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# Piety, Professionalism and Power: Chinese Protestant Missionary Physicians and Imperial Affiliations between Women in the Early Twentieth Century

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Like many other white Protestant women physicians around the turn of the twentieth century, Mary McLean hoped to practise her chosen profession in Asia. She and her sister presented themselves as candidates for missionary work before the interdenominational China Inland Mission Board in 1904. However, the mission's physician believed that McLean's heart condition would be aggravated by China's climate. The sisters spent several months in Shanghai testing the physician's pronouncement. After this trial period they were forced to concede that McLean's health did indeed suffer in China. They concluded that God had not intended for them to work as missionaries. Yet they still wanted to help the cause of Protestant missions. In lieu of becoming missionaries themselves, they determined to help a Chinese Christian girl receive a medical education. Through missionary contacts in Shanghai, they found Tsao Liyuin, a young teacher interested in the McLeans' proposal. Tsao came to the United States with the sisters' support in 1905, entered the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania (WMCP) in 1907 and graduated in 1911. She was the third Chinese woman to graduate from the College and later became one of many Chinese women in the employ of US-based missionary organisations.<sup>1</sup> McLean's health prevented her from engaging in missionary work directly, but in Tsao she found a suitable, if unexpected, proxy.

This article takes as its starting point the life trajectories of WMCP's first three Chinese graduates: Hu King Eng, Li Bi Cu and Tsao, all of whom earned medical degrees in the United States around the turn of the twentieth century before returning to China to carry out medical missionary work. The physicians' lifelong involvement with US-based missionary activities, and their unusual position as highly-educated Chinese women who assumed authority and visibility within American missionary circles, render them significant subjects in exploring both the possibilities and the limitations of women's missionary networks. Although exceptional figures, Hu, Li and Tsao are representative of a cohort of second- and third-generation Protestant

women from Asia for whom missionary work provided educational and professional opportunities. Christian women from India, Korea and Japan also trained as physicians in the US under the tutelage of women's missionary associations.<sup>2</sup> As seen through the lives of the physicians and other women with whom they interacted, women's missionary networks served as both a women-centred alternative to heterosexual and patriarchal family models and as a gendered form of imperialism.

Even in comparison to other Chinese missionary physicians such as Shi Meiyu (Mary Stone) and Kang Aide (Ida Kahn), Hu's, Li's and Tsao's successes represented class advancement. All three WMCP graduates were from humbler class backgrounds than Shi and Kang, who received their medical degrees from the University of Michigan. Tsao's career was particularly remarkable because she, unlike other Chinese missionary physicians, was not formally affiliated with the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society (WFMS) of the Methodist Episcopal Church or any other missionary organisations. Tsao did spend five years working for a missionary hospital established by American Quakers. Her experience in working for a mission associated with a religion on the margins of American Protestantism provides a point of comparison to the WFMS physicians, facilitating a broadened view of women's participation in Protestant missions.

Through analysing the numerous permutations of transnational women's missionary networks, I demonstrate that Carroll Smith-Rosenberg's classic argument positing the historical centrality of relationships between women as a means by which women formulated their own subcultures can have broadened applicability to include transnational contexts, when due consideration to race, religion and imperial power relations is provided.<sup>3</sup> Protestant missionary work constructed a transnational space upheld through affect as well as institutional connections between the US and China. Within the bounds of this space, possibilities for both subverting and upholding traditional hierarchies of race, gender and class abounded. Hu, Li, Tsao and other women involved with missionary work participated in an ongoing reconstruction of an imagined community in which their shared identity as Christian women was central.<sup>4</sup> Theirs was an imagined Christian sisterhood that transcended racial and national boundaries – although, as we will see, the community did not always operate as such.

This article relies heavily upon missionary sources such as annual reports and minutes from conferences. I make little claim regarding these records' accuracy, and certainly their origins produce an emphasis on the women's religious identities, as well as a generally positive account of missionary activities. For purposes of this analysis, the sources' degree of accuracy is less relevant than what they can tell us about the perspectives of missionary physicians and the choices they made in representing themselves and their work. I utilised the reports' quantitative data to provide a supplementary perspective, although I do not consider this data to be indicative of a wholly accessible truth, either. Rather, these records provide glimpses into missionary work as it was imagined and represented by a particular set of participants. Because these reports were compiled by many individuals and widely circulated among missionaries, it can be reasonably inferred that these participants consider the records to be relatively accurate representations of their work as they perceived it.

This methodology is consistent with a large body of historical research on gender and imperialism that considers the discursive construction of imperialism as the primary object of study.<sup>5</sup> Antoinette Burton has successfully utilised biographies of

remarkable, peripatetic figures as a means to elucidate gendered cultures of imperialism as they operated in the metropole of imperial Great Britain.<sup>6</sup> This investigation is inspired by Burton's methodology, if complicated by early-twentieth-century China's particular position as neither a formal colony nor a wholly autonomous nation-state.<sup>7</sup> However, despite China's unique position within the global imperial system, and the US's status as a latecomer to formal empire, this article's conclusions have implications for relationships between women in numerous imperial and colonial contexts.

As Jane Hunter has demonstrated, American missionary women in China often advocated for traditional Victorian domesticity in their words, if not their deeds.<sup>8</sup> By remaining single throughout their lives and openly encouraging other Chinese women to do the same, Hu, Li and Tsao actually advanced a more radical critique of conventional, heteronormative gender roles than their white colleagues. They claimed marriage and family structures as a major cause of Chinese women's oppression. While this critique of marriage was consistent with many nationalist criticisms of allegedly traditional Chinese culture, their vision of modern womanhood differed from male nationalists who wrote on issues regarding women's rights in late-Qing and early-republican China. Male nationalists emphasised the necessity of improving women's education so that they could better serve the nation as mothers. In contrast, missionary physicians promoted an ideal of female service in which women's personal and professional relationships with each other were paramount.<sup>9</sup>

But the physicians, in encouraging other Chinese women to embark on missionary work as a liberating alternative lifestyle, obscured inequalities within Christian communities. After all, within mainline Protestant churches, women were subordinated to men. Even within women's separate missionary organisations that enjoyed relative autonomy, such as WFMS, women, despite their purported Christian sisterhood, were differentially positioned based on race, occupation and age. The choice to become a missionary worker rather than a wife meant accepting a different set of dependencies. Chinese missionary workers were dependent not upon husbands but upon relationships with American women. While missionaries touted these relationships as a form of liberation, during an era of strong nationalism, political conflict and anti-imperial unrest in China, such dependencies could take on decidedly different social meanings. As Rebecca Karl has shown, the position of Chinese women in marriage was frequently likened to slavery among nationalists in the early twentieth century. However, women's slavery within marriage was also analogised to China's purported slavery to foreign imperial powers.<sup>10</sup> While many of Hu's, Li's and Tsao's aims were avowedly nationalist, their insistence that only conversion to Christianity and work at Christian institutions could liberate Chinese women put them well outside mainstream nationalist thought. At times they could appear to be aligned with imperialism, especially in the wake of the May Fourth Period and New Culture Movement.

Through these physicians' lives and relationships, the complexities of relationships between women across race and nation are laid bare. Within US women's history, there is a long tradition of presenting voluntary associations between women (generally of the same class and race) as a means by which women bonded together to resist sexist and heterosexist social conventions and create a space for themselves outside of their assigned private 'sphere'.<sup>11</sup> Positive historical assessments of affiliations between women have also persisted within the field of transnational history. For example, noted transnational historian Akira Iriye has suggested:

It seems plausible to argue . . . that not all behaviour and activities in the world are produced by nationally defined actors . . . Sometimes, however, individuals' or groups' nationality becomes less important than other categories that define them or their activities. If these Americans and Germans happen to be all female, their nationality may be of less relevance than their gender in accounting for the ways they interact with one another.<sup>12</sup>

While Iriye makes a strong case that historians should consider historical actors' non-national affiliations, his example nonetheless implies that commonalities between women – presumably the result of shared gender oppression – render women as a universal class that is more likely than men to cast aside national affiliations in favour of transnational identities.<sup>13</sup>

Within women's history, in contrast, works considering women's relationships across racial lines have tended to suggest that true transnational sisterhood was scarce in imperial and colonial contexts. Numerous scholars, including Burton, Margaret Jacobs and Peggy Pascoe, have demonstrated that affiliations between women across lines of race and nation in colonial and imperial contexts were often fraught, symbolically positioning white European and American women as mothers to childlike non-Western women.<sup>14</sup> Women's missionary activities in particular have frequently been touted as an exemplar of white American and British Protestant women's assertion of cultural superiority.

In a recent historiographical essay discussing British women's missionary work, Elizabeth Prevost has argued that historians of missions have effectively privileged race over religion as an analytic category, producing histories of hegemony that position women missionaries simply 'as products of a dominant discourse of nation and empire'.<sup>15</sup> Prevost asserts that this model does not adequately account for the agency of either white women missionaries or indigenous converts. She proposes that historians of missions should retain attention to colonial and imperial power, but more fully historicise religion and religious experience. For Prevost, '[t]he challenge lies in accounting for cultural and colonial terrains of power in conjunction with the spiritual conviction of missionaries and converts'.<sup>16</sup> In the spirit of this two-pronged aim, I refer to relationships between missionary women, such as those between Hu, Li and Tsao and white women missionaries, as imperial affiliations. Despite these associations' voluntary nature, affective components, mutual benefits for white and Chinese women and centrality of shared religious convictions, the ties that bound Christian women together in missionary work were nonetheless affected by racial ideologies, inequalities and imperial relationships between nation-states.

