teach you about social manners. I was very awkward with boys. In mixed company, for a long time, I didn’t quite know what to do. Girls that went through mixed education know how to joke, how to be very calm and natural. With me, I kind of froze in front of mixed company.’<sup>556</sup> Zhang Luoluo, reminiscing about her school days with a group of alumnae at a reunion to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the school, could see both the advantages and the pitfalls of an all-girls education: ‘I think it is definitely an advantage to go to an all-girls school. You can concentrate on your study. The disadvantage is you don’t know how to

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<sup>554</sup> Anita Li Chun (1943) in ‘Telling women’s lives’.

<sup>555</sup> Rosita Li Wang (1946) in ‘Telling women’s lives’.

<sup>556</sup> Mae Yih, (1946), in ‘Telling women’s lives’.

relate to boys. I didn't know what to talk to them about. But I don't have any regrets.'<sup>557</sup>

Other studies have shown how girls in an all-girls environment are freer to take on 'male' roles, and indeed many girls who went to McTyeire or St. Mary's identified themselves as 'tomboys' who wanted to be treated as boys rather than girls. Anita Li Chun remembers: 'But actually, I was a tomboy. My older brother – he should have become a girl. He wished he was a girl. Really, we should have exchanged places. Really, I wanted to do everything the boys could do. And my older brother wanted to be a girl so he would have less responsibility, but he pushed the responsibility on me anyhow. Every time there is a funeral or marriage I was the one to go. To this day, really, I'd rather be a man.'<sup>558</sup>

Other students took their desire to be treated as male at school even further. For example, Rosalyn Koo went to the extent of dressing as a boy to school. She explained in an interview how she desired to be treated as a boy and was disdainful of stereotypically feminine behaviour: 'I felt very restless. I'd ask myself "why am I here with this bunch of girls?" I said I will never be like the stereotype of a girl which is gossip, gossip, and gossip, play mah-jongg, and talk to each other about their husbands having mistresses outside. I mean, all the stuff I saw going on in my house. Or go shopping. How to make demands on your husband who's not faithful. Because you can't leave. So what do you get? You get money. Because wives have no control. But all this gossiping.'<sup>559</sup> Rosalyn revealed that part of her disdain also came from witnessing the difficult position of women in society at that time. Consequently, she felt she would rather be a man than a woman:

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<sup>557</sup> Zhang Luoluo (1947) in 'Telling women's lives.'

<sup>558</sup> Anita Li Chun (1943) in 'Telling women's lives'.

<sup>559</sup> Rosalyn Koo (1947) in 'Telling women's lives'.

I said, I don't want to be a girl, I never want to be a girl. I am very articulate. You use double standard. You treat my brothers one way and you treat me another way. I had a report card. I wanted to show him that I had good grades. He said. Why do you need to study so hard? You don't need to. Girls don't need to study so hard. My brother got a C he got chewed out. But my father did not care about me. He said, we hired a music teacher to teach you music, a French teacher to teach you how to speak French. And maybe if you need to we hire a dancing instructor to teach you how to do ballroom dancing. You don't need to study that hard. And I screamed at him. I went to my mother and said, look at him, he treats me like a second-class citizen. I would blow up.<sup>560</sup>

Identifying herself more as male than female, Rosalyn was horrified that when she failed her mathematics course, Principal Xue Zheng asked her to switch into home economics. 'In addition to not wanting to be like them in this sense, I refused to sew, to cook, to knit. Anything attached to the feminine I refused. That's why I said to my high school principal, "Why should I have to go into home economics? I have no use for that.'<sup>561</sup> Rosalyn thus styled herself as a rebel and tomboy at school and her classmates and teachers remembered her as one. She was not only rebelling against the style of feminine behaviour she witnessed at home and in society, but also the highly feminine gender norms and expectations prevalent in the school. Principal Xue Zheng, remembering Rosalyn at School, applies a 'male' gender stereotype remembering such 'naughty' girls at school: 'Rosalyn was very naughty. She was very very naughty. When she was in school, she dressed as a boy, never in a girl's dress. Naughty girls were boys. I was quite serious with the girls, because I thought they were spoiled by their parents so tried to balance it.'<sup>562</sup> In this way, the memories of alumnae and their teachers actually reinforce existing gendered stereotypes in their

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<sup>560</sup> Interview with Rosalyn Koo, 6 November 2011, San Mateo, 12:31.

<sup>561</sup> Rosalyn Koo (1947) in 'Telling women's lives'.

<sup>562</sup> Xue Zheng in 'Telling women's lives'.

descriptions of being a 'tomboy' or 'girl'. The crucial point here is that the school provided a space where girls could self-consciously don stereotypically defined 'masculine' attributes to express themselves and thus find a relief from society's pressures of how a 'woman' should perform her roles in society through behaviour and dress.

Another consequence of opportunities for gender invention or blurring that occurred in the environment of an all-girls school was the formation of same-sex relationships, known as '*chao pengyou*' 炒朋友, or '*la pengyou*' 拉朋友, where elder and younger McTyeire students 'had crushes' or 'fell in love' with each other.

According to Theresa Chen:

'Miss Harris, she was one of the youngest ones, and boy how many girls go after her! Ow, ow ow! Well, infatuation, adolescent infatuation. I never had that because I was close to her. But then also in school, that was like girls together, *women jiao zuo chao pengyou* ... Let me explain to you what it is. One party would say, 'oh she's cute', and so we say '*chao pengyou*' we get you to meet, and so then they go to have tea together, get them together, it's sort of like the same gender romance. It's only in girls' school, but that was very strong, and they always say, somebody, kind of looks up to so and so, and so if they express that so it's kind of a game too, and it's really fun. Well they just have some time together, and the other ones who get them together, they have fun teasing, like matchmaking. I remember when I was in Junior 1, there was a Senior 3, and they thought, oh, that's a cute kid, about me! But there are some people who were well known as coupled together, usually younger and older ones, the younger one will look up to the older, and the elder one will say 'she's kind of cute kid.' It's a group thing, I had my friends and if we know someone, we gang up and try to get them together, and sometimes they get kind of embarrassed because you know, they kind of like, because your showing your, it's not exactly infatuation, but it's like you know, more a game, more teasing than anything else, but it's very

prevalent, but I think that's a girls' school culture. And the other thing. We had softball, and if someone admired someone with ability, we were like '*chaopeng you le*'.<sup>563</sup>

Rosalyn Koo also remembers the phenomenon of younger girls having 'crushes' on older girls and waiting for them after class to carry their books. According to Roz, becoming '*chao pengyou*' involved the elder student inviting the younger one to walk one round of the school grass field in front of Richardson hall together, and then they were matched. It also appears that older students used such relationships to get younger girls to perform chores for them.<sup>564</sup> Pan Guangdan (the republican era translator who is remembered today for introducing the European scientific theories of homosexuality to the Chinese public), distinguished the same-sex relationships formed in girls' schools in China from those formed in England as lacking what he characterised as 'tradition'.<sup>565</sup> However, evidence from my interviewees suggests that by the 1940s same-sex romances within all-girls schools such as McTyeire, had become so institutionalised as to be considered one of the rites of passage, along with a class flower, mottos or rings as described in chapter two.

Within the all-girls environment of a missionary school gender roles could become more fluid, girls could invert traditional binaries by flirting with, pursuing each other and perhaps experimenting with their sexuality. It is unclear how this phenomenon was viewed by their teachers and, while it is unlikely to have been encouraged, it is important to remember that many missionary teachers themselves had chosen a career to remain single to pursue their careers or escape pressures to marry. As graduates of women's colleges, many of their American and British missionary teachers would have been familiar with the phenomenon of women

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<sup>563</sup> Interview with Theresa Chen, 10 November 2016, San Mateo, 59:20.

<sup>564</sup> Interview with Rosalyn Koo, 5 November 2016, San Mateo.

<sup>565</sup> Pan Guangdan cited by Tze-Ian D. Sang, *The Emerging Lesbian, Female Same-sex Desire in Modern China* (London, 2003), p. 121.

falling in love with each other in an all-girls educational environment. Evidence suggests that ‘Smashing’ or ‘Crushing’ in the American context or ‘Piping’, ‘Pashing’, ‘Raves’, or ‘Spooning’ in the British lexicon was rife in all-girls’ schools of the era.<sup>566</sup> As a Smith College clipping explained: ‘this distinctly woman’s college word’ described a situation when ‘One girl ... usually a freshman, becomes much attached to another girl, usually an upper-class girl. The young girl is ‘crushed’ on the other, sends her flowers, and tries in various ways to give expression to her admiration.’<sup>567</sup> American Women’s College authorities tried to discourage ‘Smashing’ or ‘Crushing’. However, as Horowitz points out, from the point of view of college authorities ‘emerging college life, with its independent standards, was the problem, not student sexuality.’<sup>568</sup> Moreover, while American women’s college authorities became increasingly concerned with and condemned student ‘crushes’, it became an accepted practice that unmarried faculty women would frequently pair off and set up their independent household outside of college grounds together.<sup>569</sup>

The formation of same-sex ‘crushes’ or ‘flirtations’ also occurred within the context of other all-girls schools, whether missionary, private or government schools for girls. For example, republican writer, Xie Bingying, also styling herself a ‘tomboy’, described her embarrassment when a classmate at the First Provincial Normal School for Girls in Changsha fell in love with her:

It seemed very strange to me when I first perceived that many of my schoolmates began to become inseparable pairs. They would never leave each other, whether walking or sitting down, and that was something very new to me ... But then there was a Miss Sun, who also came from Shin-Fa and studied with me in the same class, and she suddenly fell in

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<sup>566</sup> Gillian Avery, *The Best Type of Girl, A History of Girl’s Independent Schools* (London, 1991), p. 304.

<sup>567</sup> Horowitz, *Alma Mater*, p. 106.

<sup>568</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.

<sup>569</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 190.

love with me. She must stay in the same room with me. As the days went by, and perhaps because of her constancy, I, iron hearted though I am, began to feel some affection for her. From my birth I had been quite like a boy, and she was a typical romantic girl.<sup>570</sup>

Later, Xie and another classmate who had an unrequited love for her, were teased by their dormitory mates by being forced to share a dormitory bed for the night: 'I could imagine that she was full of tears, and I thought I could hear a suppressed sob. As she had such a great love for me and was so devoted to me, while I was so cold to her, not even giving her a kind word, this could be regarded as a great insult to her. But what could I do? I began to imagine the unhappy time a husband and wife must have who have no love for each other. Alas, they were just as miserable as we were then.'<sup>571</sup> In this way, girls in a single-sex environment consciously tried out or practised same-sex relationships in anticipation of the traditional heterosexual relationships they would be expected to form later. In the pages of the *McTyieran* and the *Phoenix* we find images of girls practising proposing to each other, cartoons depicting student 'crushes' (figs. 36 and 37) and writing about the answers they would give to potential suitors. In fig. 37, a stereotypically 'feminine girl' with waved hair and curved figure is being paired with a more masculine 'tomboy' with shorter hair by a mischievous classmate acting as matchmaker. In fig. 36, girls walking arm in arm down 'love lane' progress from 'class mates' and 'table mates', to 'roommates' and 'friends', with the final destination of their relationship teasingly crossed out, perhaps inviting the viewer to join in the school culture fun of 'teasing' and speculating where the boundaries of such relationships might be drawn. These images also reveal that, while writing about the modesty of their dress and behaviour at school, (and critiquing those students and teachers who did not conform to how a

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<sup>570</sup> Xie Bingying, *Autobiography*, p. 76.

<sup>571</sup> *Ibid*, p.81.

‘McTyeire girl’ should comport herself) students often appear in high heels, beautifully tailored qipao’s and full makeup in the cartoons and images of the magazines.<sup>572</sup>

In her book, *The Emerging Lesbian*, Sang Tze-lan has shown how early twentieth century western sexology, which pathologised homosexual relationships, entered the discourse of May Fourth writers in the republican era. Of particular concern were the same sex-relationships which seemed to be so prevalent in girls’ schools of this era. While the debates that raged on the pages of republican era women’s magazines varied in stance from elevation of same-sex female love as the highest form of spiritual communion, to dismissing these school romances as a temporary infatuation (much as male writers in the late nineteenth century American and British context had done) what is clear is that the all-girls school environment of republican China did unintentionally provide a new and relatively free space where girls had agency to experiment with new forms of same-sex companionship and more fluid expressions of gendered identity. As Sang points out: ‘Female same-sex bonding in school was not simply a matter of physical pleasure; more often than not it was about camaraderie and a creative search for the self.’<sup>573</sup> These female relationships forged in the context of an all-girls school perhaps provided a refuge from, and in some cases a viable alternative to, heterosexual marriage in an environment where the May Fourth ideal of a companionate, free-choice marriage was yet to become a reality for most women of this era. Indeed, as we have seen with their mothers and sisters trapped in unhappy marriage to unfaithful husbands, and their independent female missionary teachers providing a new model of same-sex domesticity in China, it is unsurprising that many missionary schoolgirls sought

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<sup>572</sup> See ‘Answers to probable proposals’, *The McTyeirean*, (Shanghai, 1921), p. 11.

<sup>573</sup> Sang, *The Emerging Lesbian*, p. 136.

refuge in the all-female society of their school and the intimate and fulfilling female friendships they made there.

Other opportunities for girls to play men's roles existed at missionary schools in the form of plays and pageants performed by students at Christmas and for graduation. The highlight of the McTyeire school calendar was the senior play, which was put on by girls of the graduating class. Money raised from the ticket sales helped to fund the printing cost of the annual school magazine, *The McTyeirean*. Teachers, parents and other family members were invited to attend along with members of the school board, church and other patrons of the school. No expense was spared in preparation for this event; professional lighting teams, set designers and theatre directors were recruited to coach the girls how to say their lines and ensure the event was a success. This event not only showcased the school and its facilities, but also the girls themselves who would appear in newspaper and magazine reports, extolling their abilities and indirectly advertising them as eligible future brides. Dramatically talented girls eagerly auditioned and participated in the senior play and the best parts were given to the most outstanding students (and in the case of the Christmas pageant at St. Mary's, to the most Christian ones).<sup>574</sup> However, in an all-girls environment, boys' roles were performed by female classmates. Sometimes gender stereotypes came to the fore as the prettiest girls in the school were often chosen to be the heroines. Taller girls, or those with deeper voices, were cast in male roles. For example, Mae Yih (McTyeire, class of 1946) remembered: 'And then we had plays, senior plays, all that, which helped us establish public speaking, performing in front of the public. You know, encourage leadership qualities which I think was very important. My role in the senior play was the prince.

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<sup>574</sup> Interview with Dong Yue, 26 November 2016, Beijing.

I was always a boy. All the queens and princesses went to the good-looking gals in the class.’<sup>575</sup> Similarly, Zhang Luoluo (McTyeire class of 1947), who was tall, athletic and good at sports was cast as the prince in the 1947 senior play (fig. 38).

As Jiang Jin has explored in her book *Women Playing Men*, female opera stars, by adopting the dress and characteristics of men, could push at the boundaries of what was considered permissible between sexes in terms of onstage intimacy, as the viewers were aware that both players were female. According to Jiang, female opera stars playing men’s roles could experiment with new subject positions and strategies for asserting their identities.<sup>576</sup> How did missionary schoolgirls feel when they donned men’s clothes and assumed male roles in school plays which were performed to a select audience of parents, teachers, board members and other important personages? Interviews suggest that they enjoyed the freedom which this temporary gender inversion afforded them. For example, Xu Meizhen, (McTyeire class of 1945), remembered she had had fun playing the part of Essex in *Elizabeth and Essex*. She performed her male role so well that the audience thought she was a man:

I was very naughty. The senior play, was usually very professional. In our class there was a classmate who knew a film studio, and also knew some stage actors, very famous ones, she invited them to come to our school to act as directors. So it was extremely professional, she invited an extremely famous male actor to come and be our director, and he went to the Lyceum theatre in Shanghai, to borrow their scenery. Also a professional advertising station, which had their own orchestra, someone also knew the conductor of this orchestra, and they invited the conductor to come to our school and help develop the music, and this conductor also composed the theme song for our play. And then there was also a professional who came to do the lighting, so this play was really very

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<sup>575</sup> Mae Yih (1946) in ‘Telling women’s lives’.

<sup>576</sup> Jiang Jin, *Women Playing Men, Yue opera and social change in twentieth century Shanghai* (London, 2009), p. 255.

professional, all of it was borrowed from a film studio ... the people who came included the teachers, parents, their friends, we went out to sell tickets, to raise money for the school magazine. Have a look, this is our play 'Elizabeth and Essex' and 'The Indian princess'... This is the play that we acted. Look, I bet you can't find me ... I was already dead ... lying on the stage (Laughing). Our makeup was all done by professionals. Look at this, in Chinese opera, men's shoes were very thick were they not? This was a type of stage drama. I am now quite short but previously I was quite tall, (5 centimetres taller!), because I was tall I played a man's part in the play, I put on a deep voice. The audience found this very strange, they asked, which school did you go to borrow male classmates? We said, Hey! We are all girls (laughing), they thought we were boys!<sup>577</sup>

Her account along with the pictures (figs. 39 and 40) illustrate Xu Meizhen's enjoyment in playing these male roles and the novelty of adopting male attire. This gender inversion is also inflected with western notions of courtship and courtly love, facilitated by their elaborate and expensive European-style costumes in fig. 41 where Xu Meizhen poses as courtly lover Essex. Their study of Shakespeare plays in their English Literature classes gave girls an early exposure to these western cultural norms and traditions, articulated through their body language and poses, which were at once exotic, fun and liberating for girls to perform on stage. Xu Meizhen characterises herself as a 'naughty' student in the same way that Rosalyn and Xue Zheng characterise the naughty students as playing boys roles' at school. Similar to Rosalyn Koo, Xu Meizhen preferred wearing more gender-neutral outfits to school (dungarees) while her colleagues wore more feminine qipaos (See fig. 42). In this image Xuemei Zhen stands out for her dungarees and uncurled hair. She gazes directly at the camera, glass raised to her lips, she commands the attention of the viewer and is the centre of the group in a social as well as physical sense. Xu

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<sup>577</sup> Interview with Xu Meizhen, 17 March 2016, Shanghai, 01:04-01:09.

Meizhen also took on leadership roles and was elected as class president. She is, according to the American college stereotype the ‘All-round girl’. As Horowitz asserts: ‘Through college organizations they discovered how to wield power and act collectively; through aggressive sport to play as a team member and win; through dramatics to take male roles. In a society in which gender differences attributed aggression, strength and directness to men, the “all-round” girl of the women’s college learned how to act as a man.’<sup>578</sup> In this way we can see that the environment of missionary schools offered some pupils (such as Xu Meizhen and Rosalyn), the freedom to take on traditionally male roles, expressing these more fluid gender identities in their dress, extra-curricula dramatic activities, social relationships and leadership roles. The school was thus an experimental space which produced unexpected results. Although set up under tightly controlled conditions, designed to produce the perfect Christian wife and mother along very conservative gendered ideas of women’s roles, in reality the outcome was to unintentionally provide a safe all-female space where girls such as Rosalyn had agency to perform their own experiments with their gendered identities by performing stereotypically ‘male’ attributes.

In their creative writing in the school magazines, girls push these gender inversions to the limit in their experimentation with what women could do in society. Not limited to the genteel expectations of their missionary educators and parents, their imaginations radically transgress gender boundaries as they imagine themselves taking on roles which were traditionally the exclusive preserve of men: fighting battles and joining in radical revolutionary activity. For example, in her story ‘Spiritual Companion’ Yongjiang pupil, Meng Kuizhu 孟奎珠, combines notions of

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<sup>578</sup> See Horowitz, *Alma Mater*, p.163.

revolutionary feminism with Christianity in a unique and radical way. She advocates women not only serving their country in times of crisis as teachers, doctors and nurses (although these are roles she also elevates), but as active military participants as well.<sup>579</sup> In the story, the heroine Ling 玲, a ‘rich and revolutionary woman’, is a middle school professor of Chinese literature. She leads and advises the students in their protests and rallies during the ‘great social transformation.’<sup>580</sup> During the war she becomes a nurse behind the front lines, acting as a kind of Florence Nightingale strengthening soldiers’ bodies and minds through her courageous words. So far, the heroine has acted in line with traditional notions of female virtue. The break comes when: ‘One windy and rainy night, suddenly the announcement of utter defeat came urgently from the front line, they changed into martial uniforms, decided to band together and prepare the team to go and help, however who would allow a weak woman to go and carry out such a dangerous and important mission?’<sup>581</sup> The heroine reassures her male comrades that she, although a weak and feeble woman, has the strength to fight because of her ‘spiritual companion’: ‘I don't know if I will return alive, therefore I will take my beloved spiritual companion and introduce him to you. I hope you will also agree with him and let him get close to you ... Who is this friend? It is only the four words “save the nation through revolution.” In my thinking and action throughout my life, I have never departed from these four words’<sup>582</sup>

In this passage Meng Kuizhu combines a radical revolutionary feminism with Christian language and imagery. In this way, we can see that some pupils effectively envisioned a new type of Chinese woman, one who not only had the caring attributes of Christian wife and mother, but who could also take up arms to defend her country.

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<sup>579</sup> Meng Kuizhu, ‘Jingshen shang de Banlü’, *Yongjiang Sheng* (1931), pp. 81-84.

<sup>580</sup> Meng, ‘Jingshen shang de Banlü’, p. 82.

<sup>581</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 83.

<sup>582</sup> *Ibid.*, p.84.

In so doing, Yongjiang girls uniquely combined liberal and conservative, Christian and nationalist gender discourses, effectively transcending the limitations of both. This use of Christianity to strengthen women's revolutionary participation was a radically new departure from the genteel and virtuous Christian motherhood and femininity that an early generation of Christian educators had prescribed. During the 1911 Revolution, missionary educators and some Chinese Christian women were shocked by the 'unfeminine' revolutionary activities with which girls became involved.<sup>583</sup> Ida Kahn's *An Amazon in Cathay* (1912) warns of the dire consequences that could occur if women dared to step out of the domestic realm into the front line world of men.<sup>584</sup> In her story, the heroine Pearl dons men's clothes and cuts her hair in order to join the army, but, 'unprotected and un-chaperoned', is raped by Chinese soldiers.<sup>585</sup> In contrast, Meng Kuizhu's heroine uses her Christian faith and patriotism, simultaneously embodied in her 'spiritual companion' to inspire her male comrades and strengthen her resolve to go into battle. As Joan Judge has explored, stories of virtuous women who took on men's roles at times of national crisis were longstanding in Chinese literature and still used in didactic textbooks for women in this period.<sup>586</sup> In these stories, women were justified in stepping outside of the domestic realm for national and family salvation. For example, Hua Mulan takes her father's place when he is unable to fight for the emperor, showing both her patriotism

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<sup>583</sup> See Graham, *Gender, Culture and Christianity*, p. 102

<sup>584</sup> Ida Kahn, *An Amazon in Cathay*, (1912), cited in Hu Ying, 'Naming the First New Woman', p. 217. Most scholars have read Ida Kahn's (Kang Aide or Kang Cheng) story as an example of how Chinese educated Christian women imbibed the conservative gender ideas held by their western missionary educators and role models. For a different interpretation of the Ida Khan story see: Connie Shemo, 'How Better to serve her country? Cultural translators, US Women's History and Kang Cheng's 'An Amazon in Cathay', *Journal of Women's History*, 21.4, 2009, pp. 111-133, Shemo argues that Kang Cheng's story and later writings should be read as an example of Chinese women's agency and important role as cultural interlocators, through which they forged their own version of the leading role of Chinese Christian women in building modern China.

<sup>585</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 222.

<sup>586</sup> Judge, *The Precious Raft of History*, p.151.

and filial loyalty to her father.<sup>587</sup> At the end of the story the traditional gender balance is restored and Mulan assumes the role of virtuous wife and mother. Indeed, it is only through a temporary gender inversion by assuming the characteristics and appearance of men, which allowed women to participate in such unfeminine activities.<sup>588</sup> In Meng's story, it is the heroine's Christianity that allows her to enter the world of men while retaining her feminine virtue. It is through her faith that she can strengthen and reassure her male comrades and face the idea of her own death undaunted. This story demonstrates the extent to which girls were no longer confined by the Christian doctrine of femininity but actually created their own unique version of feminism and Christianity to strengthen their patriotism and justify their roles as active participants in the revolution.

#### **Ad Astra: Able to 'do it all'? Dreams vs. Realities**

Safe within the confines of their all-female missionary schools, free from the gendered hierarchies still deeply embedded in society, girls could create new roles for themselves. As we can see from the articles, poems and illustrations that fill the pages of their school magazines, girls did not limit themselves to the roles of good wives and wise mothers (*Xianqi liangmu* 賢妻良母), but in their creative imagination envisioned themselves becoming, lawyers, doctors, politicians and even space explorers. Indeed, for the class of 1924 the sky seemed no limit as they determined to go 'to the stars' in their creative writings, and this ambition was reflected in their class motto: 'Ad Astra!'<sup>589</sup> A nice example of their unlimited ambitions is the creative writing piece entitled 'Class prophesy' in the 1924 edition of annual school magazine *The McTyrean*. In this story the author Zia Tsoo Yi is

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<sup>587</sup> Judge, *The Precious Raft of History*, p. 151.

<sup>588</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>589</sup> Front Matter, *The McTyrean* (Shanghai, 1924).

walking about the campus at night-time full of melancholy that she will soon graduate and have to leave her school and her beloved classmates. She comes into the courtyard where a beautiful fountain is playing. The stars are shining above her and as the clock strikes, she hears beautiful music and the fountain starts singing to her, revealing a vision of what her classmates will achieve in the future:

“Worry not for the future, for there is One that will take care of it for you. But look below and amuse yourself, there are strange sights in store for you.” I stood rooted on the spot – enchanted, but I looked down as bidden ...

Why! It was Lok Zing Tseng, my classmate, standing there on a platform and addressing a multitude of young women.

“... Only the impossible is worth doing, dear sister.” She was saying: “so let us fight for our rights! We must have women’s suffrage or we die – this is the sole aim of the present women’s movement. We are striving towards liberty and life ...” Her voice grew fainter before I could recover from the surprise of this transfiguration, the picture also grew dim and another took its place ... It was a female statue, standing aloft. Her face was of ethereal beauty – pure and serene, the very image of Truth. One hand was held out as if in perpetual warning or blessing. On the other hand was a dazzling light. At the foot of the statue these letters were glowing:

“He is a freeman whom the Truth makes free: All else are slaves!”

But behold! As I looked, the letters formed themselves into a halo: they glittered for a moment and melted away. Beneath them, I saw the honest face of Dzung Bai Sih our Puritan. She was sitting in a law court, taking the seat as chief of Justice! While down below a trial was going on.

A Chinese flag, with its five shining stripes, flew gloriously into view. It was supported by another flag with the initials P.O.S. in gold. There were decorated on the walls of a big room, where a group of young women were having a meeting. Towering above them all, I saw Woo Wei Zui’s calm face. She was saying something:

‘Dear Sisters, we must strive for something good; or, what’s the use of our voting power? We fought against liquor for some time and a law was enacted last year prohibiting the drinking of intoxicating liquor throughout the country.

The evils of gambling were also checked through our efforts. Now, we must fight against child labour – the evil which is crushing the buds of our nation. Remember! We must be true to our motto and really be the “Pillars of Society ...”

The rest of the speech was not heard for the picture had disappeared.

A bluebird now fluttered into view. It flew around joyously two or three times, until it rested itself motionlessly upon a small bottle which someone was holding. What’s that? I thought. The picture became clearer, a hospital was shown. Nyeu Ming Hwa, dressed as a doctor, was standing before the bed of a patient ...

An Airplane now flew into sight, bearing the name, “Ad Astra,” A flag was waving with “en route to Mars”, in gold. As the machine flew nearer, I got a glimpse of the smiling face of Sze Wei Tsung. The Machine gave a dash and darted upward to the blue deep sky.

The sprays ceased as if by magic. The music stopped. All the strange visions vanished. The fountain was calm and clear, reflecting all the hues of the deep sky. I woke up as from a dream.<sup>590</sup>

In this essay Zia Tsoo Yi combines her Christian, feminist and nationalist ideals in her vision of what her classmates may achieve in China’s future: fighting for women’s liberation, becoming a priest, a celebrated judge, a distinguished doctor, and interstellar explorer. In this piece we see not only the influence of the student’s missionary education in her Christian language and support of the temperance movement, but her writing also indicates the influence of the McTyeire Senior High School English curriculum which included Shakespeare’s plays.<sup>591</sup> Indeed, her essay is reminiscent of both Gonzalo’s utopian vision: ‘If I have plantation of this isle’ and Caliban’s ‘I cried to dream again’ speeches in *The Tempest*. However, the dream ends as she is suddenly awakened by the school gardener, prompting us to question how far the author herself believes this vision to be a pure fantasy or an achievable

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<sup>590</sup> Zia Tsoo Yi, ‘Class Prophecy’, *The McTyeirean* (Shanghai, 1924), pp. 46-52.

<sup>591</sup> Interview with Theresa Chen, 10 November 2016, San Mateo.

reality for her classmates once they leave school. As Rosalyn's depiction of her mother's plight has shown, the tentative fragility of their school day dreams is revealed, in light of the sobering realities that alumnae faced upon graduation in the 1910-20s.

We must question how far the unique environment of mission schools prepared girls for the realities of the society they had to enter upon leaving school. As Solomon has explored, this tension that an educated woman felt between her academic training to be 'useful' and the demands on her to fulfil her traditional roles that society still expected of her, was a paradox experienced by the first generations of college educated women in the United States: 'At college she had accepted a double-edged message, to be useful and to be womanly. Only later did she wonder whether she could meet both the traditional expectations inherent in being a woman and the new obligations introduced by her collegiate experience.'<sup>592</sup> How did girls negotiate these ambitions and desires upon leaving schools with the pressures and difficulties still faced by women in 1920-40s China? I argue that students borrowed from their missionary teachers the 'duty' 'service' and self-sacrifice which underpinned the doctrine of 'women's work' in order to negotiate these challenges and achieve their ambitions. Returning to the story which opened this chapter, this section will explore how girls at missionary schools adopted the rhetoric of 'service', which combined notions of Nationalism, Christianity and Feminism, in order to overcome these restrictions and carve out new roles in society. At the beginning of chapter four we explored a McTyeire student's fictional story, in which the heroine, Ming Tsung, convinces her father that she should go to university. She is inspired by

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<sup>592</sup> Solomon, *In the Company of Educated Women*, p. 115.

the words of her teacher, and reasons that it is her ‘duty’ to help her less fortunate sisters, who have not the privilege to receive an education as she has had:

“It’s not fair”, she cried, “not fair. I ought to have that chance. It is my *duty* to society. I *owe* it something which I much *repay*, but, I’m not ready for that *work* yet. College will prepare me for it and then I can truly be *useful* for society. I ought to have this chance. I must. I hear the women of China *calling* to me, calling for freedom, for equality, for life, while I sit here and do nothing. It is impossible! What am I made for if not to *serve*? No, no, I must work for women, for their freedom, against men’s bondage. These poor women are buried in their homes, buried in the lives of their husbands.”<sup>593</sup> [Emphasis mine]

In her writing we can clearly see that the author, Tsong Tuh wei, (Zhang Dewei 章德衛) has been influenced by the same rhetoric that missionaries used to describe and justify ‘women’s work’ and their own calling to be female missionaries. Tsong uses the rhetoric of her ‘calling’, ‘duty’, and ‘service’ to help her less fortunate sisters in China in the same way that missionary women justified women’s work as a natural extension of their caring roles. According to Jane Hunter, many American missionary candidates had a profound religious experience or ‘moment of conversion’ which convinced them that God had ‘called’ them to work in China.<sup>594</sup> Personal ambition and desire for a larger scope for their abilities influenced many women, feeling constrained by their own society’s limited outlets for their talents, to take up missionary service as a career.<sup>595</sup> Moreover, in becoming a missionary and engaging in the rhetoric of self-sacrifice, women were able to overcome the criticism of their societies that judged such successful, ambitious and intelligent women as

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<sup>593</sup> Tsong, ‘The two wills’, p. 185.

<sup>594</sup> Hunter, *The Gospel of Gentility*, p. 40. For example, Pearl Buck’s mother, Caroline Sydenstricker, pledged to go as a missionary to China upon her mother’s death. Pearl Buck, *The Exile*, (London, 1936), p. 63.

<sup>595</sup> Hunter, *The Gospel of Gentility*, p. 31.

‘unfeminine’.<sup>596</sup> Therefore, for ambitious young women in the late nineteenth century, the attractions of becoming a foreign missionary were great: ‘women who subscribed for mission service were those who wanted more for themselves than they saw in conventional alternatives. Some of them wanted more opportunities for advancement; some, more renown, others satisfaction, independence, adventure, status. But all wanted to participate in a greater project the dimensions of which both enhanced and diminished their own – a project that offered them, in Simone de Beauvoir’s terminology, transcendence.’<sup>597</sup> Similarly, as Dana Roberts has argued, missionary women used ‘women’s work’ to carve out a wider sphere for themselves within male-dominated missionary society themselves.<sup>598</sup> Antoinette Burton has highlighted that this rhetoric of a downtrodden eastern ‘sisterhood’ in need of the uplifting influence of Christianity, served the needs of Protestant British women in several ways. This discourse not only enabled female missionaries to enlarge their scope of operations within missionary societies under the rhetoric of ‘women’s work’ and to garner financial support for the mission endeavour; it also reassured them of their own comparatively ‘liberated’ position at a time when the women’s movement was struggling to gain ground at home.<sup>599</sup>

Missionaries were keen to instil in their pupils a sense of their own privilege for having the rare opportunity to receive an education, and consequently their duty to extend this privilege to their less fortunate sisters in China. In this article Ming Tsung takes the argument a step further, arguing that she must have access to a college level education in order to fulfil her duty. In this way, we can see that missionary school pupils used the same rhetorical devices as their missionary

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<sup>596</sup> *Ibid.* p. 35.

<sup>597</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51.

<sup>598</sup> Roberts, *American Women in Mission*, p. 137.

<sup>599</sup> Burton, *Burdens of History*.

teachers to justify their own ambitions and widen their sphere of operation within society. However, in some cases, they went further than their missionary teachers, in their assertion that Chinese women had something to teach their American counterparts, thus reversing the power dynamic implicit in the missionary enterprise. For example, in her article Li Tsing Lien (Li Qinglian 李清廉, McTyeire class of 1918), who was currently studying for her degree at George Washington University, while employing the missionary rhetoric of service to justify her ambitions, takes the argument one step further, arguing that students should not just learn from America in order to help China, but that Chinese women can also be of service to America:

We all have problems to face, but when we think for a moment, we realise that we are undergoing a process of preparing ourselves for future *service* in China, and these problems and difficulties appear to be simply stepping stones to something *higher, greater and nobler*. With the idea of *responsibility* for our country's future progress, all the so-called troubles ought to be surmounted without much struggle, if we expect to *serve* our country in the future. What are these problems compared to what we have to face when we get home! Lastly, the pressure of our *responsibility* urges us to give our best to America. China, like any country, has her weak points, but there is sufficient good in her which we can pass over to our friend America.<sup>600</sup> [Emphasis mine]

This gendered rhetoric of 'service' 'duty' and 'responsibility' is a continual refrain running throughout the magazines in the 1920s-1940s. In particular, if we look at the 'Class Prophecies' section of each *McTyerian* for the years 1917- 1937, where girls predict and dream what they and their classmates will do in the future, we can see that, although girls aims change and broaden from an emphasis on social work and domestic education in 1919, to more radical ambitions to become explorers,

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<sup>600</sup> Li Tsing Lian 'Our Responsibility', *The McTyeirean* (Shanghai, 1921) pp. 121-123. For more on Chinese Christian women's leadership roles and agency in the cultural exchange between China and America see Shemo's reevaluation of Ida Khan. Shemo, 'How better to serve her country', pp. 111-133.

politicians, lawyers, bank managers and factory owners by the 1930s, the rhetorical devices they use to justify these widening ambitions remain the same, namely the ideology of 'service'. While envisioning their futures in roles far beyond the domestic sphere, girls are careful to place these ambitions alongside the traditional roles of wife and mother, and filial daughters, thus justifying their radical ambitions within an acceptable framework. For example, in the 1921 *McTyerian* the graduating class imagine what they will be doing in the year 1930:

On the opposite wall hung an automatic calendar with the date April 1 1930. Near the window sat a handsome man perusing the morning paper. Perching upon one arm of the chair was a little girl of three with her rosy cheek leaning against their father. Standing on tiptoe at the back was a little boy of five with his arms around his neck. Then a sweet faced lady appeared who took her place at the head of the breakfast table and was immediately joined by the father and children.

"Is there any interesting news in the paper?" Asked Me Li.

"Why, yes, there is interesting news concerning some of your classmates, answered her husband. "Miss Zee Yeu Yong was elected minister of finance at the general election yesterday. She was the first woman to take up that post since the introduction of women's suffrage six years ago. But the more surprising news is that Miss May Ko has been appointed Chief-of-police."<sup>601</sup>

Thus, girls used their schools as a laboratory for testing the limits and trying out new roles, using a traditional rhetoric to justify their ambitions and achieve their ends. They even playfully dreamed that a woman might be able to get married to a man several years her junior.<sup>602</sup> Vivian W. Yen (McTyeire class of 1934) believed that the special environment provided by McTyeire gave girls the space, freedom and opportunity to imagine limitless possibilities for their roles in future society: 'We were able to do it all: Mothers, educated, devoted and elegant wives, powerful

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<sup>601</sup> Tseu Mei Yuin, 'Class Prophecy: The Magic Screen', *The McTyeirian* (Shanghai, 1921), p. 8.

<sup>602</sup> Zien Fong Kuh, 'Class Prophecy', *The McTyeirian* (Shanghai, 1922), p. 20.

business women. Because we did not live on a mundane plane. The school was for our elevation.’<sup>603</sup> As Catherine Yeh has explored, political novels from the period 1907-1911 are replete with utopian visions of women’s future political roles.<sup>604</sup> What is interesting in the case of missionary school girls writing in the May Fourth era and beyond, is how they fuse Christianity and the gendered doctrine of ‘service’ which they have imbibed from their education, with May Fourth patriotism and ideals about a husband who supports their ambitions in a companionate marriage in their dreams of the roles that they will fulfil in China’s future society.

The ‘Alumnae Section’ at the back of the school magazines allows us to contrast girls’ ambitions and day dreams of what they will achieve upon graduation to their roles in real life later on. In some cases, we find that girls do fulfil their dreams. For example, in the 1921 *McTyerian* Yen Wei Tsung (Yan Wanqing 顏婉清, McTyeire class of 1921) predicts she will become a nurse by 1930 and in the alumnae section of the 1930 *McTyerian* she is listed as working as at the Red Cross hospital.<sup>605</sup> Remarkable cases of female pioneers graduating from McTyeire include Celia Zeng (Cheng Xiuling 程修齡, McTyeire class of 1920) and Yan Shunzhen 嚴順貞 (McTyeire class of 1910), who became China’s first female lawyer and female bank manager respectively.<sup>606</sup> In most cases, however, girls’ radical ambitions of becoming explorers, doctors, lawyers, bank managers and politicians have not come to fruition and they are listed as married with children.<sup>607</sup> It was not until the mid-late 1930s, when the second Sino-Japanese War brought opportunities for women to

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<sup>603</sup> Vivian W. Yen (1934) in ‘Telling women’s lives’.

<sup>604</sup> Catherine Yeh, *The Chinese Political Novel: Migration of a World Genre* (London, 2015), pp. 231-266.

<sup>605</sup> See Yui, ‘Class Prophecy’, p. 10 and ‘Alumnae Directory’, *The McTyerian* (Shanghai, 1930), p. 167.

<sup>606</sup> Chen Jingyu, *Zhongxi nüzhong*, vol. I. p. 164.

<sup>607</sup> ‘Alumnae Directory’, *The McTyerian* (Shanghai, 1930), p. 167.

pursue a career alongside marriage that this became a real possibility for many women. A striking trend throughout the alumnae sections of both *The Phoenix* and *The McTyerian* is how many students work for the YWCA upon graduation: by 1923, one in five of all alumnae (1900-1923) were working as YWCA secretaries, committee chairs or section heads.<sup>608</sup> Indeed, Tsun Pei Wei Hsueh (Wei Zengpei 韦增佩, McTyerie class of 1908) became the first Chinese Secretary for the national YWCA.<sup>609</sup> The importance of organisations such as the YWCA and other Christian organisations for women in providing a stepping stone from school to society, and the leadership roles it aimed to inculcate through its student associations, will be explored in the next chapter.

## Conclusion

In this chapter, I used the metaphor of a ‘laboratory’ to describe the gendered experiments performed by girls in missionary schools. While missionary schools were highly controlled spaces, set up on rigid and conservative gender norms, paradoxically, they also became freeing spaces where girls, removed from the gendered hierarchies entrenched in society, could try out new ways of performing their gender roles. Through their creative imaginations, school plays, leadership activities and relationships with each other, they experimented with, challenged and inverted traditional gender binaries. They did not straightforwardly reject the ‘old woman’ or wholeheartedly embrace a vision of the westernised ‘new woman’. Instead, the gender ideals articulated by missionary school pupils challenge this strict binary between the ‘old’ and ‘new’ woman, helping us to break down these monolithic categories.

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<sup>608</sup> ‘What the McTyeire Alumnae are doing’, *The McTyerian* (Shanghai, 1923), pp. 127 – 132.

<sup>609</sup> Ling Nyi Chang Hsu (1929) in ‘Telling women’s lives’.

The school also provided girls with a space to dream, to imagine limitless possibilities for their future roles in Chinese society. For some, these school daydreams became real ambitions, which girls worked towards throughout their school lives and careers, becoming China's first female teachers, doctors, lawyers and bank managers. For many others, these dreams were something to forget and let go of upon graduation, when they 'woke up' to the sobering reality of a society where deeply embedded gender norms and expectations defined the limits of women's roles. Confronted by the reality of women's position in society, missionary school girls learned that by harnessing nationalism and Christianity with a gendered rhetoric of 'duty', 'service' and 'self-sacrifice', they could expand their roles in society and justify stepping beyond traditional boundaries. As Lilian Zia puts it in the *Riverside Echo* of 1925: 'Jesus was born of a woman, why should we look down upon women? I am word, I am a Chinese woman. I desire to, and I hope I can help China by raising the position of Chinese women.'<sup>610</sup> Although they were influenced by and borrowed from their missionary educators' gendered rhetoric, girls went beyond their missionary educators by suggesting that Chinese women also had something to teach their American counterparts. To what extent did missionary schoolgirls put this rhetoric of serving their country by helping to uplift their sisters in China, in to practice in their later career choices? How did they step from school into wider society? The next chapter will explore how the YWCA functioned within missionary schools for girls and provided them with an ideal forum to put into practice this rhetoric of service. It also provided girls with new international identities and networks where they could put into practice their leadership skills and ambitions to serve China as its future leaders.

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<sup>610</sup> Zia, 'What Can I do to help China', p 12.

## CHAPTER SIX

### **‘Our country’s future leaders’: The YWCA within mission schools for girls in Republican Era East China, 1918-1949.**

#### **Introduction**

In 1931 Li Rongmei 李榮美, a pupil at Yongjiang school in Ningbo, outlines the function of the YWCA within her school and its role within society. Linking her school to wider society through the YWCA, Li places women as the future leaders in her conception of how this new society could be organised:

The goal of the YWCA is complete perfection. By means of morality and wisdom it helps young people ... Perhaps, it can also assist in every kind of special public enterprise and public mechanism ... it can effectively promote social development. From this it looks as if the position of the YWCA in society is very significant.<sup>611</sup>

Li Rongmei’s words give us a unique insight into the ways in which female students in 1930s Zhejiang province were re-envisioning women’s position in society. In Li’s conception, women are not just the basis of society’s morality, through their roles as ‘good wives and wise mothers’ that earlier generations of Chinese male reformers had prescribed. Instead, through new organisations for women such as the YWCA, they are the organisers and leaders of society.

This chapter will explore the role of the YWCA in mission schools for girls in 1920-40s East China, focusing on Yongjiang School as a case study. This chapter shows how participation in student YWCAs linked girls in a wider network for women on a local, national and international scale. On a local level, participation in YWCA summer conferences gave girls access to a network which spanned the Yantze Delta region. By participating in YWCA summer conferences, girls were trained in body, mind and spirit to become model citizens of China: they participated

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<sup>611</sup> Li Rongmei, ‘Qingnian hui’ in *Yongjiang Sheng* (1931) pp. 184.

in morning exercises, listened to talks and lectures on Christianity and honed their leadership skills by encouraging non-Christian students to become Association members. Acting as representatives of their schools, provinces and nation, girls participated in a forum for cultural exchange and developed new identities which transcended the nation. They realised their duties and capabilities to act as ‘global citizens’ as international tensions grew in the interwar period. Girls were not passive recipients of this education, but instead they harnessed the gendered rhetoric of becoming the future ‘mothers to the world’, combining Christianity with internationalism and feminism to expand their roles and sphere of operation in society, to the highest levels on the world stage.

Despite the dismissal of the YWCA in communist historiography as an imperialist organisation for women that did not represent a true Chinese women’s liberation, the fact remains that the YWCA was the largest organisation for women in republican China and is therefore an important subject of historical enquiry if we are to have a more holistic understanding of the women’s movement in China.<sup>612</sup> Scholars have questioned how far the YWCA can be distinguished from missionary societies operating in China in the early twentieth century. Although the Association’s aims were broader than most missionary societies, stressing social rather than purely evangelical goals, the women who worked for these transnational organisations sought to uplift their downtrodden ‘sisters’ in the east through the transformative power of the gospel in the same way as missionary women. Moreover, the local, regional, national and transnational nature of the networks of knowledge, leadership training and support established by these associations, make them a particularly interesting source of study for better understanding the influence of

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<sup>612</sup> Dunch, ‘Mothers to Our Country’, p. 328.

Christian organisations on developing networks for educated women in the early twentieth century.

In recent years the activities of the YWCA in China have come to the attention of scholars both in China and internationally. In Chinese language scholarship, particular attention has been paid to the labour aspects of the YWCA. For example, Zhao Xiaoyang and Niu Shengni have explored the YWCA's efforts to help working-class women including the night schools established for female cotton mill workers in Shanghai.<sup>613</sup> The debate has focused on the extent to which the YWCA was a conservative or radical organisation in the women's movement in China. Alison Drucker's 1979 study of the YWCA in Shanghai argues that while providing essential leadership training and experience to educated Chinese women for the first two decades of the twentieth century, by the 1930s the YWCA's focus on middle-class educated women and its continued support for conservative gender values was seen as outdated and its support was undermined by the growth of more radical, egalitarian communist organisations.<sup>614</sup> In contrast, Elizabeth Little-Lamb has challenged the argument that the YWCA lost support and declined in the 1930s, stressing its evolution from 'a middle-class to a people's organisation.'<sup>615</sup> Similarly, in her biographical study of Maud Russell, an American YWCA secretary who worked in China from 1917 to 1943, Karen Gander stresses the radical and adapting nature of the Association. Indeed, foreign secretaries such as Russell became

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<sup>613</sup> See Zhao, 'Jidujiao hui yu laodong wenti' pp. 183- 209 and Niu, 'Lingyi zhong funü yundong', pp.234 -282.

<sup>614</sup> Alison R. Drucker, 'The Role of the YWCA in the Development of the Chinese Women's Movement, 1890-1927', *Social Science Review*, (September, 1979), p. 434.

<sup>615</sup> Elizabeth A. Little-Lamb, 'Engendering a Class Revolution: the Chinese YWCA industrial reform work in Shanghai, 1927-1939', in *Women's History Review*, 21.2, (April, 2012), p. 190.

sympathetic to the communist cause in China in order to fulfil their original mandate of improving the lives of industrial working women.<sup>616</sup>

Scholars who focus on Chinese women in the republican era such as Wang Zheng and Emily Honig have also done important work, interviewing women who led the YWCA in China during the republican era, providing an insight into how Chinese women experienced their roles within the YWCA. Emily Honig's article on Cora Deng (Deng Yuzhi 鄧裕志) shows how Chinese women were effectively able to combine rhetoric of women's liberation and Christianity in their work for the Association and in their identities as YWCA members.<sup>617</sup> In Wang Zheng's interview with Cheng Yongsheng, who graduated from the YWCA normal school for physical education in Shanghai and became a chief executive of the Hangzhou YWCA for one year, we see how YWCA staff did not always passively comply with the running and aims of the organisation, but rather adapted its beneficial aspects to their own purposes in a changing political climate.<sup>618</sup>

None of these previous studies have provided an in-depth example of how the YWCA functioned within the environment of a mission school. Indeed, in the attempt to rescue the YWCA as a left-wing people's organisation, its student work, associated with the imperialist missionary enterprise and the bourgeois feminists who became its first secretaries, has been side-lined in recent scholarship on the YWCA. The Christian nature of the YWCA has also been downplayed.<sup>619</sup> I believe it is a mistake to overlook the YWCA's missionary school roots and its enduring Christian character. By 1924 there were twelve city Associations with an estimated

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<sup>616</sup> Garner, *Precious Fire*, pp. 108-130.

<sup>617</sup> Emily Honig, 'Christianity, Feminism and Communism: The life and times of Deng Yuzhi', in Daniel D. Bays (ed.), *Christianity in China from the eighteenth Century to the present*, (London, 1996).

<sup>618</sup> Wang, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment*, p. 296.

<sup>619</sup> Niu Shengni, 'Lingyi zhong funü yundong', p. 235.

membership of 3000 and 91 student branches of the YWCA in China exceeding 6,000 members.<sup>620</sup> From these statistics we can see that the majority of YWCA members were young girls who were members of the YWCA student organisations. At moments of anti-Christian and anti-foreign hostility, students could defend their complementary and mutually reinforcing identities as patriotic Chinese Christians via their YWCA associations' social service activities. The YWCA used its student members as miniature missionaries to spread the gospel (and the Association's structures) to other non-Christian schools via the Associations' summer camps and conferences. It also drew on its student members for its first Chinese secretaries, many of whom became left-wing and joined the Communist Party as underground members. Crucially, it was also via the student YWCA networks that the Communist Party sought to infiltrate missionary schools for girls in the 1930s. It is therefore important to look more closely at the activities of the YWCA within mission schools if we are to fully understand the role and importance of the YWCA within republican era society and beyond. Yongjiang School, which had its own YWCA Association, provides a good example of how this organisation functioned at the local level. Indeed, mission schools were often the first point of access for women to these larger, national and international networks for Christian women.

This chapter seeks to answer several interlinked research questions. I firstly explore how the YWCA developed in China and role of its student departments in its early foundation. Part two will then look in depth at how the YWCA functioned within mission schools for girls, through a case study of the Yongjiang YWCA. What activities and conferences did YWCA students participate in and how did participation in these activities fashion women into model Chinese citizens? Part

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<sup>620</sup> Drucker, 'The Role of the YWCA', p. 429.

three will consider how students developed international identities through their participation in summer camps and pageants. What networks (local, regional and transnational) did participation in these activities give women access to? How did girls at mission schools respond to and adapt these activities to suit their own aims and objectives? Finally, I will explore how some girls came to be exposed to communist ideology at missionary schools through their participation in the YWCA.

This chapter argues that the YWCA student Associations gave girls new leadership opportunities and a sense of social service responsibilities. Summer camps and pageants gave girls an opportunity to hone these skills on a national and international stage, while their participation in such networks opened up new opportunities for them upon graduation. Young women in Zhejiang province, far from being passive recipients of these activities, were active in appropriating and redefining this education for their own use. Using their school YWCA as an initial ‘laboratory’ stage, girls designed, tested and led their own internal and external programs of social-service oriented activities, skills which they were then able to transfer upon graduation when they became YWCA secretaries, board members, teachers and leaders of other women’s institutions at the local, national and international level. Such international identities and socially oriented leadership abilities created a talented pool from which the CCP drew as they attempted to win over student YWCA members in the 1930-40s.

In this chapter, I use the terms ‘Christian Internationalism’ and ‘International feminism’ to describe the aims and operations of the YWCA in 1920-40s China. As Michael Thompson has highlighted, the ‘Christian internationalism’ of the 1920s, as propounded by YMCA international secretary and leading recruiter of the SVM, Sherwood Eddy, distinguished itself from the ‘Imperial internationalism’ of earlier

decades by embracing the social gospel and rejecting the notion of a white Christian nation at its centre. It was also characterised by the proliferation of new enterprises, such as travelling seminars, conferences and study groups.<sup>621</sup> While conference, camps and pageants were certainly a defining feature of the Chinese Student YWCAs in the 1920s, as well as a rejection of an imperialist international vision (especially in the aftermath of May Thirtieth 1925), as historians of international feminisms have reminded us, we must not be uncritical of the notion of an ‘international sisterhood’ able to bring about world peace as the ‘world’s mothers’ that Christian organisations for women envisioned in the 1920s. British women used the image of their downtrodden ‘sisters’ in the east in order to pursue their own agenda and carve out for themselves a stake in the running of empire.<sup>622</sup> We must also be aware that the cultural vantage point from which women in international organisations were writing often affected their stance on the tense relationship between national and international feminisms in colonial societies.<sup>623</sup> We must bear these warnings in mind as we dissect the rhetoric of international feminism as it was espoused by YWCA secretaries in China and be cautious and critical of the smooth and ‘harmonious’ transfer of power of the YWCA from a ‘foreign’ to a ‘Chinese’ led organisation in the 1920s that the official histories present us with. Nevertheless, this vision of bringing about a lasting world peace through an alliance of the world’s Christian women was a very real and attractive vision for many Chinese women in the YWCA in 1920s China. This chapter adds further nuances to the debate by exploring how Chinese Christian women at mission schools responded to this vision of a Women’s Christian internationalism, internalising, adapting and rejecting elements as they saw fit. In their experiments at their school YWCA girls constructed

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<sup>621</sup> Thompson, ‘Sherwood Eddy’, p. 67.

<sup>622</sup> Sinha, ‘Suffrage and internationalism’, p. 226.

<sup>623</sup> Rupp, ‘Feminisms and Internationalism’, p. 536.

their own vision of how to a modern, Christian Chinese woman, drawing ideals of an ‘International Sisterhood’ as it was useful and meaningful to them.

### **The YWCA Student Associations: aims, organisation and activities**

The very first YWCA in China was established in 1890 within Hongdao Union School for Girls in Hangzhou. (See appendix two for school history). *A Study of The Young Women’s Christian Association of China, 1890-1930* published by the YWCA stresses the importance of schools in the early foundation and development of the YWCA in China: ‘The school Association was the vanguard of the National YWCA in China. As early as 1890, in the Union Girls School in Hangchow, the first of the later widespread network of school organisations came into being, it is still in existence after forty years of life.’<sup>624</sup> Indeed, Hongdao School was proud of its history as the starting point of the YWCA in China, as the 1912 school report states: ‘Ours is not the oldest mission school for girls in China, but we have the honor of having the first “Y.W.C.A.” organised in this country. For two years it stood quite alone for the National Committee of China was not formed until 1900, and not until 1904 was there any general secretary.’<sup>625</sup>

The foundation of the YWCA followed the visit of an American traveller who spoke about the work of the YWCA in the United States.<sup>626</sup> Mrs. J. L. Stuart, a Southern Presbyterian missionary teacher, reported: ‘It had been on our hearts and lips many times, to devise a scheme to put our girls to some kind of Christian work within the limits of the School, as the restrictions of those days forbade any kind of outside work.’<sup>627</sup> The organisation of a school YWCA seemed like a perfect

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<sup>624</sup> National Young Women’s Christian Association of China, *A Study of The Young Women’s Christian Association of China, 1890-1930* (Shanghai, 1930) p. 23. Burke Theological Seminary (BTS) MRL12-3-2-7

<sup>625</sup> *Hangchow Union Girls school, Hangchow, China 1912*. p. 12. PHS - NT6.3H793MC.

<sup>626</sup> YWCA, *A Study*, p. 23.

<sup>627</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

opportunity to allow the girls to undertake social service within the safety of their school: 'I do not hesitate to say that I consider it one of the most potent factors for good that we have known in the life of our school in developing the Christian life of the girls, in giving them self-reliance, executive ability, and above all, an interest in the souls of those about them.'<sup>628</sup> The YWCA in China as it functioned within the mission school environment therefore had a very evangelical aim at its outset: to interest girls in the spiritual life of the school and to persuade others to join the church. During this early period it also had conservative gender values as it was envisioned by missionary educators: to give girls a healthy forum to practise their leadership activities within the safety of their school and not to get caught up in dangerous and 'unfeminine' military participation in which some radical female students became involved during the 1911 revolution: 'It has well served the purpose for which it was organised and perhaps no other society is so well fitted to develop in Chinese girls that independence, dignity and forceful character which must be their saving strength in this era when liberty is being so recklessly thrust upon them.'<sup>629</sup> This situation changed rapidly in the wake of the May Fourth Movement which took off in 1919, after which the Association rapidly became focused on giving girls a forum to engage with wider society and other non-missionary schools as we will see in Yongjiang School by the 1930s.

The period from 1890 to 1911 saw the establishment of Student Associations in other missionary schools across China, including ones in in Fuzhou 福州, Tongzhou 通州, Weixian 濰縣 and Suzhou 蘇州.<sup>630</sup> In 1899 a National Association was formed. However, it was not until 1904 that the first City Association was

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<sup>628</sup>Mrs J. L. Stuart cited in YWCA, *A Study*, p.5.

<sup>629</sup> *Hangchow Union Girls School, Hangchow, China 1912*. p. 12-13 PUCAS, NT6.3H793MC.

