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BOSTON UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Dissertation

The FUNDAMENTALIST MOVEMENT AMONG PROTESTANT MISSIONARIES IN CHINA, 1920-1937

by

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To My Wife

Her Support Made This Dissertation Possible

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BBUC	Bulletin of the Bible Union for China
BFC	Bible for China
BGC	Billy Graham Center. Wheaton College. Illinois
CCC	China Continuation Committee
CIM	China Inland Mission
CLS	Christian Literature Society
CSSU	China Sunday School Union:
KMT	Kuomintang (The Nationalist Party)
NCC	National Christian Council
NTS	Nanjing Theological Seminary
PCUSA	Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (South)
PCUSABS	Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A Board of Foreign Missions. Secretaries' Files
PCUSA	Presbyterian Church of in the U.S.A. (North)
PHS	Presbyterian Historical Society
WSSA	World Sunday School Association

EDITORIAL METHOD

In this work I use Pinyin, instead of the traditional Wade-Giles system, to spell Chinese names and places. However, certain very common and fixed forms of spellings such as SunYat-sen, Chiang Kai-shek, and Yangtze River are preserved. Also, certain traditional spellings of Chinese names were preserved due to the unavailability of their Chinese equivalents. When a name appears for the first time, the Wade-Giles spelling is put in parentheses.

When biographical information of a missionary is given, only his or her years of service in China are put in parentheses following his or her name. For other personalities, their years of birth and death are provided.

THE FUNDAMENTALIST MOVEMENT AMONG PROTESTANT MISSIONARIES IN CHINA, 1920-1937

(Order No.)

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Doctor of Theology

Boston University, School of Theology, 2000

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Abstract

Throughout the 1920s and 30s, one of the most important features of the Protestant missionary enterprise in China was a powerful fundamentalist movement that battled against modernism in the mission field. Yet fundamentalism among China missionaries has never been the subject of serious scholarly investigation. This dissertation examines the major historical events, issues, individuals, and organizations involved in the fundamentalist missionaries' anti-modernist campaign. The major topics covered by this study are the Bible Union of China, the North Jiangsu Mission and the Nanjing Theological

Seminary, The North China Theological Seminary, the Fundamentalists and church union movement, and the controversies primarily centered on the Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry and Pearl Buck's criticism of missions in the 1930s. The time-frame of the study is from the founding of the Bible Union in 1920 to 1937 when the Sino-Japanese War erupted. Among all the missionary groups working in China, American Presbyterian missions will receive special attention and treatment because of their prominent and crucial role in the fundamentalist cause.

This dissertation explores in depth the fundamentalist missionaries' views and engagement in various aspects of the mission enterprise, such as evangelism and social services, theological education, religious publication, inter-denominational cooperation and union, and the missions' relationship with non-Christian religions. The goal of the study is to uncover and clarify the roots of the fundamentalist movement among Protestant China missionaries, the nature and character of the movement, the fundamentalists' interaction with the modernists and moderates, the similarities and differences between the fundamentalists in China and North America, and their impact on the course of the Protestant missionary movement in China and the emerging indigenous Chinese Christian groups.

This study employs a historical methodology that focuses primarily on the fundamentalist movement's internal theological, personal, and organizational dynamics. Its sources include archives, journals, monographs and other missionaries' writings.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As Chinese society was in great turbulence and transition in the 1920s and 1930s, Chinese Protestant churches and the foreign missionary enterprise were also undergoing tremendous changes. During these decades the Protestant missionary community was deeply divided by the fundamentalist-modernist controversy. Addressing the fundamentalist movement among Protestant missionaries in China from 1920 to 1937, in this study I trace and clarify the historical processes of the movement and its controversy with modernism, the nature and character of the movement, its theological cores, its impact upon missionary thinking and strategies, and its influences on emerging evangelicals within the Chinese churches. My selection of this topic was based on both its value in understanding the Protestant missionary movement in modern China and the current status of research in the field.

In studies of modern mission history, China is perhaps one of the best documented and researched mission fields. The achievements since the 1960s in the field of China mission studies owe much to a group of Sinologists. At a time when the Christian missionary movement in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries attracted little significant attention from academic communities in North America and Europe, John

King Fairbank and his colleagues and students saw the significance of this field.[1] In her overview of the studies of American Protestant foreign missions since the Second World War, Dana Robert evaluated the Sinologists' works in this way: "Among secular historians, sinologists have made the greatest use of American missionary documentation to illuminate their field of research and thus represent an exception to the academic neglect of missions. Some of the best scholarly studies of American missionaries both collectively and individually are by Sinologists. In particular, the research of Harvard professor John King Fairbank and of his students and followers represents the finest body of work that analyzes the role of missions in relation to foreign policy, American nationalism, internationalism, and cultural interaction."[2] By the 1970s most of the extensive scholarly studies of China missions had been done by experts in modern Chinese history. Their initiatives and efforts have brought the studies of the missionary movement in China to a new level and laid a solid foundation for renewed interests and blossoming in the field in the 1980s and 1990s.

In his vision of China mission studies, John King Fairbank identified three foci: "the American missionary expansion or outward thrust, the impact of this missionary effort on the Chinese people and society, and the backflow of influences affecting the missionaries' home constituency and the American people in general." [3] For him the whole missionary movement in modern China could be studied as a form of cultural

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[1] For a discussion of China missions studies for the past half century, see "Preface," in Christianity in China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present, ed. Daniel H Bays (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996).

[2] Dana L Robert, "From Missions to Mission to Beyond Missions: The Historiography of American Protestant Foreign Missions Since World War II," Note no.14, International Bulletin of Missionary Research 18 (October 1994): 159.

exchange between the West and China. What fascinated him seemed to be the roles the missionaries played in China's modernization in the nineteenth century, Christianity's interaction with the New Culture movement and other social causes in the twentieth century, and social consequences of missionary efforts in China. Generally speaking, his approach can be called a social-cultural one. In other words he approached China missions from the perspective of cultural and social interaction and impact. It is fair to say that this approach has been common and even dominant in China historians' studies of the missionary movement in modern China. [4] Of course, many China historians did not totally ignore the spiritual message the missionaries brought to Chinese people or the theological aspect of the missionary movement. As a matter of fact, Paul A. Cohen presented an excellent analysis and comparison of two basic types of missionary theological thinking and approach in his influential essay entitled "Missionary Approaches: Hudson Taylor and Timothy Richard." [5] Nevertheless, in most studies by the historians of modern China, the discussion overwhelmingly concentrated upon social and

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[3] "Introduction: The Many Faces of Protestant Missions in China and the United States," in The Missionary Enterprise in China and America, ed. John King Fairbank (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), 6.

[4] This is the case with the works even prior to the 1960s. An example is Paul A. Varg' s Missionaries, Chinese, and Diplomats, The American Protestant Missionary Movement in China, 1980-1952 (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1958). In the preface, the author makes the following statements: "the author looks at the history of missions as a problem in the relationship between two basically different cultures, Western and Oriental....In the story of Christian missions in China is seen the tragic but overwhelming conflict of two cultures that never came to a full understanding of one another." Varg, Missionaries, Chinese, and Diplomats, viii-ix. Dana L Robert also noticed this common interest all sinologists shared. See Robert, "From Missions to Mission to Beyond Missions," 159.

[5] Paul A. Cohen, "Missionary Approaches: Hudson Taylor and Timothy Richard," in Harvard University: Papers on China, vol.11 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957). This valuable comparative study depicts two basic models in nineteenth century China missions, and its conclusions are accepted and developed by many American and Chinese scholars. (See Guo Xiwei, "试论中华内地会的产生及特点" (The Origin and Characteristics of China Inland Mission) 世界宗教研究 (Studies of World Religions) no.1 (1996): 63-73) In my opinion, as long as these two models are only applied to China Protestant missions of the nineteenth century, they are largely valid. But they are inadequate as two basic mission models for the whole missionary movement from the 1840s to the 1950s.

cultural aspects of the missionary movement in the country. Even the religious message and evangelistic activities of missionaries were often examined in close relation to their social and cultural contexts and consequences, and treated as issues of "cultural transmission and adjustment."[6] The continuing dominance of the cultural-social approach can be clearly seen in the recently published The Conversion of Missionaries, Liberalism in American Missions in China, 1907-1932 by Lian Xi. In this rather extensive treatment of the fundamental changes in missionary mentality or theological thinking in the early twentieth century, the roles of China's cultural environment and social upheavals in stimulating these changes were very much emphasized; even more significantly, among the major characteristics of theological liberalism, the liberal missionaries' enthusiasm toward religious cooperation and inclusiveness was highlighted as the most important change in missionary approach and the major difference between liberal movements in North America and China.[7] In my view the author's fascination with the native culture's impact upon the missionaries' attitude toward non-Christian religions and mission enterprise is just another testimony that the cultural-social approach is still a major factor in guiding the studies of China missions from the perspective of modern Chinese history.

Without denying the value of examining and understanding China missions within the broader social and cultural contexts of modern China, I nevertheless want to point out that this cultural-social approach to the missions, preoccupied with cultural and social aspects of its subject, may have missed other very important aspects of the missionary movement in modern China. The missionary movement was simply too complex and

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[6] "Introduction," in American Missionaries in China, Papers from Harvard Seminars, ed. Kwang-ching Liu (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1966), 2.

multi-faceted to be handled just as a modern chapter of cultural exchanges between the West and East or one of many social factors in transforming modern China. The cultural-social approach is definitely strong in uncovering the missionary movement's relationship with its external environment but is rather weak in revealing the internal theological and missiological dynamics or the theological dimension. Most of the historians of modern China are much more concerned with roles of Christian missions and churches in the Chinese social and cultural contexts than with the integrity of the missions and churches itself. As a result most works written by Sinologists hardly addressed in an adequate and systematic way such issues as the theological and missological roots of the missionary movement in modern China in the contexts of Anglo-American evangelical revivals and worldwide missionary expansion in the modern times, the mission theologies behind different mission policies and strategies, the organizational mechanism of mission boards and societies, and individual missionaries' relationship with their boards and societies. Even in some of the rarely found treatments of mission theology, the cultural concerns and implications of mission theology were often so heavily stressed that other aspects of theology were neglected and the integrity of theological system was not adequately preserved.

Because the nineteenth-century progressive missionaries like Timothy Richard and the twentieth-century liberal missionaries played prominent and important roles in China's social and cultural reforms, it is no wonder that the cultural-social approach heavily concentrates on the liberal side of the missionary story in China. After all, it was the liberals who were most susceptible to the shifting winds in cultural and social

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[7] See Lian Xi, The Conversion of Missionaries, Liberalism in American Protestant, Missions in

climates. Thus the cultural-social approach is most fruitful and significant in exploring liberal missionaries' contributions to China's social and cultural reconstruction and their responses to China's social movements in the twentieth century. Except for some scant studies of Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission, the conservative missionaries have virtually received no significant attention in the works of China historians. The stories of conservative or fundamentalist missionary movements remain to be told. Recent publication of two extensive studies of liberal movements among China missionaries only served to reinforce this imbalance. [8]

Since the late 1970s and early 1980s, church historians and missologists have begun to produce extensive works on modern China mission history. Generally speaking, they tended to give more attention to the theological developments and missological implications of China missions. Some of their works belong to the category of general history of China missions. [9] and others are about prominent missionaries in the liberal tradition. [10] A small number of scholarly works on the stories of conservative missionaries are mainly studies of the China Inland Mission and very much limited to the nineteenth century. [11] The diversity of the conservative mission tradition in China and

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China, 1907-1932 (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 14.

[8] See Jun Xing, Baptized in the Fire of Revolution: The American Social Gospel and the YMCA in China, 1919-1937, (Bethlehem, PA: Lehigh University Press, 1996). See also Lian, Conversion of Missionaries.

[9] For example, see Ralph R. Covell, Confucius,the Buddha, and Christ: A History of the Gospel in Chinese (New York: Orbsis Books, 1986). See also Alvyn J.Austin, Saving China, Canadian Missionaries in the Middle Kingdom, 1888-1959 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986). See also G.Thompson Brown, Earthen Vessels and Transcendent Power, American Presbyterians in China, 1837-1952 (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1997).

[10] For example, see Ralph R. Covell, W.A.P.Martin: Pioneer of Progress in China (Washington, DC: Christian University Press, 1978). See also Stephen Endicott, James G. Endicott: Rebel Out of China (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980).

[11] Alvyn J. Austin is a major author in this respect. See Alvyn J. Austin, "Pilgrims and Strangers: The China Inland Mission in Britain,Canada, the United States and China, 1865-1900" (Ph.D.diss., York University, Ontario, 1996).

particularly the fundamentalist movement in the 1920s and 1930s has yet to be seriously studied; the whole picture of conservative missions is far from being complete. So far the sporadic efforts of church historians and missiologists have not changed the existing imbalance of the studies in China mission history.

In comparison to the studies done by Sinologists and mission historians, the studies of modern Chinese church history in recent decades have presented a better balanced picture of Protestant Christianity in modern China with extensive research and interpretations of twentieth-century Protestantism in China from both liberal and evangelical perspectives.[12] Chinese Christian scholars from Hong Kong and Taiwan have made significant contributions to this field. For instance, Wing-Hung Lam, a scholar based in Hong Kong, has written and published extensively in Chinese and English on both liberal figures such as Zhao Zi-chen (T.C.Chao) and conservative figures such as Wang Ming-dao (Wang Ming-tao) and Ni Tuo-sheng (Watchman Nee).[13]

However, in my opinion, the most important and valuable English works in recent years on conservative or evangelical sectors of Chinese Protestantism of the twentieth century have been written by Daniel H. Bays. In his view one of the most prominent features of the period after 1900 was the rise of independent and conservative Chinese sects, indigenous churches, and evangelists, but this category of Chinese Christians has

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[12] For liberal interpretation, see Philip L. Wickeri, Seeking the Common Ground, Protestant Christianity, the Three-Self Movement, and China's United Front (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1988). For evangelical interpretation, see Tony Lambert, The Resurrection of the Chinese Church (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1991).

[13] See Wing-Hung Lam , Chinese Theology in Construction (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1983). See also his, 属灵神学·倪柝声思想的研究 (The Spiritual Theology of Watchman Nee)(Hong Kong: China Graduate School of Theology, 1985).See also his 王明道与中国教会(Wang Ming-Tao and the Chinese Church) (Hong Kong: China Graduate School of Theology, 1982). See also his 曲高和寡·赵紫宸的生平与神学 (The Life and Thought of Chao Tzu-ch'en) (Hong Kong: China Graduate School of Theology, 1994).

long been ignored and neglected by the Sino-foreign Protestant establishment and scholars of Chinese history and the history of Christianity.[14] His research of recent years has played a pivotal role in changing North American scholarship's preoccupation with liberal trends within the Chinese churches and their ignorance of conservative or fundamentalist trends. While devoting most of his studies to indigenous, theologically conservative Chinese Christians, Bays also from time to time touches on contemporary developments within foreign missionary communities. He notices the great increase in independent or "faith" missionaries after 1900 and points out that "the mission sector itself became much more diverse."[15] Furthermore, he sometimes does acknowledge the direct links between certain conservative Chinese Christians and foreign missionaries.[16] However, he often tends to place overwhelming emphasis on the independence or the separatist tendency of the indigenous Chinese Christians from foreign missionaries and the distrust and even hostility between the conservative Chinese Christians and the "Sino-foreign Protestant establishment."[17] He summarizes the foreign missionaries' attitude toward these indigenous elements of the Chinese Christian communities in these words: "Many foreigners were quite unaware of the extent and power of these new elements....Those who did have direct contact with the independent groups tended to distrust and dislike them, suspecting their theology and resenting their 'sheep-stealing' from established mission congregations."[18]

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[14] See Daniel H. Bays, "The Growth of Independent Christianity in China, 1900-1937," in Christianity in China, ed. Bays, 307-16.

[15] Ibid., 307.

[16] See ibid., 315.

[17] Ibid., 308.

[18] Ibid., 316.

Based on Bays' arguments, one could easily come to the conclusion that the connection between the conservative movement among foreign missionary communities and conservative elements of the Chinese churches was, if not non-existent, insignificant. Or put another way, despite certain individual foreign missionaries and organizations' contributions to the origins of certain independent conservative Chinese Christian communities, the foreign mission enterprise as a whole did not have any lasting and significant influence on the growth of independent Christianity in China.

Bays' position seems to correspond with a common view held by many historians of Christianity in China: the fundamentalist movement was basically a foreign import, and its conflict with modernism of the 1920s and 1930s was carried on largely within foreign missionary communities and had very little impact on the development of the Chinese churches. [19] Consequently, many questions about the relationship between the fundamentalist movement among foreign missionaries and the Chinese churches remain unanswered: Were there any significant connections between them in terms of theology and even personnel? If so, what was the nature of the connection? What were the views and attitudes of the fundamentalist missionaries toward the emerging independent conservative Chinese churches and evangelical revival movements? What roles did the fundamentalist missionaries play in facilitating conservative elements among Chinese Christians? All these questions need more attention and more systematic study.

Another important approach to the fundamentalist movement in China was made from the perspective of the studies of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy in North

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[19] Some liberal Chinese church leaders already held this kind of view in the 1920s. See Milton Stauffer, ed., China, Her Own Interpreter, Chapters by a Group of nationals Interpreting the Christian Movement (New York: Missionary Education Movement of the United States and Canada, 1927), 107, 134.

America of the 1920s and 1930s. In recent decades the most valuable studies of the fundamentalist controversy and movement in North America have been done by Ernest Sandeen, George Marsden, and Joel A. Carpenter. All these scholars identified foreign missions as one of the most crucial issues the fundamentalists fought over and one of the major activities in which the fundamentalists were involved.[20]

In most major works on fundamentalism, the formation of the Bible Union of China in 1920 was commonly considered to be the most significant indicator of the fundamentalist rallying against the liberal tendencies in the mission field.[21] The China Inland Mission was also often identified as a major force behind the fundamentalist movements in both China and North America. [22] As a matter of fact, some other very significant individual fundamentalists and institutions in China have been considerably overshadowed by the fame of the Bible Union of China and the CIM. In addition, the historical developments of the fundamentalist movement in China and many major issues involved in the controversy there have yet to be uncovered. Furthermore, some scholars of fundamentalism were inclined to treat the fundamentalist movement in China as merely a minor extension of the domestic debates in the North America. For instance, one scholar simply referred the Bible Union of China as "an importation of American fundamentalism into that land."[23] The particular social context and unique theological

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[20] See "Introduction," in Modernism and Foreign Missions, Two Fundamentalist Protests, ed. Joel A.Carpenter (New York:Garland Publishing, Inc.,1988). See also George M. Marsden, Fundamentalism and American Culture, The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism, 1870-1925 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 167-68.

[21] See Marsden, Fundamentalism and American Culture, 167

[22] See Ibid., 97. See also Alvyn J.Austin, "Blessed Adversity: Henry W. Frost and the China Inland Mission," in Earthern Vessels: American Evangelicals and Foreign Missions, 1880-1980, ed Joel A Carpenter and Wilbert R. Shenk (Grand Rapids, MI: William B.Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990), 70.

[23] Lefferts A. Loetscher, The Broadening Church, A Study of Theological Issues in the Presbyterian Church since 1869 (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1954), 104.

and missiological concerns of the fundamentalist missionaries in China have not received sufficient treatment. Finally, the "backflow of influences" from the fundamentalists in China to their North American counterparts remains a topic awaiting serious research.

In sum, although fundamentalism among China missionaries has been touched on by the disciplines of modern Chinese history, Chinese church history, and fundamentalist studies, it has never become a subject of any serious and comprehensive scholarly investigation. My research project aims to change this situation. This project is designed to be a rather extensive, but in no way exhaustive, examination of the major historical events, issues, individuals, and organizations involved in the missionary fundamentalists' offensives against the modernist trends in China.

However, this task can not be fulfilled without foundational work laid down by all the above-mentioned studies in the history of China missions, Christianity in China, and fundamentalism in North America. Even though previous studies fell short of telling the story of fundamentalism among Protestant missionaries in China, some of them are nevertheless indispensable in providing methodological guidance. For one thing, the cultural-social approach common among Sinologists underscores that the missionary movement and Chinese churches have to be considered against their cultural and social background. Even the fundamentalists were not immune to the changing social and cultural trends in North America and China.

For my research the most valuable methodological help comes from the studies of fundamentalism in North America, especially the works of Ernest Sandeen and George M. Marsden. Sandeen's The Roots of Fundamentalism (1970) and Marsden's

Fundamentalism and American Culture (1980) are two masterpieces that have reshaped the whole field.

Before Sandeen's works, fundamentalism had been commonly portrayed as a manifestation of isolated and backward rural culture in opposition to northern urban-based modernism.[24] According to Sandeen, a major shortcoming of the previous studies was that they never considered fundamentalism as a genuine religious movement and thus "virtually never made any effort to seek an understanding of the Fundamentalist by analyzing the background of the controversy." [25] His own central thesis was that "Fundamentalism existed as a religious movement before, during, and after the controversy of the twenties.... The Fundamentalist movement was a self-conscious, structured, long-lived, dynamic entity with recognized leadership, periodicals, and meetings."[26]

Sandeen further argued that the most important root and theme of fundamentalism was millenarianism, and thus "fundamentalism ought to be understood partly if not largely as one aspect of the history of millenarianism."[27] In The Roots of Fundamentalism, he traced the origin of modern millenarianism in Britain and its spread to the United States. Then he illustrated how John Nelson Darby's dispensationalism began to

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[24] An often-quoted example of this kind of view is H. Richard Niebuhr's The Social Sources of Denominationalism (Henry Holt and Company, Inc, 1929; reprint, Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1987), 184, 186). His labeling of rural Fundamentalism and bourgeois Modernism had to do with Marx Weber's classification of religion into the religion of the bourgeoisie and the religion of the primitive agriculturalist. I think his much-criticized view revealed the danger of imprudent application of sociological typology to an unusually complex historical phenomenon like fundamentalism.

[25] Ernest R. Sandeen, "Introduction," The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism 1800-1930 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), x.

[26] Ibid., xiii.

[27] Ibid., xviii. An important study of Premillennialism is Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming, American Premillennialism, 1875-1982 by Timothy P. Weber (Grand Rapids, MI: Academie Books, 1983).

dominate millenarian movements by the mid-nineteenth century. For the second half of the nineteenth century and early years of the next century, the millenarian movement began to organize and proselytize through a series of popular prophetic and Bible conferences, and absorb the elements from Princeton theology and holiness teachings. Though he carefully distinguished between the fundamentalist movement and the fundamentalist controversy of the 1920s, Sandeen nevertheless acknowledged that " millenarianism did play a large and quite unappreciated role" in the controversy between the fundamentalists and modernists. [28]

In my view the most significant breakthrough made by Sandeen's study was its emphasis on the theological continuity and integrity of fundamentalism. By focusing on the theological and organizational roots of fundamentalism, Sandeen made serious efforts to understand the dynamics of fundamentalism rather than just its social roles and consequences. I agree with George M. Marsden's evaluation of the significance of Sandeen's study: "Sandeen's work was an important step toward taking fundamentalism seriously as a significant and lasting religious movement with its own types of organization and ways of thoughts."[29] Sandeen's study certainly showed us the relevance and importance of theological approach in understanding fundamentalism. I think Marsden's critique of the inadequacy of Sandeen's approach is equally illuminating. Marsden maintained that Sandeen's definition of fundamentalism was "unusually narrow," [30] and his virtual identification of fundamentalism with millenarianism ignored

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[28] Ibid., 268.
[29] Marsden, Fundamentalism and American Culture, 200-201.
[30] Ibid., 200.

many other sources of fundamentalism,[31] and failed to "deal adequately with the larger phenomenon of the militantly anti-modernist evangelicalism of the 1920s, known at the time as 'fundamentalism'."[32] In counteracting the traditional social interpretation of fundamentalism, Marsden argued, Sandeen over-emphasized a very few factors behind a very complex historical phenomenon. [33]

In contrast, Marsden stressed the complexity of fundamentalism and suggested a much broader definition of fundamentalism, at least for the decades of the 1920s. In Fundamentalism and American Culture, he demonstrated the wider roots of fundamentalism in " the nineteenth-century traditions of revivalism, evangelicalism, pietism, Americanism, and variant orthodoxies."[34] After tracing the evangelical consensus and dominance in American culture in the post-Civil War era, he illustrated how the diverging paths began to emerge from the evangelical establishment during the 1870s and 1880s. In his analysis of the shaping of fundamentalism before the First World War, Marsden identified several major traditions or influences, especially dispensational premillennialism, the holiness movement, and the Princeton theology based on Scottish Common Sense philosophy. Immediately after the First World War, Marsden argued, the issue of the modernist erosion of Christian civilization and morality dramatically transformed many conservatives' attitude toward culture and motivated them to fight against the influence of evolutionary theory in American culture and against the modernist force within churches.[35] Marsden's account of the fundamentalist controversy

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[31] See Ibid., 201.
[32] Ibid., 5.
[33] Ibid., 201.
[34] Ibid.
[35] See ibid., 143-64

ended with a discussion of the demise of fundamentalism as a nationally influential coalition and the fundamentalists' reorganizing efforts after 1925.

Marsden's approach had at least one crucial point in common with Sandeen's approach: "It views fundamentalism not as a temporary social aberration, but as a genuine religious movement or tendency with deep roots and intelligible beliefs."[36] In other words Marsden shared Sandeen's concern that the inner coherence, continuity, and integrity of fundamentalism should be respected and stressed.

I think one of the greatest strengths of Marsden's approach is the ability to catch not only internal coherence but also internal contradictions of a historical movement, and one of the greatest contributions of his studies of fundamentalism is the uncovering of multiple sources, multiple dimensions, and paradoxical tendencies of the fundamentalist movement. For instance, he revealed that, on the one hand, fundamentalism contained the elements inherited from the individualistic, culture-denying, soul rescuing pietist tradition; on the other hand, it was greatly shaped by the highly intellectual and civilization- building Calvinistic tradition. [37] This inner tension of fundamentalism created a certain ambivalence in the fundamentalists' attitude toward different cultural and social issues at different times. Marsden's studies underscored that fundamentalism as a popular movement was full of ironies and often inconsistent in its theological, cultural, and social positions.

Defining fundamentalism, Marsden also stressed its complexity. He pointed out four major "distinctive emphases that came to characterize fundamentalism": dispensational premillennialism, the holiness movement and its implications for social

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[36] Ibid., 5-6.

reform, efforts to defend the faith, and views of Christianity's relationship to culture."[38] Fundamentalism was a broad alliance of conservatives with not always identical theological inclinations. In Marsden's own words

> Fundamentalists were evangelical Christians, close to the traditions of the dominant American revivalist establishment of the nineteenth century, who in the twentieth century militantly opposed both modernism in theology and the cultural changes that modernism endorsed. Militant opposition to modernism was what most clearly set off fundamentalism from a number of closely related traditions....Fundamentalism was a loose, diverse, and changing federation of co-belligerents united by their fierce opposition to modernist attempts to bring Christianity into line with modern thought.[39]

This definition has two highlights. First is the broadness of the fundamentalist alliance; second, perhaps more importantly, what held this broad alliance together was the fundamentalists' common fear of the religious and cultural danger posed by modernism and their determination to publicly and persistently battle it. Just as Marsden said in another essay: "Fundamentalists are not just religious conservatives, they are conservatives who are willing to take a stand and to fight."[40] In other words, to accept simply conservative theological views does not make one a fundamentalist, but to stand up to fight for these views does turn one into a fundamentalist. This view is shared or echoed by some other scholars. [41] Also, Marsden recognized that there was at least one theological theme, namely the belief in the inerrant authority of the Bible, that could be considered as a rallying and organizing principle among the fundamentalist circle.

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[37] See ibid., 6-8.

[38] Ibid., 6.

[39] Ibid., 4.

[40] George M. Marsden, Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing House Company, 1991), 1.

[41] Martin E Marty seems to agree with Marsden's definition: "Fundamentalism in America, a complex emergence which also inevitably eludes precise definition, was at base a reactionary movement against Protestant liberalism and the Modernist party." Marty, The Noise of Conflict, 1914-1941, Modern American Religion, vol. 2 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 159.

Adherence to the Bible as God's word gave the movement a cognitive and ideological overtone that distinguished it from the more ethics and experience-oriented conservative movement.[42] Nevertheless, preoccupation with Biblical authority had to be combined with militant anti-modernism in order to account for the fundamentalist movement in the 1920s. As I will show in my dissertation, Marsden's definition of fundamentalism is largely applicable to the fundamentalist movement in China.

Joel A. Carpenter's recent publication Revive Us Again :The Reawakening of American Fundamentalism is worth noting. Both Sandeen and Marsden's works explored the origins of fundamentalism and its controversy with modernism in the 1920s. Built upon Sandeen and Marsden's studies, Carpenter tried to answer the questions of "how fundamentalism survived its setbacks in the 1920s and adapted itself to changing cultural conditions."[43] His studies of fundamentalism of the 1930s and 1940s have bridged the gap between the emerging fundamentalism of the 1920s and contemporary fundamentalist revivals. His illustration of how the fundamentalists re-organized themselves and sought new revivals through a network of conferences, missions, schools, and publishing ventures was ground breaking. For my attempt to understand the fundamentalist trends in China of the 1930s, Carpenter's analysis of changes in the larger fundamentalist movement is very helpful.

As Marsden's studies of fundamentalism demonstrated, fundamentalism emerged in the late 1910s and early 1920s as a coalition of militant evangelicals against

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[42] See Joel A. Carpenter's observation: "What finally distinguished fundamentalists from other evangelical or conservative Protestants was their determination to resist modern secularity on an ideological, argumentative level." Joel A. Carpenter, Revive Us Again, The Reawakening of American Fundamentalism (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 64.

[43] "Preface," in Revive Us Again, by Carpenter, xi

modernism, and its identity was always shaped by this confrontation. Inevitably my study will touch on the concepts of liberalism and modernism and their impact on the Protestant missionaries in China. By far, the most illuminating and thorough interpretation of liberal thought and its historical influences among American Protestant missionaries can be found in William R. Hutchison's The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism and Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions. In the first work, Hutchison traced modernism's origin in early nineteenth-century Unitarianism, its steady growth afterwards within major Protestant denominations, the rise of the social gospel, its controversy with the fundamentalists in the 1920s, and its ensuing struggle for survival under internal and external criticism. In this historical study, Hutchison identified three major components of modernism or its core beliefs in its fully developed form of the early twentieth century: First, "the conscious, intended adaptation of religious ideas to modern culture"; second, "God's immanence in human cultural development and revelation through it"; third, "the realization of the Kingdom of God in human society."[44] Hutchison acknowledged that once transplanted to the mission fields, these core modernist beliefs seemed to lead to some new conclusions. In his pioneering work Errand to the World, Hutchison pointed out some of the major traits of liberal missionary thinking: first, the tendency to undercut the exclusivity of Christian claims to truth and enthusiasm for inter-religious dialogue and cooperation; second, the lack of premillennial expectation of the second coming and the sense of urgent direct evangelism; third, confidence in the coming Kingdom of God on earth and zeal for social service oriented

[44] William R. Hutchison, The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), 2.

missions. [45] Overall, I believe that Hutchison's definition of modernism is valid in both North America and such mission fields as China. Keeping in mind the fact that a large number of new college and seminary graduates from North America joined the mission forces in China in the early decades of the twentieth century and that many Chinese Christian graduates from North American universities and seminaries began to assume key church leadership in China in the same period, I find it no wonder that the modernists in China advocated the same essential ideas as their North American comrades and applied them to their mission practices.

One point that emerges from my survey of previous studies of the fundamentalist movement among China missionaries is that the movement can be approached from the multiple perspectives of modern Chinese history, Christianity in China, and fundamentalism in North America. In comparison, I feel what is needed more is a highly developed theological and historical approach as it exists in Sandeen and Masden's works. Instead of treating the fundamentalist movement among China missionaries simply or primarily as a part of the modern history of China or Christianity in China, I intend to take the integrity of the movement seriously and focus primarily on its internal theological and organizational dynamics. While the historical and social contexts are always taken into account, the fundamentalist movement's interaction with China's society and culture do not receive significant attention in this study. After all, the conservative missions had less impact upon China's cultural and social changes than their

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[45] See William R.Hutchison, Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions (Chicago: The University Of Chicago Press, 1987), 102-11. The organizing theme of this work seems to be the American Protestant missionaries' ambivalent and shifting attitude toward Western culture or civilization and their complicated roles as the agents of this civilization. (See Hutchison, Errand to the World, 9). But I doubt whether this theme can be used as an organizing principle when we come to the

liberal counterparts. In addition, the current condition of the studies of fundamentalism in China makes the uncovering of its own theological and institutional developments a more urgent task.

In this dissertation American missionaries' roles in championing the fundamentalist cause in China feature very prominently. The main reason is that, although fundamentalism was nourished by many elements from European theological trends, it was in North America of the 1920s where fundamentalism took its shape and the controversy between the fundamentalists and modernists fully unfolded. "Almost nowhere outside of America did this particular Protestant response to modernity play such conspicuous and pervasive role in the culture."[46] Furthermore, as American missionaries became the largest contingent of the Protestant missionary forces in China in the early twentieth century,[47] they provided both the channels through which the controversy spread to the mission field and leadership for the fundamentalist missionary movement in China.

Denominationally, a larger portion of this study deals with the missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (North) and the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (South). Just as the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. was one of the main stages for the drama of the fundamentalist and modernist showdowns in America, the Presbyterian

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fundamentalism among China missionaries in the 1920s and 1930s. The reasons for my doubt will become clear in the following chapters.

[46] Marsden, Fundamentalism and American Culture, 221.

[47] According to Searle Bates, "My own best estimate is that the last figure before the dislodgment of the Boxer period, for January 1900, show American missionaries to have been 35 percent of all Protestants, and British 54 percent. The 1910 reports run 43 and 44 percent, respectively. Probably in 1912 the Americans equaled the British. Possibly American missionaries were one half the Protestant total in 1917, under wartime conditions. In 1935-1936 the Americans were 47 percent and the British 35 percent of the total." M.Searle Bates: "The Theology of American Missionaries in China, 1900-1950," in The

missionaries in China took part extensively in the fundamentalist battle against modernists there. Along with the China Inland Mission, the Presbyterian missionaries and missions accounted for the strongest leadership and forces of the movement and several major events of the controversy. Another reason for paying a greater attention to the denominational mission is that the fights between the fundamentalists and modernists were most frequent and fiercest among the denominational missions, simply because the fundamentalists and modernists were all working under the same mission boards and often in the same institutions.[48] The denominational missions are thus better case studies in revealing the subtle and volatile triangular interactions among the fundamentalists, liberals, and the mission boards (mostly moderates). With its highly sophisticated doctrinal and ecclesiastical systems, the Presbyterian churches and their China missions experienced especially intense internal struggles among the fundamentalist, moderate, and modernist factions in the 1920s and 1930s.

In the early decades of the twentieth century, a great number of free-lance missionaries carried out evangelization on their own. Most of them were the "faith mission" type, theologically quite conservative and under heavy influence of holiness teachings. Among them were such personalities as Jennie Hughes, who helped found influential Bethel Mission based in Shanghai, and Margaret E. Barber, who exerted tremendous influence on Ni Tuo-sheng (Watchman Nee). Although most of these independent missionaries theologically identified themselves with the fundamentalist

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Missionary Enterprise in China and America, ed. John K. Fairbank (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), 136.