Another vein of scholarship that has inspired this article, including studies by Hyaeweol Choi, Ryan Dunch, Connie Shemo and Rumi Yasutake, has demonstrated that East Asians, far from being passive recipients of Christianity, responded to missionary organisations and utilised missionaries' ideas and resources for their own purposes.<sup>17</sup> Shemo's biographical examination of Chinese missionary physicians Shi and Kang is particularly relevant to this study. In interpreting Shi's and Kang's transnational lives, which bore numerous similarities to Hu's, Li's and Tsao's experiences, Shemo demonstrates that missionary physicians were nationalist and proto-feminist in their ideology and activities.

Many of my conclusions regarding Hu, Li and Tsao echo Shemo's work. Yet differences in the women's circumstances lead me to propose a narrative that differs

somewhat. While Shemo casts Kang and especially Shi as resisters of white women missionaries' racism and imperialism, Hu, Li and Tsao do not fit so easily into the resistance paradigm. But as Paul Kramer reminds us, resistance is not synonymous with agency in imperial encounters.<sup>18</sup> While Hu, Li and Tsao certainly challenged sexism and anti-Chinese racism, at times they also participated in imperial ideologies and formations of labour. Missionary institutions featured exploitation alongside opportunity and hierarchies within purported equality. Hu, Li, Tsao and other women who chose to work for missions under these unequal conditions cannot be reduced to either resisters or enablers of imperialism, but their choices should nevertheless be recognised as expressions of agency amidst social limitations.

### The novel proposition

Even an abbreviated examination of Hu's, Li's, and Tsao's biographies indicates the centrality of already established transnational missionary networks to their early lives. Hu King Eng was born in 1865 into a prominent Christian family in Fuzhou. Her grandfather was one of the first Chinese converts to Protestant Christianity, and both her father and uncle were clergymen with the Methodist Episcopal Church in China. Hu's mother was active in missionary work and the Methodist Episcopal WFMS. As children, Hu and her sisters accompanied their mother on evangelistic visits to neighbouring families. Hu was the first student at Foochow Boarding School for Girls, a school run by WFMS.<sup>19</sup> After graduating, she worked as a medical assistant to American physician Sigourney Trask, the attending physician at a WFMS hospital in Fuzhou. Trask, impressed by Hu's abilities and character, entreated WFMS leaders in the US in 1883 to pay for Hu to travel to the US so that she might be educated as a physician.<sup>20</sup>

WFMS leadership, however, was sceptical of such a proposition. Hu knew little English and her missionary education in Fuzhou was, by the standards of white middle-class Americans, subpar. One WFMS leader commented that 'the proposition was so novel, and the undertaking so hazardous, that while our hearts glowed in gratitude and wonder at such a project opening such possibilities to a Chinese woman, we shrank from the cost and risk involved'.<sup>21</sup> The organisation's response indicates that the idea of a Chinese woman as a physician initially appeared to be a quixotic dream. However, a group of women associated with the society's Philadelphia branch assumed the costs and responsibilities of Hu's education, creating a fund not officially part of WFMS provisions.

With this aid, Hu came to the US in 1884 and began to study at Ohio Wesleyan University. In 1888, she entered the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania (WMCP). Although Hu returned to China for two years in 1891 and 1892 to care for her ailing father, she returned to the US and graduated from WMCP in 1894, making her one of the first Chinese women physicians to graduate from any medical college. During her time in the US, Hu found particular support from Sarah Keen, a woman active in the Philadelphia branch, and the Sites family, a Methodist missionary family whom Hu and her family knew in Fuzhou.

Li Bi Cu was also the daughter of a minister, and her family lived in a small village in Fujian province. Her mother too was a devout Christian, having been left on the doorstep of a missionary-run orphanage in Fuzhou as an infant. (In more dramatic

renditions of this tale, Li's mother was abandoned to the streets of Fuzhou.) Like Hu, Li received her early education in a missionary boarding school. During the course of her education, Li met Elizabeth Fisher Brewster, a long-time missionary teacher in China. Brewster and a missionary physician were impressed with Li. In accordance with the wishes of Li and her father, Brewster brought Li to the US in 1897. Li first went to a public secondary school in Herkimer, New York. She then attended the Folts Institute in New York, a WFMS-sponsored institution that educated future missionaries, and after two years there went on to WMCP. A woman referred to as 'Miss Allen' from the New York branch of WFMS assumed the costs of Li's education, and she graduated from WMCP in 1905, after a total of eight years in the US.<sup>22</sup>

Like Hu and Li, Tsao was the daughter of a minister. Her father, Tse Zeh Tsao, had taken an idiosyncratic path to Christianity. During the Taiping Rebellion (1850–64), his parents sent him to relative safety in Shanghai, where he studied at a school run by Methodists from the southern US. There he met Reverend Walter Lambuth, who took Tsao to the US in 1859. While in the US, Tsao led a varied life as a servant in the Confederate army, apprentice in a Georgia print shop and student of medicine and theology. He pledged himself to missionary work and returned to Shanghai in 1869, where he married the sister of a Chinese Episcopal priest. The couple settled in Suzhou and established a new Methodist church, of which Tsao was pastor. Tsao Liyuan was one of six children, all of whom received Western educations. She was first educated in a missionary school in Suzhou and later attended the McTyiere School in Shanghai. After attending another missionary school in Nagasaki, Japan, for two years, Tsao returned to teach at the McTyiere School. Around this time, the McLeans began their search for a young Chinese woman whose education they could sponsor. Helen Richardson, principal of the McTyiere School, recommended Tsao, who travelled to the US in 1905. After two years of preparatory work, Tsao entered WMCP in 1907 and graduated in 1911.<sup>23</sup>

For all three women, travel to the US marked a continuation of engagement in transnational missionary networks already in place. Missionary discourses represented Hu's, Li's and Tsao's educational achievements as a triumph of Protestant evangelism in China and especially of Protestant missionary women's establishment of schools for girls. While early advocates of women missionaries envisioned missionary relationships as vertical ones in which white women would uplift Asian and Middle Eastern women through their mere presence, the women's lives suggest that missionary encounters between women could develop into more mutual and dynamic relationships of mentorship and support. Ultimately, the success of Hu, Li, Tsao and other Chinese women educated in the US encouraged missionary organisations dominated by white women to support higher education for Chinese women and establish a transnational, interracial Christian labour force that included some Chinese women in leadership roles.

Because the women and many of their parents began their Christian service in clearly subservient roles within missions and the church hierarchy, becoming missionary physicians represented upward mobility. Even in contrast with fellow Methodist missionary physicians Shi and Kang, Hu, Li and Tsao signified how missionary tutelage could enable class mobility. While Shi and Kang entered the University of Michigan's medical school soon after arriving in the US, Hu, Li and Tsao all received some preparatory education in the US prior to entering WMCP. This indicates that comparatively fewer resources were available to their families in China. They had not been able to

obtain prior education that was comparable to Kang's and Shi's early education. Their sojourns, and dependence on missionary women in the US, spanned a longer period of time.

### Modern women in America

While the women were in the US, missionary networks continued to shape their lives, providing them with opportunities to present alternative images of Chinese womanhood that challenged racist and Orientalist depictions common among white Americans.<sup>24</sup> Since Chinese immigration was almost entirely barred by US law during this period, the women required exemptions just to enter the country, which they obtained through their missionary contacts. The women's missionary connections allowed them to assume some measure of public visibility and respectability usually denied to female immigrants from Asia.

As Derek Chang has demonstrated, many white Protestants involved in missionary movements were relatively progressive on racial issues because they believed that Christian piety could supersede race as a measure of character.<sup>25</sup> Accordingly, white missionaries perceived Hu, Li and Tsao as living embodiments of the potential of Chinese people, once Christianised. Their presence served to promote missionary work and white missionaries' interests. A report of the 1886 meeting of the WFMS Philadelphia Branch proclaimed that 'the touching recital of King Eng's story, told by herself, brought the listeners into very close contact with the results of foreign mission effort, which often seems so intangible to the indifferent. Here was the direct evidence that labor for God cannot be in vain'.<sup>26</sup> While positioning Hu's piety as a product of missionary work was somewhat misleading, as she was a third-generation Christian who had not been personally converted by a missionary, Hu's success and visibility nevertheless came to exemplify the righteousness and potential of missionary work. Through this discursive construction, Hu herself came to stand as a product of missionary labour. Yet Hu was also *providing* her own labour and image to the mission, as she did continually throughout her life. Her presence at missionary meetings and her personal narrative likely aided WFMS in its fundraising efforts.

In an ironic turn, the students were frequently described as exemplars of Christian piety to be emulated by wayward American Christians. While the women were engaged in evangelism in the US, Tsao developed a close relationship with Dolores Marchand, a Puerto Rican classmate, who was apparently converted to Protestantism over the course of the relationship.<sup>27</sup> The women also 'converted' white Protestant Americans. One account of Hu's biography claims: 'While in this country her influence is very helpful to others. One mother exclaimed, "Little did I dream when giving money for the work in China that a Chinese girl would lead my daughter to Christ!"'<sup>28</sup> This narrative reveals how Hu utilised her time in the US to reverse the usual script of missionary encounters. Although the woman quoted in this account supported missionary work with the intention of helping white women to convert Chinese girls, it was a young Chinese woman who 'saved' her own daughter, who had apparently strayed from the path of Protestant devotion prior to Hu's intervention. This was socially transgressive. As Tracy Fessenden has argued, the association between femininity and piety so prominent in nineteenth-century American culture was effectively limited to middle-class white women, although other women were also affected by this ideology.<sup>29</sup>

Hu upheld the association between women and piety so central to Victorian gender ideology, but subverted its underlying racial ideology.