<sup>630</sup> YWCA, *A Study*, p. 8.

established in Shanghai. In 1905 the Chinese Association was affiliated to the world YWCA and Miss A. Estelle Paddock was appointed as the first national secretary.<sup>631</sup> By the time of the outbreak of the 1911 revolution there were more than twenty YWCA school Associations to be found across China. The official history of the YWCA stresses the importance of the YWCA within the life of missionary schools: ‘In those early pre-revolutionary days, when voluntary organisations within schools were less common than now, it may well be that the YWCA filled a large place in the life of the institutions, sharing its Christian message and service – these were the concerns of the first Associations. The first departmental efforts were concerned with these student Associations – with the stimulation to their formation; with assisting them in organization of their committees; and with developing their programs. Under the leadership of Miss Paxton, the first student secretary, there was a strong evangelical emphasis.’<sup>632</sup> It was also hoped and assumed that these girls, who were receiving a western style education, would become ideal future secretaries to be trained for service to the Association. The alumnae sections of the St. Mary’s and McTyerie yearbooks reveal that the YWCA was one of the main pathways by which girls stepped from school into professional roles in society. By 1924, apart from those who were married (15 percent), pursuing further study (18 percent) and teaching (34 percent), 10 percent of McTyeire alumnae were working for the YWCA as board members, committee chairs or national secretaries.<sup>633</sup> Unlike full time teaching (which many students pursued for a few years prior to marriage) working for the YWCA was also crucially a career path which students could pursue

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<sup>631</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>632</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>633</sup> ‘What our graduates are doing’, *The McTyeirean*, (Shanghai, 1925), pp. 119 – 126.

alongside marriage, enabling graduates to balance work and family responsibilities by working part-time as board and committee members.<sup>634</sup>

The period 1911-1923 saw the rapid expansion of the YWCA as new Student Associations and City Associations were founded. In 1911 there were twenty Student Associations, one City Association (Shanghai) one Chinese secretary, and eight foreign secretaries.<sup>635</sup> By 1923, just before the first national YWCA convention, there were over eighty student Associations, twelve city Associations, fifty-one Chinese secretaries and eighty-seven foreign secretaries.<sup>636</sup> In the wake of the May Fourth Movement, western ideas and education were becoming popular in China. Added to this fertile environment for growth, this was also a period of rapid expansion of the missionary movement in the west, with the advent of the Student Volunteer Movement (SVM) based on the ideals of the social gospel in the wake of the First World War. China, the 'Young Republic', was the most popular country in missionary circles. After 1920 the number of foreign secretaries started to decline in the wake of the post war depression.<sup>637</sup>

During the 1920s the YWCA along with other Christian organisations in China faced pressure to indigenise its leadership lest it be branded a 'tool of cultural imperialism', in the anti-Christian and anti-foreign movements which were sweeping China in the post-May Fourth period. A particular flashpoint in these hostilities was sparked by the shooting of Chinese protestors by British policemen on 30 May 1925 in Shanghai. As American Secretary Mary Dingham described in a special supplement to the *Green Year*: 'The shooting of May 30<sup>th</sup> crystallised public opinion.

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<sup>634</sup> *Ibid.*, 4 out of 9 graduates working for the YWCA were also listed as married in the 1925 yearbook, only 2 out of 34 listed as teaching were also married.

<sup>635</sup> The first Chinese YWCA secretary was Wei Zengpei 韦增佩, (McTyeire class of 1908), See Chen (ed.), *Zhongxi nü zhong*, p. 78.

<sup>636</sup> YWCA, *A Study*, p. 11.

<sup>637</sup> YWCA, *A Study*, p. 12.

As happens in war time, you had to be either for or against. It was impossible to be neutral. The terrific question put to every group was: Are you Chinese or Foreign. The Y.W.C.A has answered: “We are Chinese.”<sup>638</sup> In the aftermath of the shooting some members of the Association seriously urged the YWCA national committee to drop the word ‘Christian’ from its name. In 1925 Ding Shujing 丁淑靜 was elected as the first Chinese General Secretary of the National YWCA. In this way, the YWCA perhaps distinguishes itself from missionary enterprises in China. Although founded on similar ideals of bringing people to God via the social gospel, the YWCA arguably did not go through the lengthy and at times painful process of ‘indigenisation’ that many missionary societies suffered after 1927, when new Nationalist government regulations forced these changes. Indeed the *Study of the YWCA of China, 1890-1930*, makes it clear that the YWCA placed emphasis on its origins as a grassroots, indigenous association for Chinese Christian women rather than a ‘foreign’ missionary style initiative: ‘That it appeared spontaneously in the form of the students’ Associations in various schools, and in the formation of a national committee even before the appearance of a secretary, is symbolic of the lay nature of the organisation.’<sup>639</sup>

However, that is not to say that all YWCA foreign secretaries were well prepared for the work in China, or treated their Chinese colleagues on equal footing. Zeng Baosun, granddaughter of Zeng Guofan, revealed on her voyage back to China from England in 1918 that two new YWCA recruits were unwilling to share a cabin with a Chinese girl who was suffering from seasickness.<sup>640</sup> This story, while it may be unrepresentative of the majority of YWCA foreign workers, reminds us that it is

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<sup>638</sup> Mary Dingham cited by Karen Garner, ‘Redefining Institutional Identity, the YWCA challenge to Extra-territoriality in China, 1925-30 in Anne-Marie Brady and Douglas Brown, (eds.), *Foreigners and Foreign Institutions in Republican China* (Routledge, 2012). p.76.

<sup>639</sup> YWCA, *A Study*, p.5.

<sup>640</sup> Kennedy, *Confucian Feminist*.

important to question the idealised rhetoric of ‘international sisterhood’ and harmonious transfer of power from foreign to Chinese secretaries that the official history presents us with. Indeed, these tensions in the dialogue between national and international feminisms in the interwar period have been highlighted by scholars of international feminisms. Although founded on a liberal ecumenical international feminist vision of Anglo-American origin, by 1925 the YWCA did not hesitate to declare itself a ‘Chinese’ Women’s organisation when forced to choose between labels of ‘national’ or ‘international’ vis a vis ‘imperial’, in the aftermath of the May Thirtieth Incident. As Lelia Rup points out, these tensions between nationalism and internationalism in the women’s movement of the 1920s largely depended on the racial and cultural vantage point of individual women in these organisations: ‘Women from colonised or dependent countries often fought for national autonomy as a prerequisite to internationalism, encountering resistance from women who took their own national identity and independence for granted. Where a woman stood in the world system, that is, has a powerful effect on her understanding of the relationship between nationalism and internationalism.’<sup>641</sup>

During the period 1927-1949, following the establishment of the nationalist government and the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War, the YWCA enlarged its mandate within society and shifted its focus away from training upper-class elite women and students to become its future secretaries, to focus on the needs of working-class and rural women.<sup>642</sup> This shift is also evident in the changing topics within *The Green Year* (The official magazine of the YWCA, published quarterly in Shanghai from 1916 to 1937). By the 1930s, instead of topics and news covering

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<sup>641</sup> Lelia Rupp, ‘Feminisms and Internationalism: A view from the Centre’, *Gender and History*, 10.3 (1998), p. 536

<sup>642</sup> The National Committee, Young Women Christian Association of China, *The YWCA of China 1933-1947*, (Shanghai, 1947), p.1. SMA – U121-0-18.

student activities, we find more articles concerning the conditions of working women in factories and the lives of women in the countryside. This shift not only reflects China's changing national political situation, emergence on the international stage and her struggle against Japan, but also reflects a reorientation in the concerns of new YWCA secretaries who become increasingly left-wing and secular in their views.<sup>643</sup> The middle schools now fell under the department of 'girls work' which aimed to build Christian character and habits through its girls club movement 'Hua kuang', (華光 The Light of China).<sup>644</sup> Girls were encouraged to participate in social service activities through a 'Time Investment Club' in their summer holidays. As *The YWCA of China 1933-1947* explains: 'Specifically the purpose of this girls' club movement 'Hua Kuang' is Christian character building. Each club unit provides normal, natural activities, whereby girls can develop habits, attitudes and ideas to help them grow into capable, socially minded Christian women. With the democratic group life each girl is given opportunity for leadership and bearing responsibility. Through the national and international ties of the YWCA they become part of a nation-wide and world-wide fellowship of women and girls.'<sup>645</sup> As we shall see, these goals of providing leadership training and access to international networks for women were at the heart of YWCA student associations such as Yongjiang.

### **Organising a YWCA Student Association: A case study of Yongjiang School**

The 1931 edition of the Yongjiang school magazine *Riverside Echo* includes a photograph of the organising members of the Yongjiang YWCA (see fig. 43). The *Student Handbook: Constitution and Organisation of a Student Y.W.C.A.* published in 1924 by the National Committee of the YWCA of China, lays out in detail the

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<sup>643</sup>Garner, *Precious Fire*, pp. 108-130

<sup>644</sup>The National Committee, Young Women Christian Association of China, *The YWCA of China 1933-1947*, (Shanghai, 1947), p. 67. Shanghai Municipal Archives, (SMA) U121-0-18.

<sup>645</sup>YWCA, *The YWCA of China 1933-1947*, pp. 67-68.

aims of the Association, its constitution and rules. It offers many suggestions on how a student YWCA should be run, including the election and roles of cabinet members and the organisation and activities of committees. The dual purpose of the Student YWCA had a clear Christian message at its core, with an emphasis on Bible study, social service and international fellowship:

- 1) Based on the Christ-like friendship, to unite those of the same purpose through Bible study and prayer to know thoroughly Jesus Christ as the highest revelation of God, perfect example of man and Saviour, and to copy His way of Living.
- 2) To lead fellow-students to share the friendship of this movement in order to grow in faith and spiritual character, to understand Jesus Christ clearly, to become active members in the Church, with united strength to help meet the needs of society, to carry out the teaching that “within four seas all are brothers” and to help establish the Kingdom of God upon earth.<sup>646</sup>

The membership rules also reinforced the Christian nature of the Association. The *Student Handbook* states clearly that although ‘any student who expresses agreement with the purpose of the Association may become a voting member’, ‘the majority of the cabinet shall be church members.’<sup>647</sup> Over time, however, there was an increasing interest in building links between mission and non-missionary schools and the establishment of YWCA’s in government schools became a priority. Therefore, the Constitution of the National YWCA states: ‘In student Associations where there are not sufficient numbers of church members there may be a minority of non-church members on the cabinets.’<sup>648</sup> Evidence from Yongjiang and other missionary schools suggests that although rules about full membership became looser over time as non-Christians were allowed to be full voting members, the student Associations did maintain a Christian focus. Li Rongmei (李榮美), a member of the Yongjiang

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<sup>646</sup> YWCA, *Student Handbook*, p. 3.

<sup>647</sup> *Ibid.*, p.3.

<sup>648</sup> *Ibid.*, p.6.

YWCA explains in the 1931 school magazine: ‘Because the society’s foundation is Christian, therefore in all our work we act according to the principals of the Christian spirit. However, people who join the society do not have to be Christian, they respectfully ask to join the society and then they will be society members.’<sup>649</sup> We know that YWCA membership remained very popular at Yongjiang throughout the 1930s. In 1937 Principal Marian H. Y. Bih reports that seventy-four per cent of boarding school girls were members of the YWCA.<sup>650</sup>

The principles of student leadership and self-government are deeply embedded in the student YWCA. The first line of the *Student Handbook* stresses the fact that a school YWCA should be student-led and self-supporting: ‘It has been agreed that a student Y.W.C.A shall only be formed in a school where the students themselves can carry the organisation, and that where this is not possible the school is not ready for a Y.W.C.A.’<sup>651</sup> Students not only had the opportunity to practise and hone their leadership skills in electing cabinet members, but were also given the freedom to decide how to organise meetings and committees. Apart from the essential standards regarding the name, purpose and membership requirements, student YWCAs were free to design their own administration structure, programs, committees, meetings and by-laws.<sup>652</sup> In this way, pupils were given adequate scope to exercise their creativity and leadership potential. Li Rongmei explains how the Yongjiang YWCA was structured in a diagram in the 1933 magazine (see fig. 44). According to this diagram, members of the cabinet committee included the Association president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer.<sup>653</sup> Girls were given a direct insight into the realities of running an organisation, and participated in a

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<sup>649</sup> Li, ‘Qingnian hui’, p. 187.

<sup>650</sup> Principals Report, 1936-1937, NCA, 卣 10-1-308.

<sup>651</sup> YWCA, *Student Handbook*, p. 2.

<sup>652</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>653</sup> Li, ‘Qingnian hui’, p. 187.

democratic process designed to equip them with the skills needed in their later careers as managers and organisers of societies: 'In a democracy the responsibility of government must be distributed as widely as possible. This means that the cabinet must not do all the work or make all the plans. Members must be given a share in the work of the Association as far as can be arranged though of course the Cabinet carries the chief responsibility for the whole YWCA.'<sup>654</sup>

In some schools the Association suffered from the problem that all girls were expected to become members by a particular grade, and that many girls did not really understand the purpose or aims of the Association in which they had become members. This was discovered to be a problem at Hangzhou Union School for girls, the earliest YWCA in China, where by 1922 interest in the Association seemed to be flagging: 'Last fall we found that a number of girls were nominally members of the Y.W.C.A. but took no interest in the work and rarely attended meetings, so we decided to reorganise and drop from the membership list those who did not care to belong. The result was that we have had a much smaller Y.W.C.A but those who have been members have been really interested.'<sup>655</sup> The solution seemed to lie in reminding girls of their responsibilities as leaders of the Association. The school reports the following academic year in 1923-1924: 'Last year our Y.W.C.A was having a hard time to maintain itself, so this fall we told the students that unless they wanted it, we would not have a Y.W.C.A., that it was a voluntary student organization. The majority of the senior middle school students voted to continue it,

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<sup>654</sup> YWCA, *Student Handbook*, p.10.

<sup>655</sup> Hangchow Union Girls High School, Hangchow China, Principals report, 1921-1922, PHS, NT6-3HI93UP.

and we have had good meetings. We have just had a campaign for new members, and the membership has been increased to one hundred and twenty.’<sup>656</sup>

The suggested topics for meetings and program planning in the *Student Handbook* give us an important insight into the core values and wide-ranging concerns of the YWCA in this period and is therefore worth quoting at length:

1. WE SHOULD BE DISCUSSING MATTERS RELATING TO HEALTH AND RECREATION. How to keep healthy. The value of play. Recreation in the Home. Summer Camps. New games. Personal standards of health. Care of the hair, teeth and hands. What makes girls lazy about out-of-door games after they are about 20 years old? Should a Christian be careless about health? Chest Binding, summer exercise.
2. ALL MANNER OF THINGS OF PUBLIC INTEREST THAT DO NOT COME INTO OUR SCHOOL WORK. Current history. Chinese politics. The treatment of beggars at Nantung. Cheffoo’s attempt to make a literate city. Popular education. The women’s rights movement. At what age should students go abroad to study? What age should they come back to China? Internationalism. The National Language. Magazine articles. Great discoveries.
3. THE WHOLE QUESTION OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT, AND OUR PERSONAL RELATION TO THE WORKERS. Should I have luxuries while others starve? What is a fair working day for me? For my servants? Is there a difference, and if so why? What are the chief industries in our city? What are the conditions in them, and the wages paid? Do the Christian employers have better conditions than others?
4. THE QUESTION OF OUR OWN STANDARDS. Honesty. Friendship. “Face”. “Khak-chi”. Gossip. Standards of dress. Of reading, Love and Marriage. What principles should govern the new relations between men and women? How can we keep the best of the old and choose the best of the New?

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<sup>656</sup> Hangchow Union Girls High School, Hangchow China, Principals report May 21<sup>st</sup> 1924. PHS, NT6-3HI93UP.

5. SOCIAL PROBLEMS. Opium and drugs. Extravagance. Gambling. Ancestor worship and the relation of a Christian Student to it. Concubinage. Women as Citizens. Slavery. Separate homes. The condition of the orphanages in our city ... The great division which exists between the Christian community and other people who are outside the Church.
6. MATTERS PERTAINING TO RELIGION. What practical value is religion to me in my life? What is the chief point of difference between Christianity and Buddhism: How does one approach a non-Christian who does not know the Bible? What is the central thing in Christianity?<sup>657</sup>

The organisation of committees and programs was also the prerogative of every school YWCA to design for themselves and the Yongjiang YWCA thus established eight committees with eight members on each committee including: Moral education committee, Missionary committee, Bible study committee, Health and hygiene committee, Music committee, Temperance committee, Citizenship committee, Social committee.<sup>658</sup>

Li Rongmei explains that the programme of the YWCA at Yongjiang was divided into two sections: Internal and external activities. Internal activities included meetings and socials organised by the social committee. According to Li, the purpose of the YWCA's internal activities was so that: 'Students can all help each other, learn by mutual interaction, and serve others through a sacrificial spirit.'<sup>659</sup> A core goal of the Student YWCAs was to promote a sense of Christian fellowship and harmony within the school, to encourage opportunities for students from different grades to get to know each other and to welcome new students into the school. Suggestions for the running of the membership committee include advice on how to welcome new girls to the school and explain to them the purpose of the YWCA, encouraging them to

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<sup>657</sup> YWCA, *Student Handbook*, p. 17-18.

<sup>658</sup> Li, 'Qingnian hui', p. 186.

<sup>659</sup> Li, 'Qingnian hui', p. 186.

become members.<sup>660</sup> The *Student Handbook* suggests that the membership committee ‘might also arrange for the welcome of new students apart from the YWCA welcome meeting. It might arrange to have each new student taken care of for the first week or so by one of the older girls, until she feels at home and knows the school’s customs.’<sup>661</sup> This Big Sister – Little Sister relationship was a feature of many missionary schools for girls. For example, at St. Mary’s Hall in Shanghai the seniors would be responsible for the juniors, helping them to settle in and find their way around the school.<sup>662</sup> Girls not only used these leadership and communication skills to improve the internal life of their school, but also to make a contribution to local society as we shall see in their external social service activities.

The external activities of the Yongjiang YWCA reveal the extent to which Yongjiang girls conceptualised their nation building efforts in Christian terms. The YWCA’s external activities were focused on organising a variety of local and national charitable relief organisations, including establishing a Sunday school for local children in the school gymnasium, collecting donations for flood and famine relief and sewing warm clothes to send to soldiers fighting against the Japanese.<sup>663</sup> Through their active participation in such charitable relief works Yongjiang girls could simultaneously fulfil both their national and Christian social responsibilities. In 1931, in the aftermath of the devastating Yangtze River flood, Principal Shen emphasised the charitable works of Yongjiang students as an example to both the Christian school governors and local education authorities of the important contribution that Yongjiang girls were making to national relief activities:

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<sup>660</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>661</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>662</sup> Dzung, ‘New students in the eyes of an old one’, p. 22.

<sup>663</sup> See Principals report, 1931, NCA, [日 10-1-307.

The students raised a special flood relief fund amounting to \$604 and sent it to the flood relief committee through the local education bureau ... After the aggressive occupation of Manchuria by Japan, students gave an entertainment in which they raised \$441.40 for Red Cross work amongst the Chinese soldiers. They have raised \$300 for 100 mattresses which they have sent to the Shanghai hospital for wounded soldiers through the city YMCA. We expect to use the rest for medicine and bandages ... These activities did not interfere in any way whatever with the regular classwork nor with the Christian atmosphere.<sup>664</sup>

As Principal Shen highlights, the staff at Yongjiang saw no conflict between pupils' nation building activities and the Christian atmosphere of the school in this period. In fact, we can see that in many instances Christianity actually strengthened and reinforced the importance of such charitable relief works. In particular, we can see how their dual goals of Christianity and nation building neatly coincided in their Sunday school established for street children. Li Rongmei explained both the Christian and national contribution of these schools:

To harvest every kind of hard and precious moral lesson, to go and teach the innocent children, gradually cultivating their qualifications to work as citizens. At the same time also teaching them to sing, and explaining stories to them, so that they can vivaciously develop as much as possible. From this we can see our school's YWCA has made a great contribution to society.<sup>665</sup>

Education work amongst the masses was a particularly strong concern for both pupils and teachers at Yongjiang. As we have seen in Chapter four, this focus on education sprang not only from their Christian environment and nation building sentiments, but also from the prevailing gender ideology which reinforced education as a sanctioned arena in which women could contribute to the nation building process.

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<sup>664</sup> Principals Report, April 16, 1932, NCA, 日 10-1-307.

<sup>665</sup> Li, *Qingnian hui*, p. 188.

The YWCA handbook points out that sometimes students did not realise such charity work was by its very nature a Christian inspired enterprise: ‘As a rule when asked students will define their social service as work which is not evangelistic, or as having no definitively Christian purpose. This has behind it a fallacy of thinking. Our best evangelistic work is often done not by preaching or teaching but by living. This social service work can therefore be a very strong and appealing piece of evangelistic work.’<sup>666</sup> Yongjiang girls, however, did make a direct correlation between their social service and evangelistic efforts. This distinctive combination of Chinese nationalist and Christian sentiments is revealed by Tu Fengyan in her explanation of the Yongjiang collection and donations movement: ‘Mencius said: ‘everyman possesses a sympathetic heart’, my schoolmates have a charitable project for everything, such as disaster relief, helping at orphanages, all have the spirit of self-sacrifice, fearlessly go out to collect contributions, these in short, are carrying the foundation of Jesus Christ’s spirit, ah!’<sup>667</sup>

In their participation in the internal and external activities of the YWCA girls had an opportunity to practise and hone their leadership skills, defend their school from outside attack and prove their contribution to society. As we have seen in chapter three, this was particularly crucial during the hostility that missionary schools such as Yongjiang faced from anti-foreign and anti-Christian movements in local society during the 1920s. In their organisation of meetings, election of cabinet members and committees girls could use the YWCA as essential practice for their future roles as active organisers and leaders of Chinese society.<sup>668</sup> Christian women, as moral exemplars and organised leaders, could help China build a strong national society through their public activities and institutions. In the 1931 magazine, Xu

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<sup>666</sup> YWCA, *Student Handbook*, p. 27

<sup>667</sup> Tu Fengyun ‘ben xiao de xuesheng hui’, *Yongjiang Sheng* (1931), p. 178.

<sup>668</sup> Li, ‘qingnian hui’, p. 185.

Yunying expressed her belief that women would become: ‘our country’s future leaders, the future social transformers.’<sup>669</sup>

**‘To build a happy world for future generations of our sisterhood’: YWCA student networks, summer conferences and pageants**

A core aim of the YWCA in China was to inculcate in students a sense of identity in an organisation that transcended their school, local area, and nation. It also sought to convey the idea that girls could make the world a better place through their participation in a global network for Christian women. Through the YWCA girls learned to link their school to China’s national situation and the position of Chinese women in the world. By participating in the YWCA they gained access to a network for educated Christian women that functioned on the local, national and international scale and could provide them with important connections and opportunities for work and study upon graduation.

What were these local, regional, national and international networks to which the YWCA gave mission school girls access? The nature of these networks was very clear to the National YWCA of China in the 1920s. For example, in the student handbook it is advised that at the welcoming meeting for new members ‘there might be several speeches telling students what the Association is doing in the school, in China, and in joining up the students of the world.’<sup>670</sup> By making this connection between the school, China and the wider world, girls entering the YWCA could immediately relate their school not only to China’s national situation, but also feel part of a larger community of women that transcended national boundaries.

On a local and regional level, girls who were members of a YWCA Student Association were encouraged to make connections with students at non-Christian private and government schools during the 1920s. For example, the *Student*

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<sup>669</sup> Xu Yunying, ‘Xiandai qingnian sixiang shang de cuowu’ *Yongjiang Sheng* (1931), p. 48.

<sup>670</sup> YWCA, *Student Handbook*, p.14

*Handbook* stresses that during their summer vacations students at mission schools should try to cooperate with local government schools in their social service work: ‘This may be one of the places where Government and Christian Schools can come together in friendship and service. Students from Government schools are just as eager to help China, and are just as ready to give up some of their spare time to work. It would be a good thing if every Christian School made a point of trying to cooperate with the Government or private school which is nearest.’<sup>671</sup> It was hoped that by interacting with non-Christian school pupils YWCA girls could influence these pupils to join the Association and eventually become members of the Church.

Local activities that were designed to connect mission school YWCAs included summer conferences. There were several aims behind YWCA summer conferences. Firstly, these conferences aimed to connect girls from different school YWCAs and provide a forum for them to communicate and get to know each other in a relaxed recreational setting. For example, in the 1925 *Yongjiang Magazine*, Harriet Sze describes a visit of the *Yongjiang* girls to their Ningbo delegates at the YWCA summer conference held at Hangzhou in 1925:

One summer afternoon as the weather was fine we paid a visit to our Ningbo delegates at the YWCA Conference in the Union School at Hangzhou. They were just going to have meeting including music and stunts, when we arrived, so they invited us to attend the meeting. Some other schools gave some stunts, but we only sang a song and I played a piece. If Lydia had not urged me so hard, I would not have played it, because I was not a delegate.<sup>672</sup>

Although it is not clear how students were selected to be delegates to represent their schools at these conferences, (did their teachers pick the brightest or most Christian students, or were they elected by the other YWCA members?) student delegates had

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<sup>671</sup> *Ibid.*, p.29.

<sup>672</sup> Harriet Sze, ‘Peeping in at the Summer Conference’, *Yongjiang Sheng*, (1925), p. 9.

the opportunity to represent their school on a local, regional and sometimes national and international level, sharing ideas and making connections with other YWCA members. In addition to the student summer conferences, *The Green Year Magazine* student section also functioned as a forum where Student YWCAs could share news and ideas. For example, the March edition of the 1921 magazine included a description of a party held at the Sarah Bachelor Memorial School at Ningbo (the Baptist predecessor of Yongjiang), ‘the ideas of which could be used by other Associations.’ (see fig. 51)<sup>673</sup>

The summer conferences were also designed for Christian young women to become friends and have fun together in a beautiful recreational setting. Summer camps were usually convened in remarkable beauty spots and could last up to several days. Yongjiang pupil Harriet Sze recalled in 1925: ‘According to the conference custom, they went to the west lake every afternoon. Therefore our delegates asked us to go with them when the meeting was over and we did. Oh, we had such a good time in the boats! Some girls ate to their hearts content, some sang at the top of their voices, and some girls paddled energetically. It was dark when we returned to the hotel, and I was quite satisfied with this visit.’<sup>674</sup>

As well as recreational activities, such as climbing hills and visiting sites of local interest, the conferences included performances, singing and dancing by the delegates and other team building activities. There were also more structured programmes including morning exercise sessions, bible study and speeches made by famous scholars and preachers. Conferences were thus designed for the holistic development of girls’ bodies, minds and spirits.<sup>675</sup> The conferences were also seen as an ideal opportunity for YWCA members to interact with girls from non-Christian

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<sup>673</sup> ‘Contents of the March Issue’, *Qingnian nü bao*, 5.1, (March, 1921). pp. 18-20.

<sup>674</sup> Sze ‘Peeping in at the Summer Conference’, p. 9.

<sup>675</sup> Xu Xuilan, ‘Fu guling xialinghui ji’ *Qingnian nü bao*, 2.4 (October, 1918). p. 1.

and government schools with the aim of encouraging them to join the Association and eventually become Christians. The ‘Questions about attending the YWCA summer conference’ published in the June 1919 *The Green Year* prompt students to consider: ‘Will my behaviour have a positive or negative influence upon the non-Christian students? Have the friends who I met at last year’s summer camp who expressed their desire to become a Christian become Christians?’<sup>676</sup> In this way, we can see that the YWCA in many ways regarded its student Associations as miniature missionary societies, whose members could fulfil a missionary function, while honing their leadership and organisational skills. An article entitled ‘The purpose of the Student YWCA’ in the March 1918 edition of the *The Green Year*, clearly lays out its missionary function:

To lead non-Christians to convert to Christianity. Normally, when those who have never heard of the Bible are suddenly introduced to Jesus’ teaching, they think it is ludicrous. However, if invited under the name of YWCA, sometimes there would be someone who will want to have a try. Gradually, they will become friends with Christians. The YWCA has its own missionaries, responsible for guiding these kind of non-Christians. By watching and listening to Jesus’ Grace with their own eyes and ears, naturally, they will be touched and start to feel a willingness to become a Christian.<sup>677</sup>

Another key function of the YWCA summer conferences was to help students understand their identities as members within the YWCA and the local, national and global networks for women which this membership gave them access to. At these events students were impressed with the idea that they belonged to an international organisation of Christian women, and as members of the YWCA they were part of a network that connected their school to the Association, nation and wider world. An

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<sup>676</sup> ‘Dui yu nü qingnian xialinghui zhi wenxun’, *Qingnian nü bao*, 2.3, (June, 1918), p. 15.

<sup>677</sup> ‘Huabei di san ci fei jidutu nüzi qingnian donglinghui’, *Qingnian nü bao*, 3.2, (March, 1919), p. 4.

article in the March 1919 edition of the *The Green Year* clearly points to the function of the student Associations instilling this new global identity for women:

To give students a global vision. Students cooped up in school with their heads in books, often forget how big the world is and their own relationship to the world. Once they become Association members, they will start to connect to the world. Every year there is a global prayer meeting. At a set time every country's YWCA for the same purpose prays to God. As Association members present at this event, they will begin to feel that they are part of a global sisterhood, in which they themselves are just one drop in the ocean, not only a citizen of the Chinese nation, but also a global citizen.<sup>678</sup>

A survey of the changing topics in *The Green Year* reveals China's changing international situation and relationship with foreign powers. During the 1920-30s, the main concerns of the magazine shifted away from students and topics related to Christianity, towards an increasingly outward looking perspective. During this period we find many articles on the position of women in Japan, Russia and India. These articles were designed to inculcate in girls a sense of their membership in a transnational organisation for women and a concern for their sisters abroad.<sup>679</sup>

During the interwar period the idea that women could act as international peacemakers and that international Christian organisations for women such as the YWCA could help ensure world peace gained popularity. The role of Christian women in bringing about peace was the main topic of speeches given at the third YWCA meeting for non-Christian women in North China in 1919.<sup>680</sup> On Christmas Eve 1939, in the midst of the second-Sino Japanese war in Chongqing, Ginling College women put on a play entitled 'Mothers to the World'. After despairing of the

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<sup>678</sup> 'Xuesheng nüqingnian hui zhi zongzhi', *Qingnian nü bao*, 2.2, (March, 1918), p. 3.

<sup>679</sup> 'Supplement to *The Green Year*: Concerning the Events on and since May 30 in Shanghai', *Qingnian nü bao*, (July, 1925).

<sup>680</sup> 'Huabei di san si fei jidutu nüzi qingnian donglinghui', p. 5.

current international situation which left no safe place for an infant (the baby Jesus) to grow up, four student actresses representing China, Finland, Japan and Germany decide to form an international motherhood to work for world peace in order to ensure the safety of the next generation: 'let us all work together to make the world safe for this baby, then all babies will be safe. They kneel down around him, and hold their hands and pledge themselves to build a world where all babies will be safe from poverty, fear, war, and sudden death, and to realise that only by sharing can all have enough.'<sup>681</sup>

This rhetoric of international 'motherhood' in the interwar period has been critiqued by many scholars. For example, Leila Rupp warns that we must distinguish between the 'possibilities of inclusiveness and the realities of exclusion ... Despite grand proclamations of their global nature the international organisations – by virtue of their choice of official languages, sites for conferences, election of leadership, and so on – mirrored and perpetuated the dynamics of global power.'<sup>682</sup> In its early period of operation, this imbalance in power between China and the west may have also affected the power relationships between foreign and Chinese secretaries within the YWCA, as we have witnessed in the story relayed by Zeng Baosun. Moreover, as Mark Mazower has pointed out, it is important not to confuse the rhetoric and wish for internationalism by its proponents in the interwar period with its fulfilment.<sup>683</sup> While many scholars of interwar internationalism have pointed out the naivety that characterised the pacifism which ultimately failed in the 1930s, this hope and vision of a new international world order, based on an alliance of the world's Christian

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<sup>681</sup> Eva Dykes Spicer, 'Mothers of the world' in Spicer Papers, SOAS-PPMS-92-3-6-23, p.2.

<sup>682</sup> Rupp, 'Feminisms and Internationalism', p. 537

<sup>683</sup> Mark Mazower, 'An international Civilization? Empire, Internationalism and the Crisis of the Mid-Twentieth Century', *International Affairs*, 82.3 (2006), p. 565.

women as 'Mothers to the world', was very real for its proponents in the YWCA of the 1920s.<sup>684</sup>

To what extent was the YWCA's vision of a transcendental Christian internationalism brought about by an alliance of the world's women taken on board by its ordinary student members? While it is important to bear these critiques in mind as we scrutinise the power dynamic between western and Chinese women within the YWCA, or between the foreign and Chinese faculties at missionary schools, the records suggest that this rhetoric of a 'global sisterhood', and women's roles as peacekeepers by their participation in international politics, was pervasive in organisations such as the YWCA in the interwar period. Evidence suggests that this goal of international feminism and peace-making as it was espoused by Christian educators and YWCA secretaries was to some extent taken on board by girls who attended the national and international YWCA summer conferences. For example, in the 1925 edition of the *Riverside Echo*, Yongjiang pupil Lydia Tsao expresses her feelings about a Japanese Delegate who had come to attend the YWCA summer conference at Hangzhou:

At the past Y.W.C.A. summer conference, I was one of the delegates from our school. When the meeting closed two things had affected me very much. One was the beauty of Hangzhou where we met, and the other was the presence of a Japanese delegate, who was invited by our conference. I will tell you something about our Japanese guest. She was not a tall lady, her figure had the grace of youth and an abundance of black hair shaded her face. Her eyes had charming brilliancy. She gave our summer conference a beautiful celluloid lantern and a beautiful Japanese doll, dressed in red, which were tokens of goodwill. Besides these, she delivered us many letters, which came from Japanese Y.W.C.A members. She made us two speeches. The subject of one of them was

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<sup>684</sup> Daniel Gorman, *The Emergence of International Society in the 1920s* (Cambridge, 2014).

“The earthquake on September First.” This she told us in absorbed melancholy, because she herself had experienced it. The other was “The duties of the Young Women of the Y.W.C.A of Japan.” This she reported eagerly, her eyes sparkling with vivacity. Her account cheered us with its forcefulness and interest. She was affectionate and this made me think that although there are many international disagreements between our China and Japan, yet nothing can bar the endearing friendship of God’s children, the Christians. So I think if all people of all the countries believe in Jesus Christ, and are not merely so-called Christians, surely heaven will come down on earth.<sup>685</sup>

From this article we can see that Yongjiang girls, through their participation in international networks which the YWCA summer conferences provided, were forming new identities that transcended national boundaries, to embrace a vision of global citizenship. At the conferences students learned about the position of women in other countries, were given a forum for cross cultural exchange and a chance to make international friendships and connections. Moreover, despite hostile international relations between Japan and China, they could sympathise and find common ground with their Japanese counterparts through their shared identities and duties as Christian women and YWCA members. This Japanese delegate to the YWCA student summer conference at Hangzhou, Yuki Kimura, is pictured in the October 1924 edition of *The Green Year* (see fig. 45).

This ideal of a global Christian network for women was most visually reinforced upon student bodies in the international pageants conducted by the YWCA. For example, pageants which were held within China, such as the Tientsin YWCA World Fellowship Pageant, held in celebration of the World’s Week of Prayer in November 1922, used Chinese women’s bodies to act out these themes of international fellowship and harmony. In this pageant Chinese girls’ bodies assumed

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<sup>685</sup> Lydia Tsao, ‘A Japanese Delegate in the Summer Conference’, *Yongjiang Sheng* (1925), p. 10.

an international identity as they were dressed in the clothes of other countries (see fig. 46). In the centre of the stage Chinese Association members dressed to represent countries ranging from Switzerland to Japan, stand in a triangular formation encircled by a rope – perhaps symbolising their united fellowship within the Association. A girl clothed in Chinese dress stands at the front of the triangle, perhaps highlighting China’s prominent role at the forefront of the Association. Flags of different countries bedeck the stage as older women in the audience look on. This international pageant not only gave girls a physical sense of their membership in a global association for women, but by dressing in the clothes of other countries, they were also acquiring knowledge of foreign cultures and customs in a forum for cultural exchange.<sup>686</sup> Similar images also appear in the March 1918 edition of *The Green Year* as the First World War comes to an end and international diplomacy is stressed (see fig. 47). In this image Chinese young women are similarly dressed to represent different nations, including: Switzerland, England, America, China and France and Germany, with these countries’ flags draped across their bodies and headbands emblazoned with a star are affixed to their neatly tied-back hair. At the middle and front of this group of six girls arranged in a triangle formation, is a seventh girl attired simply in Chinese dress. She holds the flags of these six nations, symbolising China’s role in international diplomacy.<sup>687</sup> As Daniel Gorman has highlighted, pageants, games and international exhibitions were visible manifestations of and important tools for inculcating ‘imperial internationalism’ in interwar Britain. For example, at sporting events such as the British Imperial Games of 1930, participants dressed in iconic dress to represent their counties.<sup>688</sup> In the case

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<sup>686</sup> ‘Tientsin YWCA World Fellowship Pageant, held in celebration of the World’s Week of Prayer in November 1922’, *Qingnian nü bao* (March, 1923).

<sup>687</sup> ‘Shi tu daibiao zhongguo jidujiao nü qing nian hui zonghui’, *Qingnian nü bao*, (March, 1919), p. 2.

<sup>688</sup> Gorman, *The Emergence of International Society*, p. 159.

of the YWCA of interwar China, pageants and festivals such as the Tianjin World Fellowship Pageant served as visual celebrations, impressing a Christian internationalism directly upon women's bodies, with membership of the YWCA (representing a Women's Christian internationalism), rather than the Empire, as the transcendent theme.

Above all, helping to transcend these international boundaries and cultural differences, was the YWCA symbol itself. The image of the downward facing blue triangle, the official insignia of the YWCA, is prevalent throughout *The Green Year* magazine. Chinese women's bodies were often used to form the triangle, impressing upon them their membership in the organisation in a very physical sense. The three sides of the 'Blue Triangle' stand for body, mind and spirit, representing the recreational, educational, and spiritual goals of the Association. For example, in December 1921, a Chinese woman is depicted in front of the blue triangle in place of her European/American counterpart (see figs. 48 and 49).<sup>689</sup> In the October 1921 magazine Shanghai Association members are captured in an aerial photo, using their bodies to form the blue triangle logo (see fig. 50).<sup>690</sup> In March 1921, we see an image of the members of the YWCA at the Ningbo Sarah Bachelor Memorial School (see fig. 51). In this image girls proudly display the Blue Triangle logo embossed on the white cards which they hold in front of them. They are dressed homogeneously in their school uniform of white and black skirts with white headbands covering their neatly tied-back hair. There also an air of military discipline about the girls as they are arranged in a neat triangular formation for the photograph. The girl at the head of the triangle wears a coloured scarf across her shoulder, perhaps distinguishing her as

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<sup>689</sup> *Qingnian nü bao* (March, 1921), p.17.

<sup>690</sup> 'Shanghai huiyuan de da hui ji', *Qingnian nü bao* (October, 1921). p.11.

the president of the school YWCA.<sup>691</sup> Although such images do reappear in later editions of *The Green Year* during the 1930-40s, it is perhaps significant that they are most abundant in the early decades of the Association's history, as the YWCA tried to establish itself and inculcate in its members a sense of belonging within the Association.

### **Unintended outcomes: The YWCA and Communism at missionary schools for girls**

The international networks, identities, organisational and leadership skills which the YWCA was so keen to instil in its student members became a useful tool for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) as the Association's networks were infiltrated by underground members of the CCP in the 1930s-1940s. As many scholars have explored, the YWCA became an increasingly left-wing organisation in the 1930-40s. Wang Zheng has shown how the underground Communist Party drew on and learnt from the organisational structure and recruiting techniques of Christian and women's organisations, such as the YWCA, to recruit members.<sup>692</sup> Several YWCA secretaries, such as Cora Deng, became leading members of the All China Women's Federation after 1949. The final section will explore the unintended outcome of YWCA associations within missionary schools for girls through a case study of a student who became an underground communist through her participation in the YWCA while studying at a McTyeire. The source material for this case study is based on two interviews conducted with the ex-student, aged 93, in Beijing in November 2016. In the interests of anonymity, I will refer to the student by her English name, Ellen.

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<sup>691</sup> 'Ningbo shengmo nü xiao nüqingnianhui huiyuan zhi san jiao xing', *Qingnian nü bao* (March, 1921), p.10.

<sup>692</sup> Wang Zheng, *Finding Women in the State: A Socialist Feminist Revolution in the People's Republic of China, 1949-1964* (Berkeley, 2016).

Ellen was born in 1924. Her father and mother were both Christians and were natives of Ningbo. They had ten children, all of whom were sent to missionary schools. Her father was educated at Nanjing university medical school and played an important role in the founding of the Three- Self Patriotic Church Movement (sanzi aiguo yundong 三自愛國運動), which moved the Christian Church in China away from foreign missionary control. It advocated self-government, self-propagation and self-support and after 1949 became the founding framework under which Christian churches were allowed to operate in China. Ellen explained that she was influenced by her father who taught her the Christian message of helping those in need through the saying: If you have two pieces of clothes you should give one to those in need. When I asked why she became an underground Communist Party member at McTyiere, she explained how she was influenced to join the Communist Party through her participation in the YWCA:

Now I will tell you about the time I joined the YWCA. They organised us to visit indentured workers (*Bao shen gong* 包身工). This place was full of girls whose family had sold them into labour. They thought they would have a good life, but as a result, these girls, (they lived in Shanghai near the Suzhou creek), they did not even have beds and lived in huts made of grass. They did hard work at factories. Because their lives were so bitter and everything they earned were taken by the person who bought them, they were afraid they would run away. So these girls, when they went back to their dormitories they were completely naked. They were not allowed to have clothes in case they would run away. If you don't have clothes you can't run. So when I saw these girls, lying on the ground with very thin grass beneath them, so miserable! This experience had a really deep influence on me. *I thought giving one piece of clothing to them, can't solve the problem at all!* The real problem is the corrupted government and the structure of the society. Therefore, after I had read books, I thought that this society was really not equal,

and it must change. Change how? So this was an important factor as to why I joined the Communist Party. My family taught me that human love had no social class barriers, so that is why I joined the Communist Party.

[Emphasis mine]

In Ellen's memory, it is through Christianity, the influence of her parents and joining the YWCA activities that she is first awakened to inequality in society, and finds in Christian teaching the imperative to help others. However, it is also through the shortcomings of Christian instruction that she turns towards communism instead of Christianity as the ultimate solution for the inequality she witnesses in Chinese society. After attending YWCA meetings and activities, Ellen remembers she was invited to dinner by YWCA secretaries dedicated to work amongst student members in Shanghai, where they discussed China's political situation and communist ideology.<sup>693</sup> In this way, the CCP borrowed from and drew upon the organisational structures of the YWCA, using its student societies, conferences and charitable activities to recruit Christian and socially minded students, such as Ellen, to the communist cause.

Having already been influenced by the social gospel of Christianity, Ellen explained that it was during the second Sino-Japanese War that she decided to join the Communist Party, as the YWCA provided an effective outlet for her patriotism during the war:

Shanghai YWCA had many activities. Such as activities to promote the anti-Japanese war. When I attended Shanghai YWCA activities ... They told me, you must be patriotic. They taught me how to be patriotic ... I wanted to go to Yan'an but I was only fifteen years old. I had an older friend within the YWCA who asked me to write a letter to explain what I knew about communism. When she saw the letter, she realised I knew

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<sup>693</sup>Interview with Ellen Cao, Beijing, 25 November 2016. 7:21-13:24

what I was talking about. It was about a 1000-word report, about what nationalism meant.<sup>694</sup>

Ellen also came into contact with communist ideas through her wide reading, both in her school library and at other libraries in Shanghai (see fig. 52).<sup>695</sup> From the 1939 edition of *The McTyeiran*, McTyeire's annual yearbook, we can get a glimpse of how Ellen saw herself at school and how her classmates perceived her. Her love of reading comes to the fore in an article she wrote for the 1939 magazine entitled 'Reading'. She writes: 'Reading increases our wisdom and knowledge. Besides it helps us to recognise what the truth is, thus we can be better daughters and better citizens in serving our country.'<sup>696</sup> Ellen was younger than many of her classmates at McTyeire and often felt isolated and cut off from her peers, who were older than her and interested in what she considered frivolous topics: Clothes, make up and getting married. She recalled:

In my dormitory there were two girls who were the daughters of the Yong'an department store owners. They wore lipstick and they really thought I was just a little kid. When we had class I was more concerned about understanding the conditions of girls outside of our school, but some girls just did not really care about studying, they just wanted to prepare to get married. They really looked down on me.<sup>697</sup>

Her serious and detached nature perhaps made her an unpopular student. She was the only student not to provide a photo in the yearbook page dedicated to each girl in the graduating class, and there is no description of her by a friend, which normally accompanied the photo. Instead, she cryptically writes: 'She is a person' beside her name (see fig. 53). Where her image appears in another picture in the magazine,

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<sup>694</sup> *Ibid.*, 44:52.

<sup>695</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>696</sup> Tsao Pao Tsung, 'Reading', *The McTyeirean*, (Shanghai, 1939), p. 185.

<sup>697</sup> Interview with Ellen Cao, Beijing, 25 November 2016, 42:52

someone has graffitied on her face.<sup>698</sup> While this may have occurred at a much later point during the political turbulence of the Cultural Revolution, it is clear from the school yearbook that Ellen considered herself a bit of an outsider and she formed friendships with other serious, like-minded students who joined the YWCA.

Taking part in activities organised by the YWCA also helped Ellen to hone her organisational skills (peiyang zuzhi nengli 培養組織能力), which became important training for her work as an underground Communist Party member. As a member of the underground Communist Party she tried to contact other students through the YWCA. After her graduation from McTyeire in 1938 she went on to study and work as a teacher at St. John's University, while continuing her work as an underground party member.<sup>699</sup> Therefore, whether they were propagating Christianity, the gospel of women's education or a more radical left-wing agenda, the YWCA within missionary schools provided girls with the exposure to new ideas, and essentially provided networks and training, enabling them to step beyond the boundaries of the domestic sphere.

### **Conclusion**

To conclude, this chapter has explored how the YWCA functioned within missionary schools for girls in the 1920-40s. It has shown how the YWCA impressed its aims of leadership, social service and international fellowship upon young women's bodies in the republican period through its organisations and activities, and how Association members responded to these influences. One of the most important contributions of the YWCA within mission schools for girls was providing them with an ideal forum or 'laboratory' to test and hone their leadership and organisational skills. In their election of committee members, running of committees and meetings, girls showed

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<sup>698</sup> *The McTyeirean* (Shanghai, 1939).

<sup>699</sup> Interview with Ellen Cao, Beijing, 26 November 2016.

that they were capable of becoming China's future leaders and organisers. Moreover, by harnessing ideas from Christianity, internationalism and feminism, women's caring roles and responsibilities were expanded to include social service and international diplomacy. YWCA girls could use the rhetoric of female 'service', 'duty' and 'self-sacrifice' to expand their sphere of operation within society in their charitable activities, both inside and outside of the school. By partaking in social service activities, missionary school girls could simultaneously fulfil both their Christian and national responsibilities, and defend their school and their identities as both Christian and patriotic Chinese citizens during periods of mounting anti-foreign hostility in China.

Above all, the YWCA provided Christian women with new networks and identities where they could put their newly acquired organisational and leadership skills to the test on a local, national and international stage. On the local level, they could interact and make friends with girls from other Christian and non-Christian schools, forging important local ties and friendships within the Association, which encouraged girls from non-Christian backgrounds to become members. At summer conferences their bodies were trained physically through outdoor exercise, their minds were opened to new ideas about internationalism and China's national situation, while they gained spiritual sustenance from Bible study. The YWCA also impressed upon girls their duties and responsibilities as members of an international Christian fellowship of women, not only to represent their countries in forums of cultural exchange, but to be able to transcend these national ties through a concern and understanding of the position of women in other countries. At a time of mounting international hostility, women in organisations such as the YWCA were impressed with their identities as global citizens. As international Christian women

they could play important roles as peacemakers and diplomats. At Yongjiang, some students successfully imbibed the idea that an alliance of the world's Christian women could be the answer to the ongoing tensions between nationalism and internationalism as China sought to negotiate her place and defend herself in a fraught international political situation. These overlapping, local, national and global identities for students are nicely summed up in *The Green Year* article which lays out the purpose of the Student YWCA Associations: 'To firmly understand that I am towards the Association, towards the school, and towards my country a fellow Sister. We are all responsible for the global women's world...You should have the courage to act, to put all your energy into making a contribution to the women's world.'<sup>700</sup>

Finally, in some cases the YWCA's attempts to open girls' minds to the plight of their less fortunate sisters had unexpected consequences, as we see in the example of Ellen. Through participation in YWCA activities she was first exposed to more progressive ideals that made her question how far Christianity could be the solution to China's problems as her missionary teachers expounded. Indeed, the international identities and social service ideals which the YWCA had been so keen to instil upon women's minds and bodies in the interwar years, unwittingly became a fertile ground for the CCP in the 1930s-1940s. Progressive YWCA student secretaries drew upon ideals of the Christian social gospel and a Christian internationalism to convince socially-minded girls to join the Communist Party. As we shall see in the next chapter, during the Second Sino-Japanese War and civil war years the CCP, through the YWCA, also took advantage of students' patriotism by providing a practical and ideological outlet for their anxiety and frustration over the inequalities they witnessed in society. The organisational structures and leadership skills which the

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<sup>700</sup> 'Xuesheng nüqingnian hui zhi zongzhi', *Qingnian nü bao*, 2.2, (March, 1918), p.4.

YWCA cultivated in its student members proved a key asset in its efforts to convince socially minded students, such as Ellen, to join the underground party before 1949.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### ‘At the Centre of a Tornado’: Missionary Schoolgirls’ experiences of the Second World War and Civil War in Shanghai 1937-1949

#### Introduction

In the 1938 edition of the St. Mary’s *Phoenix*, pupil Tsang Sieu-ai (Zhang Xiulai 張秀愛 class of 1938) describes her experience of commuting to a new school building on Nanjing Road during the Japanese occupation of Shanghai in a piece entitled ‘The Centre of a Tornado’:

Sitting in the comfortable classroom and listening in a leisurely way to what the teacher is saying is like hiding at the centre of a terrific tornado, which seems to be whirling the whole world around. Though we feel that we are safe, yet the terror outside our centre keeps roaring around us, calling our attention to it. To reach this place of safety is also not without labour. You have to pass through the tornado in order to reach the centre ... Even at the centre of the tornado, which you have reached through so many hardships, you cannot be quite at rest. First of all, the smell of noonday lunch, keeps you feeling “the wrong place.” (There is a whole family living in the room right next to us you see.) Then, during classes, the teacher is forced to stop for a few minutes though most apologising, with a sorrowful eye towards the window, outside of which, either a bombardment is taking place too noisily, or the newspaper boys are having their daily ‘revolution.’<sup>701</sup>

The feelings Tsang captures here provide an insight into how missionary schoolgirls experienced the second Sino-Japanese War in Shanghai. In Tsang’s writings she is aware of being apart from but not cut off from the War. There is an awareness of her own privilege, a gratefulness for the ‘refuge’ which their school provided and a sense of novelty. However, they are not cut off from the ‘tornado’; the War is very close at hand, the sound of bombing drowns out their teachers, and girls have to pass through

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<sup>701</sup> Tsang Sieu-ai, ‘The Centre of a Tornado’ *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1938).

its tempest, confronting challenges and dangers on their way to school. Tsang is also aware of the national politics and debates going on around her, and the ‘terror’ of fighting is not far off.

The recollections of missionary schoolgirls during China’s war with Japan are both fragmentary and contradictory in nature. Students recall the ‘fun’ of doing homework by candlelight, ‘excitement’ of air raids and wealth of new sights, sounds and experiences that commuting to school during the War brought. However, at the same time the danger was very real and close to the surface of girls’ recollections: A Japanese teacher banged his baton on the table to threaten girls into silence, students were forced to bow as they passed the Japanese checkpoints in the park on their way to school, and fled from soldiers who tried to corner them alone. Still, the fragmentary moments of fun and excitement which emerge from missionary girls’ recollections do not fit into established narratives, which tend to depict the War as a period of uniform suffering, particularly for Chinese women.<sup>702</sup> While not downplaying the very real dangers and humiliations girls faced in wartime Shanghai, this chapter aims to complicate and provide further nuances to our understanding of women’s wartime experiences. As scholars of childhood and war studies have highlighted, the ways in which children experienced warfare was often markedly different from their adult counterparts, who sometimes attempted to shield them from the psychological trauma caused by war by making it into a ‘game’.<sup>703</sup> Psychiatrists have also explored how children’s autobiographical memory is affected by traumatic experiences, such as warfare, often resulting in the suppression of painful memories

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<sup>702</sup> Diana Lary, ‘War and Remembering: Memories of China at War’, in James Flath and Norman Smith (eds.), *Beyond Suffering: Recounting War in Modern China*, (Vancouver, 2011), p. 282.

<sup>703</sup> Nicholas Stargardt, ‘Moments of Subjectivity of Children in the Second World War’, in Helga Embacher and Grazia Prontera (eds.), *Children and War: Past and Present* (Solihull, 2013), p.53.

or disassociation from their experience.<sup>704</sup> It is therefore important to consider how traumatic experiences can affect memory when analysing the recollections of missionary school alumnae as evidence of the ways in which female students experienced the War in Shanghai.

Although studies of the second-Japanese war have proliferated in recent years, few studies examine the lived experience of women in the wartime. As Susan Glosser has highlighted, due to the available source materials extant in the archives, previous studies tell us more about representations of women during the War, rather than about what they actually did.<sup>705</sup> Even less attention has been paid to the experience of children in the Sino-Japanese conflict. Although Li Danke's oral history collection of women's lived experiences in wartime Chongqing provides a valuable insight into how women of all social classes experienced the War in the GMD wartime capital, including students, little attention is paid to how childhood may have shaped female pupils' wartime experiences.<sup>706</sup> In general, two tropes of women in wartime China have emerged from the existing literature: the woman 'warrior', who abandons her femininity to fight the Japanese, and the passive female 'victim' who is raped or exploited by Japanese soldiers.<sup>707</sup> Missionary schoolgirls' experiences of wartime Shanghai complicate these binaries of hero vs. victim and resistance vs. collaboration. Indeed, their experience shows us how missionary girls,

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<sup>704</sup> Van der Kolk, 'Trauma and Memory', pp. 52-46.

<sup>705</sup> Susan Glosser, "Women's culture of resistance: An ordinary response to extraordinary circumstances", in Wen-Hsin Yeh, Christian Henriot (eds.), *In the Shadow of the Rising Sun: Shanghai under Japanese Occupation* (Cambridge, 2004) p. 303. Existing scholarship on Chinese women's experiences in the War also include: Harriet Zurndorfer, 'Wartime Refugee Relief in Chinese Cities and Women's Political Activism', in B. So and M. Zelin (eds.), *New Narratives of Urban Space in Republican Chinese Cities* (Brill, 2013), pp.65-91. Louise Edwards, *Gender, Politics and Democracy* (Stanford, 2008). See also Louise Edwards, *Women Warriors and Wartime Spies of China*, (Cambridge, 2016).

<sup>706</sup> Li Danke, *Echoes of Chongqing: Women in Wartime China* (Illinois, 2010). Chen Yanzhu, *Xingbie yu zhanzheng, Shanghai 1932-1945* (Beijing, 2014).

<sup>707</sup> Harriet Zurndorfer, 'War and the Silent Women: the Retrieval of Chinese and European Jewish Women's Narratives of World War II', *Research on Women in Chinese History*, 17 (December, 2009), pp. 107 – 115.

as both female and children (normally powerless subject positions) had the agency to test, rebel against and, in some cases, invert the power-dynamics between Japanese invaders and Chinese civilians.

This chapter will explore how girls at missionary middle schools experienced the War in Shanghai. How did the War impact upon their teaching and curriculum? To what extent did their schools provide a 'refuge' or 'safe space'? In what ways did girls participate in relief activities, and how did their Christian education help them to cope with and make sense of the War? How far were girls engaging in politics in this period and why did some become members of the underground Communist Party during and after the War? I argue that although in the early years girls were sheltered from the horrors of warfare, safe within their schools in their foreign-owned campuses, after they were forced to move campuses, the realities of warfare hit home. They were no longer in an 'ivory tower,' but exposed to a wealth of new experiences brought by the War. Girls' multifaceted experiences of the War, from excitement at new sights they were exposed to via their daily commute, to helplessly watching refugees flood into Shanghai, to bullying and pitying their Japanese teacher, provide a nuanced insight into the lived experience of upper- and middle-class female students in occupied Shanghai. While some girls at missionary schools remained politically isolated during this period, for many the War brought new experiences, making them both socially and politically aware and leading them to experiment with new ways of combining Christian, feminist and socialist beliefs. This chapter highlights the everyday life aspects of students' experiences of the War. As we shall see, although participation in Communist activities could provide some sort of escape, a feeling of being useful to society, and perhaps help to assuage their feelings of guilt for living privileged lives in the midst of so much wartime suffering,

it did not necessarily turn them into ‘heroines’ or ‘tough resistors’ to the Japanese, as typically portrayed in communist historiography of student CCP members in this period.