[48] Sociologist E.A.Ross' point is very illuminating here: "Conflict is sharpest and most passionate when it comes between those who have been united." E.A.Ross, The Principles of Sociology (New York: Century, 1920), 161; quoted in Marty, The Noise of Conflict, Modern American Religion, vol. 2, 157.

cause and personally got involved in anti-modernist campaigns in different ways. their lack of denominational affiliations and their concentration on direct evangelization limited their chances of direct conflicts with the modernists and also the degree of their involvement in the fundamentalist movement. They might have felt deeply offended by the modernist positions and made significant contribution to the spirituality of the evangelical missionary movement. However. their most common responses to the modernist trends were to separate from the modernists and focus on spreading the "pure" gospel to deter corrupting liberal influences rather than engage in constant verbal attacks on modernism. They certainly favored a grassroots. practical evangelism and spiritual revivals over doctrinal disputes. As we define the "fundamentalist" as a conservative who not only theologically endorsed fundamentalism but also militantly opposed modernism. many of these free-lance missionaries might not fit well in to the category of typical fundamentalist. That is why these conservative missionaries will not be in the spotlight in this study.

Related to this point is the case of the China Inland Mission. The CIM is always claimed as the champion of the fundamentalist cause. In many ways this claim is correct. Since the time of its founding. the CIM never wavered in its conservative evangelical doctrines. and its doctrinal position had much in common with fundamentalism. As this dissertation will demonstrate, in the early twentieth century many CIM leaders and members participated actively and extensively in the fundamentalist counterattacks through publications, the Bible Union. and other fundamentalist enterprises in China. The CIM missionaries often accounted for the majority of the fundamentalist forces there. On the other hand, the CIM always considered itself as an agency of evangelization of China.

Its primary task was to spread the gospel and win souls for Christ. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, the CIM never lost its focus on evangelization and thus, as some scholars suggest, was able to "ignore the ethical and theological issues about which other Protestants earnestly contended."[49] There is no sufficient evidence that the CIM as an organization deliberately and consistently plunged itself into the theological and doctrinal debates with the modernist party in China. Among very few actions the CIM took as a direct response to the modernist trends in the 1920s and 1930s, the most sensational one was perhaps its official withdrawal from the National Christian Council in China in 1926. Besides these few incidents, the CIM never allowed its attention and energy to be substantially diverted from evangelism to the doctrinal controversy with the liberal camp. Most of the CIM missionaries joined the fundamentalist camp and fought as individual members. Therefore, in my opinion, the CIM's contribution to fundamentalism in China is undeniable but indirect and hidden. Based on this judgment, I only discuss CIM's withdrawal from the National Christian Council in this study and do not give the CIM more special treatment, even though the individual CIM missionaries' activities on behalf of the fundamentalist cause are mentioned from time to time.

By paying greater attention to American Presbyterian missions, this study concentrates on doctrinal and theological dimensions of the missionary fundamentalist movement. I acknowledge that an important feature of the missionary fundamentalist movement in China was its spirituality deeply rooted in the holiness movement and Keswick teachings. Spiritual consecration and absolute surrender to Christ constituted powerful impetuses behind the work of above-mentioned free-lance conservative

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[49] Joel A. Carpenter, "Propagating the Faith Once Delivered: The Fundamentalist Missionary

missionaries, the CIM, and mission-related revivals in China. However, evangelical piety was not the focal point of debates between the fundamentalist and modernist camps in the field, and it is thus not extensively discussed in this study.

A few words are needed to explain the time frame of this study. Although the conflicts between the conservative and liberal missionaries already began to simmer a couple of decades before 1920, it was through the establishment of the Bible Union of China in 1920 that the sparse fundamentalist movement became a loosely organized and coordinated campaign against the modernists in the mission field. The highly publicized founding of the Bible Union, the visits of several prominent fundamentalists from North America, and W.H. Griffith Thomas's explosive charges against modernism in China all brought the issue of modernism among China missions to the attention of the missionary community in China and the churches in North America. All these events took place in 1920. Therefore, the year of 1920 was really the year when the fundamentalist movement in China took its distinct shape and attracted the considerable attention of the missionary community and churches in China and overseas. The period of 1920 to 1926 witnessed a series of clashes between the fundamentalist and modernist camps on some major issues. In the early 1930s the controversy was heated up again by Pearl S. Buck's criticism, Re-Thinking Missions, and the founding of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions. After the breakout of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937, the effects of the war on mission work increasingly diverted the attention of the missionaries across China from the fundamentalist movement and controversy.

Enterprise, 1920-1945," in Earthern Vessels, eds. Shenk and Carpenter, 126.

Without a doubt, the studies of fundamentalism among China missionaries are currently at a very primitive stage. Our knowledge of exactly what happened and what major issues, personalities, and institutions were involved is still very scanty. A lot of basic questions need to be answered, and a lot of groundwork needs to be done. Under these circumstances a broad survey of the historical developments of the fundamentalist movement in China is necessary. As the very first extensive study of this particular subject, my project has no way to shun this kind of broad survey. Thus what I first intend to accomplish here is to depict major but lesser known events of the controversy,[50] the most prominent and important fundamentalist institutions and personalities, and most critical issues the fundamentalists were concerned about. Each chapter is devoted to a few major events, persons, institutions, or issues. In order to preserve the original features and integrity of the historical process of the fundamentalist movement, I pursue my discussion chronologically. In other words, except for the first and last chapters, all other chapters are arranged largely according to their chronological order.

However, considering the large number of missionaries and institutions involved in the fundamentalist movement, I focus on the most influential and representative persons, institutions, events, and issues and use them to illustrate the features, concerns, and evolution of the fundamentalist movement. In a sense this dissertation consists of a series of case studies. What I secondly intend to accomplish is to probe into core beliefs and internal structure of the fundamentalist movement through the case studies. Therefore, my study combines a case study approach with a broad survey approach.

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[50] Certain relatively well-known events such as the trial of John Leighton Stuart will not be included.

Moreover, my selections of cases have to do with the availability of data and academic significance.

In the second chapter I lay out a historical and social background for the fundamentalist movement to set a stage for further discussions. First of all, China's historical evolution since the late nineteenth century and the social and cultural situation in the early twentieth century are surveyed. Then I trace the development of Protestant missions since the mid-nineteenth century and the evangelical consensus of Protestant missions in China, the fundamentalist-modernist controversy in North America, growing liberal trends among missionaries and churches in China, and conservative missionaries' reactions.

The third chapter is devoted to the most well-known fundamentalist alliance—the Bible Union of China. Its founding, activities, and decline are explored. The fourth chapter discusses the fundamentalists' confrontation with the modernists on the issue of theological education. The case to be analyzed here is the controversy surrounding Nanjing (Nanking) Theological Seminary. In some ways the fifth chapter is a continuation of the fourth chapter. It is about the history, characters, and influence of conservative North China Theological Seminary, and my purpose is to tell the story of the fundamentalists' efforts at building their own institutions of theological education. The sixth chapter analyzes the fundamentalists' overall attitude toward the church union movement. The primary case is the CIM's withdrawal from the National Christian Council in 1926. The conservatives' reactions to the Church of Christ in China and the League of Christian Churches are also discussed. The first half of the 1930s witnessed a new round of fundamentalist-modernist controversies among China missionaries. The

seventh chapter examines the major controversies of the 1930s regarding the China Sunday School Union, Re-Thinking Missions, Pearl S. Buck, and the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions. My overall ambition is to tell the fundamentalists' side of the story of the Protestant missionary movement in twentieth-century China.

CHAPTER II

THE ROAD TO THE CONTROVERSY

It was during the early 1920s when the fundamentalist movement rather dramatically gained national prominence among the Protestant missionary community in China and its quarrel with the modernist movement began to attract a lot of attention from the missionaries and native Christians. However, the division and controversy had long been in the making: their roots lay deep in the Protestant missionary movement of the nineteenth century, and they were the direct results of the tremendous changes taking place within the missionary enterprise in China by the end of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. In addition, the raging fundamentalist-modernist controversy in North America after the First World War accounted for stimulating and intensifying the controversy in the mission field. The social and cultural trends in modern Chinese society were another powerful factor in shaping missionary thinking and activities. This chapter explores how the internal changes and external impact came into play and lead to the great division among the Protestant missionaries in China of the 1920s and 1930s.

China in Transition

The years from the 1850s to the 1930s were an era of tremendous turbulence and great transition in Chinese history. To strengthen their country and defend themselves against foreign aggression, the Chinese people attempted to modernize China's industry,

military, government, education, and culture. These attempts led to unprecedented changes in the country, and a closed, agricultural society became more open and diverse. For these years the changes often took place in very sweeping and even violent ways, and Chinese society was shaken by numerous social campaigns, wars, and revolutions.

These monumental changes were set in motion when Qing (Ch'ing) China lost two Opium Wars and was forced to open its doors in the 1840s and 1850s by the Western powers. After suffering numerous military defeats in the hands of the foreigners, the Qing Dynasty had to sign a series of unequal treaties with the foreign powers and concede numerous political and economic privileges and even parts of its territory to them. As a nation that had always considered itself the center of the world and the seat of civilization, China was not only overwhelmed economically and militarily by Western technological superiority but also shocked psychologically by military failures in the hands of the "barbarians." By the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, China's national crisis became so severe that a final division of China into several colonies of the foreign powers appeared imminent.

The deepening national crisis awakened different social classes of Chinese society. A consensus had been gradually reached in the society that China needed to revitalize itself through reform in order to resist foreign aggression. To explore the roads of national salvation became the major theme and central issue of China's modern history. Most, if not all, social and cultural movements in modern China were centered on this theme. The goals of China's reform or modernization were to defend national sovereignty and to achieve economic prosperity. To reach these goals involved two basic tasks. The first one was national self-strengthening, or saving China from foreign

aggression by political, economic and military means; the second task was enlightenment, or the transforming of Chinese culture and national character by learning science and democracy from the West.

Around the mid-nineteenth century, mostly initiated and led by high-ranking government officials, China's reform concentrated on the first task. The presupposition for reform was that the roots for China's weakness lay in technological ignorance rather than in political and cultural systems, and what would make China strong again was simply to learn Western sciences and technology, to import modern weaponry and military industry, and to train a modern army. Since this approach did not prevent China from being defeated by foreign powers, the Qing government initiated two broader reform attempts in 1898 and 1905. The reform measures involved agriculture, education, government services, military, and commerce. Although the reform of 1898 was overturned and followed by the eruption of an anti-foreign sentiment in the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, the reform of 1905 did result in some significant achievements. Probably the most important one was in education. As a result the ancient examination system was abolished, a modern educational system was inaugurated, a national university was established in Peking, and many talented young people were sent to study abroad.

However, as the nationalist movement gained strength and the demands for reform got stronger in Chinese society, the Qing Dynasty proved its incompetence in envisioning and implementing systematic reform. To many reformers the only hope to save their country seemed to be the toppling of the old dynasty and the establishment of a new republic. This new tendency found its strongest expression in Sun Yat-sen's

persistent revolutionary activities. After many years of effort, the revolutionaries managed to overthrow the Qing Dynasty through a series of provincial uprisings in 1911. Sun was elected as the first provisional president of the new republic.

In many ways the revolution of 1911 was very superficial. The changes took place largely in the realm of central government. As Richard T. Philips points out, "there were no immediate fundamental changes in the social structure, the distribution of wealth, the methods of lower administration or in economic activities, such as one usually associates with the term 'revolution'."[1] After the old order collapsed, the revolutionaries certainly had trouble finding a workable replacement. A brief experiment in Western style democracy was quickly followed by the fragmentation of the central authority and the rise of local warlords. While the countryside was devastated by the warlords' fighting troops, China continued to be exploited by the foreign powers. In the wake of the First World War, Japan's aggression in Shandong (Shantung) Province caused a nationwide patriotic movement that was named the May Fourth Movement.

After the parliamentary democracy failed, the Russian revolution of 1917 seemed to point to a new revolutionary road to national salvation. China's movement of national salvation was further radicalized and revolutionized. With Soviet guidance and support, the Chinese Community Party was founded in 1921. Riding on a new wave of nationalism, SunYat-sen invited Soviet advisors and the newly founded Chinese Communist Party to reorganize and revitalize his own political party in Guangdong (Kwangtung) Province in 1923. A new ideology or so called "Three Principles of the People" (nationalism, centralized democracy, socialism) was developed and propagated,

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[1] Richard T. Philips, China since 1911 (New York: St Martin's Press, 1996), 32.

the Soviet type of political and military systems were adopted, and a nationalist-communist united front was formed. This new nationalist party (the KMT) quickly emerged as a powerful revolutionary force and launched "a dual struggle to rid China of warlordism and of the special privileges of foreigners."[2]

The KMT's cause gained public support nationwide after a number of Chinese demonstrators were killed in Shanghai and Guangzhou (Canton) by the foreign forces there on May 30, 1925. A wave of anti-imperialist fervor engulfed the whole country. Chinese students, merchants, and workers were mobilized and organized in a rising tide of demonstrations, strikes, and boycotts, which put great pressure on the Western colonial establishment in China. Even the peasants were agitated by the communists. For many Chinese intellectuals and students, Lenin's theory of imperialism provided a powerful explanation for China's internal and external problems. The so-called May Thirtieth Movement of 1925 really paved the way for the Northern Expedition launched by the KMT from their base in Guangdong in 1926. As the KMT army led by Chiang K'ai-shek advanced to the Yangtze valley, they defeated many local warlords and even forced the British to give up their concessions in some cities. When the KMT army entered Nanjing (Nanking) in March of 1927, some soldiers of the victorious army looted a number of foreign residences and killed half a dozen foreigners. This incident caused massive evacuation of foreigners including missionaries from China's interiors. In the meantime the internal struggle between the nationalists and communists intensified. In 1927 Chiang K'ai-shek purged the KMT of the communists through a series of ruthless attacks.

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[2] John K. Firbank, Great Chinese Revolution:1800-1985 (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1986), 205.

Finally, in June of 1928 Beijing authorities yielded to the KMT rule; in December of the same year Manchuria accepted the Nanking authority. A fragile national unification under the KMT dominated central government was finally reached .

The so-called "Nanjing Decade" (1927-37) gave China a relatively stable environment to modernize and develop itself. The KMT authority made efforts to develop the economy, to initiate constitutional and administrative reforms, and to abolish the unequal treaties and regain full national sovereignty. However, except for some achievements in financial reform, most reform measures did not yield significant results. The corruption and bureaucracy within the KMT regime, the KMT's neglect of rural problems, its old and inefficient ruling method, the wars with remaining warlords' forces and the communist rebels, and mounting Japanese aggression in North China all contributed to the slow and ineffective progress of China's modernization movement under the KMT regime. The break-out of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937 eventually brought the KMT's modernization campaign to a halt.

In early twentieth-century China, nationalism was the major driving force behind the social movements. For both ruling classes and masses, the primary concern seemed to be the pursuit of political, economic, and military solutions for China's prolonged national crisis. Patriotism and an anti-imperialist feeling continued to dominate in Chinese society. As Jessie G. Lutz pointed out, "For a people no longer characterized by commitment to the same fundamental beliefs and values, nationalism became the cement to hold China together." [3] Indeed, by the late 1920s China's society had become

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[3] Jessie Gregory Lutz, Chinese Politics and Christian Missions: The Anti-Christian Movements of 1920-28 (Notre Dame, IN: Cross Cultural Publications, Inc. 1988), 285.

increasingly politicized, and the gradual cultural reform and democratic experiment quickly gave way to the KMT and communist revolutions. Indeed, war and revolution became major themes of the Chinese history of the 1930s and 1940s.

In the early decades of the twentieth century, a very significant development in China was the rise of new intellectuals and new cultural trends. So, along with tremendous social and political turmoil, China's cultural and intellectual life also went through fundamental transformation. After the traditional examination system was abolished, the foreign mission-sponsored schools gained unprecedented popularity, and thousands of promising young people went to study in Japan, Europe, and North America. These students not only learned Western sciences but also brought Western ideologies to their own country.

It was through the May Fourth Movement of 1917 to 1921 that modern Western culture was systematically introduced into China and produced a fundamental impact on the cultural life of Chinese society. Culturally, the May Fourth Movement was a massive iconoclastic attack upon traditional Confucian values and an extensive importation of modern Western ideologies. Therefore, the May Fourth Movement is also called the New Culture movement or New Thought movement. Especially from 1917 to 1919, the movement largely proceeded in the forms of cultural transformation and debates. The intellectuals of the New Culture Movement held a common appreciation for democracy and science, and they sought to save their country through the introduction of new values and an overhaul of Chinese culture. Furthermore, what the New Cultural Movement introduced into China was extremely diverse. As Chow Tse-tsung observed: "When traditional Chinese thinking and institutions appeared shaken, Western ideas such as

democracy, science, liberalism, pragmatism, humanitarianism, anarchism, socialism and so on all entered a free market for thought....Turning from their common hostility to the traditional order to the task of finding positive solutions, they were confronted with a diversity of social philosophies and models. Therefore, after 1919, discord among the new intellectuals increased."[4]

Most of the competing ideologies were secular ones closely related to scientific, evolutionist, and progressive worldviews and thus were quite hostile to any religion. By embracing these thoughts, new Chinese intellectuals developed a deep-rooted confidence in science and social progress.

The wide spread of new secular ideas posed an unprecedented challenge to the Christian churches and mission enterprise in China. Within the church and mission circles, there was an increasing uneasiness and alarm at "the rapid, and wide-spread, diffusion of modern sceptical and anti-Christian thought."[5] The new open-mindedness of the Chinese people was often perceived as an opportunity for them to accept the gospel as well as rival secular ideologies.

Not surprisingly most of the new intellectuals of the May Fourth Movement had very little taste for religion. Their initial attack on Confucianism was quickly broadened to a general attack on all religions. Anti-religious rallies were organized, and articles were published. The weapons of these anti-religious intellectuals were taken from such Western thinkers as Bacon, Descartes, Voltaire, Comte, Hugo, Darwin, Marx, and Kropotkin. Among the major arguments against religion were that "all religious faith is

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[4] Chow Tse-tsung, The May Fourth Movement, Intellectual Revolution in Modern China (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1967), 215.

[5] "CIM Annual Report, 1911," China's Millions (June 1912): 87.

dogmatic and hence unscientific, emotional instead of rationalistic....Religion originated from the ignorance and fear of primitive peoples....Religions are partisan and aligned against each other....This dogmatic attitude will thwart the development of individuality and social advancement."[6] One of the leading figures of the New Culture movement declared that all religions "are to be classed with the other discarded idols of a past age." [7] Furthermore, aestheticism and sciences were advocated as substitutes for religion. Lutz correctly argued that "characterizing all these discussions was skepticism regarding the supernatural and acceptance of a social criterion of value....Progress and change were esteemed rather than stability and tradition; secular scientism provided the criterion for the good society."[8]

Although a few prominent intellectuals like Chen Du-xiu (Ch'enTu-hsiu) had held positive views of Christianity's social functions at the early stage of the New Culture movement,[9] Christianity began to be singled out as a favorable target for attack. It was claimed that all supernatural aspects of Christianity were unscientific and superstitious, and churches were blamed for suppressing free thinking and democratic ideas in Europe and supporting the imperialist aggression in China.[10]

These accusations and themes were taken over and developed in the anti-Christian movement of 1920-22. When the World's Student Christian Federation held a conference at Qing Hua (Tsing Hua) College in Beijing in April 1922, a group of radical students in Shanghai resorted to Marxist-Leninist vocabulary and denounced Christianity as the

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[6] Chow, The May Fourth Movement, 324-25.

[7] Quoted in ibid., 321.

[8] Lutz, Chinese Politics and Christian Missions, 33.

[9] See Chow, May Fourth Movement, 321. Chen admired Jesus as a passionate person and great moral model and rejected all Christian doctrines about his supernatural character.

"running dog" of the capitalist class in their telegraphed protest.[11] They also announced the formation of an Anti-Christian Student Federation and "exhorted all patriots to unite in a drive against the missionaries and their lackeys."[12] When the movement spread to Beijing, an anti-religion federation was established, and the focus of criticism shifted from Christianity's connection with capitalism to its contradiction with modern sciences. The main tools of the anti-Christian campaigns were articles, telegrams, public lectures, and rallies. However, lacking organizational continuity and structure, this student movement began to decline in 1922.

With the assistance and guidance of the KMT and communist party, the anti-Christian movement was revived two years later and incorporated into the larger anti-imperialist patriotic movement. The Christian church was condemned as the instrument of the Western imperialists and colonists, by which they carried out cultural aggression and attempted to enslave Chinese people spiritually and mentally. [13] A series of anti-Christian demonstrations were staged across China. In many places church services were deliberately interrupted; church buildings, damaged; and church members, harassed. The Christian schools were especially targeted as the worst symbols of the imperialist cultural aggression. The Chinese intellectuals and students demanded that religious education be restricted in the Christian schools and these schools be put under Chinese control through mandatory registration with the Chinese government. Consequently, a campaign of restoring educational rights was initiated and quickly gained momentum during 1922 and

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[10] See ibid., 325.

[11] See Lutz, Chinese Politics and Christian Missions, 55.

[12] Ibid.

[13] See Lam Wing-hung, 风潮中奋起的中国教会 (Chinese Theology in Construction) (Hong Kong: Tien Dao Publishing House, Ltd., 1980), 140-43.

1923. From 1925 to 1927 the campaign was endorsed by both warlords in the North and the KMT in the South, and the mission schools were required to register with the governments under such conditions as making religious activities voluntary and promotion of Chinese administrative power. Disputes, student strikes, and even the closing down of schools threatened the whole Christian educational system. After Chiang K'ai Shek suppressed the communists in 1927, the KMT began to moderate its anti-Western position and tried to eliminate the most radical elements in the campus. As a result anti-Christian fervor began to abate. At last the anti-Christian movement came to an end after Chiang publicly accepted the Christian faith in 1930 and the Japanese occupation of Manchuria in 1931 diverted the nation's attention. Nevertheless, the movement left the Christian missions and churches with many questions about the ways the missions and churches were run. Many mission organizations began to adjust their policies, particularly in mission, schools and to promote indigenous church leadership according to the new social context in China.

The Expansion of Protestant Missions in China From 1807 to 1910

In the nineteenth century Protestant Christianity came to China as a part of the Western impact on China. The Protestant missionaries' role in modern Chinese history was quite complicated. On the one hand, they made significant contributions to China's modernization campaign. On the other hand, some missionaries' reliance on the protection of the treaty privileges and gunboats aroused persistent and deep anti-Christian sentiments and riots in Chinese society. From the mid-nineteenth century to the early

twentieth century, the Protestant missionary enterprise in China experienced triumphs as well as tragedies, progress as well as setbacks. Despite its turbulent history in these years, the Protestant missionary movement in China was getting stronger, and the newly planted Chinese Protestant churches were taking roots in the ancient land.

The story of the Protestant missions in China began when Robert Morrison of the London Missionary Society arrived in Guangzhou in 1807. Through their translation, educational, and medical works, Morrison and his fellow missionaries laid the foundation for the Protestant missionary movement in China. During the first two decades after the Opium War, the growing number of Western missionaries arrived in China and now had extraterritorial status at their disposal, but their activities were largely restricted in the five Chinese port cities.

It was not until the 1860s when the vast interior of the empire opened up to the Christian missions. The treaties of 1858 and 1860 between China and the Western powers allowed Western missionaries to travel in inland China and acquire properties anywhere, and placed not only foreign missionaries but also their Chinese converts under the protection of the Western powers. According to Kenneth S. Latourette, these treaties "revolutionized the status of missionaries and Chinese Christians and made possible a large expansion of the Church."[14] Indeed, the decades after 1860 witnessed a dramatic increase of mission forces and activities. In 1858 there were only eighty-five Protestant missionaries in China; by 1881 the number of China missionaries and their wives stood at

[14] Kenneth Scott Latourette, A History of Christian Missions in China (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1929), 277.

618.[15] By 1898 the missionaries had reached all of the eighteen provinces of the Qing Empire.[16]

The years from 1856 to 1897 have been described as an era of "pioneering" and "path-breakers."[17] Most of the missionaries concentrated on so-called "direct evangelism," namely spreading the gospel and gaining converts by preaching and distributing printed materials. Meanwhile, missionary educational, medical and publishing enterprises continued to grow. Most of the schools were at the elementary level and aimed to provide the Chinese converts' families with education.[18] Nevertheless the missionary schools, hospitals, and publishing houses became the major media by which modern Western sciences and ideologies were imported, and the missionaries were among the most important pioneering forces for modernization in China.

As a result the size of the Chinese Protestant communities became significantly larger. In 1858 less than 500 communicants were reported. By 1877 this number had increased to 13,515 and by 1900 it reached 85,000. [19] The majority of these converts were farmers, shop-keepers, artisans, street-vendors, and laborers. The efforts to convert gentry-scholars, the ruling classes in the Confucian social order, were largely unsuccessful. In fact, the ruling class increasingly felt that their educational, economic, and political privileges were seriously being undermined by the presence and activities of the Western missionaries. Not surprisingly, the gentry-scholars were the mobilizing and leading force behind a series of anti-missionary and anti-Christians incidents that became

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[15] Ibid., 405-406.
[16] Ibid., 361.
[17] Ibid., 362.
[18] See Ibid., 442-43.

more frequent and violent during the last three decades of the nineteenth century and culminated in the Boxer Rebellion in 1900.

In spite of the heavy losses inflicted by the Boxer Rebellion, the Protestant missionary movement bounced back very quickly and made new progress in the first decades of the new millennium. The mission forces were greatly reinforced. "In 1889 1,296 Protestant missionaries had been reported. In 1905 the number had risen to 3,445.... In 1910, 5,144 missionaries were reported."[20] The geographic expansion of the missions was also very impressive. From 1891 to 1900, 250 mission stations were opened in the whole country; the number for the following decade was 274. The greatest expansions occurred mostly in the interior provinces.[21]

As the Protestant missionary movement proceeded in China for the second half of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth century, there emerged different missionary approaches and methods. These approaches and methods reflected the different theological backgrounds and personal experiences of the missionaries themselves in China. The most common view has been that there were two basic types of missionary approaches respectively advocated by Timothy Richard (1869-1919) and Hudson Taylor (1853-1905). The former came to China as a British Baptist missionary in 1870 and was extensively involved in famine relief, education, publication, and political reform; the latter arrived in China in 1854 and founded and led the China Inland Mission from 1865. As early as the 1920s, Kenneth Scott Latourette made the following

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[19] Frank Rawlinson, Helen Thoburn, and D.MacGillivray, eds. The Chinese Church as Revealed in the National Christian Conference (Shanghai: The Oriental Press, 1922), 82.

[20] Latourette, History of Christian Missions in China, 606.

[21] Ibid., 605.

comparison between them in his monumental work A History of Christian Missions in China:

> Taylor and Timothy Richard were outstanding exponents of different and in time conflicting conceptions of the missionary's function. They had much in common....Both dared to think in terms of all China and to attempt to formulate methods for reaching the whole of the nation much more expeditiously and effectively than was being done by their contemporaries. They were unlike in that Richard dreamed of seeing all phases of China's life transformed by the introduction of every wholesome feature of Western civilization, while Taylor confined his efforts to the proclamation of the Gospel as understood by the Evangelicals of the time. Richard's theology was the more flexible and he was quicker to recognize all that was good in the non-Christian faiths of China. [22]

Latourette's point is clear: although Richard and Taylor shared the same motivation and goals, they held different views on mission methods and strategies. Richard was more broad-minded and flexible and culture-oriented, while Taylor was more single-minded and evangelism-oriented. These themes have become widely accepted and elaborated by the scholars of China missions.[23]

The contrasts between Richard's and Taylor's mission approaches are undeniable. While Richard centered his mission on building the kingdom of God or a modernized society in China, Taylor centered his mission on proclaiming the gospel; while the former wanted to save the people's souls as well as bodies, the latter wanted to save their souls first; while the former attempted to convert China by importing Western civilization and stimulating social changes, the latter focused on preaching the good news to as many people as possible before the imminent second coming of Christ; while the

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[22] Ibid., 387.

[23] By far the most elaborate and important comparative studies of these two mission models were presented by Paul A. Cohen in his essay "Missionary Approaches: Hudson Taylor and Timothy Richard." Cohen insists that Taylor and Richard's models were most representative and influential in shaping the whole Protestant missionary movement and Chinese churches. His essay played a major role in making this contrast of Timothy Richard and Hudson Taylor a classical and standard characterization of at least the nineteenth-century missions and perhaps even the early twentieth-century missions.

former targeted the elite in Chinese society as the key group to evangelize, the latter tried to bring the gospel to anyone, mostly the low classes, in the interior of China; while the former got involved extensively in China's educational development and political reform, the latter never allowed the task of preaching the gospel to be overwhelmed by any educational and medical engagement; while the former devoted himself to cultivating a cordial relationship with the non-Christian religions in China, the latter was never vague in claiming the absolute truthfulness of Christianity and erroneous nature of other religions.

In terms of results, Richard--along with a small group of like-minded missionaries such as W.A.P.Martin, Young J. Allen, and Gilbert Reid-- made impressive contributions to China's modernization. Hudson Taylor of the CIM, on the other hand, led the largest Protestant mission in China. His conservative theology greatly shaped the character of the Chinese churches but did not make prominent contributions to China's modernization. The gaps and even conflicts between these two approaches were real. At one time Taylor was so upset by the theological orientation of Timothy Richard that he ordered the CIM missionaries to stop worshipping with him.[24] When the General Missionary Conference in China met in Shanghai in 1890, Hudson Taylor took the lead in opposing W.A.P. Martin's proposal that would not dismiss the Chinese practice of ancestral worship as idolatry but sought to reform it into a Christian practice, despite Timothy Richard and Gilbert Reid's endorsements of the proposal.[25] It is fair to say that the contrast between them shadow the controversy that shook the Protestant mission enterprises in the 1920s.

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[24] See Timothy Richard, Forty-five Years in China (New York: Frederick A Stokes Company, 1916), 152-53.

[25] See Covell, Confucius, the Buddha, and Christ, 120.

However, it would be an overstatement to conclude that Timothy Richard was a liberal while Hudson Taylor was a fundamentalist. To say so is anachronistic. At the end of the nineteenth century, the missionary approach articulated by Richard was far from being developed into a modernist and social gospel type, and a conservative cause in opposition to modernism in the mission field was still something in the future. Richard and Taylor only represented two different emphases and tendencies under an overarching "Protestant missionary consensus." [26] The tensions between these two missionary approaches did not yet reach the point of breaking the consensus.

Despite the missionaries' different stands on the priorities in the mission agenda and the methods to achieve these priorities, most of the missionaries and societies could to a significant extent agree on the basic missionary message, the relevance of social services, and the uniqueness of Christianity. In 1877 and 1890 the two conferences of Protestant missionaries exhibited fundamental unity across the Protestant missionary community in China. Perhaps the last prominent demonstration of this consensus and unity was the China Centenary Missionary Conference of 1907.[27] Eleven hundred delegates from all Protestant missions in China attended the conference.[28]After a great deal of discussion, the large majority, if not all, participating missionaries agreed that

> The mission of the Church is one—viz. to proclaim by word and deed to every nation under heaven, through the medium of a living and ubiquitous Christian

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[26] The concept of "a Protestant Missionary Consensus" is defined by James Alan Patterson. He identified four major components: first, evangelism and church planting; second, "the doctrinal allegiance to the uniquely divine nature of Jesus Christ"; third, the willingness to define the social dimension of mission; fourth, pragmatic ecumenism or cooperative mission efforts. He asserted that the fundamentalist-modernist controversy served to cut these ties holding the Protestant missionary camp together and contributed to the loss of the consensus. See Patterson, "The Loss of a Protestant Missionary Consensus: Foreign Missions and the Fundamentalist-Modernist Conflict," in Earthen Vessels, eds. Shenk and Carpenter, 73-91.

[27] M. Searle Bates called this conference "the last major collective expression of their theology by Protestant missionaries in China." Bates, "The Theology of American Missionaries," 143.

[28] Brown, Earthen Vessels and Transcendent Power, 165.

> society, the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of Man, and to cause the light of the knowledge of the glory of God as revealed in Christ to enlighten all lands. The end in view is not merely the future salvation either of particular races or individual souls, but the proclamation, also, of a present and adequate antidote for the darkness in which the sin and suffering and ignorance of man at present enshrouds the world.[29]

Here the proclamation of the message was affirmed as the task of mission, and a balance between individual salvation and social transformation was carefully maintained. On the one hand, at the center of mission was to "carry the Gospel to these unevangelized millions." On the other hand, the necessity and aims of missionary social service were acknowledged: " educational, medical and charitable agencies are indispensable. . . . Their essential evangelistic purpose should always be emphasized."[30]

A certain degree of unity in doctrinal position and the scriptures was also declared by the conference as follows:

> This conference unanimously holds the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the supreme standard of faith and practice, and holds firmly the primitive apostolic faith. Further, while acknowledging the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed as substantially expressing the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith, the Conference does not adopt any Creed as a basis of Church unity. . . . We gladly recognize ourselves as already one body in Christ, teaching one way of eternal life . . . and as one in regard to the great body of doctrine of the Christian faith; one in our teaching as to the love of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; in our testimony as to sin and salvation, and our homage to the Divine and Holy Redeemer of men.[31]

This rather traditional evangelical faith statement reaffirmed the missionary community's belief in the supreme authority of the Bible and the truthfulness of the historical doctrines. Although no official creed was adopted, the conference stressed the actual oneness in

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[29] Records, China Centenary Missionary Conference (Shanghai: Methodist Publishing House, 1907), 364.

[30] Ibid., 550.

doctrines and teachings. In fact, the statement also included the basic message the missionaries intended to deliver to Chinese people. For the missionaries the message of the gospel could offer Chinese people truths that Chinese traditional cultures and religions lacked. Therefore, the conference reasserted the superiority of Christianity over Chinese culture and religions. The conference's memorial to the Chinese government stated: "We gladly recognize such correspondences where they exist, but we are bound also to notice the differences there are between the teaching of Christ and the teaching usually accepted in China. These differences all gather around the question of God in His relation to man, and of man in his duty to God. . . .Thus we recognize that all nations have one Lord and Father of all Who is in Heaven, to Whom all owe allegiance."[32] Obviously, the goodness of non-Christian religions was not denied. But Christian truths were declared as the only way to salvation for all nations. These words indeed reflected the typical attitude toward non-Christian religions, which was held by most missionaries at the time.

The fact that the delegates of this conference were able to reach a series of agreements on a wide range of issues indicates that the Protestant mission consensus remained firm and intact in early twentieth-century China. "Unity" was such a popular theme among the missionaries that the conference of 1907 resolved to recommend the formation of the Christian Federation of China in order to "foster and encourage the sentiment and practice of union."[33]

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[31] Ibid., 437-38.
[32] Ibid., 395-96.
[33] Ibid., 719.