The women also professed their faith to their American classmates, most of whom were young white women of Protestant background if not practicing Protestants. According to the American missionary and author Margaret Burton (1885–1969), who wrote extensively about women's missionary work, the trend towards secularism in American society at the turn of the twentieth century proved troubling for Li. Burton claimed, 'While in the medical college Li Bi Cu came in contact with the type of student who refuses to believe anything which cannot be proved by a scientific formula. Some of them told her that the religion which her parents and the missionaries had taught her was no longer believed by any intelligent person in America, but was simply an old tradition which educated people did not accept'.<sup>30</sup> Burton positioned this experience as a trial of faith for Li, which she overcame. In the process of resisting other medical students' agnosticism, Li disproved their claim that professional education and piety were at odds with one another. This story, and the anecdote about Hu's conversion of a young white girl, suggests that white women who supported missionary Chinese physicians – who tended to be of an older generation and were themselves less likely to have received extensive higher education – were troubled by a perceived trend. They feared that the younger generation, particularly girls, were turning away from faith, even as educational opportunities for women in the US became increasingly available.<sup>31</sup> Hu, Li and Tsao were hence exemplars of modern Protestant womanhood, less visible in mainstream US culture, in that they were educated *and* faithful, engaging in professional pursuits out of a selfless devotion to global Christianity rather than individual ambition.

But while the women were perceived as exceptional Chinese people – unlike the non-Christian majority – they nevertheless were often described in terms that are clearly racist and Orientalist. Frequently referred to as 'celestial maidens', US newspapers and periodicals reporting on the women's activities typically described their physical appearances and attire in detail. Throughout these descriptions, there is an underlying tone of wonder – as though the writers could not quite believe that there were Chinese women, dressed in Chinese garb, who were well-educated, Christian and pursuing careers in the male-dominated field of medicine.<sup>32</sup> The women were invariably subjected to the curious gawking of white Americans in the US. This attention may not have been entirely welcome, but they strategically utilised it to demonstrate to white Americans the capabilities and possibilities of educated, modern Chinese women. For instance, one 1895 newspaper article reporting Hu's departure to China recounts: 'The Chinese women, [Hu] says, are waking up and getting to be progressive in their ideas. They want to become educated and to take part in the work of the world like the women of Western [*sic*]'.<sup>33</sup> This account indicates that when given opportunities to act as spokeswomen for Chinese women, the physicians used them to present Chinese women as progressing into modernity through education and Christianity.

While in the US, the women maintained a distinctly Chinese style of dress. Through their sartorial choices, the women challenged Americans to rethink their notions of Chinese womanhood through their occupational activities rather than physical appearance. By emphasising both their modernity and their Chinese-ness, they demonstrated Chinese women's compatibility with Western ideas and culture. In this, their



self-presentation corroborated the progressive Protestant view that religion trumped race. They were also similar to male reformist and nationalist figures of the late Qing period, including Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao.<sup>34</sup> Like these reformers, the women insisted that China's hoped-for transformation into a modern nation on par with Japan and the West needed to include liberation of Chinese women: improvements in educational and professional opportunities for girls and women and the cessation of foot-binding customs.<sup>35</sup>

The women physicians embodied all of these aspects of Chinese women's modernisation. As educated women, they were pursuing a course of study that was uncommon, and sometimes frowned upon, even for young white women in the US.<sup>36</sup> Their unbound feet also symbolised their liberated status. Unlike Shi Meiyu, who was often hailed in US publications as the first high-status Chinese woman never to have bound feet, Hu's feet actually were bound during part of her childhood, which was widely publicised. The issue was a contentious one between her parents. Her father insisted that Hu, their first-born daughter, have natural (*tianzu*) feet, while her mother wanted to bind Hu's feet. On several occasions, Hu's feet were unbound and re-bound as her parents and other relatives debated the matter. Hu herself begged her parents to bind her feet, conscious of the social ostracism faced by large-footed women in China. Her father ultimately prevailed, however, and Hu's feet grew naturally.

According to Hu's later accounts, she experienced an epiphany regarding her unbound feet while in the US and running late for her train while in Chicago. She sprinted towards the train platform to make the train on time and, at that moment, experienced a rush of gratitude that her feet were unbound so that she might make her train. She repeated this story frequently throughout her life, and in many ways this story is a microcosm of her time in the US as a whole, in accordance with the narrative Hu crafted. By being in the US, and engaging in quintessentially modern activities such as riding trains, running through streets and studying medicine, the girl who had once begged her parents to bind her feet had become a modern woman, entering modernity at a run.<sup>37</sup>

Yet despite being admired by many Americans, the women were subjected to racialisation in professional settings by patients and colleagues alike. Bertha Van Hoosen, the supervising physician at Mary Thompson Hospital in Chicago, where Tsao interned for a year, admitted later in life that she was initially concerned about Tsao's appointment. In a letter written after Tsao's death, Van Hoosen confessed, 'I got so that I actually dreaded her coming, because of her nationality, and of the probable prejudice against her. But, like a fog before a blaze of sunshine, all my fears were scattered by her very presence. Literally she came, was seen, and conquered'.<sup>38</sup> Van Hoosen continued to recount the story of an irritable patient, an eight-year-old boy in need of a tonsillectomy who expressed contempt for everyone in the hospital except for 'the Chinaman', meaning Tsao. Van Hoosen's contention that Tsao was able to 'conquer' all prejudice likely presents an overly rosy portrait of the situation, but the account nevertheless captures how many white Americans perceived the women. According to this narrative, the women were able to overcome prejudice and change people's minds about Chinese people through sheer power of character and ability. However, Van Hoosen's fears that Tsao would encounter prejudice indicates the presence of anti-Chinese racism in the US including, perhaps, her own.

Because missionaries and supporters of missions were among the few constituents of white Americans to oppose immigration laws excluding Chinese migrants, on occasion missionary publications' accounts of the women's activities in the US explicitly challenged anti-Chinese attitudes.<sup>39</sup> In one anecdote about Li that was frequently repeated in missionary publications, Li's train was en route to San Francisco prior to her departure to China and ran over a man described as an eastern European immigrant. Although he was haemorrhaging severely, Li tended to him and kept him alive until he was taken to a hospital. Missionary publications proudly recounted this incident. Mrs Stephen L. Baldwin, in a pamphlet describing the history of WFMS work in China commented that 'one can but wonder if he [the injured man] was anti-Chinese'.<sup>40</sup> Repetition of this incidence in the missionary press challenged anti-Chinese attitudes among whites in the US and positioned Li as a saviour of American and Chinese people alike. Collectively, Hu's, Li's and Tsao's activities in the US demonstrate that cross-cultural flows instigated by Protestant missionaries did indeed flow in multiple directions, many of them unanticipated. They were not passive recipients of charity, but active participants in American life in a number of spheres. Yet the racism and Orientalism in American culture still exerted influence on their interactions with Americans and, indeed, shaped the choices available to them.

### **Affections, affiliations and dependencies**

All three women returned to China within a year or two of graduation. Their professional lives continued to be enmeshed in transnational missionary networks. Because Hu and Li were financially supported by WFMS, they spent their careers at WFMS-sponsored hospitals. Hu worked in Fuzhou, while Li worked in numerous locations in Fujian province.<sup>41</sup> Tsao's career differed because she was not permanently affiliated with a particular missionary society. Her benefactors, the McLean sisters, wanted her to choose her career path independently. Tsao first worked at a hospital in Nanjing sponsored by American Quakers, and then went to a state-funded hospital for women and children in Tianjin. Before accepting her position in Tianjin, Tsao negotiated the right to operate the hospital much like a missionary institution, even paying evangelical workers out of her own salary.<sup>42</sup>

None of the women married, although both Hu and Li raised adoptive children, indicating their willingness to forge family structures outside of heteronormative standards. The women devoted their lives to medical missionary work, termed 'the double mission' in missionary parlance. In their work as physicians, they assumed a number of other roles, including teacher, administrator, evangelist and fundraiser. In fulfilling these duties, relationships with American women continued to be critical. Missionary records indicate that these relationships included affection and mutual dependency, but also featured material inequality.

By the late nineteenth century, WFMS had developed a complex, multi-tiered organisational apparatus that facilitated connections between missionaries in the field and their supporters in the US. There were many geographically-defined 'conferences' within WFMS, and China was divided into six to eight conferences. Both Hu and Li spent their careers working in the 'Foochow Conference', a region including not only Fuzhou itself but the entirety of Fujian province. Each conference had its own rotating leadership and organisational structure. The Foochow Conference, which was bilingual

in its proceedings within China, typically had two sets of officers – one designated as English (speaking) and the other as Chinese.<sup>43</sup> Dunch claims that the records of the Foochow Conference's annual conferences (which provide a significant portion of this article's sources), 'show us Chinese Protestant women in the process of building their own separate institutional spheres, in which they ran meetings, spoke in public, debated and voted, prepared reports, and exercised oversight of the schools, hospitals and so on for women'.<sup>44</sup> Dunch is correct in asserting that Chinese women assumed leadership positions, public visibility and autonomous activity within missionary conferences. At the same time, however, the significance of the linkages which tied Chinese Christian women with white American women should not be overlooked. Despite the authority that some Chinese women assumed, these linkages were critical to the distribution of resources that kept missionary institutions in operation.