Due to the disruption and relocation of schools during the War, many of the schools stopped printing their annual magazines in this period (1938-1946). Although McTyeire retrospectively published a combined volume for girls graduating in 1942 to 1946, St. Mary’s did not resume publication of its yearbook after 1941. I therefore rely heavily on oral history interviews collected with alumnae living in Shanghai, Beijing and the USA in this chapter. In the first section I consider the disruption to pupils’ lives that was caused by moving schools and home, and the novel experience of commuting to school. The second section considers the changes to the school curriculum that occurred in the wartime context, and the practicalities of carrying on in new surroundings. This section also explores how far girls internalised their wartime experiences and to what extent they were ‘cut off’ from the national and local political situation. The final section will consider girls’ shifting ideological affiliations during the Civil War period 1945-1949.

### **On the move: Relocation of Missionary schools during wartime**

The most dramatic change missionary schools underwent during the Second World War was their physical relocation or, in more cases, closure. After the Marco Polo Bridge incident of 7 July 1937, as Japanese troops advanced into central and eastern China, many schools were relocated, merged or disbanded. Jennifer Liu has found that in Japanese occupied areas, 110 middle schools with more than 41,700 students were forced to relocate or shutdown, and the wartime minister of Education Chen Lifu 陳立夫 (1938-1944) wrote that one half of the nation’s 571,800 middle schools

were directly impacted.<sup>708</sup> Many missionary middle schools in East China followed other government schools and universities to ‘Free China,’ relocating in the GMD wartime capital of Chongqing, Sichuan province, or to Kunming in Yunnan, amongst other locations. As Jessie Gregory Lutz has explored, before the attack on Pearl Harbour Christian colleges were more likely to remain in East China than their government counterparts. Some schools sought to use their foreign connections and close location to the treaty ports to protect themselves, either by moving into the nearby foreign concessions or by hoisting foreign flags to try to become ‘islands of extraterritoriality’.<sup>709</sup> As Lutz points out, due to available source material, most literature on wartime education has focused on the relocation of universities and the difficulties faced by students as they tried to continue their education in ‘Free China.’ Comparatively little research has focused on middle schools, particularly those that remained in occupied areas.<sup>710</sup> The experience of missionary schoolgirls in occupied Shanghai therefore helps to fill an important gap in the literature.

Before the Japanese occupation of Hangzhou on 24 December 1937, Hongdao Union Girls School was moved to Jiande (建德), a mountainous region east of Hangzhou, and shortly afterwards to Shanghai, where it joined the East China Christian School Association (東華區基督教學校聯會) of fifteen middle schools which had been forced to relocate to the international concession during the War.<sup>711</sup> After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour in 1942, the East China Association of Christian Schools was also disbanded, with some students travelling to join schools

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<sup>708</sup> Jennifer Liu, *Defiant Retreat: The Relocation of Middle Schools to China’s Interior, 1937–1945*, *Frontiers of History in China*, 8.4, (2013). p. 560.

<sup>709</sup> Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges*, p.363.

<sup>710</sup> Jessie G. Lutz, ‘Comments’, Paul K. T. Sih (ed.), *Nationalist China During the Sino-Japanese War, 1937-1945*, (New York, 1977), p 130. For studies of relocated higher education institutions see: John Israel, *Lianda: A Chinese University in War and Revolution* (Stanford, 1998).

<sup>711</sup> Hongdao nüzhong xiaoyouhui bianjizu, *Hongdao nüzhong jinian kan* (Hangzhou, 2008), p.4.

in inner China.<sup>712</sup> Riverside Academy, despite being damaged by a fire in 1936, and being located perilously close to a telecommunications tower which was a target for the bombers, narrowly avoided a direct hit during the Japanese bombing of Ningbo in November 1937.<sup>713</sup> Immediately after the bombing it was decided to move the school to the home town of Principal Shen, Ting-hsing, in the countryside of Yin County, 100 li from Ningbo, using the Shen family Ancestral Hall and the village temple as a temporary school. According to the recollections of Esther Gauss, 170 boarding school pupils made the arduous twelve-hour journey by bamboo raft (racing each other to keep themselves awake) to the remote village where classes were conducted from 1937-1945 (see figs. 54-55).<sup>714</sup>

In Zhejiang province the network of waterways aided the movement of schools in exile, while those who followed the GMD government to inland provinces often had to make the arduous trek on foot. Keith Schoppa has highlighted the difficult journeys and conditions faced by middle schools in exile in Zhejiang during the Sino-Japanese War, which not only included the logistical difficulties of moving large groups of students and equipment to the ‘rear areas’ behind the Japanese front lines, but also the problems of lack of food and medical supplies. Schools often relocated several times during the War according to the movement of advancing Japanese troops.<sup>715</sup> Schoppa questions the quality of students’ classroom learning amid all this disruption, but concludes that it was this experience and life skills taught to these elite students in exile, rather than the formal learning, that was of value: ‘For many young Chinese, this was their first lengthy time in a China without electricity, in whole counties without roads, cut off from the outside world, mired in

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<sup>712</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>713</sup> Esther M. Gauss, Personal Letter 1937-1938 – PHS – RG82-56-19.

<sup>714</sup> Esther M. Gauss, Personal Report, 1939-1940, PHS- RG 82-59-13.

<sup>715</sup> Keith Schoppa, *In a sea of bitterness: Refugees during the Sino-Japanese War* (Boston, 2011), pp. 188-213.

shocking poverty; indeed this experience may have been *the* educational value of schools turned refugees.<sup>716</sup> This ‘real-life educational experience’ was certainly true for students at Yongjiang, and Esther Gauss reports proudly of the students’ cheerful determination in the face of difficult conditions at the temple school where: ‘There were problems and inconveniences of course, but they were taken as a matter of course. At first we had to put up with what living arrangement could hurriedly be made, and for several weeks many students cheerfully slept in tightly packed rows of the Sing family ancestral hall until space could be secured elsewhere in the village and until our supply of palm-fibre bed bottoms could be brought from Ningbo.’<sup>717</sup> It is important to bear in mind that conditions at Riverside-in-exile are being filtered through the eyes of their missionary teachers. While enduring the same living conditions as their students, missionaries narrated their experiences to the board in particular ways which stressed the Christian atmosphere and spirit with which the school was ‘carrying on’ in spite of such hardships. English Methodist teacher Doris Coombs also reveals that the school suffered from a lack of equipment (they had to leave their science equipment and library books in Ningbo) and teachers’ salaries had to be cut to make ends meet.<sup>718</sup> In her letter to the mission board on 12 May 1939 she appeals to the board to consider granting the school five thousand dollars of emergency funding to buy equipment, underlining the rather desperate teaching situation at Riverside-in-exile in the final line of her letter: ‘Really a lot of equipment is needed to run the classes as we should like, but we just have to do without. Even the few library books we have managed to acquire have to be kept on some shelves with a curtain in front, because we can’t afford to have cupboards made. Some of the

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<sup>716</sup> Schoppa, *In a sea of bitterness*, p. 213.

<sup>717</sup> Esther M. Gauss, Personal Report, 1938-1939, PHS- RG 82-58-11.

<sup>718</sup> Ou Tsuin-Chen, ‘Education in Wartime China’, in Paul K. T. Sih (ed.), *Nationalist China During the Sino-Japanese War, 1937-1945* (New York, 1977), pp. 103-104.

blackboards are terrible, etc, etc ... I am sure you will all realise that *a middle school with 170 girls can't be run without equipment!*'<sup>719</sup> Gauss also somewhat humorously reveals that the school had to share the ancestral hall with the Sing family bamboo shoot canning factory, with tin cans filling up the kitchen and classroom spaces.<sup>720</sup>

This also appears to have been an eye-opening period for their missionary teachers as well, and perhaps brought about a closer feeling of fellowship and equality between Chinese and foreign staff at Riverside (consisting of Gauss and Coombs during the War). Whereas before the War female missionaries had lived separately from their Chinese colleagues in the missionary house, while in exile they bonded through the experience of sleeping close together in difficult conditions and sharing meals. Gauss reports her enjoyment and excitement felt during this period when the school was in exile: 'Miss Coombs (of the English Methodist mission) and I were the two foreign members of the faculty that went with the school. We with 24 students and three other members of the faculty secured rooms in a new house situated high up on a hill overlooking most of the village ... our cooking was simple as we took our noon meal in the school, eating Chinese food with the students and teachers. A long veranda running the length of the building and facing south gave us our morning and evening dining room, where the beauty of the mountain scenery proved a fine appetizer. I found the country life even more fascinating than it had seemed to me when I had been in “\_” towards the close of the previous school year.'<sup>721</sup> There is thus a feeling of novelty, excitement, almost a 'summer-camp' atmosphere in missionary narratives of their experience of Yongjiang-in-exile. Whether Chinese teachers and students felt similarly upbeat about their experiences

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<sup>719</sup> Doris Coombs to MMS secretary, 12 May 1939, MMS – FBN7 – Women's Work – Correspondence – China – 1933-1945

<sup>720</sup> Esther M. Gauss, Personal Report, 1937-1938, PHS – RG82-56-19

<sup>721</sup> Esther M. Gauss, Personal Report, 1938-1939, PHS- RG 82-58-11.

in the countryside is difficult to glean from missionary sources. However, as we shall see in the case of St. Mary's and McTyeire, the War did mark a turning point in the power relationship between missionary and Chinese teachers, as Chinese teachers took the lead in ensuring the school carried on when foreign teachers were evacuated or interned.

Jennifer Liu has also explored the tensions between fleeing students and the local people they encountered in the villages they relocated to, where, with a lack of local government to enforce law and order, schools were often plagued by local bandits and strongmen, as well as corrupt teachers and local officials. These tensions often resulted from the pressures put on limited food and other resources by the influx of student refugees to remote locations. As Lin highlights, temples were often used as sites for relocated schools, and students and monks came into conflict due to the students' lack of respect for Buddhist rituals.<sup>722</sup> While it is unclear how Riverside girls responded to their Christian school carrying on in a temple environment, missionary teachers Gauss and Webster reveal their impatience at the temporary disruption caused by the periodic 'idolatrous' practices which went on at the temple:

Two ancestral halls and the village temple were put at our disposal, subject of course to use by the villagers for any special occasions, such as an idol's birthday... A noisy and not infrequent interruption to classroom work was the sudden appearance at one of the ancestral halls of a group of mourners who had come to place the tablet for the dead. The wailing, loud beating of gongs, and firing of large firecrackers of course stopped all recitations for the time, but the intrusion seldom lasted for more than ten minutes. In the temple we as a school made no use of the stage and carefully refrained from any use of the central section running straight to the idol and altar.<sup>723</sup>

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<sup>722</sup> Liu, 'Defiant Retreat', pp. 576-580.

<sup>723</sup> Esther M. Gauss, Personal Report, 1939-1940, PHS- RG 82-59-13.

Evidence suggests that it was crucially Principal Shen's family connections which afforded Yongjiang this temporary refuge and allowed them to maintain their independence throughout the War period in relative comfort, while other Christian schools in Zhejiang such as Hongdao were forced to merge with other Christian schools and move to Shanghai. Indeed, the experience of Yongjiang girls in exile during the wartime period was, from the missionary perspective at least, very different to the dire hardship, poverty and malnutrition that Schoppa describes in his depiction of student refugees in Zhejiang. Riverside is therefore somewhat of an anomaly from the trend that Schoppa depicts. Gauss states clearly in her report that it is thanks to Principal Shen's personal connections in the village that Riverside was able to carry on in relatively easy circumstances, and crucially secure enough food: 'The fact that the village is Miss Sing's home place ensured friendliness and paved the way for more or less difficult things such as securing enough extra bags of rice to feed such a sudden influx of population, or securing the temporary use of a temple that when we arrived was being attractively partitioned and arranged for a provincial free clinic, but that would not be used for that purpose until several weeks later.'<sup>724</sup> While missionary sources provide a fascinating insight into the changing conditions of Riverside-in-Exile during the War, the main focus of the remainder of this chapter will be on St. Mary's and McTyeire in Shanghai, as they constitute the bulk of my interview data on students' lived experiences in the wartime. As we shall see, the experience of students in occupied Shanghai was very different from the conditions of Riverside-in-Exile.

Shanghai, due to its international concessions, occupied a special position during wartime. Along with Macau, Hong Kong and other foreign controlled

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<sup>724</sup> Esther M. Gauss, Personal Report, 1938-1939, PHS- RG 82-58-11.

concessions, these spaces became a so-called ‘lonely’ island of neutrality within Japanese-occupied China during the period 1937-1942. In fact, as recent scholarship has shown, these international concessions were by no means cut off from the turmoil of the War or the wider political situation; they not only had to deal with the effects caused by an influx of refugees from surrounding areas, overcrowding, food shortages and spiralling prices, but also in some cases benefited from a new multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism that refugees brought.<sup>725</sup> This special status is reflected in McTyeire and St. Mary’s students’ memories of this period.

One of the strongest memories of girls was the process of moving school. On 13 August 1937, when the girls were on summer vacation, the Japanese army started their invasion of Shanghai. After three months of fierce battle Shanghai fell to the Japanese forces and the St. Mary’s campus on Brennan Road, close to the west train station, was occupied. The Methodist Episcopal Church decided that for safety, St. Mary’s should move with St. John’s University and Middle School to the Emporium Building, or the ‘Continental Building’ as it was known to St. Mary’s girls, a commercial building within the international concession on Nanjing Road (see fig 56 for school movements).<sup>726</sup> St. John’s rented twenty rooms on the fourth floor of the building, and allocated several rooms for St. Mary’s to conduct junior and senior classes.<sup>727</sup> Due to the limitations of space, classes had to be conducted on a half-day basis, with girls coming to school to start lessons at 1:30pm and finishing at 4:30pm. There were no facilities for sport, music or extra-curricular classes, which had formed an essential part of missionary school life. Many student societies and extra-curricular activities were suspended during this time. Religious services took the

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<sup>725</sup> Li Danke, *Echoes of Chongqing*, p. 18. For more on Wartime Shanghai see: Wen-hsin Yeh (ed.), *Wartime Shanghai* (London, 2009).

<sup>726</sup> Later known as Cishu Building 慈淑大楼 and today is the Donghai Building 东海大楼 on 353 Nanjing Road. See Xu and Chen (ed.), *Shengmaliya nüxiao 1881-1952*, p. 47.

<sup>727</sup> *Ibid.*,

form of a twenty-minute worship session held before classes each day. In the autumn of 1939 St. Mary's was able to move into a building called 'Graves Hall', named after Bishop Graves (Feiwei tang 斐蔚堂) on the St. John's university compound. With more space, St. Mary's could resume whole day lessons, and make use of the P.E., music equipment and chapel facilities that St. John's offered, although there was still no accommodation for girls on campus (see fig. 57).

If the latter years of the War were a relatively easier time for St. Mary's, the reverse was true for McTyeire. Due to its location on Edinburgh Road, close to the international settlement, McTyeire suffered comparatively less disruption during the early years of the War (1937-1942). After the bombing of Pearl Harbour in 1942, Japanese troops expanded their occupation into the international settlement, ending the *gudao* period, and changing the situation for McTyeire dramatically. During 1942 Japanese patrols periodically searched McTyeire and positioned military police outside of its gates. In the spring of 1943 their American teachers, along with all allied civilians in Shanghai, were interned in civilian internment camps, and in the summer of 1943 their school was requisitioned by the Japanese army to become the Number Two Military Hospital. McTyeire was relocated to a former British girls' school known as the Cathedral Girls School on 425 Avenue Haig (Haige lu 海格路).<sup>728</sup>

Girls remember with sadness the process of leaving their beautiful campuses behind. In the 1938 *Phoenix* student Yau Ding-Vi Yao (Yao Meidi 姚梅棣, class of 1942) recalls with sadness having to leave 'the quiet classrooms, the majestic

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<sup>728</sup> Today Huashan Road 华山路. This school had been formerly occupied by the Japanese to conduct a primary school, but with the intervention of Xue Zheng the primary school agreed to move out to make way for McTyeire. See Chen Jingyu, *Zhongxi nü zhong*, p. 48.

corridor, the beautiful lawns, and the large gymnasium of St. Mary's Hall behind.'<sup>729</sup>

Other students found the move a novel and exciting experience. One of the strongest memories of the War for McTyeire student, Xu Meizhen (徐美貞, McTyeire class of 1946), was having to help move the library books from McTyeire to the new school on Avenue Haig:

Shanghai had international concessions, before Pearl Harbour they could not enter, but after Pearl Harbour when America joined the Second World War, they could come in. All the Westerners were concentrated in Japanese prisoner of war camps. Including all our teachers. Now our school, the whole campus was taken over by the Japanese army, to become a Japanese hospital, and they asked our school to move to another English school, the English had already gone. This school was called Cathedral Girls School. This school building was quite good, but it was too small. Our students were too many. So we had to divide into morning and afternoon classes. In the morning the seniors had classes. In the afternoon the juniors had classes. All of the curriculum was curtailed. For example we had no PE and music classes. And no art classes, these kind of not so important classes were all cancelled, just leaving important humanities and science subjects. And there was no dormitories so the students all had to commute to school. Because most of our classmates lived in the foreign concession, most of us rode bicycles to school. Those who couldn't ride bikes took a rickshaw. Or a pedicab. Those who lived very close just walked to school ... Our school library had very many books. So the school asked us to volunteer to help find a way to transport all of our library books from the old building to the new school. So we just put them on bicycles, on pedicabs, to take them to the new place! (Laughing). At that time our principal, she was very capable. She negotiated with the Japanese. She said to them our school has music classes, we have many pianos, we want to find a way to move them, can we use your army trucks? Later they agreed, and they used the army

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<sup>729</sup>Yau Ding-Vi, 'Disappointments', *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1938).

trucks to take the pianos to the new place. This was Principal Xue Zheng.

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Xu Meizhen's memory of the fun she and her classmate had moving their school library and the ways in which Principal Xue Zheng was able to negotiate with the Japanese in order to secure the safe transfer of the musical instruments and books highlight the complex and blurred boundaries between 'resistance' and 'collaboration' in teacher and student negotiations with the Japanese and daily survival tactics they employed in wartime Shanghai.<sup>731</sup> Faced with a difficult situation, teachers and pupils made the best of the situation, and worked with the resources they had at their disposal in order to ensure the survival of their school.

As a consequence of their new smaller settings, both McTyeire and St. Mary's had to conduct half-day classes. Moreover, with no space for dormitories, girls had to commute to school for the first time. In some cases, this proved an insurmountable difficulty, and those students whose families were from distant provinces could no longer attend school. While many students' families already lived within the international concession, others moved into the concessions for safety. For example, Yang Zhiling 楊之嶺 (St. Mary's class of 1951) fleetingly remembered being a refugee in Shanghai, before finding suitable accommodation with friends and family:

Most of my memories of school are from the Japanese invasion period. They came into Shanghai in 1937, from Yangshupu 楊樹浦. And the safe part at that time was in the foreign concessions. So I remembered, it was when I was four years old, I think. I do not have the memories but my mother was talking about this again and again, I thought I remembered, but then I know I did not remember that. It was so hard to find a taxi

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<sup>730</sup> Interview with Xu Meizhen, 17 March 2016, Shanghai. 07:44-12:45.

<sup>731</sup> To avoid being labelled a collaborator, Xue Zheng is at pains to highlight in her memoirs how she was only persuaded to attend an educational advisory board when invited by the collaborationist government when she realised that food supply for teachers would be discussed. See Xue Zheng, 'Wo suo zhidao de Zhongxi nü zhong' *Wenshi ziliao gongzuo weiyuanhui (bian.)*, *Jiefang qian shanghai de xuexiao*, *Shanghai wenshi ziliao xuanji di wushijiu ji* (Shanghai, 1988), p. 321.

because everybody was running into the city from the outskirts of the city, Yangshupu, so we found a taxi, my father found a taxi, and we could not bring anything with us, only eight people, six children and two parents. So people load on people, we could not bring anything with us, so my mother, put onto layers of clothing, it was our best clothing, so I was so happy! I thought we were going to be guests for some family. I was so happy! So then when we got to the city, we divided into different places. No family could house so many people. So some of us stayed at my grandmother's place, some of us stayed with my grandfather's friend, and I was in one of my distant uncles' homes. So like that, all divided into different places. It was hard not to be able to see our parents.<sup>732</sup>

Yang Zhiling describes this memory of being a refugee in the international concession as a 'false memory' that has been created through her mother's retelling, rather her own true memory. The experience of being a refugee for elite missionary schoolgirls, the majority of whom had wealthy friends and family with whom they could stay, was a world away from the plight of poor migrants who flocked into the city's public spaces, looking for places to stay, and with rapidly spiralling food prices, trying desperately to feed themselves.<sup>733</sup> Moreover, Yang Zhiling's memory (if it was indeed her own 'real' memory) is filtered through the eyes of a four-year-old child: she was excited, and wearing her best clothes as she believed they were going to visit a family. Children's experiences of warfare are often remarkably different from their adult counterparts, not fully understanding what was going on, a break from their daily routines could be exciting and exhilarating. We also must consider the role played by selective memory in childhood. As psychiatrists have shown, children forget or dissociate themselves from traumatic experiences as a coping

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<sup>732</sup> Interview with Yang Zhiling, 20 July 2016, Beijing, 1:55:40.

<sup>733</sup> By 1 January 1942 the price of rice on the free market had risen to 280 yuan for one picul or *dan* and there were long lines for grain, coal and cooking oil. See Fredrick Wakeman Jr. 'Shanghai Smuggling', in Christian Herriot and Wen-Hsin Yeh, (eds.), *In the Shadow of the Rising Sun, Shanghai under Japanese Occupation* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 121.

mechanism.<sup>734</sup> It is therefore very difficult to untangle the ‘true’ memories of young children’s experiences of warfare as distinct from family and group retelling and later historical representations. In Yang Zhiling’s case, it is understandable how the traumatic experience of being separated from her parents and placed in an unfamiliar environment may have had a big impact on her memory as a four-year-old child. That she was ‘happy’ may well have been a memory implanted by her mother’s retelling in an attempt to mitigate the trauma of this sudden removal from her family environment.

Other students had to take a long and difficult commute to school, via foot, bicycle, rickshaw or bus for the first time. Commuting to school was both an exhausting and eye-opening experience for girls who had previously been sheltered from encountering the poorest sections of Shanghai society in their boarding schools. Despite the inconveniences, some girls reported their enjoyment of the new experiences, eye-opening sights and sounds that their commute brought. These new experiences included witnessing and interacting with a greater social strata of Shanghai society than they had ever been exposed to before. They found pleasure in their exposure to all sorts of people who they would not normally encounter in the elite social circles their families moved in. For example, Sung Sing-Ling (Shen Shuqin 沈淑琴, St. Mary’s class of 1941) writes:

Now that I’m not a boarding student, I have to take much pains in getting to school, which is quite a distance from my home ... We also see many different kinds of people on the bus. There are noisy American schoolgirls, eating, joking and sending laughter through the whole bus, making everybody turn his head and stare at them. There are many workmen, curious sightseers, and serious businessmen who knit their brows if the bus becomes too crowded. Beside these, there are sights to

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<sup>734</sup> Van der Kolk, ‘Trauma and Memory’, pp. 52-46.

be seen on the streets and sidewalks. We often see anxious people trying eagerly to get a chance of purchasing a dollar's worth of rice. There are, too, occasionally street fights and people getting into each other's way in their hurry. There are so many exciting things that you don't get to see when you're riding in a car ... Though there is much that is uncomfortable about riding a bus or tram, yet we enjoy it thoroughly.<sup>735</sup>

The War thus provided new eye-opening life experiences for the previously sheltered St. Mary's girls, albeit witnessed from the safety provided by the bus window. In her article entitled 'Why I like day school' Zia Ung-sing (Ji Qixian 吉琦仙, St. Mary's class of 1940) goes as far as to write that she prefers life in the 'New St. Mary's' to their old boarding school:

This year we are studying in the Continental Building instead of in St. Mary's Hall, because the places around our school are occupied by soldiers. We cannot stay in the Continental Building during the night, so all the students must go from their homes to the building every day. Though it seems very inconvenient, yet I like the day school better, because there is plenty of time for me to study my lessons in the morning. Another reason why I like day school better is that if the weather were very cold in the morning, the time which I could spend in sleep is longer than in St. Mary's Hall. The third reason is I can see there are a great many interesting things which we could not see in school. These are the three reasons why I like day school better than boarding in Saint Mary's Hall.<sup>736</sup>

Although many of her classmates do not go so far as to agree with Zia that they enjoy their new school life more than their old one, (in fact many bemoan their new situation and look forward to the time when they can return to their old campus), pupils had a range of experiences and reactions to the War – both positive and negative, but all eye-opening and new. Girls' excitement about their new experiences

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<sup>735</sup> Sung Sing Ling, 'Oh! The Bus! Oh! The tram!' *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1938). We may question to what extent Sung is being genuine in her excitement or using a sarcastic tone here.

<sup>736</sup> Zia Ung-sing, 'Why I like day school', *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1938).

and more independent lifestyle, provides a more nuanced insight into the daily lives of female students in wartime Shanghai. Their recollections also complicate the dominant PRC narrative of women's wartime experience in Shanghai, which by focusing on the hunger, deprivation and danger wrought by the Japanese, serve to repress any positive memories of the War for women.<sup>737</sup> The official patriotic narrative of China's war with Japan in China today had also influenced my interviewees and it was often only after probing their experiences that they gave a more nuanced picture of how women experienced the War in Shanghai. As we shall see, this is particularly true for girls' memories of their Japanese Language education. Despite the excitement of these new experiences in the process of traversing the city, the harsh realities of war were often brought home to girls in a very profound way, and they were by no means living in an 'ivory tower'. Girls' articles often touch upon the pitiful plight of the refugees who flocked to Shanghai, showing their awareness of the plight of their compatriots in wartime. Li Me-Chung (Li Meiqing 李梅卿, St. Mary's class of 1939) writes:

Early one morning, I was awakened from my dreamland by the shouts and cries of the people on the streets...After a few minutes of thinking I realise that it must be the thousands of refugees evacuating from the western districts as the War was now turning to that direction...The refugees were mostly farmers and country people. They brought with them the few possessions they had got. Some very old men and women also lingering on their way, with their grandchildren yelling behind. Both helpless, yet trying to help – it was piteous!...One little child had evidently lost track of his family, for he cried and cried, calling his Papa Mama, but no one answered. Later a policeman kindly picked him up, but I'm afraid that it wouldn't have helped him much to find his parents as it was all confusion on the road. My servant told me that the people

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<sup>737</sup> See Wakeman, 'Shanghai Smuggling', p. 116.

had been passing on the street for four hours, and I'm sure at least there were thousands of homeless added that day to the already numerous ones who met the same fate. I really can't but feel thankful each day that I am so fortunate as to have a home.<sup>738</sup>

Although a feeling of helplessness pervades their narratives, in their writings girls show they were acutely aware of and extremely grateful for their privileged positions, and that they pitied the unfortunate refugees whom they encountered. Girls also show their awareness of the difficult economic situation many families were facing due to the War, such as the soaring prices of rice in Shanghai, which left many people starving. Although from elite families who could generally afford to buy food on the black market, St. Mary's girls were also affected by the shortages. Tsu Foh-Pau (Xing Fengbao 邢鳳寶, St. Mary's class of 1941) writes:

The second new experience for me is the shortage of rice. As our native rice is not available, we have to buy imported rice, which is much inferior in flavour to our own rice. Moreover, there is great difficulty in getting the rice. The purchase is limited to one dollar each buyer, and one has to wait hours and hours before he can get a dollar's worth of it. There is often a big crowd of people lined up in front of the rice shop under the supervision of a policeman. We have never known such troubles of living.<sup>739</sup>

Although from privileged families which could afford to buy food at inflated prices on the black market, St. Mary's girls also remember rationing and queuing up to get rice. As one student remembers, this was sometimes a frustrating experience. As children they did not know how the system worked and were consequently overlooked in the queue for rice, and had to start all over again.<sup>740</sup>

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<sup>738</sup> Li Me-Chung, 'The Piteous Sight I Witnessed', *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1938).

<sup>739</sup> Tsu Foh-Pau, 'Difficult conditions', *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1941).

<sup>740</sup> Interview with Xiao Jiaxun, Shanghai 16 March 2016.

Other more immediate dangers, such as bombs and bullets from aircrafts which could descend on the city at any moment, were also encountered by students. Sometimes the horrors of war could be turned into a ‘game’, ‘spectacle’ or ‘dangerous adventure’ in schoolgirls’ imaginations. For example, St. Mary’s student Tsang Vung-Chung (Chen Jianqing, 陳簡青 St. Mary’s class of 1939) describes her close escape from bombing in a piece entitled ‘A dangerous outing’:

It was two or three days after the War had broken out, when most of the food stores shut up their doors and would not sell any rice, bread, fruit, et cetera. Brother and I strolled out on that afternoon and tried to get some food. As he failed in getting some food after some attempts, we just stroll down the Bund, where an air fight was going to take place. We reached the Bund and waited for a long time in a park over there, but the aeroplane seemed as if they would never show up. As we were impatient of waiting, we started for home, but just then we heard the sound of many planes. We returned and intended to feast our eyes on the site. Hardly had we sat down when the machine guns in the aeroplanes had begun to work! How awful that ‘Pa-pa’ noise did sound to us! Fearing to get some stray bullets, we jumped to our feet and tried to get out from that terrible place, but it was not a very easy thing to do as crowds of people were also coming out from the Bund. In a twinkling we heard some horrible sounds again. This time the noise was ‘bon-bon’ sound of some tremendous bombs thrown down from some bombers. In an instant an eight-storeyed building a few metres from us was hit, about ten people near us were killed by the shells, and several automobiles some distance away from us burst into crimson flames ... When we had recovered our senses, we immediately turned on our heels and ran straight before our noses for our very lives. Our dresses were quite wet through by sweat when we got home. Our dangerous adventure was related not without shudders.<sup>741</sup>

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<sup>741</sup> Tsang Vung-Chung, ‘A Dangerous Outing’, *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1938).

Whether or not this story was a record of Tsang's actual experience or a fictional piece, or some mixture of both, is difficult to ascertain.<sup>742</sup> Students clearly felt some excitement and curiosity surrounding the danger of warfare; it was a 'spectacle' and a 'dangerous adventure' to be witnessed and related. As we have previously discussed, that war could become a game or adventure for children is a phenomenon explored by many scholars of children in conflict, as a psychological tool for dealing with conflict.<sup>743</sup> For example, Theresa Chen 陳宗慈 (McTyeire class of 1947) remembers the 'fun' of doing her homework by candlelight, ensuring that the blackout blind covered the windows, so not one speck of light could escape to attract the attention of bombers:

This was when we were in Shanghai and thinking back it was really colourful. We were all crowded in one bedroom. And my brothers were living with my uncles. And so she (my mother) has five children and he has seven, so it was a whole dozen! At that time the Americans were bombing Shanghai, and I remember that at that time we had to have black drapes and then you would hear the warning siren that the American planes were coming, so then we all closed the drape, and no electricity was allowed. So on a small table in our bedroom all the little kiddies were sitting there, and there's no light, there is an oil lamp, with just one oil wick, so this oil lamp, the brightness is less than a candle light. Just study. And that is an amazing picture. And not a whole lot of conversation.<sup>744</sup>

Theresa Chen's narrative indicates that this is a memory from the latter stages of the War, when after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour the Americans carried out air raids on Japanese occupied Shanghai. After the bombing of Pearl Harbour and the entry of Japanese forces into the foreign concessions, life became even more difficult

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<sup>742</sup> There are some inconsistencies in her story, which starts with her and her brother setting off to buy food, but ends with both their 'dresses' getting wet through, which would suggest a female companion. This may however be due to the student's level of English.

<sup>743</sup> Stargardt, 'Moments of Subjectivity of Children in the Second World War', p.53.

<sup>744</sup> Interview with Theresa Chen, 10 November 2016, San Mateo, 29:29.

and dangerous for girls commuting to school. Julia Tsai Li (McTyeire graduate of 1945) remembered that Japanese soldiers could regularly be seen outside of McTyeire, and on one occasion the principal ordered the girls to hide from the soldiers who wanted to enter the school:

Oh let me tell you about that one incident I can never forget. It will stay with me until the day I die. I was in my junior year and school usually got over at 3:00 or 3:30 right? Just before the end of the school day all of a sudden, Miss Xue gave us a hush-hush and then shoed us all away to the top the school, I think the fourth floor, the top of the building. And as children at that time, well, you don't ask questions. Whatever the teacher asked you to do, just do it. So, we all went upstairs and then were very quiet. We didn't know the reason why until later on. We were let out, and we were asked to go home. Then we were told that one troop of Japanese soldiers, they were all six footers, were outside the school and they knew that this was girls' school. So they wanted to crash in. I don't know how she had got wind of it. She had all girls. I could never forget that incident.<sup>745</sup>

For those who commuted to school by foot or bicycle, the danger posed by patrolling Japanese soldiers was very real. Yang Zhiling (McTyeire class of 1951) remembers her mother's advice on how to safely pass Japanese soldiers escorting her younger sisters to school:

We had to walk to school, and my mother was so afraid of the Japanese soldiers, and we were all girls...Because every day my mother was afraid for us, and we did not laugh and giggle, make noise, we did not want to attract attention when we had to pass Japanese soldiers. One day, I was escorting my two younger sisters and some Japanese soldiers we are walking close to us, and you cannot run, otherwise you would attract attention, my mother told me, just walk slowly and do not look at their eyes. Just lower down your head and walk. It was scary.<sup>746</sup>

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<sup>745</sup> Julia Tsai Li, in 'Telling Women's Lives'.

<sup>746</sup> Interview with Yang Zhiling, 20 July 2016, Beijing, 01:57:00.

After 1939 St. Mary's was able to move to Graves Hall within the grounds of St. John's University. To reach the relative safety of the campus from their homes in the international settlement, many girls had to traverse Jessfield Park (today Zhong Shan Park 中山公園), where there was a Japanese patrol stationed. Girls remember that they often crossed the park in groups, or waited for older male students from St. John's University to escort them. Girls who rode bicycles to school remember having to dismount and push their bikes across the park. Ying Manrong 應曼蓉 (St. Mary's class of 1945) remembers her narrow escape from sexual assault by a Japanese soldier one rainy day as she tried to cross the park from campus to her home:

During the War I had an experience that had a great influence on me. When I was in Senior Two, one day I was studying in the library, I was reading for a very long time, suddenly the sky went very dark and heavy rain started falling. I decided to leave quickly. There was nobody in the library. I was pushing my bicycle across Zhongshan Park, you could only push your bike they wouldn't allow you to ride it. However whilst I was pushing it on the way there was absolutely no one there, there was no one there ... [voice shaking] Suddenly I saw in front of me, about, about, five or six yards away a man, wearing a dark raincoat, very big coat, I was very afraid because he was Japanese. He had a demonic grin on his face. As soon as I saw him I was very afraid, he certainly had bad intentions. Although I saw that he did not have a gun, he took out his sex organ from underneath his raincoat, I had never seen this before. I have never told this to anyone before. You know when Japanese soldiers saw nobody was around they would rape women. I saw there was a music band stand close by where there was a young couple. When I saw them I made a run for the band stand. I did not care if I was disturbing them, I just wanted to save myself. Later I found out he was one of the Japanese Military Police, who had been stationed in the Zhongshan Park. Although they patrolled there they also preyed on women. Oh! I was scared to death. [With anger

in her voice] All Chinese women at this time never had a day when they felt safe, even us students who studied at a prestigious school, even we encountered this kind of danger! If there was not this young couple in the bandstand I am afraid I would have been raped. To encounter this kind of thing! At that time I was not very strong ... I had almost forgotten this thing. That's why I know how terrible those Japanese troops were. Can you imagine, how many Chinese women did the Japanese rape?<sup>747</sup>

Ying Manrong recounted this story with great emotion in her voice and facial expression: the fear and anger in her narrative came through strongly, even after sixty-two years. The sexual threat from Japanese soldiers faced by Chinese women during the War has been highlighted in many studies of the second Sino-Japanese War. While there has been much scholarly attention paid to the rape of women in notorious instances, such the Nanjing massacre, and women who were forced into sexual slavery as 'comfort women' for Japanese soldiers on the front lines, much less attention has been paid to the sexual threat that women of all social classes had to face on a daily basis in occupied wartime Shanghai.<sup>748</sup> Although Ying Manrong is narrating a personal experience, it is difficult to determine, due to a lack of data, the number of women who were raped during the occupation period in Shanghai, and her outrage towards the end of her narrative where she states 'can you imagine, how many Chinese women did the Japanese rape?' may have also been influenced by later depictions of Japanese soldiers during the Rape of Nanjing. In Ying Manrong's retelling, her outrage is also closely connected to her class status – even elite students

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<sup>747</sup> Interview with Ying Manrong, 2 July 2016, Beijing, 2:07:00 – 2:12:00.

<sup>748</sup> Iris Chang, *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of WWII* (New York, 1997), Timothy Brook, *Documents on the Rape of Nanking* (Michigan, 1999), Daqing Yang, 'Challenges of Trans-National History: Historians and the Nanjing Atrocity' *SAIS Review*, 19.2, (1999), pp. 133-147. For literature on comfort women see: Yoshimi Yoshiaki, *Comfort Women: Sexual Slavery in the Japanese Military during World War Two* (New York, 2000), George Hicks, *The comfort women: sex slaves of the Japanese Imperial Forces* (London, 1995), and Qiu Peipei, *Chinese comfort women: testimonies from imperial Japan's sex-slaves* (Vancouver, 2013).

such as herself became vulnerable to the sexual threat of Japanese patrolling soldiers during this period.

Other students had to commute to school from a different direction, crossing the Suzhou creek at the Waibaidu Bridge 外白渡橋 on their way to school, which was a Japanese checkpoint. Rosalyn Koo (McTyeire class of 1947) recalls the humiliation Chinese students felt at having to bow to the Japanese guards when they passed them:

I remember I was generally nervous, restless every day, especially when we had to move to the temporary site, and I was worried about the Japanese military and they were on the street everywhere. We had to get off the bicycle and then bow and then go. And one time I decided not to bow and I just rode my bicycle. Just to get away really fast. That's no good if they should catch you. It's humiliation, in your own country you had to do this.<sup>749</sup>

Lucy Hong remembered that her father, Hong Deying 洪德應, an Anglican pastor, faculty member at St. John's University and later headmaster of St. Mary's (1949-1952) used to take a much longer, circuitous route on his daily commute to the university in order to avoid having to bow to the Japanese on the bridge.<sup>750</sup> For one McTyeire primary student, this was a particularly sensitive point, as her mother was Japanese and she therefore had a special pass which allowed her to pass without bowing. Zhu Lizhong 朱麗中 (McTyeire class of 1950), remembers the painful isolation and ostracism she experienced due to her Japanese heritage:

We had to cross two bridges going to school, and everyone has to get down from their pedicab or rickshaw and then you had to bow to the soldiers standing guard. My mother refused to bow, so she was taken to the military border police, and she said, I am Ashikaga, how should I

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<sup>749</sup> Interview with Rosalyn Koo, 5 November 2016, San Mateo. AM: 09:29.

<sup>750</sup> Interview with Lucy Hong and Cao Shengjie, 22 October 2016, Shanghai, 23:30.

bow to a no-name soldier? She refused to bow. Then she got special permission, she doesn't have to bow ... I was ostracized by my classmates [in elementary school], so I did not have close friends.<sup>751</sup>

Although identifying herself as 'more Chinese than Japanese', her mother used to dress her in Japanese clothes during this period, perhaps for her own protection, which sealed her status as an outcast at school: 'Our mother was the descendant of the two Japanese shogun families, Ashikaga of Muromachi period, and Tokugawa of Edo period. When we were in the elementary school, it was during the eight years Sino-Japanese War. I was more Chinese than Japanese, although my mother used to dress us in Japanese students' attire. I did not have friends as I was outcasted.'<sup>752</sup>

In alumnae memories, therefore, although their schools did represent a place of 'shelter' or 'refuge', girls were by no means 'isolated' or 'cut off' from the War and had to pass daily through many dangers and humiliations to reach a place of relative 'safety' on their school campuses. (See figs. 58-60). Rosalyn Koo explained her feelings during wartime: 'During the War, [by] going to the campus you were able to shut everything out, you just study, it's like a refuge. You can peruse Charles Dickens, Thomas Hardy, and not worry about anything else happening outside the school. However, in ninth grade, tenth grade, no matter what, the soldiers came in, and we had to get out.'<sup>753</sup>

### **Patriotic resisters? Japanese Education and Girls Political Awareness.**

One of the most dramatic changes brought by the War were changes in language teaching. In 1942, girls at St. Mary's and McTyeire were saddened to lose their English and American missionary teachers who were interned in civilian internment

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<sup>751</sup> Interview with Zhu Lizhong, 11 November 2016, Los Altos, 53:25.

<sup>752</sup> Personal Email from Zhu Lizhong to Jennifer Bond, 21 May 2018.

<sup>753</sup> Interview with Rosalyn Koo, 05 November 2016, San Mateo, 15:15 – 20:06.

camps by the Japanese.<sup>754</sup> The loss of their English teachers also had an impact on their lessons, as the school had to find Chinese teachers of English for the first time. After graduating from the English Literature department of St. John's University Chen Guanyu was invited to come back to McTyeire as the first Chinese teacher of English. She remembered the difficulties faced to find suitably qualified Chinese teachers of English during the War: 'Then Pearl Harbour. They were in a concentration camp, then evacuated. Then there was a vacuum in the English department, and we had to fill it. So I had to take over teaching senior high school English.'<sup>755</sup> Indeed, for some teachers at McTyeire, the absence of the foreign staff fostered a feeling of greater independence and autonomy amongst the remaining Chinese faculty, who no longer had to consider missionary demands or interests. Students came to describe their pre-1943 experience as 'Alice in Wonderland. After that we had to grow up fast.'<sup>756</sup>

The next dramatic change came in 1943 with the introduction of Japanese into the school's curriculum. The introduction of Japanese language and culture classes was extended into all schools in occupied areas under Japanese control as part of the attempt to create a 'Greater-Asia Co-prosperity Sphere', which was used to consolidate and justify Japanese imperial expansion.<sup>757</sup> At St. Mary's and McTyeire a Japanese teacher was stationed at the school. As the McTyeire centennial volume records: 'Japanese supervision of McTyeire's educational program operated in the guise of Japanese language instruction, which collapsed in less than a semester as a

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<sup>754</sup> Li Tun-Chi, 'Class history 1946' *The McTyerian 1942-1946* (Shanghai, 1946).

<sup>755</sup> Kuan Yu Chen in 'Telling Women's Lives'.

<sup>756</sup> 'Voices of McTyeire at War, Recovery and Transformation, 1937-1949' in 'Telling Women's Lives'.

<sup>757</sup> For more on Pan-Asianism and the Co-Prosperity Sphere see Erri Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War 1931-1945* (New York, 2007), p. 205.

result of student protest and subterfuge.’<sup>758</sup> This official history, which portrays girls as ‘patriotic resisters’ of the Japanese, along the lines of the state-endorsed narrative, is problematic when we probe deeper into alumnae’s individual memories of their Japanese language education. As we shall see, their reactions to their Japanese teacher, which ranged from hatred to ridicule, pity and even enjoyment, challenge the straightforward dichotomy between ‘resistance’ vs ‘collaboration’ in Chinese dealings with the Japanese during this period.

At McTyeire a Japanese language teacher named Ishikawa was recruited alongside thousands of other educators who came to teach in China during the War.<sup>759</sup> However at McTyeire, the gender dynamics of the classroom at an all-girls school contributed to the Japanese teacher’s powerlessness – indeed he was often at the mercy of their female students, as he could not punish them physically, but only verbally reprimand them. Lucy Hong remembered: ‘At that time the Chinese teachers were in charge of the school and the foreign teachers were forced to go to the concentration camps. We were all girls, and the teacher was a man and he had to be polite to us. He was not too serious...We just went to his class to waste time, not to really study’ She added almost as an afterthought: ‘Of course with hatred in our hearts but we cannot show it.’<sup>760</sup> Similarly, at the fiftieth anniversary reunion the class of 1947 recalled that the Japanese teacher used to bang his baton down on the table in an attempt to restore order, and make girls listen to him in class, without much effect.<sup>761</sup> Xu Meizhen remembers their teacher’s powerlessness with glee:

The Japanese army enforced Japanese lessons and sent a Japanese teacher from Japan to teach us. They sent a male teacher. Now Xue

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<sup>758</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>759</sup> Liu, ‘The Changing Face of Women’s Education in China’, p. 113.

<sup>760</sup> Interview with Hong Luming, 1 April 2016, East China Theological Seminary, Shanghai, 33:37 – 38:10.

<sup>761</sup> ‘Joint recollections at the fiftieth Anniversary reunion the class of 1947’, in ‘Telling Women’s Lives’.

Zheng, she was very firm. She said to them: We are a girls' school. You are not allowed to hit the students. Because the Japanese would try to hit the students. So they agreed. But who wanted to study Japanese? So this young male Japanese teacher, he had a baton. When we were in his class we all did not listen, we just chatted to each other, he was so angry... but he could not hit us ... So he whacked his baton on the desk so hard that it broke in half! [Laughing]. We didn't want to learn Japanese so we just played up in his classes.<sup>762</sup>

While narrating their memories in the patriotic language of 'hatred' and 'resistance', girls at McTyeire actually came to sympathise with and pity their Japanese teacher, as he was forced to live away from his wife and son, who subsequently died on a boat from Japan to China. Xu Meizhen recalled: 'Later we learned that he also did not want to come to China. He was sent by the Japanese government. In his own country he was also a teacher. He had a wife and children, and he really missed them. He had photos and let us look 'this is my wife, this is my child.'<sup>763</sup> Students also remember humorous incidents that resulted from miscommunication with their teacher. Xu Meizhen remembered with great mirth:

Because we couldn't speak Japanese, we learned the English alphabet. So it was very difficult for us to communicate with him. But he understood Chinese characters, because Chinese and Japanese have this traditional connection. There was a classmate who injured herself falling off a horse. She did not come to class. This Japanese teacher asked us, why is she not coming to class? We all didn't know how to tell him what had happened to her. We just knew that in Japanese 'wuma' meant horse. We told him 'wuma boolongdong' (onomatopoeia in Shanghai dialect to describe the sound of an object falling from a high place) [Laughing].<sup>764</sup> The teacher understood somehow.<sup>765</sup>

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<sup>762</sup> Interview with Xu Meizhen, 17 March 2016, Shanghai, 26:15 – 28:00.

<sup>763</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>764</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>765</sup> *Ibid.*,

The Japanese teacher eventually gave up trying to teach these unruly girls and, directed by the students, taught the girls how to sing songs in Japanese: an experience that many girls seemed to have enjoyed. Rosalyn Koo explained how the students suggested that they learn to sing Japanese songs as a compromise:

And we would be talking, totally ignoring him. He would use his sword and bang it on the teacher's desk, stomp out, bringing Xue Zheng. She would be very severe. Then this lieutenant, still mad, would try to teach. Of course, he had no ideas how to teach girls. We made sure he didn't know how to teach anybody. Then we decided this wouldn't work, because this guy was not going to disappear. Then we asked him, "What do you like to do? What do you like? Would you like to sing?" We were trying to find out anything to distract us from teaching us Japanese. And then, you know, kids are good singers. So, they say, "Sing!" And he finally got the drift. He said "Yes, let's sing." So we asked him to teach us singing in Japanese. We thought that would be a good compromise. And this is how we went through the year in Japanese. Didn't learn a single word! Later on we found out that his family, his wife and children, were planning to join him in Shanghai and their boat sank. And so he lost his entire family. And we never saw him again.<sup>766</sup>

Thus, girls at McTyeire almost took the lead in their Japanese education, dictating to their rather pitiful teacher what and how they should learn. Girls' experiences of their Japanese education – from defiant resistance to pity, ridicule and even some moments of fun – provide further nuances to our understanding of the ways in which girls negotiated their lives during the Japanese occupation period – a negotiation which went beyond a simple resistance vs. collaboration dichotomy. Indeed, in the case of McTyeire and St. Mary's the gendered relationship between an all-female student body and a male teacher (who was powerless to discipline the girls) negated his position into an almost comical and tragic figure, and worked to effectively

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<sup>766</sup> Rosalyn Koo, in 'Telling Women's Lives'

reverse the power dynamics between Japanese aggressor and Chinese civilians. Girls' memories, which reveal the sympathy they felt after the tragic loss of his family, also show that they regarded him a human being – a real-life Japanese person who they pitied, as opposed to the 'evil predators' that dominate other narratives.

Having explored the ways in which the War impacted on girls' lives materially and the practical changes in the teaching body and school curriculum, we will now explore to what extent girls' political opinions changed and how far they engaged in the patriotic project of resisting Japan. Girls' mind-sets reveal their conflicting and sometimes ambivalent attitudes, challenging the dominant patriotic rhetoric of a concerted war of resistance against Japan in China today. How far did the realities of war hit home for girls at St. Mary's and McTyeire? What patriotic relief activities were they engaged in? To what extent did the school isolate or shelter them from the wider political situation?

At first glance, evidence from the school magazines suggests that during the early years of the War in Shanghai (1937-1942) life went on in a normal fashion for girls at McTyeire and apart from missing their classmates whose families were from far afield, or whose parents had moved to escape the conflict or work for the government in Chongqing, they experienced very little changes in their day-to-day life-styles. The McTyeiran magazines of 1937-1941 make very little mention of the conflict, and the articles by students in the annual magazines continue on light-hearted topics which are concerned with girls' dress, appearance and social life such as: 'Beware! Are you properly groomed?', 'Types of people that bore me' and 'My Lady's Wardrobe'.<sup>767</sup> The magazines for these years are still full of news of sporting competitions, plays and pageants that girls were performing, suggesting that the War

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<sup>767</sup> Wu Vong Ching 'Beware! Are you properly groomed?' *The McTyeiran* (Shanghai, 1940) p. 27, Chen Ping Tsung, 'Types of people that bore me', *The McTyeiran* (Shanghai, 1940), pp.14-15, Kiang Ye, 'My Lady's Wardrobe', *The McTyeiran*, (Shanghai, 1940), pp. 23-24.

had not deeply penetrated into the psychology or lives of girls up to this point. Indeed, as Toby Lincoln has highlighted, we must take into account ‘the importance of providing a nuanced spatial analysis of wartime violence’ when attempting to understand the lived experience of warfare for residents in the lower Yangtze region.<sup>768</sup> Although Shanghai was occupied in 1937, for girls at McTyeire very little changed in the routines of their boarding school life, until they were forced to move campus in 1943. In the 1940 magazine only three out of seventy articles mention the War.<sup>769</sup> For example, in her article ‘United we fall’, rather than focusing on the pitiful plight of refugees, the author, Lee Chu Zia (McTyeire class of 1940), complains of having to share a house with another family. She concludes (rather ironically in hindsight): ‘I believe we shall never let this misfortune of sharing a house with another family befall us again. We have tasted bitterness once and it ought to be the last time.’<sup>770</sup> Indeed, the McTyeire centenary publication also comments that ‘even during the War, many alumnae experienced periods of exuberance, rather than horror and deprivation.’<sup>771</sup>

We may speculate that there was a sense of forced gaiety, of not wanting to let the War intrude too much and of ‘carrying on’ despite the chaos going on around them. Girls also wrote with a sense of gratitude for the refuge provided by the school and an awareness that they were in a privileged position, knowing that they could continue their lives in difficult circumstances. For example, in the class history of 1945 McTyeire student Hsueh Nying (Xue Yin 薛吟) writes:

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<sup>768</sup> Toby Lincoln, ‘The Rural and Urban at War: Invasion and Reconstruction in China during the Anti-Japanese War of Resistance’, *Journal of Urban History*, 38.1. (2012), p. 115.

<sup>769</sup> *The McTyeiran* (Shanghai, 1940).

<sup>770</sup> Lee Chu Zia, ‘United we fall’, *The McTyeiran* (Shanghai, 1940) p. 6

<sup>771</sup> ‘Voices of McTyeire at War, Recovery and Transformation, 1937-1949’ in ‘Telling Women’s Lives’.

During the period of time that we studied in McTyeire a tremendous change has taken place in the world outside, but inside the four walls of McTyeire life was calm and peaceful. Some said that we were most unfortunate to have the golden years of our youth pass in such a hard time, but they did not know that the happiness that McTyeire gave us was enough to make up for everything.<sup>772</sup>

This spirit of ‘carrying on’ is also reflected in the McTyeiran class history of 1940 where King Sze Tsung (Jin Shizhen 金詩箴, McTyeire class of 1940) writes: ‘In the face of sorrow and distress we tried our best to live a joyous life’<sup>773</sup> and Dunn Woo Li (Deng Hulie 鄧瑚烈, McTyeire class of 1941) asserts proudly: ‘In spite of everything that was happening in our immediate vicinity, we did not miss one class.’<sup>774</sup> Chang Ching Yu (Zhang Jingyu, 張景瑜 McTyeire class of 1943) writes: ‘The War did not dull our youthful zest or mar our childish happiness.’<sup>775</sup> Some students went as far as to make light of the War by joking about the national situation. In a humorous article entitled ‘Behind the Scenes at St. Mary’s’ Ling Kuo-fen (Ling Guofang 凌國芳 class of 1941) jokes: ‘considering the events of the last few years, girls complain our present geography books are old-fashioned, and rightly so. Perhaps we’d better drop it till the Wars are over.’<sup>776</sup> The welcome refuge that their school campus provided during the War and Civil War years can be seen in photographs of girls happily riding their bikes on the school campus and relaxing on their lawn (see figs. 58-60). Sheltered by the privilege of wealth they could to some extent try to ‘carry on’ as normal during these turbulent years.

However, in interviews conducted with graduates living in the USA many years after the War had ended, McTyeire graduates not only spoke about their school

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<sup>772</sup> Hsueh, ‘Class history 1945’.

<sup>773</sup> King Sze Tsung, ‘Class history’, *The McTyeiran* (Shanghai, 1940).

<sup>774</sup> Dunn ‘Class history’.

<sup>775</sup> Chang Ching Yu ‘Class history’, *The McTyeiran 1942-1946* (Shanghai, 1946).

<sup>776</sup> Ling Guo fen, ‘Behind the scenes in St. Mary’s’, *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1941), p. 47.

as a welcome ‘refuge’ but also as isolating and cutting them off from the wider political events going on in the country. For example, Chen Guanyu 陳觀裕 (McTyeire class of 1936) remembered:

Well, we were the privileged ones. We lived in the international concession, so we were protected by colonialism. So the bombing didn’t bother us. We heard of refugees, of course, people who lived close to the Chinese territories, who fled to the international concession take cover. But we never really directly experienced bombing. Or like the massacre in Nanjing, those things are very remote. I learned about Chinese history and all of those terrible things that happened to us, the famine, and the floods, after I had grown up and gotten out of China. I read a lot about Chinese history written by Western scholars like Fairbank and I got a more accurate understanding of China. For heaven sake! We didn’t know anything about our own country.<sup>777</sup>

In an interview with Zhang Luoluo (McTyeire class of 1948) conducted in 2016, she agreed with the assessment that girls at McTyeire were not very much concerned with politics or nationalism during this period: ‘Oh, we were not patriotic at all!’<sup>778</sup> After the Japanese moved into the international concessions, their foreign teachers were interned and they had to move out of their school and face a daily commute, the realities of the War hit home, even for these privileged girls from elite families. Girls had to face the social realities of the War, even if they were still removed from the politics of it. Chen Guanyu recalls working as a teacher at McTyeire after 1942:

Especially when we moved campus, that was a great change. From then on, it was not an ivory tower. We had no fuel, everybody was on bicycle. There was no boarding, and from that time on it was such a deterioration. The inflation was astronomical, and deterioration, deterioration. That generation of students is much more practical. Oh, I’m talking about clothing, they are more socially conscious. I don’t know how much we

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<sup>777</sup> Kuan Yu Chen, in ‘Telling Women’s Lives’.

<sup>778</sup> Interview with Zhang Luoluo, 8 November 2016, San Mateo, USA.

were politically aware, only socially more conscious. And everybody had a hard time, and so many people lost so much during the Japanese occupation.<sup>779</sup>

Some students were more socially conscious of the War than others, and like their college counterparts in Ginling, girls in missionary schools in Shanghai displayed their patriotism and Christian spirit through engaging in a variety of relief activities.<sup>780</sup> Christian students sought to display both their faith and patriotism on the pages of their magazine, reminding their classmates of their duty to do more for their suffering compatriots. For example, in her article in the *Phoenix* of 1939, student Ling Kuo-fen (Ling Guofang 凌國芳, St. Mary's class of 1941) criticises her classmates for being sheltered in their privileged bubble of wealth:

At this unsettled time I think the people who need the most help are the refugees. Thousands and thousands of them have come into the city since the outbreak of war, carrying with them no more than a small bundle of clothes or some with nothing. The more fortunate ones have been able to live in the refugee camps, but a great many of them have had to live on the streets... The relief organisations have done a marvellous piece of work, but there can never be too much help in such cases. And when we compare wealthy playboys and girls, who continue to squander their money on amusements, with the pitiful refugees, who are lying cold and hungry so nearby, one cannot feel that people in Shanghai can really lend more of a helping hand to the unfortunate ones than they have been doing. In the school alone, I see many students who spend a great deal on amusements without a thought of the poor refugees. It is not that they want the refugees to die or are unwilling to give when asked, but that they are just sometimes thoughtless. Are we extending a helping hand? Are we doing our part in helping our countrymen? The answer is "No" – at least for many. Now with Christmas near hand a time of goodwill and

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<sup>779</sup> Kuan Yu Chen, in 'Telling Women's Lives'.