Ironically, the divisive elements that would shatter this vision of unity were already simmering in the conference of 1907. The progressive and conservative wings of the Protestant missionary community began to clash on such issues as the relation of evangelism and social work, and ancestor worship.[34] These clashes foretold the eventual demise of the Protestant mission consensus in China. After the conference the gap between the progressives and conservatives kept getting wider. In this sense the Centenary Missionary Conference of 1907 can be viewed as a milestone in Protestant mission history in China. The traditional consensus and emerging conflict all converged in it.

The New Missionary Trends and Spread of Liberal Mission Thinking in the 1910s and 1920s

In the history of Protestant missions and churches in China, the 1910s and 1920s were a critical era. During these decades the achievements were unprecedented in the fields of church growth, missionary educational and medical enterprises, and indigenization of Chinese churches. Most importantly, a distinct missionary liberal movement and the fundamentalist movement were taking shape and parting company. Not very long after the missionary conference of 1907, the Protestant mission consensus in China began to face serious challenge.

The decade after the 1911 revolution has been called "the golden years" of the Protestant missionary movement in China.[35] Although Christians were still a very small minority among the whole population in China, they constituted a large number of leaders

[34] See ibid., 540, 614.

and participants in the revolution. In the post-revolution years, both in the local and central governments of the new republic, many key positions were occupied by Christians and the graduates from missionary schools. Furthermore, most of the politicians, intellectuals, and other social classes in Chinese society were quite open to new ideas and eager to learn from the West. "Certainly many thoughtful Chinese, in facing the new day brought by the Revolution, looked hopefully toward Christianity as a possible source of the moral and spiritual dynamic."[36] This open and friendly attitude toward Christianity created a very favorable environment for the advance of the missionary cause. Consequently, the 1910s witnessed the phenomenal growth of the Protestant missionary forces in China. The number of the missionaries rose from about 3,000 at the beginning of the century to 6,204 by 1920; 7,663, by 1922; and to 8,158, by 1925.[37] The size of the Chinese Protestant community also enlarged considerably in the same period. The number of communicants increased from 131,404 in 1904 to 268,652 in 1915 [38] and to 402,539 in 1922.[39] As Christians became prominent in politics, education, and economics, the social status of Christian communities in urban areas improved considerably. However, after the mid-1920s the impact and pressure of the New Culture Movement and the Anti-Christian Movement temporarily led to a slower increase and even shrinkage of the missionary forces and Chinese Christian communities. In 1928 the number of Protestant missionaries stood at 4,375. The 1930s witnessed a gradual

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[35] Brown, Earthen Vessel and Transcendent Power, 195.

[36] Latourette, History of Christian Missions in China, 610.

[37] Frank Rawlinson, ed., China Christian Yearbook 1936-37, (Glendale, CA: A.H. Clark Co., 1937), 459..

[38] Latourette, History of Christian Missions in China, 680.

[39] Ibid., 780.

recovery of the missionary forces in China. In 1936 there were 6,059 missionaries in the country.[40]

Since the 1880s the institutionalization of missionary educational and medical works already had been under way.[41] But the greatest institutional build-ups occurred in the first two decades of the twentieth century. The tremendous social demands and changes in missionary thinking resulted in a surge of mission-related higher educational and modern medical enterprises in China. While the enrollments of the elementary and middle-level missionary schools continued a phenomenal growth.[42] the development of missionary higher education was most spectacular and significant. At the end of the nineteenth century, there were only five mission-sponsored colleges across the country. By 1920 there were sixteen four-year colleges.[43] After a series of consolidations and expansions, thirteen universities and colleges greatly improved their academic standards and gained the status of top Christian higher educational institutions.[44] Some of them, such as Yenching, St. John, and Nanjing, became well-known internationally. The number of students enrolled in Protestant colleges in 1929 was 4,285 as against 1,691 in 1919 and 878 in 1910. [45] American missionary societies committed most heavily their financial resources and manpower to higher educational institutions.

Meanwhile, medical work was also greatly expanded. In 1905 there were 301 physicians out of a total of 3,445 missionaries, 166 hospitals, and 241 dispensaries; by

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[40] Rawlinson, ed., China Christian Yearbook 1936-37 , 459.

[41] See Irwin T.Hyatt, Jr., "Protestant Missions in China, 1877-1890: The Institutionalization of Good Works," in American Missionaries in China, ed Kwang-Ching Liu (Cambridge, MA: East Asian Research Center, Harvard University, 1966), 93-126.

[42] See Laourette, History of Christian Missions in China, 623.

[43] William P. Fenn, Christian Higher Education in Changing China 1880-1950 (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm.B.Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1976), 43-44.

[44] See ibid., 237.

1915 there were 525 physicians out of 5,338 missionaries, 330 hospitals, and 223 dispensaries.[46] In 1921 the famous Peking Union Medical College opened and became the center of medical education in China. An inevitable and profound consequence of these enlarged educational and medical programs was a higher percentage of missionaries and resources diverted to activities other than direct evangelism in its traditional forms. It has been said that "by 1911 less than half the total missionary staff was engaged in direct evangelistic work." [47]The so-called "secularizing" tendency was so strong that it began to cause increasing concerns on the part of missionaries and mission observers.[48]

Other important Christian institutions that experienced rapid growth in the early decades of the twentieth century were the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA). Between 1914 and 1922 the YMCA membership in China increased 359 percent.[49] By 1920 the YMCA had branches in thirty-one Chinese cities and 60,566 members nationwide.[50] Since the founding of its China Committee in 1905, the YWCA had opened 101 centers in cities and schools, and

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[45] Ibid., 239..

[46] Latourette, History of Christian Missions in China, 652.

[47] Ibid., 619. According to a report of the Evangelistic Work Committee appointed by the Centenary Missionary Conference of 1907, by 1909, of 1,758 missionaries of all mission societies other than the CIM, less than 600 were engaged in direct evangelistic work; all others were in medical, educational, literary, and philanthropic work. "The Centenary Conference Appeal for Evangelistic Workers," The Chinese Recorder 40 (May 1909), 275. Another example was the Northern Presbyterian missions. From 1912 to 1926 the number of missionaries assigned to evangelism increased from 134 to 183; meanwhile, the number of medical missionaries, from 67 to 116; and the number of educational missionaries, from 78 to 195. Brown, Earthen Vessels and Transcendent Power, 196.

[48] This situation prompted some mission observers to ask : "Are we in danger of secularizing our missions?...Is there a tendency in missions to heal the sick, feed the hungry, and teach the ignorant to the neglect of evangelization?" Joseph Clemens, "Are We in Danger of Secularizing our Missions?" Chinese Recorder 44 (November, 1913), 659. For many missionaries, evangelism meant open air and street chapel preaching, and they blamed the increasing tasks of institutional building and congregation caring for its decline. See "Preaching as a Mission Agency," in China Mission Year Book 1912, eds., G.H.Bondfield and others (Shanghai: Christian Literature Society, 1912), 178-201.

[49] Bondfield and others, eds. China Mission Year Book 1912, 775.

[50] Milton T. Stauffer and others, eds., The Christian Occupation of China (Shanghai: China Continuation Committee, 1922), 371

its total membership had reached 6,414 by 1920.[51] Throughout the 1920s and 1930s the YMCA and the YWCA became increasingly involved in the labor movement in China's industrial centers such as Shanghai, Tianjin (Tientsin), and Hankou (Hankow).[52] The growth and changes of the YMCA and the YWCA reflected a tendency for greater social concern and involvement among missionaries and Chinese Christians. Another sign of this tendency was several rural programs set up by the National Council of Churches, the Nanjing Theological Seminary, and other Protestant institutions. The mushrooming of inter-denominational programs and organizations inevitably swelled management or executive segment of missionary forces and thus intensified the trend of "secularization" or institutionalization of mission work.

As the Protestant missions expanded in the 1910s and 1920s, inter-denominational cooperation was strengthened, and the church union movement gained momentum. The founding of the China Continuation Committee (CCC) in 1913 and the National Council of Churches (NCC) in 1922 were two major developments in this regard. There was also a growing movement toward denominational and inter-denominational union. A number of union attempts within the Presbyterian, Anglican, Lutheran, and Methodist denominations succeeded. The most significant success was the founding of the Church of Christ in China in 1927, which brought together different churches from Presbyterian, Reformed, Baptist, and Congregational backgrounds.

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[51] Ibid., , 375.

[52] See Emily Honig, "Christianity, Feminism, and Communism: The Life and Times of Deng Yuzhi," in Christianity in China, ed. Bays, 254-55. See also Stauffer, Christian Occupation of China, 373-74, 376-77.

Finally, in the early decades of the twentieth century, a significant development of Chinese churches was the so-called three-self movement and indigenization. The unsettling social and political environment made this task especially urgent. While many denominational mission churches took steps to encourage Chinese Christians to bear more administrative, missionary, and financial responsibilities, more and more Chinese Christians took initiatives in establishing their own churches fully controlled and financed by the Chinese. According to Daniel Bays' estimate, "In the 1940s, the various independent Chinese Protestants may have accounted for 20-25 percent of all Protestants, 200,000 persons or more."[53] These emerging indigenous Chinese churches included some very conservative, sect-like groups such as the True Jesus Church, Little Flock, and Jesus Family. Along with the churches rose some well-known Chinese evangelists, teachers, and church leaders. Furthermore, some Chinese church leaders and intellectuals made painstaking efforts to indigenize Christianity in the Chinese cultural context. How to adapt the Christian message to Chinese cultural tradition and to make it relevant to China's struggle for national salvation became two major issues of the discussion among the churches, particularly these with liberal inclination, in the 1920s and 1930s.

All the growth and developments truly made the 1910s and 1920s the most fruitful era in Protestant church history in China. However, behind all these new developments and new trends were the less visible but no less significant changes in theological thinking of the missionary community and Chinese churches. Without an understanding of these theological changes, the dynamics behind all other changes can not be grasped thoroughly. One of the major changes in missionaries' theological

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[53] Bays, "Growth of the Independent Christianity," 310.

thinking was the spread of higher criticism, social gospel, and liberal theology. Under the influence of liberal theological views, some missionaries began to reflect on the evangelical theological consensus of the previous century and challenge some of its assumptions. The progressive thinking of such missionary pioneers as Timothy Richard and W.A.P. Martin was developed into a full-blown liberalism. The above-mentioned institution-building trend and growing social concerns were actually closely related to the rise of liberalism in the mission field.

In the 1910s and 1920s China's rapidly changing political, economic, and cultural life often confronted the Protestant missionaries with many unprecedented new issues. Even with mission schools, some missionaries found themselves facing questions raised by the Chinese students: "Why should we have religion? Since it is superstition and causes stagnation in progress." Another student obviously doubted the relevance of the gospel in the context of the nationalist movement: "How can the pacific teachings of Jesus Christ help China when she needs 'iron and blood heart and spirit'?"[54] Many missionaries felt that new social contexts and needs required them to do a great deal of re-thinking of the goals, messages, and methods of their missionary enterprise.

As early as 1908, William Deans, a Scottish missionary in China, wrote a lengthy article to reflect on changing Chinese society and the changes needed in mission work. He first described China's transition as one from "Ancientism" to "Modernism". [55]He then asked: "With want of faith in the old, a general scepticism and materialism are coming in. This is one of the problems of modernism. How are we as missionaries going

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[54] The Bulletin of the Bible Union of China, no.3 (January 1921): 14.

[55] William Deans, "The Problem of Modernism in our Mission Work," The Chinese Recorder 39 (May 1908): 259-60.

to meet this scepticism, this want of faith in the old idolatrous practices, this materialistic tendency?"[56]

His answer was: "To meet this problem, then, we must change our methods of approach. To meet the new need, the new phase of thought, we must reconsider our methods of presenting Christianity." [57] He went on to call the missionaries to abandon the kind of preaching that was often nothing more than "a railing at idolatry, a sweeping condemnation of all to eternal woe unless there is instant acceptance of the Gospel" and to have a broader view of God's grace, and to acknowledge the goodness in other religions.[58] After pointing out that new scientific discoveries and higher criticism had posed many serious questions about the traditional beliefs in the Bible, he observed that "we may ignore it; we may declare the infallibility of the Bible in every point, in every narrative; but so much has been established by criticism, opposed to our old interpretations and old acceptations, that we cannot remain indifferent to it....We want a higher tone in our preaching, more quality, more reasonable explanations, and not a reiteration of Biblical narrative as true because it is in the Bible."[59] Dean's reflections and recommendations were a good indicator of the ongoing development in the thinking of China missionaries. And his repeated warnings that the problem of modernism "will soon come into the church" even sounded quite prophetic. [60]

As a matter of fact, the evolutionary theory and higher criticism had already stirred up serious discussion among the missionaries throughout the 1910s. Many

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[56] Ibid., 260.
[57] Ibid., 261.
[58] Ibid., 261-62.
[59] Ibid., 265.
[60] Ibid.

missionaries urged that "the attitude of missionaries toward ...the well established results of philosophy and science and theology be one of hearty welcome."[61] And they tried very hard to reinterpret the Christian doctrines to make them somehow compatible with new theories and discoveries. A rather common approach was to treat evolution as "the method by which God has guided life in its development."[62] In addition, attempts were made to distinguish "the moral progress" from natural evolution and thus shield the former from the latter.[63] With the Chinese young people's growing interest in natural and social evolution in mind, some missionaries began to call on the missionary community to introduce works "on the social bearing of Christianity" and that "show the deeper and more spiritual conceptions of evolution."[64]

The growing tendency of accommodating Christian faith to the new cultural and theological trends was greatly strengthened and accelerated by the arrival of a large number of new missionaries especially from North America around the First World War. Throughout the 1900s the number of new missionaries averaged 150 to 200 per year. In 1910 the number exceeded 300. During the First World War, an average of 325 to 375 new recruits arrived in China each year. In 1920 alone as many as 450 new missionaries joined the missionary forces there. By 1920 more than half of all the Protestant missionaries had spent less than ten years in China.[65] Before leaving for the mission field, many young recruits for China missions were nurtured by liberal theology and the social

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[61] J.W.Bashford, "Attitude of Missionaries toward Evolution and Higher Criticism," The Chinese Recorder 44 (July 1913): 410.

[62] Ibid. Also see The Chinese Recorder 46 (December 1915): 794. This position has been called "Theistic Evolution." See Marty, The Noise of Conflict, Modern American Religion, vol. 2., 159.

[63] F. Madeley, "Correspondence," The Chinese Recorder 46 (July 1915): 445-46.

[64] John S. Burgess, "What Chinese Students Are Reading," in China Mission Year Book, 1911, eds. D. MacGillivray and others (Shanghai: Christian Literature Society), 124.

[65] Rawlinson, Thoburn, and MacGillvray, Chinese Church, 93-94.

gospel in North American colleges and seminaries. When entering the field, they brought these liberal ideas with them.[66] In a valuable study of the home base of American China missions from 1880 to 1920, Valentin H. Rabe asserted that "many of the younger men also came to the field strongly influenced by the tenets of social Christianity, and refused to consider street preaching or tract distribution as their primary ministerial function." [67] Rabe further elaborated on this point as follows: "The twentieth-century missionary tended to qualify, if not deny entirely, the doctrine of eternal damnation of those who had had no opportunity to hear the gospel...The new missionary had a more inclusive conception of what was involved in Christian service. Eventually the missionary became difficult to distinguish from the social worker."[68] The young generation of missionaries in China certainly had a very different theological outlook and understanding of the missionary's roles. Many of them became outspoken advocates of modernism when they reached the mission field. This was bound to have enormous consequences for the Protestant mission enterprise in China.

In addition to this, the rise of young Chinese church leaders and Christian intellectuals further strengthened the liberal movement. In an important essay on the conservative-liberal split, Paul Hutchinson of the American Methodist Episcopal Mission pointed out in 1922: "One other source of gain to the liberal movement during recent years has been the coming to the fore of young Chinese leaders. Many of these have been

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[66] See Valentin H. Rabe, "Evangelical Logistics: Mission Support and Resources to 1920," in The Missionary Enterprise in China and America, ed. John K. Fairbank, 71. As Rabe indicates, many of these young missionaries were medical and educational professionals whose theology was understandably inclined to liberalism. Also see Paul Hutchinson, "The Conservative Reaction in China," The Journal of Religion 2 (July 1922): 350.

[67] Valentin H. Rabe, The Home Base of American China Missions, 1880-1920 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978), 81.

[68] Ibid., 106-107.

educated abroad; some are the product of the mission colleges of China....A large majority of these men are liberals, bringing into Christian circles the same spirit that the 'New Thought Movement' is spreading throughout Chinese society as a whole."[69] Most of these liberal missionaries and Chinese Christian leaders took key positions in Christian higher educational institutions and the YMCA and helped turn these institutions into strongholds of the modernist influence in China.

Liberal theology also made its way into China by means of introduction and translation of works by such liberal thinkers as William Newton Clarke and Harry Emerson Fosdick. Their works gradually gained tremendous popularity among the Protestant missionary communities and urban churches in China in the early decades of the twentieth century. The visits to China by several leading liberal figures from North America during these years only served to stimulate and strengthen the modernist advances there. Prominent among these figures was G. Sherwood Eddy (1871-1963). After assuming the role of a YMCA traveling evangelist in Asia in 1911, Eddy appeared frequently on the Chinese scene. Transforming himself into a Christian socialist in the wake of the First World War, Eddy became a leading voice of the social gospel in China.[70] Under John D. Rockefeller's sponsorship, Harry Emerson Fosdick also came to address a series of missionary gatherings in China in 1921.

As the result of the missionaries' reflection and liberal theology's impact during the early decades of the twentieth century, a this-world-oriented, kingdom-centered

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[69] Hutchinson, "The Conservative Reaction in China," 350.

[70] For Eddy's activities in China, see Rick Nutt: "G. Sherwood Eddy and the Attitudes of Protestants in the United States toward Global Missions," Church History 66 (September 1997): 502-21. See also Eddy, Eighty Adventurous Years, An Autobiography (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1955), 60-81.

mission approach began to emerge and soon became one of the major forces in the Protestant missionary enterprise in China. Drifting away from the traditional beliefs in the Bible, a transcendent God, and a supernatural Christology, the theological thinking of the liberal mission approach had some distinctive features. First, it described God as the Father of all humans, so that the relationship between God and humans could be defined in rather humanistic terms, and the immanence of God could be highlighted. Second, the liberal mission theology emphasized the social and ethical implications of Christology. It was claimed that "China needs a Christ who is simple and not hopelessly entangled in creeds and dogmas." [71] Consequently, the truthfulness and relevance of the virgin birth, miracles, substitionary atonement, and bodily resurrection were either downplayed, reinterpreted or simply denied. Instead, Jesus Christ was portrayed as a perfect moral example, and his incarnation, teaching, healing, and sacrifice on the cross were all viewed as a manifestation of his love toward humans and a call for a mutual love among humans.

Guided by these theological presuppositions, the social gospel and liberal mission approach called upon the missionaries to give up their preoccupation with soul-saving and concern themselves with the well-being of individual and community as well as the nation. According to a liberal understanding of mission, "social service is a modern

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[71] C.Y.Cheng: "Problems of the Chinese Church," in China, Her Own Interpreter, ed. Stauffer, 114. J.Wesley Shen of the Shanghai YMCA asserted that "I on the other hand regard Jesus as by birth a man, on the same level as ourselves, and that his distinctiveness lies in his supreme power of strivings." P.G Hayes, "Virgin Birth in Modern Chinese Thought," in The Chinese Recorder 62 (March 1931): 175. According to the same article, "This movement toward a scientific attitude on the question of Jesus' birth is part of a contemporary trend in China's thought world....Christian leaders, who are zealous for their movement in the modern world, are thereby driven to a careful scrutiny of this and every other item of their religious faith. Thus the Church moves on toward a scientific attitude regarding this important question, which, uncritically accepted, is an almost insurmountable obstacle in the path of her progress, especially among China's educated youth." Price, "Virgin Birth," 178-79.

expression of the Christian spirit."[72] Therefore, the basic task of the Christian mission was no longer just to preach the words but also to transform the world into the kingdom of God through social service. The unprecedented emphasis on social service contributed heavily to the phenomenal growth of educational and medical projects in the 1910s and 1920s. Another hallmark of liberalism was its enthusiasm of interpreting Christianity "in terms of the spiritual inheritance of China" and of engaging in an equal dialogue with other religious traditions in China. [73]

In the 1910s and 1920s the strong influence of the modernist theology and liberal mission thinking seriously challenged the evangelical tradition most China missionaries had adhered to since the nineteenth century. The consequence was a growing sense of confusion, uncertainty, and self-doubt among the Protestant missionary community in China. H.T. Hodgkin stated: "There is a wide-spread uncertainty as to the message itself. Again and again Christian leaders are found who are genuinely puzzled in regard to some elements in the Christian Gospel. They are not sure whether the points on which they lack conviction are part of the essentials of the Gospel or whether it is legitimate to hold one's judgment in suspense on them and still set forth the Gospel message."[74] These words testified to the depth of the modernist impact on the missionaries in China. The rise of liberalism was certainly one of the most significant developments of twentieth-century mission history in China. And it ushered in a period of fundamental changes and conflicts within the missionary community and Chinese churches.

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[72] Herbert Cressey, "The Practical Value of Social Services as Part of a Missionary Program," The Chinese Recorder 47 (March 1916): 207.

[73] T.C.Chao, "Our Cultural Heritage," in China, Her Own Interpreter, ed. Stauffer, 19.

The Conservatives' Growing Dissatisfaction with the Liberal Trend

Despite the modernist inroads, throughout the early decades of the twentieth century, deep-rooted evangelical theological tradition was still very influential among the foreign missionary communities in China. According to Paul Hutchinson, "The missionaries of the past generation (giants, many of them) were in large part conservative, having come to their work at a time when conservatism seemed the only alternative to a Christianity so emasculated as to be worthless."[75] This pioneer generation theologically dominated the Protestant mission consensus in China and passed their evangelical theological tradition to the next generation. By the early twentieth century many of these missionaries who came to China in the late nineteenth century had spent many years in the field and thus were relatively isolated from the latest theological developments in Europe and North America. Not surprisingly the rising tide of liberalism and the social gospel came to them as a shock. The new theological views and mission approach increasingly raised the older conservatives' eyebrows. The confusion created by widespread liberalism among the missionaries made them equally upset. The growing tension between the older conservative missionaries and their younger liberal counterparts was powerfully caught by the following interpretation of the origins of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy, offered by a conservative missionary writer in 1924:

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[74] H.T. Hodgkin, "Review of the Evangelistic Work of the Church in China and Study of Problems Connected Therewith," in China Mission Year Book, 1925, eds. H.T. Hodgkin and others (Shanghai: Christian Literature Society for China, 1925), 180.

[75] Hutchinson, "The Conservative Reaction in China," 340.

> Of late years, the young people offering themselves for missionary service and commissioned by the Boards, coming, as many of them do from colleges and seminaries which teach only the modernist ideas, have brought modernism with them; so have found themselves out of sympathy,--in faith and often in policy and method,--with those of us who have established and for many years carried on the mission work. Sometimes rather impetuously, sometimes gradually, they have sought to change the old teachings and practices in the Missions, to bring them into line with what they have been taught are more "modern" and more "scientific" ideas and ideals. For the most part we older men, for some years, bore patiently with this youthful enthusiasm and confidence.
>
> During the last few years, however, it has become evident that, encouraged by increasing numbers, emboldened by the support of influential men in the home churches, and strangely alarmed lest that Old Gospel...might not seem acceptable to the Chinese students whose New Thought inclined so strongly to Materialism, a distinct and determined effort has become apparent to introduce the modernist teaching into all departments of mission work, to decry the old teaching as "mediaeval," and above all to secure the control of institutions of higher education, both denominational and union. We have felt compelled, therefore, not so much in self-defence as in defence of the faith which we brought to China, and upon which we have built up China's Christian Church, both to protest earnestly against this destruction of the foundation and to organize ourselves in a fellowship of prayer and of constructive effort to restore seriously shaken faith and to dispel some of the wide-spread confusion which has resulted from the aggressive militancy of the new comers.[76]

This anonymous author obviously felt frustrated and victimized by young liberals' bold attack on old mission teachings and practices. He sensed that these new comers in the field were not just some misguided, imprudent young people, but they represented something new. Behind them was a more powerful, more dangerous movement. For this old guard there seemed to be no other choice but to fight the modernist trend. This author's complaint clearly indicated that a theological generational gap between the old and the young was indeed an important factor in arousing the fundamentalist offensive against the modernist movement.

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[76] " Puzzled, A Letter from a Missionary Father to his Son," The Chinese Recorder 55 (August 1924): 539.

On the other hand, it would be a mistake to completely rely on the theological generational gap to explain the origin of the fundamentalist movement among the Protestant missionaries in China. The fundamentalist-modernist controversy was not simply a fight between "the old gospel" and new theology, as some missionaries liked to suggest. Fundamentalism was also not just something passed down from the past generation. Rather, it was the nineteenth-century evangelical missionary tradition reconstructed according to the present needs and enriched with some new factors imported from North America.

While the liberals in the mission field received their reinforcements from abroad, the conservatives received theirs, too. The China Inland Mission, the largest conservative mission in China, saw its ranks enlarged from 550 missionaries in 1895 to 933 in 1910.[77] From 1916 to 1921 a total of 263 new missionaries joined the CIM.[78] Another major conservative mission in China, the Christian and Missionary Alliance, also greatly increased its staff and opened a number of new mission stations. It was no wonder that the famous Bible Union of China could later boast of "a goodly company of young missionaries" among its ranks.[79]

Many young conservative missionaries were greatly influenced by the rising fundamentalist movement in North America. By introducing the fundamentalist ideas and its antagonism against modernism to China, they helped strengthen the tie between old conservatives in the field and the larger international anti-modernist campaign. In fact, the

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[77] Quoted in Leslie T. Lyall, A Passion for the Impossible: The China Inland Mission, 1865-1965 (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1965), 61.

[78] Based on statistics from China and Gospel (London: CIM, 1922). See also Alvyn J. Austin, "Blessed Adversity: Henry W. Frost and the China Inland Mission, in Earthen Vessel, eds. Shenk and Carpenter, 69.

rise of the fundamentalist movement in China was closely related to the raging controversies in North America.

As the conservative missionaries in China felt increasingly dissatisfied with the new liberal trend throughout the early decades of the twentieth century, the fundamentalist movement across the Pacific Ocean took its shape and launched an all-out war against its modernist foes after the First World War. The fundamentalists blamed evolutionary theory, higher criticism, and liberal theology for the erosion of the foundation of the Christian civilization in North America. They fought the modernist influence on two fronts: American culture and churches. The battles were especially fierce within the Northern Baptist and Northern Presbyterian denominations. More and more attempts were made to rally the fundamentalist forces by setting up organizations. For instance, in 1919 William B. Riley, the long time pastor of the First Baptist Church in Minneapolis founded the World's Christian Fundamentalist Association. Three years later, he established the Baptist Bible Union.

However, as the fundamentalist campaign threatened to shatter the peace and unity within the denominations, the moderates withdrew their support for the fundamentalists. The fundamentalists' offensives began to stall within both the Northern Presbyterian and Northern Baptist denominations around 1925. The so-called "Monkey (Scopes) Trial" in the summer of 1925 rendered the fundamentalist cause a fatal loss in public opinion. Another anti-modernist campaign led by J. Gresham Machen within the Northern Presbyterian Church was also defeated in late 1920s and early 1930s. The fundamentalists retreated to consolidate and nurture their communities.

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[79] "Editorial," BBUC no.13 (June-July 1923): 1.

What was happening in North America directly facilitated the formation of the fundamentalist alliance in China. George Marsden pointed out that foreign missions "long remained one of the most hotly debated issues in both the Baptist and Presbyterian denominations."[80] The modernism among the missionaries and native Christians was always a favorite target that the fundamentalists at home attacked. By aiming at the modernism in the mission fields, the fundamentalists tried to make sure that only the orthodox message was spread there, and the modernist influence in the denominational mission boards was checked. China, as the most important mission field, naturally attracted the most attention from the fundamentalist leaders in North America.

One of the conservative layman who became deeply concerned with the situation in the mission fields was Milton Stewart, the brother of Lyman Stewart who financed the famous series The Fundamentals. In 1917 he set up the "Milton Stewart Evangelistic Fund" and hired W. E. Blackstone of Chicago and his son J. H. Blackstone of Nanjing to administer the fund. W. E. Blackstone (1841-1935) was best known as a zealous dispensationalist and Christian Zionist. As a Methodist layman, he was extensively involved in missions and ran the " Stewart Evangelistic Fund" for five years. His son J. H. Blackstone was a Methodist missionary in China since 1906 and played the role of the field representative for the Funds. In the articles published in 1917 and 1918, J.H. Blackstone explained the motivation behind the Fund as follows: "There is a growing conviction among a large number of missionaries that special emphasis should be placed

[80] George Marsden, Fundamentalism and American Culture, 167.

upon the 'soul-saving' part of our mission work."[81] He further stated that "the Stewart Fund has come into existence for the purpose of increasing, as far as possible, the evangelistic force in strategic places, and of helping the established work in both the training and use of evangelistic workers." [82] In other words, "this Fund purposes to assist in an immediate extension of the evangelistic work, carrying the gospel witness as far as possible to those who have not yet heard."[83] Theologically the Fund was said to accept "the Bible—the whole of it—as the inspired word of God without question."[84]

With this almost CIM-like aim and tone, the Stewart Fund concentrated on supporting direct evangelistic campaigns in China. For the most part the Fund worked through existing mission agencies that totaled up to over sixty by 1922.[85] An Interdenominational Evangelistic Committee composed of thirty China missionaries was set up to advise the Fund on its work. Besides financing the Bible training institutions and evangelistic literature production, the Fund sponsored such prominent fundamentalists as R.A.Torrey, W.H.Griffith Thomas, C.G.Trumbull, and M.G.Kyle to visit China and speak at numerous missionaries' conferences and evangelistic meetings there around 1920. Their visits served not only to further link the conservative factions among the missionary community in China with the fundamentalist movement in North America but also directly to stir up the conservative protests and to rally the conservative missionaries. Without this overseas linkage the sudden prominence of the missionary fundamentalist

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[81] J.H. Blackstone, "The Milton Stewart Evangelistic Fund," in China Mission Year Book 1918, eds. E.C.Lobenstine, A.L.Warnshuis and others (Shanghai: Kwang Hsueh Publishing House, 1918), 359.

[82] J. H. Blackstone, " The Milton Stewart Evangelistic Fund," in China Mission Year Book 1917, eds. E.C.Lobenstine and others (Shanghai: Christian Literature Society, 1917), 367.

[83] Ibid., 371.

[84] Quoted in The Minutes of the North Kiangsu Mission, 1917, China Mission Papers, PCUS Deptartment of History, Montreat, 20.

movement in China around 1920 and many of its later activities would not be adequately explained.

As the tension between the conservative and liberal missionaries kept rising throughout the 1910s, many missionaries began to sense the coming storm. In 1913 Frank Rawlinson, the associate editor of The Chinese Recorder, [86] wrote the following words that really captured the uneasy feeling common among the missionaries:

> While there have not come to the surface many signs of anything approaching a controversy, yet there has been a certain amount of earnest discussion and consideration of some of the modern positions of historical criticism of the Bible and of theological thought....Whether issue between "conservatives" and "liberals" will be very sharply drawn, and whether discussion on these questions will ever reach an open controversial stage is a debatable question. All missionaries are so thoroughly convinced of Christ's right to the supreme place, and are kept so busy trying to live up to that idea, that these changes of emphasis do not receive the attention they might.[87]

Obviously, Rawlinson acknowledged the emerging differences between liberal and conservatives. Nevertheless, he still held a great confidence in the consensus and unity among the missionary communities and believed that this consensus could not be easily disrupted. However, by 1920 the formation of the Bible Union of China brought the fundamentalists' anti-modernist movement into the spotlight and touched off widespread debates among the missionary circles. Thus, the deep division between liberals and conservatives was no longer "a debatable question," and the disputes between liberals and

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[85] "The Stewart Evangelistic Fund," in Christian Occupation of China, eds. Stauffer and others, 377.

[86] The origin of The Chinese Recorder could be traced back to 1832 when Elijah Bridgman, the first American Protestant missionary to China, started a journal entitled The Chinese Repository. After it was renewed with a new title The Chinese Recorder, it gradually became the most important English-language missionary journal in China. Its prominence reached peak when Rawlinson, a missionary under the Southern Baptist Church and later the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, was the Editor-in-Chief from 1914 to 1937.

[87] Frank Rawlinson, "Problems Prominent in the Minds of the Missionaries," in China Mission Year Book 1913, eds., D. MacGillivray and others (Shanghai: Christian Literature Society", 1913), 192-93.

conservatives finally reached "an open controversial stage." In less than ten years, Rawlinson's estimation of the situation was rendered invalid, and his hope was never translated into reality.

CHAPTER III

THE BIBLE UNION OF CHINA

Every summer of the early decades of the twentieth century, hundreds and thousands of missionaries of different denominations gathered in several popular summer resorts located in either seashore or mountain areas in the eastern parts of China. Of course the missionaries' original purpose for going to these resorts was to escape the heat of the interior and take a break from their sometimes very intense and stressful missionary work. In the meantime these annual gatherings in the resorts gradually became the perfect occasions for ecumenical fellowship and spiritual renewal. Every year retreats and conferences were organized. Distinguished preachers and scholars from overseas, often from North America, were invited to visit there and speak to the conferences. Some of these conferences, especially organized by conservative missionaries, were obviously modeled after the camp meetings and the Bible and Kewisk conferences in America.[1]

The most famous one among all summer resorts was perhaps Guling (Kuling), a mountain resort along the Yangtze River in Jiangxi (Kiangsi) Province of central China. Since the annual gatherings were inter-denominational, there was an old rule that excluded any "controversial topics" from the conference programs in order to prevent any

[1] For the developments and functions of summer resorts, see Stauffer and the others, eds, Christian Occupation of China, 395. Paul Hutchinson observed that "the conservative spirit is nurtured, moreover, in the summer resorts frequented by the missionaries....It is my observation that the general atmosphere of

denominational tension. But when William Henry Griffith Thomas was invited to give lectures in Guling during the summer of 1920, serious controversy finally broke out. W. H. Griffth Thomas (1861-1924) was an Anglican seminary professor and taught in England and Canada from 1905 to 1919. Gaining the reputation of a popular author and speaker in dispensationalism and "victorious" Christian life, he spent the last five years of his life writing and speaking at conservative gatherings. Partially funded by the Milton Stewart Evangelistic Fund, Thomas and Charles G. Trumbull-- the famous editor of The Sunday School Times-- traveled to Japan and China in the summer of 1920.

In Guling Thomas first spoke to a group of conservative missionaries on the subjects of the authority of the Bible, inspiration, Old Testament criticism, evolution, the place and power of scholarship, and the Lord's coming. Then during the general conference he talked about the person of Christ, the death of Christ, the resurrection of Christ, the Bible, the church, and the Christian experience under the general title of "Grounds of Christian Certainty." Although he repeatedly denied any intention to create controversy, his speeches nevertheless brought in the charge of driving "a wedge of distrust between two great bodies of Christian workers."[2] Thomas then went on to attend other missionary conferences in China. After returning to the United States, he made a sweeping accusation of the modernist tendency among China missionaries in the famous speech "Modernism in China" to the Presbyterian Social Union in Philadelphia in January 1921 and caused a great deal of debate among the churches and mission boards in North America.