Conferences in the mission field paralleled organisational structures in the US. Like the Foochow conference, the US organisation had geographically-defined branches. Within each branch there were conferences and districts. Within each district, the smallest unit was the individual organisation. Oftentimes, these organisations were associated with particular Methodist churches. Smaller units within WFMS typically had their own set of officers. Additionally, there were organisations for children and 'young ladies' associated with WFMS in which children and adolescent girls raised money for missionary activities under the supervision of older women.

The extensiveness of the organisation's apparatus in the US allowed many American women to assume leadership positions within the organisation, usually as volunteers, but sometimes as paid workers. The organisation's structure also facilitated ongoing communication between WFMS women in the US and those abroad. Conferences in the mission field, and branches in the US, had corresponding secretaries responsible for maintaining these contacts. Branches were most concerned with the missionaries and missionary work that they sponsored directly. Missionary workers in the field wrote annual reports of the year's work, which were presented at annual missionary conferences in both China and the US. Corresponding secretaries for the conferences would synthesise or forward these reports to the corresponding secretaries of branches that supported their work, and to the national WFMS. Accordingly, the physicians' reports travelled, albeit in abbreviated form, to various WFMS publications and meetings at both the regional and national levels. In this way, a Methodist woman in Philadelphia only marginally involved with WFMS could learn about Hu's medical work in Fuzhou by reading *The Heathen Woman's Friend* (later *The Woman's Missionary Friend*) or by listening to an abbreviated version of the report at a local meeting. While these chains of communication were mediated, these global communications served to create an 'imagined community' of missionary women in widely disparate sites engaged in common pursuits.<sup>45</sup> WFMS was locally oriented and globally connected.

Transnational networks between missionary women included interpersonal relationships as well as practical and financial support. Hu described Sarah Keen, who served as corresponding secretary for the Philadelphia Branch for many years and who knew Hu during her time in the US, as 'my very dear friend, teacher, and secretary'.<sup>46</sup> Keen never went to China, nor did Hu return to the US following her departure in 1895, yet Keen and Hu had a personal and professional relationship that spanned many years. Hu sent Keen reports about her work at Woolston Memorial Hospital and the hospital's

needs. Keen, in turn, raised funds for the hospital and communicated information to possible supporters in the US. These networks were essential for financing medical missionary work. Although missionary hospitals were partially supported by Chinese donors and patient fees, they relied heavily on donations from the US, especially in their first years of operation. Typically, missionary hospitals received at least \$1000 of support per year – and sometimes quite a bit more.<sup>47</sup> American donors also provided funds for new hospital buildings and other special expenses.

Because of the local orientation of WFMS-affiliated organisations, missionary hospitals and other institutions were not simply allotted a lump sum each year. Donations were allotted for specific purposes. Individuals and group donations went towards particular expenses such as a nurse's salary or hospital maintenance. WFMS annual appropriations reports listed each branch's appropriations in great detail. For instance, the 1915 report indicates that WFMS allotted \$75 for repairs at Woolston Memorial Hospital in 1916, paid for by the Philadelphia branch, which also covered Hu's salary annually.<sup>48</sup> The branches' own annual reports are even more specific. Each expense funded by the branch was actually sponsored by an individual or group. Li's annual salary, for example, was provided by the 'Dr Li Bi Cu Standard Bearers Missionary Genesee Conference', a conglomerate of WFMS 'young ladies' branches centred in Genesee, New York.<sup>49</sup> Generally, the same group or individual would pay for the same expense every year. When donors could not continue their contribution, it was the responsibility of a branch officer to find a new party who could assume responsibility for the expense.<sup>50</sup> Groups also provided non-monetary donations to affiliated projects. The Genesee Standard Bearers who covered Li's salary, for instance, donated bandages and other needed items to Li's hospital on several occasions. In recognition of this support, Li oftentimes specifically thanked the Genesee Standard Bearers and other local organisations associated with the New York Branch in her annual reports.<sup>51</sup> Donation protocols hence included material as well as monetary exchange, fostering a dual personal and financial relationship between donor and recipient.

The system of specified donations required careful coordination and planning among WFMS officers. A system that put all contributions into a common pool would probably have been easier to administer. But the system was not utilised for its efficiency. Rather, it served to strengthen and personalise the ties between missionaries and their supporters in the US. Donors could feel as though they had contributed to a specific aspect of mission work. Some supporters did donate as individuals, and those whose contributions were particularly large could expect to have buildings, rooms, scholarships and other entities named in their honour. However, even individual donors appear in WFMS records in terms of their association with local organisations. For example, the 1912 report of the Philadelphia branch indicates that Annette Locke of the South Avenue Church in Wilkesburg, Pennsylvania, contributed towards Woolston Memorial's 1913 operating expenses. The same report states that the Christ Church Auxiliary in Pittsburgh paid for a nurse in Fuzhou that year.<sup>52</sup> This method of record-keeping illustrates an important aspect of WFMS operations. Regardless of whether a given expense was provided by one individual or a group, donors' associations with local organisations were paramount. When Locke donated to Woolston Memorial Hospital, she did so as a member of the South Avenue Church. For the many WFMS women who neither entered the mission field themselves nor held nationally recognised positions,

the system of specified donations provided a sense of communal pride along with opportunities for global engagement.

Due to these ongoing connections, the women physicians continued to receive press coverage in the US after their return to China, especially in missionary publications. These representations elaborated upon the women's image, already established in missionary circles, as pious, Christ-like figures. In US publications, certain anecdotes about the women recur repeatedly, becoming apocryphal of their abilities. For Hu, who was often referred to as 'the miracle lady' in US publications, the story of how she cured an elderly woman's blindness through double cataract surgery took on iconic status.<sup>53</sup> When this story was retold, however, Hu's skill as a surgeon was not emphasised nearly as much as her capacity to enact a miracle. Like Christ himself, Hu led the blind to see. Scientific medicine was merely the instrument she used.

That Hu and the other women physicians were represented as divine, Christ-like figures suggests that they were, at least in some respects, successful in challenging racial assumptions that Chinese people were inherently sinful. These portrayals also challenged more typical images of China and Chinese women that appeared in the US because in stories about the physicians, Chinese women were the enactors of philanthropic work – while most missionary stories positioned Asian women simply as recipients and benefactors of white women's sacrificial labour. Nevertheless, the physicians' financial dependency on white American women demonstrates that despite Hu's, Li's and Tsao's willingness to reverse the script of missionary encounters, power relations between them and their supporters were asymmetric.

All three women remained single for life, and this was also a key component of their representations in the US missionary discourse that held that marriage and Confucian family structures were at the root of Chinese women's oppression. Despite remaining single, both Li and Hu raised adoptive children, Hu with her sister and assistant Hu Seuk Eng.<sup>54</sup> As was the case for other women involved in missionary work in China, missionary status provided women with opportunities for unorthodox family arrangements while maintaining social respectability.<sup>55</sup> But while there was some ambivalence about middle-class white women missionaries' 'spinsterhood', the Chinese physicians' choice to remain single was celebrated in missionary discourse as another sign of their devotion and liberated status relative to other Chinese women. Tsao received a marriage proposal from another Chinese student while she was in the US. Although she considered the proposal, Tsao decided to decline after hearing the man in question speak disparagingly of Christ over dinner.<sup>56</sup> Like Catholic nuns, the missionary physicians were symbolically married to their work and to God.<sup>57</sup> However, this narrative obscured their dependency on the mission itself, and by extension their US supporters.

### **Women's work for women**

Despite the high esteem with which Chinese missionary physicians were regarded, the physicians were nevertheless workers who provided considerable labour to missions for relatively little compensation. Unlike most white women who worked as missionary physicians in China, Hu, Li and Tsao lived in or close to the hospitals where they worked, most likely increasing their relative workloads. The physicians worked long hours and took few breaks, working especially hard during periodic epidemics.

Their reports to friends and fellow missionaries frequently begin by mentioning their exhaustion and busy schedules. On more than a few occasions, the women took extended leaves in order to improve their health. They believed that in performing this arduous labour they were serving God, for which they would eventually receive divine rewards. They positioned themselves within the tradition of Christian martyrdom. As Hu described in one of her reports to the Foochow Woman's Conference:

... we Christians too have to walk on rugged roads, across mountains of sin in this world ... Therefore even if many hardships come to us, we should bear them patiently, for our affliction in this world is but for a moment and the reward in the world to come is eternal.<sup>58</sup>

Hence the physicians publicly demonstrated their capacity for selfless service. In their descriptions of it, the physicians' work does not appear as a scientific pursuit, gendered as male. Rather, medicine is constructed as a decidedly feminine pursuit rooted in self-sacrifice. This is consistent not only with Victorian notions of womanhood, but also dovetails with Chinese ideals pertaining to female virtue, which Joan Judge has shown to be central to the formation of a conservative nationalist ideology in China, as translated from Japan.<sup>59</sup> However, while Hu's self-presentation was consistent with nationalism, her most pressing concern was not the nation itself, but her own salvation and that of others.

But while the physicians stressed divine rewards they believed they would receive in the world to come, compensation in the material world was also relevant to their lives. In comparison to white WFMS missionaries in China, Hu and Li were under-compensated. Their salaries were consistently at least 25 to 34 per cent lower than their white counterparts in the missionary field – and sometimes the gap was greater than that, as when Li first began her work.<sup>60</sup> Hu and Li also received regular 'gifts' from American sponsors, hence supplementing their lower salaries. But the clear differences between a regular salary and supplemental 'gifts' from individual patrons further indicate the physicians' esteemed yet dependent positions within the mission.<sup>61</sup>

It is difficult to say how the women felt about the pay discrepancy. Because salaries were regularly published in official WFMS reports, the salary gap was common knowledge among WFMS workers. Hu and Li were probably reluctant to complain. Expressing excessive concern about monetary remuneration would have appeared unseemly and materialistic, whereas missionaries preferred to present themselves as selfless servants. Still, there is fragmentary evidence suggesting that the women were not entirely indifferent to the issue. When Hu received a raise in 1921 and Li did not, the situation was rectified the following year. This suggests that at the very least, Hu and Li thought their pay should at least be comparable to each other. Beginning in 1922, WFMS began providing 'administrative grants' to Chinese workers who, like Hu and Li, fulfilled significant administrative responsibilities in conjunction with their work.<sup>62</sup> This narrowed but did not close the pay gap.