<sup>780</sup> Helen Schneider, 'Mobilising Women: The Women's Advisory Council, Resistance, and Reconstruction during China's War with Japan,' *European Journal of East Asian Studies* 11:2 (December 2012), pp. 213- 236 and Jin Feng, *The Making of a Family Saga*.

helping others, I sincerely hope that many will recall and bear in mind the verse in the Scriptures: “inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”<sup>781</sup>

However, while admonishing her classmates to do more to help the refugees using both Christian and patriotic language, Ling also explains why it is important to help the refugees in more pragmatic terms – so that they do not become lawless and a social nuisance to Shanghai residents:

Then there are those not in refugee camps who are in an even more desperate plight. Finding no employment, no honest way of livelihood, many have resorted to begging, stealing or selling out to the enemy. This if allowed to increase unhindered, would certainly make Shanghai a terrible city. Therefore taking all things into consideration, it will certainly be much wiser and more humane to help the refugees out of their difficulties now, than to have the dead, blind, beggars, thieves and traitors on our hands later.<sup>782</sup>

Indeed, it seems that levels of awareness and concern about the plight of people caught up in the conflict varied according to how much girls themselves were exposed to the realities of war. In the 1938-1939 *Phoenix* yearbooks, during the time St. Mary’s girls were commuting to school on the Nanjing Road, a large proportion of their articles concerned the War (eighty-three percent), whereas in 1940-1941, when girls were more comfortably ensconced within the walls of St. John’s University, the War seemed more removed, and only a handful of girls’ writings touch upon the War in these years.<sup>783</sup> Christian teachers were keen to expose students to the dire position of their countrymen during the War, organising trips for girls to St. Luke’s Refugee Hospital and the Blind School on Brennan Road. Teachers used these visits to reinforce the complementary values of patriotism and Christian self-

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<sup>781</sup> Ling Guo fen ‘A helping hand’, *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1939), pp.37-38.

<sup>782</sup> Ling Guo fen ‘A helping hand’, *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1939), p.37.

<sup>783</sup> Less than 1 percent of the articles discuss the war in the *Phoenix* magazines of 1940-1941.

service in girls' education. Girls were also encouraged to use such activities as an opportunity of spreading the Christian gospel amongst the refugees. In a letter to her classmates in the 1940 *Phoenix*, St. Mary's alumna Loh Oen-vung (Lu Anwen 陸安文, St. Mary's class of 1939), describes her work at the Christian-run Child Welfare Centre, where she volunteered her time:

I reserve one day a week for calling on the families of our children in order to keep in touch with their home conditions and needs. Here again the wonderful opportunity for Christian social service presents itself ... Is it not a true fact that our Christian religion is the only valuable means of comfort? ... We try to comfort the old grandmother by telling of the endless love and strength of Him who dwelt among man and died that we might live. The daughter-in-law has since become interested in Christianity and attends services and meetings when possible.<sup>784</sup>

Like their college counterparts, St. Mary's and McTyeire girls engaged in a variety of wartime relief activities, which allowed them to simultaneously fulfil their patriotic and Christian social service duties. In the 1939 edition of *The Phoenix*, Loh Oen-vung (Lu Anwen 陸安文, St. Mary's class of 1939) outlines the war-time relief work that St. Mary's girls are involved with:

As we are now living in this isolated island, the Paris of the Orient; what we now realise is that it is the paradise of a few and the grave of the many...Since we are citizens, we cannot stand by and watch our country fellows being starved and frozen to death. Sympathy and pity are of no use to them unless we put our sympathy and pity into practice with our whole heart. That is the real way to help them and save them. Rich people can contribute money, while the others can offer their wits and energies. Everybody can help others in different ways. In the past year we, young people, did a lot of such kind of work. In our school we contributed money, certainly as the most important work; collected old clothes; taught poor children in the refugee camps; and helped to sell

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<sup>784</sup> Loh Oen-vung 'Correspondence', *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1940) p. 106.

tickets for the Charity Bazaar during the Christmas season. All of those had quite good results.<sup>785</sup>

However, while praising her schoolmates for their charity work, Loh is aware that more should be done. Like her classmate, Ling Guofen, she employs mutually reinforcing patriotic and Christian sentiments to remind students of their ‘duties’:

Now again we have the statement, “Don’t be extravagant!” everywhere to remind us to save as much as we can, in order to continue helping people. Outwardly we seemed ardent and responsible in the past, but if we ask ourselves honestly whether we all did this kind of work voluntarily – that means without being asked, I think we might be very much ashamed of ourselves. Schoolmates! Let us consider it and examine ourselves. What did we really do for the refugees? As citizens how should we have better behaved in serving others? If not voluntarily let us try right now. It is not yet too late. The age we are living in is a very dangerous one. Each of us should be aware of the citizen’s duty, so no more of our country fellows may face starvation. No more luxuries these days! We must remember the words which Jesus our Lord told us: “Freely you have received, freely give”, and “To minister, not to be ministered unto”. Let us forge ahead to do our best to help the refugees.<sup>786</sup>

These were not just good intentions that remained confined to the pages of a school magazine. Wartime relief work also provided opportunities for girls to gain new skills and training. For example, in 1938 a group of ten St. Mary’s girls undertook a four-week training programme in nursing, and then volunteered as student nurses at the Red Cross Medical Corps. Loo Kyan-Faung (St. Mary’s class of 1938) describe girls’ experiences at the hospital: ‘On our mark – we began our work, getting everything ready for the doctors, helping them change the uncleaned bandages of the wounds, and lifting patients up carefully while the doctors were washing their

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<sup>785</sup> Loh Oen-vung, ‘What we did for the refugees’, *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1939) pp. 39-40.

<sup>786</sup> Loh, ‘What we did for the refugees’, pp. 39-40.

wounds ... Thrice this day we took the patients' temperature respiration and pulse. At recess, we wrote letters for the soldiers to their families or friends; conversed with them and sang for them when they asked us.'<sup>787</sup> As has been explored in chapters four and five, the rhetoric which girls use to describe their engagement in such Christian and patriotic relief activities, was also a highly gendered one. Similar to students at Ginling College, who carried out charitable relief work in wartime rural Sichuan, by emphasising the traditional female virtues of 'service' and 'self-sacrifice' in their wartime social work activities, girls were able to carve out effectively new roles for themselves in a time of national crisis.<sup>788</sup>

The Christian education also helped students to come to terms and cope with their experiences of warfare. For example, Jean Craig, a teacher at McTyeire, set girls an assignment based on their experiences of the War. In her memoirs, written in 1982, she recalled one student's submission and quoted the piece from memory:

This is my Father's world. I thought that Spring would never come. And then this morning when I woke and went out front to get the newspaper, I noticed a bud on the tree. I ran into the house and got my bike and started to ride out the little village where my brother and I had such fun in the summer when we were children. As I rode along, I forgot about the horrible war we just been through, and I began singing my favourite song, "This is my Father's world". Before I knew it I had reached the village – only the village wasn't there. In place of the village there were demolished houses. Dead, unburied bodies were scattered about. A great big sob came up in my throat. I turned round and crossed the little bridge that led back to town. As I crossed the bridge, I heard a trickle of water. The water was running under the ice. I stopped and looked down, and there by the side of that icy little stream, there was a tiny wildflower that had pushed its way through the earth. I picked it up and stuck it through

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<sup>787</sup> Loo Kyuan-Faung, 'A day's work in the Red Cross Society', *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1938).

<sup>788</sup> Schneider, *Keeping the Nation's House*, pp. 148 -168.

the buttonhole of my sweater. I got back on my bike and pedalled back to town singing to myself “This is my Father’s world”.<sup>789</sup>

In this passage we can see how the Christian message of hope and rebirth (symbolised by the tiny wild flower which had pushed its way through the earth in the devastated village) has penetrated into girls’ psychology. During this difficult period, some girls used their Christian faith, concretised in hymns and songs, as a coping strategy to make sense of the death and destruction which they witnessed around them. Girls not only used Christian language and imagery to strengthen their patriotic spirit, some of them also joined external Christian organisations such as the Shanghai Christian Schools United Student Union (Shanghai jidujiao xuesheng lianhehui, 上海基督教學校學生聯合會), YWCA and Red Cross societies which organised students to take part in a variety of wartime relief activities. In 1938 the Shanghai Christian School Student Union held a three-day summer camp at McTyeire which was attended by 560 students from seventeen Christian schools across Shanghai. The summer camp included lectures and discussion groups, art and sports activities and talks on the topics of how Christian students could, with their enlightened world view, aid the patriotic resistance movement. Some of the plays and pageants put on by students also had an overtly political message, designed to educate people about the wartime political situation.<sup>790</sup> Hong Lüming and Cao Shengjie remember that the YWCA summer camp activities in the wartime also included plays and pageants to mock and critique political enemies and Japanese collaborators such as Wang Jingwei.<sup>791</sup> As we have seen in Chapter Five, by 1938 the Shanghai Christian Student Union and YWCA had become a recruiting ground

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<sup>789</sup> Jean F. Craig, in ‘Telling Women’s Lives’.

<sup>790</sup> Chen Jingyu, *Zhongxi nü zhong*, 1892~1952, p.46.

<sup>791</sup> Interview with Lucy Hong and Cao Shengjie, 22 October 2016, Shanghai.

for underground communist party members, who used meetings and events to influence students.

While encouraged by their teachers to fulfil patriotic and Christian duties to relieve the human suffering that the War brought to Shanghai, girls' level of social and political awareness during the wartime varied with their own personal situation and experiences. While some students were clearly very concerned over their country's plight in the wartime and were actively involved in politics, charitable and political wartime activities, the frivolity and extravagance of other students disgusted their more politically and socially minded classmates, who increasingly turned to radical politics as we shall see in the next section.

### **Politicised? Recovery and Radicalisation during the Civil War 1946-1949**

Having explored girls' experiences of the War and practical changes to the school life and curriculum, this section will explore further to what extent girls became involved in politics during the Second World War and Civil War years. PRC narratives of missionary schools have depicted them as isolating students from the wider national situation, enclosed within the walls of their schools.<sup>792</sup> Alumnae's memories reveal that while some pupils remained disinterested in politics others became politically active for the first time and a few students decided to join the underground communist party at school during the period 1937-1949.

Although elated to finally be able to return to their campuses after the War, girls recall vividly the destruction the War had brought on their schools and the slow process of restoring their campuses to their former glory. For example, at McTyeire, which had been used by the Japanese as a military hospital, there were five large water-filled holes in the beautiful grass lawns, with an air raid shelter under the wide

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<sup>792</sup> See Li Chucai (ed.), *Diguo zhuyi qin hua jiaoyu shi ziliao, jiaohui jiaoyu* (Beijing, 1987).

palm tree, and debris strewn everywhere. According to a report of the situation at McTyeire made on 21 January 1947: 'The school's desks, chairs and sports equipment have all been destroyed.'<sup>793</sup> Xue Zheng reported that all the doors, windows and washroom equipment in the school had been broken and all the science equipment was gone with a total estimated damage of 200,000 Yuan.<sup>794</sup>

In order to start the laborious restoration work, Xue Zheng organised the students and teachers to work in small teams that helped to clear the debris. After three months the school was able to resume classes full time, albeit in somewhat dilapidated surroundings. Donations from parents and alumnae helped to pay for the cost of restoring the school and students themselves played a part in helping raise the funds needed through ticket sales for their Christmas pageant. Chu Yee Yun (Zhu Yiyun 朱頤雲, McTyeire class of 1947), writes in the class history: 'The desolate and neglected campus really made our hearts ache. We resolved at least to do something if not much. Under the guidance of Miss Chen we gave a lovely Christmas pageant from which we raised funds for new chairs and desks.'<sup>795</sup> Thus, girls took direct responsibility for restoring their campuses to their former glory and their feelings of sorrow and anger at the destruction wrought by the War come through strongly in the three volumes of school histories. Students' anger during this period was not just confined to the Japanese aggressors who had wrecked their beautiful campus, but also towards a government that had not done enough to defend China during the wartime.<sup>796</sup> Some students recall that it was during the wartime that they became disillusioned with the Nationalist government and started to turn

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<sup>793</sup> *Ibid.*, p.52. Other schools in Japanese occupied China had fared even worse than McTyeire. For example, at Huanan college in Fuzhou the main school building was destroyed. See Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges*, p. 403.

<sup>794</sup> *Ibid.*, p.52.

<sup>795</sup> Chu Yee-yun, 'Class History', *The McTyeiran* (Shanghai, 1947).

<sup>796</sup> Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, *Student protests in twentieth-century China: the view from Shanghai* (Stanford, 1991).

towards the Communist Party for inspiration. For example, on her birthday in 1946 Zhu Lizhong wrote in her brother's autograph book: 'Never forget the National Humiliation' in decorative lettering (see fig. 61).

Interestingly, in our interview in California in 2016 Zhu Lizhong did not remember feeling particularly patriotic or political during the war, but said she 'must have been' at that time, citing the evidence from her brother's yearbook. Although this could be regarded as a formulaic expression of patriotism, which was characteristic and perhaps even expected of all students in the post-war period, it is also worth considering the fact that having been ostracised by her classmates due to her Japanese ancestry during the War, Zhu Lizhong perhaps felt she could make up for this by a show of intense patriotism after the War. As we have seen in chapter four, it was during the wartime that Ellen Cao decided that Communism instead of Christianity was the most effective means of solving China's problems of an unequal society. Similarly, Wang Shaolan 汪紹蘭 (McTyeire class of 1949) remembered:

During the time when I was in the senior classes, after the war of resistance had been won and the Japanese had surrendered, the GMD started to fight a Civil War to break the Communist strength. Under its reactionary government, prices rose, people had no means of livelihood, I was disconcerted and full of resentment. At that time all Shanghainese were struggling for democracy and peace, against hunger, against war, against the destruction wrought by war, which come in wave after wave.

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The continued American military presence in China after the War also fuelled students' anger at the Nationalist government. The resentment came to a head after the rape of a Peking University student named Shen Chong 沈崇 in December 1946 by an American soldier. As Jessie Gregory Lutz has explored, the incident ignited

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<sup>797</sup> Wang Shaolan 'Xiangyata li de liang shan 'chuang', in Chen Jingyu (ed.), *Huiyi zhongxi nüzhong 1949-1952* (Shanghai, 2016), p. 22.

student resentment at the failure of the Nationalist party to restore China to full sovereignty after years of invasion by allowing a continued American military presence, sparking waves of protests across the country. Students in Beijing formed an “Association for Protesting against American Atrocities”. Strikes were held on 30 and 31 December 1946 and placards and posters appeared denouncing American imperialism, demanding an official apology, compensation for Shen Chong and immediate withdrawal of all US troops in China.<sup>798</sup> This outrage involving an elite student from a prestigious university was perhaps too close to the bone for girls at McTyeire and St. Mary’s.<sup>799</sup> Many alumnae remember this incident as a turning point in their political thinking. For example, Ying Manrong, who had narrowly avoided being raped by a Japanese soldier during the War, remembered this incident with great feeling:

Also, after the War in 1947 there was the case of Shen Chong, have you heard of that case? She was a Peking university student who was raped by an American soldier. Because of this incident we progressive students, we all protested. At that time, I experienced a great internal change, because, there had been so many times, when my friends had come to ask me to join in with political rallies and I just went along, because they wanted me to. But during this student protest, I wanted to take an active part. The Japanese had hurt us. The American although they pretended to be our friends, actually they also harmed lots of Chinese girls ... So I understood that Japanese and Americans were really the same ... So therefore, when my friends asked me to translate these posters into a newspaper article about the rape of Shen Chong in English for the China Press, I agreed to do it. I saw that they had used very big expressions in the banners and flags. I asked my mother’s permission to go out for the evening to do this translation about the Beijing student who had been

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<sup>798</sup> Jessie Gregory Lutz, ‘The Chinese Student Movement of 1945-1949’, *Journal of Asian Studies*, 31.1 (1971), pp. 96-97.

<sup>799</sup> Lutz, ‘The Chinese Student Movement of 1945-1949’, pp. 96-97.

raped, and she agreed, she also felt angry about this. But told me not to tell my father ... I waited there till 2am. I really didn't know how to translate their big expressions into English. I have never seen this kind of newspaper as well. I decided to use a language that I thought English and American people would understand ... I wrote it according to how our missionary teachers taught us – we had come across speeches such as the Gettysburg Speech by President Lincoln. This I had read, but they asked me not to write a long piece, don't write it like the Chinese, just tell the time, the place, who was involved. And put in the significance. That's fine. I just put down the most important things down. I translated it for a second time, the second piece was acceptable. There was no news the next day. It was almost 6am when I submitted the translation. I thought maybe the newspaper had decided not to publish it, so I thought oh well, maybe they found someone else to translate it. On the fifth day, I found out that it was published! They published this paper! They wanted to make sure it was all very well done, with lots of research. Because they also needed to be well-prepared for the protest campaign. Although it was not exactly the same as the piece I had written, it was very similar. This had an important impact on me. This was an activity led by the Communist Party. And I realised that the leaders there, maybe, one or some of them spoke English. So after this I thought I should join the CCP, not only did I feel they could liberate women, but I felt I could also make a contribution [with my English].<sup>800</sup>

Although the hated system of extraterritoriality had finally been relinquished by all foreign powers by 1947, the damage of years of unequal treaties and foreign privilege had made its mark, and for the growing Communist Party, the behaviour of American soldiers in China after the War only served to reinforce and convince progressive Chinese students such as Ying Manrong, that China had not yet fully recovered her territorial sovereignty or dignity in the eyes of the world. In Ying Manrong's narrative, Japanese aggressors and their humiliation of Chinese women

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<sup>800</sup> Interview with Ying Manrong, 2 July 2016, Beijing, 2:12:00- 2:18:00.

during the wartime becomes inextricably linked with later American presence in China and her ideological shift towards the Communist Party as a means of ridding China of colonial threats. Her personal experience of a narrow escape from rape by a Japanese soldier may have also stoked her anger at the American soldier who raped Shen Chong, making it natural for her to draw a direct parallel between Japanese and American treatment of Chinese women, and sparking her political radicalisation. Interestingly, another reason why Ying Manrong chose to follow the Communist cause was because she felt her high level of English could be useful to CCP. Perhaps after so many years of feeling helpless and victimised during the War, Chinese women with a high level of English due to their missionary school training, such as Ying Manrong, saw for the first time a direct and very practical way of helping their country. In Ying Manrong's memory there is also an element of disgust at Chinese women, who degraded themselves by consorting with American GI's:

These kind of GI girls, who did lots of things to make Chinese women lose face. I thought these people, they all come to make China into their colony, and they had all come out of the system of extra-territorial privileges. These GI girls would be taken out by American soldiers to bars and get drunk. This was a result of the continued colonial invasion of China. These kind of girls were really the lowest!<sup>801</sup>

While China struggled to recover from almost a decade of warfare, the attitude of some of their classmates (many of whom were daughters of government officials and wealthy industrialists) during the period 1946-1949 disgusted other students. Not only did their classmates resume frivolous concerns and extravagant lifestyles, some girls at McTyeire even went as far as to go out to bars with American military personnel.<sup>802</sup> Students' disgust at the frivolous lifestyles some were leading during and after the War also extended to their teachers. For example, at the 2017 McTyeire

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<sup>801</sup> Interview with Ying Manrong, 2 July 2016, Beijing, 2:18:00- 2:20:00.

<sup>802</sup> *Ibid.*,

alumnae reunion in San Mateo, USA, Zhu Lizhong gave a speech in which she described the rebellion of her classmates against their home economics teacher, whom they deemed to be ‘wasteful’ and ‘unpatriotic’ for encouraging girls to wash their hair in egg yolk to make it shine and use milk to make their skin whiter:

I did poorly in Tiger Wang’s math class in [Junior Three] 初三, so I opted to be in the Class B, as compared to Class A which was stronger in [Li ke]理科 entering senior high school. Instead of physics, we had home economics. This teacher suggested that we should use milk to wash our faces to have beautiful facial skin, as the wife of Shanghai mayor [Wu Guozhen] 吳國楨, and use egg white to wash our hair to make it shiny. The daughter of the mayor [Wu Xiurong] 吳修蓉 wrote a piece on our weekly board publication named [Kuangbiao] 狂飆, sharply criticized that this person was unqualified to be a teacher, when the country was torn with civil wars and millions dying from hunger, to suggest using edible to selfishly beautify one selves. The teacher was furious and wanted the school authority to punish the writer, but the whole class united together and did not reveal who was the author. The school listened to the students, and fired the teacher. That was one of our class victories.<sup>803</sup>

While this story may also be read as a student’s defence of her mother (no doubt Wu Xiurong was afraid that her mother would be criticised if the students believed that she behaved in this way), other students also recall feeling angry at their teacher and parents for what they considered to be wasteful, frivolous and unpatriotic behaviour. For example, Rosalyn Koo remembered that she accused her father of being ‘decadent’ for hoarding food when so many people were starving during and after the War: ‘I went home and I called my dad. I said ‘You are decadent. I will have nothing to do with you. You are corrupt, you are a hypocrite. You store things on the black

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<sup>803</sup> Wu Li-chun, ‘My McTyeire Years 70 Years ago’, Speech delivered at McTyeire Alumnae Association Reunion, San Mateo, 4 November, 2017.

market, people are starving. You store everything and you have servants.’ It was a guilt trip.<sup>804</sup>

Some students, such as Ellen Cao (see chapter six), became deeply disillusioned with their classmates at McTyeire and St. Mary’s who continued to live what they regarded as luxurious and frivolous lives and started to turn towards Communist ideology as a solution to the inequality they witnessed in society. Girls came into contact with Communist ideology via a range of sources, including their library books, teachers, classmates and family members who had become members of the underground Communist Party. Christianity and the influence of Christian groups such as the YWCA also played important roles in the development of their political thinking. Similar to Ellen Cao, Qu Mingming 瞿明明 (McTyeire, class of 1950) first came into contact with Communist ideology through Christianity. In her memories of her time at school she explained how she was a Christian student from a wealthy middle-class family. Her mother died when she in Senior Three, which made her turn towards the school as a surrogate family. In 1947 when she was in Junior Three, Qu attended a meeting of the YWCA student section at the Community Church (Guoji libai tang 國際禮拜堂) on Hengshan Road. She remembered: ‘There I attended the welcoming spring festival, listened to speeches, participated in visits, travels, campfires, such activities, where I received progressive ideas, which opened my eyes. We formed a Christian students’ fellowship and I became the vice-chairman, we organised meetings, published small reports, organised excursions. It called students to strive for freedom and promoted their zeal for progressive ideas.’<sup>805</sup> It was thus progressive Christian students at missionary schools, such as

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<sup>804</sup> Interview with Rosalyn Koo, 5 November 2017, San Mateo, 29:05 -29:59

<sup>805</sup> Qu Mingming, ‘Zhongxi nüzhong shi wo nanwang de jia’, Cheng Jingyu (ed.), *Huiyi zhongxi nüzhong* 1949-1952, (Shanghai, 2017), p. 39.

Ellen Cao and Qu Mingming (who also felt lonely and isolated from their peers), who first turned towards the communist cause as the most practical means of helping their countrymen, whose plight they were vividly exposed to during the war years. As we have explored in Chapter 6, the YWCA had encouraged them to think about the position of women in Chinese society and beyond, and trained them in the leadership skills needed to organise and motivate their classmates to participate in social service activities. As we shall see in the Epilogue, the period 1949-1952 reveals the extent to which the CCP utilised existing Christian networks and organisational practice – such as church meetings and the YWCA summer camps – to convert Christian students to their cause, employing a similar language of ‘serving society’, which resonated with the message of the social gospel that missionary students could understand and identify with.

In her memories Qu also describes several other factors which led her to join the party, including the rape of Shen Chong in Beijing and her participation as a student teacher at the Yiwu School (*Yiwu xiaoxue*, 義務小學) for poor neighbourhood children which was restarted at McTyeire by a progressive teacher after the War. While it is difficult to glean how the faculty reacted to students’ political activities during this period, it is clear that progressive students were supported in their activities and encouraged to influence their classmates by two teachers at the school. At McTyeire the mathematics teacher, Zhang Xiaoru 張小如, and Chinese language teacher, Yuan Weitong 袁煒彤, were part of a Communist group of middle school teachers operating under the name of ‘Middle school education research group’ (*zhongdeng jiaoyu yanjiu hui*, 中等教育研究會).<sup>806</sup> After the War had ended, Zhang Xiaoru restarted the practice school that McTyeire had

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<sup>806</sup> Chen Jingyu, *Zhongxi nü zhong*, 1892~1952, p. 60.

run before the War, Yiwu Primary School. Zhang used the school to recruit socially-minded students to the Communist cause, and the school became a secret base for underground party members to organise their activities as liberation drew near. Qu recalls: ‘After victory in the war of resistance against Japan, Zhang Xiaoru started the Yiwu Primary School within McTyeire. I became a student teacher. It was through visiting the families of the poor students that I became to recognise the corruption of the GMD government.’<sup>807</sup> Similar to Ellen Cao, Qu Mingming, was influenced by the social doctrine of Christianity, and it was through Christian organisations infiltrated by CCP members that Qu was first exposed to Communist ideology.

Underground Communist teachers at McTyeire also encouraged socially-minded students to join the CCP in more subtle ways: by praising students’ written work, which contained ‘progressive ideas’, and exposing them to left-wing and Marxist literature, which they helped to circulate at school. For example, Chen Tianmi 陳添彌 remembered that her Chinese teacher, Yuan Weitong 袁煒彤, gave her progressive books to read and Zhang Xiaoru praised her for an article she wrote before 1949 entitled ‘Why I don’t want to write about Christmas’:

There was a teacher in the library called Zhang Xiaoru Laoshi. At Christmas there was some activities, this teacher said, at this time we were in Junior Three, she said, you guys can write whatever you feel like writing about, choose the topic yourselves ... because I read a lot of books, including Lu Xun’s books. From Junior Three I had a read a few books that had been passed down to me in the school, including books about American imperialism in China and Mao Zedong's writings (actually I was not interested in these books). However, I got many chances to get access to these books. Including a book written by that author living in the revolutionary base areas [Ding Ling], *The Sun Shines*

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<sup>807</sup> Qu Mingming, ‘Zhongxi nūzhong shi wo nanwang de jia’, p.39.

*Over Sanggan River*. This is a novel about farmers' struggle against their landlord to regain their rights. I really liked reading these books, especially Lu Xun novels, I read all his works. So after I had read all these books, I thought my country really has suffered so many humiliations and hardships. So at Christmas I rebelled. Everyone was writing about welcoming Christmas. I wrote an article entitled 'I don't want to write an article about Christmas'. Because I had this idea that China had suffered from so many hardships. In the end I wrote, 'only when everyone in China is in a position to enjoy and welcome Christmas, would I like to write an article about Christmas.' My teacher was very happy when she saw this article. She gave me a very high mark. Although naturally it could not be published in the school magazine, she gave me a high mark and she encouraged me.<sup>808</sup>

Chen Tianmi and other students at McTyeire felt that the reading they were exposed to by their underground Communist Party teachers and classmates at missionary school had an important impact upon the formation of their political thinking. Similarly, other alumnae felt that at missionary school, where the library was not as tightly controlled by the GMD as at government schools, students were more likely to be exposed to a wide range of political ideas in their reading materials. For example, one McTyeire student remembered: 'What I like about McTyeire was its liberal atmosphere ... we were not controlled by the KMT like a lot of public schools. We could read whatever we wanted. From Karl Marx to Byron, everything was on the shelf waiting. It was a joy. We were so young at the time. We were interested in everything from Hamlet to Hitler.'<sup>809</sup>

According to Qu Mingming (McTyeire class of 1950), this left-wing literature at McTyeire was accumulated by underground Communist teachers who worked at the school from the 1930s:

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<sup>808</sup> Interview with Chen Tianmi, 17 May 2016, Beijing, 2:25:00 – 2:33:00.

<sup>809</sup> 'Voices of McTyeire at War, Recovery and Transformation, 1937-1949' in 'Telling Women's Lives'.

Around 1935 Dong Rujing 董瑞瑾, came to the school to teach Chinese, she was an underground Communist Party member. Dong Rujing introduced students to progressive books. She encouraged students to start a wall newspaper and a small library. She worked together with Zheng Peide 鄭培德, who was in charge of the library and very trusted by the library head Jiang Meijuan 江梅娟. Therefore every month Miss Deng and Miss Dong would buy books and magazines for the library. They brought left-wing books of the New Culture movement of the 1930s. They also brought translations of progressive foreign language books, and books by left-wing writers. These included Xiao Jun's 蕭軍 *Village in August* (Bayue de xiangcun 八月的鄉村), Qu Qiubai's 瞿秋白 *Shanghai Woods* (Shanghai shulin, 上海述林) and other authors including Ba Jin 巴金, Mao Dun 矛盾, Lu Xun 魯迅. At the same time, Miss Robinson came back from holiday bringing with her a number of progressive left-wing writers works such as Marx's *Origins of Capital*, John Reed's *The days that shook the world* (concerning the October revolution in Russia) and Vincent Shean's *Personal history* (about the Chinese revolution). The McTyeire library became a treasure trove for the many students who wanted to pursue progressive thoughts.<sup>810</sup>

While the school authorities did not encourage girls to become involved in political activities during this period, being an all-girls missionary school with a greater amount of autonomy than government schools, may have served to protect the underground Communist Party members who were operating in the school and influencing other students and teachers. For example, Chen Tianmi recalls:

The school was quite tolerant of such independent thoughts. However, because it was a missionary school, they did not encourage us to get involved in any political activities. Later, the secret police of National Party had suspicion about communist ideas spreading in the school. Once they tried to burst in and arrest students. However, because these secret police were all men, the guards at the gateway did not let them in. That

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<sup>810</sup> Qu Mingming, 'Zhongxi nü zhong aiguo xuesheng yundong de huigu', p. 122.

was a rule of missionary schools, men were not allowed in the school gate. After liberation we found out that Zhang Xiaoru was an underground Communist Party member, as was Yuan Weitong. So the school definitely had these kinds of underground activities.<sup>811</sup>

In contrast, as we have seen in chapter two, at government-controlled Wuben Girls' School its status as an all-girls school did not protect students from direct military interference and arrest by Chiang Kai-shek's feared Blue Shirt Secret Police. Therefore, its independent status and tight control over the campus may have actually served to protect underground CCP members at McTyeire, whose students were not subject to direct GMD government interference.

In April 1949 Qu officially became an underground party member and started to encourage other students to join the party. By 1948 she had successfully influenced Luo Mingfeng 羅明風 to join the party who, with the support and encouragement of teacher Zhang Xiaoru, was elected as the leader of the Student Union.<sup>812</sup> Luo in turn influenced Wang Shaolan 汪紹蘭 to join, whose brother was already a party member.<sup>813</sup> The three established a small Communist Party group inside the school. Luo Mingfeng remembered:

[Qu] Mingming led me to become a person who influenced others to walk the revolutionary path, she was the person who introduced me to join the Communist Party. Under her influence and leadership, McTyeire had its first underground Communist Party organization, which started a series of revolutionary activities. She made hundreds of girls who were in a state of confusion, see the revolutionary light. Many of her classmates subsequently joined the army or took part in revolutionary work. We must not forget this leader.<sup>814</sup>

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<sup>811</sup> Interview with Chen Tianmi, 17 May 2016, Beijing, 2:33:00.

<sup>812</sup> Luo, 'Wo zai zhongxi nüzhong rudang', p. 17.

<sup>813</sup> *Ibid.*, p.18.

<sup>814</sup> Luo Mingfeng, 'Huinian Qu Mingming tongxue', Cheng Jingyu (ed.), *Huiyi zhongxi nüzhong* 1949-1952, p. 17.

In her letter requesting to join the party Luo remembers that she wrote: ‘I believe that only the Communist Party can save China, and make China rich and powerful again.’<sup>815</sup> It is interesting how closely Luo’s wording follows the official CCP formula here, suggesting she may have been influenced by the official literature when reflecting on her decision to join the Communist Party at school many years later. In April 1949 the three set up a secret student society called ‘McTyeire New Democracy Youth Group’ (Zhongxi nüzhong xinminzhu zhuyi qingnian hui 中西女中民主主義青年會) in order to recruit more members (who numbered twenty on the eve of liberation), and also used the Yi Wu school as a recruiting base.<sup>816</sup> They also used their classmate Zhang Qiying’s 張啟瑩 empty home to hold meetings and plan activities. Although Zhang Qiying’s family had fled to Taiwan, on the day they departed Zhang had refused to join them as she was by that point committed to the communist cause.<sup>817</sup> Chen Tianmi also remembers being influenced by Qu Mingming to join a student rally at Jiaotong University in April 1949 to protest against the killing of three university students by the GMD. Chen recalled that although she just ‘went along’ with other students, attending this rally was an important turning point in her political thinking:

The whole of Shanghai was liberated on May 27<sup>th</sup> 1949. Shortly before liberation in Shanghai, in April, I attended a student meeting at Jiaotong University which I believe Qu Mingming organised us to attend. Three students from Jiaotong University had been killed by the GMD. I don’t know why I went, but several of our students from McTyeire, (about forty to fifty students) went along to attend the meeting. We went to Jiaotong University to commemorate the sacrifice of these three students. Their bodies were buried at the Jiaotong University campus. They built

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<sup>815</sup> Luo Mingfeng, ‘Wo zai zhongxi nüzhong rudang’, in Cheng Jingyu (ed.), *Huiyi zhongxi nüzhong 1949-1952*, p. 18.

<sup>816</sup> Chen Jingyu, *Zhongxi nü zhong*, 1892~1952, p. 59.

<sup>817</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 60.

graves for them as well. We sang a song called ‘Wu yue de xinhua’ [Flowers in May]. This song was from the war of resistance against Japan. These student pioneers had sacrificed themselves for the country’s future. When I listen to these songs, I felt quite shocked. The atmosphere at that time was very solemn and quiet. So this made me feel that strongly, that the future of our country was in the students’ hands. At that time I realised we were responsible for this country’s fate. This was a Communist Party organised meeting. I am not sure why I went ... some of my classmates asked me ‘are you going to come’? So I just followed along with them in a muddled way... But when I went I realised students’ responsibility for our county.<sup>818</sup>

Chen Tianmi, like many of her classmates, narrates her memories of becoming politicised during this period as starting with just ‘going along’ with friends or classmates. It was at particular historical moments, such as the rape of Shen Chong or the killing of three Jiaotong students, which sparked a ‘moment of conversion’ when they realised that elite students like themselves could become victims of American or GMD violence, galvanising them into actively taking part in revolutionary activities.

It is difficult to glean the reaction of teachers and parents to the girls’ revolutionary activities. During the period 1948-1950 Principal Xue Zheng was absent in America studying for her PhD in Education at Columbia University. Although vice principal Chen Guanyu took charge, the absence of Xue Zheng’s leadership and influence over the students during this time may have resulted in a lack of coherence in teachers’ reactions to these ‘progressive’ ideas in the school. It is also unclear how far the faculty and student body at large were aware of their

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<sup>818</sup> Interview with Chen Tianmi, 17 May 2016, Beijing, 2:36:50- 2:39:00. 《五月的鮮花》 Flowers in May was originally a poem by Guan Weiran 光未然 commemorating the sacrifices of the May 4<sup>th</sup> Student movement published in 1935. The composer Yan Shushi 阎述诗 was moved by the poem and set it to music. The song soon became popular amongst students during the Second Sino-Japanese War and Civil War.

classmates' political activities. Although for many students it was a great surprise to them after 1949, when their classmates came out as underground communists, for some students, they knew of their classmates' and teachers' activities at school and, while not getting directly involved, they often covered up for them or chose not to report on their classmates' clandestine activities.<sup>819</sup>

During the period 1946-1949 many students at St. Mary's and McTyeire whose parents worked for the GMD government left the school, fleeing with their families to Hong Kong, Taiwan and the United States. Conversely, other students reacted against their privileged family backgrounds. Some students chose to remain in China and join the CCP, in spite of or perhaps even because of their elite family and educational background, which had sharpened their awareness of the inequalities which they witnessed in Chinese society.<sup>820</sup> For example, Zhang Qiying chose to stay in China although her family left shortly before 'liberation'. Rosalyn Koo (McTyeire class of 1947), a tomboy who had felt discriminated at home for many years because of her sex was sent to an elite finishing school in the USA upon graduation. Her parents feared that their already headstrong and feminist daughter would inevitably become a Communist Party member if they allowed her to pursue a higher education at Yanjing University as she wished to do. She recalled:

I always wanted to go to Yenching. Always planned my life that after McTyeire I would go there. Because my grades were quite good, I only had to take two subjects to pass the exam, which I passed easily. You see my mother went to Yenching. My father went to Chinghua. So all my young life the idea was that I shall go to Yenching. But that was 1947 and the communists were coming down from the north. And my parents

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<sup>819</sup> Interview with Zhang Luoluo, 8 November 2016, San Mateo.

<sup>820</sup> Sherman Cochran, 'Capitalists Choosing Communist China: The Liu Family of Shanghai' Jeremy Brown (ed.), *The Dilemmas of Victory: The Early Years of the People's Republic of China*, (Cambridge, Mass, 2007), pp. 359-385.

put their foot down and informed me that I cannot, because they feared I would become a communist member for sure ... I would discuss with my mother the kinds of injustices going on. For instance, very close to home, we would have servants. We would have a wet nurse. And the woman would abandon her child to come here because her family was in the countryside ... I really felt it was so unjust ... now where did I get this? I got it from my mother. My mother said to me, "Everyone has some place in Christ" but somehow she did not practice it. Then I enjoyed it. We had a chauffeur. I mean we enjoyed it. But I always had this big guilt trip about the unfairness. So I always said to my mother – that's why she got so scared – the reason I wanted to go to Yenching is I want to advance myself intellectually – wanted to help the poor. I wanted to go to the countryside and help the farmers. My mother said, "Where did you hear about all this?" And that's why she put her foot down saying, "You will become a communist member for certain". I probably would have because I have a basic sense of the society being unjust and also I have an anger about being treated like a second-class citizen.<sup>821</sup>

In her narrative, Rosalyn seamlessly blends the different ideological influences which had moulded her upbringing and education. Her family background unintentionally reinforced the feminist (through her sense of unfair treatment as a girl) and Christian ideals she would have imbibed at home and school, making her more socially conscious and interested in the communist cause. Therefore while girls at missionary schools were to some extent sheltered by the elite family background and prestigious education environment in the years 1946-1949, their recent experiences of warfare meant that girls were not isolated from China's wider political situation. The 'frivolous' and 'unpatriotic' concerns of some students and teachers disgusted and drove other more politically-minded classmates to active participation in the underground Communist Party, where they sought to influence other members of their schools.

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<sup>821</sup> Rosalyn Koo, in 'Telling Women's Lives'.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, alumnae memories provide a more nuanced picture of missionary school girls lived experiences of the War and Civil War, prompting us to challenge previous interpretations which have depicted missionary schools as ‘cut off’ or ‘isolated’ from their political and social surroundings. Indeed, for girls at Yongjiang and Hongdao the wartime period marked a dramatic change in their education as their schools were relocated (Riverside) or closed (Hongdao). Principal Shen’s important family connections ensured that Riverside passed through the War in comparably easier circumstances than other schools in Zhejiang province, making it somewhat of an anomaly in this region. In Shanghai, although their extraterritorial status and location close to the international concession did to some extent provide girls with a safe ‘haven’ and shelter from the turbulence of warfare going on around them, after their schools were forced to move site (St. Mary’s in 1937 and McTyeire in 1943) the realities of warfare hit home. Filtered as it was, through the eyes of children and the memories of grandmothers, the War provided girls with exciting and eye-opening new life experiences. In commuting to their re-located schools, they were exposed to a much broader swathe of Shanghai society than ever before. However, the War certainly held negative experiences and painful memories for girls: the experience of bombing and aircraft fire; helplessly witnessing the suffering of refugees; becoming refugees themselves; humiliation and narrow escape from rape by patrolling Japanese soldiers – these were all very real physical and psychological dangers that female missionary school students faced in wartime Shanghai. Girls were not necessarily passive victims in these encounters. At McTyeire girls managed to turn the power dynamics between civilian and invader on their head in the case of their Japanese teacher who they rebelled against, antagonised, and eventually pitied.

How girls internalised and made sense of these experiences also varied. Some students became more socially and politically aware during the War and took the opportunity to engage in patriotic relief work, encouraging their classmates to do the same, using both Christian and patriotic language. For example, Cao Baozhen, Qu Mingming, and to a lesser extent Rosalyn, found in their Christian education the imperative to help others. It was during the War, disgusted by the disparity they witnessed between the luxurious lifestyles being lived by their families and classmates at school and the suffering and poverty of the Shanghai refugees, which caused them to turn to communism as the most effective means of helping their countrymen and solving the inequalities they witnessed in society. Missionary education had also impressed upon women their duty to be 'useful' to society, and by the 1940s some girls found the Communist Party as the most practical outlet for their Christian-gospel-inspired social zeal. After the end of the War, and their return to campus, the social and political divides within the student body, which had started to grow during the War came to the fore, as some students drew on their Christian, socialist and feminist education to become underground communist members while others fled with family members working for the GMD to Hong Kong, Taiwan and the United States.

## EPILOGUE

### **‘You should not call everything Imperialism’: Changes to the Missionary schools 1949-1952**

#### **Introduction**

On the eve of liberation in Shanghai, 24 May 24 1949, Qu Mingming, leader of the ‘McTyeire Student Union New Democracy Association’ (Zhongxi nüzhong xin minzhuzhuyi qingnian she, 中西女中新民主主義青年社), led her progressive classmates in activities to welcome the Peoples Liberation Army. She recalls:

When Shanghai was liberated my classmates and I formed a team to help spread the news amongst the people. Wearing armbands, we proclaimed to the residents and workers of Shanghai: “Shanghai has been liberated”, “the Guo Min Dang has collapsed”, “Power has been returned to the people”, “Welcome the Peoples Liberation Army to Shanghai”. Within a few days, McTyeire was seething with excitement, and these young ladies who had been shut up in an ivory tower rushed out of their cage and like small birds, spread their wings and began to soar.<sup>822</sup>

A few days later, on 27 May 1949, McTyeire and St. Mary’s students represented their school, amongst other middle schools in Shanghai, playing drums in the parade to celebrate the founding of the People’s Republic of China. Dong Yue 董悅 (St. Mary’s class of 1951) recalled her enjoyment of participating in the parade. She and her classmates were excited to wear Shanxi style clothes and learn to play the drums from that region.<sup>823</sup> (see fig. 62). Not all students took part in these activities or felt like ‘birds’ suddenly released from a ‘cage’. A number of students had already departed China with their families and for many of those who remained the process of ‘liberation’ was time of anxiety and tension. One student recalls how she hid with her other female relatives on the top of her house, covered by straw, for fear of the

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<sup>822</sup> Qu, ‘Zhongxi nüzhong shi wo nan wang de jia’, p. 40.

<sup>823</sup> Interview with Dong Yue, 21 November 2016, 21:37 -22:34.

PLA soldiers.<sup>824</sup> According to missionary teacher, Ruth Harris, other students and faculty members at McTyeire had hidden in their closets and behind mattresses, frightened by the sound of gunfire.<sup>825</sup>

Having explored students' experiences in the wartime and the factors that led some students to join the underground communist party at school, this section will briefly consider the changes that took place at missionary schools in the period 1949-1952. Although this was a period of profound political and social upheaval, which saw the development of increasing tensions within the student body and faculty, between Christians and Non-Christians, Chinese and foreigners, the continuity in girls' memories of this time helps to challenge the pre-post 1949 rupture embedded in our traditional chronology of modern Chinese history. Historians have explored how the 'New Democracy' period (1949-1953) was marked by fluidity, accommodation and continuation of older forms of political and social organisation.<sup>826</sup> As we shall see in the early period after liberation, although there were immediate changes to the curriculum, a power shift within the faculty and student body and physical changes to girls' dress and hairstyle which denoted their allegiance to a new political regime, many alumnae remember this time as a period of continuity. School daily life continued much as it had, with plays, pageants and concerts, even Christian celebrations that had marked the missionary school year. Indeed for some staff and students at missionary school, this was a period of remarkable spiritual and personal growth as students sought to combine communist ideology with their Christian teachings in their social service activities. After the

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<sup>824</sup> McTyeire Alumnae Association (eds.), *Telling Women's Lives: In Search of McTyeire, 1892-1992* (San Mateo, 1992).

<sup>825</sup> Ruth Harris in Sara M. Evans (ed.), *Journeys that opened up the world: Women, Student Christian movements and social justice, 1955-1975* (London, 2003), p. 23.

<sup>826</sup> Jeremy Brown and Paul G. Pickowitz, 'The Early Years of the People's Republic of China: An Introduction' in Jeremy Brown (ed.), *The Dilemmas of Victory: The Early Years of the People's Republic of China* (Cambridge, Mass, 2007), p. 10.

outbreak of the Korean War, however, divisions within the faculty and student body became more entrenched, with increasing tensions between Christians and non-Christian radical students, culminating in the departure of their missionary teachers. Although I will briefly consider the departure of mission school teachers from Riverside Academy in Ningbo, in order to understand missionary perspectives on these changes, due to the available source materials, the main focus of this section will be on how students at McTyeire and St. Mary's experienced this transition. I will explore the new political environment of the schools, the changing power dynamics within the student body and between staff and pupils, and girls' participation in political activities. Part two will explore changes in the school curriculum and textbooks, the increasing tensions and divisions within the student body and faculty teachers after the outbreak of the Korean War and the departure of their foreign teachers. Finally, I will briefly consider the ending of the missionary school era in China with the closure and merger or renaming of the schools in 1952.

### **Changes in girls' political thinking and involvement with politics**

One of the most dramatic changes that missionary schools experienced after 1949 was a physical change in the make-up of their student bodies. In the period leading up to liberation many students whose families worked for the GMD government or were wealthy businessmen left China for Hong Kong, Taiwan and the USA. Replacing these students was a much larger number of new students who were from poorer family backgrounds and were not required to pay the tuition fees. According to some alumnae, the academic standard of the student body as a whole dropped as the new students were not as advanced in English. Jean Craig recalled: 'The greatest obvious change was the increase in enrolment. Students were still admitted by

examination, but they no longer had to meet our former requirements in English. This meant that Junior I students began using the new government English texts!’<sup>827</sup>

Another dramatic change occurred in the power dynamic of the student body. Progressive students at McTyeire, including Qu Mingling, Luo Mingfeng and Wang Shaolan, as well as their teachers, Zhang Xiaoru and Yuan Weitong, came out as underground communist members and started to lead the school, organising activities to help their fellow students to adjust their thinking to the new regime. Zhang Xiaoru became the party secretary at the school. Qu mingming writes in her memoir:

After Shanghai was liberated, our secret progressive society no longer needed to remain underground, and the New Democracy Association changed its name to ‘The Torch Society’, and became an open student organisation. After one month’s preparation, on 9<sup>th</sup> December 1949, McTyeire became the first Shanghai Christian school to set up a general branch of the Communist Youth League in our school, at that time we had ninety-seven members, and I became the general secretary of the League. In a short time the War to aid Korea and Resist America started. Under orders from the party, the politics teachers and the group members were responsible for promoting thought education, to lead the students to the correct political outlook, and to follow the revolutionary path. Many student thoughts had great changes and they became progressive, and for many struggling to enter the Communist Youth League became their driving force. Through giving small ideological reports and other educational activities students thinking changed, and the whole student body joined together. Classmates all wanted to join the League, some signed up for military service, and a few classmates even gave up university places in order to devote themselves to building the New China and the New Society.<sup>828</sup>

The McTyeire Communist Youth League grew larger and they organised their classmates to take part in political activities and rallies alongside other middle school

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<sup>827</sup> Jean Craig in ‘Telling Women’s Lives’.

<sup>828</sup> Qu mingming, ‘Zhongxi nüzhong shi wo nanwang de jia’, pp. 40-41.

students in Shanghai to show their support for the new government. To celebrate the first Anniversary of the PRC, in 1950 the whole McTyeire faculty and student body represented their school in a parade alongside other schools in Shanghai. Some students carried the national flags, with others following with drums and other musical instruments (see fig. 63). After the outbreak of the Korean War (Kang Mei Yuan Chao, 抗美援朝) students at McTyeire put their long-famed theatrical and musical talents on display to the public once more, this time acting out plays to represent their classmates' political conversion. For example, in 1951 Wu Yiyun (巫漪云) directed a play entitled 'Deng Yiliu's Transformation' which 'depicted the life of a girl from a capitalist family, who from a life of privilege which was deeply influenced by American television, realised that the importance of humanity lay in devoting her strength to building and preserving the New China.'<sup>829</sup> The narratives of a struggle towards a 'moment of conversion' and theme of 'redemption' perhaps struck a familiar cord with their Christian education. Indeed, the new revolutionary zeal with which they carried out their political and social service activities can be seen as a continuation of the energies which they applied to their earlier Christian social service activities, backed up by a new political message. How far girls were truly committed to the ideological underpinnings behind their actions, like their previous commitment to the doctrine of Christianity, is similarly difficult to determine however. Memories from the new students who joined McTyeire after 1949 complicate this harmonious portrait of the student bodies' transformation to socialist ideals and reveal that this transfer of power might not have been as straightforward as the school histories suggest. For example, according to Tao

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<sup>829</sup> Chen Jingyu (ed.), *Zhongxi nüzhong*, p.67.

Xiafang 陶霞芳, who joined McTyeire in 1950, the senior girls looked down upon newcomers such as herself for being from less socially elite families.<sup>830</sup>

Physical changes in students' dress, hairstyle and deportment also marked a change in the era and was an external sign of student commitment to the new way of thinking. Ruth Harris remembered in her memoir:

As the school began its reorganisation process, it became clear that certain students and teachers had long been preparing for this day. Within a few days everyone in the school community – students, faculty, administration, and servants – was organised into study groups that met daily to discuss books prepared for this purpose. The books included Marxist philosophy, Chinese history and the goals of the program of New China. As a part of each meeting, we carried on criticism and self-criticism to raise our consciousness. It seemed to me within a week, every person in Shanghai was part of such a group. It was astonishing how soon changes came to our elite student body. Very soon, everyone was wearing plain blue cotton clothing, no jewellery or makeup and simple hairdos. Anything that symbolised identification with “the people” was in; everything that suggested separation from the people was out.<sup>831</sup>

The political rallies which students were expected to be involved in greatly disrupted the educational work of the school from their missionary teacher's point of view. On 25 May 1950 English MMS missionary Doris Coombs wrote about the situation at Riverside Academy under the new government:

This term we are having great difficulty trying to keep our educational work anywhere near normal standards. There are many competing demands on the girls' time and strength. To begin with, there is the study-work scheme, where they are trying to earn the fees their parents are unable to pay. The biggest project is vegetable gardening, not only on our own land, in the former lanes and playing field, but also a large piece

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<sup>830</sup> Interview with Tao Xiafang, 2 August 2018, Shanghai.

<sup>831</sup> Ruth Harris in Evans (ed.), *Journeys that opened up the world*, p. 24.

of ground outside the west gate. Apart from that there was one day last week when all the schools went out to the country to catch worms which spoil the crops. I heard that the farmers were not as appreciative as they might have been because some of the young rice was trampled down! Girls left school soon after 5 am, walked about 6 miles to the appointed place and worked till evening. Then most of them returned, but several stayed to put on a propaganda programme for the villagers and didn't get back till midnight. Last, but not least, there have been innumerable celebrations – Youth Day, Labour Day, the recent liberation of Chusan and yesterday the anniversary of the liberation of Ningbo.<sup>832</sup>

Girls' willingness to join in such political activities varied and is hard to determine in hindsight. Like their teachers, some students felt annoyed that their education was being disrupted by these continuous political campaigns. For example, Wu Yiyun (McTyeire, class of 1950) recalled:

Just after liberation when I was in Senior Two and Senior Three, the curriculum was in chaos, because some teachers had to leave ... For those who stayed they were not allowed to rely on the old textbooks, so there was lots of confusion about what they should teach us. You can understand at that moment of great change, there was lack of clarity. Also, there were lots of political activities, and everyone had to attend, so there was less emphasis on the academics which got weaker. Nobody was really paying attention to the academic side of things. It was a bit chaotic ... but of course every country goes through those periods of change.<sup>833</sup>

Others recall that they just joined in these political activities because all their classmates did so, and they felt they wanted to go along with everyone else. Chen Kuan Yu (McTyeire class of 1936), who was acting as principal of McTyeire in 1948-1950, put it like this: 'Some tried to be, well, whatever the wind blows. It was

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<sup>832</sup> Doris Coombs to Mrs. Ladlay, May 25<sup>th</sup> 1950. SOAS Achieves: MMS – 1326 – Women's Work Ningbo, 1946-1951 – Doris Coombs.

<sup>833</sup> Interview with Wu Yiyun, 5 December 2016, Shanghai, 10:45 -11:15 (part 5)

an east wind blowing so they joined in.’<sup>834</sup> In their joint recollections recorded at the fiftieth anniversary of their class entering McTyeire, alumnae from the class of 1947 recalled that their Christian education, which exhorted them to ‘love’ and ‘understand’ each other rather than ‘criticise’ and ‘hate’, was a stumbling block to their political conversion: ‘We had to remould ourselves, to rebuild our connections. How should we look upon them in a new way, according to Marxism? So that’s a struggle to change one’s values. This was difficult. And then the movements came up. According to our education we were supposed to love, and here now we have to struggle, to hate your enemy. But we were brought up to love your enemy. This was really a struggle.’<sup>835</sup>

Other students became truly revolutionary in their thinking and determined to serve their country in a military capacity during the Korean War. During the period July 1949 - July 1951 forty-two McTyeire students signed up to military service, trained as nurses or volunteered to work for their country wherever they were most needed.<sup>836</sup> Although six McTyeire students intended to go to the front line to help, ultimately many were prevented by the rapid end of the war (see fig. 64). For example, Chen Tianmi 陳添彌 remembers her motivation for signing up to the army:

In Senior Two I decided to sign up for the Army, so I did not graduate from McTyeire. Why did I decide to join the army? Because in 1950, the War to Resist America and Aid Korea had started. At that time, many patriotic youth decided to sign up for the army. I was one of these patriotic youth, I wanted to protect my country. But I also had a struggle in my mind about this choice ... I was from an intellectual family, I wanted to study mathematics at university like my father had done and become an engineer. I didn’t really think much about politics. However,

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<sup>834</sup> Kuan Yu Chen, in ‘Telling Women’s Lives’.

<sup>835</sup> ‘Joint recollections at the fiftieth anniversary reunion of the class of 1947’, in ‘Telling Women’s Lives’.

<sup>836</sup> Chen Jingyu (ed.), *Zhongxi nüzhong*, p. 67.

this campaign (Kang mei yuan chao 抗美援朝) was very fierce. We patriotic youth must defend our country. I wanted to go to help people in Korea. But I had this dream of becoming an engineer. But I was afraid I might die at the frontier. It was a dilemma in my thinking. Many students signed up. All my good friends decided to sign up. They encouraged me, ‘your country needs you’, so I signed up to be an artilleryman. Because I thought I should use my skills in mathematics. Many students who liked maths signed up for the artillery. I like mathematics and I am very good at it. In the end, only I and other five students were approved to join the army. This was how I came to join the army... However, although I signed up for the army, I never went to Korea. They sent us to ‘Wei Shen kou 衛生口’ to act as medics. Because we were from a girls’ school, many of my classmates wanted to study medicine. I was not interested in medicine. I was more interested in mathematics. But they sent me to train as an army medic. They asked us to train in basic medical knowledge. I did the training, but I never went to Korea. Although I did help to lift the wounded soldiers and donate blood. They thought the war might end very soon and so we did not go to the frontier. So after training for several months I was sent to study medicine at Medical School (Yi Ke Da Xue 醫科大學) for six years. So in reality, I never went to war ... After I graduated, I completed some medical research, so I never acted as practicing doctor, I just did foundational medical training of 6 years. Therefore, I did not actually graduate from McTyeire. I left in Senior Two, but I never picked up a gun.<sup>837</sup>

Chen Tianmi’s frustration that she was not allowed to pursue her natural interests in artillery and mathematics, because it did not accord with continuing gendered norms about women’s proper roles in society, is apparent in her narrative. Thus, despite CCP rhetoric of female equality and liberation, in practice in the early 1950s, girls who signed up to serve their country in military service were still confined by a doctrine of femininity. These continued gendered expectations for women have

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<sup>837</sup> Interview with Chen Tianmi, 17 May 2016, Beijing, 2:45:27 – 2:52:00.

striking parallels with an earlier generation of missionary educators, who had frowned upon the military participation of their female students.