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these conferences is conservative. For some reason, people with a conservative bent seem to enjoy a multiplicity of meetings." Hutchinson, "The Conservative Reaction in China," 341.

Thomas was accused of being directly responsible for the founding of the Bible Union of China. Thomas's reply was that "I had nothing to do with the formation of the Bible Union, except in so far as my address seem [sic] to have been the immediate occasion for it."[3] There is certainly no evidence that Thomas personally initiated the Bible Union in Guling, but his speeches there no doubt had the effect of significantly intensifying the conservatives' negative sentiment toward modernism in the field and prompting them to take public action.

In the wake of his speech, on August 1 eighteen or twenty missionaries attending the conference in Guling met and appointed a small committee. This committee immediately called a public meeting of those desiring "to take definite steps towards strengthening the position, in mission work, of Christian fundamentals as emphasized during the Convention."[4] At the meeting a larger committee was appointed to draw up a "statement of fundamentals and program for a permanent organization." One day later the public meeting adopted a statement and decided to set up a national association, the Bible Union. One hundred and fifty people enrolled as the members of the association.[5] The resolution of the meeting defined this Bible Union movement as primarily a missionary organization but invited all Christians to join in.[6] A Committee Ad Interim of thirty was elected to communicate with all Protestant missionaries in China and to form the new movement's national body. The committee immediately dispatched a representative to

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[2] Quoted in W.H.Griffith Thomas: "Modernism in China," in Modernism and Foreign Missions, Two Fundamentalist Protests, ed. Joel A Carpenter (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc. 1988), 632.

[3] Ibid., 637. Also see J.Walter Lowrie: "Why I Became A Member of the Bible Union of China," The Bulletin of the Bible Union of China, no.10 (December 1922): 2. See also R.A.Torrey, "Christian Unity and the Bible Union," BBUC no.5 (December 1921): 13.

[4] "Memorandum Re Origin and Organization of the Bible Union of China," BBUC, no.4 (January 1921): 4.

[5] Ibid.

Jigongshan (Kikunshan), another popular summer resort for the missionaries, to win support and set up a local committee there.

The Guling group immediately drafted a statement to spell out the Bible Union's motivation, doctrinal basis and goals, which was later endorsed by the Jigongshan group. The statement stood as follows:

> Purpose. 1. We, the undersigned, are constrained to band ourselves together as an association "to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints."
>
> Basis 2. This "faith" we hold to have been revealed in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, whose integrity and authority as the inspired Word of God we most fully accept. The fundamental doctrines of this "faith" we hold to be set forth in the Apostles Creed, accepted according to its original and obvious meaning.
>
> CAUSE FOR ACTION. 3. We note with anxiety the divisive character of much of the recent teaching in certain theological seminaries of the West. We feel that the state of both the Christian and Non-Christian world demands unity of purpose and steadfastness of effort in preaching and teaching the fundamental and saving truths revealed in the Bible. We are convinced that this is no time to sit quiet or even to pray and work merely in private while we allow the entrance of teachings which are dividing the Christian body and leading many to doubt the foundations of Truth and accept in their stead an incomplete "Social Gospel".
>
> We, therefore, find ourselves compelled to take concerted action without which we lack adequate means of safeguarding our churches and the institutions on which we are expected to depend for the training of students.
>
> PROGRAM. 4. To this end we desire:
>
> 1. To unite in prayer that God may so direct this movement as to arouse the Church of Christ to its deep need of a firmer grasp on [sic] the fundamentals, and a fresh realization of the power and sufficiency of the simple Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, the preaching and teaching of which has been blessed of God since the beginning of Missionary work.
>
> 2. To promote the circulation, reading and study of the Bible, trusting that its Divine Author will use this movement as a testimony to its integrity and authority.
>
> 3. To prepare and circulate literature and textbooks, witnessing to the fundamental truths of the Bible.
>
> 4. To represent to our Home Boards and supporters the vital importance of accepting for missionary service only such candidates as will handle aright the word of truth.

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[6] Ibid.

5. To help in finding and securing the election, upon the faculties of our Christian institutions of such men and women as will uphold the Christian fundamentals.

6. To watch carefully against any attempts to influence, by textbooks or otherwise students and church leaders towards beliefs and activities contrary to sound doctrine.[7]

This statement definitely reflected the conservatives' growing concern and impatience with rampant modernist teachings. It called for immediate and decisive actions to counterattack modernism. Its rhetoric now sounds rather belligerent. Obviously, the Guling statement was a product of more radical elements of the conservative camp. The aggressive tone of the document was so controversial that "the publication of the statement in certain papers was described as a breach of confidence." It is no wonder this version of the statement did not get to the press and was held to be "confidential and for members only."[8] In September of 1920, the Bible Union published an expanded version of the statement. This version dropped a couple of the most radical clauses and rhetoric and proposed several steps to strengthen conservative theological education and secure conservative representation in such national bodies as the National Christian Council.[9] But the statement's core contents and militant stance were kept intact.

By late September several prominent missionary leaders in China felt that " a shorter, more definite and positive statement with certain less essential items on the Kuling program eliminated, would command a more general support."[10] As a result a local committee was formed in Shanghai, which included J.W.Lowrie, Chairman of the

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[7] Quoted in E.C.Lobenstine to Arthur J Brown, 21 August 1920,Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., Board of Foreign Missions, Secretaries' Files, RG82, Box No. 20, Folder No.13, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

[8] Hutchinson, "The Conservative Reaction," 344.

[9] See "The Bible Union of China," The Chinese Recorder 51 (September 1920): 660-61.

[10] "Memorandum Re Origin and Organization of the Bible Union of China," 5.

China Council of the Presbyterian Mission (North), and D.E.Hoste, Director of the China Inland Mission.[11] According to some contemporary observers, this event indicated that there existed extreme and moderate wings within the Bible Union, and under a " temperate leadership,"[12] the Bible Union was softening its exclusivist and belligerent position. E.C.Lobenstine was the executive secretary of the China Continuation Committee and seemed to maintain close contact with E.G.Tewksbury, the chairman of the Executive Committee of the Bible Union. According to his account, Tewksbury felt that "the Movement was being hurt by several who are prominent in it, namely, Woodbridge, Henry Woods, Hugh White and one or two others of that type. He could not get them off the Committee very well....They (Shanghai Committee headed by Hoste and Lowrie) met and eliminated from the statement which they are sending out a number of the most objectionable clauses."[13]

In October the Shanghai committee requested a joint meeting with the Executive Committee of the Committee Ad Interim appointed in Guling. This meeting produced the following revised tentative statement, and it was approved by a majority of members of the Bible Union of China.

> Being convinced that the state of both the Christian and non-Christian world demands unity of purpose and steadfastness of effort in preaching and teaching the fundamental and saving truths revealed in the Bible, especially those now being assailed, such as, the Deity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, His Virgin Birth, His Atoning Sacrifice for Sin, and His Bodily Resurrection from the Dead; the Miracles both of the Old and New Testament [sic]; the

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[11] W.H.Griffith Thomas seemed involved in the process of forming the Shanghai committee. See "Memorandum Re Origin and Organization," 5. See also E.C. Lobenstine to A.L. Warnshuis, 2 November 1920, PCUSABS, RG82, 20-13. A.L.Warnshuis served in China under the American Reformed Mission and then became a secretary of the International Missionary Council in 1921.

[12] Hutchinson, "The Conservative Reaction," 346.

[13] E.C. Lobenstine to A.L. Warnshuis, 2 November 1920.

Personality and Work of the Holy Spirit; the New Birth of the Individual and the necessity of this as an essential prerequisite to Christian Social Service;

We reaffirm our faith in the whole Bible as the inspired Word of God and the ultimate source of authority for Christian faith and practice;

And unitedly signify our purpose "to contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints."

To this end we express our desire to join with others of like mind in seeking to carry out the following Program:

1. Prayer: To pray that God may so direct this movement as to arouse the Church of Christ to its deep need of a firmer grasp on [sic] the fundamentals of the Christian faith and a fresh realization of the power and sufficiency of the simple Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, the preaching and teaching of which has been blessed of God since the beginning of Missionary work.
2. The Bible: To promote the circulation, reading, and study of the Bible, trusting that its Divine Author will use this movement as a testimony to its integrity and authority.
3. Literature: To prepare and circulate literature and textbooks witnessing to the fundamental truths of the Bible.
4. Personnel: To present to our Home Boards and supporters the vital importance of accepting for missionary service only such candidates as accept the truths referred to above.
5. Educational Institutions: To stand firm for faithful teaching of the whole Bible as of primary importance in the work of all Christian schools and colleges; and also by deputation work, conference, and special lectureships, help forward local effort in emphasizing the fundamentals of the Christian faith.
6. Theological Education: To promote sound teaching in theological seminaries and Bible schools and to seek means by which able exponents of the faith may reach the present and future leaders of the Chinese Church.
7. Evangelism: To forward all measures in Christian enterprises which make for the deepening of their devotional, evangelistic, and missionary spirit.[14]

In comparison to the document produced by Guling group, this statement made the theological basis of the Bible Union much clearer and tried to avoid the confusion about what exactly the Bible Union stood for. It eliminated the section "Call for Action" and moderated the rhetoric of certain clauses in its "Program" section. This new version of the statement did show that, while maintaining the purpose of defending the faith once delivered, the leadership of the Bible Union intended to give the Union's program a more positive and constructive outlook, and thus make it more appealing to a wider range of

missionaries with conservative inclinations. The change of the attitude on the part of the Bible Union was widely noticed. Even Brownell Gage of the Yale in China, an outspoken critic of the Bible Union, acknowledged and welcomed this change: "I gladly acknowledge that its 'Tentative Statement, as revised' goes a good way toward making co-operation with the Union less difficult."[15]

After its founding, the Guling Committee Ad Interim called to elect a National Committee of One Hundred and choose an Executive Committee and its officers. The Presbyterians and CIM missionaries played key roles in the early leadership of the Bible Union. Thirteen out of thirty members of the Guling Committee were from either the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A (North) or the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (South), and five were from the China Inland Mission. Henry M. Woods of the PCUS served as chairman, and Lowry Davis of the PCUS, as treasurer of the Guling Committee. Among eleven members of the executive committee chaired by E.G.Tewksbury, General Secretary of the China Sunday School Union, were five Presbyterian missionaries.[16] Later all the members of the Shanghai committee were added to the executive committee, and J.W.Lowrie took over the chairmanship of the executive committee as Tewksbury was on furlough.

In order to implement its programs, the Bible Union established seven sub-committees. The Committee on Prayer was responsible for promoting prayer. From 1920 to 1921, it did so by regularly circulating prayer requests among the missionary communities. The Bible Committee was designed to disperse the knowledge of the Bible.

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[14] "The Bible Union of China, Tentative Statement," BBUC, No.1 (January 1921): 3.

[15] Brownell Gage, "Why I Cannot Join the Bible Union," The Chinese Recorder 52 (January 1921): 32.

With the financial help of the Stewart Evangelistic Fund, it produced scripture posters and asked the mission stations to place them in such public spots as tea shops and hotels. It also attempted to advertize the Bible and Bible study books on commercial products and promote private and public Bible readings.

The Committee on Literature was started to encourage the Union's members to produce conservative literature for the Chinese churches. The Committee on Educational Institutions and the Committee on Theological Education focused on surveying the current status of religious instruction in the schools and watched theological teachings and textbooks. The Committee on Personnel paid special attention to the doctrinal orthodoxy of missionaries in China. It urged the Union's members to persuade their home churches to examine carefully the theological views of the missionary candidates. The Committee on Evangelism aimed to strengthen evangelistic work by such means as literature, retreat conferences, and mission study classes.[17] Finally, The Bulletin of the Bible Union of China was designated as the official organ of the Union and started to be published irregularly from January of 1921.

From May 13 to 15, 1922 the first National Convention of the Bible Union of China was held in Shanghai. About 140 people were present at the convention.[18] The Milton Stewart Evangelistic Fund, the China Inland Mission, and other organizations and individuals helped finance this event. [19]A constitution was approved by the convention. The previous tentative statement was included in the constitution, and applicants for

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[16] "Memorandum Re Origin and Organization of the Bible Union of China," 6-7.

[17] See ibid., 8-19. See also W.R. Williams, "Report of the Past Year," BBUC no.4 (October 1921): 10-15. See also W.R.Williams, "What Is the Bible Union Doing?" BBUC no.12 (April-May 1923): 24-29.

membership were required to subscribe to the statement. Although the free membership was primarily for foreign missionaries in China, all other Christians were welcome.

The original organizational structure of the Committee of One Hundred and the Executive Committee were kept intact, and Shanghai was made its headquarters. The leadership elected by the convention included some of the most well-known missionaries in China. The percentage of the Presbyterian missionaries was still high. Except for Chairman (Archdeacon W.S.Moule, the Church Missionary Society) and Treasurer (C.H.Judd, the CIM), the two vice chairmen (Courteney H.Fenn and Jonathan Goforth), the Chairman of the Executive Committee (Henry M Woods) and the General Secretary (J.Walter Lowrie) were all Presbyterians. In 1924 the Presbyterian and CIM personnel also accounted for almost half of the Committee of One Hundred.[20] Except for a secretary in the Union's office in Shanghai, all officers of the Bible Union were volunteers and divided their time between their regular missionary work and the business of the Bible Union of China.

As the constitution of the Bible Union indicated, the Union was entirely financed by voluntary contributions from its members and sympathizers. By April 30 1922 the contribution the Union had received stood at M. $5,850.39. The budget for 1922 was M. $3,500.00. The largest portions were spent on the salary of the secretary and the cost of The Bulletin of the Bible Union.[21]

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[18] "The First National Convention of the Bible Union of China, May 13-15, 1922." BBUC no.8 (July-August 1922): 12.

[19] "The First National Convention of the Bible Union of China," 21.

[20] Ibid. See also "The Bible Union Committee of One Hundred: 1924," BBUC no.18 (October 1924).

[21] "The First National Convention of the Bible Union of China," 19-21. "M" stands for Mexican Dollar, a silver currency used in China throughout the 1920s and early 1930s.

During the first two years after its founding, the number of the Bible Union members grew very dramatically. By October of 1920, the Bible Union already had more than 400 members, most of whom joined the Union at two summer resorts, Guling and Jikongshan, and got enrolled there.[22] In December of the same year, general invitations to all Protestant missionaries in China to join the Union were mailed out. By mid-June of the next year, the membership roll rose to about 1,300.[23] By October of 1921, this figure was 1,650.[24] At the end of 1922, the Bible Union had over 2,000 active members,[25] and by mid-1923, 2,200. [26] The Bible Union members constituted approximately thirty percent of all missionary forces in China in the early 1920s. According to a report dated July 1921, the Americans and British were the majority of the Bible Union membership, while other nationalities included the Scots, Irish, Norwegians, Swedes, Finns, Russians, Germans, Danes, Dutch, Canadians and Australians. Over eighty missionary societies or boards were represented. The CIM missionaries constituted less than one quarter of the Bible Union membership but still had the largest group within the Union.[27]

The founding of the Bible Union of China immediately created a sensation among the missionary communities and churches across China and North America. In 1921 it was reported that "it has been generally hailed by the evangelical press in English-speaking countries. ...A considerable number of encouraging letters have been received from specially interested friends in America, England, Canada, Australia and Africa."[28]

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[22] "Memorandum Re Origin and Organization of the Bible Union of China," 5.
[23] W.R.Williams, "The Family Circle of the Bible Union," BBUC no.3 (July 1921): 4.
[24] Williams, "Report of the Past Year," 7.
[25] "List of Active Members of the Bible Union of China," BBUC no.10 (February 1923).
[26] Nelson Bell, "The Bible Union of China: Why, When, What," BBUC no.13 (June-July 1923): 4.
[27] Williams, "The Family Circle of the Bible Union," 6.
[28] Williams, "Report of the Past Year," 6.

William Jennings Bryan was said to take "a hearty interest in the Bible Union" and presented the Union with 100 copies of his booklet entitled "The Menace of Darwinism," which he permitted the Union to reprint in either English or Chinese.[29] The popularity of the Bible Union among the conservative missionaries in China was exhibited by the fast growth of Union memberships. Even a considerable number of moderate missionaries who did not completely agree with the Bible Union theologically expressed their sympathy with the Union's charges against the modernists.[30] Furthermore, the Bible Union of China inspired the formation of organizations with similar natures and aims in other mission fields.[31] In 1921 the fundamentalist missionaries in India established the Bible League for India, Burma, and Ceylon, and the founders of this league cited the Bible Union of China as the example.[32]In 1923 the Bible Union of Victoria was founded in Melbourne. In the next year the Japan Bible Union and the Madras Bible League were started. For the 1920s the Bible Union (or league) seemed almost a synonym for the international anti-modernist movement.

However, at least in China, the reception the Bible Union received was mixed. Criticism from liberal missionaries was not slow in coming. Brownell Gage was the dean of the academic college of Yale-in-China. In an article entitled "Why I Cannot Join the Bible Union," he resorted to the classical liberal distinction between living experience

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[29] Ibid., 8.

[30] See "Extracts from a Letter Received by E.C.Lobenstine" Attached to E.C. Lobenstine to A.L. Warnshuis, 16 Oct 16 1920, PCUSABS, RG82, 20-13, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. This missionary cautions that "there is something to be careful....It seems to me as if there is coming into China from America a Christianity. ...is emphasizing the social aspect of it to such an extent, that the question of personal sin and salvation is put to the side."

[31] It has been implied that the Bible Union of China was inspired by the Bible League in the northern Baptist denomination. See J. Walter Lowrie, "Why I Became a Member of the Bible Union of China," 2.

[32] "The Bible League for India, Burma and Ceylon," BBUC no.10 (December 1924): 20.

and its external form, between spirit and letter and described fundamentalism as "canned religion," which entailed the "greater peril of rotting at the moorings of 'safe doctrine' and unchanging dogma."[33] In response to the Union's emphasis on evangelism as the priority, Gage insisted that "the 'Social Gospel' is a fundamental without which no gospel is complete."[34] Another common label given to the fundamentalists by liberals was the "reactionary element" (or movement).[35] Moreover, the fundamentalists were ridiculed as "fossil-like, moss-backed, narrow-minded people,"[36] and the Union was said to be composed only of "old fogies," who were stuck in the ancient doctrines and did not like to think critically.[37]

The Bible Union's efforts of exposing the modernist influences and some fundamentalists' militancy in attacking modernism were constantly under heavy fire. The Bible Union was charged with relying on unfounded accusations and engaging in "heresy hunting." [38] Tewksbury, the chairman of the Executive Committee of the Bible Union, was thus called the "chief inquisitor" in China.[39]

There was also a strong suspicion against the motives of the Bible Union movement, and a theory of Union conspiracy began to emerge. The Union was accused of having "political designs" [40] and planning to capture the National Christian Conference.[41] Even the honesty of the Bible Union's theological position was being questioned. As a

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[33] Brownell Gage, "Why I Cannot Join the Bible Union," 32-33.

[34] Ibid., 35.

[35] E.C.Lobenstine to Mr.Day, 7 October 1920, PCUSABS, RG82, 20-13, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

[36] Jas. R.Graham, Jr., "Rally Round," BBUC no.13 (June-July 1923): 10.

[37] See "Editorial," BBUC no.13 (June-July 1923): 1-2.

[38] See Hutchinson: "The Conservative Reaction in China," 353. See also Lobestine to Brown, 21 August 1920.

[39] Lobestine to Warnshuis, 2 November 1920.

[40] Hutchinson, "The Conservative Reaction in China," 354.

liberal missionary writer, Paul Hutchinson expressed eloquently many liberals' suspicions: "It has been stated that a declaration of 'fundamental and saving truths' had no right to employ therewith so indefinite a formula as 'such as, the Deity of our Lord,' etc., etc. The 'such as' may mean so much that does not appear on the surface....It is probable that a large majority of the members of the Bible Union are premillennialists...But from the first the Bible Union has been careful to avoid any facing of the question of the second coming. It has sought safety here in silence, and so has been, some say, less than completely candid."[42] This kind of criticism clearly suggested the existence of a hidden theological agenda—premillennialism-- on the part of the Bible Union. In other words the Bible Union was speculated to be a premillennialist plot in disguise.[43] The Union's moderate leadership's efforts to make the Union more appealing to a broader audience apparently backfired. The vagueness of certain sections of its statement seemed directly to arouse suspicion and speculation about the Bible Union's theological position.

A far more common and damaging criticism of the Bible Union movement was that it was responsible for stirring up theological and doctrinal controversies and even sought heresy trials throughout the Christian institutions in China. Therefore, the movement severely harmed the tradition of tolerance and freedom within the missionary community, destroyed the missionary unity, and caused serious distrust and divisions among the missionaries. Although some missionaries never accused the leaders of the Bible Union of deliberately pushing the fundamentalist movement in a divisive direction,

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[41] Lobenstine to Mr. Day, 7 October 1920.
[42] Hutchinson: "The Conservative Reaction in China," 352.

they still had a great concern that the actual impact and consequences of the Bible Union movement would be to divide the missionary forces and divert the missionaries' attention away from their primary task toward futile debates and conflicts. In this regard the position The Chinese Recorder took was rather typical. Even with its long time liberal tendency, The Chinese Recorder, under the editorship of Frank Rawlinsnon, tried hard to tread a middle path in the fundamentalist-modernist controversy and maintain the unity and harmony among missionaries. In an editorial dated August 1921, the author started his argument by declaring that "the main business of getting people to know Christ and through Him God, must not be sidetracked while we try to solve bottomless questions or attempt to force others into our own mould of thought." [44] Then he went on to claim that "the majority of the Christians in China are more concerned about the great business of bringing people into contact with Christ than technical questions of either the 'fundamentalist' left or the 'modernist' right." [45] Finally, he called all missionaries to guard against intolerance and unite in opposing naturalistic religion, the common enemy of the Christians. [46] Clearly this editorial saw tolerance and unity as the key to keep the missionary movement focusing on its major job.

For liberals the theme of unity, tolerance, and charity became one of the most popular weapons against the Bible Union movement. In his attack on the Bible Union, Brownell Gage capitalized much on this very powerful theme: "When the body of Christ is divided, there is loss of life and power. A healthy life in the church depends upon

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[43] See Frank Throop to George T Scott, 6 November 1922, PCUSABS, RG82, 20-13, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

[44] "Editorial," The Chinese Recorder 52 (August 1921): 515.

[45] Ibid., 515-16

[46] Ibid., 516.

spiritual freedom and unbroken fellowship and these cannot be had without broad Christian tolerance and charity. I, therefore, cannot feel constrained to join in a program that is likely to be largely partisan."[47] Under the pens of the liberal authors, the fundamentalist party was portrayed as the enemy of missionary unity, and "partisanship," "intolerance," " and "divisiveness" were almost synonymous with the Bible Union.

Perhaps no one else could fear the harm the Bible Union movement would do to the Christian unity more acutely than someone deeply involved in the church union movement. A very telling case was E.C.Lobenstine's attitude toward the Bible Union. Lobenstine came to China as a Northern Presbyterian missionary in 1898. In 1913 he was appointed as the Executive Secretary of the China Continuation Committee. From then to his retirement in 1935, his whole missionary career was devoted to the promotion of Christian unity and cooperation in China. When the Bible Union movement was officially initiated in Guling, Lobenstine immediately saw a real threat to church union. He was convinced that the Bible Union movement was "likely to bring about a cleavage in the missionary body,"[48] and "it was by all odds the most serious situation which has arisen in the missionary body since I came to China." [49]After Tewksbury told him that Hoste once implied the "possibility of the movement dividing mission stations up and down over China into two antagonistic parties," he was apparently horrified by "the havoc which this would play."[50] By late 1920 he was so worried that he constantly reminded his friends in America of the seriousness of the situation in China and suggested that something needed to be done in order to "turn attention to constructive

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[47] Gage, "Why I Cannot Join the Bible Union," 34.
[48] Lobenstine to Brown, 21 August 1920.
[49] Lobenstine to Warbshuis, 16 October 1920.

effort and away from discussions which can have no good result." He even asked one of his friends for a possible candidate who "will be able to turn the attention of the ultra-conservative group away from a fight that will lead to no good end" and "should be able to carry with him both conservatives and progressives."[51] For someone like Lobenstine, the danger of a massive division within the missionary ranks in China, mainly caused by the Bible Union movement, was real and imminent.

This fear of disunity was also to a great extent shared by a considerable number of conservative missionaries. While these missionaries could wholeheartedly accept the doctrinal position of the Bible Union and sympathized with the Union's cause, they nevertheless were very concerned with the apparent militancy of the Bible Union in the Union's opposition to liberalism and with the possible destructive and divisive effects the Union might cause. These concerns largely accounted for their hesitation in joining the Bible Union. According to the analysis of a member of the Bible Union,

> As to the movement itself, it is rather a three-sided than a two-sided question—there are those who favor it; there are those who doubt the wisdom of it; and there are those who are entirely opposed to it. But as to the object of the movement there are, I suppose, only two sides to it, or rather two parties concerned with it, namely, on the one hand, those who wish to preserve the Bible and the fundamental doctrines of Christianity from what they considered to be the errors of modern destructive criticism, and on the other there are those who believe that the careful study of the Bible in more recent years shows that some of the views held by some of the so-called conservatives are untenable, and being erroneous, should not be taught to either the Chinese or anybody else.[52]

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[50] Lobenstine to Warnshuis, 2 November 1920.

[51] Lobenstine to Warnshuis, 16 October 1920.

[52] James E. Bear Jr, The Mid-China and the North Kiangsu Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, 1912-1920, vol. 4: The Mission Work of the Presbyterian Church of the United States in China: 1867-1952, (The American Theological Library Association, Chicago: Joseph Regenstein Library, 1974, Microfilm), 24.

This passage clearly points to the existence of a third group besides the fundamentalists and modernists, who doubted whether a public campaign was the best way to fight theological heterodoxy. It is obvious that doctrinal correctness was not the only major factor in determining the conservative missionaries' reaction to the cause of the Bible Union. The consideration of the practical effects was also a very crucial factor in this regard.

As a matter of fact, when the Bible Union of China suddenly came into being in August-September of 1920, uncertainty, concern, and reservation were mixed with joy and sympathy in many conservative missionaries' preliminary response to the movement. Many conservatives were willing to endorse the theological position of the Union but fell short of actually joining in the movement. D.E. Hoste's case is quite telling. In 1885, seven young men from Cambridge University, or the famous "Cambridge Seven," joined the CIM in China. One of them was D.E. Hoste. After Hudson Taylor retired in 1903, Hoste was appointed the General Director of the CIM and led the mission till 1935. Even though he played a very important leadership role in the Bible Union later, Hoste's initial reaction to the Union was rather complicated. In his own words,

> It must frankly be confessed that the first news of the Bible Union was received by me with a measure of doubt, almost amounting to disapproval. Not that one questioned the character and motives of those starting it, or was without sympathy with their aim; for my own views regarding the Holy Scriptures and the doctrines referred to in the Tentative Statement of the Union, were substantially the same as those of its authors. On the other hand, I dreaded the possibility of a campaign of denunciation of fellow-missionaries, conducted in a harsh, acrimonious spirit, that would tend to excite similar sentiments in the minds of those attacked, and do far more harm than good. It is obviously most desirable that, so far as possible, we as a missionary body in this country, should present a united front in the face of prevailing materialism, moral evil, and erroneous beliefs....Again, ought time and strength to be diverted from the

> positive work of propagating the Christian faith, to action that might lead to results such as those just mentioned?[53]

This passage bears some striking resemblance to some of the liberals' typical charges against the Bible Union. Despite their theological differences, these conservatives seemed at least to share the liberals' fear that the Bible Union movement could foster a hostile atmosphere and bitter feeling among the missionaries and thus hinder the progress of Christianity in China. Of course, it must be pointed out, for liberals this fear was very much a coming reality, and thus the harmful consequences of the Bible Union could be used as an effective weapon to undermine the fundamentalist movement. For the cautious conservatives, the fear of disunity was a dreadful possibility that they would like to prevent from happening or minimize its negative consequences. Under the influence of the nineteen-century tradition of tolerance and consensus, the missionaries like Hoste still did not completely give up on a united front in witnessing to Christian faith in China. To break off with their modernist-minded fellow missionaries was not easy and instant. Another missionary, who attended the first public meeting in founding the Bible Union and later joined it, stated his own inner struggle in this way: "It seemed to me that such a movement would be unwise, as it might cause division and maybe strife, and I was especially anxious to see some of my friends who had leanings to modern theology and destructive criticism won to a more reasonable view of the Bible. It was my fear that the Bible Union would alienate large numbers of men who, if given time, would come around to what I believed to be the right view of the Bible."[54]

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[53] D.E.Hoste, "Why I Have Joined the Bible Union of China," BBUC no.2 (April 1921): 1-2.
[54] James Nelson Montgomery, "My Reasons," BBUC no.13 (June-July 1923): 8.

These words rather clearly illustrate the ambiguous and transitional character of some moderate conservative missionaries' relationship with their liberal counterparts. They wanted to hold modernism in check but were not yet ready to sever their connection with the modernist groups. An isolated and bitter fundamentalist minority was perhaps the last thing they wanted. Even if they had to take a stand for faith, many conservative missionaries wanted to see it conducted with the Christian spirit of love and charity. They were much afraid that the Bible Union and its campaign would be marked by acrimony and bitterness. This concern was definitely behind such a call from a member of the Bible Union: "Whilst we are to contend earnestly for the faith, let us hold truth in love, showing the utmost deference to the opposing opinions and avoiding all acrimony and bitterness as tending to grieve the spirit of Christ."[55]

It did not take long for the Bible Union leadership to become aware of not only the mounting liberal attacks but also the widespread "misunderstanding and misapprehension as to the scope and aim of the Bible Union of China."[56] The general secretary's report of the first year frankly acknowledged that the "missionary body of China, with the exception of a small, though admittedly influential, group, generally look on this organization with sympathy, if not always with approval."[57] Certain Bible Union members even claimed that "the Bible Union is being criticized and even persecuted."[58] No doubt the Bible Union found itself at the center of the controversy and under tremendous pressure. Consequently, during the first few years of its existence, the leadership of the Bible Union made considerable efforts to reiterate the official

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[55] Bear, The Mid-China and The North Kiangsu Missions, 24-25.
[56] Nelson Bell, "The Bible Union of China," 3.
[57] Williams, "Report of the Past Year," 6.

theological viewpoints of the Bible Union, clarify its purposes and nature, and restate its policy. A flush of statements and testimonies appeared in The Bulletin of the Bible Union, and a few program adjustments also followed. All these words and deeds seemed to be designed to respond to the criticism, eliminate the suspicions, and recruit the missionaries with conservative inclinations to its ranks.

In order to achieve these goals, the Bible Union repeatedly reiterated its doctrinal positions and further defined its own identity. An editorial of the Bulletin of the Bible Union in 1922 embraced the name of "fundamentalist" given by their modernist enemies, saying that "we are fundamentalists in the large popular sense of that term; we are not members of any organization entitled 'Fundamentalists'; we are definitely 'The Bible Union of China.'"[59]Then the author went on to elaborate what the fundamentalists stood for:

> "Fundamentalists"—that is precisely what we are: we hold that a Bible which is veracious, presenting no misrepresentations of the facts, not even pious ones, for men's acceptance, is fundamental to the Christian faith; and we hold, with prophets, apostles, and Christ Jesus Himself, that miracle working, the free, untrammelled exercise of infinite power, is fundamental to the very nature of God Almighty; we hold that uncamouflaged recognition of God's miraculous dealings with the people in Old and New Testament days is fundamental to Christian thinking; we hold that Christ supernatural is the supreme fundamental of Christianity itself—supernatural in His birth, in His crucifixion, in the glory of His bodily resurrection and visible ascension, in His mediation and intercession at God's right hand now...; we hold that the birth of the soul from above by the power of the Holy Spirit, through faith in Christ Jesus as Redeemer and Lord, is fundamental to salvation and to Christian service of God and men.[60]

Following the line of the official statement of the Bible Union, this passage dwells on three major themes: the authority of the Bible, the supernatural dimensions of the Bible

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[58] Montgomery, "My Reasons," 10

[59] "Fundamentalists", BBUC no.9 (October 1922): 1

[60] Ibid.

and Christology, and personal conversion as the prerequisite for social involvement. The first two, particularly, became the most common themes in the Bible Union's literature and focal points in their debate with the modernists. A subtitle of The Bulletin of the Bible Union summarized these fundamentalists' theological views very neatly and precisely: "A Whole Bible and A Whole Christ for A Whole World."[61]

James Walter Lowrie began his missionary career under the Northern Presbyterian mission in 1883. After working in the North China field for a number of years, he was elected the chairman of the newly founded China Council of the Presbyterian missions in 1910 and held the position till 1925. His long missionary service earned him tremendous respect among the Presbyterian and even non-Presbyterian missionaries. And he was referred to as "one of our ablest and wisest missionaries."[62] As the general secretary of the Bible Union, Lowrie wrote a lengthy testimony, "Why I Became A Member of the Bible Union of China," in 1922. In it he singled out the supernatural power of God as "the actual watershed between the spiritual domain of the latitudinarians and evangelicals."[63] He fiercely attacked the modernists' preoccupation with natural law and denial of God's miracle-working. Another heavy-weight of the Bible Union, D. E. Hoste, also insisted that precisely on the issue of the supernatural, the modernists departed from "Christianity as taught in the Old and New Testaments."[64] In his controversial essay, "Why I Have Joined the Bible Union of China," he asserted that "Christianity as taught in the Bible is

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[61] BBUC no.9 (October 1922)
[62] The Chinese Recorder 65 (May 1934): 335.
[63] Lowrie, "Why I Became a Member of the Bible Union of China," 3.
[64] Hoste, "Why I Have Joined the Bible Union of China," 3.

essentially supernatural; hence the attempt, however well meant, to tone down or eliminate the supernatural in it admits a principle that involves its destruction."[65]

In addition it is evident from the Union's official statement and other literature that the Bible Union was concerned with "the increasing emphasis being placed by the Missionary Boards upon education as distinguished from the direct evangelism and the tendency in the higher educational missionary institutions to diminish the emphasis upon the fact that Christ Jesus is indeed the object of the faith as the great Sin-Bearer."[66] One of the goals of the Bible Union was to "keep the supreme emphasis in missionary and church effort upon the necessity of personal faith in the Lord Jesus."[67] Indeed, the Bible Union was ready to take a stand against the social-gospel type of mission approach.

While articulating their theological and doctrinal agenda, the leaders of the Bible Union often found it necessary to stress that their agenda was clear-cut and uncompromising. One of their purposes was to defeat the modernist tactics of employing ambiguous language in disguising their real intention and agenda. James W. Lowrie was very much annoyed by these modernist tactics. He believed that "it is of supreme importance in the propagation and exposition of the Christian faith that words should be used frankly, candidly—'yea, yea' and 'nay, nay'."[68] His complaint was that "a fashion has arisen in the last few years of making the most solemn assertion of belief in the deity of our Lord Jesus....as if the man were really loyal to the faith of the New Testament; whereas he holds all these matters in some philosophic, unreal sense....He professes to

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[65] Ibid.