In contrast, the Friends' China Mission for which Tsao worked provided her with compensation equal to other missionary physicians for the entirety of her contract with the mission, although salaries offered by the Quaker mission were lower overall as compared to WFMS. Tsao and other American-educated physicians at the Friends' Mission received \$500 annually at a time when WFMS missionaries were making \$600 a year.<sup>63</sup> Still, Tsao's salary of \$500 in 1915, in only her fourth year of work,

was more than the \$450 that Hu and Li earned in the same year, although both Hu and Li had a decade or more of service at that time. With resources that were paltry in comparison to those of Methodist missions, the Quaker mission provided Tsao with a salary equal to that of white American physicians it employed, possibly because of the Quaker tradition of egalitarianism. The Quaker mission appears to have assigned salary on the basis of position and level of education only, while WFMS treated white and Chinese missionary women as belonging to inherently different classes.

It is possible that WFMS felt that it could provide Hu and Li with lower compensation because the organisation had sponsored their education. Such a justification is dubious, however, given that Hu and Li must have paid back the costs of their educations, and then some, over the course of their decades of service at lower wages than their white counterparts. Moreover, some white women who worked as missionaries also had the costs of their education subsidised by the mission. As Shemo writes, within WFMS, 'salary distinctions based solely on national origin and race seemed so natural that they did not come up for debate'.<sup>64</sup> But whatever the justification for Hu's and Li's lower pay, the difference indicates that the Christian sisterhood forged through missionary work was an inequitable one, in spite of mutual affections and the praise lavished upon Hu and Li. However, they, unlike Shi Meiyu, never relinquished their missionary affiliations and if they objected to WFMS practices, they did so quietly. Hu's and Li's comparative willingness to acquiesce to inequitable WFMS practices is possibly attributable to their comparatively longer reliance on the mission.

Despite the limitations of women's missionary organisations, Hu and Li encouraged other Christian Chinese girls and women to follow their examples and assume medical missionary work. Yet most women in this labour force would receive even less status and remuneration than Hu and Li. Hospitals' evangelistic operations relied upon a number of workers, including assistants, nurses, matrons and evangelistic workers tasked with providing patients and their families with education in written language (both English and Chinese) and Christian tenets. Referred to as 'Bible women', these workers were older Chinese women who had converted to Christianity at some point in their adult lives.<sup>65</sup> Some Bible women may have travelled far from their native regions to serve, as evidenced by Hu's request in 1907 for a Bible woman who spoke the Fuzhou dialect without an accent.<sup>66</sup> Many Bible women were widowed, or living separately from an abusive husband or marital family, and several are described as having physical disabilities. They probably tended to be in a precarious economic position. Some Bible women were themselves former hospital patients. For example, one woman treated by Tsao at the Friends' Hospital in Nanjing, was, according to Tsao's account, initially resistant to both modern medicine and Christianity. Although Tsao insisted that the woman needed her lower leg amputated due to 'a bad tubercular ankle', the woman initially refused to consent to the surgery. After a month of persuasion, the woman accepted both the amputation and Christianity, and Tsao reported that she planned to enter a school for Bible women.<sup>67</sup>

Regardless of this tale's accuracy, the anecdote demonstrates missionaries' conceptualisation of Bible women's work. They believed that assuming work as a Bible woman provided both spiritual salvation and work and sustenance for women who may have otherwise lacked in occupational opportunities – so long as they were willing to accept Christianity and missionary values. Bible women utilised work at the mission as

a substitute for dependence on a husband or other relation. However, the annual salary of a Bible woman was only \$24 to \$30 in the first few decades of the twentieth century, making them, along with hospital matrons, the lowest-paid workers in the hospital.<sup>68</sup> Bible women embodied the duality of opportunity and exploitation that was so critical to the day-to-day operations of missionary institutions.

Younger Chinese women were also incorporated into missionary hospitals' labour force. Like hospitals in the US at the time, missionary hospitals required low-cost labour in order to manage growing caseloads. In both cases, a solution to this problem was to rely upon medical student labour.<sup>69</sup> For missionary hospitals, this was not a new practice; Hu began her medical work as the student-assistant of Sigourney Trask. When Hu took charge of Woolston Memorial Hospital, she continued the cycle of missionary medical training. She, however, endeavoured to create Chinese women physicians – not assistants. During her early years as a medical instructor, Hu had about two to six students at a given time. At first she took only Christian women, although she began accepting non-Christian girls at the beginning of her second decade of work. Most students paid to attend, but a few were sponsored by WFMS.<sup>70</sup> While Hu required an entrance exam for admittance to her training programme, her application process emphasised the character of entering students. Hu's entrance examination asked applicants why they wished to study medicine, which was her way of ensuring that students sought to become physicians for only altruistic motives.<sup>71</sup>

The medical education the missionary physicians provided was quite different from that which they had received in the US. In the US, medical educations at the more highly-regarded institutions, including WMCP, consisted of regular lectures and laboratory work in addition to clinical training. The physicians tried to provide a comparable education to their students. However, given their extensive responsibilities and the hospital's relative paucity of resources, the laboratory and lecture components of medical instruction were undoubtedly less robust. Students also did not perform dissection.<sup>72</sup> Most learning took place on the job. As Li admitted of her two medical students in 1908, 'we have not been able to give them very much book knowledge yet they have learned enough of practical work to be of great value to us'.<sup>73</sup> This indicates the ways in which missionary hospitals benefited from students' labour at little or no cost to the mission.

Once these medical students graduated from missionary hospitals' education programmes, their professional status was uncertain. Hu considered completion of her course, alongside satisfactory performance in a written examination, to qualify students as physicians. The first student to graduate from the hospital was her own younger sister, Hu Seuk Eng, who acted as Hu's assistant at Woolston Memorial Hospital for the duration of the hospital's existence.<sup>74</sup> But while Hu King Eng is always referred to as 'doctor' in WFMS records, her sister is referred to as such only sporadically. Additionally, the salary that Hu Seuk Eng received was considerably less than that of the elder Hu. At a time when Hu King Eng earned \$450 annually, her sister earned only \$50, a figure only slightly higher than the \$40 salary accorded to nurses at the hospital.<sup>75</sup> Moreover, the younger Hu was never appointed physician-in-charge of a hospital on a permanent basis, although she sometimes acted as such when Hu King Eng was on leave. Other students at Woolston Memorial were typically given positions as assistants after graduation, at both missionary and government-run hospitals, although a few went to small villages as independent practitioners.<sup>76</sup>



This indicates ambiguity about the status of women 'physicians' trained through the missionary hospitals. As Shemo suggests, numerous WFMS policies and practices made it increasingly difficult for Chinese women to attain higher-status positions within the mission in the 1910s and afterwards, despite their increasing presence in the missionary workforce.<sup>77</sup> The missionary practice of training women as 'physicians' within hospitals, without further medical education, was one such cause. Despite this, Hu continued to support training physicians in this manner, even as missionaries' training methods came under increasing criticism from both within and outside of WFMS.<sup>78</sup>

Provision of medical education through the hospitals not only provided hospitals with a cheap labour force, but also was a symbolically significant part of the physicians' work. Graduate ceremonies were elaborate affairs held in local temples. Hu reported that at her sister's graduation, 'my Chinese people were quite excited at seeing the diploma being presented in the temple . . . Seeing a Chinese young woman receiving her diploma in the Ancestral Temple made many Chinese parents regret that their daughters were engaged or married or drowned'.<sup>79</sup> Hu's tongue-in-cheek comment indicates that she saw her sister's graduation as a significant public event that demonstrated to society at large the benefits of providing girls and women with formal, modern education. This also indicates Hu's attitude towards marriage in Chinese society. For Hu, marriage and professional work appeared incompatible, and it is clear she preferred that more women assume work in lieu of marriage. According to Hu's 1902 report, one betrothed young girl, the daughter of a state official, told her father that she wished to attend a missionary boarding school and then study medicine with Hu after witnessing Hu Seuk Eng's graduation ceremony.<sup>80</sup> Such a conversion from engagement to professional aspirations was entirely in line with Hu King Eng's goals in medical education. Providing medical education was also important for the physicians' continued demonstration of Chinese women's capabilities to American supporters. Hu reported of her students in 1904, 'I wish you could be here and hear their fifteen minutes to half an hour talk in our morning services . . . Can any one dare to think, "What is the use to teach these Chinese people?"'.<sup>81</sup>

However, most young women who received medical training through missionary hospitals (whether as 'physicians', assistants or nurses) did not receive the same opportunities for professional advancement that Hu, Li and Tsao had enjoyed. Following Li's completion of her education in 1905, WFMS did not assist any other Chinese women in completing an MD in the US, while none of the educational opportunities available within China were considered equivalent to an American medical education. This was true within the growing nursing profession as well as among physicians, and was reflected in missionary hospitals' salary scales, which included sizable differences based on job position, education, and level of experience. While the New York branch of WFMS allotted \$600 in 1915 for the salary of Mary Carleton (a white woman who served as a missionary physician in Fuzhou) and \$450 for Li's salary, Bible women received only \$30 annually, nurses \$40, a medical student \$50 and a worker described as a medical assistant received \$80.<sup>82</sup> While it is difficult to ascertain all of the differences between workers from this information alone, the distinctions in salary are presumably rooted in differences in education and experience among the workers. On occasion, missionary physicians were frank in acknowledging the practical benefits of training their own labourers. As Carleton admitted in 1915, it was simply cost-efficient

for hospitals to train their own nurses.<sup>83</sup> Providing nurses-in-training with more formal schooling not only would have been costly, but also would have compelled the mission to provide its nurses with higher salaries. Performing God's work, it would seem, was not without worldly limitations and inequalities. Despite Hu's and Li's own unequal status within WFMS, they too participated in the perpetuation of missionary hospitals' hierarchical labour system.