After 1949 there was also a power shift from the faculty to the students themselves. At Riverside Academy in Ningbo, Doris Coombs explains in her letter dated 30 August 1949: ‘The power of the principal is greatly diminished, as the School is now to be run by a committee of seven teachers, including the principal, and two students, elected by their fellow students.’<sup>838</sup> Chen Guanyu, who was acting principal of McTyeire from 1948 to 1950, while Xue Zheng was in the USA studying for her PhD, remembers the shift in power from faculty to students and her struggle to balance competing tensions and retain her own authority in the new political landscape:

You didn’t talk about politics if you are liberal, because you’d be labelled. In those days the Christian schools taught us we should be above politics. Politics is a dirty thing. And yet, it’s just the reverse when the communists came. They wanted you all to be involved in politics, to know the ideology, to know the government directives, to form into small discussion groups. They were trying to embrace everybody... Xue Zheng had gone to America, and that was the time I took over as an acting principal ... That was 1949, and poor me, I was young, I didn’t have the experience for that kind of change. Wow! It was such a change, so dramatic, so terrifying. We were walking on eggs. Students revolted, faculty revolted, servants revolted. Then there was a group of radical students already underground and teachers who ate with me for several years emerged from underground and began to join the communist party...We never stopped the school. They wanted us to keep the school open. Those radical students, the radical students just didn’t care. They went off to rallies in the evenings, and the Dean tried to follow the old rules and called up the parents. She could be attacked as reactionary or

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<sup>838</sup> Doris Coombs to Mrs Ladlay, 30 August 1949, SOAS- MMS – 1326 –Women’s work Ningbo – 1946-1950 – Doris Coombs – 1946-1951.

anti-revolutionary. I worried about these older rigid faculty members, and I was supposed to be acting principal! I was young and inexperienced and they were so stubborn. After every city fell they wanted each unit, factory, school, to send a contingent of people marching, to parade. They would tell the students to parade, and, oh, you really have a hard time if you didn't have a contingent. It was all on my shoulders. If you don't have one it's my fault. I was prepared to be attacked at any time. And they can ring bells. They would assemble in the auditorium. They could have asked me to go on the platform. They could have had those accusation meetings. They could have made me a target. Why? I was a Christian. I went to America, just got back. I taught English, and I was very friendly with the missionaries. They were my teachers, we were on good terms. I was still in charge, but really the student government was in charge. Very interestingly they were students from troubled families. Broken families, problem families, and those students found somehow an outlet in revolution. They were dissatisfied with their personal family life, and they had a cause to embrace, to give themselves to. I took the lead, I had to, for the sake of the school. Otherwise the school would be in trouble. In one of the old pictures, I carry a red banner. And the terrible thing, down with the Americans, the Korean War. All along the road the students sang 'Down with the American Devils, up with the Koreans!' And I carried the banner.<sup>839</sup>

When Shanghai was liberated in May 1949, Xue Zheng was still in the USA, studying for her doctorate in education at Columbia University. According to the McTyeire history volumes, as soon as she heard about the changed political situation in China, she rushed back to participate in building the new country, sacrificing her chance of finishing her PhD which she was close to obtaining.<sup>840</sup> More self-interested desires may have driven many patriotic Chinese who were studying and working overseas back to China immediately after 1949. These educated and idealistic patriots believed they could help the new government, and also wanted to distance

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<sup>839</sup> Kuan Yu Chen, in 'Telling Women's Lives'.

<sup>840</sup> Chen Jingyu (ed.), *Zhongxi nüzhong (1892-1952)*, p. 63.

themselves from a country which might taint their reputation if they remained too long.<sup>841</sup> Xue Zheng wanted to secure her position as headmistress of McTyeire and ensure the smooth transition of power, which might have been jeopardised if she had remained in the USA for an extended period after liberation. She returned to China in April 1950 travelling via Tianjin and Beijing where received a hasty political ‘re-education’ before being confirmed by the Shanghai education authorities as continuing in her post as headmistress. When she arrived back on campus students were relieved to see that her change of dress (she was wearing a plain Lenin suit), symbolised that she had already successfully adjusted her thinking and behaviour to the new regime. The McTyeire history volumes record:

In the spring of 1950 Principal Xue Zheng returned to the school. At the welcome ceremony, students saw that she already wore a Lenin suit ... they were surprised that she did not have the appearance of someone recently returned from America, instead she looked like an experienced revolutionary returned from the liberation front lines. Her clothing represented the fact that she wanted to conform to the new tide, and was firmly resolved to dedicating herself to the work of education in New China.<sup>842</sup>

Interviews with other alumnae reveal that some students doubted the genuineness of her speedy political transformation and this may have contributed to her denunciation during the Cultural Revolution.<sup>843</sup> Sherman Cochran has highlighted how, contrary to the official CCP narrative, many individuals chose to remain in or return to China

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<sup>841</sup> For more on the individual decisions made by individuals on whether to stay in or leave communist China in 1949 see Joseph Esherick, ‘The Ye Family in New China’ in Jeremy Brown (ed.), *The Dilemmas of Victory: The Early Years of the People’s Republic of China* (Cambridge, Mass, 2007), pp. 311-336.

<sup>842</sup> Chen Jingyu (ed.), *Zhongxi nüzhong (1892-1952)*, p. 64.

<sup>843</sup> Rosalyn Koo explains how Xue Zheng was persecuted during the Cultural Revolution. Interview with Rosalyn Koo, 5 November 2017, San Mateo.

after 1949 for highly pragmatic and personal, rather than patriotic, reasons.<sup>844</sup> As Brown and Pickowitz put it: ‘Profound concerns about personal careers and family trajectories played a role in the “thought transformation” process of individual citizens. Their personal concerns were (and are) rarely acknowledged. Many people were faking it. Many others were opportunistic. The party knew this and did not care much in the early years. What people said in public was more important than what they really thought or what they said at home.’<sup>845</sup>

At St. Mary’s the mysterious murder of principal Lu Zhu Lanzhen 陸朱蘭貞 in August 1949 led the American Episcopal Church to hastily appoint Hong Deying 洪德應, a pastor and faculty member at St. John’s University, as the first and only male headmaster of St. Mary’s. His daughter, Lucy Hong, believes that the sudden circumstances of Lu Zhu Lanzhen’s death led to his hasty appointment. He was also an experienced and respected educator upon whose loyalty the Church could rely.<sup>846</sup> Not all missionary school principals were as ready to bend to the new tide of government in their dress, behaviour and political thinking as Xue Zheng. For example, at Riverside Academy, Principal Shen Yixiang refused to denounce American education as ‘imperialist brainwashing’ and in 1952 was imprisoned as a counter-revolutionary.<sup>847</sup>

### **Changes to Curriculum: RE and English**

Immediate changes to the curriculum included the complete replacement of previous textbooks with government approved ones and teachers were required to train in the

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<sup>844</sup> Sherman Cochran, ‘Capitalists Choosing Communist China: The Liu Family of Shanghai’ Jeremy Brown (ed.), *The Dilemmas of Victory: The Early Years of the People’s Republic of China* (Cambridge, Mass, 2007), pp. 359-385.

<sup>845</sup> Brown and Pitowitz, ‘The Early Years’, p. 10.

<sup>846</sup> Interview with Lucy Hong, 3 July 2017, Shanghai.

<sup>847</sup> *Yongjiang nüzhong guanyu Shen Yixiang, jiaoyu sixiang de pipan daimei aiguo dahui jilu deng wenjian*. 27 May 1952. NCA, 旧 10-1-50.

new curriculum. Jean Craig recalled at McTyeire: ‘By September 1950 the government had rewritten and printed all textbooks from kindergarten through high school and these texts were used in all the schools. Instruction in the use of the new curriculum was required, and classes according to subject matter were organised. (If I remember correctly, teachers of geography from all over the city came to our campus on Thursday afternoon.)’<sup>848</sup> Doris Coombs described the changes which took place in the curriculum at Riverside: ‘The curriculum and the textbooks were changed dramatically. Apart from time spent in various political exercises, long periods were given to working on the land, etc. The history books were scrapped and new ones were so meagre that the teacher told us privately he had finished well before the end of term and he used time in telling them stories. The classics were banned.’<sup>849</sup> Ruth Harris remembered the content of the new textbooks at McTyeire: ‘Our study books told of foreign imperialism and colonialism, they dealt with the hundreds of years of unequal treaties ... They described the Opium War of 1839-1842, when the British forced China to continue receiving shipments of opium and China was forced to cede Hong Kong to Great Britain. They detailed the unequal treaties with other European countries and finally with the United States too.’<sup>850</sup> Missionary teachers, along with their Chinese colleagues, had to go to political education meetings and self-criticism sessions to improve their self-awareness. Doris Coombs recalls that at Riverside Academy:

All teachers had to be in the staff room from 7 to 8 am to study books on Marxist Leninism, and periodic meetings were held to test them. (My American colleague and I started to attend but we found we could be excused on the grounds of not being proficient in Chinese). Once a week

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<sup>848</sup> Jean Craig in ‘Telling Women’s Lives’.

<sup>849</sup> Doris Coombs ‘Recollections of Ningpo under the communists (1949-1950)’, SOAS - MMS – 1218 – Special Series – Notes and Transcripts. NT56-56.

<sup>850</sup> Ruth Harris in Evans (ed.), *Journeys that opened up the world*, p.24.

there was a staff criticism meeting when each one was expected to recount what progress had been made and confess errors and slackness et cetera. There was also frank criticism of each other. I remember that on one occasion one of our Christian teachers was accused of neglect of duty because she had taken some girls to a revival meeting instead of encouraging them to study. At the end of term each of us received triplicate forms which we had to state all kinds of details – how much time is spent on reading, what books you read, how long we were in bed, did we live frugally... A meeting was held where we read our declarations and had a chance to alter them if our critics persuaded us to do so. The forms were then next studied by the school council which included servants and students, and they amended or added as they felt necessary and finally sent them to the education authority of the city. In this way records were kept of everyone. In addition to all this, two teachers at a time had to go to two-month indoctrination courses, and if they didn't satisfy the authorities they were kept longer. I believe they were asked to admit that it was wrong to believe in God, amongst other things. What could they do? I'm afraid most of them used the Chinese lie, saying what they were supposed to say while realising that both parties knew it was not a fact. This was how one "saves face" and it obviated their having to prolong their stay.<sup>851</sup>

Another significant change to the curriculum was the introduction of politics classes. At McTyeire Zhang Xiaoru and Yuan Weitong became responsible for girls' political education and at St. Mary's a new teacher, Yu Huigeng 俞慧耕, arrived to help girls to adjust their thinking to the new regime. Yu Huigeng, a graduate of American Presbyterian Mary Farnham Girls' School (Qingxin nüxiao, 清心女校), another elite missionary school in Shanghai, was appointed to work at McTyeire because it was thought that with her similar family and educational background she could help these bourgeois *xiaojie* (young ladies) adapt themselves to the new regime as she had done.

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<sup>851</sup> Doris Coombs, 'Recollections of Ningpo under the communists (1949-1950)', SOAS MMS – 1218 – Special Series – Notes and Transcripts. NT56-56.

Moreover, as someone with the same class and educational background, girls at St. Mary's were more likely to trust her than they would have done an outsider from a different class background. In 2016 Yu Huigeng remembered with amusement:

In September 1949 when I strode into the high walled and yellow and red tiled campus, a group of innocent and lively girls were from the second storey classroom window craning their necks in a state of great curiosity and anticipation to have a look at me. They expected, that because I was sent to them by the military education bureau, that I would certainly be wearing a military uniform, have a military cap on my head and on my feet a pair of straw sandals worn by the female soldiers of the Eighth Route Army. Contrary to their expectations, there came this young teacher fresh out of St. John's University, wearing a finely tailored green qipao, with white leather shoes, no military cap on her head, who even had waved hair. There were some students who really didn't expect this and they called out in surprise: 'Oh! How did that happen?' In this exclamation of 'oh!' I entered their lives and hearts.<sup>852</sup>

According to alumnae memories, Yu Huigeng was very successful in winning over the girls' hearts and minds. Her ex-students all reported fondly that they enjoyed her classes. Today, Yu Huigeng is one of the oldest organising members of the St. Mary's Alumnae Association in Beijing, and she still acts as a teacher to her former students in reunions today, showing the 70-80-year-old alumnae how to be as subtle and healthy as she at 93 years old.<sup>853</sup> In an interview in 2016 Yu Huigeng remembered:

The country sent me to St. Mary's after St. John's. Why did they send me to St. Mary's? Because I had graduated from St. John's and St. Mary's was the girls' middle school linked to St. John's. I taught girls politics at school, explaining to them why it was necessary for liberation, to have an equal society. Because my class background was the same as theirs. So I

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<sup>852</sup> Yu Huigeng in Xu Yongchu and Chen Jingyu (eds.), *Sheng maliya nüxiao 1881-1952* (Shanghai, 2014), p.59.

<sup>853</sup> St. Mary's Reunion, 16 June 2016, Beijing.

could really understand them. I was not there to criticise them. They were all from wealthy family backgrounds, just like mine. So I could really understand these kind of girls' way of thinking. So gradually their thinking changed, until eventually some even signed up for military service. They realised that I had the same class and educational background as them. They all listened to me. I wasn't from a peasant or revolutionary family background. So we had a very good relationship, even until today the girls all listen to me.<sup>854</sup>

However, this transfer of power within the student body and faculty was not as smooth as the official histories present. This was particularly the case when we examine the status of religious activities at missionary schools after 1949. Although all religious classes were banned, students and staff were allowed to continue with private religious activities. At McTyeire and Riverside Academy, the faculty got round the ban on religious activities on the school campus by renting buildings outside of the school. Ruth Harris, a Methodist teacher who came to teach music at McTyeire after the Second World War, got into trouble with the students and faculty when she refused to sing anti-American songs in the chapel during the Korean War:

The students requested her to act as the conductor of their signing in the chapel. Wearing the dress of the people, she conducted the singing of 'We the workers have strength'. However, when the students asked her to sing a song about the Korean War, she firmly refused. In order to influence students to join the Christian fellowship activities, Ruth Harris joined in the fellowship activities a number of times. Every Tuesday evening the foreign teachers' dormitories were open for students to visit, in order for the Christian students and teachers to hold a prayer meeting. Ruth Harris wanted to follow the directions of the missionary society, and used an apartment building outside of the school as a base for her activities, which Principal Xue Zheng's firmly objected to.<sup>855</sup>

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<sup>854</sup> Interview with Yu Huigeng, 16 June 2016, Beijing, 12:20 – 16:30.

<sup>855</sup> Chen Jingyu (ed.), *Zhongxi nüzhong (1892-1952)*, p. 69.

Other missionaries were less willing to adopt the new political ideas in their teaching. Doris Coombs reported: ‘Needless to say I ceased to teach singing at all as all the songs were propaganda. The English periods were curtailed and I had to use an English translation of one of Mao’s writings, though I made it clear to the girls that I was merely teaching the English language as I didn’t agree with all the ideas!’<sup>856</sup>

In the early period after the communist takeover, missionaries were able to continue to conduct their religious activities outside of the school with a remarkable degree of liberty. Christmas, Easter and other events which marked the missionary school year, continued as usual. Interestingly, in her memoirs Ruth Harris remembered this period as a time of spiritual and political awakening for herself and a revival of the Church in China:

Every student at McTyeire was now required to take the course on political thought. Previously a weekly chapel service had been required. But this could no longer be held. In these circumstances, however, a new church was born, made up of those students and teachers and neighbourhood people who were Christians. Of the 1,8000 students, fewer than 100 attended church. A wholly new situation developed as these students asked one another for prayer, and each phrase of the hymns we sang had real meaning for our lives. The Church began to come remarkably alive when it was standing up to be the Church.<sup>857</sup>

Under new social conditions, Christian students at McTyeire widened their experience of Chinese society. Harris organised charity activities including a summer camp to the countryside near Suzhou which, remarkably, was granted permission by the new government authorities:

The Youth Fellowship of the new Church, influenced by a new awareness of the people and their suffering, began to see the gospel in a

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<sup>856</sup> Doris Coombs, ‘Recollections of Ningpo under the communists (1949-1950)’, SOAS MMS – 1218 – Special Series – Notes and Transcripts. NT56-56.

<sup>857</sup> Harris in Evens (ed.), *Journeys that opened up the world*, p. 25.

new light. Young people became interested in their neighbours and questioned for the first time, why there were glass shards on the tops of the walls surrounding the school. We made plans to organise a summer work camp with women and children in the countryside near Suzhou ... I explained that our goals for the work camp were the same as the goals of New China: to serve the people, to learn about the living condition of poor rural folk, and to work for their liberation from poverty. To everyone's amazement, including mine, we were granted travel permits. We had not heard of anyone else being allowed to leave Shanghai at that time. That summer experience proved to be the highlight of my three years in Shanghai. We deepened our knowledge of the Christian faith and our understanding of the lives of people living under the oppression of poverty... Later an American friend in Nanking asked me with much concern: "How are you?" I answered with complete conviction: "I'm great! I never realised the Church could be like this." That expressed my amazement and excitement at my first experience of the Church alive in that small faithful community in Shanghai.<sup>858</sup>

Similarly, Doris Coombs remembered that, ironically, in the early period of the new communist government she actually witnessed a religious flourishing at Riverside Academy, with many students becoming interested in Christianity for the first time:

RE was banned, of course, but our principal had rented a large house next door to the school, where she installed her mother. A door was made in the wall and Christian activities continued there, not on school premises. After eighteen months of liberation there were two or three times as many girls attending meetings as before. This was chiefly due to courageous witness of the Christian students. When wall posters were put up ridiculing Christ and the Christian religion, the Christians would put up posters refuting the anti-Christian arguments, and their refusal to deny their faith caused many who had wavered to side for Christ.<sup>859</sup>

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<sup>858</sup> Harris in Evens (ed.), *Journeys that opened up the world*, p. 25.

<sup>859</sup> Doris Coombs 'Recollections of Ningpo under the communists (1949-1950)', SOAS MMS – 1218 – Special Series – Notes and Transcripts. NT56-56.

At Riverside, Shen Yixiang (who was a devout Baptist), thus took a remarkably different approach to the pragmatic Xue Zheng who, as we have seen, towed the government line and tried to prohibit missionary efforts to continue religious gatherings for students off-campus. Doris Coombs also remarks on the similarity of tactics used by the communists in their meetings to the ones traditionally employed in Churches, a legacy perhaps of the communist infiltration and adoption of the tactics of Christian groups such as the YWCA during the war and civil war:

The Christian teachers and girls had a meeting, and we decided to have a fellowship for the Christians, meeting on Sunday at 4.30. After the afternoon series, they will also have daily morning watch and evening prayers and twice a week there will be a meeting when we hope enquirers will also come. It will be led by a fine Presbyterian woman evangelistic worker. The first meeting she will introduce a subject and will prepare questions, which will be discussed at the second meeting. At the third meeting the groups will give their reports, and the fourth meeting will be a summing up by the leader. That is the latest communist method, but it also that which has been used in our summer conferences for many years!

We are going to try it.<sup>860</sup>

Older missionaries who had served in China before the war were not so sanguine about the new political circumstances under which they were operating. Students were aware of these growing tensions. For example, Dong Yue 董悦, a Christian student at St. Mary's, recalled a conversation she had with Deaconess Ashcroft shortly after liberation:

Deaconess Ashcroft said something to me one day which had a very deep impact on me. At that time it was just after liberation, so we all thought how great it was that the CCP had come. We just kids and we didn't really understand. Deaconess Ashcroft called me aside and she said to me: 'did you know that, you should not call everything 'Imperialism', I

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<sup>860</sup>Doris Coombs to Mrs Ladlay, March 18<sup>th</sup> 1950, SOAS MMS – 1326 – Woman's Work Ningbo – 19461-1950 – Doris Coombes 1946-1951.

thought about it and realised she was correct. Was America an imperialist country? Today we don't think of it like that. So I thought her words were correct. At that time Deaconess Ashcroft was correct. She said to me: 'You don't understand what imperialism is.' When I heard her words, I was very young, I didn't really understand. But now when I think about it she was correct. Deaconess Ashcroft! She said, you should not call everything imperialism or everyone your enemy.<sup>861</sup>

Although Dong Yue is applying her present understanding (in light of the reestablishment of China-US relations since 1971) of what might be considered Deaconess Ashcroft's quite patronising words to her as a teenager over seventy years ago, her memory of this incident reveals the growing tensions between Christian and non-Christian elements of the school body and the increasingly uncomfortable environment missionary teachers operated under after 1949.

After the outbreak of the Korean War, however, it became apparent to missionary teachers that their presence in China was no longer welcome, and indeed they were becoming a hindrance and embarrassment to their Chinese colleagues. At McTyeire, tensions grew in the student body and faculty between Christian students who supported their foreign teachers, and non-Christian more radical students who wanted their American teachers to leave. As the McTyeire history volume suggests, the animosity between students who were part of the Christian Fellowship and those who were part of the Communist Youth League, daily became fiercer and more apparent in the school. Chen Tianmi recalls: 'Just after liberation, when I was in Senior One, there was a split in the student body at McTyeire ... Students were in these two different factions, the CCP faction against the non-CCP faction. There was a group called the Christian Fellowship, and most of the students were Christian. Each faction had a student who was competing to be the leader of the student union ...

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<sup>861</sup> Interview with Dong Yue, 21 November 2016, Beijing, 21:37 -22:34.

This rivalry was very clear in the school. Before liberation you could not see this kind of rivalry, but afterwards it was very apparent. Each faction sang songs and made speeches to try to win over the students and get their candidate selected as student body president.<sup>862</sup> These tensions also affected the faculty as well. Xue Zheng wrote in a letter dated 1950:

There are conflicts among the faculty in McTyeire ... The progressive group is against the conservative one, the non-Christian group is against the Christian group, and a certain group is against the American group, although the latter does not realise the opposition and is also too busy at work but that certain group just wanted to create this feeling. All these feelings should be wiped out as soon as possible in order to prevent troubles in the future.<sup>863</sup>

Similarly, at Riverside Academy tensions grew between Christian students who supported their missionary teachers, and more radical non-Christian students who wished their teachers to leave. Doris Coombs remembered: 'It was our custom to hold a sunrise service in the compound on Easter morning. Nearly a year after liberation the principal decided to go ahead and hold the service in the compound as usual. Most of the girls attended, but we were saddened by group of girls in a room opposite side of the campus singing propaganda songs and shouting slogans.'<sup>864</sup> Coombs added with irony and amusement in the same letter: 'a smaller service was held in Methodist compound and interested group of soldiers climbed over the wall and listened in, one of them was joining in the egg hunt which followed.'<sup>865</sup> Interestingly, in many teachers' and students' memories of this period, the battle for ideological control of the school between Christian and communist students was

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<sup>862</sup> Interview with Chen Tianmi, 17 May 2016, Beijing, 2:41:00- 2:45:00.

<sup>863</sup> Xue Zheng in McTyeire Alumnae Association (eds.), *Telling Women's Lives: In Search of McTyeire, 1892-1992* (San Mateo, 1992).

<sup>864</sup> Doris Coombs 'Recollections of Ningpo under the communists (1949-1950)', SOAS MMS – 1218 – Special Series – Notes and Transcripts. NT56-56.

<sup>865</sup> *Ibid.*,

fought using songs as a musical form of ‘ammunition’. Girls tried to drown each other out or out-perform each other’s displays of zealous devotion to their cause in a display of musicality which had always been a core and celebrated part of the missionary school curriculum. Indeed, in both Christian and communist ideology songs and music were a key tool for conveying key tenets and a very persuasive and emotive way to influence or indoctrinate the listener. It is interesting that in alumnae memories of their school days, songs – both Christian and communist propaganda songs – stand out in their recollections. Often my interviewees broke into song to narrate a certain period of their life, or to illustrate why they were so moved by a particular idea or campaign.<sup>866</sup>

After the outbreak of the Korean War, conducting religious activities at school became fraught with difficulties and life for foreign missionaries at school got more and more tenuous. In 1951, the American Wesleyan Bishop of China, Bishop Ward, suggested that all missionaries should leave, following the 1950 move by the People’s Government to take over all American educational institutions. Missionary schools were declared a ‘tool of cultural imperialism’ in a new wave of Chinese nationalism which echoed the anti-Christian and anti-imperialist movements of the 1920s.<sup>867</sup> Documents from missionary archives throw light onto how missionary teachers experienced the period 1949-1952 and their hasty departure from China. Ruth Harris recalls with sadness how the changes after the Korean War made it

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<sup>866</sup> For more on the influence of music in modern Chinese political history, see Pang, Laikwan, Clark, Paul, Tsai, Tsan-Huang (Eds.), *Listening to China’s Cultural Revolution: Music, Politics, and Cultural Continuities* (London, 2016). See also: Andrew Jones, *Like a Knife: Ideology and Genre in Contemporary Chinese Popular Music*, (New York, 1992).

<sup>867</sup> On 29th December 1950 the people’s government issued an order regarding the ‘Resolution on the policy of how to deal with cultural education organisations and religious groups which are subsidised by America’, Guanyu chuli jieshou meiguo jintie de wenhua jiaoyu jigou ji zongjiao tuanti de fangzhen de jueding’ 關於處理接受美國津貼的文化教育機構及宗教團體的方針的決定 Cited in Cheng Jingyu (ed.), *Zhongxi nüzhong*, p. 70.

necessary for missionaries to leave in order to avoid causing ‘more harm than good’ by bringing trouble and embarrassment for their Chinese colleagues:

There was no way to anticipate the effects of the Korean War on the Christian community in China. Often over the previous two years, I had marvelled at the fact that I was still there, an American teaching Chinese young people. I thought of the ways Germans and Japanese had been treated in my country during World War II. How could the Chinese be so accepting and trusting? But now the time had come when no American could make a positive contribution. Now I was a liability to my Chinese friends and colleagues ... It was time to leave China. If I stayed, I could do more harm than good, mostly in bringing suspicion on my friends and students. Signs of friendship to me might be difficult for them, perhaps even dangerous.<sup>868</sup>

Similarly, Doris Coombs at Riverside Academy remembered: ‘As time went on we came to the conclusion that were going to be an embarrassment to our Chinese friends. We decided to apply for permits to leave the country.’<sup>869</sup> Although missionaries detail at length their sadness upon their forced departure from China, ascertaining how students felt about the departure of their foreign teachers is somewhat more elusive. While some students remembered tearful farewells, others, whether out of political correctness or simply disinterest, did not seem to attach much emotional significance to their departure.

One of the most dramatic changes wrought by the departure of their foreign teachers was the changes to English teaching that this brought. No longer allowed to use the texts that had comprised the missionary school curriculum, the Chinese teachers in charge of teaching this subject struggled to come up with suitable and politically correct teaching materials, particularly for girls with advanced English

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<sup>868</sup> Ruth Harris in Evans (ed.), *Journeys that opened up the world*, p. 26.

<sup>869</sup> Doris Coombs ‘Recollections of Ningpo under the communists (1949-1950)’, SOAS MMS – 1218 – Special Series – Notes and Transcripts. NT56-56.

levels in the higher grades. Wu Yiyun (McTyeire class of 1952) felt that her English suffered after 1952 when all the foreign teachers had left the school. During the Korean War, when little attention was paid to the English curriculum, the teacher responsible asked her to go and find newspaper sources from which she could teach the class English. Wu Yiyun regretted that they were no longer allowed to study the foreign novels which she felt would have improved her English at a quicker rate. Wu Yiyun somewhat ruefully remembers:

When the English teachers returned home, basically who was going to teach us? What would they use to teach us? At that time nobody was really paying attention to this. The principal, she was sometimes absent and she couldn't pay attention to these really particular matters ... the result was that they invited an alumna, Miss Zhu, to come and teach English, however, after talking with her we realised she really did not know how to do this, and the old material she was not allowed to use, so what could she use? She was also not familiar with teaching and this was a really big change, [after liberation], as a result she came to find me, as the class leader, she said, 'you come with me and help me to find some teaching materials, so she put this responsibility on me, and I thought, how am I meant to find teaching materials? At this time we still had English class, but what should we use as materials? How should I know? Later I found a few foreign English Language newspapers, which were quite modern to teach the class. When were in Senior 1 we read *Ivanhoe*. Now this book was very interesting, but also wasn't very easy. It's all about English history. Originally, my English wasn't that strong, but in Senior 1 something that left a very strong impression on me was that we read *Les Miserables* [In English Translation], and I very moved by this book, and then I really started to like English class, and I became very diligent. And *Les Miserables* was a very thick book, not only did you have to get the content, but also understand all of the vocabulary, and the feeling behind the story. So, I started to like English after reading this book. In Senior 2 we read *A Tale of Two Cities*, now this is not a very

easy book to read, but I also liked reading it ... Then after Senior 2 all of the foreign teachers went home. What were we supposed to read? Just randomly reading books from the library was not suitable because I still needed help to grasp the meaning. So after liberation what should we do? Finally I thought of a way to find some kinds of newspaper materials. However, this material compared to the original material, the gap was so big, so I said to the teacher, okay, I will go out of the school to find some newspapers, and she said, Okay. In reality, I really didn't learn anything. This was the situation in English class.<sup>870</sup>

### **The End of an Era: Merger, disbandment and takeover of missionary schools**

In 1952, following the government's decision to reorganise the education system and nationalise all private educational institutions, missionary schools in China were disbanded, renamed, or merged to form new schools, ending an era of over a hundred years of missionary school activity in China. In Shanghai McTyeire and St. Mary's were merged together to form the Shanghai Number Three Girl's School based at the McTyeire campus on Jiangsu Road. Tan Ying 覃英 was appointed principal and Xue Zheng as vice-principal.<sup>871</sup> Riverside Academy became Ningbo Girls' Middle School (Ningbo nüzi zhongxue, 寧波女子中學), and Hongdao Union Girls' School became Hangzhou Female Middle School (Shengli Hangzhou nüzi zhongxue, 省立杭州女子中學). Memories of alumnae who graduated in the last years of their schools' history provide an interesting insight into this transition and complicate official narratives which use a celebratory tone to describe the merger.<sup>872</sup> On 5 July 1952 girls from St. Mary's and McTyeire attended the opening ceremony of the Number Three Girls' School. On the stage in Richardson Hall Xue Zheng, representing McTyeire, and Yu

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<sup>870</sup> Interview with Wu Yiyun, 5 December 2016, Shanghai, 2:00-10:00 (part 5).

<sup>871</sup> Chen Jingyu (ed), *Zhongxi nüzhong 1892-1952*, p.70.

<sup>872</sup> Chen Jingyu (ed), *Shengmaliya nvxiao*, p. 64.

Huigeng representing St. Mary's, gave speeches to inaugurate the new school.<sup>873</sup> After the speeches girls paraded to the school gate where they hung their new school sign bearing the new school name: Shanghai Number Three Girls' School (see fig. 65). That afternoon the McTyeire and St. Mary's senior classes graduated as the first class of the Number Three Girls' school (see fig. 66). Despite officially becoming the first graduating class of the new school, aluminae's memories testify to their sadness at this sudden end to their schools' histories. This was particularly true for St. Mary's girls who had lost their beautiful campus and were now 'guests' in their rival's domain. Zhang Luoluo (McTyeire class of 1947) attended the opening of the Number Three Girls' School in her capacity as reporter for the Wenhui Bao newspaper, 文匯報.<sup>874</sup> In an interview in 2017 Zhang Luoluo recalled the sadness of the St. Mary's pupils at the opening ceremony: 'That day I sat on the first row and saw the faces for the St. Mary's girls, they were all extremely sad ... Our McTyeire campus was still here, we still had our auditorium, but I felt that St. Mary's girls were just guests in our school.'<sup>875</sup> Indeed, both sets of graduating classes from 1952 continued in their identification with their alma mater as the last class of St. Mary's girls and McTyeirans. This loyalty is visible in the alumnae associations today: alumnae from the class of 1952 attend the separate McTyeire and St. Mary's alumnae associations and their names are listed in the back of their schools' respective history volumes.<sup>876</sup>

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the period 1949-1952 was a transitional period for missionary schools in East China. There were dramatic shifts in the makeup of the student body, the

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<sup>873</sup> Chen Jingyu (ed), *Zhongxi nüzhong 1892-1952*, p.70.

<sup>874</sup> By then Zhang Luoluo had changed her name to Zhang Chuanling 張傳玲.

<sup>875</sup> Interview with Zhang Luoluo, 6 November 2017, San Mateo, 1:54:00-1:55:00.

<sup>876</sup> Indeed, the classes of 1951-1952, whose identity as McTyeiran was being taken away, are perhaps even keener to retain their identities as McTyeire students than their predecessors, to the extent that the classes of 1951 and 1952 retrospectively published their own year book to celebrate the achievements of their classmates and keep in touch with each other.

power balance between staff and pupils, changes in the textbooks and curriculum and new political campaigns to attend. However, the early period after the change of government (1949-1950) was a relatively stable one and there was much continuity in the school daily life. Although religious education classes were banned, Christian students and staff continued their religious activities off-site, and found in the new political environment opportunities for recruiting new members, bringing about a surprising, if short-lived, revival of the Church. As contemporary observers remarked, there were many overlaps between Christianity and communism: both in their social service ideology and in their tactics for recruiting new members. Indeed, in the eyes of missionary observers the CCP seemed to have borrowed from the structure of church meetings and YWCA organisations. Girls experienced these changes in different ways. While some more radical students who were already operating as underground party members were able to come to lead the school and take charge of their classmates' and teachers' political re-education, other alumnae were more ambivalent in their memories of this period. Some attended political meetings as a matter of course, to go along with everyone else rather than out of any real conviction or enthusiasm for the new regime. Others were disenchanted that their education had to suffer as a result of these disturbances and the loss of their foreign teachers.

The Korean War, which broke out in June 1950, marked a turning point and brought to a head growing tensions between Christian students who were pro-missionary and radical students who wanted their foreign teachers to leave. At McTyeire this tension manifested itself in growing hostility between two rival groups: the Communist Youth League and the Christian Fellowship. Eventually, their missionary teachers had no choice but to leave, lest they bring further harm and

embarrassment to their Chinese students and colleagues. Their departure evoked sadness in some girls and nonchalance in many others. Although their English suffered as a result, girls had little time to brood over this: very soon the history of their schools would end abruptly in their merger into the Number Three Girls' School.

There is not scope enough within this thesis to detail the changes that engulfed the schools during the decades of political turmoil down to this day, nor to document extensively the achievements of alumnae who went on to become: business women, educators, writers, wives and mothers, architects, engineers, translators, army officers, politicians and diplomats, amongst many other occupations. Many alumnae suffered during the Cultural Revolution because of their family background and for having attended a missionary school: Xue Zeng was removed from office and persecuted by staff and students at the school. According to Rosalyn Koo, she was pushed down the steps in front of Richardson Hall and her legs were broken.<sup>877</sup> Shen Yixiang of Riverside Academy spent years in prison for refusing to denounce American education as imperialist brainwashing.<sup>878</sup>

Despite the hardships which many faculty and alumnae underwent, their sense of loyalty and identity to their school has withstood the test of time, as can be witnessed in the re-emergence of the alumnae associations since the 1980s. The alumnae chapters established in Shanghai, Beijing and the USA host annual reunions where students' sense of love and loyalty to their alma mater is palpable. Whether or not borne out of old age, nostalgia, a desire for longevity or the suffering which they have endured, students' loyalty and identity to their school has certainly had an impact on their schools' successor institution in Shanghai. Alumnae strive to keep

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<sup>877</sup> Interview with Rosalyn Koo, 5 November 2017, San Mateo.

<sup>878</sup> *Yongjiang nüzhong guanyu Shen Yixiang, jiaoyu sixiang de pipan daimei aiguo dahui jilu deng wenjian*. 27 May 1952. NCA, 卬 10-1-50.

the memory of their schools alive in their reunions, newsletters, book publications and investment in the Number Three Girls' School today. Indeed, one can see how generations of alumnae and teachers have successfully transmitted their school spirit, stressing the importance of girls' education, which is very much alive in the culture of the Number Three Girls' School today. As Jean Craig remarked upon her return to the school shortly before the centennial anniversary in 1982: 'McTyeire has lost her name but not her spirit! She lives on in the lives of her daughters: women of strength and faith, women who have dared to make their school motto central in their living. Scattered now in faraway places and in many lands, McTyeire alumnae continue to be women of distinction and persons who care. Some, though very old, carry heavy leadership responsibilities.'<sup>879</sup>

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<sup>879</sup> Jean Craig in 'Telling Women's Lives'.

## CONCLUSION

During a focus group interview with four alumnae who graduated from St. Mary's between 1947 and 1953, following the suggestion of their former teacher, Yu Huigeng, I started by asking the group an open question: What was the most important influence you feel that going to St. Mary's had on your life? Naturally, the answers they gave varied with their personal experiences and storytelling-style. However, three clear themes emerged: firstly, alumnae felt it had given them a strong foundation in English, which was important for their later careers. Secondly, they had formed life-long friendships at school which had survived and supported them during the tumultuous decades of political changes through which they had lived. Finally, and perhaps most difficult to define, it had 'cultivated their characters': taught them how to 'love', how to 'forgive' and how to be 'a good person'.<sup>880</sup> This sort of 'moral education' that missionary schoolgirls felt they had received intrigued me. Was this evidence of Christian influence in their education? How would this 'moral' education differ from the sorts of values inculcated at a non-missionary middle school for girls? Was it based on Chinese ideas of morality or western ones? What was the difference and how to define it? Two other alumnae, who had conducted masters' level research, took pains to try to define this intangible moral education. According to these alumnae, although many girls at missionary schools in the 1930-40s did not define themselves as Christian, they were influenced by the Christian environment of the school in an intangible or imperceptible way. Christian values were inculcated through the literature they studied and the music they sang. For example, Yang Zhiling 楊之嶺 (St. Mary's, class of 1951) defined it in this way:

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<sup>880</sup> Focus group with St. Mary's alumnae, 11 May 2016, Beijing.

Forgiveness. According to the school, if you did something wrong the dean would call you into her office, and talk with you and tell you what is right and what is wrong, they did not seek to punish people. If you changed you would be allowed to remain, if not, according to the schools rules you would be allowed to leave. In a lot of literature [that we studied], such as *A Tale of Two Cities*, Dr. Manette because of the son-in-law, he was in prison because of that family. But after he knew about the son-in-law's background he tried to forgive. This kind of thing. *This kind of teaching is so powerful, not like instruction, telling you what to do, but the literature is penetrating into your blood, into your mind and your thinking and your feelings and everything...* During the Cultural Revolution I can remember, not only myself, but a lot of classmates, and younger classmates were persecuted because of our background. But after that we tried to forgive these [people], because they are all young students and we need to teach them. And at this time if you did not have this kind of attitude you would hang yourself. So this is something very important.<sup>881</sup> [Emphasis mine]

Theresa Chen 陳宗慈 (McTyeire class of 1947) felt that the same 'imperceptible' Christian or moral influence could have been inculcated at her school though the influence of music and songs:

De, zhi, ti, 德智體, Morality, Academics and Physical education. These are important aspects. But McTyeire had another one that make the students very vivacious [Huoyue 活躍]... This was not very obvious, but there was this kind of underlying [education], there is a cultivation of people's characters. At McTyeire, in addition to this de, zhi and ti, there was Music. Music is that emotional appreciation, that art appreciation, that uplifting appreciation. And to me, because by this time we did not have religious classes, this was our religious education. There was this fellowship thing. For me, music is where I got my religious education. Because in that music there was a lot of praise. Hymns are where I got my religious education. It was also from art. If you look at the hymns

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<sup>881</sup> Interview with Yang Zhiling, 20 July 2016, Beijing, 2:45-6:35.

they are very poetic. And so it cultivates your appreciation for art. I was part of Miss Harris's Choral Group. Out of the choral group she selected twelve students and I was one of the twelve, when I was in my last semester. We even went out and we sang acapella. We went by train out of town to a little place, we sang to the people there. It was a field trip. I was second soprano.<sup>882</sup>

Since their establishment in the mid-nineteenth century, there have been many different representations of missionary schools and the pupils who attended them. Few studies have sought to understand the lived experience of girls who attended these schools or put at the centre of analysis pupils' own understanding of their experiences. During the period that my interviewees attended school, missionary schools were seen by society as elite or 'aristocratic' schools for girls (Guizu xuexiao 貴族學校). A former student of McTyeire remembers how she was bullied by a teacher named Wang at the Shanghai Municipal Council School (Gongbuju 工部局) for having formerly attended McTyeire. She remembers this teacher thought she was too aristocratic in her manners and deportment and criticised her for having attended a 'xiaojie xuexiao' – a 'School for aristocratic young ladies'. She found this label both unfair and ironic: she had to transfer out of McTyeire as her mother could no longer afford the tuition fees after her father left for Chengdu during the Second World War:

They have a Math teacher, she was an old maid, they call her Wang Laohu 王老虎. There was another girl from McTyeire who came with me. She saw us, she said 'oh, you came from McTyeire, McTyeire students are all spoilt young ladies! (Zhongxi, Zhongxi dou shi xiaojiepai! 中西中西都是小姐派).' I guess she didn't know my mother, we didn't have money so I came! McTyeire, McTyeire pampered young ladies! (Zhongxi Zhongxi, Xiaojie Pai! 中西中西, 小姐派!) I thought Gosh!

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<sup>882</sup> Interview with Theresa Chen, 10 November 2016, San Mateo California, USA, 52:00 – 58:00.

We don't have money, that's why I came! Then she would criticise us for the way we sat. Slapping the ruler on my desk. She would criticise the other girl too, there was always something, you know, she would call you to go to do something, you did not walk right, or you did not write right, you are walking too much like a xiaojie ... you are too confident (zixinxin 自信心) ... She would say, next time don't do that! You get so scared and the other girl just cried. If you cry, she wants you to go out of the classroom. My friend was always in the hall because she was crying.

I would just try not to cry, I didn't want to cry because I was so scared.<sup>883</sup>

After 1952 many missionary school students were criticised for their class background and for having attended a school which was then labelled a 'tool of American cultural imperialism', in an echo of the anti-Christian and anti-foreign movements of the 1920s. Today, missionary schools have become part of a cosmeticised cultural nostalgia as the republican past is repackaged and appropriated for a post-socialist Chinese present. For example, in 2016 St. Mary's was 'rebuilt' in mock Spanish style on its original site, which now functions as venue for a German pub and shopping complex. The school church, the only surviving original building, has had a face lift and although its exterior remains intact, the interior has been stripped away to serve as an exhibition space, with all religious elements (pews, images) removed (see fig.2).

Direct reference to the school's missionary past was used in a promotional video advertising the shopping centre in 2016. In the video advertisement, a modern office woman gazes down at the school from the height of her high-powered, glass-fronted office building adjacent. In her mind's eye, she is transported back to the republican past as she imagines the life of a missionary school student at St. Mary's. Republican past and post-socialist present slide seamlessly into one another from the

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<sup>883</sup> Interview with Sally Chen, 7 November 2017, California, USA, 33:00-36:00. Note: This interview has been anonymised.

gendered gaze of the modern Chinese female office worker. Infused with a sense of nostalgia, the video invites the viewer to marvel at how far women have come in the past hundred years and perhaps even depict missionary schools as the starting point for such changes. It places the Chinese woman on an upwards trajectory of progress, liberation and self-determination, enabled by her education, until she has arrived at her present modernity with the independent capital to buy expensive brands in the shopping centre below. Similarly, the Riverside Academy building, which was reconstructed in 1949 after being damaged by bombing in Ningbo during the Civil War, now serves as the Ningbo City Education Museum (Ningbo shi jiaoyu bowuguan 寧波市教育博物館). The adjacent shopping centre takes its name from the date of the school's foundation: 1844 Centre.

Although these representations of missionary schools and their pupils have been multiple and circular, from the *guizu* of the Republican Era to the 'brainwashed pawns of foreigners' in Mao times, to objects of consumption and cultural nostalgia today, few studies have sought to place at the centre the experience of girls themselves. Few have attempted to understand what it meant to go to a missionary school for girls, what impact this experience had on their lives, and how alumnae interpret their own school experiences today. By focusing on the experiences of individual alumnae and the ways in which they construct a narrative of their lives, we can rescue Chinese women's own voices from the meta-narratives of Chinese history which so often efface individual agency. The experience of missionary schoolgirls complicates our understanding of the women's movement in Chinese history. The role of Chinese Christian women, whose experience does not neatly fit into these meta-narratives, has therefore largely been excluded from histories of the women's movement in Communist historiographies. Although filtered through a lifetime of

experience, it is important to attempt to understand what going to a missionary school meant, from the perspective of alumnae themselves. By providing a better understanding of how girls negotiated their identities as female, Chinese and possibly Christian, we can glean a more nuanced insight into how girls had agency to negotiate their own modernity in early twentieth century China, combining different aspects of the education that they experienced at school.

However, unpicking how far their experiences at missionary school were influential in directing the course of their later lives is a difficult and potentially misleading exercise. Although a formative period, we must place their experiences at school in context to other influences, including their family background and career choices, not to mention the momentous social and political changes that China went through, rendering many ordinary Chinese people with little direct control over important decisions in their lives. This is especially true for alumnae who graduated from middle schools and university after 1950. No longer could they choose their career path or where they worked, but were sent where the country deemed them to be most useful. One alumna who I interviewed went to great lengths to maintain her freedom of choice upon graduation. Determined to devote her life to serving the church as a priest, she gave up a scholarship at St. John's University and transferred to finish her degree in theology at Nanjing seminary, as she realised that she might be prevented from entering the ministry upon graduation from St. John's.<sup>884</sup>

In some cases, there is an obvious correlation between alumnae's missionary school training and their later careers. For example, many of the alumnae I interviewed went on to work as teachers and translators because of their advanced English. For example, as we have seen in Chapter Seven, Ying Manrong realised she

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<sup>884</sup> Interview with Cao Shengjie, 22 October 2016, Shanghai.

could serve the Chinese Communist Party with her English by translating a newspaper article about the rape of Shen Chong.<sup>885</sup> Although English was replaced by Russian in the curriculum after 1951, since the late 1970s their proficiency in English has subsequently proved an asset in many alumnae's careers, even if they did not advertise too widely where their fluency had come from in the years immediately following the Cultural Revolution. For example, Yang Zhiling (St. Mary's class of 1951) feels that the high level of English which she acquired at St. Mary's had a profound influence upon her later career.

Yang Zhiling remembers that although she had originally aspired to become a doctor, upon her graduation from St. Mary's in 1951 the country was short of teachers. She therefore went to Beijing Normal University (BNU) graduating in 1955. Upon graduation she worked as an administrator for BNU, assigning students jobs upon graduation. During the Cultural Revolution she was denounced as a capitalist roader and felt she could no longer do her job. In 1973, towards the end of the Cultural Revolution, she went for a job as a teacher at the Foreign Affairs Research Council. During the interview she convinced her boss to hire her by being able to recite to him a passage from Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*, which she had studied at St. Mary's. When delegates were selected to go to the USA to study comparative educational systems in 1980, Yang Zhiling was selected. She was invited to tour fifty-three cities across eighteen states to give talks about modern Chinese educational developments.<sup>886</sup> Yang Zhiling decided to pursue her studies in education to PhD level at Kent State University in Ohio and when she graduated in 1982, became the first Chinese person to receive a PhD degree in America since reestablishment of diplomatic relations. From 1989-1990 she worked as a professor

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<sup>885</sup> Interview with Ying Manrong, 2 July 2016, Beijing, 2:12:00- 2:18:00.

<sup>886</sup> Yang Zhiling, 'Shengmaliya nüxiao, wo xin zhong de fengbei', in Xu Yongchun and Chen Jingyu (eds.), *Huiyi Shengmaliya nü xiao*, (Shanghai, 2014), p. 137.

in education at the University of Minnesota and then at Utah, where she worked until 1993. She then worked at California State University for ten years from 1993-2003, when she returned to China. Throughout her time in the USA people were interested in her educational background and felt that she was ‘different’ from most Chinese people they had met before. She felt that her western manners, knowing how to say ‘yes please’ and ‘no thank you’, acquired at St. Mary’s were probably the reason she seemed different and was invited on the lecturing tours. Yang Zhiling has had a successful career in the education world and she has been invited to over twenty-two countries to give talks and lectures. She attributes a large portion of her successful career to the training she received at St. Mary’s.<sup>887</sup>

Other graduates had careers as translators and interpreters for important politicians and diplomats. For example, after graduating from St. Mary’s in 1947, Zhao Fengfeng studied for one year at St. John’s University and then in 1949 transferred to Tsinghua as her sister was studying in Beijing. She originally majored in education, but later changed to foreign languages. She graduated from Tsinghua in 1952. After graduation she entered the Foreign Service, acting as translator for several important political figures and foreign visitors to China. Her longest assignment was as the personal secretary of American left-wing writer and political journalist, Anna Louise Strong (1885-1970). Strong visited China six times in total, starting in 1927.<sup>888</sup> On her final stay, which lasted for twelve years (1858-1970), Zhao Fengfeng accompanied the seventy-two-year-old Strong on her visits all over China, acting as translator at her meetings with a variety of important political figures including Premier Zhou Enlai and Guo Moruo 郭沫若 (see fig. 67).

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<sup>887</sup> Interview with Yang Zhiling, 20 July 2016, Beijing.

<sup>888</sup> Interview with Zhao Fengfeng, 14 June 2016, Beijing.

Similarly, Liu Zechi 劉澤擘, upon graduating from McTyeire in 1947 studied at St. John's University for one year before transferring to the Education department at Yanjing University. Upon graduation she worked as a translator at the Beijing Foreign Affairs Office and met several important politicians during her work there, including Mao Zedong.<sup>889</sup> Other graduates used their English as translators for news agencies and other cultural bureaux. For example, Wu Qihui 吳其慧, who was particularly strong in English, was one of the top three students graduating from the St. Mary's class of 1947 and was therefore able to enter St. John's University without taking the entrance examination. She majored in English and after her graduation in 1952 went to work for the Xinhua news agency until her retirement at the age of sixty-five. After retirement she also worked as an editor for the *New China* magazine.<sup>890</sup>

Missionary school graduates from a Christian family background who wanted to pursue a career serving the church, were co-opted by the new regime to staff their religious affairs bureau and other cultural and religious organisations under the new Communist government control, such as the China Christian Council (CCC), Three Self Patriotic Church Movement (TSPM) and YW/YMCA. For example, Lucy Hong (Hong Lüming, 洪侶明), who attended McTyeire from 1941-1945, graduated from St. John's as an Education major in 1952. Upon graduation Lucy was assigned to work in the Shanghai Cultural Bureau (Shanghai Shi Wenhuaju 上海市文化局), in charge of editing films, TV dramas, and comics. In 1953 she was transferred to work in the Shanghai Culture Publishing Company (Shanghai Wenhua Chubanshe 上海文化出版社), and was responsible for helping to edit novels. In 1954 Lucy transferred

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<sup>889</sup> Zhao Fengfeng, 'In memory of the American woman writer, Anna Louise Strong' in *Women of China*, 1980 No. 2, pp. 36-38.

<sup>890</sup> Interview with Wu Qihui, 15 June 2016, Beijing.

to work in the CCC as an assistant editor of the main magazine of the Protestant Church in China, *Tianfeng* 天風. Lucy recalls at this time the government needed people with a Christian background to staff the CCC and she was in charge of proof reading. In 1953 Lucy married Shen Yifan 沈以藩, who became the last ordained Episcopal Bishop of China before the Cultural Revolution.<sup>891</sup> After the Cultural Revolution Lucy started working for the YWCA in 1980. Although she was already fifty years old, Lucy had much experience and they asked her to be the Shanghai YWCA vice-general secretary. In 1988-89 Lucy was selected for one year of study at Manchester University Seminary funded by the China National YWCA. In her retirement Lucy taught music (the organ) at the East China Theological Seminary.<sup>892</sup> Similarly, Cao Shengjie 曹聖潔, whose adopted mother and grandmother were devout Christians, was a graduate of a southern Baptist school for girls in Shanghai, Jinde 進德女中, in the class of 1949.<sup>893</sup> Upon graduating from Nanjing Theological Seminary in 1953 Cao Shengjie worked as a church worker at St. Peter's Church in Shanghai (Shanghai Sheng Bide Tang, 上海聖彼得堂), and was also a board member of the Shanghai YWCA. After the Cultural Revolution Cao Shengjie, along with other figures who had been leaders of the Protestant church in China before the Cultural Revolution, such as Shen Yifan and Yao Minquan 姚民權 were invited by the Centre for Research on Religion (Zongjiao yanjiusuo 宗教研究所) to do research and conduct interviews about the status of Christianity in China. This study marked

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<sup>891</sup> Shen Yifan, *Jiangtai Shifeng - Shen Yifan Zhujiao Wenji* Vol.1, (Shanghai, 2015).

<sup>892</sup> Interview with Lucy Hong, 07 December 2015, Shanghai.

<sup>893</sup> Luo Weihong, *Cao Shengjie koushu lishi*, (Shanghai, 2017). See also Cao Shengjie, *Jingyu zhong de sicao, Cao Shengjie wenji*, (Shanghai, 2006).

the revival of the Protestant church in China, and in 1991 Cao Shengjie became the National YWCA vice-president until her retirement in 2012.<sup>894</sup>

In other cases, we can see how the values of girls' education imparted at school created strong-minded women who self-consciously championed women's causes throughout their lives. Although we should be careful to avoid making sweeping statements, applying labels such as 'feminist', or making broad assumptions about the influence of their missionary education on alumnae's later lives, by paying attention to how alumnae narrate their own lives and how they understand the influence that going to missionary school had on them we can better understand how they convinced of their own contribution to the women's movement in China, past and present. For example, Rosalyn Koo (McTyeire class of 1947), always felt discriminated against at home for being a girl. She was angry and disappointed with her father who had several girlfriends and did not live up to the ideals that his Christian and western educational background (MA from Columbia) should have imparted in his personal life: 'I always think he treated me as a second-class citizen. There should be no excuse for that because he was educated in the United States. What is your excuse? He had girlfriends, he hurt my mother. But my husband's side [of the family] was straight and above board. The concubines would come in, at least the ones who bore children. But my father was supposed to have one wife and three kids, but he fooled around outside. And I said you are a hypocrite!'<sup>895</sup> Rosalyn describes McTyeire as a 'sanctuary' or 'refuge' and it was only at school she felt she had a free space to truly be herself, dressing as a boy to school and escaping traditional 'feminine' stereotypes expected of her at home. In narrating her life story Rosalyn directly relates the education she received at

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<sup>894</sup> Interview with Cao Shengjie, 22 October 2016, Shanghai.

<sup>895</sup> Interview with Rosalyn Koo, 5 November 2017, San Mateo, USA, 15.15-20.06.

McTyeire, which expounded the importance of girls' education, to her philanthropic work in later life, helping poor Chinese girls receive an education. After pursuing a successful career as a partner in an architecture firm in San Francisco, in 1989 Rosalyn launched the Spring Bud Project (Xiwang gongcheng 希望工程) with the support of the Shanxi All China Women's Federation. This project sponsored girls from poor families in rural Shanxi, enabling them to attend primary, high school and university.<sup>896</sup> Rosalyn directly related her philanthropic work for girls' education in later life to her experience at McTyeire.<sup>897</sup> Rosalyn's loyalty and love for her alma mater, and particularly her old principal Xue Zheng, can also be seen in her efforts to mobilise the American alumnae in the 1980s, who through their financial support of the school, were able to reinstate Xue Zheng as honorary principal in 1979. Alumnae were also able to reinstate music (an important part of McTyeire identity), and in 1981 succeeded in returning the school to being an all-girls institution, the only one of its kind in Shanghai.

Rosalyn may be an unusual example due to the extraordinary level of her philanthropic social-feminist activism and pivotal role in recapturing the school history. Indeed, many of her classmates pay tribute to her extraordinary leadership role in their alumnae association.<sup>898</sup> Many alumnae agree that the girls who came out of McTyeire and St. Mary's were somehow 'different'. They are indeed extraordinarily accomplished and determined women who have achieved remarkable things in their lives and careers both inside and outside of China. As one alumna put

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<sup>896</sup> The project has since been expanded all over China and until 2010 had raised 600 million Yuan, to build over 500 schools, enabling 1.7 million girls to access education across China. For more information see <https://www.wikigender.org/wiki/spring-bud-project/> and <http://www.1990institute.org/search/Springbud+>

<sup>897</sup> Interview with Rosalyn Koo, 5 November 2017, San Mateo, USA, 15:15-20:06.

<sup>898</sup> Zhu Lizhong, McTyeire California alumnae reunion, 4 November 2017, San Mateo.

it jokingly: ‘What you can say about McTyeire husbands is that they all married very powerful women!’<sup>899</sup>

What made graduates of these schools stand out? According to many of the alumnae I interviewed, this sense of being somehow ‘different’ and standing out from the crowd was a key part of missionary schoolgirls’ identity. What was this school identity? Naturally, it was unique and different for every missionary school covered in this thesis. For example, while McTyeire was known to produce fashionable, academically and musically accomplished girls, St. Mary’s distinguished itself by its reputation for more modest dress, stronger religious environment, and for its dance and drama programme. Riverside Academy was well known for its sporting achievements in the 1930s, while Hongdao prided itself on its academics and strong teacher training department (see appendix 2). As Ryan Dunch and Henrietta Harrison have highlighted, during the 1911 Revolution new identities as modern Chinese citizens were inculcated through signs and symbols of the nation, including flags, songs, and personal appearance, such as dress and hairstyles.<sup>900</sup> Similarly, at missionary schools, a school identity and sense of loyalty was inculcated through signs and symbols unique to each school and each class. These signs and symbols included the school and class mottos, logo and songs, as well as physical markers of identity in girls’ dress and appearance which connoted class identity: a class colour, a class flower, a class badge or class ring. At missionary schools such as McTyeire and St. Mary’s the *jie-mei* or ‘Big Sister-Little Sister’ system helped to transmit these traditions of class and school identity to the next generation. The annual production of the class yearbook, senior play and graduation

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<sup>899</sup> Interview with Zhang Luoluo, 8 November 2016, San Mateo, USA.

<sup>900</sup> Dunch, *Fuzhou Protestants*, p.137, Henrietta Harrison, *The Making of the Republican Citizen*, pp.60 -61.

ceremonies were also rites of passage that served to transmit these traditions and preserve their unique class identities for posterity.