[66] "The Supreme Emphasis upon Christ Crucified for Our Sins Must Remain," BBUC no.18 (October 1924): 3.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Lowrie, "Why I Became a Member of the Bible Union," 6.

use the Bible as his authority, but preaches 'another Gospel'."[69] He blamed this kind of "half truth" for "a spirit of cowardice, a more or less craven fear of openly declaring what at heart has already been accepted as a substitute for the 'faith of our fathers,' the faith of the Old and the New Testaments."[70]

Furthermore, the fundamentalists felt they needed to highlight their uncompromising stance in order to distinguish themselves from moderate elements of the missionary community in China. Nelson Bell was a Southern Presbyterian medical missionary. In an article published in The Bulletin of the Bible Union of China, he identified two moderate groups. First, he said, "there is another group who do not go so far in their belief, or lack of belief, but whose departure from orthodoxy manifests itself in a failure to accept all of the Bible, and who would throw suspicion or discredit on parts of it, accepting some, and rejecting others, but still claiming to accept all of the fundamental teachings, though often qualifying some of them with their own phraseology."[71] For Bell one of the hallmarks of the true fundamentalist was his or her unconditional acceptance of the whole, not just part, of the Bible. If a missionary did not accept the whole Bible as the truth and compromise with higher criticism even partially, he or she might not have belonged to the fundamentalist camp.

Second, Bell insisted "there are those who claim to themselves [sic] believe all of the fundamental teachings of God's Word, but who, with a false liberality, feel that those who do not so believe should be accepted by the Foreign Mission Boards and not

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[69] Ibid., 6-7
[70] Ibid., 7.
[71] Bell, "The Bible Union of China," 3

molested, even when upsetting the faith of others."[72] In other words a true fundamentalist should have the will to uncover and fight modernism. If a missionary accepted the whole Bible just privately but declined to take a public stand against the modernist foes in the name of liberality and tolerance, he or she also might not have belonged to the fundamentalist camp.

Nelson Bell's words showed that the fundamentalist camp was aware of the existence of a large number of missionaries who could agree with the fundamentalists on such issues as the authority of the Bible, supernatural Christology, and the priority of evangelism and who also felt uneasy about the radical theological ideas of modernism. But they failed to follow the fundamentalists' break with the modernists and go to verbal war with them. In the midst of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy, this group of missionaries thought that both fundamentalists and modernists were too radical and could not identify themselves with either one of them. In general these moderate missionaries tended to stress more the urgency and priority of spreading the essential gospel message and planting churches and had relatively less interest in clarifying doctrinal and creedal orthodoxy through debates than did the fundamentalists. In order to fulfill the primary task of the missionary forces in China, they valued Christian unity and cooperation more than rigid doctrinal conformity. In their pursuit for missionary unity and harmony, the moderates were willing to make theological compromises, which they hoped were acceptable to both conservative and liberals.

In the 1920s and 1930s the moderates constituted the majority of the Protestant missionary community. In their battle against modernism, the fundamentalists were much

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[72] Ibid.

troubled by the moderates' unwillingness to take a public and militant stand for orthodox doctrine. They were frustrated by the moderates' strong favor of practical unity and cooperation at the cost of doctrinal orthodoxy. For the fundamentalist missionaries, modernism was simply anti-Christian apostasy and the enemy of the gospel. If modernism were not defeated, the very foundation of missionary enterprise would be shaken, and missionaries would have had no true message to preach. In their view the moderates' preoccupation with peace and cooperation only served to compromise "truth" in favor of the modernist apostasy. They pointed out that an immediate consequence of the compromise was the vagueness and ambiguity of the moderates' theological and doctrinal positions. Not surprisingly, moderates often became a target of fundamentalist criticism.

The fundamentalists knew that the greatest source of the moderates' resistance to the Bible Union was their illusion about peace and unity. An editorial of The Bulletin of the Bible Union pointed out: "Those who, in a period of religious unrest, find themselves sympathizing with a newer viewpoint, but for some reason still continue to use the older forms of expression and decline full classification with either school of thought. They apparently feel that their compromising position makes for peace and unity."[73] Then the editorial claimed that the moderates' refusal to take sides in the controversy was virtually impossible: "In fact their place 'on the fence' is a constant source of anxiety to their colleagues who have definitely taken their positions on the one side or the other. Nor is the unstable equilibrium of their present seat wholly satisfactory even to themselves."[74] No matter how valuable Christian harmony and unity were, the fundamentalists believed, the orthodoxy of faith and doctrine should not be sacrificed just for their sakes. Putting

[73] "Men of Mediating Mind," BBUC no.8 (July-August 1922):5.

the authority of the Bible first, a true fundamentalist never compromised with modernism in any way and was not afraid of opposing modernism even at the cost of the "false unity" of the missionary community. In the ongoing battle between the fundamentalists and modernists, it was no longer possible somehow to transcend the differences between these two camps and maintain a unity with eyes closed to the fundamental conflicts. In the eyes of the fundamentalists, the middle-of-roaders or fence-riders were pretentious, cowardly, and even hateful. When A.C.Dixon (1854-1925), the famous American Baptist evangelist and editor of The Fundamentals Series, visited China and spoke to a missionary gathering in August of 1922 in Guling, he told his audience, "I hate fences. I would that all fences were made of barbed-wire, for then no one could 'sit on the fence'." [75] His words greatly impressed some missionaries there. Afterwards, one missionary said: "Thank God for black- and white-thinking men. We ought to have more of them," and he believed what the Bible Union stood for was this: "The bringing to Chinese and foreigners alike, clean cut, out-and-out for Christ teaching and preaching the Christian religion."[76] The essential message the Bible Union wanted to convey to the Protestant missionary audience was that the Union was defending the "fundamental truths" without compromise and that all the conservatives still sitting on the fence should jump into the fight for the Bible.

One important feature of the theological agenda of the Bible Union of China was its broadness. The brief theological formula included in the Bible Union's tentative statement of 1920 contained only very basic evangelical beliefs but did not even mention

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[74]Ibid.

[75] Quoted in Edythe M Flower, "Open the Gates of the Temple," BBUC no.13 (June-July 1923): 21.

such controversial topics as premillenialism. This fact was already noticed by its liberal critics from the very beginning. The Bible Union, indeed, deliberately kept a conservative doctrinal statement as general as possible in order to unite a broad conservative constituency in the mission field and carefully did not touch topics that might cause any controversy among its own ranks. When the Bible Union's literature tried to define the nature of the Union, what was repeatedly stated was that "it is not a premillennial organization. Pre or postmillennialism has no more to do with it than the subject of baptism."[77] Clearly the Bible Union only wanted to take sides in the fight against modernism but not in the internal theological controversies within the fundamentalist camp. It sought to maintain a minimum conservative theological consensus as the basis for a conservative missionaries' united front against the modernist influence. In fact, the theological basis of the Bible Union was so broad that some of its members could argue that "the Union sets forth no 'creed' to be signed."[78] Furthermore, the Bible Union often argued that it did not import or invent any new brands of theology but was "simply seeking to maintain the position not many years ago generally held throughout the missionary body in China."[79] In other words what the Bible Union did was to defend from the evangelical beliefs inherited from the nineteenth-century Protestant mission consensus. Related to this, in response to the liberals' accusation that it was a movement

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[76] Ibid.,21-22

[77] Bell, "The Bible Union of China," 4. In tracing the Bible Union's origins, The Bulletin of the Bible Union claimed that "it was not evolved in the interests of any special religious theory or type of theology." ("Facts About the Bible Union," BBUC no.3 (July 1921): 1). This was designed to refute the assertion that the Union was just the offspring of American premilleialism. According to Frank H. Throop, the Bible Union "is neither Pre nor Post but both....It has nothing to do with Pre or Post. In fact the whole thing started as an offset to a lot of destructive critics mostly from Chicago U." Throop to Geo T Scott, 6 November 1922.

[78] M.Gardner Tewksbury, "What It Does Not Mean to Join the Bible Union," BBUC No.13 (June-July 1923): 6.

introduced by the fundamentalists primarily from North America, the Bible Union always made a point that it was a "spontaneous" reaction against the modernist trend and insisted that "the source of the idea was inside and not outside the Chinese missionary body." [80]

Furthermore, rectifying the popular image of the Bible Union as a closed-minded organization stuck in ancient orthodoxy, some Bible Union members argued that the Bible Union was actually open to the modern methodologies and modern interpretations and theories. It was declared that "modern theology has no monopoly on modern methodology....Orthodoxy in belief does not preclude the application of up-to-date ways and means in the expression of that new life into which we are begotten in Christ Jesus."[81] An official statement of the Bible Union in 1924 also asserted that "we should make it our aim,...to utilize to the utmost all the aid which substantiated modern discovery and consecrated scholarship afford to strengthen the faith and dissipate the doubts."[82] The fundamentalists' enthusiasm over the discoveries of modern archeology seemed to lend some validity to this assertion.[83] By asserting its willingness to use modern methodology and discoveries, the Bible Union was obviously trying to demonstrate its vitality and relevance in the modern age.

The Bible Union of China also made a great deal of effort to clarify its own purposes and aims. The official statement of the Bible Union only briefly mentioned that the Union's purpose was "to contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints." The meanings of this brief statement were later extensively elaborated and

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[79] "Letter to the Mission Board in the Homelands," BBUC no.8 (July-August 1922): 45
[80] "Facts about the Bible Union," 1.
[81] Ibid., 6
[82] "Statement of the Policy of the Bible Union of China," BBUC no.18 (October 1924): 1.

expanded in order to show that the Union "has no motives other than those clearly stated in its official literature" [84]and refute the liberals' charge that the Bible Union had a hidden agenda. In most of the Bible Union literature, the Union's purpose appeared to be twofold. First, the Bible Union was designed to rally the conservative missionaries and provide them with a fellowship or network in their efforts of preaching the supernatural message and counterattacking the modernist erosion of the gospel. An editorial in The Bulletin of the Bible Union in 1921 explicitly stated that "its purpose is to uplift a banner about which those who stand for the Word of God as bequeathed by the Apostolic Church may rally and find a common medium of expression and action."[85] Only when the fundamentalists got united would their voice be strong enough to be heard across the missionary communities in China. That was why James W. Lowrie declared: "I joined the Bible Union because isolated, individual opposition and protest against the methods of the modernists is quite unavailing....We who stand for the old faith...must join hands....We can watch the tactics of unbelief better; we are made more alert; we are mutually encouraging; we can have an organ of expression in the Bulletin, and can arrange to produce literature such as times demand; and better than all, we can unitedly pray."[86] For the fundamentalists the Bible Union was certainly more than a common anti-modernist voice; it was also supposed to serve as a channel of mutual support and a forum of expressing and discussing their common concerns. In other words the Bible

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[83] The Bulletin of the Bible Union repeatedly reported or mentioned Melvin G. Kyle's visit to China in the summer of 1921, whose archeological defense of the credibility of the Bible was apparently a big attraction to the fundamentalists in China. See BBUC no.3 (July 1921): 19.

[84] "Facts about the Bible Union," 1.

[85] Ibid.

[86] Lowrie, "Why I Became a Member of the Bible Union of China," 8.

Union provided "a bond of union between those in all the churches in China who are standing for the truth."[87]

Second, the Bible Union was started to save the Chinese church from fatal modernist apostasy. In the early decades of the twentieth century, a common concern among conservative missionaries was that emerging Chinese Christian communities might receive the gospel message corrupted by higher criticism and the social gospel and would go astray under the guidance of the modernist leadership. W.S. Moule (1888-1925), the well-known Anglican missionary and the first chairman of the Bible Union, expressed this concern very well: "There is a great probability of the modern position as regards the Scriptures being accepted in China as the Christian position. This would be fatal to the influence of the Christian Church in the nation, would weaken it spiritually and morally, and would perhaps even destroy its existence."[88]

In fact, this concern about the future of the Chinese church was cited as one of the major reasons for the founding of the Bible Union: "It is to preserve this fundamental Christ to the infant Chinese Church that the Bible Union of China was formed and continues to live and grow." [89] An editorial in The Bulletin of the Bible Union of China laid out the Union's role in relation to the Chinese church in this way: "It exists chiefly for the sake of the Chinese church, (1) to testify to the confidence within the missionary body in the Bible as the trustworthy Word of God; (2) to confirm the faith of Chinese Christians in Scripture and warn them of errors whose ultimate influence may not be realised; (3) to assist them to believe, to study, to love, to understand and to obey the

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[87] "Statement of the Policy of the Bible Union of China," 1.

[88] "Statement: Contained in a Letter from Archdeacon W.S.Moule,", BBUC no.4 (October 1921): 5.

Bible."[90] In a world filled with "half truth" and heresies, the Bible Union of China viewed itself as the true guardian and promoter of the whole truth for not only the missionary movement but also Chinese Christians. Therefore, the Bible Union statement of 1924 claimed that the Union was "true watchmen, good shepherds and faithful stewards of the trust committed to our charge."[91]

While the modernism of the foreign missionaries was always the target of severe and constant criticism of the Bible Union, the modernist tendency within the Chinese churches was not spared. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s the Bible Union also tried to promote the fundamentalist cause of the Chinese church. It supported the translation of certain conservative theological works and sponsored the evangelistic conferences of Chinese Christians in cooperation with the Milton Stewart Evangelistic Fund. These conferences often featured some of the most prominent conservative Chinese evangelists such as Wang Ming-dao,[92] Ni Tuo-sheng,[93] Chen Chong-gui,[94] and Wang Zai.[95]

The Bible Union denied that the Union and its campaign were the cause of division among the missionary community and emphasized that its programs were constructive. Shattering the unity of foreign missionaries and Chinese churches was

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[89] "Fundamentalists," 3.

[90] "Facts about the Bible Union," 1.

[91] "Statement of the Policy of the Bible Union of China," 1.

[92] Wang Ming-dao (1900-91) graduated from a school run by the London Missionary Society. He was the founder of The Christian Tabernacle in Beijing. In the 1920s and 1930s, he spoke to numerous revival and evangelistic meetings and also published a popular Christian magazine. After 1950 his resistance to the Self-Three Movement supported by the Communist Party earned him worldwide recognition among Christians.

[93] Ni Tuo-sheng (Watchman Nee, 1903-72) was the founder of the "Little Flock." He was a powerful church leader and evangelist. His writings on Christian spirituality were very influential among Chinese Christians.

[94] Chen Chong-gui (Marcus Chen, 1884-1964) worked as a chaplain for a warlord and editor of an important Christian journal. He was also a well-known evangelistic speaker, writer, and seminary professor.

always one of most serious charges the Bible Union had to face. In refuting this charge, the Union authors largely adopted two basic strategies. First, they shifted the blame to their liberal foes. Many Bible Union publications argued that it was the modernists, not fundamentalists, who deviated from the historic orthodox doctrines revealed in the Bible and passed down through Protestant evangelistic tradition. It was claimed that the Bible Union's doctrinal tenets were the same preached by Paul, Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, and the Wesleys. Thus the fundamentalists just "stood fast" on the old faith, while modernists began to "take distance."[96] Nelson Bell simply declared that the Bible Union was not divisive, because "the mission body is being divided by those who insist on preaching and teaching things contrary to God's Word and to the confessions of all Evangelical Christendom. They would destroy the great uniting bonds."[97] When the Bible Union exposed the modernist errors, it did not create division but just revealed the existing one: "It simply dares not refuse to recognize existing division."[98] Second, to prove that the Bible Union was not divisive in its nature, the fundamentalists argued that the defense of truth inevitably led to conflict. This was the argument of W.S.Moule: "Whenever the Church has combatted a heresy it has led no doubt to divisions and acute controversy, but ultimately to the gain of the cause of truth, and the purification of the Church itself."[99] For the fundamentalists the top priority was always to protect the orthodoxy of Christian doctrine and the purity of the Christian faith.

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[95] Wang Zai (Leland Wang, 1898-1975) started his ministry together with Ni Tuo-sheng in the early 1920s. He traveled widely and gradually established himself as a powerful revival speaker. In the 1930s he founded his own evangelistic band. His ministry was extended to overseas Chinese communities.

[96] Graham Jr., "Rally Round," 11-12.

[97] Bell, "The Bible Union of China,"4.

[98] "Facts about the Bible Union," 1.

[99] Moule, "Statement," 4.

The Bible Union tried very hard to change its image of a belligerent, negative, and destructive force and to put up a positive and constructive face. In so doing, the Bible Union's leadership stressed that the Union was interested in initiating and carrying out the constructive programs of promoting the conservative cause just as much as fighting their modernist foes, and the Union's manner of advocating its views and interests were marked by love, charity, and fairness. The "Statement of the Policy of the Bible Union of China" of 1924 claimed that "while we will not shrink from exposing and resisting erroneous teaching regarding the character and authority of the Bible, and of the fundamental truths contained in it, yet the main object of our endeavours is to contend for the faith."[100] This statement obviously put priority on propagating "the fundamental truths" instead of attacking the modernists. In defense of the Union, Nelson Bell asserted that "it is not condemnatory of those who do not join....It is not a group of Christians sitting in judgment on their fellows."[101] In response to the charges of spreading unfounded accusations, the Bible Union claimed that it did not intend to single out any individual missionary for attacks and discipline,[102] and it just tried to sound an alarm at the general modernist trends in China.

Over and over again, it was said that the Bible Union's statement was "fair" and "inclusive" and its program was "constructive;"[103] "The Bible Union is getting more and more to be a Bible Movement and a Prayer Movement" [104]; and "the primary purpose was not so much to make war on others as to take a firm stand together in the spirit of

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[100] "Statement of the Policy of the Bible Union," 1.

[101] Bell, "The Bible Union of China," 4.

[102] "Letter to the Mission Boards," 50.

[103] H.Kerr Taylor, "Why I Joined, and Continue a Member of the Bible Union," BBUC no.13 (June-July 1923): 14.

preparedness and readiness....to preach the Word, and to withstand the attacks of those who would preach some other Gospel."[105] Here the real aggressors were once again identified as the modernists who deliberately undermined the authority of the Bible and tried to discredit the conservatives. Instead of the aggressors, the Bible Union and fundamentalists were actually just defenders of the "old Bible." Under the modernist attacks the Bible Union had no choice but to fight: "While no one in the Bible Union is looking for strife, yet should it be found out that false teaching is being given to the Chinese, the Bible Union will feel it a duty to warn the Chinese, and use its influence to keep pure all institutions of learning, and publications."[106] Even when the Bible Union engaged in the fights with the modernists, it was claimed, the Bible Union handled them mostly with the spirit of charity. D.E. Hoste, particularly, cited this spirit as one major reason why he changed his mind and eventually joined the Union: "I feel satisfied that those promoting the Union are animated by a spirit of charity and courtesy toward those from whom they differ."[107] Obviously its efforts at improving its public image was geared to remove widespread doubts and suspicions about the Bible Union and gain more memberships.[108] The Bible Union widely circulated Hoste's essay, "Why I Have Joined the Bible Union of China" and considered it as a repeated invitation to join the Union.[109]

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[104] M. Gardner Tewksbury, "What It Does not Mean to Join the Bible Union."7. The seven major programs the Bible Union set up to some extent validated this claim.

[105] Montgomery, "My Reasons," 8-9.

[106] Ibid., 9.

[107] Hoste, "Why I Joined the Bible Union." 4.

[108] According to J.E.Shoemaker, many missionaries were still waiting to see what the Bible Union was going to do before making their decisions about the Union. He asked: "Shall we not all seek to maintain our position and present our views in a spirit so marked by consideration, fairness and freedom from mere partisanship, that all who have like convictions will gladly unite with us." There was no doubt that recruitment was an important consideration in the mind of the Union leadership. J.E.Shoemaker, "Extending the Membership of the Bible Union," BBUC no.8 (July-.August 1922): 44

[109] "Report of the Past Year," 7.

This essay generated some discussion within missionary circles and drew some liberal response.[110] According to some missionaries' testimonies, Hoste, Lowrie, Moule, and others' articles about the Bible Union played crucial roles in their decisions to join the Union.

However, it would be a mistake to assume that the Bible Union was only interested in a public relation campaign. The Bible Union leadership was very much willing to make its programs more appealing to a larger conservative constituency and turn the Union into a broad association of conservative missionaries. Furthermore, the Union's leadership carefully maintained the balance between the contention for faith and a non-partisan attitude and guarded the unity of the conservative missionaries from being disrupted by any actions on the part of extreme fundamentalists. The spirit was nowhere more evident than in Ruth Paxson's lengthy address entitled "Orthodoxy and Spirituality," given to the opening session of the Bible Union National Convention of 1922. Ruth Paxson came to China in 1911. In her early years in the country, she was associated with the CCC and the YWCA. Deeply influenced by holiness teachings, she later left the YWCA and became one of the most famous evangelists in China in the 1920s and 1930s.[111] She was an influential writer, speaker, and organizer of numerous evangelistic and revival meetings among foreign missionaries as well as Chinese churches. When the Bible Union was founded, she was elected a member of its executive committee. In her speech she first highlighted "the evenness and balance" of Jesus and

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[110] See "The Question of the Supernatural, A Symposium," The Chinese Recorder 52 (July 1921): 472-82.

[111] According to one account, Paxson resigned from the YWCA because of its increasing modernistic tendency. (See Grace W. Woods, Revival in Romance and Realism (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1936), 49.

then went on to speak of such themes as "keen insight without indiscriminate suspicion," "clear discernment of evil, without discouragement," "possible denunciation but with his restraint and sorrow," "positiveness without self-righteousness," "how to be separate yet one," "how to contend and yet follow peace," "how to practise the love we preach and yet protect the church from those who proclaim another gospel." She reminded her fellow missionaries:

> Through membership in the Bible Union we have spoken collectively concerning the essential and primary place which fundamental truths should hold in missionary service, and without doubt to some who are not in sympathy with this viewpoint there is dogmatism, certitude, and finality in our statement. This is inevitable....But with what kind of an attitude and with what kind of a manner do we speak? Are we characterized by a stultifying self-righteousness and fleshly pugnacity or by a consistent winsomeness and transparent trueness of character and conduct?[112]

She urged the missionaries to continue to fight for the truth while keeping their heart from "the slightest trace of unloving or unholy suspicion of his fellow men."[113] Her approach showed a great sensitiveness toward the need of positive attitude and loving spirit in the fight for the truth. Within the fundamentalist camp, the missionaries with a holiness and pietist background like Ruth Paxson tended to be less divisive and separatist. This had to do with the emphasis of the holiness teachings on spiritual life and practical services rather than doctrinal orthodoxy.[114]

In line with this more amicable spirit, in October 1924 the Committee of One Hundred decided to turn The Bulletin of the Bible Union of China into a magazine with a

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[112] Ruth Paxson: "Orthodoxy and Spirituality," BBUC no.8 (July-August 1922): 30.

[113] Ibid., 29.

[114] Grace W. Woods (1923-28) was another important figure in revival movements in China of the 1920s. The wife of Henry M.Woods of the Southern Presbyterian Church, she started the "World Wide Prayer Movement" and revival in Shanghai from 1924 to 1925. She believed that the fundamentalist-

more comprehensive scope and change its title to The Bible for China. The major reason behind this move was cited as "to emphasize the constructive aim of the Bible Union."[115] Under its new title, the magazine was supposed to be a channel for spreading the " fundamental truth" and strengthening the fellowship of conservative missionaries. [116]

In the mid 1920s, the Bible Union's efforts to maintain unity among its own memberships and a positive approach was threatened more and more by some extreme elements within its own ranks. Some missionaries' harsh words and behavior damaged the Union's image and reputation. Under such circumstances the Bible Union leadership tried to distance itself from any "unofficial" actions of any individual members. According to a decision made by the executive committee of the Bible Union in May of 1925, the Union "does disclaim responsibility for the authorized utterances of any of its members....No ground is afforded ....for any individual member or group of members to take action in the name of the Bible Union." The executive committee also affirmed that the Bible Union's official positions were contained in its statements of policy, and the Union's business was conducted "through responsible committee careful to carry out the wishes of its members."[117]

In addition, to maintain its constructive approach, the Bible Union leadership did refuse to admit certain extreme fundamentalist figures into the Union. An example was the Union's rejection of Edgar E. Strother's application. Strother came to China in 1909 and served as the General Secretary of Christian Endeavour until 1928. On the ground

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modernist controversy "would disappear under the beneficent influence of a heaven-sent revival!" (Grace W. Woods, Revival in Romance and Realism, 25).

[115] "Editorial: Our New Title:'The Bible for China,'" The Bible for China no.18 (October 1924): 1.

[116] See "Editorial Notes," BFC no.33 (February 1928): 2.

that Strother's spirit was "too acrimonious for the welfare of the cause" and his method of "fiercely denouncing" his enemies irrespective of any evidence was "equally inimical to the welfare of that cause," [118] the Committee of One Hundred almost unanimously declined to grant him Bible Union membership. As a loose association, the Bible Union of China certainly did not want any big trouble makers among its own ranks. Just as many other missionary organizations of its time, it always faced the challenge of keeping an internal peace and presenting an external united stand.

The founding of the Bible Union of China had significant impact upon the missionaries' home bases, particularly in North America. The reactions of the mission boards of major denominations were mixed or sometimes quite intense, and the news of the Bible Union aroused much interest among the home churches.[119] The cause of the Bible Union and the controversy were brought to the home audiences and advocated by some leading fundamentalist figures in North America. W. H.Griffith Thomas' address to the Presbyterian Social Union in January 1921 was especially crucial in starting a controversy about modernism in China. In this famous speech, Thomas stated that "I felt it necessary to criticise much that I saw and heard in China."[120] To support his charges of widespread modernist influence in the field, he gave substantial evidence of the modernist propaganda especially rampant in missionary educational and publishing enterprises. For the most part, he did not name a lot of modernists and the mission boards

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[117] "Extract from the Minutes," BFC no.21 (June 1925): 29.

[118] J.W.Lowrie: "Reply from Secretary of Bible Union" The China Fundamentalists (May-June 1928): 43

[119] Some missionaries on furlough testified that they were often asked questions about the Union when speaking to home church gatherings. See Frank H. Throop to Wm. P. Schell, 27 November 1922, PCUSABS, RG82, 20-13, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. See also letter from Frank H. Throop to Geo T Scott, 6 November 1922.

[120] Thomas, "Modernism in China," 668.

that supported them. But he did strongly imply that certain mission boards and their missionaries were cooperating with the modernist forces in China. Finally, he suggested that the home churches should pressure their mission boards to send only conservative missionaries to the mission fields. Thomas apparently made similar accusations in some other speeches later.

The Board of Foreign Missions of the Northern Presbyterian Church definitely felt the heat, because Thomas's speeches directly brought into question the doctrinal orthodoxy of some North Presbyterian missionaries and the ways by which the missions were being run. Under the Board's instruction, Arthur J. Brown, the secretary of the Board, wrote to Thomas to complain that Thomas' charges were "general, impersonal and unsupported," and "you have thrown suspicion over the whole missionary body without making it possible to acquit the innocent by dealing specially with the offenders."[121] Brown went on to point out the serious consequences of such sweeping accusations: "When a speaker declares....that a Board is maintaining unsound men and advises his hearers to find out how their money is being spent before they give any more, the natural corollary is a withholding of gifts;" and "you have weakened financial support of and impaired confidence in the effort of all the missionaries for the evangelization of China."[122] Brown's letter also indicated that the Board was annoyed by the public way Thomas filed his charges: "If you had spoken to us first, the Board would have given you an immediate opportunity to bring the matter before it with full purpose of correcting any

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[121] Arthur J Brown to W.H.Griffith Thomas, 28 February 1921, Attached to Arthur J. Brown to the Presbytery of Philadelphia, 10 March 1921, PCUSABS, RG82, 21-3, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

[122] Ibid.,

evil that might be revealed."[123] Finally, the Board strongly urged Thomas to substantiate his accusations, which Thomas declined to do. In March the Board decided to send the correspondence between Brown and Thomas to the Presbytery of Philadelphia and the Presbyterian Social Union to ensure that "the Board exercises great care to see that candidates possess the essential qualifications of a soundly evangelical Gospel."[124]

Obviously, the Northern Presbyterian Mission Board was very irritated and alert to such kinds of agitation from the fundamentalists. When Frank Throop, a Northern Presbyterian missionary and supporter of the Bible Union, returned to the United States and introduced and defended the Bible Union of China at several meetings in 1922, two secretaries of the Mission Board, George T. Scott and W. P. Schell, wrote to him and cautioned him "to be careful not to give any addresses which could be misinterpreted."[125] Throop, instead, believed that they misunderstood the Bible Union and warned that "if something is not done to adjust things it will soon run into large sums of money withheld from the Board."[126] In reply Schell tried to keep himself out of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy: "I have not the slightest desire to have anything to do with that controversy, neither have I any personal quarrel with the Bible Union of China or any member of it"; but he complained that "some of our missionaries have not been quite fair to their own fellow missionaries."[127] Nevertheless, the Mission Board could not completely control the impact of the Bible Union in America. The events in China and the fundamentalist agitation in America did prompt a number of presbyteries to file some

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[123] Ibid.,

[124] Brown to the Presbytery of Philadelphia, 10 March 1921.

[125] Wm P. Schell to Frank Throop, 12 December 1922, PCUSABS, RG82, 20-13, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

[126] Throop to Schell, 27 November 1922; see also Throop to Scott, 6 November 1922.

overtures calling attention to certain reports regarding the modernist tendency among the missionaries. Eventually, the Board's position prevailed at the General Assembly of the Northern Presbyterian Church in 1921. After some investigations the Standing Committee on Foreign Missions declared that "it finds nothing to disturb the confidence of the General Assembly in the Board of Foreign Missions and in the great body of its loyal Christian missionaries"; but "the Board of Foreign Missions be instructed to examine further into these reports."[128] The Board also ensured its missionaries that it "has full trust and deep affection for its foreign missionaries and is not in any mood of suspicion or misgiving with regard to them." In the meantime it warned that the missionaries should inform their own Presbyteries or the Board if they lost their loyalty to the beliefs the Church stood for.[129]

However, the mission boards soon found out they also had to answer directly some questions from the Bible Union of China. From the very beginning, one thing the Bible Union planned to do was to persuade the home boards to stop sending any missionaries with "unsound views." In the summer of 1921, a special committee began to draw up a letter to mission boards in the home countries. After much consultation and modification, the final version of the letter was mailed out to about ninety home boards or committees in January 1922. Most of the contents of this lengthy letter dealt with the necessity of forming the Bible Union and its purposes in order to make a case for the Union and explain away any misunderstandings and suspicions. What is special in this

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[127] Schell to Throop, 12 December 1922.

[128] "Statement of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions on its Attitude toward the Doctrinal Soundness of Missionaries," 11 October 1921, PCUSABS, RG82, 21-12, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

[129] Ibid.

document is that the Bible Union reminded the mission boards that "it is with these Boards...that the prime duty and responsibility rest, to see to it that the Christian faith, as set forth in the official Statements of their several churches, is being taught by those whom they set apart and appoint for that purpose."[130] Moreover, the letter cleverly added a personal touch to its arguments: "We refer to the weighty obligation resting upon those guiding missionary organizations to keep faith with those who, on a certain understanding regarding doctrine, have their prayers, their gifts, and the surrender of their sons and daughters or loved relatives, been the contributors to the building up of those organizations."[131] The underlying assumption here was that any watering down of orthodox beliefs on the part of the boards was nothing short of a betrayal of their home constituencies and field workers. Finally the letter urged the boards to "administer the funds,...the teaching and text-books in theological seminaries and educational institutions, the public presentation of the Message in the stations and selection of new candidates for missionary service" strictly according to the faith statements of their own denominations.[132]

Some responses from the mission boards did reach the Bible Union and were read at different Union meetings. The reply of the Northern Presbyterian Mission Boards was quite short: "It is and has long been its policy to accept only those candidates 'who are sound in evangelical faith.'" And it endorsed the Northern Presbyterian China Council's affirmation of loyalty of all Northern Presbyterian missionaries to the gospel.[133]

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[130] "Letter to the Mission Boards," 47.

[131] Ibid., 50.

[132] Ibid., 51.

[133] Arthur J. Brown and George T. Scott to the China Council and the Missions in China, 14 February 1922, PCUSABS, RG 82, 22-20, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

The Executive Committee of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (South) was keenly aware of the seriousness of the issues brought up by the Bible Union of China. To handle the communication with the Bible Union of China, it appointed a "Special Committee on Orthodoxy in China" in February 1922. For some reason this committee never officially responded to the Bible Union's letter to the boards. But the executive committee did state that it was "in hearty sympathy with the purpose of the China Bible Union and wishes it Godspeed."[134] To safeguard the doctrinal orthodoxy of its missionary forces, the executive committee urged missionary candidates and missionaries on furlough to get training in the history and doctrine of the church in Southern Presbyterian schools.[135] Starting from 1923 all newly-sent Southern Presbyterian missionaries were required to sign the following statement: "I Believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice. I have carefully read the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of our Church and I do sincerely receive and adopt them as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures."[136]

The reactions of both Northern and Southern Presbyterian mission boards threw light on the Bible Union's impact on home constituencies. At least for a few years after 1920, the Bible Union and its supporters in North America created so much trouble for the mission boards that the latter became very concerned with loss of the home constituencies' confidence and support. While trying hard to keep peace among their missionary ranks, the boards had to do a lot of damage control on their reputation at

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[134] Minutes of the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S, vol. 16 (February 1922), Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC, 11

[135] See ibid., vol.17 (January 1923), 8. See also Ibid., vol. 18 (October 1923),16.

[136] Ibid., vol.18 (February 1924), 34.

home. While affirming the orthodoxy of their missionary forces over and over again, the boards had to watch more carefully over the issues of theological orthodoxy.

During the first half of the 1920s, the founding and activities of the Bible Union of China were indeed quite sensational. However, the second half of the 1920s and 1930s witnessed a steady decline of the Bible Union's influence, and the Union soon could no longer attract any significant attention from major missionary or church publications except its own magazine, The Bible for China. In addition to the shift of the missionaries' attention because of the drastically changing political and social situation in China, the Bible Union's own organizational defects and internal strife contributed to its decline and demise.

From the beginning to the end, the Bible Union of China was a loose interdenominational association or fellowship of conservative missionaries in China. Although a national structure was set up in 1922, the structure never functioned very well. Its headquarters in Shanghai were run by a small group of missionaries on a voluntary and part-time basis, and the regional meetings of its members occurred only occasionally in summer resorts across the country. Virtually without any full-time officers, the Bible Union was simply unable to institutionalize the movement and sustain its original popularity and momentum. Except for the Bible Committee and Evangelistic Committee, all other sub-committees soon became dysfunctional or non-existent. The only enterprise the Bible Union was running relatively well was The Bible for China magazine. Not surprisingly some missionaries began to complain that "the Bible Union is doing nothing."[137]

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[137] Andrew Allison, "Current News from the Field," BFC no.47 (September 1930): 26.