### Imperial affiliations

Interpreting the nexus of relationships between missionary women presents several challenges to the historian. Hu's, Li's and Tsao's lives reveal relationships between white American and Chinese women that included mutual exchanges and benefits. Yet the mutuality of these relationships did not render all women equal partners in missionary work. While missionary work was touted as an alternative to the dependencies of marriage, women's missionary networks' functionality entailed a different set of dependencies. The structures that funded and facilitated missionary work rested upon differentials in power and compensation between those who funded missions and those who provided missions with their labour. Even within the missionary workforce, there were hierarchies based on race, occupation and level of education. For these reasons, it would not be altogether inaccurate to suggest that Chinese women who worked for missions sponsored by white American women were participants in a system that extracted labour and resources from a dependent, non-Western nation for the benefit of a foreign power based in the West – such as is typical of imperialism.

Yet this configuration does not fully account for the missionary physicians' perceptions of themselves and their labour. Tsao wrote in a 1917 grant application to the Rockefeller Foundation's China Medical Board that '[o]ne thing I know is that I hope to come back to China better prepared to serve my God and my people', demonstrating the compatibility between missionaries' religious and nationalist aims.<sup>84</sup> For Tsao, as for Hu, Li and other Christian Chinese women who worked for missions, missionary affiliations provided economic and educational opportunities and presented a female-centred alternative social arrangement to heterosexual marriage. From their perspectives, missionary work and affiliations represented Chinese women's emancipation from Confucian tradition and male power, not China's subordination to foreign imperial powers. They believed that in order for China to achieve its destiny as a Christian nation, reliance upon foreign (Christian) charity was, at least for the moment, necessary.

But the women's affiliations could assume very different meanings to different audiences depending on the historical context. While a comprehensive examination of non-Christian responses to the physicians' medical work is outside of this article's scope, there is evidence indicating that some non-Christians considered the physicians' affiliations with Christianity and foreigners to signify complicity with imperialism, especially during and after the May Fourth Period of 1919, in which anti-imperialist sentiments flourished.<sup>85</sup> Amidst anti-imperial unrest and political conflict in China, the physicians' affiliations could indeed be interpreted as a choice to affiliate with foreign imperial powers rather than the nation. While Hu had previously faced popular opposition, such as during the Boxer Rebellion (1899–1901), she encountered an even

greater emergency in 1927 when Woolston Memorial Hospital was looted and the edifice destroyed by a mob in a wave of anti-imperial uprisings in Fuzhou.

The narrative that missionaries constructed around the hospital's destruction suggests that Hu's associations with foreign actors and ideologies were a contributing factor. During this time, the nuns at a Catholic orphanage located near the hospital were accused of using the body parts of infants to concoct medicine. Both nuns were from outside China; one was Spanish and the other was Filipina. Their foreign status, compounded by their affiliation with Christianity, likely rendered them particularly suspect. When Hu was asked to investigate these charges, she examined infants at the orphanage and proclaimed the charges to be false.<sup>86</sup> She and other WFMS missionaries believed this incident precipitated the hospital's destruction.<sup>87</sup>

While missionaries' summation of the precise course of these events cannot be verified, this narrative is consistent with recent historical research on anti-imperialism in China during 1926 and early 1927. Fuzhou was a particularly active site of anti-imperial unrest and according to Michael Murdock, most missionary institutions in the city were looted.<sup>88</sup> In this respect, Woolston Memorial Hospital – despite its status as an institution headed by a Chinese woman – was treated no differently than Fuzhou's other missionary institutions. By supporting the nuns against popular claims, Hu had unwittingly allied herself with imperialism. She and her sister were forced into exile in Singapore after these events, where Hu died in 1929. Although Hu at one time stood as an exemplar of modern Chinese womanhood, by the 1920s shifts in national and global politics had rendered her, to some at least, an old-fashioned symbol of China's subjugation to foreign powers.

But even after the surely devastating blow of the hospital's destruction, Hu continued to use her missionary affiliations to intervene in American discourse about China. She reportedly asserted, 'It was not done by the Chinese but it was the work of those who hate God and Christian institutions'.<sup>89</sup> By disassociating 'true' Chinese people from enemies of Christianity, who are presented as aberrant, Hu continued to argue for the fundamental compatibility of Christianity and Chinese identity. While these identities may have appeared mutually exclusive to those who looted the hospital, Hu continued her multiple affiliations even in the face of violence and bitter disappointment.

However, as missionary resources declined in the late 1920s – a result of Americans' waning interest in foreign missions and the economic depression – those who continued to work as missionary physicians were compelled to seek new affiliations and sources of support.<sup>90</sup> Li worked as a physician until the 1949 Communist Revolution. Her career posed an example of how missionary physicians could operate in the shifting medical and political context. As physician-in-charge of Lucie F. Harrison Hospital in Fujian, Li maintained the hospital's missionary affiliation. But as Li kept the hospital operational throughout the decades to come, she received proportionally less support from US missionary sources. To fill the gap, Li relied more upon patient fees, governmental support and grants from secular relief organisations, many of them based in the US or Britain.<sup>91</sup> These affiliations, though lacking the proto-feminist aims of missionary women's networks, were also produced by unequal (and therefore imperial) relationships between nation-states. Yet the hospital's imperial affiliations with the US and Britain were perhaps less damaging in the late 1930s and early 1940s as China faced invasion from Japan and became part of the Allied powers. As Li

continued to devote herself to her work, nation and faith, the local meanings that her imperial affiliations assumed continued to shift along with the affiliations themselves.

## **Conclusion**

Over the course of their transnational lives, Hu, Li and Tsao confronted a social context that included anti-Chinese racism in the US, the growth of nationalism in China and popular anti-imperial sentiments amid political turmoil after the 1911 Revolution. In responding to this context, the physicians cultivated complex self-representations in which their gender, religious, racial, national and occupational identities interacted, sometimes in unexpected ways. Hu, Li and Tsao defy the binary of complicity versus resistance that has been prominent in historical literature about women's participation in imperialism. To them, a question about which identity was primary would have appeared unintelligible.

However, on occasion others interpreted their affiliations as effectively privileging religious and imperial affiliations over national identity. Although the physicians presented themselves as New Women of modernising China, their vision of the nation, and women's role within it, differed substantially from the nationalism of the non-Christian majority, especially in the 1920s and afterwards. Their rejection of marriage and the Confucian family ideal also exceeded most white women missionaries' prescriptions for Chinese women in its radicalism. But the physicians' suggestion that women convert to Christianity and centre their lives around affiliations with other women, across differences in race and nation, made their position within Chinese society a rather tenuous one at times. Even in comparison to Shi Meiyu, a missionary physician who eventually left WFMS, Hu, Li and Tsao supported the mission's status quo and its associated dependencies. This is attributable to differences in the women's lives. Hu, Li and Tsao were of humbler origins than Shi and dependent on American missionary women for a longer period of time due to their comparatively weaker educations in China. As a result, they tended to be more supportive of the mission that fostered opportunity as well as dependence.

Hu's, Li's and Tsao's complex negotiations of affiliations, and the transnational missionary project more generally, indicate that women's personal and organisational relationships with one another remain pertinent to the study of women's history, as articulated in foundational early works by Carroll Smith-Rosenberg and Estelle Freedman, among others.<sup>92</sup> While the notion of a transcendent, universal sisterhood among women has been rightfully critiqued, the lives of figures such as Hu, Li and Tsao indicate that despite racialisation and power differentials between women, the ideal of sisterhood – in this case, Christian sisterhood – nevertheless could wield significant influence in particular contexts, even if practices did not always live up to ideals. Further consideration of how a diverse array of women used personal and organisational bonds to formulate social arrangements outside of heterosexual marriage is warranted, although it must be recognised that these social arrangements had costs as well as benefits.

In many ways, the labour system produced through missionary organisations was exploitative, reminiscent of other labour systems found under imperialism. But while women's missionary networks distributed opportunities and resources unevenly, they also provided a clear alternative to marital dependency and allowed women to engage

in medical work which they found to be both professionally and spiritually fulfilling. For Hu, Li and Tsao, as well as for many other Chinese women who worked for missions, the trade-offs of missionary labour were worth the bargain.