Just as elite educational institutions worldwide still derive their legitimacy based on their long histories (passed down in their traditions and rites of passage), so elite missionary schools for girls in China shored up their reputations and prestige based on their long histories and traditions. This identity was in no small part tied to the elite social status of the girls whose parents could afford to pay the high tuition fees that missionary schools charged. Moreover, sending your daughter to a missionary school not only became a marker of social status for elite families in the early twentieth century, but also became seen as a vehicle for social mobility by some families. As Mae Yih (McTyeire class of 1946) puts it: ‘My parents sent me to McTyeire because my mother said all the ambassadors’ wives came from McTyeire ... It was a kind of a prestige. It’s the elite school for elite members of society. So if you want to be elite, your daughters have to go to McTyeire.’<sup>901</sup> This ‘clubbiness’, or elitism and exclusivity, marked by the cultivation of western social graces in dress, deportment and manners, also became a shared experience of suffering after 1949 as missionary school students were targeted for their elite backgrounds and American ‘imperialist’ cultural links. This exclusive identity has survived the decades of the Cultural Revolution, and since the 1980s alumnae have been able to reassert and celebrate their prestigious educational background once more. World-wide annual reunions are now held in a new socio-political context in which academic elitism, a fluency in English and western cultural values once again confer social capital.

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<sup>901</sup> Mae Yih in ‘Telling Women’s Lives’.

Periodically charged, as they were in the 1900s, 1920s and 1950s, as being the ‘brainwashed puppets of foreigners’, to what extent was this identity a foreign one? Chapter three has explored how missionary schools weathered the waves of the anti-foreign and anti-Christian hostility which rebounded against missionary schools across China in the 1920s. Particular flash points of hostility erupted in 1922 as anti-Christian campaigns were organised in response to the meeting of the World Council of Christian Students in Beijing and in May 1925 after the shooting of Chinese protestors by British policemen in Shanghai. These events fuelled the Educational Rights Recovery Movement (1924-1928) and culminated in the left-wing, anti-imperialist violence which accompanied the Northern Expedition of 1926-1927. While students’ reactions to such events varied from nonchalance to defence, distancing and in some cases open rebellion, missionary school students were not isolated or cut off from these movements in society as some historians such as Wen-shin Yeh have claimed.<sup>902</sup> Instead, they drew strength from their Christian education to demonstrate their patriotism. In order to defend their schools from anti-foreign and anti-Christian hostility in society, this generation of missionary school graduates self-consciously fused their patriotic and Christian beliefs in their commitment to social service activities. By participating in a myriad of social service activities: from teaching bible stories to poor children in their local area, to collecting money for flood and famine relief, to sewing clothes to send to soldiers fighting against the Japanese, missionary schoolgirls in the 1920-30s aimed to demonstrate to society that they could simultaneously serve their country and God. By carrying out such projects they were fulfilling their missionary teachers’ mandate to help others and demonstrating their patriotism and love for their countrymen.

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<sup>902</sup> Yeh, *Alienated Academy*, p. 211.

Missionary schoolgirls were therefore by no means isolated from wider social and political movements in the Post-May Fourth period. Nor were they simply the puppets of their foreign missionary teachers. They had the agency to forge their own understandings of how Christianity could help China and a profound sense of their own responsibility in bringing about a social-gospel inspired Christian modernity in China. So strong was their desire to use their own understanding of Christianity to serve their nation that missionary schoolgirls rebelled against their teachers to take an active part in military activities during the Northern Expedition, as we have seen in chapter three in the case of Margaret Fan. Margaret had the agency to take from her Christian education and upbringing what she saw as an imperative to help the country in a military capacity; in doing so she broke the boundaries of what missionary school educators and conservative government figures regarded as appropriate feminine behaviour.

We might also consider to what extent the charges laid against missionary school pupils were justified: that their foreign language and western cultural education somehow denationalised them and made them into the ‘brainwashed pawns of foreigners’. The crux of these criticisms came down to the foreign language of instruction in which girls were taught and their exposure to what society regarded as a foreign religion: Christianity. As in the case of Margaret Fan, evidence in their bi-lingual yearbooks contradicts such accusations by showing how girls had the agency to creatively combine different cultural influences that they were exposed to (at school, from their family background and the cosmopolitan cultural environment of treaty port cities in which they lived) in order to forge new cosmopolitan identities. These hybrid cultural identities, which were neither purely foreign nor purely Chinese, were expressed and negotiated in a myriad of small ways: the mixture of the

three languages (English, Mandarin Chinese and local dialects) that girls used at schools, the ways in which they combined Chinese and western cultural references in their jokes, nicknames and artwork, their mannerisms and deportment. Successfully cultivating these new hybrid identities at school prepared them well to negotiate their place as women in the new cosmopolitanism or, as Isabella Jackson defines it, 'Transnational colonialism', emerging in treaty port cities in the early twentieth century.<sup>903</sup> As missionary school graduates, their training somehow qualified them to act as intermediaries, and they could seamlessly traverse two worlds (Sino and western) by virtue of their hybrid identities. They were fluent in English and polished in western social graces, making them highly desirable brides for the ambitious young men who wanted to make a career for themselves in the customs, railways, postal services and foreign-owned businesses booming in republican Shanghai. Crucially for some, being Christian also gave them access to a new club: Sino-foreign Christian social circles and organisations which crucially provided Chinese Christian women with new networks of support and exposed them to opportunities for further study abroad and career advancement. By taking on leadership roles in their school, Student Unions and YWCAs they were also equipping themselves in the skills needed to become successful career women in their own right. Neither purely 'foreign' or 'Chinese' inspired, in their writings, cartoons, jokes and depictions of campus life, we can see girls were dynamically forging new cosmopolitan identities which helped them negotiate and make sense of these multiple influences, to carve out their place as women in the new social milieu of treaty port China.

Moreover, we must not neglect the changes that occurred in missionary schools over time. Girls' memories of missionary school in the period 1900-1920s do

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<sup>903</sup> Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, p. 26.

testify to the ‘foreign-style’ education they received: all classes were in English and Religious Education was compulsory. However, after 1927 when schools were required to register and comply with new nationalist government educational guidelines, we can see that schools were becoming more secular and more Chinese. Although still relying on foreign missionary societies for funding, by the early 1930s Chinese principals and the majority of Chinese board of directors controlled the day-to-day running of the school. English was no longer the primary language of instruction and the Christian atmosphere of the schools weakened as religious classes and services were no longer compulsory. Indeed, by the 1940s a minority of missionary schoolgirls identified themselves as Christian.<sup>904</sup>

Missionary school also sought to inculcate specific gendered identities in girls. As Chapter four and five explore, although missionary schools were the earliest public educational options available to girls, the purpose and justification for female education changed over time. An enduring conservative notion of womanhood which justified female education, to train ‘good wives and wise mothers’, advocated by the early generations of Chinese reformers and missionary teachers, was built upon and manipulated by the first generation of missionary school graduates for their own ends. Like their missionary educators, they used a traditional gendered rhetoric of woman’s ‘caring’ roles and responsibilities, harnessing this to a mutually reinforcing Christian and patriotic language of ‘service’ to push at the boundaries of what was acceptable for Chinese women to do in society: to become China’s first female teachers, doctors and nurses as well as Christian homemakers.

During the May Fourth period Chinese women had agency to imagine new and radical roles for themselves, advocating the cause of women’s suffrage, which

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<sup>904</sup> St. Mary’s was the exception to this trend (see school histories in appendix).

had been betrayed in the 1911 Revolution, and right to participate at the highest levels of government as leaders of society. However, as many of my interviewees, whose mothers graduated in this period of great flux testified, this was a difficult and paradoxical period to be a missionary-educated woman in China: equipped with a high level of knowledge, the skills to lead and Christian inspired social values, which imparted a driving sense of ‘purpose’ and ‘duty’ to help their less fortunate Chinese sisters, they were disappointed and frustrated upon leaving school, as they entered a society that was not yet ready for them. As Rosalyn Koo puts it: ‘I was very much influenced by my mother and aunts; they all attended university. My mother was educated at Yanjing for a couple of years; she didn’t finish. And my mother’s younger sisters both finished Yanjing. When you get these sisters together, I mean heaven help him! My father would just run. Very strong. But they were also the victims of the circumstances, of society. Even though they may be capable, they cannot work.’<sup>905</sup>

In order to move as ‘New Women’ within this restrictive world, missionary-educated women who wanted to pursue a career used the networks of support that missionary education provided them with to push at these boundaries. The alumnae associations and other organisations for educated Christian women, such as the YWCA and CWTU, were essential stepping stones from school to society in 1920-30, providing women with a platform and allowing them a space to demonstrate that their leadership and organisational skills honed at missionary schools qualified them to act as the future leaders of Chinese society. The local, national and international networks that such organisations provided, gave women the role models, support networks and opportunities to pursue a career outside of the home. For many of these

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<sup>905</sup> Interview with Rosalyn Koo, 5 November 2017, Part 2, San Mateo CA, 29:00-31:00.

ambitious women, teaching was one of the most natural career paths and they used their networks to succeed in their careers. Looking at the careers of three of the headmistresses of the schools covered in this study illustrates this point nicely. As Chapter One highlights, the principals of Riverside (Shen Yixiang), Hongdao (Zhou Juewei) and McTyeire (Xue Zheng) were all born into merchant class families at the turn of the century. They graduated from missionary schools (often the forerunner of the schools they became headmistress of) and studied at missionary universities before returning to their alma mater as teachers. After the nationalist government took power they were elected principals of their schools and had the opportunity to pursue Masters and PhD level education abroad at the expense of the missionary societies that sponsored their schools.<sup>906</sup> For those who did not have the ambition to become head teachers, many graduates were employed by missionary schools in East China as teachers or served as YWCA board members and secretaries for a short period before they married.

The next generation of missionary school graduates were brought up under the leadership of these sorts of Chinese Christian women educators, who were their role models and task masters, rather than predominantly foreign missionary teachers. These were my interviewees, who graduated from school in the 1930-40s. The type of education they received was both similar to and different from their mothers' generation in several important ways, as was the society they were about to enter. No longer were Christian teachers advocating a restrictive doctrine of femininity that prescribed their primary careers should be as Christian homemakers. Nor in the 1930s-40s did they need to defend themselves so staunchly from a society which regarded missionary schools as tools of foreign imperialism. They faced different

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<sup>906</sup> See appendix two for details.

challenges and opportunities to their mothers. The appearance of women in the public sphere was no longer a phenomenon which caused public comment and anxiety, and images of St. Mary's and McTyeire girls appeared on the front covers and in the pages of fashionable women's magazines and pictorial journals, advertising their education and social pedigree on the marriage market. From 1907 they had opportunities for higher education at missionary colleges for women and from 1920 onwards they could graduate from non-missionary universities in China. They could become teachers, doctors, nurses, and even businesswomen, bankers, lawyers, board members, general secretaries, politicians and revolutionaries. Staying single to pursue a career or education abroad before marriage was now an accepted and even desirable option for women from the upper classes. As in many European countries at this time, women who sought to pursue a career outside the home, i.e. as teachers, generally did not marry. Although students dreamed of fulfilling their career and romantic ambitions on the pages of their magazines in the May Fourth Era, it was not until the late 1930s that having a career alongside marriage became a real option for most missionary-educated Chinese women.<sup>907</sup>

In other ways there had been a retrenchment of conservative gender values and a re-emergence of the doctrine of domesticity during the New Life Movement which was launched by Chiang Kai Sheck's government in 1934. The Christian and Neo-Confucian inspired tenets of the New Life Movement, which stressed women's primary roles as household managers who were responsible for improving the moral fibre of the family (and nation) through their modern domestic training in hygiene, cleanliness and citizenship, were inculcated and reinforced in the curriculum of missionary schools for girls in this period. These conservative notions of femininity

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<sup>907</sup> For more on changing attitudes towards staying single and working before marriage, see Liu Chang, "Searching for a new lifestyle: Single women in Shanghai 1915-1949", PhD. Diss. King's College London, 2018.

and the idea that a woman's place should still be in the home (although equipped with a modern domestic education) was particularly stressed as women were mobilised for the war effort against Japan. Within this both expanded and contracted social space for women, for Rosalyn's generation missionary schools for girls represented a 'free space' or 'refuge' from a society which allowed women to be highly educated and do more things than ever before, but still stressed that their primary responsibilities were to become good wives and mothers and dictated how women should think, act, dress, and what it meant to be female. Within this context Rosalyn and her classmates used missionary schools as a laboratory to experiment with new, more fluid gendered identities. From pursuing same-sex courtships, to acting male roles in the school play, to rejecting makeup, boyfriends and hairstyles and cross-dressing, for girls such as Rosalyn, who describes herself as a 'tomboy' at school, missionary school provided a relief from the gender proscriptions of society and enabled them to experiment with new ways of being a woman in China. Although there are many examples of women who have taken to cross-dressing in Chinese history and literature in order to enter a male world, most famously perhaps Hua Mulan and Qiu Jin, these were individual and extraordinary examples, who either died for their cause in the course of their patriotic activities or returned to their traditional place once their task was complete. Missionary schools provided a space where girls were free to imagine and play with new roles and more fluid gender identities within the safety of an all-female environment and away from the pressures and realities of society. They had strong female role models as teachers who had already chosen a different path from that which society dictated was their main responsibility: to become wives and mothers. Missionary schools thus unintentionally created an incredibly productive and imaginative space where girls

played with limitless possibilities of what they could do in Chinese future society, from becoming the president to inter-stellar travellers, as well as getting married and having a family. In the words of one McTyeire alumna of 1934 they believed they could: ‘Do it all’.<sup>908</sup> The opportunities for leadership and honing of their organisational skills, which membership in student clubs and societies, such as the YWCA provided, also encouraged women to step forward as leaders in their schools in ways they might not have done in a mixed-sex environment. As we have seen, Xue Zheng firmly believed in the value of an all-girls middle school education.<sup>909</sup> This independence of thought and ability to lead inculcated at school also had unintended outcomes, as missionary schoolgirls had agency to take the initiative to forge their own understanding of the social gospel in China, combining their Christian education with a radical left wind agenda in war and the Civil War years.

As chapter seven highlights, a turning point for missionary schoolgirls came in the war years. For missionary schoolgirls this was a time of eye-opening new experiences. Forced to move campuses when their schools were occupied by the Japanese army, or when it was no longer safe to stay in them, girls were exposed to a far broader swathe of society on their daily commute to school, and they were no longer living in an ‘ivory tower’. Although still sheltered by their privilege and wealth from the hunger and desperation experienced by many women in the war, for some girls, witnessing the plight of refugees and the suffering of their fellow countrymen, expanded their world view and prompted them to start experimenting with new ways of practising their Christian, feminist and socialist beliefs. Through their participation in the YWCA, which had become infiltrated by the CCP in the

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<sup>908</sup> Vivian W. Yen in McTyeire Alumnae Association (eds.), *Telling Women’s Lives: In Search of McTyeire, 1892-1992*, (San Mateo, 1992). McTyeire class of 1934

<sup>909</sup> Xue Zheng in McTyeire Alumnae Association (eds.), *Telling Women’s Lives: In Search of McTyeire, 1892-1992*, (San Mateo, 1992).

1930s, some students such as Cao Baozhen and Qu Mingming, joined the CCP as underground members at school. Others continued to live lives of privilege and luxury, much as they had before the war. Such 'decadent', 'frivolous' and 'unpatriotic' behaviour disgusted a handful of their more progressive and left-wing classmates and drove them more towards the Communist cause. Divisions within the student body became acute in the Civil War period, with progressive teachers against older pro-missionary conservatives and radical students against the Christian ones. These divisions came into the open after 1949 as radical classmates and teachers came out as underground Party members and began to lead their schools. These progressive students, and organisations such as the YWCA, played a key role in helping Christian students adjust their thinking to the new political climate in the period 1949-1952.

Throughout this period missionary schools were not static institutions that presented one body of ideas to their students, but can be seen as evolving and changing spaces as different generations of women passed through their doors as teachers and students, and experimented with new ways of being women in modern China. Missionary schools for girls provided a space for such experimentation: separated by their foreign-owned status, this sense of difference sometimes made them targets of attack and sometimes made them into refugees, as Chinese society oscillated between hostility and openness to foreigners and foreignness throughout the twentieth century. For example, although their foreign status made them targets of attack during the anti-Christian hostility of the 1920s, by the 1940s their foreign status protected them from the Japanese during the early period of the war and from direct GMD government interference in the Civil War period. It was not until the Communist government disbanded and reorganised private educational institutions in

1952 that the school lost its 'different' and 'separate' status that conferred a degree of autonomy. Missionary school- girls had agency to create and direct this process. By passing down their class and school traditions they were active participants in making their school history and identity. They took from their education what they wanted and found useful and discarded the aspects they did not. For alumnae today, what has survived is a strong awareness of a special identity. They strive to preserve the signs and symbols of that identity, which represent a past in which they had social and political capital. Recapturing their history and telling their stories in their own words is for alumnae an important act of reasserting their agency and displaying their newly re-emerged social and political power in reform-era China, where a western education has become once again an essential attribute for the social and political elite.

By looking at missionary schools from the perspective of girls who went there and made up these institutions, we can glean new insights into the making of modern Chinese womanhood in the twentieth century. The struggles they underwent in moving from school to society, the ways in which they have fashioned their hybrid cultural identities as a marker of difference, and combined Christianity with feminist and left-wing ideas, are stories which do not fit neatly and have largely been left out of studies both in the histories of missions and the women's movement in China. This thesis has shown how missionary schoolgirls had agency to fashion their own modernity, from intersecting ideas of nationalism, Christianity and feminism. Returning to the opening of my thesis, there is not one way of telling their stories, but many, and reflecting the diversity and multiplicity of their experience has been a core goal of this project.

Missionary schools unintentionally provided a space where girls could experiment with new ways of being a woman in twentieth century China. Did such an education ill-prepare them for the reality that they would face in society or did they in their creative imagination and experimentation have agency to shape that reality? I would argue for the latter. Missionary schools provided a key space for experimentation, where girls tried on different ‘outfits’ and ‘played’ with different roles for later life. They were influenced by a mesh of different experiences they were exposed to at school: from foreign teachers who acted as role models and exhorted them to serve society according to the social gospel, to the pageants and plays where they could assert a freer gendered identity, to the leadership responsibilities they assumed in organising school life. In the process they forged key friendships and relationships, a support network which would help them in their struggle to reshape Chinese society and their role within it throughout their lives.

The longer term impact of going to a missionary school has reverberated throughout their lives: Some of my interviewees living today in the United States feel that their education helped them to integrate into life in the United States more easily upon their arrival, particularly for those who found themselves unable or unwilling to return after 1949. For some who witnessed or experienced the worst excesses of the Cultural Revolution, they feel that their Christian education gave them the moral values and strength necessary to endure and forgive. Others did not enjoy their time at school, but reacted against it, forging their own interpretation of the social gospel in the Chinese context by experimenting with new and more radical way of being a Chinese Christian woman and socialist to become leaders in the Mao era. Chapter four and epilogue of the thesis, which explore the role of the YWCA and how girls negotiated their identities in the period of transition to Communist rule, 1949-1952,

raise further questions about the relationship between the YWCA, Communism and missionary schools, which have yet to be fully explored in the literature. How did the student YWCAs become infiltrated by the CCP in the 1920-1930s? What tactics did they use to recruit members at YWCA student meetings? What does this tell us about the relationship between Christianity, Communism and the women's movement in China? Is this further evidence of a special form of Christianity as it developed in the Chinese context? The YWCA provides an interesting source of study for the roots of a unique Chinese Christian modernity, which one can see in the Christian community in China today.

**APPENDIX ONE**  
**LIST OF INTERVIEWS**

Chinese Name	English Name	Left School	Interview Date	Place	Notes
<b>进德女中</b> Jinde					
曹圣洁	Shengjie Cao	1949	22.10.2016	At her home	Shanghai
			12.12.2016	At her home	Shanghai
			03.07.2017	At her home	Shanghai
<b>弘道女中</b> Hongdao					
范海兰	Hailan Fan	1937	27.04.2016	At her home	Shanghai
方莲蒂	Liandi Fang	1951	30.11.2016	At Si Cheng Church via telephone	Hangzhou
金国英	Guoying Jin	1948	30.11.2016	At Hospital	Hangzhou
陆月清	Yueqing Lu	1949	30.11.2015	At Si Cheng Church	Hangzhou
许老师	Mrs Xu	1952	06.12.2015	At Si Cheng Church	Hangzhou
<b>聖玛利亚</b> St Mary's					
杨之会	Beatrice Yang	1946	28.02.2016	At her home	San Mateo
陈潘瑛	Dianna Chen	1949	10.11.2016	At her home	San Mateo
李葵	Gwendoline Lee	1952	17.10.2015	At St John's University reunion	Shanghai
沈郇望	Harriet Sun	1948	11.11.2016	At hospital	San Mateo
程锦倩	Jinqian Cheng	1944	21.07.2016	At her home	Beijing
刁蓓华	Beihua Diao	1952	15.10.2016	At her home	Beijing
董蔚君	Weijun Dong	1948	23.11.2016	At her home	Beijing
董悦	Yue Dong	1951	21.11.2016	At her home	Beijing
顾美诚	Catherine Gu	1948	11.05.2016	Ningbo hotel	Beijing St. Mary's group interview
			12.05.2016	At her home	
郭诚锡	Chengxi Guo	1939	11.05.2016	At her home	Beijing
郭琳	Lin Guo	1950	28.11.2016	At her home	Shanghai
梁郇德	Xunde Liang	1950	01.03.2016	At her home	San Francisco
邵莉梅	Limei Shao	1950	24.11.2016	At her home	Beijing
吴其慧	Qihui Wu	1947	11.05.2016	Ningbo hotel	Beijing St. Mary's group interview
			15.06.2016	At her home	
徐乃玓	Naiding Xu	1954	07.12.2016	At her home	Shanghai
徐乃珩	Naiheng Xu	1954	22.11.2016	At a restaurant	Beijing
徐信	Xin Xu	1950	15.12.2016	At hospital	Shanghai
杨小异	Xiaoyi Yang	1952	14.03.2016	At Zhongshan Park	Shanghai
杨之岭	Zhiling Yang	1951	20.07.2016	At a restaurant	Beijing
姚惠娟	Huijuan Yao	1945	15.10.2016	At St John's University reunion	Beijing
			10.04.2016	At a restaurant	
叶美娜	Mina Yeh	1951	15.10.2016	At St John's University reunion	Beijing
应曼蓉	Manrong Ying	1945	25.11.2016	At her home	Beijing
			18.04.2016	At Hengshan Community Church	
张如兰	Lannie Zhang	1953	10.05.2016	At her home	Beijing Group interview with Lucy Hong
张瑞云	Ruiyun Zhang	1952	22.07.2016	At her home	
张样保	Yangbao Zhang	1938	22.07.2016	At her home	Beijing
			11.05.2016	Ningbo hotel	
赵风风	Florence Zhao	1948	11.05.2016	Ningbo hotel	Beijing St. Mary's group

			14.06.2016	At her home	Beijing	interview
朱文佼	Wenjiao Zhu	1952	17.06.2016	At her home	Beijing	
朱文倩	Lydia Zhu	1953	11.05.2016	Ningbo hotel	Beijing	St. Mary's group interview
朱雅兰	Yalan Zhu	1948	12.11.2016	At Zhang Luoluo's home	San Mateo	
朱亚新	Yaxin Zhu	1950	06.12.2016	At her home	Shanghai	
朱焯	Emily Zhu	1956	23.11.2016	At Restaurant	Beijing	
俞慧耕	Yu Huigeng	Teacher 1949-1953	11.05.2016	Ningbo hotel	Beijing	St. Mary's group interview
			16.06.2016	Beijing Music Academy	Beijing	Graduate of Mary Farnham School
<b>中西女中</b>	McTyeire					
陈宗慈	Theresa Chen	1947	10.11.2016	At a coffee shop	San Mateo	
凌又融	Meimi Ling	1949	07.11.2016	At her home	San Mateo	
陈添弥	General Chen	1952	17.05.2016	At Zhongshan Park	Beijing	
朱蕴文	Rodalyn Koo	1947	05.11.2016	At her home	San Mateo	
			06.11.2016	At her home	San Mateo	
			07.11.2016	At her home	San Mateo	
			08.11.2016	At her home	San Mateo	
			09.11.2016	At her home	San Mateo	
			10.11.2016	At her home	San Mateo	
			12.11.2016	At her home	San Mateo	
			13.11.2016	At her home	San Mateo	
			05.11.2017	At her home	San Mateo	
			06.11.2018	At her home	San Mateo	
陶霞芳	Xiafang Tao	1956	09.04.2016	At Hospital	Shanghai	
			02.08.2018	At Hospital	Shanghai	
龚正冠	Zhengguan Gong	1952	09.05.2016	At her home	Beijing	
张琮	Long Zhang	1947	06.07.2016	At Yan'an Hotel	Shanghai	
丁毓明	Yuming Ding	1941	09.11.2016	At her home	Palo Alto	
洪倡明	Lucy Hong	1953	17.10.2015	At St John's University reunion	Shanghai	
			03.12.2015	YWCA	Shanghai	
			07.12.2015	YWCA	Shanghai	
			20.03.2016	Hengshan Community Church	Shanghai	
			27.03.2016	Hengshan Community Church	Shanghai	
			01.04.2016	East China Theological Seminary	Shanghai	
			18.04.2016	At Hengshan Community Church	Shanghai	Group interview with Lannie Zhang
			22.10.2016	At Cao Shengjie's Home	Shanghai	
			03.07.2017	At her home	Shanghai	
朱丽中	Lizhong Zhu	1950	11.11.2016	At her home	Los Altos	
刘泽墀	Zechi Liu	1947	24.11.2016	At her home	Beijing	
陈老师	Sally Chen	1945	07.11.2017	At her home	California	Requested to be anonymous.
张罗罗	Luoluo Zhang	1947	08.11.2016	At her home	San Mateo	

			06.11.2017	At her home	San Mateo	
			07.11.2017	At a restaurant	San Mateo	Group interview with Pearl Chen
曹老师	Ellen Cao	1939	25.11.2016	At her home	Beijing	
			26.11.2016	At her home	Beijing	
徐美贞	Meizhen Xu	1946	17.03.2016	At her home	Shanghai	Group interview with Jiaxun Xiao
			15.04.2016	Number Three Girls School	Shanghai	Group interview with Jiaxun Xiao
萧嘉珣	Jiaxun Xiao	1952	17.03.2016	At Meizhen Xu's home	Shanghai	Group interview with Meizhen Xu
			15.04.2016	Number Three Girls School	Shanghai	Group interview with Meizhen Xu
陈桂珩	Pearl Chen	1949	07.11.2017	At a restaurant	San Mateo, CA	Group interview with Luoluo Zhang
曹珍家	Anna Cao	1947	08.11.2017	Via telephone	St. Louis Obispo	
宋宝莲	Paulina Soong	1947	04.11.2017	At Peninsular Regent	San Mateo	
邹思敏	Simin Zou	1947	04.11.2017	At Peninsular Regent	San Mateo	
巫漪云	Yiyun Wu	1951	05.12.2016	At her home	Shanghai	
朱永琳	Yonglin Zhu	1950	13.12.2016	At her home	Shanghai	
徐仁	Ren Xu	1942	18.11.2016	At her home	Shanghai	
张荫生	Yinsheng Zhang	1952	22.03.2016	At her home	Shanghai	
朱素非	Sophie Zhu	1941	07.11.2016	At her home	San Francisco	
薛徽音	Georgiana Xue	1945	09.11.2016	At her home	Palo Alto	
席与时	Edith Xi	1947	09.11.2016	At her home	Palo Alto	
贾韵仪	Yunyi Jia	1951	09.12.2014	At her home	Shanghai	
王义芳	Yifang Wang	1947	10.11.2016	At a restaurant	San Mateo	
杨燠华	Yuhua Yang	1956	08.04.2016	At Huating Hotel and Towers	Shanghai	
<b>甬江女中</b>	<b>Yongjiang</b>					
何爱盈	Aiying He	1958	26.11.2015	At her home	Ningbo	
贺莉清	Liqing He	1954	02.12.2015	At her home	Shanghai	
王家瑜	Wang Jiayu	Remembering Wang Yunqin, 王韵琴, 1926	01.12.2015	At his home	Hangzhou	Nephew of Wang Yunqin
范爱侍	Aishi Fan	Remembering Margaret Fan, 范博理, 1925	27.11.2015	At his home	Ningbo	Brother of Margaret Fan
			02.12.2016	At his home	Ningbo	
			19.12.2016	At his home	Ningbo	
徐珍珠	Zhenzhu Xu	1950	28.11.2015	At Ningbo Marriot Hotel	Ningbo	Group interview with Meiling Fan
范美玲	Meiling Fan	1960	28.11.2015	At Ningbo Marriot Hotel	Ningbo	Group interview with Zhenzhu Xu.
姚惠娟	Huijuan Yao	1951	01.12.2016	At her home	Ningbo	
葛荀娥	Tao'e Ge	1954	16.10.2015	At her home	Ningbo	
			01.12.2016	At her home	Ningbo	

## APPENDIX TWO School Histories

### Case Study 1: Riverside Academy or Yongjiang Female Middle School (甬江女子中學) at Ningbo

According to the school anniversary magazine of 1948, Yongjiang Female Middle School (*yongjiang nüzhongxue*, 甬江女子中學) was established in 1923 from the union of three different missionary schools for girls.<sup>910</sup> The oldest of these schools was Mary Ann Aldersey's School founded in 1844.<sup>911</sup> Aldersey was the first single female missionary to China, and the school which she established in Ningbo in 1844 is often regarded by both Chinese and Western scholars as the start of modern education for women in China.<sup>912</sup> In 1848, the American Presbyterian Mission established a school for girls in Ningbo, under the charge of Mrs Cole.<sup>913</sup> Upon Aldersey's retirement to Australia on account of her health in 1852, the two schools were merged and became known as *Richongde* 日崇德.<sup>914</sup> In 1857, American Baptist missionary, Mrs McGowan, also opened a school for girls beside the north city wall and the river which was called *Xingchongde* 興崇德.<sup>915</sup> In 1919 the American Presbyterians and Baptists decided to merge the schools into two: a primary school department and a middle school which was named Yongjiang Female School.<sup>916</sup> Under the joint administration of the American Presbyterians and Baptists, Miss

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<sup>910</sup>Zhu Zhecheng, 'xiaoshi', *yinxian sili yongjiang nüzi zhongxue nianwu zhounian jiniankan* (1948).

<sup>911</sup>White, *A woman pioneer in China*, p. 9.

<sup>912</sup>Gu Xuemei, 'Jidujiao chuanjiaoshi yu jindai Zhejiang nüzi jiaoyu,' *Ningbo Daxuexuebao*, 30.5 (2008).

<sup>913</sup> Zhu Zhecheng, *xiaoshi*, p. 1.

<sup>914</sup>*Ibid.*,

<sup>915</sup>*Ibid.*,

<sup>916</sup>*Ibid.*,

Dora Zimmerman was chosen as the first headmistress when the school opened in the spring of 1923.<sup>917</sup>

After the establishment of the Nationalist Government in Nanjing in 1928, the school was transferred to primarily Chinese administration and Shen Yixiang, 沈貽蕪 (Esther Y. Sing) was chosen as headmistress.<sup>918</sup> (Fig. 68) Under increasing pressure from the Zhejiang provincial education authority, the school was required to register with the government in September 1931 and religion became an elective class.<sup>919</sup> Control of the school was passed to the Board of Governors of Riverside Academy, and one member of each mission was appointed to the school as a teacher. These were: Baptist missionary Florence Webster and Presbyterian Esther E. Gauss.<sup>920</sup> In 1934-1936 Principal Shen took a two-year leave of absence to study abroad in the United States.<sup>921</sup> During her absence, Ida L. Y. Chang (Zhang Lianying, 張蓮英), a Ginling College graduate was appointed as acting principal, followed by Marion H.Y. Bih, (Bi Gaoying 畢鎬英) a former pupil of Yongjiang.<sup>922</sup> In 1936 the English Methodist Missionary Society, decided to merge their girls' school (斐迪中學女子部), with Yongjiang and English Methodist missionary Doris Coombs joined the faculty as a teacher at Yongjiang.<sup>923</sup>

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<sup>917</sup>*Ibid.*,

<sup>918</sup>*Ibid.*,

<sup>919</sup>Principal's report, April 16th 1932, NCA, 日 10-1-307, p.51.

<sup>920</sup> For the personnel file of Esther Mary Gauss See Presbyterian Historical Society Archives: PHS – RG82-360-32-8. The main bulk of Gauss's correspondence can also be found amid the partially catalogued collection of incoming correspondence from China: PHS- RG82-2-10 to RG82-66-5. The Baptist Historical Archives at Mercier University in Atlanta hold the correspondence of Northern and Southern Baptist missionaries to China on Microfilm. For Dora Zimmerman see: BHA – 264-5-6 and 307-3-6. For Florence Webster see 262-3-8, 306-1-3, 306-1-4, and 352-1-3.

<sup>921</sup> Zhu Zhecheng, 'xiaoshi', p. 1

<sup>922</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2

<sup>923</sup> The records of the English Methodist Mission are in the Archives of SOAS, University of London. See MMS –FBN7 – Womens work- Correspondence – China- 1933-1945- Doris Coombs Correspondence- 1933-1945.

During the Japanese bombing and occupation of Ningbo from 1941-1945 the school was closed and temporarily relocated to the countryside of Yin County.<sup>924</sup> The school was reopened in Ningbo after extensive rebuilding works in 1949, only to be hit by an incendiary bomb during the Civil War in 1949, just as the rebuilding work was about to be completed.<sup>925</sup> In 1952 the school was renamed Zhejiang Province Ningbo Female Middle School (*Zhejiangsheng Ningbo nüzi zhongxue* 浙江省寧波女子中學). The school, which survives in Ningbo today as Yongjiang Vocational High School (*Ningbo shi yongjiang zhiye gaoji zhongxue* 寧波市甬江職業高級中學), still associates with its prestigious past; the gates of the modern school are proudly inscribed with the date of its predecessor's foundation as the earliest school for girls in China.<sup>926</sup>

*Students and Staff: Religious, Academic and Socio-Economic Background*

For the first two decades of the twentieth century, missionary schools for girls remained the only middle school options available to girls in Ningbo at the senior level. While a government normal school was established in Ningbo in 1912, it was not until 1931 that the government made any provision for girls at the middle school level. Other missionary school options in Ningbo in the 1920s included CMS St. Catherine's or MMS Feidi Girls' School. Unlike Riverside, however, these missionary schools run by a single English missionary society were much smaller, poorly financed and consequently had fewer resources and facilities available to girls.<sup>927</sup>

Although Yongjiang was primarily a boarding school, the school also accepted a small number of day pupils between 1923 and 1949. In the spring of 1932

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<sup>924</sup>Zhu Zhecheng, 'xiaoshi', p. 2.

<sup>925</sup>*Ibid.*,

<sup>926</sup> Ningbo shi jiaoyu weiyuanhui bian, *Ningbo shi xiaoshiji*, p. 228.

<sup>927</sup> See Cressy, 'Middle School Standards, second study' p. 77.

the number of boarding students was 141 and the number of day girls was seventeen.<sup>928</sup> According to the available statistics, Riverside was thus an average sized middle school for girls in East China and the largest of all girls' middle schools in Ningbo.<sup>929</sup> The school was divided into a junior and senior section with three classes in each: Junior I, II and III and Senior I, II and III. Statistics on the age of the pupils in 1932 also reveal that the age of pupils in the school ranged from eleven to twenty-three years, with the majority of girls (eighty-three per cent) aged fourteen to sixteen years old.<sup>930</sup>

From the administrative records of the school we can glean a picture of the socio-economic background of the students who attended Yongjiang in the 1920-1940s. The charts included in the headmistress's reports for this period suggest that the overwhelming majority of Yongjiang students were from wealthy middle-class backgrounds.<sup>931</sup> In 1932 seventy per cent of students' parents are listed as 'merchants', with only 0.5 per cent listed as 'farmers.'<sup>932</sup> These statistics not only reflect the dominant socio-economic make-up of Ningbo as a long-established port city, but also reveal the changing attitudes towards foreign missionary education in China. By the 1930s it was desirable to give your daughter a foreign missionary education to make her more desirable in the urban marriage market. The school fees for Riverside, which in 1926-1927 were 70 dollars for junior middle school boarders and 74 dollars for senior middle school boarders, reveal the school to be just under the average for mission schools for girls in East China (see fig. 20).

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<sup>928</sup>Principal's Report, April 16, 1932, NCA, 10-1-307.

<sup>929</sup> See Earl Herbert Cressy, 'Christian middle schools in China, First Nationwide statistics, 1932-1933', East China Christian Educational Association, Bulletin No. 32, (Shanghai, 1933), p. 3.

<sup>930</sup> 'Distribution of students Age', Principal's Report, April 16, 1932, NCA, 10-1-307.

<sup>931</sup> 'Distribution of occupations of the students' parents', Principal's Report, April 16, 1932, NCA, 10-1-307

<sup>932</sup>*Ibid.*,

We can also glean an understanding of the primary educational background of Yongjiang students. While the majority of students in 1932 came from other missionary ‘feeder schools’ in Ningbo, including Baptist *Shengmo* 聖模, Presbyterian *Chongde* 崇德, CMS *Rende* 仁德女校 and MMS *Fedi* 斐迪女校, a significant minority of thirty-five percent came from non-missionary school backgrounds.<sup>933</sup> As we know, Riverside was a feeder school for women’s colleges in China, including Ginling College in Nanjing, and we can start to build up a picture of how girls were fed into the missionary school system in the course of their higher education and the links between missionary schools at the primary, middle and higher level on a regional basis.<sup>934</sup>

From the headmistress’s annual reports we can understand the changing religious make-up of the school. Over time the number of students from Christian homes declined from forty-two per cent in 1929 to only fourteen per cent in 1937.<sup>935</sup> Moreover, with the registration of the school with the government in 1931, religion became an elective course and chapel attendance was made non-compulsory.<sup>936</sup> Despite increasing pressures to secularise the school curriculum, the religious environment of the school remained a primary concern throughout the 1930s. As Principal Shen’s 1931 report reveals: ‘We prayed earnestly that the sudden increase of new students would not thin-out our religious atmosphere. Thank God almost all of the new students are interested in Christianity.’<sup>937</sup> Indeed, the records suggest that the school did maintain its religious character successfully. Many students elected voluntary bible study, and chapel services continued to be well attended. In 1930

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<sup>933</sup> ‘Feeding Schools’, Principal’s Report, April 16, 1932, NCA, 旧 10- 1-307.

<sup>934</sup> Tang, ‘Women’s education in China’ p. 13.

<sup>935</sup> Principal’s Report, April 16, 1932, NCA, 旧 10- 1-307

<sup>936</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>937</sup> Principal’s Report, May 9, 1931, NCA, 旧 10- 1-307

Principal Shen reports: 'Our students are rather interested in religion. Seventy per cent of the students go to church on Sundays. The attendance at chapel in the morning is 80%, the evening prayers led by the students who are Christian has perfect attendance.'<sup>938</sup>

Although by 1930-1931 many of the girls who attended Yongjiang did not come from a Christian home, or define themselves as Christian, the high percentage of chapel attendance alongside pupils' level of activities in organisations such as the YWCA, suggests that the environment of the school remained a primarily Christian one. Indeed, we know that some students who did not come from Christian homes converted as a result of their education at Yongjiang. In 1936 the Principal reports: 'There were four students and two teachers baptized last summer. We had evangelistic meetings during six days in February. The speaker Miss Yi Ming-cheng came from the Bible School in Kiangwan 江灣, Shanghai. The effort was quite successful in the junior middle school. There are more than thirty girls who acknowledged Jesus Christ as their saviour for the first time. We notice a continued effect.'<sup>939</sup>

The educational, professional and religious backgrounds of the staff at Yongjiang also reveal much about the intellectual and religious environment of the school at the time. With the establishment of the Nationalist Government and increasing pressures to conform to government education standards, the teaching faculty became increasingly Chinese in the period 1928-1949. Indeed, by 1936 there remained only three foreign teachers: Mrs Benjamin, Mrs Thomas, and Miss Coombs, who were English language teachers.<sup>940</sup> The increasing proportion of Chinese staff at

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<sup>938</sup> Principal's Report, June 7, 1930, NCA, 卬 10- 1-307

<sup>939</sup> Principal's Report, March 27, 1936, NCA, 卬 10- 1-307

<sup>940</sup> See list of Faculty 1936 spring, Principal's Report, March 27 1936, NCA, 卬 10- 1-307

Yongjiang also reflects long-term and much debated missionary efforts to indigenise the Church in China. Although an independent Chinese church was always purported to be the goal of the missionary enterprise, missionaries debated at length to what extent and at what point the Chinese church was ready to be self-governing.<sup>941</sup> Indeed, at Yongjiang tensions over the issue of self-governance still remained well into the 1930s, as a note included in the 1936 meeting minutes clearly reveals:

The schools have been given by us into Chinese hands – Are we absolutely sure that we are allowing our Chinese friends to exercise the control we have once handed to them ... Too many of us as foreigners do not even allow our Chinese Principal to shut the windows or put away furniture without close supervision, we do not allow them to spend a cent without the efficient supervision of ourselves. Are we playing the game honestly with them? Are we building up self-sufficiency or dependency?<sup>942</sup>

Principal Shen continues to write her annual reports in English until 1937, suggesting that foreign missionary involvement in the school remained strong throughout the 1930s. When considering the educational environment in which the girls at Yongjiang developed their ideas, it is important to recognise that, while officially registered with the government, foreign missionary influences and agenda in the school remained strong throughout this period. Moreover, the Church remained the largest source of funding for the school well into the 1940s.<sup>943</sup>

Shen Yixiang served as the first Chinese Principal of Yongjiang from 1927-1949.<sup>944</sup> She was an obvious candidate for the position. Born on 6 November 1901 into a merchant family background in Fenghua 奉化, Zhejiang, Shen Yixiang was educated at home by a tutor before entering the Baptist Sarah

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<sup>941</sup> See Dunch, *Fuzhou Protestants*, pp. 1-47.

<sup>942</sup> 'Notes re Sunday Games', Nov 27, 1936, NCA, 旧 10-1-307, p 129.

<sup>943</sup> See budget in Principal's reports, 1937-1948, NCA, 旧 10-1-308

<sup>944</sup> See Principal's reports 1923 – 1949, NCA, 旧 10-1-307/308.

Bachelor Memorial School for Girls in Ningbo (Chongde nü xiao 崇德女校). She became a Christian (Baptist) while at the school, and went on to study education at Shanghai University (Hujiang daxue 滬江大學), graduating in 1926. Upon graduation Shen returned to Ningbo and was invited to teach at the newly formed Riverside Girls' Academy. Half a year later, in May 1927, when her missionary colleagues were forced to leave Ningbo on account of the hostility to foreigners during the Northern Expedition, she was elected to become principal of Yongjiang.<sup>945</sup> In 1935-1937 Principal Shen was sponsored by the Baptist Mission to pursue MA studies at the Crozer Theological seminar and University of Pennsylvania, where she took advanced courses in Education.<sup>946</sup> Principal Shen was regarded as a conscientious headmistress who went to great pains to develop the school during her Headship.<sup>947</sup> In particular, she greatly improved the physical education facilities, establishing a new gymnasium and coaching the school's first basketball team.<sup>948</sup> Principal Shen was remembered by students and staff alike as 'an excellent teacher.'<sup>949</sup> However in 1952, due to her close connection with a missionary establishment, she was denounced as an American imperialist sympathiser.<sup>950</sup> As we shall see, Principal Shen's strong Christian sentiments undoubtedly inspired her pupils, and we can assume that her presence at Yongjiang would have had a profound influence on the school's religious atmosphere.

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<sup>945</sup> Edith G. Traver, *Five Women of China*, (New York, 1942), PHS – RG82-70-7.

<sup>946</sup> Transcript, Shen I-Hsing, University of Pennsylvania, Graduate School and *University of Pennsylvania One Hundred and Eighty First Commencement for the conferring of Degrees*, Municipal Auditorium, Wednesday, June 9<sup>th</sup> 1937, at 10 o'clock, p. 19.

<sup>947</sup> Wang Wei (Producer). 'Nü xue xiansheng', *Ningbo dainshitaiwenyibu* (2003).

<sup>948</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>949</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>950</sup> *yongjiang nüzhongguanyu Shen Yixiang, jiaoyusixiang de pipandaimaiguojiludeng wenjian*, 27 May 1952, NCA, 10-1-50.

From the headmistress's reports from this era, we know that the majority of the teaching staff graduated from well-known Christian missionary establishments, with impressive teaching credentials (see fig. 24). In 1931, Principal Shen reported happily that Yongjiang had the 'best group of teachers it can ever expect to have'.<sup>951</sup> She goes on the detail the qualifications of her staff: 'Miss Zee, a Ginling College graduate teaches general science and music, Mrs. New, formally Miss Jane Jing, a Shanghai College graduate, teaches social science, Miss Pao, Nan Kai Undergraduate, teaches mathematics ... I feel honoured to report to you that they have all proved to be very good teachers.'<sup>952</sup> The fact that Yongjiang could attract such an impressive group of missionary educated graduates indicates the growing popularity and reputation of the school as well as its consequent rising academic standards within the educational landscape of Zhejiang. By 1939 Yongjiang had firmly established its reputation within the hierarchy of missionary middle schools in East China, and although not as exclusive and expensive as some of the upper-class girls' schools in Shanghai, it could offer students senior middle school education in the hands of highly qualified teachers, allowing them to go on to study at universities for women, such as Ginling College in Nanjing.<sup>953</sup>

The educational background of Yongjiang teachers also reveals the educational networks that were operating in the missionary school system on local, regional, national and international levels.<sup>954</sup> For example, there is a clear

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<sup>951</sup> Principal's Report, May 9, 1931, NCA, 10-1-307

<sup>952</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>953</sup> Tang, 'Women's education in China' p. 13.

<sup>954</sup> For example, by 1939 out of a faculty of 24 Chinese teachers (10 male, 14 female), all but four had university or college level degrees and 10 were graduates of missionary universities. Male Chinese teachers tended to be trained at non-missionary institutions while a higher proportion of female Chinese teachers received liberal arts degrees from missionary universities. This reflects the fact that missionary education still dominated higher education options for women in the 1930s. However, while the majority of staff had previous teaching experience before coming to Yongjiang, only five had any formal teacher training, thus reinforcing the fact that by 1930s missionary normal training,

connection between missionary middle schools at the regional level with four teachers in the 1939 faculty having taught at other missionary middle schools before coming to Yongjiang, including Peide (陪德) School in Yangzhou, Junde (君德) School in Suzhou, Siming (四明) in Ningbo and McTyeire (中西) in Shanghai. (See fig. 24).<sup>955</sup> The school also recruited from within the pool of its own graduates, with three teachers coming to the faculty having graduated from the senior middle school department. Missionary schools thus drew upon each other's graduates to staff their schools for girls. Missionary teachers at Yongjiang also circulated between their schools on a local level, especially in the case of union institutions, and they were often sent where they were most needed. At Yongjiang, Esther Gauss had previously taught at the Presbyterian predecessor school, Chongde, while Baptist missionary Florence Webster transferred to Yongjiang from Hongdao in 1929. Interestingly, by 1938, missionary teachers only taught music and English, with a Chinese graduate of Ginling Theology department teaching the bible. We know from their annual reports, however, that missionary teachers at Yongjiang continued to be heavily involved in the spiritual life of the school, and were responsible for running Sunday worship and extra-curricula religious activities for students. We also know that in 1929 all of the staff were Christian except the drawing teacher and the director of physical education.<sup>956</sup> As a result of being exposed to this overwhelmingly Christian educational environment, students at Yongjiang were undoubtedly influenced by the worldviews and religious opinions of their teachers. Indeed, students writing about their daily lives at Yongjiang reveal the close relationships between students and staff that developed in the school. As Zhou Yuyin (周裕蔭)

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and their middle school teachers' levels of training was still lagging behind government schools. Principal's Report, April 26, 1939, NCA, 旧 10- 1-307.

<sup>955</sup> Principal's Report, April 26, 1939, NCA, 旧 10- 1-307.

<sup>956</sup> Principal's Report, May 25, 1929, NCA, 旧 10- 1-307

recalls in 1948: ‘It seems as if the teachers here cherish us like their own children.’<sup>957</sup>

It is with these influences in mind that we must consider the writings of the girls in their magazine, understanding that their views and opinions were inevitably shaped by the specific educational environment at Yongjiang School.

### **Case Study 2: Hangzhou Union School for Girls or Hongdao Female Middle School (弘道女子中學)**

Hongdao School for Girls at Hangzhou was established in 1912 by a union of three different missionary schools for girls: American Southern Presbyterian School, *Zhen Cai nüxiao* (貞才女校) established in 1867, American Northern Presbyterian Girls’ School, *Yucai nüxiao* (育才女校) established in 1899 and the Northern Baptist School for Girls, *Huilan nüxiao* (蕙蘭女校) established in 1902. When the school was formed the middle school department, higher primary and lower primary were all located at different locations across Hangzhou due to the lack of a suitable site which could accommodate all three. It was not until 1915 that the missions could raise enough money between them to establish a site for the school which could accommodate all three departments and student dormitories, located on today’s Xueshi (學士路) Road.<sup>958</sup> See fig. 69 for map of school grounds. In the Hongdao twentieth anniversary magazine, pupil Wang En Pao (class of 1932) describes the beauty of their campus and its buildings:

The buildings of our school are splendid and in all are in foreign style. There is a garden surrounding buildings. It is more beautiful and neat than any other middle school campus in Hangchow ... We have a basketball court and a tennis court in front of the gymnasium and a track behind the senior dormitory. Altogether there are eight buildings on the campus. There are the administration building, the junior dormitory, the

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<sup>957</sup>Zhou, ‘Shenghuo zai Yongjiang’ p.15-16.

<sup>958</sup>‘Ben xiao shi lue’, *Hongdao ershi zhou jinian kan*, (1932), pp. 101-102. HCA – 36-1-12.

senior dormitory, the foreign faculty residence, the washroom, the gymnasium, kitchen and the gatehouse. All these buildings are made of grey brick ... All these buildings are furnished simply but prettily and neatly. Each room has a large window and doors. The glass in the windows and doors is large and clear and the walls are white, so all the rooms are well lighted and well ventilated. Every classroom has several blackboards and all the floors are painted red except in the senior dormitory where they are dark brown. I'm sure our school is a good place to study because the air is so clear and the cedar tree is so beautiful, especially the spring when the grass is green and the flowers are blooming. It is also good for health. I like campus very much.<sup>959</sup>

Hongdao thus differed from Yongjiang in the respect that it was a much larger school, comprising of a kindergarten, primary and middle school in one compound. There were many advantages of this set up: missions could more easily coordinate their work and ensure that pupils would be at the required level to progress smoothly from primary to middle school level work. Moreover, because the school included a primary and kindergarten, this presented an ideal opportunity for middle school students to engage in normal work, and in 1915 a normal school department was started.<sup>960</sup> By 1915 several other girls' schools existed in Hangzhou, including CMS Mary Vaughan, private Huixing Female School and the government-run Zhejiang Normal School for Women (see Appendix table 1). Hongdao distinguished itself from other educational options for girls by being able to provide girls' education from kindergarten to senior middle level, with the option of a normal department for those students who decided to pursue teacher training – an array of educational options that very few other girls' schools could offer in this period.

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<sup>959</sup> Wang En pao, 'Our School', Hangzhou Union Girls School Twentieth Anniversary publication (Hangzhou, 1932), pp. 4-5.

<sup>960</sup> 'Ben xiao shi lue', pp. 101-102.

In 1915, Baptist missionary Ellen J. Peterson was selected as the first headmistress of the new school campus, and during her furlough from autumn 1919 to summer of 1920, Presbyterian missionary Louis D. Lyon took over the role of headmistress.<sup>961</sup> In 1922 a new school gymnasium was built, and the next year a new upper middle school dormitory was built to meet the rising demand. In 1924 the school changed its structure to meet the requirements the new educational laws promulgated in 1922; instead of four years of middle school, there were to be three years of junior and three years of senior middle school (see fig. 9. for the structure of the 1922 educational system). In the autumn of 1927 the school elected its first Chinese principal, Ni Xuemei, (倪雪梅). Principal Ni was the daughter of a Baptist pastor and a graduate of Hongdao School (class of 1914). She went on to study at Ginling College, and then worked at Bridgeman School (裨文女校) in Shanghai and served as the principal of the Baptist school in Shaoxing before coming to Hongdao. In 1929 she felt called to pursue evangelical work and was replaced by Sarah Chow (周覺昧). Sarah Chow, also a Hongdao graduate (class of 1920) taught at the Baptist school in Hangzhou before studying for a BA in Education at Hujiang University in Shanghai. She then served as a teacher and principal in the Baptist Shaoxing Girls' School before becoming the principal of Hongdao.<sup>962</sup> In 1931 the school was registered with the Zhejiang provincial education authorities.<sup>963</sup> As Helen G. Siu (Hongdao Graduate of 1918) recalls in the 1932 anniversary volume, the issue of registration was a difficult one owing to the different attitudes taken by the various missions running the school:

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<sup>961</sup> The school had two foreign missionary headmistresses, a medical missionary Dr J.V. Lee (1912-1914) and Rebecca Wilson (1914-1915) before Baptist missionary Ellen J. Peterson was selected as the first headmistress of the new school campus. See 'Our Principal's', *Hangzhou Union Girls School Twentieth Anniversary publication* (Hangzhou, 1932) pp. 2-4.

<sup>962</sup> See 'Our Principals' pp. 2-4.

<sup>963</sup> 'Ben xiao shi lue', pp. 101-102.

At present it is hard for anyone to run a school, especially a missionary school supported by three missions. It was hard for the Principal to get the school registered as the point of view of the three missions was somewhat different, but fortunately the difficulties have been overcome and finally the school has been registered. The alumnae members were happy indeed when the good news was proclaimed in the newspapers.<sup>964</sup>

In 1937, during the war with Japan, the school was disbanded and first moved to Jiande (建德) in Zhejiang province and shortly afterwards to Shanghai, where it joined the East China Christian School Association (東華區基督教學校聯會) of fifteen middle schools which had been forced to relocate to the international concession during the war. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour in 1942, the East China Association of Christian Schools was also disbanded. In 1945 the school was restarted in Hangzhou, and with help from alumnae donations, new library books and science equipment were bought to replace those damaged by the Japanese army. After 1949 the school came under the control of the new communist government and in October 1952 the school became the Hangzhou Female Middle School (省立杭州女子中學).<sup>965</sup>

The curriculum at Hongdao was very similar to Riverside. In 1926 at the junior middle school level (three years) girls studied English, Chinese, religion, mathematics, hygiene, general science, history, geography, civics, music, handwork, PE, art and music. At the senior level, the middle school curriculum diversified into home economics, social problems and specialised courses on teaching methods and school administration. Alternatively, girls could choose to transfer on to the normal course, which was a further three years teacher training. Girls could elect the primary

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<sup>964</sup> Helen G. Siu 'The Union Girls School as I see it', *Hangzhou Union Girls School Twentieth Anniversary publication* (Hangzhou, 1932) pp. 14.

<sup>965</sup> Liu Zhuang and Fang Liandi (eds.), *Hongdao nüzhong jinian kan*, (Hangzhou, 2008) p.6.

or kindergarten normal course, which provided specialised courses and teaching experience, similar to Wuben's normal course. Entrance requirements specified that girls must be at least sixteen years of age to take the normal course, and must have completed two years of middle school training. Girls seeking to enter the junior middle school must have graduated from higher primary schools or equivalent.<sup>966</sup> With its excellent facilities and provision of normal education, Hongdao was an academically strong school within the educational landscape of East China at this time. In her report of the academic year 1930-1931 Hongdao Principal Sarah Chow reports:

Our work this year has been quite satisfactory. There is continued friendly feeling existing between the school and the people outside, so that many are anxious to send us their children to be taught, thus increasing our student body each semester. The supervisor from the Commissioner of Education, on making his inspection of our school, accorded us generous praises. The head of the Municipal Government and the head of the Commissioner of Education spoke here and commented on everything favourably. By these, I am happy to realise that our school is esteemed highly by all around us.<sup>967</sup>

Thus, in the 1930s Hongdao enjoyed a better academic reputation than Yongjiang, which was struggling to meet the new government standards after registration. As chapter three highlights it also enjoyed a more harmonious relationship with local society and provincial educational authorities. The higher tuition fees at Hongdao also indicate its more prestigious academic status than Yongjiang. According to Earl Herbert Cressy's *Study of Middle School Standards in East China for 1928-1929*, Hongdao fees for senior boarding schoolgirls (excluding books, stationery and travel) was 83 dollars (slightly above the average 81 dollars), compared to Yongjiang which

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<sup>966</sup> Hangzhou Union Girls school announcement, 1925-1926, PHS NT6.3 H193ag.

<sup>967</sup> Sarah Chow, Annual report, PHS – RG431-2-13 Hangzhou Union Girls School Principal's report.

cost 74 dollars per year (see fig. 20). Another indication of its higher academic standing is revealed by the higher numbers of students who went directly on to study at university after graduation. For example, in 1926 Hongdao sent six of its students to university (the same number as McTyeire in Shanghai), whereas Riverside only sent one student to university in the same year.<sup>968</sup>

Due to its high enrolment figures, (in 1929 Hongdao had 120 middle schoolgirls compared to 73 at Riverside and only 30 at CMS Mary Vaughan), Hongdao was the fourth wealthiest school for girls in East China, and the wealthiest school for girls in region outside of Shanghai. In 1926-1927 its total income was 35,892 dollars with a large mission appropriation of 5,845 dollars. In contrast, Riverside, which only received 3,857 dollars from the missionary societies funding it, had a total income of 8,839 dollars, ranking eighteenth in East China out of thirty-five schools surveyed. See fig.15. Overall, Hongdao had the largest enrolment, and was the wealthiest school for girls in Zhejiang province. Hongdao was also better equipped than many schools, even in Shanghai, the value of the school (including land, buildings, furniture, science equipment, musical equipment and library books) was estimated at 276,084 dollars. Yongjiang, according to the same statistics had a net value of 127,538 dollars, but had a better equipped library than Hongdao both in terms of English and Chinese books.<sup>969</sup>

Another interesting comparison we can glean from the available data are differences in the background of students and teachers. Although Hongdao in 1928-1929 had a higher number of teachers on its books (20) compared to Riverside (15), reflecting the fact that Hongdao was a larger school with kindergarten, primary,

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<sup>968</sup> Cressy, 'Middle school standards, second study' p. 15.