The Bible Union members and broader missionary communities started to lose their interest in the organization. The executive committee in Shanghai even had a hard time communicating with the Bible Union's members and having them respond to the requests for opinion or cooperation. Of course, the poor communication and transportation conditions in China made the situation even worse. During the second half of the 1920s the membership of the Bible Union steadily shrank, and only 900 active members were left by 1930.[138] The departure of a large number of old missionaries from active mission service shrank the missionary constituency of the Bible Union and contributed to its decline.[139] The revenue of the Bible Union also slowly decreased, and most of its revenue was used to cover the expenses of publishing The Bible for China. The Bible Union's worst financial crisis came in 1933 when the Union almost ran out of money even for The Bible for China.[140]

By the mid-1920s a consensus had been reached among the Bible Union ranks that a full-time general secretary was needed to run and revive the Bible Union. But the Bible Union's search for this secretary was largely unsuccessful throughout the years. Under such circumstances the question was raised by different regional meetings whether the Bible Union of China should continue to exist. There seemed to be different opinions about this issue. In 1935 a meeting of some Bible Union members in Zhiwu (Chefoo), Shangdong province publicly questioned the necessity of the continuation of the Bible

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[138] Ibid., 25.

[139] By 1920 forty-nine percent of all Protestant foreign missionaries had arrived in China before 1911. (Rawlinson, Thoburn, and MacGillivray, The Chinese Church as Revealed in the National Christian Conference, 94) By 1929 this figure dropped to about thirty-five percent. (Frank Rawlinson and others, The China Christian Year Book (Shanghai: Christian Literature Society, 1929), 248. Most of the early leaders of the Bible Union retired or died by the early 1930s: Moule in 1925, Woods in 1928, Lowrie in 1930, Fenn in 1932, Goforth in 1932.

[140] See BFC no.65 (September-October 1933): 3, 19.

Union.[141] On the other hand, another members' meeting held in Xian (Sianfu), Shanxi (Shensi) province in 1930 concluded that "to be banded together in the Bible Union of China gives us a good platform for united testimony and influence. The majority felt the Bible Union as a necessity and gave expression in support of it."[142]

An important Bible Union members' meeting held in Beitaihe in August of 1935 was obviously inclined to the latter position. It was admitted that "apart from the issue of the magazine the Bible Union does not do much; but there is much that it might do, if it were not handicapped by its cumbrous organization."[143] So the meeting went on to propose several measures of reforming and revitalizing the Bible Union.

Of course the executive committee of the Bible Union was quite eagerly seeking a revival of interest in the Bible Union. Its response to the call of Zhiwu meeting was that "the Bible Union exists primarily as a witness and that to dissolve would probably be acclaimed as defeat in those quarters opposed to the position held by the Union."[144] But the executive committee very much welcomed the proposals of the Beidaihe meetings and adopted most of them in early 1936. As a result the Committee of One Hundred was reduced to thirty, and the Executive Committee of Twenty-five was reduced to ten. Obviously these measures were aimed to make the Bible Union a more effective organization uniting the fundamentalists in the mission field. The Bible for China was also planned to be enlarged and improved.[145] In addition, in early 1937 the executive

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[141] See BFC no.83 (November-December 1936): 44

[142] BFC no.45 (May 1930): 6

[143] "The Bible Union—What of the Future?" BFC no.77 (November-December, 1935): 4

[144] "Executive Committee Meeting," BFC no.84 (January-February 1937): 56

[145] "Executive Committee Meeting Minutes," BFC no.79 (March-June, 36): 42. The proposal of downsizing the governing body of the Bible Union had been advocated by other missionary groups long before the Peitaiho meeting of 1935. See "Summer Meetings of the Bible Union of China," Member's Bulletin of the Bible Union of China (September 1925): 3.

committee made attempts to strengthen or revive the Union's presence and activities in the summer resorts. However, the Bible Union's efforts turned out to be too late and too little. The eruption and spread of the Sino-Japanese War in July 1937 finally shattered any hope of revitalizing the Bible Union, and the Bible Union of China eventually faded from the scene.

As mentioned before, a gap emerged between the moderate and extreme wings within the Bible Union of China at the time of its founding. For the second half of the 1920s, this gap continued to widen, and some skirmishes occurred between two groups. The moderate leadership of the Bible Union rejected a purely negative attack on the modernists in favor of a positive presentation of the orthodox beliefs. As a result The Bulletin of the Bible Union deliberately shunned articles with strong belligerent tones. In the eyes of some fundamentalists, this move inevitably led to the loss of the Union's toughness in the battle against the modernists. As early as 1921, W.R.Williams, the general secretary of the Bible Union, noticed complaints from certain Union members and offered some explanations in his "Report of the Past Year": "It is possible that in the mind of some members, the editorials and other materials in these issues of the Bulletin are not sufficiently aggressive and hostile against those errors in our midst whose spread called the Bible Union into existence. The editors have not been unmindful of the presence of these errors. We have on one or two occasions prepared such articles; but after prayer and reflection, we have felt clearly the conviction that a positive, constructive work is the course before us."[146]

[146] "Report of the Past Year," 7.

This kind of explanation obviously did not satisfy the extreme faction. They voiced their complaints and opinion from time to time throughout the years. As the official organ and major enterprise of the Bible Union, The Bulletin of the Bible Union or later The Bible for China continued to be the main target for the criticism of the extreme group. In its November 1930 issue, The Bible for China found itself having to respond to charges that " 'The Bible for China' is not sufficiently vigorous, and is apt to steer a middle course," and "it will not publish anything strong for the conservative side."[147] The Bible of China's reply closely followed the official line of the Bible Union: "A careful scrutiny of the back numbers of our journal shows that in the policy of those who began 'The Bible for China', there was no lack of clarity and forcefulness in standing for the Faith, but there was a desire to avoid publishing half truths, or facts out of perspective, or attacks which accomplished nothing but raising up un-Christian feelings. We strive hard to maintain a constructive policy."[148] It is ironic that the words the moderate leadership of the Bible Union applied to the extreme fundamentalists here were exactly the same as their modernist enemies applied to the Bible Union as a whole.

When the Nanjing Incident caused a massive withdrawal of foreign missionaries from the interior of China in 1927, a group of conservative Bible Union members met in Qingdao (Tsingtao), a port city in Shandong Province. They viewed this evacuation as a perfect opportunity for purging the missionary forces and re-orienting the missionary movement. In the summer of the same year, they drafted and issued a letter to the missionary constituencies in the home countries. In this letter they first blamed communism for all revolutionary wars and anti-imperialist uprisings raging across China

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[147] "Editorial Notes," BFC no.48 (November 1930): 1-2.

and then linked the communist movement with modernism within the churches. According to them, many missionaries, who were trained in the modernist dominated schools in North America, "by casting doubt upon the word of God and some of its fundamental doctrines have created fertile soil for the progress of Bolshevism and unbelief."[149] To correct this situation, the Qingdao group urged the "Boards and constituencies at home by all means to avoid sending back to China any who hold modernist views....for they can only discredit the integrity of the Bible" and " we should again place the chief emphasis upon direct evangelistic work."[150] They went on to recommend home constituencies to participate in a thorough investigation of all mission work and "satisfy themselves fully as to the worthiness of the workers and the character and soundness of the work done."[151]

To the Bible Union leadership, the charges and rhetoric of the Qingdao statement were simply too sweeping and acrimonious. Therefore, in December of 1927, the Committee of One Hundred decided not to adopt and publish it as the presentation of the Bible Union's official statement. According to James W. Lowrie, the main reason behind this decision were "the Bible Union Committee of One Hundred feared to do injustice to the large loyal majority of China missionaries and cripple the responsible administrative bodies in the West."[152] At this point it seemed that the division between the moderate and extreme wings within the Bible Union deepened and went public. The leadership of the Bible Union found itself facing the same uneasy job as the mission boards: to hold

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[148] Ibid., 2.

[149] "The Letter of the Tsingtao Group of Missionaries to the Missionary Constituencies in the Home Lands," BFC no.33 (February 1928): 3.

[150] Ibid., 3-4.

[151] Ibid., 5.

together a missionary organization whose members were often at odds with one another on different issues.

Naturally the ultra-fundamentalist elements among the missionary community got increasingly impatient with the Bible Union's lack of militancy in attacking modernism. This dissatisfaction contributed significantly to the founding of a new fundamentalist organization—the Christian Fundamental League for China—in June 1927. When an attempt to start a new fundamentalist movement within the Bible Union failed in that year, a fundamentalist conference was called in Shanghai, and a new interdenominational association was effected. The new organization published a quarterly—The China Fundamentalist—as its official organ. The size of the league was always tiny, and it never gained as much attention and influence as the Bible Union did. But its core group belonged to the most militant fundamentalist elements among the China missionaries. The key figures of the league included Hugh W White (Southern Presbyterian); Arie Kok (the Netherlands Legation in Beijing); Edgar E. Strother, who had been denied membership in the Bible Union and now served as the secretary of the China Fundamental League; M.A.Hopkins, who was a publicly confessed premillennialist, a leading figure in the Qingdao group, and a long-time professor at North China Theological Seminary. The league never publicly sought to break off with the Bible Union. As a matter of fact, White and Kok continued to be very actively involved in the Union. But the Fundamentalist League no doubt distinguished themselves from the Union by their much stronger aggressiveness and militancy in confrontation with the modernists.

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[152] J.W.Lowrie, "Reply from Secretary of Bible Union," The China Fundamentalist (May-June 1928): 43.

The Fundamentals League's founding conference drafted "A Message from Fundamentalist Missionaries in China to Supporters of Missions," which was circulated to the missionaries in China and church news media in America and England. The first part of the letter fiercely denounced "the more recent arrivals on the field, of the social service type." It then claimed that "in financial and other sympathetic support given by Boards of Missions to the liberalistic or Modernistic National Christian Council. Modernism has reared its head. It has been bold, aggressive and unashamed,"[153] but these facts were ignored by the authorities of the Home Church. It further declared that "the resultant destroying of the work of faithful servants of God, built up during the past century...and destroying of faith...are crimes of such magnitude as that...the present evacuation of missionaries has been permitted by God as means of purifying the missionary enterprise."[154] Finally the letter strongly urged the home supporters of missions to do everything to make sure only orthodox missionaries were sent back and to contribute only to the mission organizations that did not send any modernist missionaries. Unlike the Bible Union, which still hoped to urge the mission boards to guarantee the orthodoxy of the missionaries, the Fundamentals League had little faith in the boards and thus directly appealed to the home constituencies to take the matter into their own hands.

At the same conference, Edgar E. Strother spoke about the necessity of rallying the fundamentalist forces in China. He described "a thoroughly organized modernist machine, like a great army with well-trained officers...and a vast number of soldiers willing to blindly follow their trusted leaders even to death." In his opinion, "the

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[153] "A Message from Fundamentalist Missionaries in China to Supporters of Missions," in Report of Fundamentals Conference (a pamphlet printed in Shanghai, 1927), Hugh W White Papers, Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC, 5.

Fundamentalists...are as disorganized guerrilla warriors."[155] Therefore, to fight modernism successfully, the urgent need was to unify the forces of the fundamentalists. He also made a point that "there is so little difference between a mild Modernist and a mild Fundamentalist that the difference is scarcely evident, but this is certainly not the case with real Fundamentalists and out and out Modernists."[156] Considering his dispute with the leadership of the Bible Union, one has to wonder whether he had some Bible Union people or moderate conservative majority in mind when he talked about the "mild Fundamentalist." Of course, only the "real Fundamentalist" could take a firm stand against the enemy forces.

According to a "Suggested Policy for the League" drafted by Strother, "The League shall co-operate with all Fundamentalist organizations throughout the world, and with individual Fundamentalists, so far as possible," and "The League will aim to help its members to bear united testimony on the points on which they can agree, while realizing that it is not possible for all members to agree on all minor points."[157] At least theoretically the League appeared to share the same goal as the Bible Union: to form a broad alliance of the fundamentalists. Theologically and doctrinally there seemed very little fundamental difference between the Fundamentals League and the Bible Union. The official statement of the League mostly contained core and common beliefs of fundamentalism such as the triune God, the supernatural aspects of Jesus' life, his atonement and second coming, and creation theory over against "false and destructive"

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[154] Ibid.

[155] Edgar E. Strother, "Does Fundamentalism in China Need Organization?" in Report of Fundamentals Conference, Hugh W White Papers, 7.

[156] Ibid., 10.

[157] Ibid., 12.

theory of evolution. But it held a more extreme belief in biblical authority, which endorsed "a divinely inspired Bible, authoritative and without error in the original."[158] Just like the Bible Union, the League deliberately excluded so-called "minor points" or more controversial topics from its official tenets. For instance, an editorial of The China Fundamentalist explicitly stated that "as to Millenialism, The China Fundamentalist cannot take sides with one group of Fundamentalists as against another group of Fundamentalists." [159] Another editorial, written by M.A.Hopkins, regretted that William B. Riley (1861-1947) made premillennialism a prerequisite to membership in the "World's Christian Fundamentals Association." It asserted: "Fundamentalism and Premillenialism are not co-extensive terms. For all fundamentalists are not premillennial; neither are all premillennialists fundamental. One of the dangers that threaten Fundamentalism is internal dissension. Let us avoid this. Fundamentalism should be broad enough to include all who believe in the real second coming of Christ, whether they be pre-, post-, or a-millennial."[160]

In this respect the Fundamentals League was rather inclusive. What actually made this organization unique was not its theological agenda but its militancy in the defense of the common fundamentalist beliefs. Even though it was claimed that "the League will try to avoid criticism of any person or other organization, except where criticism seems absolutely necessary."[161] the League never hesitated to mount very personal and denunciatory attacks on its modernist foes mostly through The China Fundamentalist. It

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[158] "Articles of Association of the Christian Fundamentals League for China," The China Fundamentalist (July-August-September, 1937): 1

[159] "The Post-Millenial View," The China Fundamentalist (January-February-March 1937): 4

[160] "Fundamentalism and Premillennialism," The China Fundamentalist (January-March 1932): 11.

[161] Strother, "Does Fundamentalism in China Need Organization?" 12.

often tended to make an absolute distinction between younger, liberal missionaries and their older, orthodox counterparts and stress that these two groups were "mutually exclusive" and had no chance for any compromise.[162] A founding member of the league even declared that "fellowship with a traitor makes one."[163] When the Fundamentals League came into being, the nationalist movement sweeping across China was viewed by many missionaries with a great deal of suspicion, and many missionaries saw a Soviet or communist conspiracy behind the revolutionary tide. The Fundamentals League was a staunch believer in the communist conspiracy theory, and its favorite strategy against modernism was to link it with Bolshevism. It often accused the modernists of being "misled by the Red propaganda which has been injected in our churches under the guise of intellectuality and science"[164]or simply denounced a prominent liberal like Sherwood Eddy as "socialist and Soviet sympathiser."[165] In contrast to the Bible Union's persistent efforts at keeping a balance between the defense of faith and spirit of Christian charity, the rhetoric of denunciation the Fundamentals League employed was much more negative, hostile, and fierce.

The different attitude of the Bible Union and the Fundamentals League toward the mission boards was also very telling. The former always tried to work with the mission boards to achieve its own goal and was afraid of crippling the administrative work of the boards. But the latter was convinced that "modernism is in China because the Boards want it here....Modernism is maintained with orthodox money, ignorantly

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[162] Ibid., 7.

[163] Charles W. Rankin, "Is There Need for Sending Information to the Home Churches?" in Report of Fundamentals Conference, Hugh W. White Papers, 4.

[164] "Kuling and Faith", The China Fundamentalist (October-December 1929):22

contributed."[166]Therefore, the Fundamentals League simply bypassed the mission boards and brought its appeals directly to the home supporters of missions. By doing so it not only publicly tried to undermine the boards but also treated the boards like enemies or at least the sympathizers of the modernists. The Fundamentals League believed that the Christian missions were endangered by both the modernists and the "defeatist," compromising policy[167]; and its own mission was to present a uncompromising stand against modernism at any cost. In other words "the League is intended to do aggressive work, which other organizations have refused to do."[168] The aggressiveness and militancy was exactly what distinguished the Fundamentals League from the Bible Union. While the Bible Union was closer to the mainstream of the Protestant missionary community in China, groups like the Fundamentals League were on the far-right fringe. The contrast between them perfectly reflects the diversity and tensions within the fundamentalist camp in China during these years.

The origin and history of the Bible Union of China defy any simplified interpretation. The Union testified of the complexity and changing faces of the fundamentalist movement among China missionaries. The Bible Union represented a broad anti-modernist alliance among the Protestant missionaries in China. There were moderate and radical factions within the alliance. Both factions were determined to take a stand against the modernist influence in China. But the former wanted to do it in a more positive and constructive way, and they dominated in the most prominent fundamentalist

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[165] "The National Christian Council, Dr. Sherwood Eddy and Sovietism," The China Fundamentalist (July-September 1931): 24.

[166] Rankin, "Need for Sending Information," 4.

[167] "Editorial," The China Fundamentalist (Autumn 1938): 3.

institutions in China. The latter were more militant and vociferous in their attacks on modernism. They were definitely a minority within the fundamentalist camp, but their agitation played an undeniable role in stirring up controversies. In addition, the programs of the Bible Union pointed to the common concerns of the conservative missionaries in China or the issues on which the conservatives saw the need to battle against the liberals. The Bible Union of China was a barometer of the concerns, agenda, scope, and diversity of the fundamentalist movement among China missionaries.

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[168] Edgar E. Strother, "Suggested Policy for the League," in Report of Fundamentals Conference, Hugh W. White Papers, 12.

CHAPTER IV

THE NORTH JIANGSU MISSION AND THE NANJING THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

In the early decades of the twentieth century, an irritating and frustrating fact for the fundamentalist missionaries in China was that the modernists were increasingly becoming dominant in the emerging Christian institutions of higher education in China. A common view among the fundamentalists was that "the modernists' strongholds were schools. Here they were entrenched and it was here too that children of the Chinese Christians and outsiders were initiated into the first principles of modernism."[1] The fundamentalists' view of the condition within the mission schools in China was usually quite pessimistic. Among all the mission colleges and universities in China of 1924, Hugh W. White declared, "it is doubtful if there is one to which a boy may be sent without fear of his being taught to disbelieve his Bible."[2]

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[1] J. Gresham Machen, "Modernism and the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A," in Modernism and Foreign Missions, Two Fundamentalist Protests, ed. Joel A Carpenter (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc, 1988), 89. In my view the most important and serious charge the fundamentalists posed against the liberals in the educational work was that the mission schools were dominated by modernist teachings and thus helped destroy the faith of the Chinese Christian youth and gave new converts unorthodox beliefs. For the fundamentalists the modernist influence in theological education was the most fatal threat. (Jessie G Lutz, China and the Christian College, 1850-1950 (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1971), 235.) Therefore, I choose to focus on the fundamentalist-modernist controversy about theological education in China and do not discuss the issues regarding mission-sponsored universities.

[2] Hugh W.White, "We Must Separate to Save our Faith," Hugh W White Papers, Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC, 4,

Even worse, this "poisonous" modernist influence began to invade the newly emerging seminaries in China. To the fundamentalists' dismay, the liberal and social-gospel types of teachings gradually became very influential and even preponderant in some seminaries. White concluded in 1924 that only four out of thirteen seminaries in China still deserved the confidence of the conservatives.[3] Since the seminaries were directly responsible for training the future leaders of the Chinese churches, the liberal dominance there became the most serious concern for the conservatives. It was said that "the seminaries are being filled with men who are New Theology men and who have no message to give. The students are filled with rubbish and then expected to preach, and what will they preach?"[4] To the conservative missionaries, this was perhaps one of the most dangerous threats the modernists had posed to the whole missionary enterprise and the Chinese churches and one of the most crucial issues on which they could not compromise with the modernists. It is no wonder that the Bible Union of China always considered one of its most important tasks was "to promote sound teaching in theological seminaries and Bible schools and to seek means by which able exponents of the faith may reach the present and future leaders of the Chinese Church."[5] To make the mission schools, especially the Bible schools and seminaries, safe for orthodox beliefs became one of the top priorities on the fundamentalists' agenda.

Among all the Protestant seminaries in China, the Nanjing Theological Seminary (NTS) was one of the largest and most prestigious. As an inter-denominational joint venture involving Presbyterians, Methodists, and Disciples, the NTS became the focus of

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[3] Ibid.
[4] Quoted in Thomas, Modernism in China, 657.
[5] "The Bible Union of China, Tentative Statement," BBUC no.1 (January 1921): 3.

an investigation and controversy regarding the orthodoxy of the faculty's teachings, which eventually led to an internal division. This controversy provides an excellent case study of the fundamentalist-modernist face-off in the field of theological education in China.

The conservative champion in this controversy was the North Jiangsu (Kiangsu) Mission of the Southern Presbyterian Church. In order to understand better the role the North Jiangsu Mission played in the controversy, it is necessary to trace briefly the historical developments of the Presbyterian missions in China. After the First Opium War of the 1840s, the missionaries of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A were among the first group of Protestant missionaries who entered China. Presbyterian missions were started in several port cities, namely Ningbo, Xiamen, Guangzhou, and Shanghai. From the 1860s to the 1890s, the Presbyterian missions in China experienced rapid expansion and growth. Unprecedented numbers of missionaries arrived in the field; numerous mission stations, schools, and hospitals were opened in the interior provinces of China; and the Chinese Presbyterian congregations began to be organized into presbyteries and even synods. To administer effectively all the missions scattered across this vast country, the mission board of the Northern Presbyterian Church decided to group all China missions into three bodies in 1868: the Central China Mission, the North China Mission, and the South China Mission. In 1889 the Shandong Mission became a separate identity. Four years later the Hainan Mission was added. Each mission was supposed to handle its own personnel assignments and budget requests. In 1910 the China Council was set up to coordinate the Northern Presbyterian missions in China. The Council was responsible for approving personnel and budget requests from the missions.

After the Civil War the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (South) quickly took new initiatives in foreign missions. Its China mission was started in 1866 and greatly expanded during the last few decades of the nineteenth century. The Southern Presbyterian missions concentrated in Zhejiang (Chinkiang) and Jiansu Provinces, along the Yangtze River and the Grand Canal. In 1900 these missions were organized into two separate groups: the Mid-China Mission and the North Jiangsu Mission. The Mid-China Mission covered the areas south of the Yangtze River, where the great cities like Shanghai and Nanjing were located and were economically more prosperous and culturally more open to the Western influences. Theologically the mission was rather progressive-minded. The North Jiangsu Mission was stationed in the areas north of the Yantze River, which were economically poor and culturally more isolated. Theologically this mission was dominated by conservative views and was willing to defend theological orthodoxy aggressively. On the other hand, the Mid-China Mission also embraced a conservative theological position but never felt a strong need to fight for orthodoxy as their North Jiangsu counterparts did. The contrast between these two missions became increasingly sharp throughout the 1910s and 1920s. According to James E. Bear Jr., a Southern Presbyterian historian, "The opposition to 'liberalism' in union endeavors was a dominant factor in the thought and actions of the China Missions, especially in North Kiangsu Mission....The Mid-China Mission, as a whole, did not feel the acuteness of the problem, as did North Kiangsu, and was frequently on the defensive because of their cooperation in these institutions."[6]

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[6] James E. Bear Jr., The Mid-China and the North Kiangsu Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, 1912-1920, vol. 4: The Mission Work of the Presbyterian Church of the United States in China: 1867-1952, (The American Theological Library Association, Chicago: Joseph Regenstein Library,

American Presbyterian missionaries were the products of the historical developments of the Presbyterian tradition in North America. The theological and administrative conflicts among them were rooted in the conflicts within their home churches in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the early nineteenth century, one of the most significant issues within the Presbyterian Church in North America was the Old School-New School division. Living in a time of revival and frontier evangelization, the New Schoolers were eager to express their Reformed doctrines and theology in new ways. They tried to revise traditional Calvinistic views of human nature and stressed human's ability to respond God's gracious love. But the Old Schoolers maintained rigid Calvinistic doctrines on God's sovereignty, grace, and depravity of human nature.

The theological disputes were closely related to the conflicts over Presbyterian polity. The New Schoolers tended to downplay the importance of church authority and conformity to the Westminster Confession in favor of individual freedom, tolerance, pluralism, and spontaneous evangelical institutions. They were more open to the cooperation with other denominations in revivals and missions. On the other hand, the Old School adherents insisted on rigid conformity to the Westminster Confession and church authority. Therefore, the Old School favored strict Presbyterian Church's control of missionary and educational institutions. For the Old School, polity "was the means to

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1974, Microfilm), 372. John Leighton Stuart also confirmed two missions' different attitude toward theological issues: "I belonged to the Mid-China Mission, the members of which though of essentially the same theological position were far less disputatious and intolerant." His interpretation of the North-Jiangsu's hardline position was that "it may be that the harsh conditions of their life in a poverty-stricken, ill-governed, inaccessible part of the country tended to embitter or at least harden them." John Leighton Stuart, Fifty Years in China, The Memoirs of John Leighton Stuart, Missionary and Ambassador (New York: Random House, 1954), 44-45.

the end of purging the Church of the reputed doctrinal error."[7] As the progressive New School and conservative Old School engaged in constant and prolonged debates throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Presbyterian churches in the U.S. struggled to "establish parameters but allowed some freedom of conscience in interpreting the doctrine of the church."[8]

The New School-Old School conflicts led to the schism of the Presbyterian body in North America. The division was further deepened by the rising disputes over slavery. As most of the New School adherents advocated for abolitionism, the Old School gained great strength among Southern Presbyterians. By the early twentieth century, the old controversy was a contributing factor in the outbreak of the modernist-fundamentalist controversy. The Old School theological stronghold, the Princeton Theological Seminary, became the champion for the inerrancy of the Bible. As far as the mission field was concerned, the Old School tradition shaped the theological outlook of many Presbyterian missionaries within the North Jiangsu Mission of the PCUS and the Shandong Mission of the PCUSA. The Old School tendencies of confessionalism and denominational control of mission organizations were evident in conservative Presbyterian missionaries' reaction to the liberal missionary movement. Old tensions between church control and union institutions, doctrinal conformity and freedom of individual conscience emerged from time to time in the controversy within Presbyterian missionary communities in China.

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[7] George M. Marsden, The Evangelical Mind and the New School Presbyterian Experience (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1970), 70.

[8] James H. Smylie, A Brief History of the Presbyterians (Louisville, KY: Geneva Press, 1996), 63.

Among Presbyterian missions in China, the North Jiangsu Mission stood out as a "strongly evangelical but ultra-conservative group."[9] From 1910 to 1916, the North Jiangsu Mission found itself at odds with its moderate partnership Mid-China Mission over the issues of whether the missions should merge their own seminary into the proposed Nanjing Theological School. In 1901 the Mid-China Mission, the North Jiangsu Mission, and the Central China Mission (PCUSA) had agreed to organize a Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Nanjing. The new seminary was opened in 1906.

Around 1910 the church union and cooperation movement was getting stronger and stronger in China, and many small denominational colleges were consolidated into larger union institutions. Under such circumstances the idea of having an interdenominational theological school began to gain support among the Presbyterian home boards and missionaries in China. The Disciples, the Methodists (North), and the Presbyterians (North and South) who all had their own seminaries in Nanjing by that time agreed to cooperate in this joint venture and affiliate their own schools with the proposed new institution. The new school was first named the Nanjing Bible Training School and officially opened in September 1911. The next year the Southern Methodists were invited to enter the union.

At first the Southern Presbyterian Mid-China Mission was quite enthusiastic about the new union school. The North Jiangsu Mission did not completely reject the idea but expressed serious reservations about the project. It was concerned with the lack of "a definite basis of Bible teaching" and the way of the school board's being chosen and only agreed that the Presbyterian seminary buildings could be temporarily used by the school

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[9] Frank W. Price, History of Nanking Theological Seminary 1911 to 1961 (New York: The Board

for the next two and a half years.[10] When the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions of the PCUS favorably responded to the proposal of the new school, the North Jiangsu Mission interpreted the committee's response to mean that the Presbyterian seminary would be affiliated with but not be merged into the new school, and any faculty member of the new school could be rejected upon the objection of any two participating missions.[11] The North Jiangsu Mission was very concerned about whether theological orthodoxy and genuine Presbyterian tradition could be adequately preserved in such a union enterprise. Therefore, it was eager to maintain the independence of the Presbyterian institution and the missions' control of the new school. From the very beginning its cooperation in this school was tentative and conditional, and the Presbyterian Seminary remained a separate identity run by its own board. As a matter of fact, the first two and a half years of the new school were considered as a trial period.[12]

In May of 1913, before the trial period expired, the Board of Managers, the governing body of the school, proposed a constitution of the new school in order to make it a permanent institution. A new name for the school was proposed: the Nanjing School of Theology. The doctrinal basis of the school reads as follows:

> The Nanking Bible School accepts as the basis of its teaching the Word of God, and holds to the fundamental doctrines of our common evangelical faith, which faith has been the strength and heritage of the Christian Church through all of its history.
>
> 1. It accepts the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God, the supreme rule of faith and practice, and as containing all things necessary to salvation.

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of Founders of Nanking Theological Seminary, 1961),10.

[10] Bear, Mid-China and the North Kiangsu Missions, vol.4, 391.

[11] Ibid., 392.

[12] See Frank W. Price, "History of Nanking Theological Seminary, 1911 to 1961," in A River of Living Water: A Historical Sketch of Nanking Theological Seminary and the Board of Founders, ed. Frank T. Cartwright (Singapore: The Board of Founders, 1963), 59.

> 2. It accepts the Lord Jesus Christ as the divine Son of God, and His vicarious atonement for the sins of the world.
>
> 3. It accepts the divinity and personality of the Hole Spirit and His operation in the work of regeneration and sanctification.
>
> 4. It holds that the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a spiritual institution, organized for spiritual ends, depending on spiritual power, and as a Church has no political authority.[13]

The constitution acknowledged that the participating missions would control the election of faculty members, and that "the particular faith and polity of each co-operating church may be taught separately." Each mission provided two representatives, who were supposed to be one foreigner and one Chinese, for the Board of Managers.[14]

When this document came to the North Jiangsu Mission for approval, the Mission rejected the merger of the Presbyterian Seminary into the new school. Along with the Mid-China Mission, the North Jiangsu suggested certain changes in the proposed constitution. After reviewing the revised constitution in August 1914, the North Jiangsu Mission found its requests of changes were not met and thus voted to withdraw from the union enterprise. The mission stated that "it feels called to stand strongly for the fundamental principles common to the evangelical denominations of the Christian Church, and to do so, it is necessary to control the instruction given to evangelistic workers."[15] To achieve this goal, the mission insisted on the right of any two participating missions to prevent the election of a professor. In other words the mission considered this right as "the only safeguard of sound doctrine."[16] As the board annulled this right in the proposed constitution, the mission complained, it removed the only guarantee of the

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[13] "Proposed Constitution of the Nanking School of Theology," in The Minutes of North Kiangsu Mission, 1913, China Mission Papers, Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC, 33.

[14] Ibid, 32, 34. Usually the foreign representatives had most power, and the positions of Chinese representatives from many participating missions were frequently vacant in the 1920s.

[15] Bear, Mid-China and the North Kiangsu Missions, vol.4, 397

missions' control of orthodox teachings at the school. [17] The next reason for withdrawal, according to James Bear's interpretation, was that "North Kiangsu was poor and culturally backward. Students sent south of the River to Nanking found an area higher in standard of living.... It was not easy for them to return to their homes....North Kiangsu came to feel that it was better for them to have schools in their own cultural and economic area."[18] There is no doubt that the North Jiangsu Mission's reluctant attitude and final withdrawal were not just based on purely doctrinal reasons. To preserve the authentic Presbyterian teachings and maintain the administrative control of a union institution were important factors here. However, the most persistent concerns the North Jiangsu Mission had were perhaps how to set up a solid safeguard against any possible unorthodox teachings in the seminary. The North Jiangsu Mission showed the deep suspicion it inherited from the Old School tradition toward any union institution and its zeal to keep the institution under denominational control.

The Executive Committee of Foreign Missions of the Southern Presbyterian Church certainly understood this. After reviewing the opinions of both North Jiangsu Mission and Mid-China Mission, which had decided to remain in the seminary, the Committee recommended that North Jiangsu rescind its withdrawal decision. In its letter to the North Jiangsu Mission, the Committee praised the North Jiangsu Mission for its efforts in safeguarding the orthodox teachings and acknowledged that "the introduction into the school of teachers or text-books whose theological soundness was

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[16] The Minutes of the North Kiangsu Mission, 1915, China Mission Papers, Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC, 17

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid., 398.

questionable...would constitute such a reason" for withdrawal.[19] But it pointed out that the doctrinal basis of the seminary and its teachings so far had been satisfactory, and "it was only in view of the possibility of unsatisfactory teaching being introduced later that the Mission thought it advisable to withdraw."[20] In another letter to the mission in January of 1916, the Committee promised that it would try to persuade the seminary to accept the two missions' right of rejecting any of the faculty members, but it reiterated its satisfaction with the orthodoxy of the teachings in the seminary and urged the North Jiangsu Mission to remain in cooperation with other missions. [21]Under the pressure from the Executive Committee, the North Jiangsu Mission re-entered the Nanjing Theological School in 1916.

Throughout the 1910s the Nanjing Theological Seminary continued to grow. By 1915 it already had six faculty members--three Chinese and three American--and 113 students. Among its student body almost one half were Presbyterians. [22]Although the North Jiangsu Mission withdrew from the seminary for a few years, a considerable number of students came from the northern part of Jiangsu Province. By the fall of 1920, there were 133 students, and the largest number of students were the Northern and Southern Presbyterians and the Methodists.[23] By 1922 the student enrollment was 168.[24] Meanwhile, the academic standards were also becoming higher, and a new name—the Nanjing Theological Seminary—was adopted in 1917.

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[19] Minutes of Executive Committee of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S., vol.9 (December 1914) , Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC, 145.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid., vol. 10, January 1916, 195.

[22] Bear, Mid-China and The North Kiangsu Missions, vol. 4, 400.

[23] Ibid., 405.

[24] Price, History of Nanking Theological Seminary, 63.

During these years the seminary held fast to its doctrinal basis. Its rather conservative theological position can be seen in its treatment of Liu Ting-fang (T.T.Liu or Lew). Liu (1892-1947) graduated from Columbia University in 1919. He taught briefly at Union Theological Seminary in New York and later took a teaching position at Yenching University in China. Eventually, he was appointed the Dean of the School of Religion, Yenching University. After he earned his Ph.D degree from Columbia University, Liu was elected a faculty member of the NTS. The secretary of the Board of Managers was instructed to write to him in the summer of 1918 to inform him of the board's decision. In the same letter, the board reminded Liu of "the emphasis which this Seminary places upon the great fundamentals of the Christian faith, generally known as evangelical Christianity."[25] It went on to state that "As between the conservative and liberal attitudes towards Christian belief this institution while welcoming all freshness of interpretation still avowedly stands for the conservative position....We desire that the students shall stand for the faith once delivered unto the saints, being rooted and grounded in the truth....For this reason we write to you in this way...assuring you of our confidence in you that you will be able to accept without reservation the doctrinal basis of the institution."[26] Evidently the board's purpose in writing this kind of letter was to guarantee that orthodox teachings would be carried out in the seminary.