## Notes

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1. Mary McLean, *Dr Li Yui Tsao: Called, Chosen, and Faithful* (St Louis: 1925), pp. 9–13.
2. In my research on international students at WMCP, I have identified several Protestant women from India and Japan whose lives followed a similar pattern. Misao Aizawa, Dora Chaterjee, Sophia Johnson, Gurubai Karmarkar, Ethel Maya Das Lal, Moto Nakagawa, Keiko Okami and Chumpa Sunthankar all graduated WMCP between the years 1888 and 1910, coming from India and Japan. Esther Pak, a Korean woman, graduated from the Woman's Medical College of Baltimore, with WFMS support.
3. See Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, 'The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations between Women in Nineteenth-Century America', *Signs* 1 (Autumn 1975), pp. 1–29.
4. For the concept of imagined communities, see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso Press, 1983).
5. For examples, see Kristin Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); Amy Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of US Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002); Mrinalini Sinha, *Specters of Mother India: The Global Restructuring of an Empire* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006).
6. Antoinette M. Burton, *At the Heart of Empire: Indians and the Colonial Encounter in Late-Victorian Britain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).
7. Historical assessments regarding China's colonial status in the period between the Opium Wars and the 1949 Communist Revolution are varied, but several historians have argued that it is appropriate to acknowledge numerous forms of imperialism that exerted influence on China during this era, including European, American and Japanese imperialisms. Ruth Rogaski refers to China as a 'hyper-colony' due to the multinational status of imperial forces operating within areas of extra-territoriality. See Ruth Rogaski, *Hygienic Modernity: Meanings of Health and Disease in Treaty-Port China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004). James Hevia explicates how British imperialism specifically operated in China. See James Hevia, *English Lessons: The Pedagogy of Imperialism in Nineteenth-Century China* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).
8. Jane Hunter, *The Gospel of Gentility: American Women Missionaries in Turn-of-the-Century China* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984).
9. There are many excellent works discussing the issue of women as pertaining to Chinese nationalism during the early twentieth century. These include Carol C. Chin, 'Translating the New Woman: Chinese Feminists View the West, 1905–15', in Dorothy Ko and Zheng Wang (eds), *Translating Feminisms in China* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), pp. 35–69; Joan Judge, 'Talent, Virtue, and the Nation: Chinese Nationalisms and Female Subjectivities in the Early Twentieth Century', *The American Historical Review* 106 (2001), pp. 765–803; Joan Judge, 'Reforming the Feminine: Female Literacy and the Legacy of 1898', in Rebecca E. Karl and Peter Zarrow (eds), *Rethinking the 1898 Reform Period: Political and Cultural Change in Late Qing China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), pp. 158–79; Hu Ying, 'Naming the First "New Woman"', in Karl and Zarrow (eds), *Rethinking the 1898 Reform Period*, pp. 180–211.
10. Rebecca E. Karl, '"Slavery", Citizenship, and Gender in Late Qing China's Global Context', in Karl and Zarrow (eds), *Rethinking the 1898 Reform Period*, pp. 212–44.
11. See Estelle Freedman, 'Separatism as Strategy: Female Institution Building and American Feminism, 1870–1930', *Feminist Studies* 5 (1979), pp. 512–29; Smith-Rosenberg, 'The Female World of Love and Ritual'.
12. Akira Iriye, 'Internationalizing International History', in Thomas Bender (ed.), *Rethinking American History in a Global Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), pp. 47–62, here p. 50.
13. This stands in contrast to major works on international women's organisations, which present a more nuanced perspective on women's transnational identities. See Leila Rupp, *Worlds of Women: The Making*

- of an International Women's Movement (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997); Ian Tyrrell, *Woman's World/Woman's Empire: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union in International Perspective, 1880–1930* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991).
14. Antoinette Burton, *Burdens of History: British Feminists, Indian Women, and Imperial Culture, 1865–1915* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994); Jane Haggis and Margaret Allen, 'Imperial Emotions: Affective Communities in British Protestant Women's Missionary Publications c.1880–1920', *Journal of Social History* 41 (2008), pp. 691–716; Margaret D. Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880–1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011); Peggy Pascoe, *Relations of Rescue: The Search for Female Moral Authority in the American West, 1874–1939* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).
  15. Elizabeth Prevost, 'Assessing Women, Gender, and Empire in Britain's Nineteenth-Century Protestant Missionary Movement', *History Compass* 7 (2009), pp. 765–99, here p. 771.
  16. Prevost, 'Assessing Women, Gender, and Empire', p. 783.
  17. Hyaeweol Choi, *Gender and Mission Encounters in Korea: New Women, Old Ways* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009); Ryan Dunch, *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of Modern China* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001); Connie A. Shemo, *The Chinese Medical Ministries of Kang Cheng and Shi Meiyu, 1872–1937* (Bethlehem: Lehigh University Press, 2011); Rumi Yasutake, *Transnational Women's Activism: The United States, Japan, and Japanese Immigrant Communities in California, 1859–1920* (New York: New York University Press, 2004).
  18. Paul A. Kramer, 'Power and Connection: Imperial Histories of the United States in the World', *The American Historical Review* 116 (2011), pp. 1348–91, here p. 1380.
  19. In referencing locations in China, I utilise the Pinyin Romanisation style. In referencing specific organisations and institutions of the past, I use the Romanisations that were in use at that time in order to preserve historical accuracy. Regarding Hu's own name, I refer to her as Hu King Eng, although she also used the name Xu Jihong. This is not intended to suggest that Hu King Eng was her 'true' name. Because Hu was known internationally by this name, and this paper is utilising a transnational framework, I refer to her as Hu.
  20. Biographical information on Hu was compiled through sources which include Isaac Taylor Headland, *China's New Day: A Study of Events Which Have Led to its Coming* (West Medford: The Central Committee on the United Study of Missions, 1912); Margaret E. Burton, *Notable Women of Modern China* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1912); Frances J. Baker, *The Story of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1869–1895* (1895; repr. New York: Eaton & Maines, 1898); Helen Barrett Montgomery, *Western Women in Eastern Lands: An Outline of Study of Fifty Years of Woman's Work in Foreign Missions* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1910). The Hu family is also discussed by Dunch in *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China*, pp. 46–7.
  21. *Fifteenth Annual Report of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the Year 1884*, p. 26. Subsequent citations of the annual reports will use the abbreviation *Annual Report of WFMS*.
  22. Biographical information on Li Bi Cu is compiled through multiple sources, including 'China: One of China's New Women', *The Missionary Review of the World* 36(3) (March 1913), pp. 228–9; Elizabeth Fisher Brewster, 'Li Bi Cu', *Western Christian Advocate*, 30 June 1897, p. 809; Mary Schauffler Platt, *The Child in the Midst: A Comparative Study of Child Welfare in Christian and Non-Christian Lands* (West Medford: The Central Committee on the United Study of Foreign Missions, 1914); Margaret E. Burton, *Comrades in Service* (New York: Missionary Education Movement of the United States and Canada, 1916).
  23. Biographical information on Li Yuin Tsao was compiled primarily through McLean, *Dr. Li Yuin Tsao*. Corroborating information on Tse Zeh Tsao obtained through *Golden Jubilee: Commemoration Volume of the Fiftieth Anniversary, China Annual Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church South 1886–1935* (Shanghai: Methodist Episcopal Church South, 1935).
  24. Carmen Birkle, 'Orientalisms in "Fin-de-Siècle" America', *American Studies* 51 (2006), pp. 323–42.
  25. Derek Chang, *Citizens of a Christian Nation: Evangelical Missions and the Problem of Race in the Nineteenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010).
  26. *Annual Report of WFMS, 1886*, p. 75.
  27. McLean, *Dr Li Yuin Tsao*, pp. 19–20.
  28. Sarah Moore Sites, 'Hu King Eng, MD'. General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church (GCAH), Mission Biographical Reference Files (MBRF), 1468-4-2:11 Hu King Eng and Hu May.