<sup>969</sup> *Ibid.*, p.77.

middle and normal departments, a smaller percentage of its staff were Christian.<sup>970</sup> Hongdao also had a lower proportion of students from Christian family backgrounds (32 percent) than Riverside (44 percent), and thus the environment of Hongdao may have been more secular than Riverside. Evidence from student magazines bears this out, and a higher proportion of students' writings in the Riverside yearbook of 1931 concern Christianity directly. In contrast, at Hongdao in the 1932 anniversary magazine, the student writing is more concerned with education and national affairs.

The family background of students who attended Hongdao was similar to Riverside. Both schools drew their students mainly from merchant families and government family backgrounds (see fig. 19). The Hongdao twentieth anniversary yearbook also allows us to understand the catchment area from which the school drew its pupils (see fig. 21). While the majority of students were from Zhejiang (73 percent) and Jiangsu (11 per cent) province, the fact that some students came to school from as far afield as Guangdong, Guizhou and Guangxi is illustrative of the reputation of the school and the importance of East China as a centre in the provision of middle school education for girls.

### **Case Study 3: St. Mary's Hall in Shanghai or *Sheng Maliya nüxiao* (聖瑪利亞女校)**

St Mary's Hall (*Sheng maliya nüxiao*, 聖瑪利亞女校) was established in 1881 by the American Episcopal Missionary Society. The school was established from a union of two existing Episcopal girls' schools: the Emma Jones School (*Wen ji nü xiao*, 文紀女校), established in honour of Episcopal missionary Emma Jones near the Episcopal church in Hongkou in 1851, and the Bridgeman Memorial School (*Biwen nü xiao*, 裨文女校), established in 1861 at the west gate in the southern

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<sup>970</sup> *Ibid.*, p.30.

Chinese city by Eliza Gillette. In June of 1881 the mission decided to merge their two girls' schools, founding a new boarding school for girls within the campus of St. John's University (Sheng Yuehan daxue, 聖約翰大学).<sup>971</sup>

The history of St. Mary's is closely tied to St. John's University, which was founded in 1871 by the Episcopal Mission. Not only did they share facilities, staff and resources, but top students at St. Mary's Girls could progress to St. John's without taking the entrance examination when the university started to admit women in 1936.<sup>972</sup> Staff who taught at St. John's University could send their daughters to St. Mary's for a reduced tuition fee as they could their sons to St. John's Middle School for Boys, also founded on the St. John's University campus. The alumni associations of St. Mary's and St John's are still linked today, and St Mary's girls are invited to participate in the biannual world reunions of St. John's University.

Episcopal missionary, Henrietta Farris, was appointed as the first principal of St. Mary's, and the early school curriculum was designed to create obedient and well-trained Christian wives and mothers who would make ideal wives for St. John's graduates.<sup>973</sup> Thus, bible training and domestic education formed a large part of the early curriculum at St. Mary's. In 1890 American missionary, Miss Steva L. Dodson, was appointed principal. During the period 1890-1920 St. Mary's expanded in terms of student numbers, curriculum, building and facilities, with a music department established in 1903 and a library opened in 1907. In 1904 the school was reorganised to offer a bilingual curriculum. St. Mary's had a strong music course, which by 1910 had become well known for its musical training. Thus, by the first decade of the twentieth century St. Mary's was competing academically and socially for elite

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<sup>971</sup> 'Xiao shi', *Shengmaliya nü xiao wushi zhou jinian tekan* (Shanghai, 1931), pp. 1-5.

<sup>972</sup> Xu Yishua (ed.), *Shanghai Sheng yuehan daxue (1879-1952)*, (Shanghai, 2009), p. 45

<sup>973</sup> Cheng Jingyu, *Shengmaliya nüxiao*, vol. 1, p. 27.

students with McTyeire, distinguishing itself with its reputation for music, dance and arts. By the 1920s St. Mary's had expanded to the extent that a new site was necessary, and in 1923 the school was moved to a new campus on Brennan Road, with Miss Caroline Fullerton as principal.<sup>974</sup> St Mary's girls all remember the beauty of Spanish style buildings on the new campus, which formed a rectangular courtyard around a wide lawn surrounded by flowerbeds. Yih Yyien-bing 葉劍萍 (St. Mary's, class of 1937), describes the beauty of her campus in the *Phoenix* of 1936: 'The lawn, covered with green and evenly mown grass, is surrounded by many buildings and porches and divided by a wide path in the middle ... Tall poplars, short bushes, evergreen pine trees, and yellow cassia grow at its edge or at its corners ... Here and there are scattered several modern benches, some under the shade of the trees, some in the broad shadow of the Romanesque church tower. The lawn, with the tower, old sun dial, picturesque porches and the fascinating palm trees which surround it, is just as lovely as a park.'<sup>975</sup>

In January 1927, due to the political disruption and attack of foreign institutions in China following the Northern Expedition, the school was closed and did not reopen until September 1928, with a reduced enrolment.<sup>976</sup> One of the most distinguishing features of St. Mary's in comparison to other mission school for girls, is that it became one of the few schools that did not register with the GMD government after 1927. The issue of registration was a great concern of Chinese

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<sup>974</sup> Caroline A. Fullerton 'St. Mary's Hall', in *St. Mary's Hall Shanghai 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary volume, 1881-1931*, (Shanghai, 1931) pp. 2-6. This 50 Year Anniversary Volume is held in the archives of the Number Three Girls School, Shanghai.

<sup>975</sup> Yih Yyien-bing, 'The Lawn', *The Phoenix*, 1936, p. 102.

<sup>976</sup> The school closed in January of 1927 with an enrolment of 287, it reopened in September 1928 with a dramatically decreased enrolment of 170. Although enrolment picked up again in the subsequent years (to 280 by 1931) some families would have doubtless been put off from sending a daughter to St. Mary's due to its unregistered status. 'Ben xiao sanshi nian wei ren shu bijiao biao' in *Shengmaliya nü xiao wushi zhou jinian tekan* (Shanghai, 1931).

teachers, pupils and alumnae of the school. For example, in the fiftieth-year anniversary volume of St Mary's Alumnae, G. Shuping Kuai (Oxon. B.A.) writes:

We are treading upon delicate ground when we mention the future prospects of St. Mary's. This knotty problem of registration with the educational authorities remains to be solved. But let us at any rate admit that we understand our school's point of view. St. Mary's is only living up to her traditions in presenting an attitude of uncompromising honesty. Money that was contributed to evangelical work will not be accepted by a school whose students need attend neither prayers nor classes on religious subjects. On the other hand, although fifty years is quite an age for an educational institution in China, it is no great age really. Have we not the hope, and the right to expect, that an institution that has weathered the storms of the last fifty years, can sail through at least fifty more?<sup>977</sup>

As a result of the decision by the American Episcopal Church, neither St. John's nor St. Mary's registered with the GMD government until 1947.<sup>978</sup> The impact of its non-registered status impacted on the environment of St. Mary's throughout the 1930-1940s in several important ways. Initially, there was a dramatic decrease in enrolment as parents were reluctant to enrol their daughters in a school with such an uncertain future. Moreover, not having to abide by the GMD regulations had a significant impact on the religious and cultural environment of St. Mary's and St. John's. Choosing not to follow new government quotas on the nationality of its faculty and board members, St Mary's maintained a much higher number of foreign missionary teachers on its staff. For example, in 1929 half of the faculty at St. Mary's were foreign teachers, which was much higher than the average of nineteen

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<sup>977</sup> G. Shuping Kuai, 'An appreciation of St. Mary's', in *St. Marys Hall Shanghai 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary volume, 1881-1931* (Shanghai, 1931) p. 12.

<sup>978</sup> Liu 'The changing face of women's education in China', p. 66.

percent foreign staff at other mission schools for girls in East China.<sup>979</sup> St. Mary's did not appoint its first Chinese principal until 1942, when the internment of its foreign faculty members in Japanese prisoner of war camps necessitated the election of a Chinese principal. Lu Zhu Lanzhen (陸朱蘭貞) a St. Mary's graduate of 1917, with a BA from Michigan and an MA from Columbia, followed by almost twenty years of teaching experience at St. Mary's and McTyeire was deemed appropriately qualified to act as headmistress and she remained in this role until 1949.<sup>980</sup> As a result of having such a high number of foreign faculty, the school could also keep English as the primary language of instruction, and apart from Chinese history and Chinese literature all other subjects were taught in English well into the 1940s. Another consequence of its non-registered status was the fact that bible study remained a compulsory class as did chapel services, which took place every day after the first two morning classes at 11 o'clock in the Chapel on St. Mary's campus. St. Mary's thus maintained a much more religious (and some would say strict and conservative environment) than other missionary schools for girls, which after registering with the government in the early 1930s became much more secular in their environment.<sup>981</sup>

St. Mary's connection with St. John's University proved vital during the second Sino-Japanese War, discussed in detail in Chapter Five. In the autumn of 1939, St. Mary's was moved to a teaching building inside St. John's campus known as Grace Hall (Feiwei tang 斐蔚堂) for safety reasons. There was no longer space for

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<sup>979</sup> See 'The Faculty', *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1929) and Cressy, 'Middle school standards second study' p. 31.

<sup>980</sup> Cheng Jingyu, *Shengmaliya nüxiao*, vol. 1, p. 160.

<sup>981</sup> St. Mary's group interview 11 May 2016, Beijing. Participants included Zhao Fengfeng 赵凤凤 (class of 1948), Zhu Wenqing 朱文倩 (class of 1953), Gu Meicheng 顾美成 (class of 1948), Wu Yanqi 吴其慧 (class of 1947) along with their former teacher, Yu Huigen 俞慧耕 (Politics teacher at St. Mary's 1949-1952).

girls to board at the school, so those who lived in Shanghai had to commute to school every day as day pupils, crossing Zhongshan Park (formerly Jessfield Park) to get to school, and those who came from further afield returned to their families. Due to limited classroom space, extracurricular activities such as music and the Christian Fellowship were stopped and girls shared the sports facilities with St. John's campus. They also attended chapel services with St. John's students, and some joined the St. John's Choir, which was a novel co-educational experience for the girls. In September 1946, after a year of repairs to the original school, which had been badly damaged by the Japanese, the school returned to its site on Brennan Road. In 1949 the school passed into the control of the new communist government. By 1951 all of the foreign teachers had left and in 1952 the school was merged with McTyeire, forming the Shanghai Number Three Girls' School, on the McTyeire campus.

#### **Case Study 4: McTyeire School for Girls in Shanghai or Zhongxi nüzhong (中西女中)**

McTyeire is distinguished from other missionary schools for girls in East China by the fact that, rather than growing out of a combination of smaller day schools for poor children who were paid to attend, McTyeire was established in 1892 by the American Wesleyan mission in order to cater to the growing need to provide an education for daughters of elite families. By catering for girls from upper class families from its earliest foundations, McTyeire thus became known as an 'aristocratic' school for girls (guizu xuexiao 貴族學校). This elite status was reflected in the fact that it charged a tuition fee from its very foundation, and catered specifically to the daughters of Chinese officials and reform minded gentry classes

who wanted to provide their daughters with a modern western style education in safe and exclusive surroundings.<sup>982</sup>

The idea of a girls' school for the daughters of Chinese gentry, designed to be self-supporting from its foundation, was conceived by Dr. Young J. Allen (American Methodist missionary to China, 1836-1907), and was named in honour of Bishop McTyeire whose influence helped raise funds for the purchase of land and erection of the first building (\$25, 000) on Hongkou and Tibet Road, where the Moore Memorial Church stands today.<sup>983</sup> American Methodist missionary, Laura Askew Haygood, was chosen as the first principal of the school. When the school first opened its doors on 16 March 1892, the school struggled at first to attract daughters of the upper classes, and its first class only had seven girls.<sup>984</sup> According to Shu Li Oen (McTyeire class of 1937), it was not until prominent members of the Shanghai gentry, such as her grandfather, started to enrol their daughters that its fame spread and its popularity began to pick up:

All people of that day believed that giving education to girls is wasteful, for they did not need to study to become good mothers. When McTyeire School was ready to open, no wonder nobody came to study, the faculty was badly disappointed by this unexpected situation. They had no idea how to get students. Finally they came to my grandfather and asked for help. Grandfather was very willing to help, for he understood the importance of education for girls in China. He promised to send his daughter to McTyeire and he requested his friends to register their daughters too. In this way the school started, and seven timid girls appeared on Campus.<sup>985</sup>

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<sup>982</sup> Jean Craig, 'A brief History of McTyeire School for Girls, Shanghai, China', (1982), pp. 1. YDS A236.08.

<sup>983</sup> Craig, 'A brief History of McTyeire School for Girls', (1982), pp. 2-3. YDS A236.08.

<sup>984</sup> *Idid.*,

<sup>985</sup> Shu Li Oen, 'In Mother's Days and Mine', *The McTyeiran*, (Shanghai,1936), p. 137.

Soon the demand was so high that the school had to start an entrance examination system, and only accepted the brightest students. As a result, McTyeire became the most prestigious and academically rigorous missionary school for girls in Shanghai, and those who failed to make the grade at McTyeire were often enrolled at St. Mary's.<sup>986</sup> By 1912 the Moore Memorial Church was being rented for extra classroom space. By 1915 the original site was too small for the growing demand, and Principal Helen Richardson (McTyeire principal 1894-1917), purchased the Chong family flower garden on Edinburgh (Jiangsu) Road. In the McTyeire yearbook of 1936 McTyeire missionary teacher, Louise Turtle, recalls: 'In 1916 Miss Richardson secured 53 mow of land on Edinburgh Road for 80,000 teals. The large residence and the substantial brick out-houses were adapted to school use and the high school was moved into them. This splendid property was brought from money obtained by the sale of 2/3 of the former site to the general board.'<sup>987</sup>

Tensions between Chinese students and foreign staff in McTyeire's early days were conveniently left out of the missionary version of the school's history. In the case of the McTyeire walk out of 1915, girls' class identities also contributed to stoking long-standing anti-foreign feelings circulating in society, when a student took offence at having her hand slapped by the foreign principal.<sup>988</sup> The 1992 volume, compiled by alumnae in the USA for the 100 anniversary of the school history details how the walkout unfolded:

Well over half McTyeire student body was invited in the strike. In the autumn of 1915 students were talking during the afternoon study period were reprimanded by the principal Helen Richardson. When the students carried on talking, Richardson slapped the hand of one of the girls. Offended and insulted by such treatment at the hands of a foreigner, two

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<sup>986</sup> 'Introduction' in *Telling Women's Lives*.

<sup>987</sup> Lelia Judson Tuttle, 'A brief history of McTyeire school', *The McTyerian*, (Shanghai, 1936), p. 20.

<sup>988</sup> 'Telling women's lives'.

of the most outspoken students criticized Richards for insulting and discriminating against the Chinese. The students were expelled. When student representatives sent to the principal to speak on their behalf were turned away, eighty two students left McTyeire.<sup>989</sup>

Although fifty students subsequently returned to the school, (having to pay a five dollar re-entrance fee), a teacher who was seen responsible for inciting the students was dismissed and one of the students who left the school founded Qixui nü xiao (find characters) which enrolled most of the eighty two departed students.

By 1916 the high school had moved into the new building on Edinburgh Road, and in the period of 1917-1929 the school grew in size and numbers under the leadership of Alice Walters (1917-1918), Martha Pyle (1919-1924), Louis Cooper (1924-1925) and Sallie Lou MacKinnon (1925-1929). In 1922 a new dormitory building was built for the cost of 175, 000 dollars and in 1929 a new gymnasium was constructed. In 1935 old 'Richardson Hall' was demolished and rebuilt, dedicated at the school's golden jubilee annual conference. As Jean F. Craig recalls, by 1935 'the school had grown from on Hangkou and Tibet Road to four buildings on the high school campus on Edinburgh Road. The school also supported two primary schools: Primary I on its own campus adjoining the high school on Edinburgh Road, and primary II in rented quarters in the French concession. Alumnae had increased from 3 to 378 and students from 7 to 1,200 – kindergarten, primary, junior and senior high schools. The high school was kept small purposefully with approximately 500 students.'<sup>990</sup> The McTyeire yearbooks are filled with depictions of the school campus buildings, wide lawns, lake, pavilion and 'dragon wall' (see figs. 70 and 71).

The period 1916-1929 was also marked by the growing indigenisation of the faculty and Chinese leadership of the school. The school, having met all the

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<sup>989</sup> 'Telling women's lives'.

<sup>990</sup> Craig, 'A brief History of McTyeire School for Girls', (1982), p. 16.

requirements for registration, was formally registered with the GMD government in 1930.<sup>991</sup> Unlike the American Episcopal Church, the Methodists were for registration and keen to promote a self-supporting, Chinese-led church at an early stage. Jean F. Craig (American Methodist teacher at McTyeire 1929-1952) recalls:

By 1929 we had become a family in which Chinese, not Americans, played the leading roles, and that was good! Chinese far outnumbered Americans on the faculty and that, too, was good. Gone were the days when maths and science – in fact all subjects except Chinese – had to be taught in English. By 1929 all subjects except English and curriculum classes in senior high school Bible, were taught in Chinese.<sup>992</sup>

Grace S. Yang, a graduate of Laura Haygood Normal School in Suzhou, Mt. Holyoake College (BA) and Columbia University (MA), took office as the first Chinese principal in the summer of 1929. Many expected Miss Mo Kai Yong (Ma Liying 馬李英), who served as matron, teacher, treasurer, business manager and vice-principal to become the first Chinese principal. Affectionately nicknamed Owl (Maotouying 貓頭鷹) by students because of the round shaped glasses she wore and the way she peered into the dormitories to check girls were sleeping, she passed away unexpectedly on 4 February 1928 to the great sadness of the staff and students. The appointment of Grace Yang was controversial, and according to some alumnae, she was not well suited to the role of headmistress. Although she had an impressive educational background and high social status, she was fond of socialising, threw elaborate parties and was rumoured to be in a same sex-relationship with one of the foreign teachers at the school.<sup>993</sup> In 1936, the board replaced her as headmistress with Xue Zheng 薛正 (McTyeire principal 1936-1952). Xue Zheng was a graduate of St.

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<sup>991</sup> Chen, *Zhong xi nü zhong*, vol.1, p. 37.

<sup>992</sup> Craig, 'A brief History of McTyeire School for Girls', (1982), p. 9.

<sup>993</sup> See 'Joint recollections, the class of 1947 at their fiftieth Anniversary of Entering McTyeire', in 'Telling Women's Lives'.

Mary's (class of 1924), and had earned her BA degree from Yenching University. In 1948-50 she went to study for her PhD in Education at Columbia University where she had previously earned her MA degree. During her absence English teacher Chen Guanyu (陳觀裕), graduate of McTyeire (1936) and St. John's University English department (1940) acted as principal.<sup>994</sup>

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour, the American teachers were interned in prisoner of war camps, and the school buildings were occupied as a Japanese hospital. The school was moved to the former English Girls' School, known as the Cathedral School on Avenue Haig, and the school was conducted as a day school where pupils from different forms attended for half a day due to the limitations of space. The experiences of McTyeire and St. Mary's students during the War is discussed in detail in chapter seven. After the war the school was reinstated on Edinburgh Road and classes started again in 1946 after a period of rebuilding. In 1949 the school was taken over by the Communist Party, and by 1951 all foreign teachers had left the school, shortly before its merger with St. Mary's in 1952 to become the Number Three Girls' School.

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<sup>994</sup> Chen, *Zhong xi nü zhong*, vol I, p. 155.

### APPENDIX THREE: FIGURES

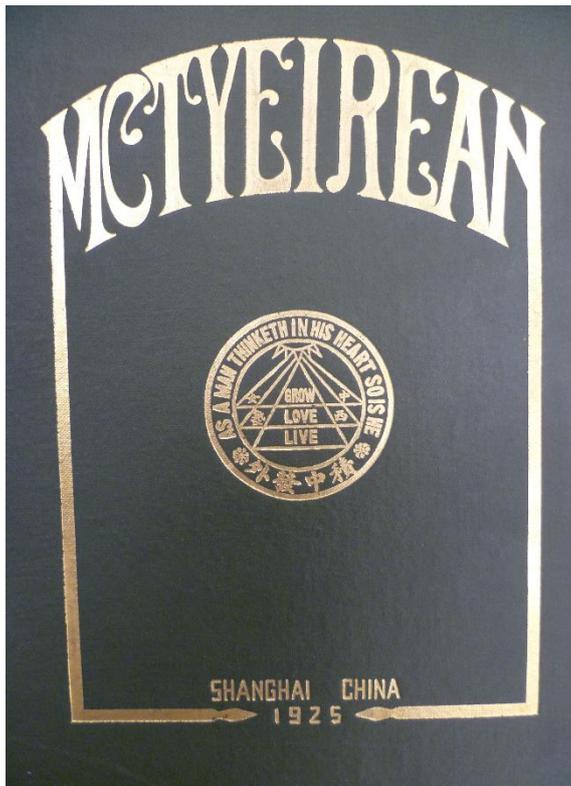


Fig. 1 McTyeire Alumnae (Class of 1946) gather to pose for a group photo at the centennial anniversary of their school in 1992. Alumnae wear their class colour (blue) and a jumper emblazoned with the school motto 'Live, Love and Grow'. Photo courtesy of Xu Meizhen (McTyeire class of 1946).

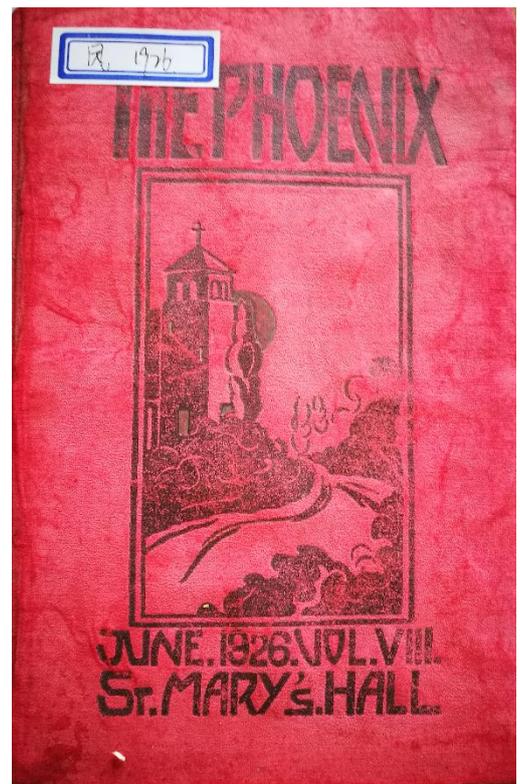


Fig. 2. Today the former site of St. Mary's is known as Raffles City, Channing (Changning Laifushi Guangchang 長寧來福士廣場) located on 1191 Changning Road, Changning district, Shanghai. St. Mary's Church is now the only remaining original building left of the St. Mary's Campus. The other school buildings have been rebuilt in imitation of their original Spanish style as a German pub and shopping outlet (Adjacent and opposite). Photo by Jennifer Bond, June 2017.

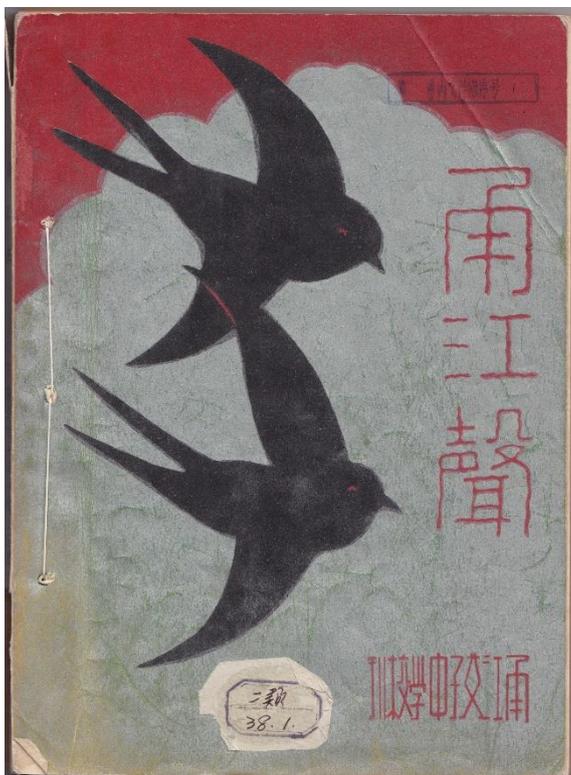
Fig. 3: School Magazines:



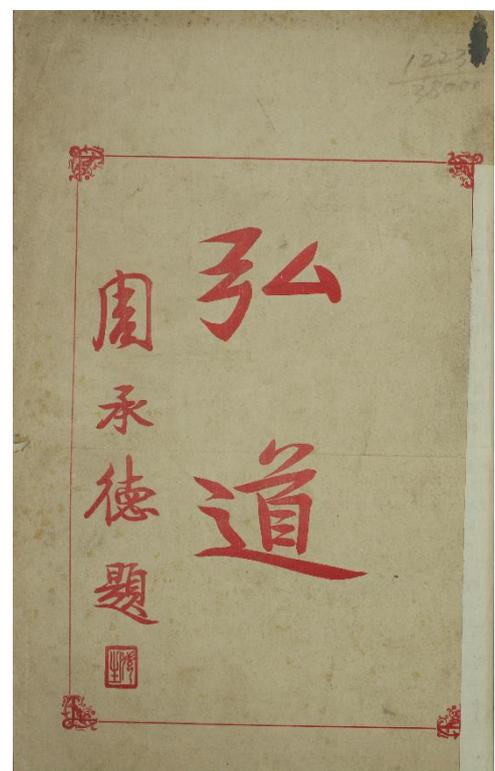
*McTyeiran*, (Moti, 墨梯) Shanghai, 1925.



*The Phoenix* (Fengzao, 鳳藻) Shanghai, 1926.



*Riverside Echo* (Yongjiang Sheng, 甬江聲) Ningbo, 1931.



*Hongdao* (弘道) Hangzhou, 1923.



SIH TSUNG (Kiangsu),

added much to her honor and grace. No toast will be entertained that she possesses every attribute which foretells leadership, in the twentieth century womanhood. Her executive ability, her literary genius and her sociality contribute to win her unrealizable popularity. Watch her Future!

“Though old the thought and oft exprest, Tis his at last who says it best.”

Lowell.

Humorous in taste, pleasing in countenance optimistic in life, diligent in study, strong in will and capable in management such is our fond sister, Sih Tsung. She is Jack of all trades. Instead of being master of none, she is nevertheless master of all. Whatever she undertakes she accomplishes. In every line of school activity she outshines her genius as an unrivaled big hug over the student body. Her presidency over the Students' Association during the year 1925 has

DAN KYA-VAN.

精有女相如之稱	旁及詩文音樂無所不	曲當衆望允孚尤工書	旋於師長同學間泛應	爲本校自治會會長周	似懸河聞者悅焉被舉	稠人廣衆雄辯滔滔口	有丈夫氣善詞令每當	女士無錫人賦性閑雅	口辯辭長而節以禮	薛正
									江蘇無錫	
									蔡伯喈	

但家璠

Fig.4. Each student in the graduating class at St. Mary's and McTyeire had a dedicated page in the yearbook, such as this one devoted to Xue Zheng 薛正, graduate of St. Mary's (1924) and principal of McTyeire (1932-1952).

The Phoenix, (Fengzao 鳳藻), 1924.



Fig. 5. The Phoenix board (English literary department) of 1932. The Editor in Chief, Ouyang Airong, sits in the centre next to the Miss Catherine Barnaby who acted as advisor. *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1932).

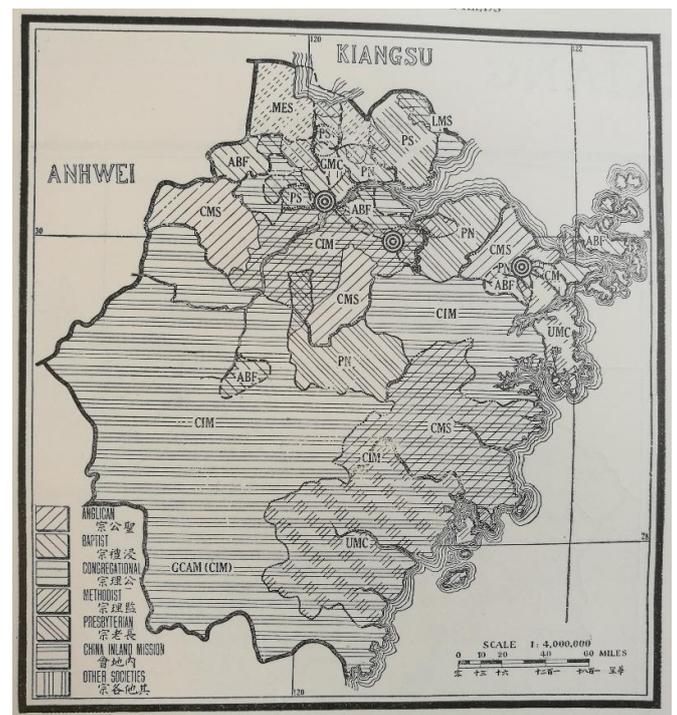
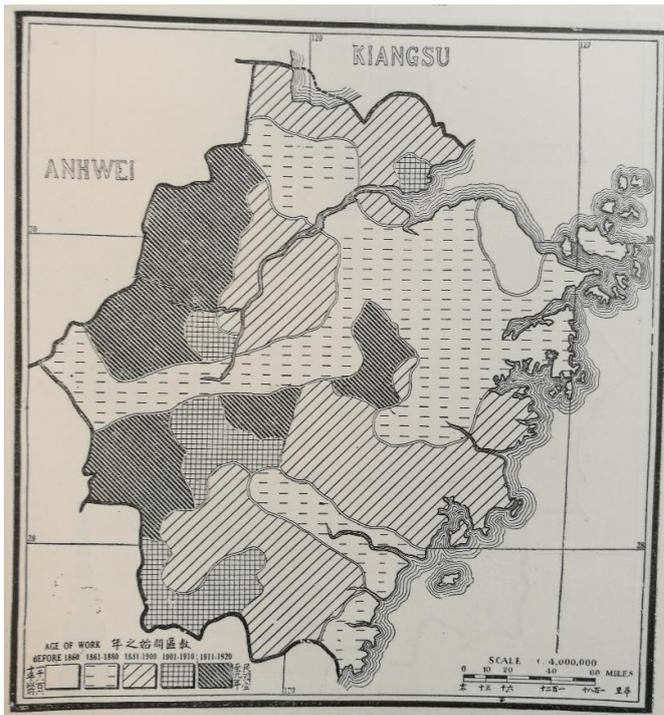
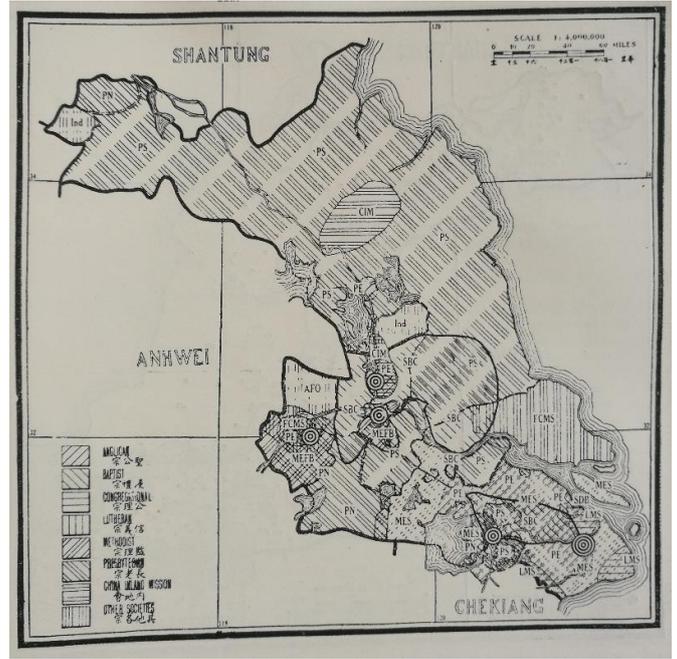
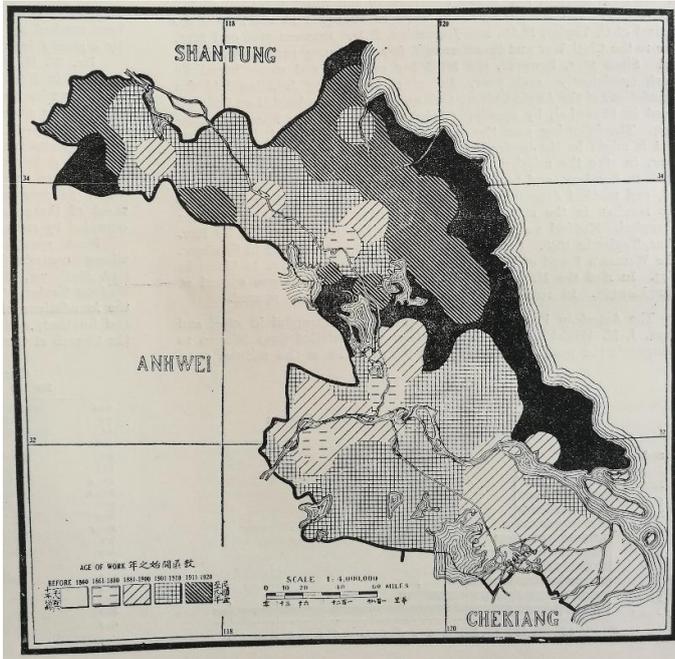


Fig 6: The Age of work and protestant mission denominations at work in Jiangsu (above) and Zhejiang (below), 1860-1922. Images from Milton Stauffer (ed.), *The Christian Occupation of China: A General Survey of the Numerical Strength and Geographical Distribution of the Christian Forces in China, Made by the Special Committee on Survey and Occupation, China Continuation Committee, 1918-1921*, (Shanghai, 1922) p. 50 and p. 140.

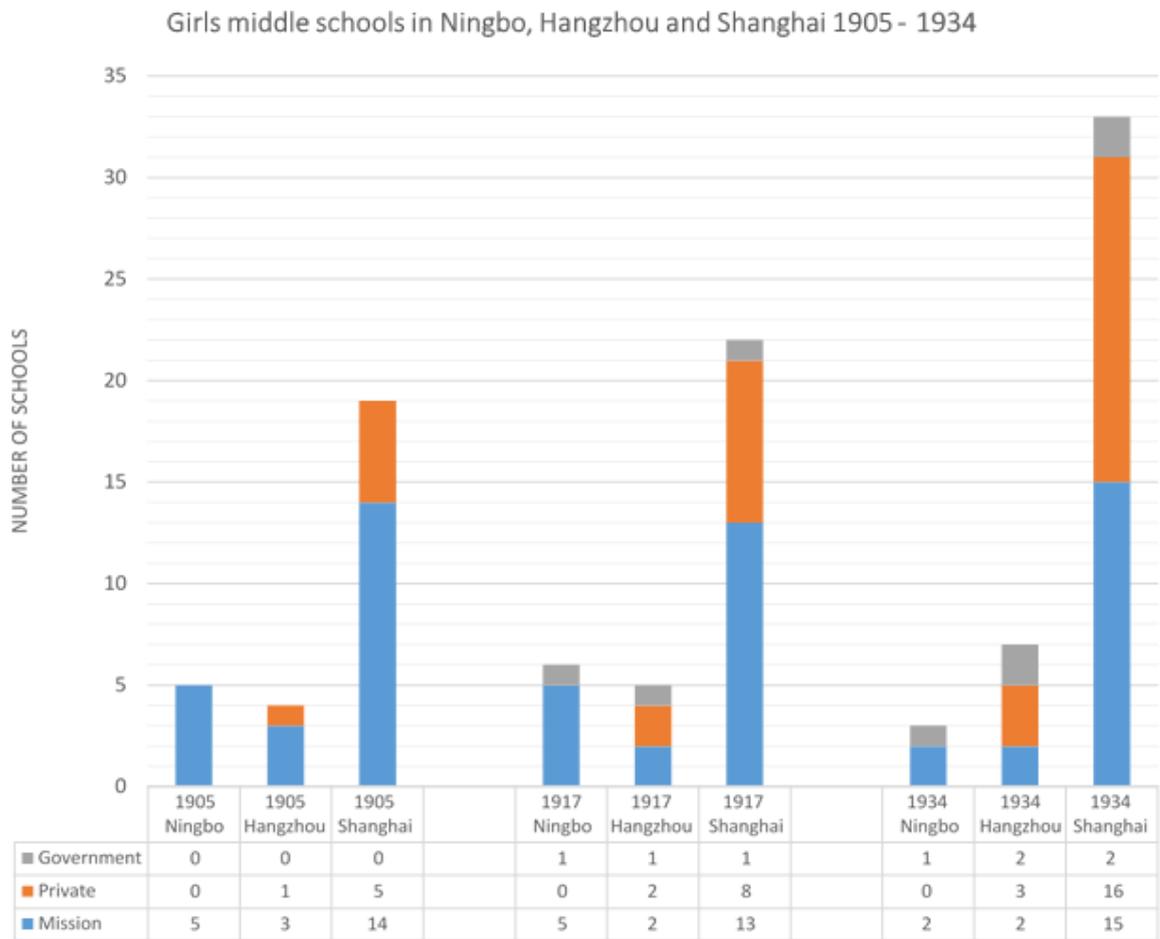


Fig. 7. Mission, Private and Government middle schools for girls in Ningbo, Hangzhou and Shanghai, 1905 – 1934. Sources: *The Christian Occupation of China: A General Survey of the Numerical Strength and Geographical Distribution of the Christian Forces in China, Made by the Special Committee on Survey and Occupation, China Continuation Committee, 1918-1921*, (Shanghai, 1922). Chindon Yiu Tang, ‘Women’s Education in China’, Bulletin 9 in *Bulletins on Chinese Education issued by the Chinese National Association for the Advancement of Education*, Vol. 2 (Shanghai, 1923). Zhang Xiaodong and Wang Qing (eds.). *Shanghai Putong jiaoyu zhi* (Shanghai, 2015), pp. 240-267. Hangzhou shi jiaoyu weiyuanhui bianzuan (eds.). *Hangzhou jiaoyu zhi* (Hangzhou, 1994), pp. 198-723. Ningbo shi jiaoyu weiyuanhui bian (eds.). *Ningbo shi xiao shi* (Ningbo, 1989).

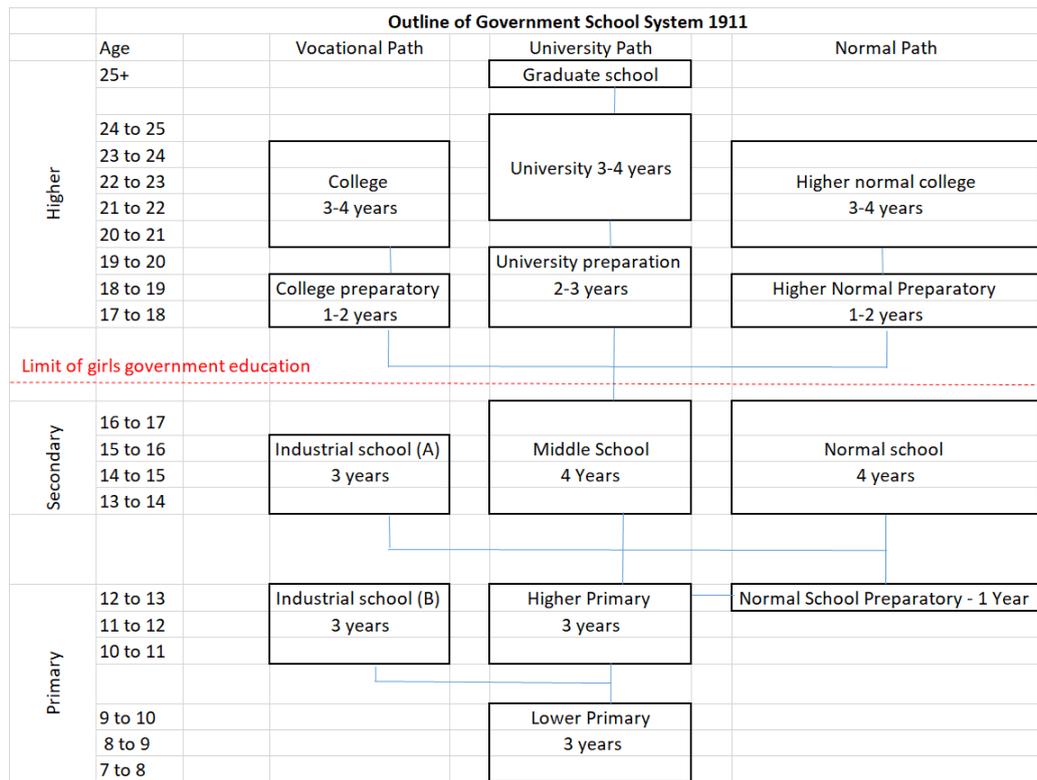


Fig 8: Government School system 1911. Source: based on Stauffer (ed.), *Christian Occupation of China*, p. 399.

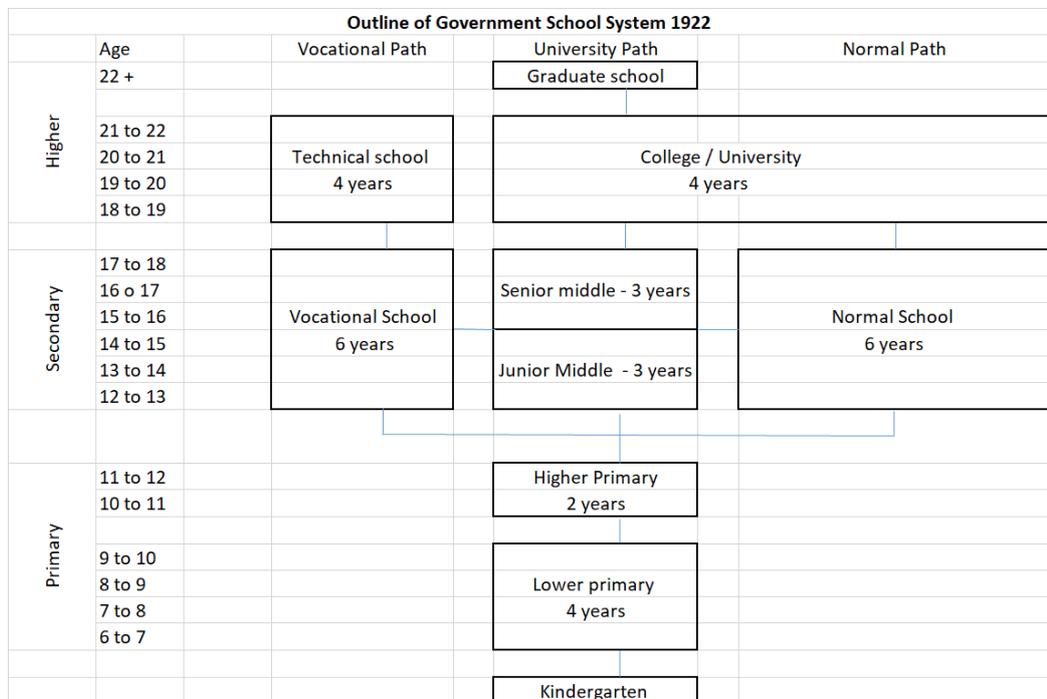


Fig 9: Government School System, 1922. Source: based on C. W. Luh, 'China's new system of education', Bulletin 8 in *Bulletins on Chinese Education issued by the Chinese National Association for the Advancement of Education*, Vol. 2 (Shanghai, 1923). p.11.

### Percentage of Male/Female Students in Government, Normal, Private and Mission Schools Jiangsu and Zhejiang, 1922

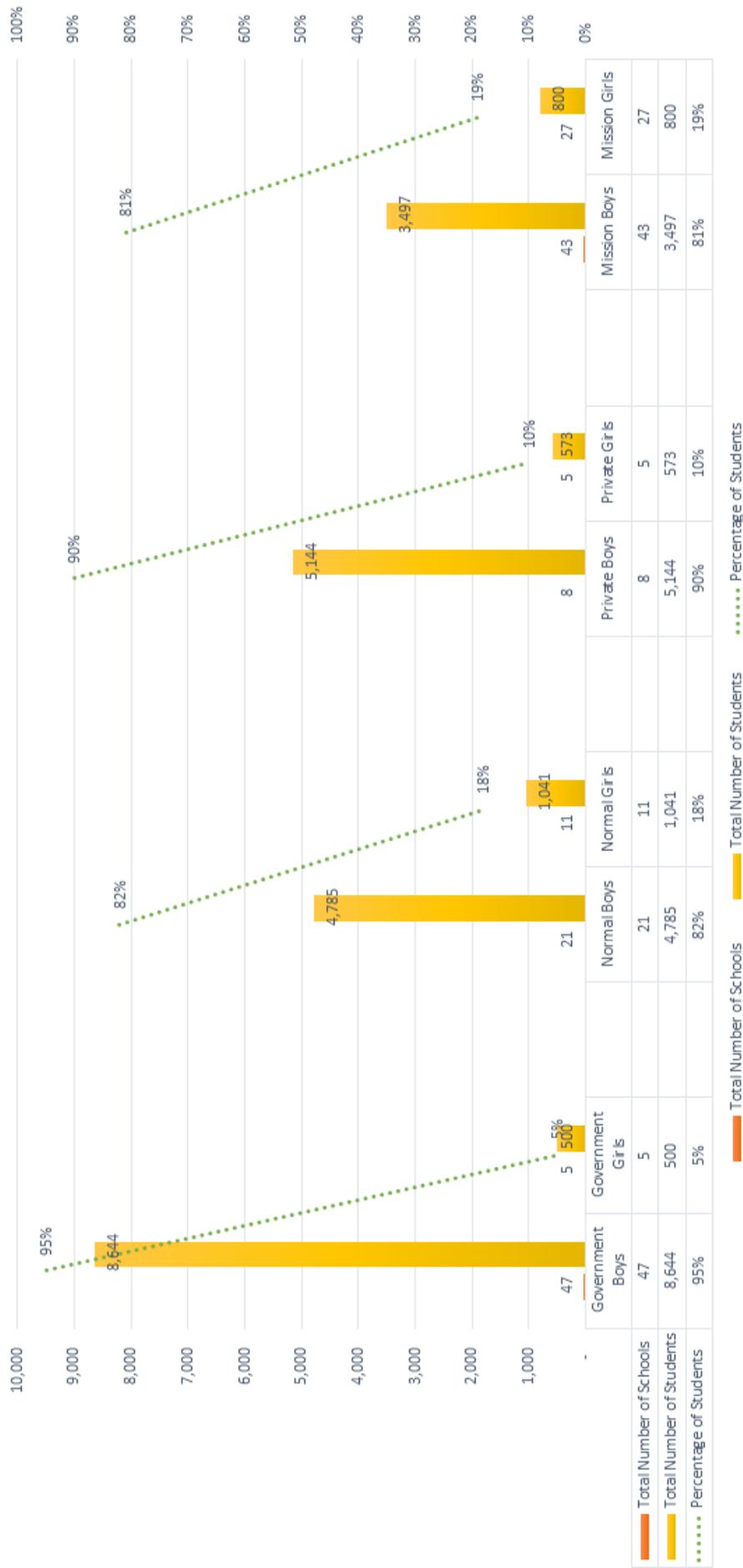


Fig. 10. Percentage of male and female students and number of schools in Government, normal, private and missionary schools in Jiangsu and Zhejiang, 1922. Sources: *The Christian Occupation of China: A General Survey of the Numerical Strength and Geographical Distribution of the Christian Forces in China, Made by the Special Committee on Survey and Occupation, China Continuation Committee*, 1918-1921, (Shanghai, 1922) and Chindon Yiu Tang, 'Women's Education in China', Bulletin 9 in *Bulletins on Chinese Education issued by the Chinese National Association for the Advancement of Education*, Vol. 2 (Shanghai, 1923). Zhang Xiaodong and Wang Qing (eds.). *Shanghai Putong jiaoyu zhi* (Shanghai, 2015), pp. 240-267. Hangzhou shi jiaoyu weiyuanhui bianzuan (eds.). *Hangzhou jiaoyu zhi* (Hangzhou, 1994), pp. 198-723. Ningbo shi jiaoyu weiyuanhui bian (eds.). *Ningbo shi xiao shi* (Ningbo, 1989).

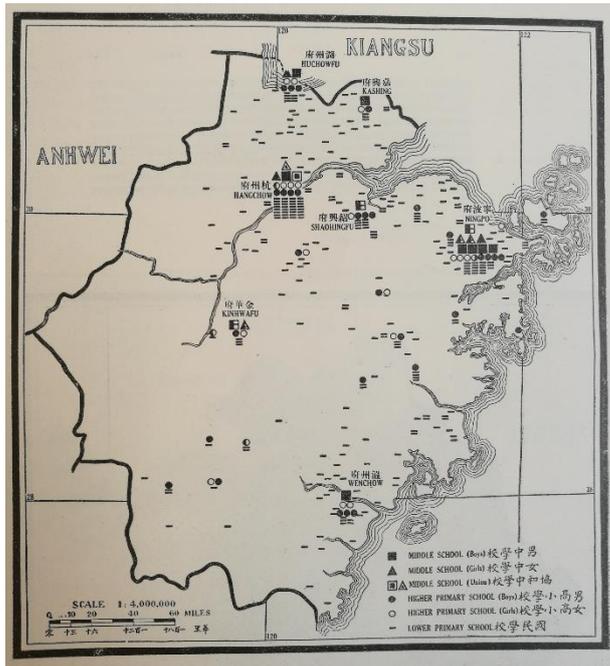


Fig 11: Distribution of mission schools in Zhejiang, 1922. Source: Stauffer (ed.), *Christian of China*, p. 54

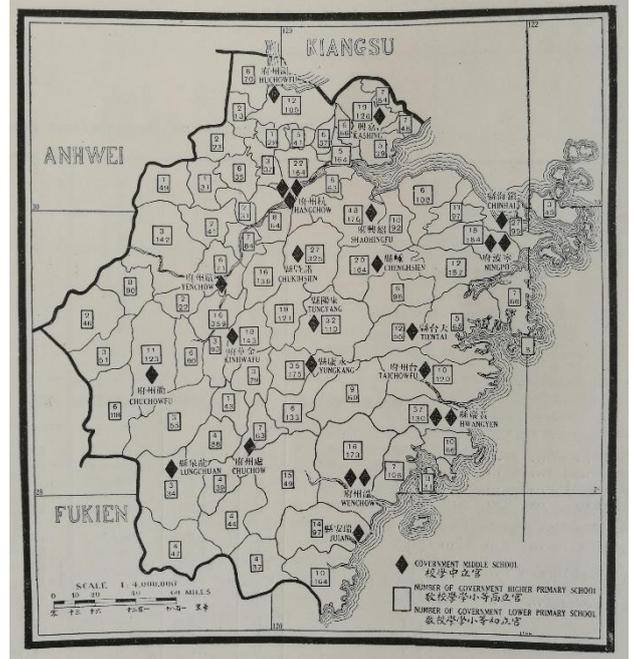


Fig 12: Distribution of government schools in Zhejiang, 1922. Source: Stauffer (ed.), *Christian Occupation of China*, p. 55

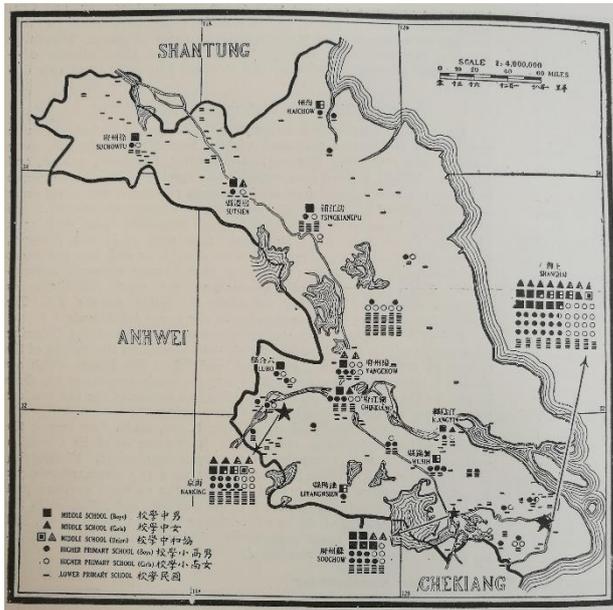


Fig 13: Distribution of mission schools in Jiangsu, 1922. Source: Stauffer (ed.), *Christian Occupation of China*, p. 142

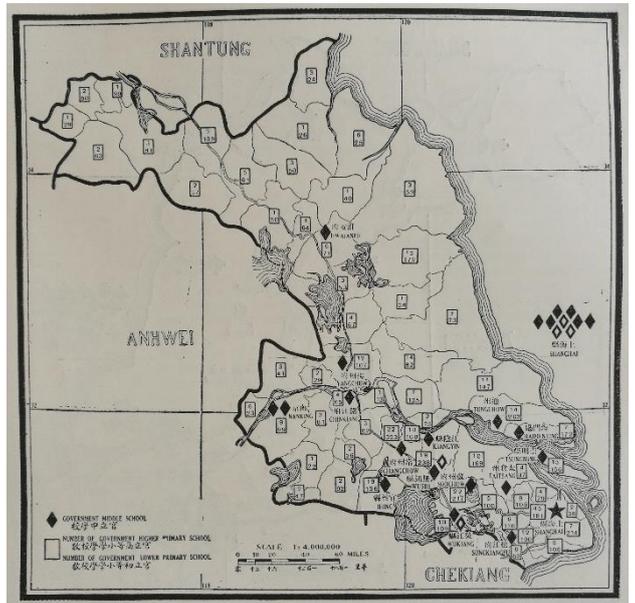


Fig 14: Distribution of government schools in Jiangsu, 1922. Source: Stauffer (ed.), *Christian Occupation of China*, p. 143

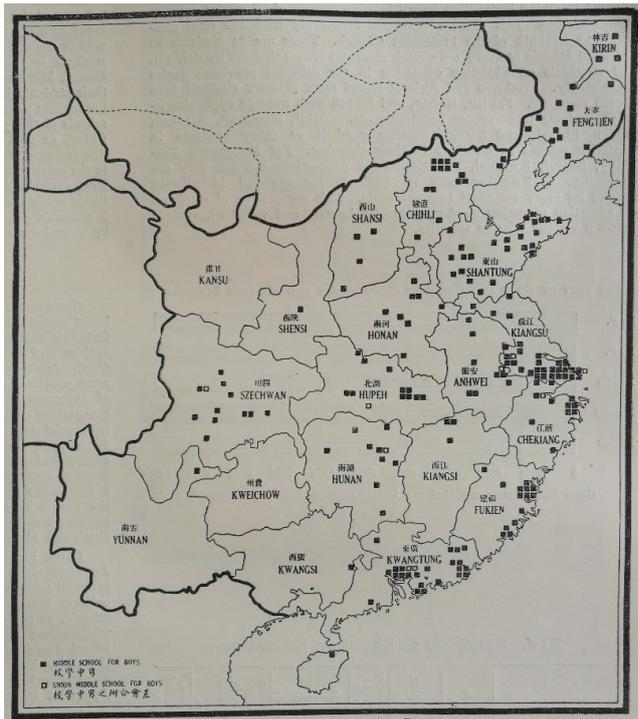


Fig 15: Distribution of Boys Mission middle schools, 1922. Source: Stauffer (ed.), *Christian Occupation of China*, p. 303

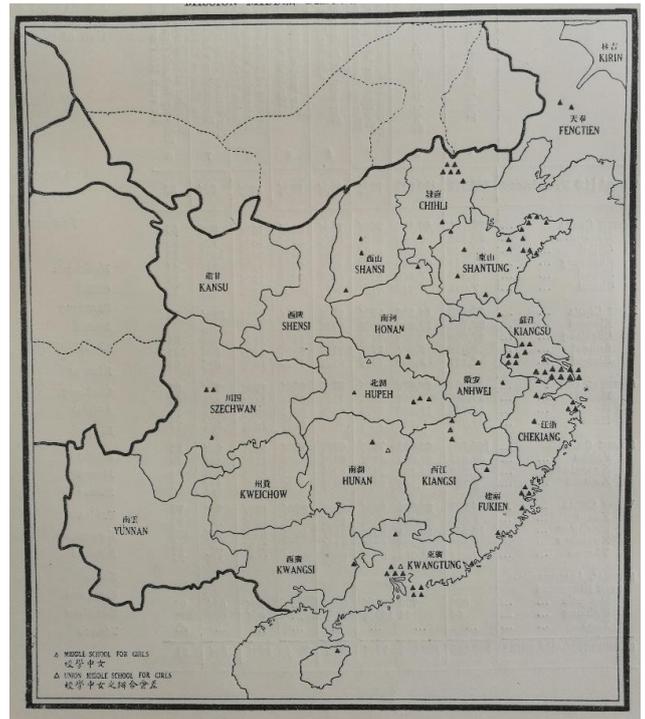


Fig 16: Distribution of Girls Mission middle schools, 1922. Source: Stauffer (ed.), *Christian Occupation of China*, p. 303

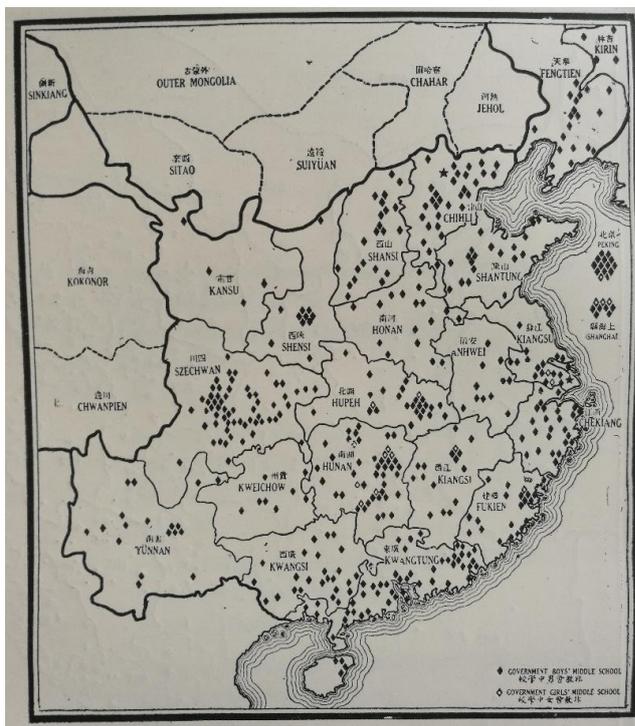


Fig 17: Distribution of Government Middle schools 1922. Source: Stauffer (ed.), *Christian Occupation of China*, p. 305

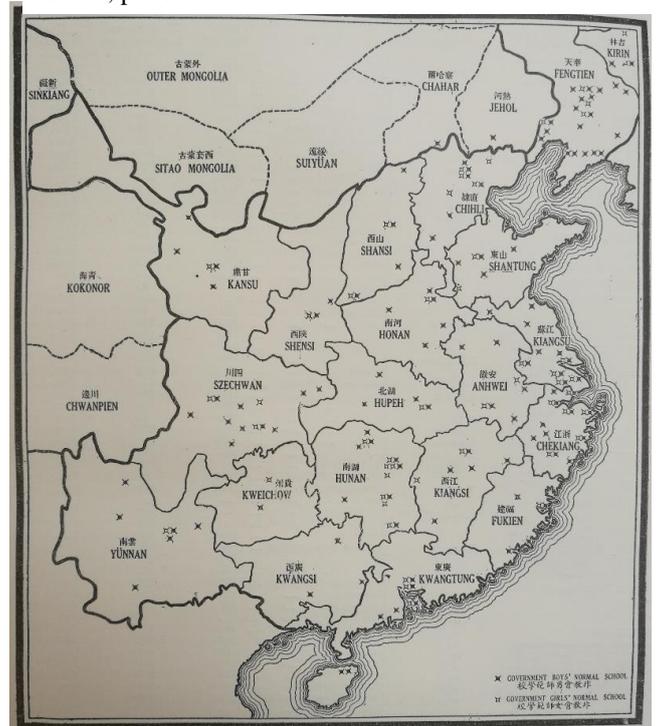


Fig 18: Distribution of Government Normal Schools, 1922. Source: Stauffer (ed.), *Christian Occupation of China*, p. 402

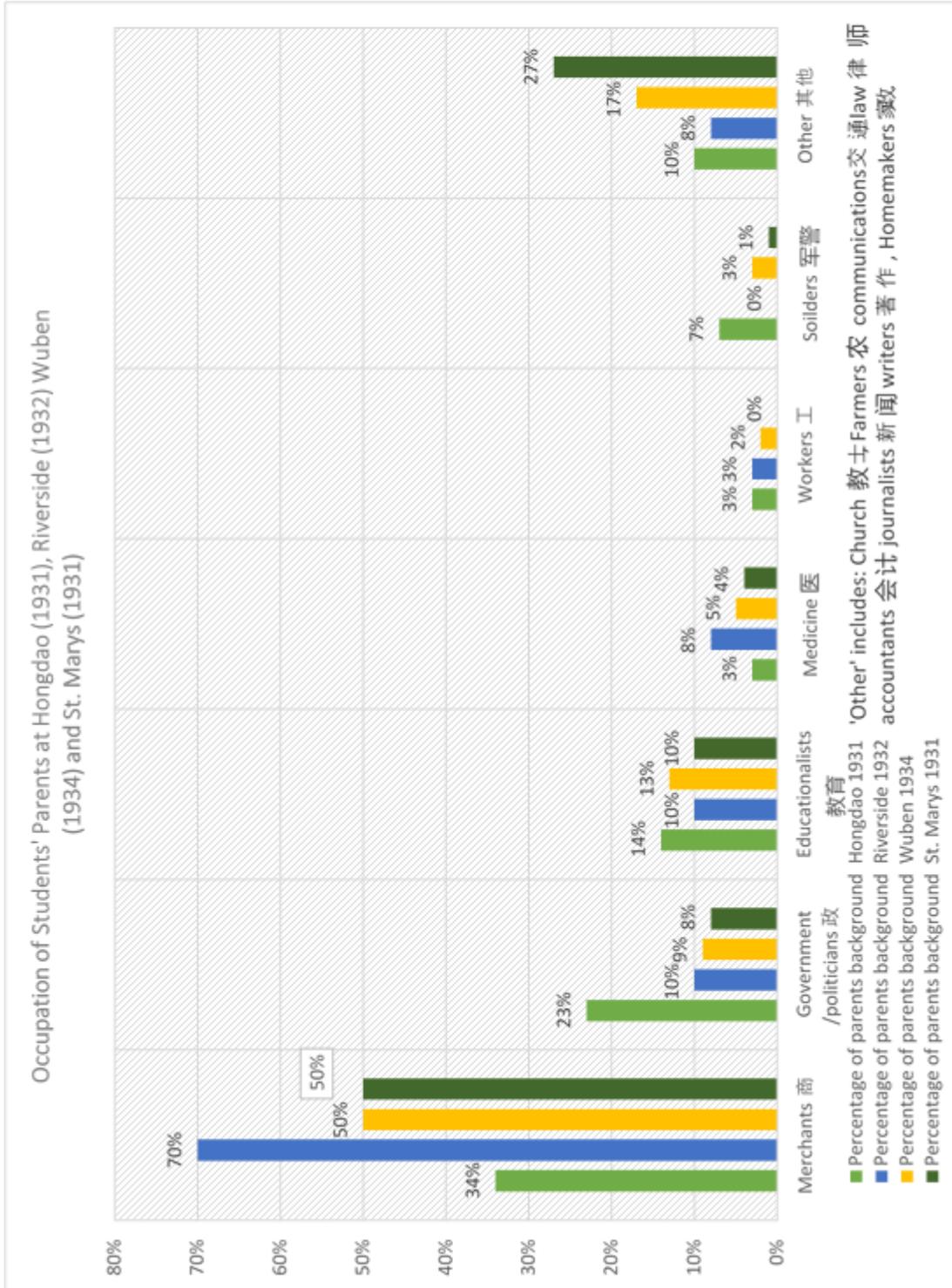


Fig. 19. Occupation of Students Parents at Riverside (1932), Hangzhou Union Girls School (1931) Wuben Girls School (1934) and St. Marys (1931). Sources: 'Ershi nian du zai xiao xuesheng zhiye tongji' *Hongdao ershi zhou jinian kan*, (Hangzhou, 1932), p. 505. Hangzhou City Archive, 册 36-1-12. 'Distribution of occupations of the students parents', Principals Report, April 16, 1932, NCA, 册 10-1-307. 'Quan xiao xuesheng jiashu zhiye bijiao tu' in *Shanghai Shi li Wuben nizi zhongxue gaikuang*, (Shanghai, 1934), p.7, Ding Wanzhen 'Ben xiao xuesheng jiazu zhiye yilan', *Shengmaliya nu xiao wushi zhou jinian tekan* (Shanghai, 1931).