Even after its resuming cooperation in the NTS, the North Jiangsu Mission never completely gave up its suspicion of this union institution and remained watchful over the orthodoxy of the teachings at the seminary. Meanwhile, the mission began to look

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[25] The Minutes of North Kiangsu Mission, 1918, China Mission Papers, Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC, 23.

[26] Ibid.

seriously for ways of educating its own younger generation of Chinese preachers and converts. As early as 1912, the Shandong Mission of the Northern Presbyterians proposed cooperating with the North Jiangsu Mission to open a Bible and Normal School in Tengxian (Tenghsien), Shandong Province, which was much closer to northern Jiangsu than Nanjing. After much consideration the two missions reached an agreement to establish a union "for the purpose of training workers for the church and for elevating the standard of Christian intelligence among our Christian communities."[27] After Calvin W. Mateer, one of the Presbyterian missionary pioneers in Shandong, this new school was named the Mateer Memorial Institute. In 1918 the North Jiangsu Mission sent George Stevens to teach in this institute. The school was designed to accommodate to the vast poor mission fields in Shandong and northern Jiangsu. The majority of students had only an elementary level of education, and the Institute served to prepare them for seminary courses. Since both founding missions were strongly conservative, the theological orientation of Mateer Memorial Institute was understandably quite conservative from the beginning. In addition to this joint venture, the North Jiangsu Mission seriously considered the idea of opening a college in its own mission territory in 1919 but later dropped it.[28] Just as its Old School predecessors in North America, the North Jiangsu Mission always seemed to protect the purity of the churches' faith from any unwanted influence.

An interesting interlude of these beginning years of the NTS was the seminary's encounter with the Milton Stewart Evangelistic Fund. In 1917 the newly founded fund

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[27] The Minutes of North Kiangsu Mission, 1916, China Mission Papers, Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC, 27.

[28] See Bear, Mid-China and the North Kiangsu Missions, vol.4, 408-409.

decided to jump to theological education in China. J.H. Blackstone, its representative in the field, approached the NTS and offered to finance a new school that gave shorter courses for a wide range of evangelistic workers such as class leaders, Sunday school teachers, and colporteurs. The initial response of the NTS faculty was not very favorable. However, two key considerations weighed heavily in the NTS' decision in this matter. First, the seminary was experiencing financial difficulties at that time; second, "it was felt that if Mr. Blackstone's offer was not accepted, he would erect a school of his own in Nanking which would detract from the Bible School department of the Seminary."[29] Finally, the NTS and Blackstone reached an agreement gradually to turn the Bible School Department of the NTS into a separate school. A joint board for the school would be established, and the faculty members of the NTS would teach in the new school on a part-time basis. The whole project was completely financed by the "Milton Stewart Fund." Besides the Bible School in Nanjing, the Fund also gave financial support to other schools, mostly the Bible training schools like the Mateer Memorial Institute.[30] The leaders of "the Milton Stewart Fund" certainly knew the importance of training Chinese Christian workers according to a conservative theological agenda. However, since the Fund began to consider the possibility of erecting another Bible School in Shanghai and the Seminary also intended to improve its own academic quality, the Board of Managers of the NTS decided to discontinue this joint institution in 1920.[31] J.H.Blackstone's enthusiasm for Bible schools apparently corresponded to the general trend of Bible

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[29] The Minutes of North Kiangsu Mission, 1917, China Mission Papers, Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC, 19.

[30] See The Minutes of North Kiangsu Mission, 1919, China Mission Papers, Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC, 17.

[31] See Price, History of Nanking Theological Seminary, 61.

training institutions in North America. Since the mid-1910s, Bible schools in North America had experienced significant expansion, and also began to take the role of "the educational standard bearers for the movement."[32] In China such conservative missions as the CIM also heavily relied on Bible schools to train Chinese evangelists and church leaders. The ill-fated project of the "Milton Stewart Fund" was another example of the fundamentalists' favor of Bible school.

As the fundamentalist movement gained momentum and aroused controversies across the missionary communities in China in the early 1920s, a new and more serious controversy broke out in relation to the NTS. For years the North Jiangsu Mission was dominated by a group of very active, long-term, and outspoken conservative missionaries including A. Sydenstricher (1880-1931), father of Pearl Buck. Henry M. Woods (1883-1928), J.R.Graham (1889-1937), B.C. Patterson (1891-1939), Hugh W. White (1894-1940), and W.F.Junkin (1897-1943). These older missionaries were later joined by some younger but equally conservative missionaries such as Nelson Bell (1916-48), father of Ruth Bell Graham, H. Kerr Taylor (1917-33), and Martin A Hopkins (1917-51). During the 1920s and 1930s the conservative position of the North Jiangsu Mission became more clear-cut and radical. In an essay published in 1932, Mrs. J.R.Graham summarized the North Jiangsu's conservative character as follows: "Our message is so clear and simple. We receive and carry this message as straight from our Saviour's lips....North Kiangsu holds this message, and gives it to those sitting in darkness and the shadow of death. As long as North Kiangsu carries this message unmixed with philosophy and vain deceit, or

[32] Virginia L. Brereton, Training God's Army, The American Bible School, 1880-1940 (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1990), 69.

science, falsely so-called, or with the wisdom of man,...let us believe in her, and there will be no cause for discouragement."[33]

Clearly the North Jiangsu Mission viewed itself as the guardian and messenger of the pure, orthodox message. In the growing tension between the fundamentalist and modernist camps, the mission, as a whole, had no trouble taking the side with the fundamentalist cause. Immediately after the Bible Union of China was founded in Guling in August of 1920, the North Jiangsu Mission adopted a resolution of "most cordially approving and endorsing the purpose and program of the recently organized Bible Union of China; and that we urge the individual members of our Mission to give this organization their most prayerful and sympathetic support."[34] In contrast, the Mid-China Mission never felt so enthusiastic about the founding of the Bible Union. Except for its Educational Committee's endorsement of the educational program of the Bible Union, no other official statement was made by the Mid-China Mission.[35] The differences between the two missions later played a key part in the controversy regarding the NTS.

By the 1920s the accusations of modernism in the mission fields began to catch a lot of attention of the Southern Presbyterian home churches. The celebrated case of John Leighton Stuart and his ongoing examination by the East Hanover Presbytery especially helped bring the home churches' attention to the existence of modernism within the mission institutions in China.[36] Consequently several presbyteries in the PCUS presented overtures on the issue of modernism to the General Assembly of the Southern

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[33] Mrs. J.R.Graham, Sr., "Why I Believe in North Kiangsu?" The Presbyterian Survey 23 (February 1932): 88.

[34] Quoted in Bear, Mid-China and the North Kiangsu Missions, vol.4, 413.

[35] See ibid.

Presbyterian Church in 1921. The assembly in turn ordered the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions to start investigations of modernism among the foreign missions. As a report of the Executive Committee pointed out: "China is the field in which rumors of unsound teachings have attained the greatest notoriety."[37] The investigation committees were quickly set up by both Southern Presbyterian missions. The first report of the North Jiangsu Mission was drafted by Hugh W. White who was on the investigation committee and the Board of Managers of the NTS. In it he reassured the church that the mission schools, including the NTS, were safe.[38] But when White later discovered that two allegedly modernist works, William Newton Clark's Outline of Christian Theology and James Hasting's The Dictionary of the Bible, were used as textbooks at the NTS, he wrote to the professor responsible and asked him to withdraw these works. After the professor refused to do so, White brought this matter up at a meeting of the Board of Managers and requested these books be withdrawn from the seminary curriculum. To his dismay he quickly found himself having to "fight entirely alone." Among over twenty men present, only one Chinese professor supported him.[39] Eventually the board acknowledged that "a wrong impression had been given by publishing in the Catalogue that Clarke's Outline of Theology was the textbook in theology" and ordered that "in the future Clarke's be used as an elective book in theology, along with Strong, Hodge and

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[36] For a concise account of John Leighton Stuart's case, see Yu-ming Shaw, An American Missionary in China: John Leighton Stuart and Chinese-American Relations (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992): 71-87.

[37] Quoted in James Edwin Bear, Jr., The Mid-China and the North Kiangsu Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, 1921-1930, vol. 5: The Mission Work of the Presbyterian Church of the United States in China, 1867-1952 (The American Theological Library Association, Chicago: Joseph Regenstein Library, 1974, Microfilm), 367.

[38] Hugh W.White, "Our Mission Schools," Hugh W. White Papers. Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC, 3. He later regretted his action.

others." The board also replied that Hasting's book was always used only as a reference book.[40]

This minor incident proved just a prelude for what was coming, and the issue was far from being settled. The General Assembly of 1922 adopted a report by the Standing Committee on Foreign Missions, which stated: " There is...only too ample abundant evidence from many sources of the wide prevalence of modern infidelity among supposedly Christian workers in the Orient." The report went on to assert that "the continuance of our co-operation in union institutions shall depend on the removal of objectionable textbooks from the courses taught in these institutions" and urged the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions to continue its ongoing investigation of modernism. [41] This action on the part of the General Assembly illustrated the dominantly conservative nature and Old School orientation of the Southern Presbyterian Church. The church did not hesitate to exert its power of control over its seminary in order to guarantee the dominance of doctrinal orthodoxy within the seminary. The General Assembly's decision gave the investigation of the NTS new momentum and set the tone for it.

Under the instruction of the General Assembly, the Executive Committee urged two China Missions to "take up this whole matter De NOVO" and stressed that "our Missions should use every proper and legitimate means to secure the removal of such books as are named in the Assembly's action, namely, Clarke's Outlines of Theology and

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[39] "The Southern Presbyterian General Assembly and the Nanking Seminary," Hugh W. White Papers, Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC, 4.

[40] See Bear, Mid-China and the North Kiangsu Missions, vol.5, 351, 366.

[41] Quoted in ibid., 367.

Hastings' Bible Dictionary."[42] On the other hand, the Executive Committee still strongly believed in the value of the cooperation with other denominations and did not want its own missions to go too far in damaging the cooperation. The committee's position is evident in its following statement: " We would deplore the necessity of separating ourselves from the other evangelical Missions....While of course we could not think of making concessions that would involve a sacrifice of principle in this matter, we do not think we ought to take any extreme position in our requirement of concessions from other Missions."[43]

However, the Executive Committee's caution and conciliatory stance did nothing to prevent the North Jiangsu Mission from pursuing a rather aggressive investigation. With its previous history of suspicion of the NTS, the North Jiangsu Mission quickly took action. In August 1922 it formed an investigation committee composed of J.R. Graham, J.N. Montgomery (1917-49), W.C. McLauchlin (1916-49), F.A. Brown (1910-49), and M.A. Hopkins. Without waiting for the cooperation of the Mid-China Mission, the North Jiangsu committee went ahead with its own investigation. For the last few months of 1922, the committee interviewed ten faculty members of the NTS on the field. The report of the committee found seven members of the faculty "in substantial agreement with the doctrinal position of all evangelical churches as interpreted in the historical creeds"[44] and especially pointed out that all Presbyterian faculty members were "doctrinally sound" and praised them for "their diligence in promoting sound teaching and their vigilance in

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[42] Executive Committee to China Missions, 6 June 1922, James Robertson Bridge Papers, Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC.

[43] Ibid.

guarding the student body from unsound influences."[45] Furthermore, the report admitted that some rumors about the textbooks had been exaggerated. Contrary to Hugh W. White's charges, the report found that both Hasting's Dictionary and Clarke's Theology were actually used as the reference books instead of textbooks. The overall conclusion of the report was that "we believe that the predominating influence of the Seminary faculty is for the conservative side."[46]

The most serious problems the investigation found were with three faculty members. The first one was H.C. Ritter, a Southern Methodist. He was elected the Professor of Old Testament at the NTS in 1917 and later became the Chairman of the Department of Old Testament Literature and Interpretation. Ritter was an outspoken advocate of liberal theology and biblical criticism. Once he stated, "The object of my course as a whole is to give the students an idea of the Old Testament as the Hebrew Bible, of the processes by which it came to be recognized as sacred and authoritative by the Jews, of the tradition among the Hebrews as to the authorship of the various books, of how the Christian Church in taking up the Hebrew Bible took up the Hebrew traditions as to authorship, and of the reasons why modern Biblical scholars do not accept such traditions as final."[47]

It was no wonder that the investigation committee of the North Jiangsu Mission concluded that "his views of the inspiration of the Scriptures, and his interpretation of the

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[44] "Report of Committee Appointed by 1922 Meeting of North Kiangsu Mission to Investigate Union Institutions in Which our Church is Cooperating," in The Minutes of North Kiangsu Missions, 1923, China Mission Papers, Presbyterian Historical Society, 46.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Ibid., 46-47

[47] Quoted in "Report of Hugh W. White as Representative of the North Kiangsu Mission on the Board of Managers of Nanking Theo. Seminary," Hugh W. White Papers, Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC, 38.

Old Testament, together with his views on many other less vital doctrines, differ so widely from the historic creeds of all Evangelical Churches" that he would "fail to lead students to a sound view of the Bible." Therefore, he should be removed from the faculty.[48] The committee also found the theological views of Sie, an assistant professor of religious education, were very "immature and unsettled" and recommended he be dismissed from the faculty.[49] Although the committee was not satisfied with the views of another Chinese professor, Wesley Shen, it nevertheless recommended not to take any action regarding him at least for the time being.[50]

On February 10, 1923 a joint meeting of the investigation committees of the North Jiangsu Mission and Mid-China Mission was held. Two committees worked out a joint statement submitted to the Board of Managers of the NTS. The statement made two major complaints to the board. First, the board had failed to enforce Article VI. Section 1 of the seminary constitution, which required each faculty member to agree in writing to teach in harmony with the constitution: "Reaffirming his loyalty to the doctrinal standards or declarations of his own church, and declaring his belief in the integrity and historical reliability of the Holy Scriptures."[51] Second, the teachings of some faculty members were subversive of belief in the authority of the Bible. Constantly referring to the original agreement of union and constitution, this statement aimed to remind the board that the very doctrinal basis of the whole school was being violated. Then it made three requests: " (1) To insist upon having a signed statement from already elected and acting professors in accord with constitution. (2) To take steps to eliminate all teaching contrary to or

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[48] "Report of Committee Appointed by 1922 Meeting of North Kiangsu Mission," 47.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid., 48.

inconsistent with the constitution. (3) To provide in the Teaching Department that young men, Chinese or foreign, otherwise qualified but without practical experience be tested at least one year before being elected to a full professorship."[52] Finally the statement urged the board to sever its relation with H.J.Ritter. For the most part this joint statement was in line with the report of the North Jiangsu Mission. Its underlying assumption was that the NTS was drifting away from the "the conservative doctrine upon which the institution was founded," and needed to return to its original doctrinal consensus.[53] It was not coincidental that the document concluded by emphasizing that "we therefore through the Board urge all the cooperating bodies to unite with us in maintaining the Seminary in accord with the original agreement."[54]

On March 28, 1923 a sub-committee appointed by the two investigation committees met the seminary board and presented the results of the investigation and their recommendations. The representatives from both missions attended, and no Chinese board or faculty members were present. This was a crucial meeting in determining the future of the institution, and also the first massive encounter between the conservative position of two Presbyterian missions, particularly the North Jiangsu Mission and the moderate and even liberal position of most of the board members. It was reported that "there was the fullest and frankest discussion of all the questions involved in the present and future work of the Seminary."[55] In the other words there were "frank" exchanges of views between the missions and Board members.

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[51] Ibid., 49.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid., 50.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Quoted in Bear, Mid-China and the North Kiangsu Missions, vol.5, 370.

Hugh W. White, as the North Jiangsu Mission's representative to the board, was present at the meeting. According to his account, led by Frank Garrett (Disciples of Christ, Chairman of the Board), Lauress J. Birney (Northern Methodist), and Arthur Bowen (Northern Methodist, President of Nanjing University), and Walter B. Nance (Southern Methodist), the moderate and liberal majority of the board did try to resist the pressure from the Presbyterian missions. One of the arguments they made perhaps most frequently seemed to be the freedom of teaching different views and mutual tolerance. Several of those present expressed their opinions as follows: "There is a place here for so-called Progressives and Conservatives....There is here freedom to search for truth: We want men to be strong, true men, whether they hold to the old or the new views. We are opposed to any form of teaching which tends to undermine the faith of men, whether it comes from the liberal or the over-conservative side."[56] When White raised the issue that a certain professor denied the first chapter of Genesis as historical events, he was immediately confronted with such questions as "how about a student who did not believe in the literal view of such passages, could the seminary make him feel at home....or would we make him feel that he was a heretic?"; "How many of us do believe in it literally? What about the snake?"; "You cannot get a man out from home who does not believe in evolution." [57]

Formerly Dean of the Boston University School of Theology, Lauress J. Birney (1920-32) was appointed to a bishopric of the Northern Methodist Church in Shanghai. Theologically moderate, Birney witnessed the fundamentalist-modernist struggle in China

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[56] Hugh W. White, "Nanking Seminary Board of Managers, March 28, 29, 1923, Report to North Kiangsu Mission by Hugh W.White," Hugh W. White Paper, Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC, 2-3.

and came to the conclusion that "this contention can easily do as much to discourage the acceptance of Christianity among the thoughtful youth of China as the outright scepticism of the schools....The contentious modernist and the contentious fundamentalist are both highly dangerous nuisances."[58] His enthusiasm for Christian unity made him an ardent advocate for tolerance and freedom. Representing the Northern Methodists in the board meeting of the NTS, Birney repeatedly appealed to the tradition of freedom and tolerance and summed up the majority's position in his response to White: "We must take the long, the broad position, not insist on the views of a little group who have been brought up in a narrow environment. We must lead the students to believe, in the light of modern science and historical criticism. I can think of nothing finer than to have these several views all taught, and let the students see they are one in heart."[59]

Again White found himself a minority in the board meeting. However, the majority of the board seemed not yet ready for a full-blown confrontation with the North Jiangsu Mission. In the board's resolutions regarding the requests of two Presbyterian missions, the board clearly tried to accommodate these requests. In response to the first request of two Southern Presbyterian missions, the board voted that the Constitution, Article VI. Section 1 would be strictly adhered to, and all the faculty members were required to sign the statement. But the phrase "the integrity and reliability" of the scriptures "should be interpreted by each signer in accordance with the doctrinal

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[57] Ibid., 5.

[58] L.J.Birney, "What Should Be the Spiritual Equipment of the Missionary in Present-day China?" The Chinese Recorder 58 (September 1927): 561.

[59] White, "Nanking Seminary Board of Managers, March 28, 29, 1923," 5.

standards of his own Church, and should not be subject to any private interpretation."[60] In response to the second request the board announced that:

> It was voted to instruct the Executive Committee and Faculty to take steps to eliminate any teaching, if there be such, contrary to or inconsistent with the Constitution.
> ...
> Therefore we will not accept negative methods of teachings or destructive criticism of the Bible. On the other hand we will disapprove of any attitude towards or treatment of modern views that would lead students to the conclusion that Word of God and His Church cannot stand and flourish in the presence and light of the highest modern learning in scientific investigation, but the acquainting of the students with the various modern views should be done with the utmost care and in a way to confirm and increase the confidence of the students in the integrity and reliability of God's Word.[61]

The board complied with the third request and stipulated that at least one year of practical work was required for any candidate for professorship.[62] After reviewing some materials used for the teaching of the Old Testament, the board concluded that they were "unsuitable, and we recommend that such teaching be discontinued, and that emphasis be placed on more spiritual and practical lines."[63] However, the board declined to dismiss H.C. Ritter. Since he was on furlough at that time, any decision about his relation with the seminary was postponed. Although the NTS student body appealed for his return, Ritter eventually decided to stay in North America.

Obviously, this carefully worded document had a dual purpose: to satisfy the Presbyterian requests as much as possible as well as to maintain freedom of conscience and scholarship of the faculty. Underneath the appearance of compliance, the board

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[60] Quoted in Bear, Mid-China and the North Kiangsu Missions, vol.5,370. The issue was complicated by official position of the United Christian Missionary Society (Disciples of Christ), which opposed signing any creed but the New Testament. The board allowed the Disciples of Christ to endorse the seminary statement by either letter or verbal statement. (Ibid)

[61] Ibid., 371.

actually refused to accept most of the accusations and conservative agenda of the North Jiangsu Mission. By inserting the words "if there be such" into the statement of " to take steps to eliminate any teaching contrary to or inconsistent with the Constitution," the board showed its reluctance to admit the existence of modernist teachings at the seminary. Furthermore, by putting the right of the interpretation of the doctrinal statement almost completely into the hands of the individual signer, it rejected the conservatives' call to return to the common doctrinal consensus. Finally, by striking a balance between orthodox and modern views of the Bible, it rejected biblical literalism. Indeed, the majority of the participating missions in the seminary had different visions about what the seminary should be from the North Jiangsu Mission.

Nevertheless the joint sub-committee of the North Jiangsu and Mid-China Missions was satisfied with the responses of the Board of the Managers of the NTS and described "the attitude of the Board was both responsive and sympathetic, as indicated by their cheerfully granting us essentially every request we were instructed to bring before them."[64] The debate seemed to be settled for the time being. However, the ensuing events dramatically heated up controversy.

On June 4, 1923 H.C.Ritter wrote a letter to the Board of the Managers, which was a systematic explanation and defense of his position. In it he insisted on his historical-critical approach to the Old Testament and explained the necessity of teaching modern Biblical scholarship. He said, "The Seventh day Adventists, the Zionists, the Holy Rollers, and dozens of other sects, including the heavily endowed propaganda of the

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[62] Ibid.
[63] White, "Nanking Seminary Board of Managers, March 28, 29, 1923," 6.
[64] Ibid., 368.

Premillenialists, all trade upon the ignorance of the Chinese Christians....It is vital that we arm our students against such propaganda."[65] He further defended the usage of the textbooks with liberal inclinations: "I do not know how to interpret the Bible and how to interpret Christianity to the eager inquiring minds of the Chinese students, if I cannot freely use as text-books and source materials such standard theological books as Clarke's Theology, Hasting's Bible Dictionary, Gray's Introduction, Kneudson's and Davidson's Old Testament Theology, Eiselen's and Smith's Historical Studies in the Old Testament History"[66] In his view "there should be room for both viewpoints to be taught side by side, without prejudice to the one or the other, with students free to accept either viewpoint without criticism when led by conscience and judgement to do so."[67] He finally indicated his willingness to resign if necessary. Ritter's letter highlighted several major issues at dispute between conservatives and liberals and attracted significant attention among the board and missions.

In the meantime the Board of Managers of the NTS also felt that the issues between the seminary and North Jiangsu Mission were far from being settled. It proposed a special meeting of the board to consider "whether it is practical to 'maintain the Seminary on its present union basis.'"[68] Obviously, the board realized the gravity of the whole controversy and what was at stake was nothing other than the future of the seminary. In a letter to the North Jiangsu Mission, the board raised two major issues: first, whether the faculty should be investigated by the seminary board or someone else;

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[65] Quoted in White, "Report of Hugh W White as Representative of the North Kiangsu Mission on the Board of Managers of Nanking Theological Seminary," 38.

[66] Ibid., 39.

[67] Quoted in "Appendix: To the Members of the North Kiangsu Mission," in The Minutes of the North kiangsu Mission, 1924, China Mission Papers, Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC, 7

second, what was exactly the constitution's requirements as to the scriptures and its interpretation. [69] These moves reflected the changes of mood on the part of the board. Some people on the board and faculty were obviously unhappy with seemingly high-handed investigation and demands made by the Southern Presbyterian missions and attempted to challenge the missions' authority to do so. Thus, rather than trying to satisfying both conservatives and liberals by diplomatic wording and delicate balance between two views, the board apparently felt it had to make some clarifications on the doctrinal basis and administrative structures of the seminary, even if that meant a show-down with the North Jiangsu Mission.

On the other hand, the North Jiangsu Mission was dissatisfied with the resolutions of the board meeting in March of 1923. For the mission the board's statement that the doctrinal basis of the seminary might be interpreted by each signer was simply too vague and risky and would inevitably led to confusion and misunderstanding. The underlying concern seemed to be that the legitimization of each individual's interpretation certainly meant the loss of any common theological standard. Ritter's letter also helped convince the mission of the necessity of a clear-cut doctrinal statement. Therefore, the mission took on the job of clarifying how the doctrinal basis of the seminary should be interpreted. This was done in a meeting of the North Jiangsu Mission in August of 1923, and the following resolution was passed in that meeting:

> Therefore the North Kiangsu Mission requests the cooperating Missions to declare, with this Mission , that the doctrinal basis as defined in Art. VI. Sec. 1 and Art. VII. when fairly interpreted, includes the following essential facts of

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[68] White, "Report of Hugh W. White as Representative of the North Kiangsu Mission on the Board of Managers of Nanking Theological Seminary," 38.

[69] Ibid.

Christian truth, which have always formed an integral part of the doctrinal standards of the cooperating churches.

(1) It is an essential doctrine of the Word of God and of the doctrinal standards of the cooperating churches that the Holy Spirit did so inspire, guide and move the writers of the Holy Scriptures as to keep them from error.

(2) The Deity and virgin birth of our Lord Jesus Christ are essential doctrines of the Word of God and of the doctrinal standards of the cooperating churches.

(3) The vicarious atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ is as essential doctrine of the Word of God and of the doctrinal standards of the cooperating churches.

(4) It is an essential doctrine of the Word of God and of the doctrinal standards of the cooperating churches concerning our Lord Jesus Christ that on the third day He arose from the dead with the same body with which He suffered and with which He also ascended into Heaven and sitteth at the right hand of His Father, making intercession.

(5) It is an essential doctrine of the Word of God, the supreme standard of our faith that our Lord Jesus Christ showed his power and love by working mighty miracles. This working was not contrary to nature but superior to it.[70]

For the North Jiangsu Mission, these points should be the doctrinal common ground and minimum theological standard for all participating missions of the seminary. Then the same resolution went on to request the Board of Managers and faculty members to endorse the North Jiangsu's above interpretation "to do so with the understanding that the above interpretation is the plain and historical intent of the Constitution."[71] When this resolution was passed, the North Jiangsu Mission apparently began to realize that the conservatives had no control of the board, and this was the source of all the problems at the seminary. Therefore, the key of keeping the seminary conservative was to keep the board conservative in the first place. It was not surprising to see the North Jiangsu Mission go a step further in making the following request in its resolution: "That in order to avoid future difficulties and to maintain the standing of the Seminary above reproach,

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[70] Quoted in Bear, Mid-China and the North Kiangsu Missions, vol.5, 372-73.

we request, the cooperating missions to send only such men to the Board of Managers as can heartily agree to administer the institution in harmony with the Constitution as interpreted above. Each member of the Board of Managers, on entering upon his duties, shall sign a written statement to this effect."[72]

This rather aggressive move reflected the growing frustration among the missionaries of the North Jiangsu Mission with the NTS' reluctance in reasserting the conservative doctrinal position. The mission was becoming tired with seemingly endless arguments with the liberal elements in the seminary and wanted to set up a safeguarding mechanism at the power center of the seminary to prevent any disputes once and for all. Hugh W. White was frustrated by his experience of serving on the board. He lost all hope of bringing the whole seminary in line with the position of North Jiangsu. In his report to the mission in 1923 he evaluated the condition in the seminary as follows:

> Under the present system of organization there is no possible means of keeping the institution free from teachings which discredit the Scriptures since the cooperating Missions put men on the Board who want liberal teaching in the Seminary, any steps we may take about the faculty or the text-books will be futile. We have no means of bringing these missions to conform to the Standard of their own churches nor can we influence the election of these missions of their representative on the Board. Therefore we cannot carry out the requirements of the constitution....It is evident, then, that efforts to correct the situation through the faculty or the Board as now constituted will not avail. If all the Modernists on the faculty were removed and the same method of forming the Board, it would not be five years till we would have the same situation over again.[73]

White apparently believed that it would take a complete organizational overhaul or even separation to change the situation. Therefore, in his view the North Jiangsu mission's new

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[71] Ibid., 373.
[72] Ibid.

effort was obviously inadequate to turn the NTS around and would inevitably fail once again.

This time the Mid-China Mission did not follow the lead of the North Jiangsu Mission in fighting the Board of Managers of the NTS. In a resolution adopted by the mission's meeting in October of 1923, the Mid-China Mission still expressed its sympathy with the North Jiangsu Mission and asserted "the five points in the statement of the North Kiangsu Mission as being consistent with and an aid to interpreting the original doctrinal basis."[74] Except for a call for all board members to have their respective missions define their own doctrinal statement, the Mid-China Mission failed to endorse the North Jiangsu Mission's request of subscription to the doctrinal statement by all board members. [75]

When the special meeting of the board was held on November 1, 1923, a clash between the North Jiangsu Mission and the majority of the board was bound to happen. North Jiangsu Mission sent H. Kerr Taylor and W.F. Junkin to present its case before the board. A relatively new but conservative missionary, Taylor was just elected the Chairman of the North Jiangsu Mission and its representative to the board in the same year. W.F. Junkin was one of veteran conservative voices within the North Jiangsu Mission. At an informal meeting on October 31, the issues raised by Ritter's letter were discussed. Taylor and Junkin "urged the gathering, in presenting the paper from our mission, to endorse, and secure ....such action on the points involved as would eliminate

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[73] White, "Report of Hugh W White as Representative of the North Kiangsu Mission on the Board of Managers of Nanking Theological Seminary," 40.

[74] Bear, Mid-China and the North Kiangsu Missions, vol.5, 374.

[75] Ibid. See also The Minutes of the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions, 1923-24, vol.18., December 1923, 138.

future confusion and misunderstanding."[76] But the pressures from the North Jiangsu Mission were quickly met with overwhelming resistance. The liberal and moderate majority of the board and faculty apparently decided that the requests of the North Jiangsu Mission were too much to take, and they were not willing to accommodate to its conservative agenda anymore. Immediately, the NTS faculty presented their own paper, which was apparently designed as a substitute for the paper of the North Jiangsu Mission. In the discussion Bowen, Nance, and several other board members and faculty representatives made it clear that they either favored or completely agreed with the positions of Ritter's letter and faculty's paper. Suggesting a couple of minor changes in the faculty's paper, Birney pleaded for "liberty of teaching in the faculty and liberty of belief on the part of the students."[77]And some of those present even publicly expressed their doubts about the historicity of the book of Jonah, Genesis, and the prophets. Edwin Marx of the United Christian Missionary Society (Disciples of Christ) stated that "his church stood for liberty of belief and liberty of teaching on the one foundation of belief in Jesus Christ, and that he felt sure that his church would not stand for any stricter interpretation of the constitution."[78] When the issue was introduced of whether the faculty's paper had binding authority on future faculty members, the debate got so tense that the meeting almost broke off. Harry F. Rowe, President of the Seminary, had to assure that the paper was only "an expression of the present faculty" and would not be binding on future faculty.[79] Throughout the meeting Taylor and Junkin repeatedly "urged a clear and unequivocal stand that would keep the Seminary conservative." But they

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[76] "Appendix: To the Members of the North Kiangsu Mission," 7
[77] Ibid.
[78] Ibid., 8.

acknowledged that "our pleadings were in vain, and to our dismay we found ourselves entirely alone in our request and contention."[80]

At the formal board meeting of the next day, the North Jiangsu representatives found themselves in the same minority position again. Their motion for the adoption of the North Jiangsu Mission paper was quickly defeated. In another round of tense debate about the faculty's paper, the same assurance was made that the approval of this paper by the board only expressed the approval of the current faculty's teachings, and the North Jiangsu representatives' pleading for a clear stand on doctrinal issue was again futile. The final resolution of the board accepted the faculty's statement as "an acceptable presentation of the theological teachings and position of the faculty," and North Jiangsu's statement was only included in the appendix for information.

Another critical action the board took at the meeting was to strip totally any participating mission of the right of directly conducting an investigation of any faculty member. "In order to preserve the highest degree of harmony and fraternal good will among the members of the Seminary faculty," the board stated, "inquiries into the kind of teaching done by any members of the faculty, either in the class room or by authorized text books, should be made only by a committee appointed by the Board of Managers."[81] The board claimed that the interests and desires of the missions were guaranteed in this arrangement because all actions of the board were subject to the review of the missions.[82] The passage of this action meant that the NTS would no longer be obligated to provide the North Jiangsu Mission and Mid-China Mission with any cooperation in their ongoing

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[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid., 9-10

investigations and had authority to block any future attempt. Obviously, the NTS board tired with the constant disputes with the mission and hoped to prevent any controversy in the future once and for all by excluding the mission from any direct involvement in investigating the faculty. Of course the representatives of the North Jiangsu Mission mounted a strong protest to this decision but to no avail. Without doubt, the most profound outcome of this board meeting was that the North Jiangsu Mission suffered a total defeat. It became clear to the mission that it was almost impossible to regain control of the seminary and return it to its original conservative foundation. The break-up of the union between the North Jiangsu Mission and the NTS seemed inevitable.

In January of 1924, the North Jiangsu Missions met to hear the report of the investigation committee. After a long discussion the meeting decided with a vote of 23 to 7 to withdraw from the NTS and filed a report to the General Assembly of 1924 through the Executive Committee of the Foreign Missions. In this report several reasons were cited for the action, and all of them, except the first one, had to do with theological and doctrinal disputes:

> 1.Because of the difficulty of efficiently controlling an institution composed of so many divergent units. 2. Because, in spite of earnest efforts and constant vigilance we have failed to keep the institution free from the compromising influence of men of liberal views on the Board.... 3. Because we have been unable to secure from the Board satisfactory guarantees that the teaching in the institution will be positively and definitely conservative, especially on the subjects of Biblical Introduction and Exegesis. (We are not here referring at all to denominational differences) 4. Because careful investigation shows that the Board had failed in its duty to safeguard the institution from unsound teaching. 5. Because the present arrangement is provocative of constant misunderstanding and contention, not only among the missions cooperating in the institution, but among the two missions of our church, and also between individual members of our own Mission. 6. Because of the well known fact that among the more

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[82] Ibid., 10.

> conservative elements not only in the various missions, but to a considerable extent in the Chinese church, there is a lack of confidence in the institution.... 7. Because our testimony to the truth is dimmed by connection with an institution,...that certain individuals on the Board and Faculty hold that there should be room for the teaching of both liberal and conservative viewpoints with regard to the Scriptures.... 8. Because the present critical condition of the church throughout the whole world, demands of our church an undimmed, clear-cut, ringing, unequivocal testimony.[83]

Based on these reasons the North Jiangsu Mission gave the NTS notice that their representatives on both board and faculty would be withdrawn, and the connection between the mission and seminary would cease in one year. This action of the North Jiangsu Mission was an acknowledgement of failure in its struggle against the modernist influence and a testimony of its conservative convictions. In the view of the North Jiangsu Mission, such an uncompromising stand was badly needed on the part of the conservative party everywhere.