29. Tracy Fessenden, 'Gendering Religion', *Journal of Women's History* 14 (2002), pp. 163–9.
30. Burton, *Comrades in Service*, pp. 102–03.
31. Barbara M. Solomon, *In the Company of Educated Women: A History of Women and Higher Education in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).
32. For examples, see 'The New Woman in China', *Meriden Daily Republican*, 25 June 1897, p. 15; 'The First Chinese Woman Doctor', *New York Sun*, 14 September 1895, p. 3; 'A Chinese Lady to Study Medicine', *The New York Times*, 9 May 1884, p. 5; 'Miss Li Bi Cu's Predicament', *The New York Times*, 28 April 1900, p. 5.
33. 'The First Chinese Woman Doctor', p. 3.
34. Zheng Wang, *Women and the Chinese Enlightenment: Oral and Textual Histories* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).
35. For history of foot-binding and anti-foot-binding, see Dorothy Ko, *Cinderella's Sisters: A Revisionist History of Footbinding* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).
36. Regina Morantz-Sanchez, *Sympathy and Science: Women Physicians in American Medicine* (1985; repr. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000).
37. Lydia A. Wilkinson, 'In Memoriam, Hu King Eng, MD', GCAH-MBRF, 1468-4-2:11; Burton, *Notable Women of Modern China*, pp. 15–70; *Official Minutes of the Foochow Woman's Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1903*, p. 78. All editions of the *Official Minutes of the Foochow Woman's Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church* cited hereafter will be referred to as *Official Minutes of FWC*, and were accessed through the Yale University Divinity School AdHoc Image and Text Database on the History of Christianity.
38. Bertha Van Hoosen, as quoted in McLean, *Dr Li Yui Tsao*, p. 92.
39. See Chang, *Citizens of a Christian Nation*.
40. Mrs Stephen L. Baldwin, 'Historical Summary of the Work of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States from 1871 to 1906', p. 13, Burke Library (BL) at Union Theological Seminary (UTS), Missionary Research Library (MRL).
41. *Annual Report of the WFMS, 1927*, p. 53; *Annual Report of the WFMS, 1895–1896*, p. 41; 'Letter Li Bi Cu to Guilelma F. Alsop August 5 1949', in Li Bi Cu Deceased Alumnae File (DAF), Drexel College of Medicine Legacy Center Archives and Special Collections (DCMLCA); Li, 'Lucie F. Harrison Hospital', Mission Geographical Reference, 1920–1970 (MGR), 1459-4-2:27; Foochow Conference Lucie F. Harrison Hospital Futsing, China, GCAH.
42. McLean, *Dr Li Yui Tsao*, pp. 75–6.
43. Ryan Dunch, "'Mothers to Our Country': Conversion, Education, and Ideology among Chinese Protestant Women, 1870–1930", in Jessie G. Lutz (ed.), *Pioneer Chinese Christian Women: Gender, Christianity, and Social Mobility* (Bethlehem: Lehigh University Press, 2010), pp. 324–50.
44. Dunch, 'Mothers to Our Country', p. 332.
45. On the concept of imagined communities, see Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.
46. Hu King Eng, as quoted in *Official Minutes of FWC, 1906*, pp. 48–50.
47. 'Mission Blank 133', 1914, folder 333, box 19, series 1.2, Record Group 4-China Medical Board (CMB), Rockefeller Foundation Archives (RFA), Rockefeller Archives Center (RAC), Sleepy Hollow, New York; 'Mission Blank 143', 1914, folder 344, box 20, series 1.2, RG 4-CMB, RFA, RAC.
48. *Annual Report of WFMS, 1916*.
49. *Annual Report of the New York Branch of the WFMS of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1905*, 64, BL, UTS, Union Theological Seminary Stacks (UTSS).
50. *Annual Report of the Philadelphia Branch of the WFMS of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1912*, 115, BL-MRL.
51. *Annual Report of the NY Branch of the WFMS, Methodist Episcopal Church, 1909*, BL-UTSS; *Official Minutes of FWC, 1908, 1909, 1911, 1914, 1915*.
52. *Annual Report of the Philadelphia Branch of WFMS, 1912*, pp. 90–110.
53. James S. Dennis, 'The Value of Medical Missionary Work', *The Gospel in All Lands* 20 (August 1899), pp. 344–50; M. C. Meyer, 'In Woman's Line', *Table Talk* 12 (1897), pp. 355–6; Untitled news item, *Mission Studies* 16 (1897), p. 100.
54. 'From a Letter from Mrs Wilkinson', RWD, 2589-3-5:7 Foochow Conference – Correspondence and Records, GCAH.
55. Hunter, *The Gospel of Gentility*.
56. McLean, *Dr Li Yui Tsao*, p. 22.

57. For elaboration of single missionary women's symbolic marriage to their work, see Elizabeth Prevost, 'Married to the Mission Field: Gender, Christianity, and Professionalization in Britain and Colonial Africa, 1865–1914', *Journal of British Studies* 47 (2008), pp. 796–826.
58. Hu, as quoted in *Official Minutes of FWC, 1902*, p. 38.
59. Judge, 'Talent, Virtue, and the Nation'.
60. Until 1922, Hu and Li earned \$450 per year, in comparison to the \$600 earned by other missionaries. During Li's first several years of work, she earned only \$250. Beginning in 1922, they earned \$675 while other missionaries earned \$750. Starting in 1928, Li earned \$710 as compared to \$900. See *WFMS Appropriations for 1918–1928*, RWD 2604-3-6: 2 Appropriations: Women's Foreign Missionary Society 1918–1928, GCAH.
61. Letter Bishop Lewis to Miss Sinclair Regarding Miss Ida Kahn, 8 June 1917, in GCAH MBRF, 1468-4-5:11 Kahn, Ida.
62. *WFMS Appropriations for 1918–1928*.
63. 'Extract from a Letter from Miss Rachel Pimm of the Friends' Foreign Missionary Society of Ohio Yearly Meeting, 9 February 1915', folder 415, box 21, series 1.2, RG 4-CMB, RFA, RAC.
64. Shemo, *The Chinese Medical Ministries of Kang Cheng and Shi Meiyu*, p. 185.
65. Ling Oi Ki, 'Bible Women', in Lutz (ed.), *Pioneer Chinese Christian Women*, pp. 246–64.
66. *Official Minutes of the FWC, 1907*, p. 41.
67. McLean, *Dr Li Yun Tsao*, p. 31.
68. See *Annual Reports of the WFMS of the MEC, 1896–1930*.
69. Charles S. Rosenberg, *The Care of Strangers: The Rise of America's Hospital System* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987).
70. *Official Minutes of FWC, 1906*, p. 42.
71. *Official Minutes of FWC, 1906*, p. 44.
72. For explanation of why dissections and autopsies were not performed in traditional Chinese medicine, see Larissa Heinrich, *The Afterlife of Images: Translating the Pathological Body between China and the West* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), pp. 113–47; and Shigehisa Kuriyama, *The Expressiveness of the Body and the Divergence of Greek and Chinese Medicine* (New York: Zone Books, 2002), pp. 155–60.
73. Li, as quoted in *Official Minutes of FWC*, pp. 72–3.
74. *Official Minutes of the FWC, 1902*, pp. 42–3.
75. *Annual Report of WFMS, 1907*.
76. *Official Minutes of FWC, 1909*, p. 55; *Official Minutes of FWC, 1915*, p. 27.
77. Shemo, *The Chinese Medical Ministries of Kang Cheng and Shi Meiyu*, pp. 163–5.
78. As early as 1906, Mary Carleton harshly criticised the system of educating physicians through hospital training only, in her remarks before the Foochow Conference. Additionally, when the Rockefeller Foundation's China Medical Board conducted a comprehensive review of medical education in China, published in 1914, CMB investigators not only condemned missionary medical education as inadequate, but claimed that no medical college in China was sufficiently rigorous. See *Official Minutes of FWC, 1906*, p. 98; and China Medical Commission of the Rockefeller Foundation, *Medicine in China* (New York: University of Chicago Press, 1914).
79. *Official Minutes of FWC, 1902*, p. 43.
80. *Official Minutes of the FWC, 1902*, pp. 43–4.
81. Hu, as quoted in *Official Minutes of the FWC, 1904*, pp. 37–8.
82. *Official Report of WFMS, 1915*, pp. 245–83.
83. *Official Minutes of FWC, 1914*, p. 67.
84. Letter Tsao to Greene, 21 May 1917, box 6, series 1.1, RG 4-CMB, RFA, RAC.
85. For a comprehensive examination of how Chinese women responded to medical care provided by Protestant missionary physicians, see Hsui-yun Wang, 'Stranger Bodies: Women, Gender and Missionary Medicine in China, 1870s–1930s' (PhD thesis, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 2003). I have also addressed this topic as pertaining to Hu's, Li's and Tsao's medical practices within the larger research project from which this article is drawn.
86. Rumours about the mutilation of children occurring in missionary institutions were common in China. My own work indicates that Chinese missionary physicians were not exempt from such rumours. See Wang, 'Stranger Bodies'.
87. Excerpt from *The China Christian Advocate*, January 1920, in GCAH, Mission Biographical Reference Files, 1468-4-2:11 Hu King Eng and Hu, May.
88. Michael G. Murdock, 'Exploiting Anti-Imperialism: Popular Forces and Nation-State-Building During China's North Expedition, 1926–1927', *Modern China* 35 (2009), pp. 65–95, esp. pp. 80–85. Many



accounts of popular anti-imperialism associate the movement with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) – and indeed, some missionary accounts of the destruction of Woolston Memorial Hospital suggest possible Communist involvement. However, Murdock has demonstrated that anti-imperialist sentiments cut across political factions and were not limited to CCP supporters.

89. Hu, as quoted in *Official Report of WFMS, 1927*, p. 53.
90. For the decline of American women's interest in foreign missions, see Patricia R. Hill, *The World Their Household: The American Woman's Foreign Mission Movement and Global Transformation, 1870–1920* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1985).
91. Uniola Adams, 'Lucie F. Harrison Hospital, Futsing via Foochow, Fukien, China', 2 November 1943, folder 463, box 66, series 1.2, RG 4-CMB, RFA, RAC.
92. Freedman, 'Separatism as Strategy'; Smith-Rosenberg, 'The Female World of Love and Ritual'.

In the early 19th century, Western colonial expansion occurred at the same time as an evangelical revival – the Second Great Awakening – throughout the English-speaking world, leading to more overseas missionary activity. The nineteenth century became known as the Great Century of modern religious missions. Beginning with the English missionary Robert Morrison in 1807, thousands of Protestant men, their wives and children, and unmarried female missionaries would live and work in China in an extended Cultural Imperialism and American Protestant Missionaries: Collaboration and Dependency in Mid-Nineteenth-Century China. *Pacific Historical Review* 60 (3): 309–38. CrossRefGoogle Scholar. Hayhoe, Ruth, and Marianne Bastid. In *Books between Europe and the Americas: Connections and Communities, 1620–1860*, eds. Leslie Howsam and James Raven, 1–22. London: Palgrave Macmillan. CrossRefGoogle Scholar. Romance, Power and Sexuality in Contemporary South African English Young Adult Fiction. *International Research in Children’s Literature* 2 (1): 101–14. CrossRefGoogle Scholar. Jay, Paul. During the later twentieth century, women’s groups would again band together, this time to formulate and advocate for the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). Though this proposed constitutional amendment ultimately failed to gain approval in the late 1970s, it became a rallying point for diverse women’s groups and drew national attention to the feminist cause. Other events in the United States, notably the civil rights movement, contributed to the rise of the feminist movement. During the early 1960s, the civil rights movement gathered momentum, aided by new anti-racist legislation, and reached a major goal in 1964 with the passage of the Civil Rights Act. Many feminists interpreted the ban on racial discrimination, established by the Civil Rights Act, to apply to gender discrimination as well.