Missionary Girls Schools East China 1926-1927														
Province	City	School Chinese	School English	Mission	Enrollment (Fall 1926)	Student who are church members %	No of teachers	Chinese teachers %	Christian Teachers %	Fees per pupil (Tuition and boarding)	Total Income	Size of Campus (Mou)	Value of plant	
Anhui	Hefei	三育女子中学	Coe Memorial	UCMS	65	45	8	80	73	59	2,578	10,499	8	20,302
Anhui	Huainan	启慧女校	Chi Hwei	PN	52	67	14	71	94	60	3,800	6,343	22	42,655
Anhui	Wuhu	为毅女中	Wuhu	ME	42		6							
Jiangsu	Jiangyin	辅买女子中学	L.M. Sprunt Academy	PS	96	56	19	79	85	56	3,350	14,318		34,950
Jiangsu	Nanjing	来复女学校	Advent Christian	AAM		69			82		3,950	8,450	8	58,611
Jiangsu	Nanjing	中华女子中学	Christian Girls' School	UCMS	128	40	24	73	90	69	2,740	13,490	23	118,107
Jiangsu	Nanjing	汇文女学	Methodist Girls Highschool	MES	218	95	19	74	84	74	6,000	25,793		61,154
Jiangsu	Nanjing	明德女学	Ming Deh	PN	60	50	20	55	85	82	3,330	15,506	18	43,650
Jiangsu	Shanghai	裨文女校	Brigeman Memorial	WU	91	58	20	82	55	93	4,051	17,001	8	115,790
Jiangsu	Shanghai	晏摩氏女校	Eliza Yates	SBC	203	42	20	60	85	118		44,865	35	273,350
Jiangsu	Shanghai	惠中女中学	Grace	SDP		36			85					
JM	Jiangsu	清心女子中学	Mary Farnham	PN	81	44	12	67	84	103	1,000	7,361		94,534
Jiangsu	Shanghai	中西女中	McTyeire	MES	210	40	32	69	78	156	19,700	74,066	74	572,560
Jiangsu	Shanghai	麦伦女校	Medhurst Girls	LMS	10		16							
Jiangsu	Shanghai	崇德女学校	Shung Tak	SBC	48			75	100	80				
Jiangsu	Shanghai	圣玛利亚女校	St. Marys	ACM	295	33	29	59	76	120	90,000		66	612,000
Jiangsu	Shanghai	洪德女校	Tsing Tuh Girls School	SBC	28	61		94	94	56	9,154			
JM	Jiangsu	慕卫女中	Susan B. Willson	MES	29	52	7	57	86	63	5,600	15,622	20	34,985
JM	Jiangsu	崇贞女中	Sutsien Girls'	PS	31			75						
JM	Jiangsu	崇贞女学校	Davidson	MES					78	48	8,420	17,523	14	44,620
Jiangsu	Suzhou	崇道女子中学	George C. Smith	PS	41	66	16	69	88	73	3,276	10,695	10	42,410
Jiangsu	Suzhou	景海女子师范	Laura Haygood Normal School	MES	128	49	32	78	81	108	16,183	40,011	20	114,327
Jiangsu	Suzhou	慧灵女学	Wei Ling Girls School	SBC	64	42	20	55	95	101	1,650	7,760	30	77,875
Jiangsu	Suzhou	振华女校	Tung Hua		78		16							
Jiangsu	Xuzhou	正心女子中学	Mary Stevens	PS	79		15	87		42	3,576	16,486	5	45,619
JM	Jiangsu	Yangzhou	Julia Mackenzie	ABFMS	42		3							
JM	Jiangsu	Yangzhou	St. Faith's	CIM	32		3							
Jiangsu	Zhenjiang	崇实女子中学	Olivet Memorial School	MEFB		68	16		94	77	6,841	18,649	30	145,910
JM	Zhejiang	冯氏女学	Mary Vaughan	CMS	40		5							
Zhejiang	Hangzhou	弘道女学	Union	PN, PS, ABFMS	151	37	29	76	90	83	5,845	35,892	40	276,084
Zhejiang	Huzhou	湖州女学	Virginia	MES	132	22	12	71	93	93	10,404	27,082	20	144,370
Zhejiang	Jinhua	成美女学	Cheng Mei	WU	18	28	13	97	55	42	1,512	5,677	15	12,613
Zhejiang	Luhou	光明女学	Kwang Ming	AFO	31	39	3	88	87	56			2	21,130
Zhejiang	Ningbo	甬江女子中学	Riverside Girls Academy	PN, ABFMS	98	62	15	73	100	74	3,857	8,839		127,838
JM	Zhejiang	Ningbo	Sarah Batchelor Memorial Girls School	PN	20									
JM	Zhejiang	仁德女校	St Cathelines	CMS	45									
JM	Zhejiang	凌德女学	Kying Tuh	ABFMS	22	55	8	87	75	53	2,350	5,137		16,230
			Adverage		80	50	16	75	85	81	5,455	21,849	19.5	126,067

Fig. 20. Missionary Girls Schools East China, 1926-1927. Source from Earl Herbert Cressy and C.C. Chih, 'Middle School Standards Second Study' Bulletin No. 5 in East China Studies in Education, (Shanghai, 1929). JM – Junior Middle School only

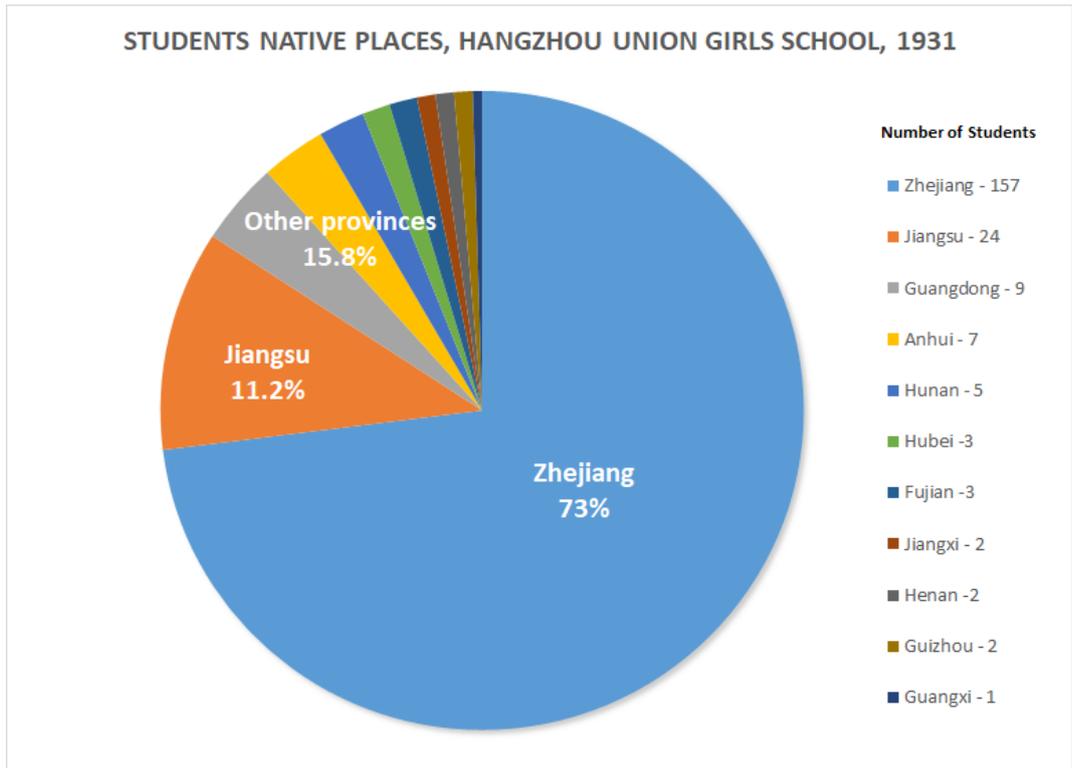


Fig. 21. Student native places, Hongdao Union Girls School, 1931. Source: ‘ershi nian du zai xiao xuesheng jiguan tongji’ *Hongdao ershi zhou jinian kan* 1932, p.508. HCA, 旧 36-1-12.

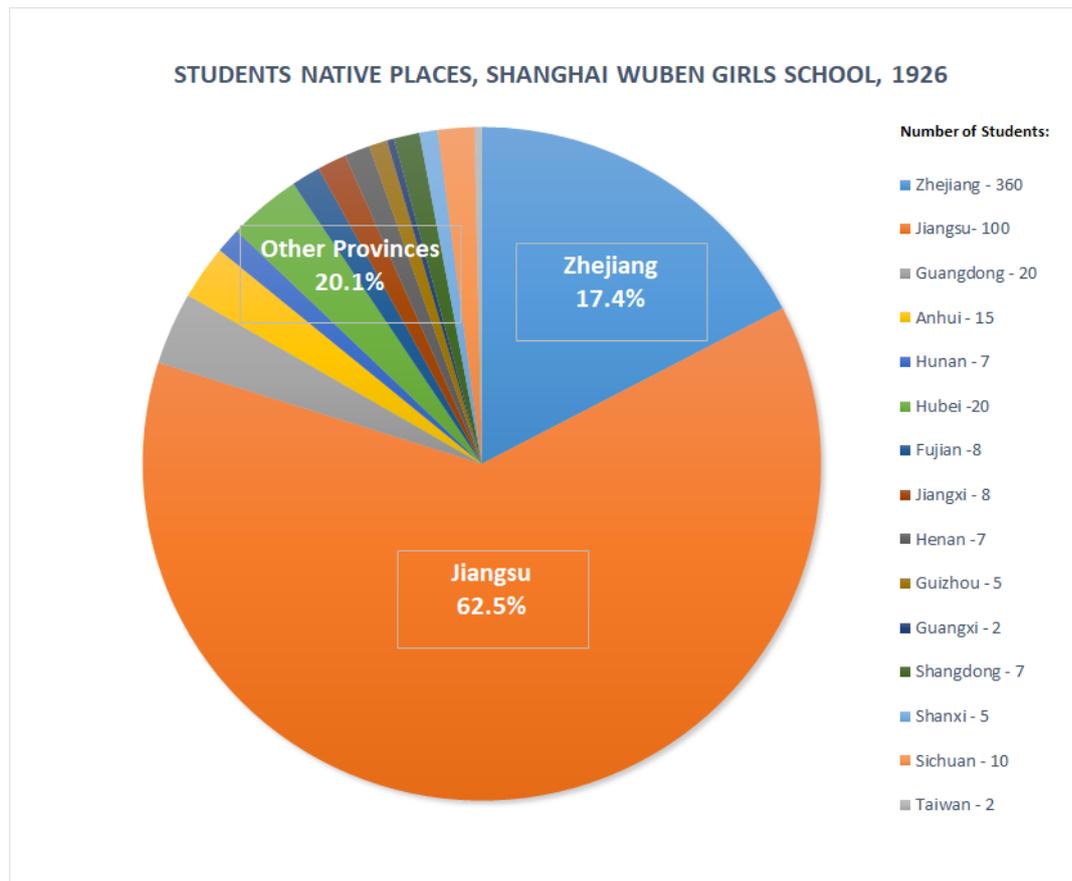


Fig. 22. Student native places, Shanghai Wuben Girls School, 1931. Source: ‘zai xiao xuesheng jiguan bijiao biao’ *Shanghai xianli wuben nüzi zhong xuexiao ershiwu zhou jinian ce*, (Shanghai, 1926).

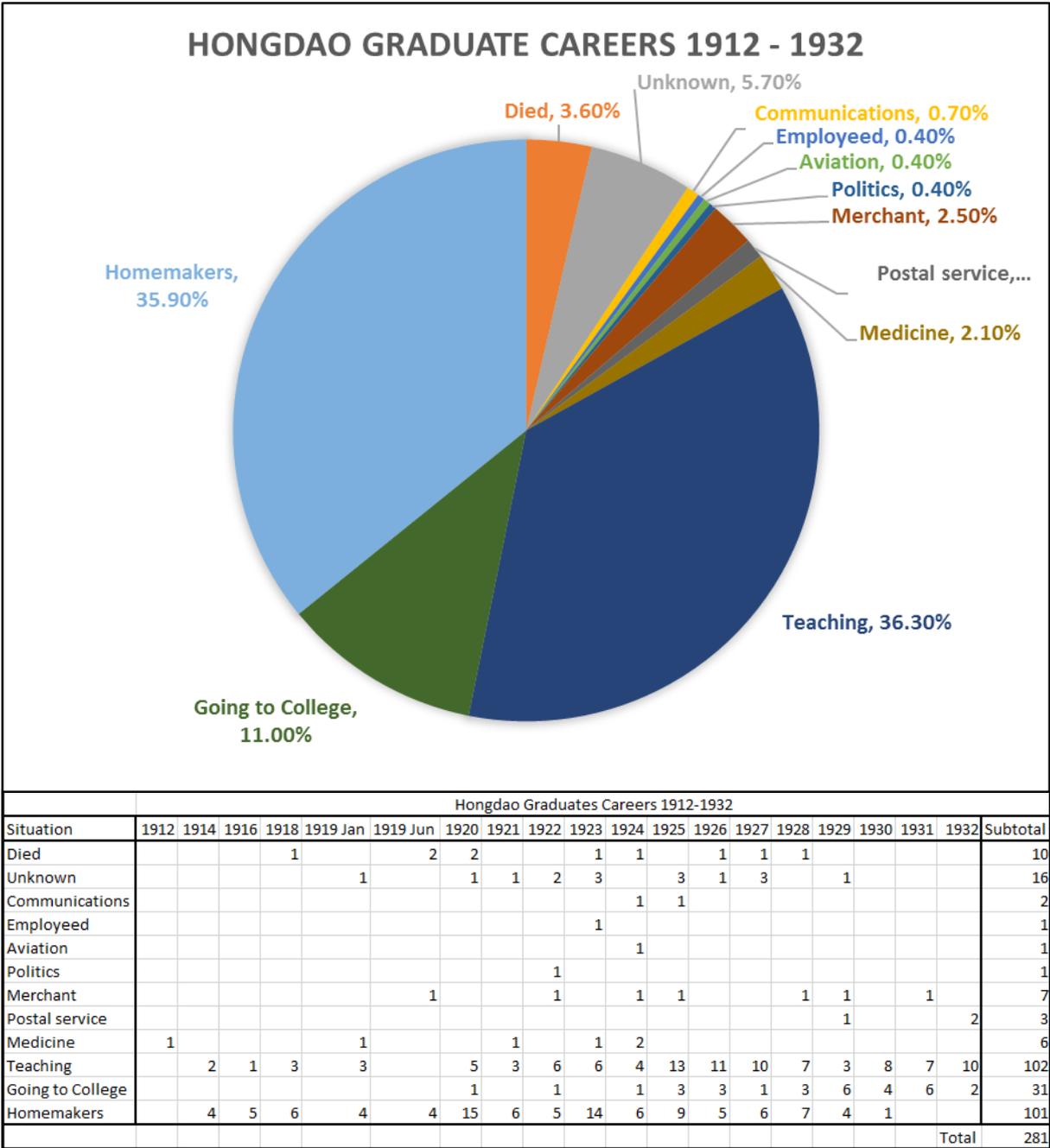


Fig. 23. Graduate Students Careers, Hongdao Union Girls School, 1931. Source: 'biyesheng zhuangkuang tongji' *Hongdao ershi zhou jinian kan* 1932, p.509. HCA, 册 36-1-12.

Teaching Staff at Riverside Academy 1938-1939							
Name	Sex	Education Background and Employment history	Position/ teaching responsibilities	Subjects taught and hours	salary	Employed from	Special notes
沈吟夢 - Shen Yixiang	F	MA Literature, University of Pennsylvania, Crozener theological seminary	Head / Senior 2 form master Head of Academic Admin/ Senior 3 form master	Junior Mathematics - 4 hours Junior Biology - 4 hours		9.1927 2.1936	Part time teacher at Diansheng school - 4 hours of English
李秀云 - Li Xiuyun	F	BA Education, Huijiang University. BA Shanghai Xinmin University, teacher at Shanghai commercial middle school	Head of Moral Education	Junior Civics - 7 hours		9.1937	Part time
張敬德 - Zhang Fude	M		In Charge of Academic Affairs, School Accountant and senior 1 form master	Junior Geography - 4 hours		9.1933	
何怡桂 - He Yigui	F	BA-Hunan Normal University, teacher at Yongzhou Peide female school and Nanjing Hede female school Shanghai China Female Physical Education University, and Jiangsu province female scout trained	Scout group leader and junior 2 form master	Scouting and Physical Education - 16 hours Junior and senior physics and chemistry - 21 hours		9.1932	
乔墨洲 - Qiao Moshou	F	B.Sc., National Central University, teacher at Ningbo industrial middle school		Junior and Senior Chinese history and Geography 20 hours Junior and Senior Chinese literature and History 20 hours		9.1937	
吳華 - Wuhua	F			Junior Chinese literature, Civics, history and geography - 25 hours Junior and Senior Mathematics, 21 hours		9.1938 9.1938	
吳秉文 - Wu Bingwen	F	BA, Literature, Ginling female middle school BA, Education, Huijiang University, taught at Ningbo Siming middle school	Junior 3 form master	Junior and Senior English - 15 hours		8.1936	
徐洵男 - Xu Xuunan	M		Head of the Fenghua section, part time teacher	Junior Chinese literature, Civics, history and geography - 25 hours Junior and Senior Mathematics, 21 hours		9.1937	
梅自强 - Mei Ziqiang	M	BA, Chinese Literature, Zhijiang College		Junior and Senior English - 15 hours		9.1923	
陸宗霖 - Chen Zongyuan	M	BSc, Mathematics, National Zhejiang University		Junior and Senior English and Piano - 18 hours Junior and Senior Music and Junior English - 21 hours		9.1928	
Ester Gauss - 陶長紳 - Tao Baoshen	F	Columbia University, Teacher at Chongde female school 法加音樂學院 - Music conservatory, teacher at Hongdao female school in Hangzhou		Junior and Senior Music and Junior English - 21 hours		8.1936	
Chenzhong	F	BA, University of London, Teacher Training, Cambridge University		Senior Biology - 4 hours Junior and Senior Bible - 10 hours	Voluntary	9.1938 9.1938	Part time
Doris Coombs - 顧道义 - Gu Daoyi	F	BA, University of Columbia University, MA, Professor at Zhijiang College	Moral Education and Junior 1 form master	Junior and Senior Chinese literature - 7 hours		9.1937	
馬爾齊 - Ma Yuji	M	BA, Zhijiang College, taught at Trinity middle school Ningbo		Junior biology - 14 hours		2.1938	
張安邦 - Zhang Anle	F	Graduate of Yongjiang Senior middle school, taught at Shaoshing Junde girls middle school	Head librarian	Junior mathematics, biology, chemistry, physics and scouts - 26		9.1938	
徐云英 - Xu Yunying	F	Graduate of Shanghai Academy of fine arts, teacher at Ningbo City government female industrial school	School administrator in Fenghua district	Junior English, biology, music - 25 hours		9.1938	
陳云夢 - Chen Yunxiang	F	Graduate of Yanjing Senior middle school	Fenghua section moral education	Senior Art - 2 hours		9.1938	part time
沈麗文 - Sha Guiwen	F	Graduate of Shanghai Academy of fine arts, teacher at Chengmei School of arts.		Senior Art - 2 hours		9.1939	part time
魏慕貞 - Chao Muzhen	F	Graduate of Shanghai Academy of fine arts, teacher at Ningbo City government female industrial school	School Secretary/Accountant			9.1934	
靳士銜 - Yu Shiquan	M	Graduate of Shanghai occupational School Previously accountant at Xuhui Middle school	School doctor	Senior military training - 3 hours	Voluntary	9.1932	
忻鴻 - Xin Hong	M	Graduate of Shandong Chaeloo University, medical school		Junior Manual work - 2 hours		9.1938	
徐新之 - Xu Xinzhi	M	now head of the Ningbo Sino-American Huamei Hospital	Administrator			8.1937	
丁立成 - Ding Licheng	M	Graduate of Huamei hospital nursing school, MA in Hygiene.					
吳華理 - Wu Huili	F	Graduate of Suzhou female school, teacher at McTyer school in Shanghai					
焦雲雁 - Jiao Zhenque	F						

Fig. 24. Missionary Girls Schools Ea Fig. 24. Teaching Staff at Riverside Academy 1938-1939. Source: 'Jiaozhiyuan yilan biao' 教職員一覽表 [Table of teaching staff] in Zhonghua minguo ershiba nian si yue ershilu ri Shen Yixiang jinshu. 中華民國二十八年四月二十六日沈貽鄉謹述 [Report by Shen Yixiang on 26 April 1939] in NCA [Old 10-1-308 - Yongjiang nüzi zhongxue xiaodonghui jilu huiji 甬江女子中學校董會記錄匯集 [Yongjiang Board of Director's Minute Meetings and Principals Reports].



Fig. 25. McTyre Junior High Graduation of 1949. The last junior high class to follow the McTyre tradition of wearing white qipao and shoes, adorned with the class flower and colour (purple). Gong Zhengguan is third from the left.



Fig 26. The 2002 McTyre reunion. Gong Zhengguan and her classmates all wore purple shawls symbolising their continued loyalty and to the class of 1952. The friends are also standing in the same formation, with Gong Zhengguan third from left. Images courtesy of Gong Zhengguan



Fig. 27. The signs and symbols of the McTyiere Senior Class of 1930 are embedded throughout their yearbook. See *The McTyierian*, (Shanghai, 1930).



Fig. 28 and 29 The McTyiere Class ring of 1947. Each ring was personalised with the name of the student engraved inside. This ring belongs to Zhu Yunwen, 朱蕴文. Photo by Jennifer Bond, 11 November, 2016.



Fig 30. St Mary's girls in their self-made hats, waiting in to demonstrate outside of the Shanghai Public Recreation Ground, May 1919. *The Phoenix*, (Shanghai, 1920), p. 61.



Fig. 31. Riverside Girls' Academy Summer School, Ningbo, 1927. Group that held the property for the School during the difficulties of the summer. Annual report for the Central China Mission, 1926-1927. PHS-MR7-PA-ZCAS. Reproduced with permission.



Fig. 32. 'Domestic Science Class, 4<sup>th</sup> Year Preparatory'. *The McTyeirean*, (Shanghai, 1918)



Fig. 33: McTyeire student Lu Pei Bao's (陸佩寶) photograph on the front cover of *The Pictorial Weekly*, published by the China Photographic Society, (Zhongguo shying xuehui huabao, 中國攝影學會畫報) September, 1933.



Fig. 34: McTyeire Student Shen Xiuxue's (沈修學) portrait is featured on the front cover of *The Pictorial Weekly*, published by the China Photographic Society, (Zhongguo shying xuehui huabao, 中國攝影學會畫報) October, 1934.



Fig. 35. A Cartoon from the 1923 edition of the St. Mary's Magazine, *The Phoenix*, juxtaposes the diligent, Christian and patriotic student who loves learning, departing for St. Mary's with her frivolous counterpart. *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1923).



Left: Fig. 36. 'Love lane', *The McTyerian*, (Shanghai, 1930). Above: Fig. 37. 'Depictions of school life: getting friends together on the school lawn' *The Phoenix*, (Shanghai, 1936).



Fig 38. Zhang Lu Luo, Tall and admired by her classmates for being good at sports, was cast as the prince in the 1947 senior play. Photo courtesy of Zhang Luoluo.



Fig. 39 and Fig. 40. Xu Meizhen plays the prince in the 1945 McTyiere senior play. Photos courtesy of Xu Meizhen.



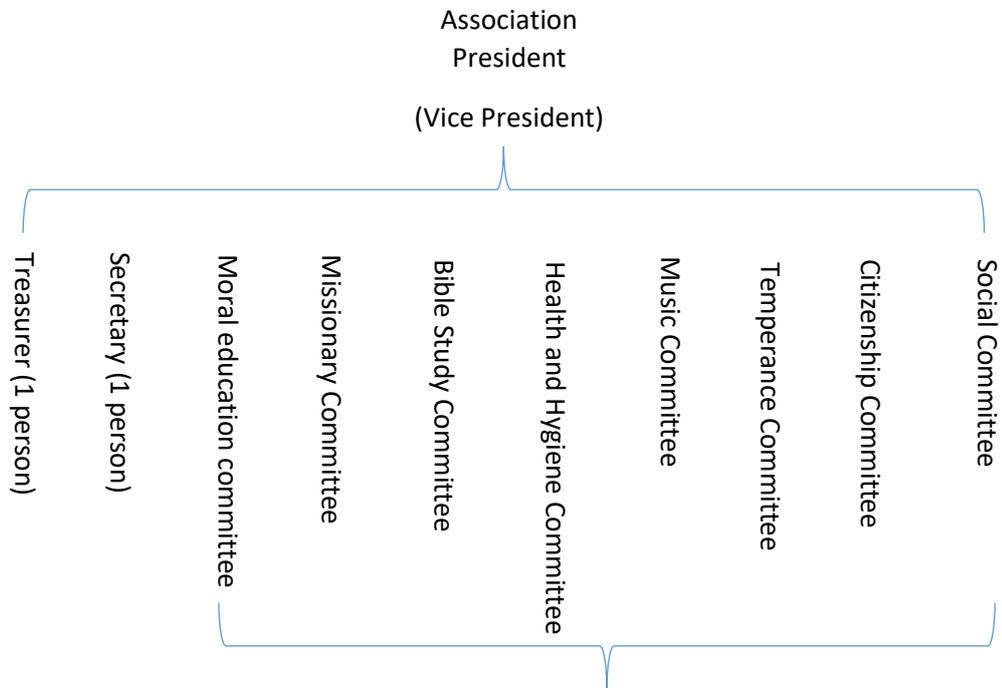
Fig. 41. Xu Meizhen playing Essex in *Elizabeth and Essex*



Fig. 42. Xu Meizhen relaxing with her classmates in their dormitory at McTyeire. Xu Meizhen stands out for her choice of clothing and direct gaze. 1946. Photos courtesy of Xu Meizhen



Fig.43. The 1931 Yongjiang YWCA Committee, *Qingnian hui zhiyuan*, 青年會職員. Yongjiang Echo, *Yongjiang Sheng*, 甬江聲 (1931), NCA, x.1.1 -1. Reproduced with permission.



The above eight committees all have eight people in them

Fig. 44. Organisation structure of the Yongjiang YWCA, from Li Rongmei, 'Qingnian hui', *Yongjiang Sheng*, (1931), p. 186.

表代本日之中會令夏州杭  
士女子雪村木

YUKI KIMURA, DELEGATE FROM  
JAPAN TO THE HANGCHOW  
STUDENT CONFERENCE



Fig. 45. 'Hangzhou Xialinghui zhong zhi riben daibiao, mucun xuezi nüshi' 杭州夏令會中之日本代表，木村雪子女士[Yuki Kimura, Delegate from Japan to the Hangzhou Student Conference], *Qingnian nü bao*, (October, 1924).

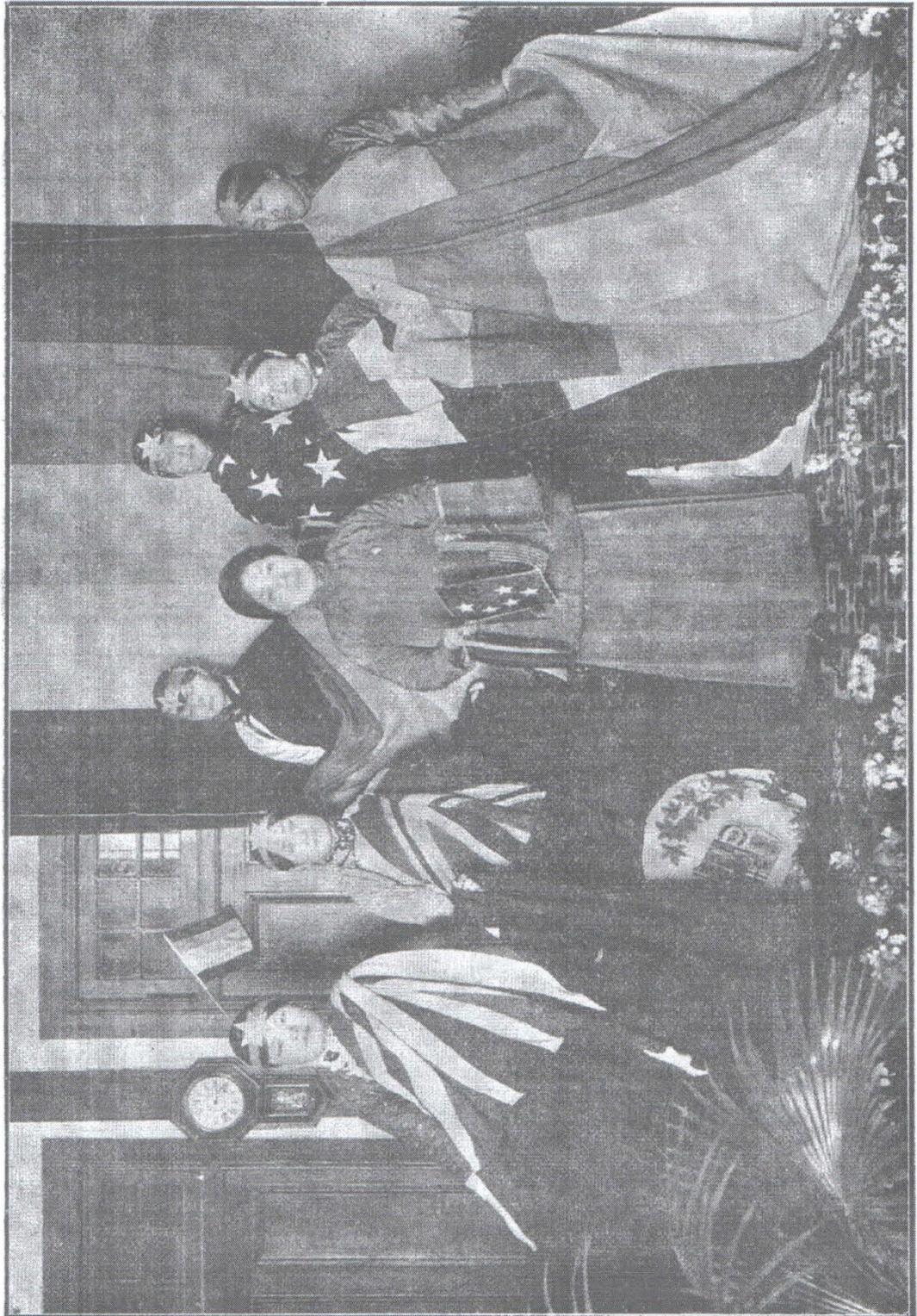
一九二二年秋季世界週禱期



Tientsin Y. W. C. A. World Fellowship Pageant, World's Week of Prayer—Autumn—November 1922

天津女青年會世界友誼表演之攝影

Fig. 46. 'Tientsin YWCA World Fellowship Pageant, held in celebration of the Worlds Week of Prayer in November 1922', *Qingnian nü bao*, (March, 1923).



是圖代表中國基督教女青年總會

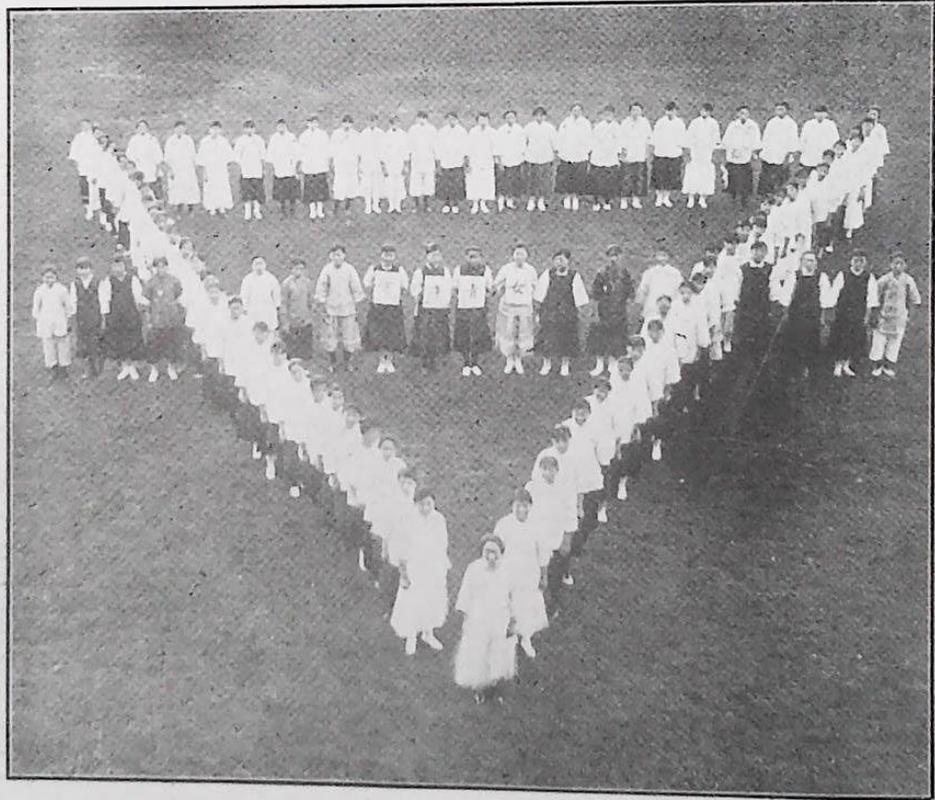
Fig. 47. 'Shi tu daibiao zhongguo jidujiao nüqingnian zonghui' 是圖代表中國基督教女青年總會 [This photo represents the Chinese YWCA national association] in *Qingnian nü bao*, (March, 1919), p. 2.



Fig. 48. YWCA poster, 1919.



Fig. 49: Image from: *Qingnian Nübao*, (March, 1921), p. 17.



上海會員的大會集

Fig. 50. Shanghai huiyuan de da hui ji' 上海會員的大會集 [Shanghai Association members group photo], *Qingnian nü bao*, (October, 1921). p.11



甯波聖模女校女青年會會員之三角形

Fig. 51: 'Ningbo shengmo nü xiao nüqingnianhui huiyuan zhi san jiao xing', 寧波聖模女校女青年會會員之三角形 [Ningbo Sarah Bachelor Memorial School YWCA members forming a triangle], *Qingnian nü bao*, (March, 1921), p.10.



Fig. 52. Ellen was an avid reader and came into contact with progressive ideas through her reading in her missionary school library and her YWCA mentors. Courtesy of Ellen Cao.

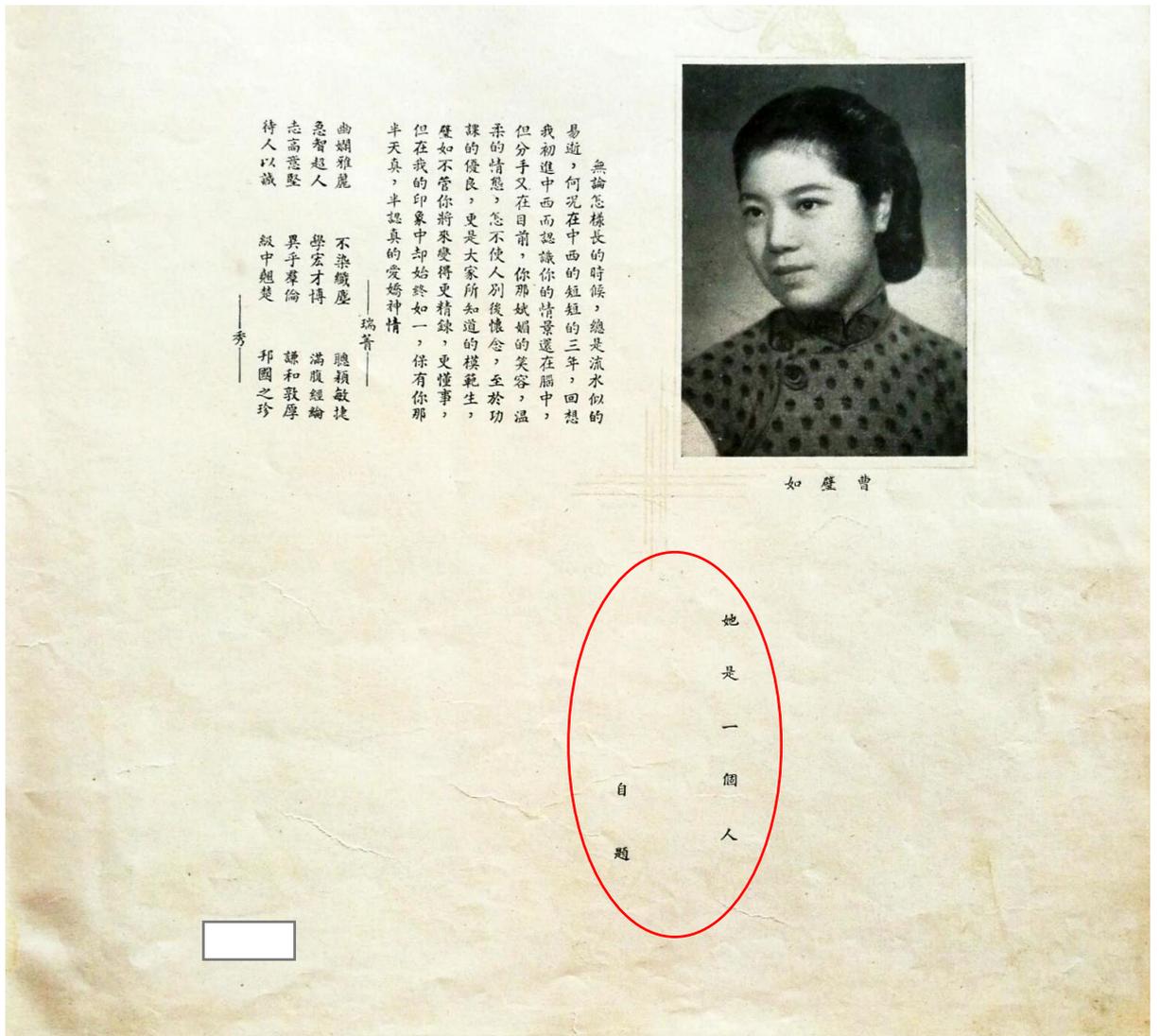


Fig. 53. Ellen's yearbook page in the 1939 *McTyerian* is left blank with no photo and a cryptic message: 'She is a person.' Image from *The Mctyerian* (Shanghai, 1939).



Fig. 54. Yongjiang in exile: Esther Gauss in one of the Ancestral Halls used as a school. Presbyterian Historical Society Archives. RG 82-59-13. Reproduced with permission.



Fig. 55. Yongjiang in the Countryside: Seniors with Esther Gauss. Presbyterian Historical Society Archives. RG 82-56-19. Reproduced with permission.

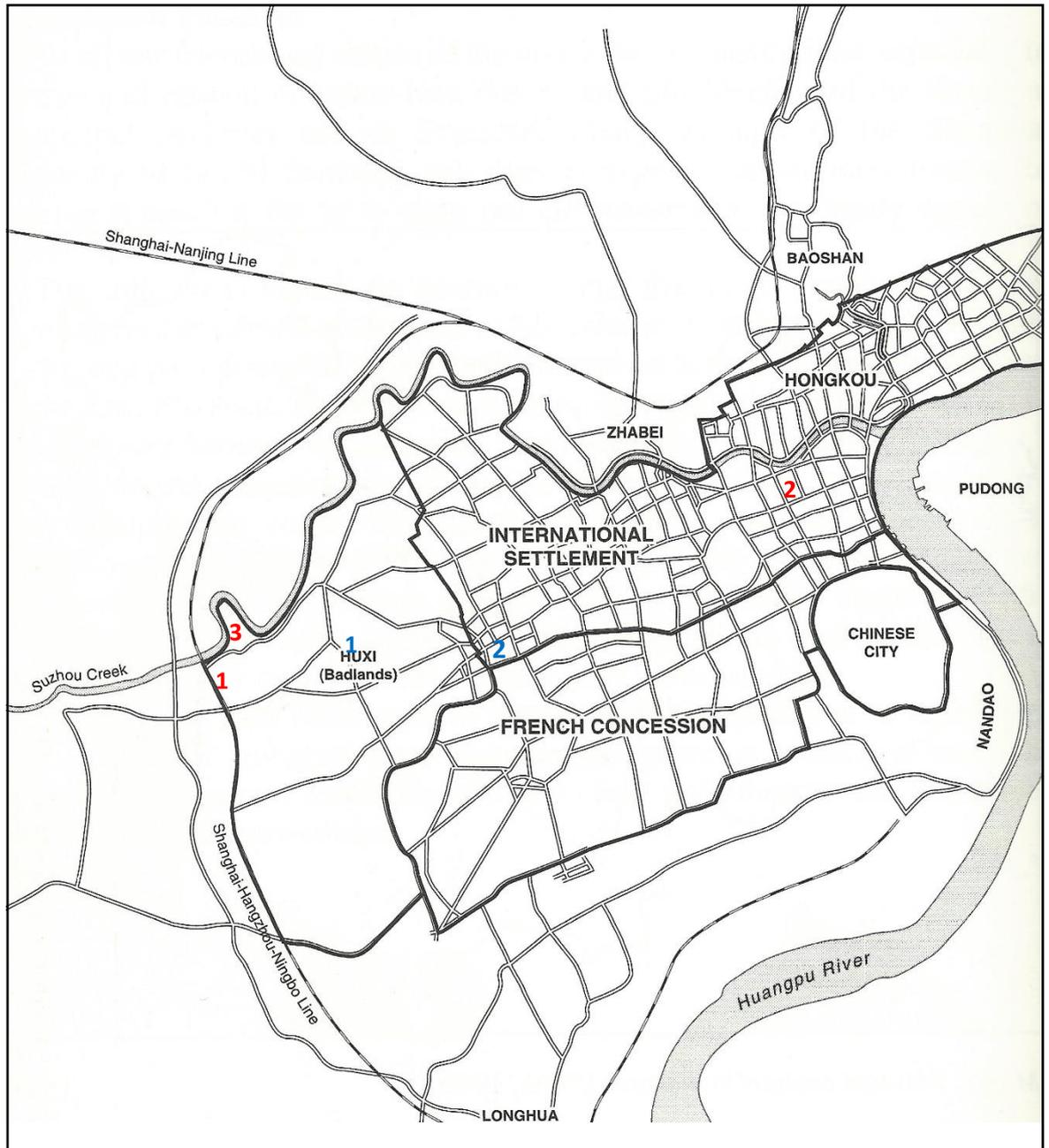


Fig 56: Movement of Schools during the Second Sino-Japanese War.  
 Map based on: Wen-hsin Yeh, *Wartime Shanghai*, (London, 1998), p. xii.

**Key:**

**Red: St. Mary's:**

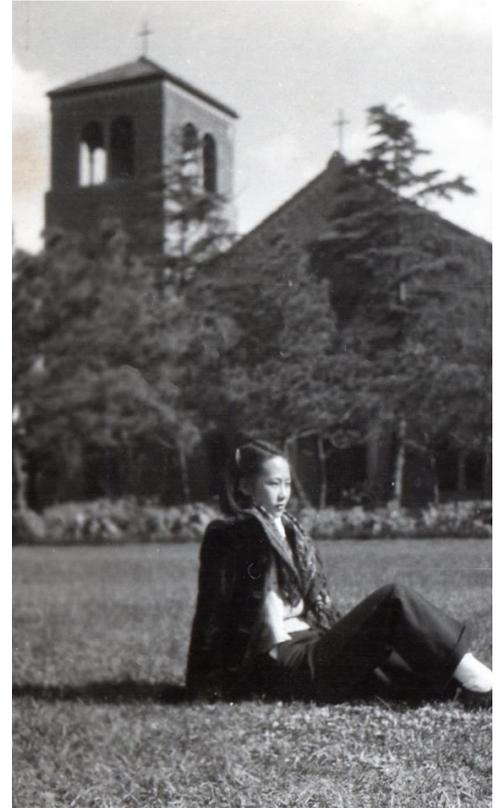
- 1- 1922-1937 Brenan Road (Today 1191 Changning Road),
- 2- 1937-1939 Emporium Building, Nanjing East Road, (Today 353 Nanjing East Road)
- 3- 1939-1946 Graves Hall, St. John's University Campus, (Today East China University of Politics and Law)

**Blue: McTyeire.**

- 1- 1914-1943 - Edinburgh Road, (Today 155 Jiangsu Road)
- 2- 1943-1945 - Avenue Haig (Today 425 Huashan Road)



Fig. 57: In 1939 St. Mary's moved into a building known as Graves Hall 斐迪堂 on St. John's University Campus. Girls could enjoy the sports and musical facilities of St. John's including participating in the University Chapel Choir, although there was no space for girls to board on campus. Image from *The Phoenix* (Shanghai, 1940).



Figs. 58-60: A safe space?: Girls had to face a difficult commute by foot or bicycle to get to school during the war. Above left: fig. 58. Zhao Fengfeng 趙風風 (St. Mary's class of 1948) riding her bike. Photo courtesy of Zhao Fengfeng. After the war ended girls could enjoy their return to their campus. Above right: fig. 59. Guo Lin 郭琳, (St. Mary's class of 1950), relaxing on lawn at St. Mary's 1949. Photo courtesy of Guo Lin. Below: fig. 60. Xu Xin 徐信 (St. Mary's class of 1950) and her classmate riding bicycles on St. Mary's campus. ca: 1948. Photo courtesy of Xu Xin.



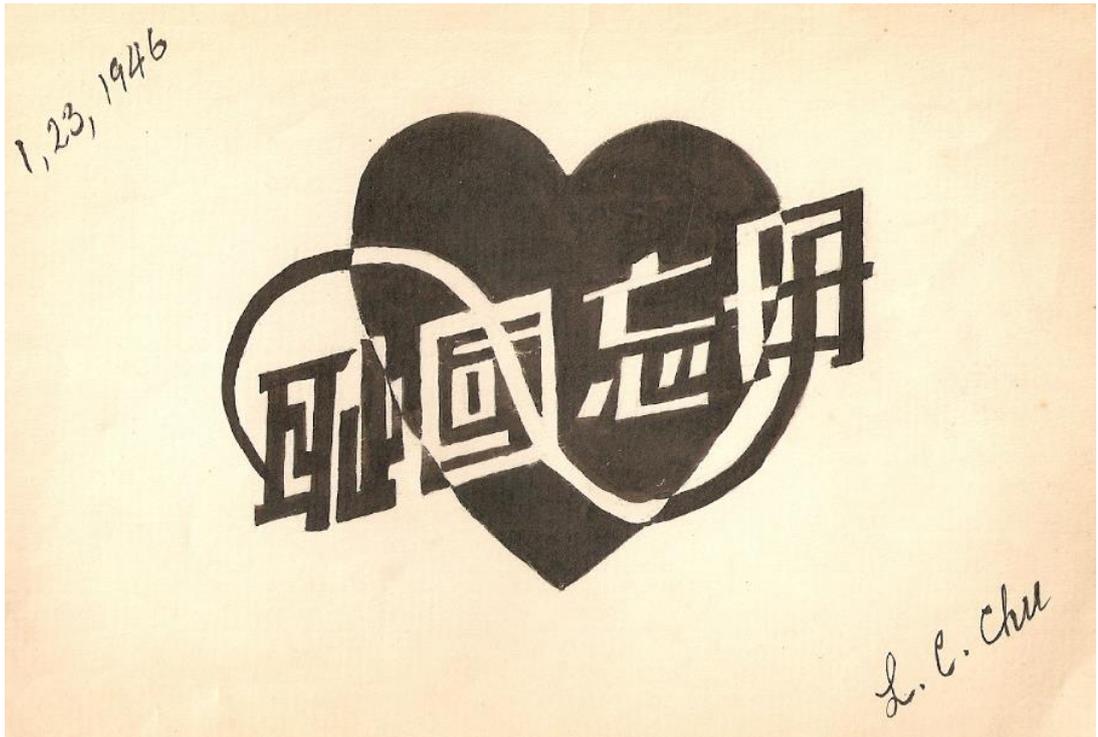


Fig. 61. Zhu Lizhong 朱丽中 (McTyeire class of 1950) wrote 'Never forget the National Humiliation' in her brother's autograph book shortly after the end of the war of resistance against Japan on 23 January 1946. Image care of Zhu Lizhong.



Above: Fig. 62: Dong Yue 董悅 (front row, second from left) enjoyed dressing in Shanxi style clothing and playing drums from that region to welcome the PLA army to Shanghai on 27 May 1949. Image courtesy of Dong Yue.

Below: Fig. 63. McTyeire students carrying the national flag, participating in a parade to celebrate the founding of the PRC, 1950. Image courtesy of Chen Jingyu.





Fig. 64: Chen Tianmi (Front left) was amongst six McTyeire students who signed up to join the army during the Kang Mei Yuan Chao Campaign to Resist America and Aid Korea. Picture courtesy of Chen Tianmi.



On 5 July 1952 St. Mary's and McTyeire were merged to form the Shanghai Number Three Girls' School. Left Fig. 65. Girls carry the new school sign to hang on the gateway of their school. Above: fig. 66. The class of 1952 formed the first graduating class of the Number Three School. However, alumnae still identify as the last graduating classes of McTyeire and St. Mary's respectively. Images courtesy of Chen Jingyu.



Fig 67: Interpreters and Intermediaries. Zhao Fengfeng (right) acts as translator and secretary for Anna Louise Strong (Centre) and Guo Moruo (Left). Image courtesy of Zhao Fengfeng.





Fig. 70. Dodson Hall, McTyeire School, Shanghai. Image from: United Methodist Archives and History Centre, Drew University, New Jersey, USA, 1648-6-7-11. Reproduced with permission.



Fig. 71 'The drive and very long Dragon Wall which cuts through the centre of the campus, McTyeire School, Shanghai. Image from: United Methodist Archives and History Centre, USA, 1648-6-7-11. Reproduced with permission.

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