In its resolution of withdrawal, the North Jiangsu Mission called upon the Mid-China Mission to leave the seminary so that two missions could re-establish a joint Presbyterian seminary. But the Mid-China Mission had a rather different view of the condition in the NTS. In its report to the General Assembly, the mission affirmed the existence of many conservatives in other cooperating missions and the progress made by the NTS in checking the inroad of modernism. [84] Apparently the Mid-China Mission disagreed with the North Jiangsu Mission's pessimistic conclusion regarding the NTS and still believed that the seminary could stay in the conservative course. In fact, the Mid-China report frankly stated that "reason given for withdrawal by the North Kiangsu

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[83] "Called Meeting of the North Kiangsu Mission," in The Minutes of the North Kiangsu Mission, 1924, China Mission Papers, Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC, 3-4

[84] See Bear, Mid-China and the North Kiangsu Missions, vol.5, 376-77

Mission are not based on full statements of facts."[85] Citing the importance of the NTS as the largest seminary in a strategic location in training the leadership for the Chinese church and the potential damage the withdrawal could bring to the influence of the Presbyterian missions, the Mid-China report concluded that "it is our solemn conviction that our testimony as a church and for the whole church in China can best be borne by holding and strengthening a position of large influence and opportunity, rather than by abandonment or isolation."[86] Therefore, the mission appealed to the Executive Committee and General Assembly to allow them to remain in the union with the NTS in order to "further strengthen the conservative influence of this important institution."[87] The Mid-China Mission never disputed the conservative theological agenda of North Jiangsu, but it definitely held a different opinion about the best way to preserve and strengthen the conservative influence. While the North Jiangsu Mission was convinced that to stay in union with the liberal parties only led to the compromising of the conservatives' position and weakening of their testimonies, the Mid-China Mission insisted that the union provided an opportunity for the conservative voice to be heard by a broader audience. At the early stage of the controversy, the Mid-China Mission did stand by the North Jiangsu Mission in filing the protests to the Board of Managers of the NTS. But by the end it went to the point of criticizing the North Jiangsu Mission as the "isolationists." The prolonged controversy centered on the NTS deepened the divisions not only between the conservatives and liberals but also between the conservatives and moderates. The North Jiangsu Mission's concern of the controversy's harmful impact on

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[85] Quoted in ibid., 377
[86] Ibid., 377.
[87] Ibid.

the relation between the two Southern Presbyterian missions in China was certainly not groundless.

As the controversy reached its final point, the Executive Committee of Foreign Mission of the Southern Presbyterian Church generally took a position closer to the one of the Mid-China Mission. From the moment of establishing the seminary, the executive committee did everything to maintain this union enterprise. Even by the end, the committee never lost its faith in the seminary and still tried to hold the original union together. After receiving the reports from its two China missions, the executive committee met in April of 1924 and resolved that "both our China Missions be authorized and instructed to continue for the present their participation in Nanking Seminary."[88] Just as the committee did in 1914, it tried to override the withdrawal decision of the North Jiangsu Mission. This action was partly based on the committee's conviction that the necessary measures were already in place in the constitution of the NTS to prevent the modernist influence, and two China missions still could "use all legitimate endeavors to uphold and strengthen the conservative influence of this important institution."[89] As usual the committee avoided any direct refutation of any particular mission and did its best to satisfy every party in the controversy. In an attempt to accommodate to the demands of the North Jiangsu Mission and to show its own seriousness about the modernist problem at the seminary, the committee asked the General Assembly to pressure the participating churches in the NTS to have their board members sign the doctrinal statement of the constitution. In addition the committee declared that "unless the teaching in the Seminary

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[88] The Minutes of the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions, 1924-25, vol.19 (April 1924), 20.
[89] Ibid.

be kept in line with the historic evangelical interpretation of the Bible, it will take steps toward the dissolution of the joint control."[90]

When this matter was brought up in the General Assembly of 1924, a special committee was appointed to consider all the papers presented. With less enthusiasm for unity, this committee reached a decision rather different from the position of the executive committee: the Mid-China Mission was allowed to remain in the seminary; and the North Jiangsu Mission was allowed to withdraw after considering the matter once more.[91] The General Assembly adopted this recommendation and again urged the North Jiangsu Mission "at least for the present to consider whether it would not be wise to retain its connection with the Seminary."[92] In the meantime the Assembly reiterated the two requests the executive committee made to the seminary and other cooperating churches and added another one that affirmed the Assembly's right to make new official investigations of the teaching in the NTS at any time.[93]

In accordance with the above resolution of the General Assembly, the North Jiangsu Mission met in August of 1924 and decided to hold their action of withdrawal in abeyance for one year. At the same meeting, the mission voted against the proposed amendment of the constitution of the NTS, which only authorized the Board of Manager to initiate any investigation of the faculty.[94] By October of 1925, the North Jiangsu Mission finally concluded that "there have been no such changes in connection with Nanking Seminary as to cause us to alter our convictions" and decided to sever its

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[90] Ibid.

[91] See Bear, Mid-China and the North Kiangsu Missions, vol.V., 378.

[92] The Minutes of the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions, 1924-25, vol.19 (October 1924), 28

[93] Ibid.

relationship with the Nanjing Theological Seminary. [95] Two years later the last faculty member from the North Jiangsu Mission left the NTS, and the North Jiangsu Mission's withdrawal was completed. The controversy about the NTS finally came to an end

For the most part the two decades of the cooperation of the North Jiangsu Mission and the Nanjing Theological Seminary were troublesome and stormy. In the 1910s the mission had multiple concerns about the seminary: administrative, denominational, and doctrinal. While trying to preserve Presbyterian control and identity, the mission feared the danger of unorthodox teachings and fought to prevent potential danger. By the 1920s the mission's concern was quite simple: the soundness of the teachings and doctrinal basis of the NTS. In the eyes of the mission, its worst fear of the 1910s had to a great extent become a reality: the modernist teachings such as higher criticism and denial of the supernatural aspects of Christian beliefs had spread rampantly within the seminary by means of the faculty and textbooks. The mission fought hard to turn back this modernist tide and restore the evangelical tradition of the seminary. In its battle to keep the seminary conservative, the mission often found itself up against higher criticism and evolutionary theory as well as the arguments for tolerance, diversity, and liberty of conscience and choice. To the North Jiangsu Mission, in the names of diversity and tolerance, the truth would be compromised in a more subtle and harmful way. The only way to avoid this situation was to hold fast to a conservative theological formula, which was supposed to be valid and mandatory for everyone at the seminary. Consequently, the mission made enemies out of the hardline modernists as well as the moderate majority. In many ways the North Jiangsu Mission's fight for doctrinal soundness was also a fight for

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[94] Bear, Mid-China and the North Kiangsu Missions, vol.5, 379.

denominational control of the seminary. North Jiangsu's insistence on a mandatory doctrinal standard and mission's right of investigation of the faculty was based on its conviction that only missions' theological and administrative authority and supervision could safeguard orthodox theological standard. In the view of the North Jiangsu Mission, administrative control was the means to prevent the NTS from being taken over by modernism. On the other hand, the NTS board and faculty tried to maintain the seminary's own independence and resist excessive interference of the supporting missions in the name of theological diversity, freedom, and tolerance. Therefore, the controversy centered on the Nanjing Theological Seminary was a good illustration of constant and common tension between doctrinal conformity and individual freedom, leadership of missions, and self-determination of mission-related institutions in the mission fields.

The controversy of the Nanjing Theological Seminary was not just a conflict between two institutions, namely, the North Jiangsu Mission and the seminary, but it also had a personal dimension. In other words certain fundamentalist missionaries played very significant roles in provoking and intensifying the controversy. A very significant aspect of the whole controversy was the complicated and changing relationship among certain Southern Presbyterian missionaries, the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions, home presbyteries, and the General Assembly.

The official investigation of the NTS by the Southern Presbyterian missions in 1922, which eventually led to the withdrawal of the North Jiangsu Mission, was authorized by the General Assembly. This action was initiated largely because of what the

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[95] Ibid.

Executive Committee called "rumors of unsound teaching,"[96] which were brought in and spread among the home churches mainly through the controversial speeches of the fundamentalist figures like W.H. Griffith Thomas, and the correspondence, reports, and publications of the missionaries. In the early 1920s these "rumors" caused considerable concerns and fears among the home constituency regarding modernism in the mission fields. And home churches in turn began to put pressure on the Executive Committee in this matter. Of course the sources of these "rumors" were largely beyond the control of the committee. Naturally, the committee often felt that it had been bypassed by some fundamentalist missionaries, and it was very hard to manage the sensation and pressure these missionaries created. That was why Samuel H. Chester, the secretary of the Executive Committee from 1984 to1926, wrote the following words in the same letter that instructed the China missions to start new investigations according to the resolution of the General Assembly in 1922:

> I am instructed by the Executive Committee in bringing this matter to your attention to sound a note of warning as to the possible danger of much harm being done by individual missionaries writing alarmist letters to their friends in this country, or seeking to remedy what they may regard as evils on the Mission field by agitation of such matters in our Church papers and by appealing to Church courts with the view of bringing such questions before the General Assembly in that way. Matters of such seriousness ought if possible to be handled by the Missions as such, and where individual missionaries cannot conscientiously accept the decisions of their Missions and wish to bring the question under consideration before the General Assembly, we think it a much safer and better plan for them to do this by way of regular appeal from the Mission to the Executive Committee and then from the Executive Committee to the General Assembly if they cannot conscientiously accept the verdict of the Committee on their appeal.[97]

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[96] Bear, Mid-China and the North Kiangsu Missions, vol.5, 367.

[97] S.H. Chester to China Missions, 6 June 1922, James Robertson Bridge Papers, Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC.

Obviously, what the committee feared was not that the missionaries had complaints, but that they did not file their complaints through the regular channel and thus created some consequences that the committee did not want to deal with. However, the committee's warning by no means silenced the conservative voices.

One of the most controversial "alarmists" and "agitators" was perhaps Hugh W. White. He grew up in Virginia, and his grandfather and father were all ministers of the Southern Presbyterian Church. White started his missionary career in China in 1894 and served in four mission stations in the North Jiangsu area for more than four decades. Immersed in the Old School tradition, White's theological orientation was conservative. Throughout the 1920s White's conservative position became increasingly radical and militant. He was convinced that his task was to "save our Church from the present Bolshevistic movement in church and state, which if unchecked will undermine Christian civilization."[98] For years he was extensively involved in the founding of the Bible Union of China and the Christian Fundamentals League for China, and he fiercely and frequently denounced modernism in his large number of anti-modernist articles published in both China and North America and in his speeches in the fundamentalist conferences like the World's Fundamentalist Convention of Minneapolis in June 1924. There were good reasons for him to be called the "Champion of Orthodoxy."[99] On the issue of the NTS, he found himself constantly at odds with the Executive Committee, and his relation with the committee deteriorated throughout the 1920s.

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[98] H.T.Bridgman, "Hugh Watt White, D.D.—An Appreciation," The Chinese Recorder 72 (September 1941): 509.

[99] Bear, Mid-China and the North Kiangsu Missions, vol.5, 380.

After serving on the Board of Managers of the NTS for about three years, and especially after attending the board meeting in August of 1923, White got completely disillusioned with the whole seminary. He began to launch constant attacks upon the modernists in the NTS and advocated an immediate and total withdrawal of the Presbyterian missions from the institution. Convinced that the situation at the NTS was much worse than the Board of Managers said and even what the investigation committees of the two Southern Presbyterian missions had found, White insisted that the board's claim of the Hasting's Bible Dictionary being used only as a reference book was not dependable,[100] and there were a whole group of modernists on the faculty along with Ritter. He denounced Shen as "a more dangerous man than Mr. Ritter,"[101] and another faculty member, who had managed to pass the examinations of the investigation committee, was "practically an atheist."[102] And these faculty members "are not going to give up their positions without a frank, open discussion and decision of the matter by the Board."[103] Unfortunately, in his view "the Modernistic influence especially on the Board is powerful,"[104] and the current organizational structure of the seminary was totally inadequate in uprooting and preventing the modernist influences in the future. Therefore, according to White, modernism was so deeply entrenched in the seminary that the situation there was almost hopeless.

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[100] White, "Report of Hugh W White as Representative of the North Kiangsu Mission on the Board of Managers of Nanking Theological Seminary," 39

[101] White, "Our Mission School," 3,

[102] Hugh W. White, "The Southern Presbyterian General Assembly and the Nanking Seminary," Hugh W. White Papers, Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, 2.

[103] White, "Report of Hugh W White as Representative of the North Kiangsu Mission on the Board of Managers of Nanking Theological Seminary," 39.

[104] White, "The Southern Presbyterian General Assembly and the Nanking Seminary," 2.

To identify who was responsible for the current situation within the NTS, White did not hesitate in pointing a finger at anyone, including his fellow Southern Presbyterian missionaries, who in his opinion failed to stand up to the modernists and thus contributed to the modernist dominance at the NTS. And he even blamed the North Jiangsu Mission's faculty members for not doing enough to expose and fight modernism: "I must speak the truth, even though it hurts. If our men on the Faculty can clean house in Nanking, why did they not do it long ago? ...Why did they wait till the N.K.(North Kiangsu) Member on the Board had to start the move?"[105] In his mind, to avoid any controversy and any decisive action against modernism was a fatal mistake. Thus, he criticized the investigation conducted by the Mid-China Mission as "superficial."[106] After revealing Frank W. Price and other Southern Presbyterian missionaries on the board of the NTS had tried to persuade him to soften his position on the modernist textbooks at the board meeting of 1922, White complained, " 'Let it alone. Don't make a row.' That, Brethren, so far as I can see, has all along been the policy of our men on the Board and on the Faculty."[107]

Based on his pessimistic views about the situation at the NTS and his personal experience of being a minority under attack on the board, White firmly believed that "there are only three ways of conserving our Nanking work. (1) Change the policy of the Board.(2) Change the Board. (3) Take our share of the property...and withdraw....Neither of the first two alternatives is practicable."[108] He even came to the conclusion that the North Jiangsu Mission should not have agreed to join in the union school in the first place. According to his account, the North Jiangsu Mission was actually lured into the

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[105] Ibid., 4.
[106] White, "Our Mission Schools," 3.
[107] Ibid.7

agreement of merging its own seminary with other denominational schools by the assurance that the joint venture would be tentative, and the mission could get out in two and a half years. But, as soon as the mission voted for the union, it soon became evident that the project would be a permanent one.[109] This kind of strategy, he claimed, was exactly by what "in 1911 they hooked our Nanking Seminary."[110] Here White was almost implying a conspiracy behind the founding of the NTS.

Obviously, White's separatist stance was in conflict with the conciliatory and cooperative approach of the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions on the issue. In fact White was very much troubled by the committee's repeated attempts and efforts to urge the North Jiangsu Mission to stay in the seminary and preserve the union. By pointing out the strong modernist influence within other cooperating denominational missions in the NTS, he insisted the committee's appealing to these missions for concessions would be in vain.[111] In his view the committee placed too much faith in the ability and determination of the Southern Presbyterian missionaries on the board and faculty in safeguarding the orthodox teachings[112]and did not do enough to implement the orders of the General Assembly of 1924.[113] The Executive Committee, he believed, was following a wrong policy of "union-regardless-of-the-Bible."[114] In other words the committee was guilty of compromising orthodoxy in its enthusiastic drive for a union institution.

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[108] White, "The Southern Presbyterian General Assembly and the Nanking Seminary," 4.
[109] Ibid., 7.
[110] Hugh W. White to The Presbyterian Standard, 17 November 17, 1922, James Robertson Bridge Papers, Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC.
[111] White, "The Southern Presbyterian General Assembly and Nanking Seminary," 4.
[112] Ibid.,7
[113] White, "Our Mission Schools," 9.
[114] White, "The Southern Presbyterian General Assembly and Nanking Seminary," 1.

To the dismay of the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions, Hugh W. White always expressed his opinion and made sensational charges of the existence of modernism among China missionaries in very public ways: writing articles for the Presbyterian magazines at home, sending letters and pamphlets to the home churches, and giving public speeches in such events as the World's Fundamentalist Convention. The committee worried that his statements would help create misunderstandings and conflicts among the Presbyterian missions in China, individual missionaries, and home constituency and the missionary enterprise. It certainly felt relieved when the General Assembly of 1923 adopted the following resolution: "The Assembly hereby...urges the church to hold its judgement of individual missionaries or institutions in suspense and refrain from criticism until the investigations have been completed and report made to the General Assembly next year. We believe that injustice may be done to devoted men and women, and untold injury wrought to this great cause by continued agitation of the question of the orthodoxy of our missionaries."[115]

In an attempt to control these unauthorized charges against modernism in the mission fields, the Executive Committee also adopted its own resolution named "A Guidance to our Missionaries" in August of 1924. In addition to the committee's repeated insistence on the investigations being conducted in an orderly manner, the new resolution also warned that spreading "such charges and suspicions throughout the church at large by publication or word of mouth...may do grave and irreparable injustice to institutions or individuals, may work serious injury to the cause of missions, and should be

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[115] Quoted in Bear, Mid-China and the North Kiangsu Missions, vol.5, 372.

considered conduct unbecoming a missionary."[116] In the eyes of the Executive Committee, this matter was so serious that one could disqualify oneself as a missionary by misbehaving on it.

For the Executive Committee Hugh W. White was clearly one of the worst offenders. In fact the Executive Committee formed a special sub-committee to examine White's activities. While White was in the United States in mid-1924, he was asked to meet this sub-committee and attend the meetings of the Executive Committee several times. In these meetings the committee expressed to him their dissatisfaction with "his course in carrying through the church papers and through printed circulars a propaganda of criticism of some of our missionaries and missionary institutions in China intended to influence action of the General Assembly and to create sentiment in the church favorable to his own individual views, without submitting first to the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions the charges and criticism which he wished to make."[117] He was requested to comply with the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Executive Committee to "abstain from such criticism pending investigated by order of the General Assembly."[118] In White's own words, "the Executive Committee...requested of me a promise of silence on doctrinal issues in the foreign field, with serious intimations of consequences, if I should refuse."[119] White was convinced that the Executive Committee was using threats to censor the missionaries and force them into obedience. This action and the committee's "a Guidance to our Missionaries" in his view were not only an abuse

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[116] "Executive Committee's Instructions to the Missionaries in August Meeting," Hugh W. White Papers, Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC, 11.

[117] "Minutes and Memos of the June Meeting of the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions," Hugh W. White Papers, Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC, 10.

[118] Ibid., 8

of the constitutional authority of the Executive Committee but also a violation of freedom of speech of an ordinary citizen. Consequently, White flatly rejected the Committee's requests, and stated that "since...the question of our duty is to be decided for us by the church itself, I see no occasion to give up my freedom of speech unless so ordered by the General Assembly."[120] White went further to charge that, if the Executive Committee's "Guidance" held, the committee would follow other mission boards' examples to "cut off or undermine men who take a strong stand for the Bible." By doing this, he suggested, the committee was actually "in favor of union with Modernism."[121] White was on the verge of implicating the Executive Committee in the modernist conspiracy.

Once the exchanges between White and the Executive Committee were made public, the committee found itself under fire from the home constituencies. Several presbyteries and synods in the PCUS overtured the General Assembly of 1925 to criticize that "the Committee overstepped the bounds of its authority, and deals a blow at freedom of speech and the rights of ministers"[122]and to instruct the Committee that "our missionaries in our respective mission fields have same rights and privileges to discuss all questions as to the doctrinal teachings of men and institutions."[123] Some overtures demanded the Committee take steps to ensure that both faculties and boards of the mission schools "give assurance of faith in the Fundamentals, mentioning specifically, the facts of Genesis, the inerrancy of the Scriptures, the Deity and Virgin Birth, the

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[119] Hugh W. White, "Narrative Statement," Hugh W. White Papers , Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC, 7.

[120] "White's Reply to the Executive Committee, June 6, 1925," Hugh W. White Papers, Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC, 12.

[121] White, "Narrative Statement," 8.

[122] "Overture of the Winchester Presbytery," Hugh W. White Papers , Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC, 2-3

atonement, and the resurrection."[124]Obviously, the "propaganda" of Hugh W. White and his fellow conservatives did have some effect on the home churches. In the end the Executive Committee was unable to save the union at the Nanjing Theological Seminary or to silence or dismiss White. White carried on his anti-modernist campaign and remained a major agitator or troublemaker for the committee in the years to come.

The controversy over the Nanjing Theological Seminary was a conflict between two visions of Christian theological education in China. While the conservatives insisted that the only foundation and overarching principle for theological education should be the Christian fundamentals-- the inerrant authority of the Bible and the supernatural Christology, the liberals advocated that the seminary should provide an open forum for a diversity of theological views. Higher criticism and modernist theology should be taught as an alternative for the student's decision. Many moderates did not accept the modernist theological agenda, but their favor of diversity and tolerance tended to make them the allies of the liberals at critical moments in the confrontations with the fundamentalists. Furthermore, in the actual process of the controversy, the theological differences were only one factor. The different personalities, organizational relations, and the sentiments among the home churches were all at play. In addition the Old School-New School conflicts over theological and administrative issues had significant bearing on the controversy. True to the Old School tradition, the North Jiangsu Mission was eager to maintain doctrinal standards and the Southern Presbyterian mission's control of union institution. Finally, the changing roles of the North Jiangsu Mission from one of the

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[123] "Resolution and Overture of Central Mississippi Presbytery," Hugh W. White Papers, Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC, 3.

founding organizations to a withdrawing minority within the NTS community testified to the decline of the conservatives' influence and dominance of liberals in the theological educational institutions across China in the 1920s and 1930s. The conservatives felt increasingly alienated and victimized, and they were determined to start their own theological educational enterprises.

[124] "Overture of North Mississippi Presbytery," Hugh W. White Papers, Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC, 5.

CHAPTER V

THE NORTH CHINA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Before the 1860s Protestant theological education in China was started and carried out in the form of training classes for native evangelists and preachers. From the mid-1860s to the Boxer Rebellion of 1900, theological seminaries began to emerge. They were all denominational institutions mainly staffed by foreign preacher-teachers, and their curricula were "more Biblical, practical and conservative."[1] The early decades of the twentieth century was a critical period for theological education in China. Numerous denominational theological schools merged into larger union seminaries staffed by an increasing number of specially trained theological teachers. The seminaries' academic standards were raised, and their curricula were broadened to include a number of aspects of social and religious studies. Corresponding to the general trends of missionary educational enterprise of the same period, Protestant seminaries were increasingly institutionalized and dominated by liberal theological teachings.

Among the largest and most well-known Protestant seminaries in China of the first half of the twentieth century, the North China Theological Seminary (NCTS) was a unique institution. It was the most influential conservative theological educational institution in China. For the most part during the 1920s and 1930s, the NCTS had the

largest enrollment of students of any theological schools in China and was widely considered as "the stronghold for maintaining Fundamentalism among the Chinese Christian ministers."[2] Indeed, it was through this institution that the conservative wing of the missionary community, especially the conservative Northern and Southern Presbyterian missionaries, trained several generations of ministers and workers for the Chinese churches and thus profoundly shaped the churches' characters. Unfortunately, after the NCTS came into existence, its growing importance and significance were intentionally or unintentionally neglected by the liberal-dominated theological educational establishment in China.[3] In recent decades the NCTS has almost been forgotten by China mission scholarship. Yet, without a study of the NCTS, one can not understand the depth of the fundamentalist movement among the China missionaries and its impact upon the Chinese Christian communities.

The NCTS was born out of a doctrinal and administrative controversy within the Shandong Christian University. Shandong Province was one of the key mission fields of the Northern Presbyterian Church, and the Shandong Mission became the largest and perhaps the most successful mission of the Presbyterian Church in China. Some of its

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[1] C.Stanley Smith, The Development of Protestant Theological Education in China in the Light of the History of the Education of the Clergy in Europe and America, part 2 (Shanghai: Kelly and Walsh, Ltd, 1941), 87.

[2] Stanley Ross Fisher and H.Paul Douglass, "The Church and its Leadership," in Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry Fact-Finders' Reports, China, ed. Orville A. Petty, vol.5, Supplementary Series, Part 2 (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1933), 279.

[3] For instance, in Earl Herbert Cressy's survey of Christian higher education in China for the year of 1925-1926, the NCTS was not even mentioned. (See Earl Herbert Cressy, Christian Higher Education in China, A Study for the Year 1925-26" (Shanghai: China Christian Educational Association, 1928)). In C.Stanley Smith's study of Protestant theological education in China, only some statistics of the NCTS were given in the appendix section (See C.Stanley Smith, The Development of Protestant Theological Education in China in the Light of the History of the Education of the Clergy in Europe and America, part 2 (Shanghai: Kelly and Walsh, Ltd, 1941)).

founders such as Calvin Matter were immersed in the Old School tradition. Under their influence the Shandong Mission was theologically very conservative.

The educational work of the Shandong Mission owed much to Calvin and Julia Mateer. In 1864 they opened a boarding school for boys in Dengzhou (Tengchow), which became one of the first colleges in China in 1882 and the predecessor of Shandong Christian University. The courses offered at Dengzhou College ranged from Western science and religious instruction to Chinese classics. By 1902 the Northern Presbyterian mission and the English Baptist mission entered an agreement to unite their schools in Shandong Province into three colleges: liberal arts, theology, and medicine. The name of Shandong Christian University was officially adopted in 1909. In 1917 all three colleges moved to their new campus in Jinan (Tsinan), the capital city of Shandong Province. As the university grew, more missionary societies joined the enterprise. By 1925 the number of participating missions reached eleven, and made Shandong University one of the most broadly representative union educational institutions in China.

However, throughout the 1910s internal tensions built up within this union enterprise. In a report of 1920, O.F.Hills, who had served as the Northern Presbyterians' representative on the Field Board of Managers, the University's governing body in China, identified three major causes of these tensions: "First, the different conceptions of University life as evolved in England and America and also in the earlier stages of the Shantung University itself; second, a lack of clear cut ideas and regulations governing the

internal administration; and third, the inability of certain of the officers and members of faculties to work together in confidential and harmonious relations with each other."[4] According to this account, the nature of the tensions was largely administrative and personal as well as denominational. The differences between the Northern Presbyterians and British Baptists, the two major segments of the University's constituency, especially played a crucial role in the developing controversy. The issues at stake included the school administration's control of students' life, the final authority of faculty administration, and the style of the president's leadership. The tensions became greatly intensified during the tenure of J.Percy Bruce, an English Baptist and a faculty member and head of the College of Theology, as the president of the university. His appointment as the president in 1916 was publicly opposed by the Northern Presbyterian mission, and his policies later forced the resignation of a number of leading Presbyterians from the board and faculty. The conflict culminated in the summer of 1919 when a large majority of the Presbyterian professors, including all three deans of the university, called for the resignation of the president. Under such circumstances the Field Board of Managers had no choice but to ask Bruce to resign. As a compromise L.J.Davies (1892-1935), the dean of the Arts College, and Watson Hayes (1882-1941), the acting dean of the Theological College, were also asked to resign.

The controversy within the Theological College was especially intense and also most significant to our topic. Some issues involved in the controversy within the theological school were similar to the ones debated in other schools. For instance a common complaint was that certain mission societies, like Anglicans and Lutherans, took

[4] Report of Shantung Mission Representative on the Field Board of Managers, PCUSABS, RG 82,

no share in the school but had voting power on the seminary matters. Therefore, some Presbyterian missionaries strongly recommended that "voting power in the Unions should have some proportion to the size of the bodies uniting, or to the financial responsibilities assumed."[5] However, the controversy regarding the seminary had its own unique features. One of them was that it was the Chinese Presbyterian churches rather than the missionaries who took the initiatives in opposing some of current policies.

By the early decades of the twentieth century, the Chinese Presbyterian churches in Shandong had become quite strong, independent, and theologically conservative. This fact was already recognized by many Presbyterian missionaries. It was said that the Presbyterian churches in Shandong had "a far more stalwart, independent, and initiative possessing body of men, than are found in many places in China....The power is in their hands."[6] Not surprisingly the Chinese Christians took a special interest in the theological school as the institution responsible for training their ministers. They might not be ready to run the arts and medical schools, but they were ready for more participation in the control of the theological college than they were given.

For years the Chinese churches had became increasingly dissatisfied with the theological school of Shandong Christian University. They felt especially strong about two complaints. First of all, they were frustrated very much by the fact that their voices had been ignored by the governing body of the university. The Chinese churches had had their own representatives on the board. But the British Baptists seemed to try to

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20-8, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, 2.

[5] J.A.Fitch to J Arthur Brown, 6 October 1919, PCUSABS, RG82, 20-8, PHS, Philadelphia. See also Hayes to the Secretaries, Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, 1 May 1920, PCUSABS, RG82, 20-5, PHS, Philadelphia.

[6] Fitch to Brown, 6 October 1919.

strengthen the foreign control and weaken the power of the Chinese churches within the school. In the spring of 1919, without any Chinese presence, a foreign staff meeting considered elimination of all non-English speaking Chinese from faculty meetings. This move would further decrease the chance of Chinese participation, and it thus drew strong protests from a number of prominent Presbyterian missionaries and significantly undermined the Chinese churches' confidence in the university. Meanwhile, the Chinese Christians were increasingly irritated by the university's indifference toward their opinions. Not only the suggestions of Chinese seminary students but also the petitions of the North China Synod, the highest governing body in the Chinese churches, received no response whatsoever from the university for many years.[7] The British Baptist mission and President Bruce especially earned a bad reputation for the arbitrary treatment of the Chinese churches and students at the theological school. It was so much so that, according to one account, "Chinese characterize the ways of treating Chinese by the two denominations (British Baptist and Presbyterian) as being the difference between Monarchy and Democracy."[8] After much complaint from the Chinese churches and foreign missionaries, the university board only agreed that the board would select certain Chinese representatives instead of having the Chinese churches elect their own representatives. For the Chinese churches, the university's reluctance to give them control of the seminary became increasingly intolerable.

Secondly, the Chinese churches complained that poor and erroneous teachings were permitted at the seminary. Among the participating missions the Presbyterian

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[7] T.N. Thompson to J.Arthur Brown, 28 November 1919, PCUSABS,RG82, 20-8, PHS, Philadelphia.

[8] Fitch to Brown, 6 October 1919.

mission was largely conservative in theology, but the modernist theology obviously began making its way into the seminary mostly through the faculty members of other denominations. According to Hayes, "some of the Tsinan (Jinan) teachings can only be described, even from a mildly conservative standpoint as 'erroneous'; the teaching regard to the O.T.especially cannot be regarded with approval....I adduce the case of Mr. Fiske as proof. Here was a man who, in morning chapel, openly scoffed at O.T.teachings, and held up prayer for rain as a superstition of a bygone age.(this perforce includes both the age of the Old and New Testament)."[9] The union nature of the institution and the lack of Chinese representation made the liberal views spread without any check. Another issue was that the theological students, mostly simple, older country folks, often found themselves subject to the ridicule of younger arts students in the same school dormitories. This created a difficult environment for the theological students.[10]

Without any significant voice in the management of the school, the Chinese churches trusted Watson Hayes as the champion of their rights and used him as their mouthpiece to have their complaints heard. This role on the part of Hayes further complicated his relationship with President Bruce. Consequently, Hayes was asked to resign in 1919. This decision upset the Chinese Presbyterian students and the churches behind them. Hayes was considered by many as "the best theological teacher in all China," and with him gone many believed there was no one who could draw the

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[9] W.M. Hayes to the Secretaries of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, 1 May 1920, PCUSABS, RG82, 20-5, PHS, Philadelphia. Another missionary wrote: "The virgin birth is scoffed at, the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ is explained away, and even the Deity of Christ is questioned by some of the foreigners on the faculty." (Extract of Letter, Attachment to the Letter from E.C.Lobenstine to J.Walter Lowrie, 12 August 1921, PCUSABS, RG82, 20-13, PHS, Philadelphia.)

[10] See Charles Hodge Corbett, Shantung Christian University (Cheeloo) (New York: United Board for Christian Colleges in China, 1955), 143

Presbyterian students to the school.[11] Therefore, eighteen Presbyterian students decided to leave the theological school of Shandong Christian University and follow him to Weixian where he continued to tutor them.[12]

Despite the university board's efforts for reform, the Chinese Presbyterian churches threw their support behind these students and one by one officially withdrew their support of the seminary. As early as November of 1919, Jinan Presbytery adopted a resolution to give several reasons for withdrawal. Among them the following was especially significant:

> I. The internal conditions of the University have been such as to hinder the growth of our theological students in Christian grace and spiritual knowledge;
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> II. The nature of much of the instruction by the associated Missions has not been satisfactory.
>
> III. Under the present reorganization it is still less possible to guard our students from erroneous teaching, because other Missions favoring radical teaching are to be admitted to the Union, and with power to appoint professors and share in the control.[13]

Another joint conference of the Chinese Presbyterian churches in November of 1919 also cited theological differences as one of the major reasons for withdrawal from the seminary: "The aforesaid school being under the control of eight Missions, the school authorities and professors as a matter of course do not agree (in belief) so it is not possible to avoid our students receiving erroneous teaching."[14] The same conference set certain conditions for returning to the theological school of Shandong Christian

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[11] Fitch to Brown, 6 October 1919.

[12] Corbett, Shantung Christian University, 143.

[13] Resolutions Adopted by the Tsianafu Presbytery at Hou Lu Chia, 8 November 1919, PCUSABS, RG 82 20-8, PHS, Philadelphia.

University. In addition to the right of electing the Chinese managers of the seminary, using the Chinese language in the board meetings, and calling back Hayes as the dean of the seminary, the Chinese churches demanded that "all teachers in the Theological School should in teaching recognize the Bible as the perfect rule of faith."[15] Of course the very limited concessions the university was willing to make were far from being satisfactory to the Chinese churches. The Chinese churches so resented the seminary and were so determined to break away from it that one of their presbytery meetings resolved to prohibit not only sending any students to the school but also licensing or ordaining any graduates from it in the future.[16] But the foreign missionary members of the presbytery finally made efforts to have the latter action dropped.

However, the Mission Board of the Northern Presbyterian Church and its China Council pressured the Chinese churches to stay in the union. But their attempts totally failed. The Chinese Presbyterian churches in Shandong Province were well on their way to support the small group of the Chinese students under the guidance of Watson Hayes and to establish a new seminary according to their own vision. In the meeting of November 8, 1919, the Jinan Presbytery resolved that "the Presbyterian Church must establish in Shantung its own theological school, Bible honoring" and invited Watson Hayes and Albert Dodd of the Northern Presbyterian mission as the professors.[17]

The next month eight representatives, both Chinese ministers and foreign missionaries, from four presbyteries in Shandong met in Weixian to form a provisional

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[14] Resolutions Presented by the Chinese Delegates to the Joint Presbyterial Conference at Weihsien, 5 November 1919, PCUSABS, RG 82, 20-5, PHS, Philadelphia.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Thompson to Brown, 28 November 1919.

[17] Resolution Adopted by the Tsianafu Presbytery at Hou Lu Chia, 8 November 1919.

board of directors for the new Presbyterian seminary. Ma Ging Tang was elected chairman, and L.J.Davis, vice-chairman. W.M. Hayes and J.A. Fitch were invited to be the corresponding members of the board. The board took actions to set up sub-committees for drafting the constitution and raising funds. Weixian was chosen as its temporary location, and Hayes was invited to take the position of the president of the seminary. Furthermore, the North Jiangsu Mission of the Southern Presbyterian Church was invited to join in organizing the new seminary. [18]The Chinese church leaders constituted the majority of the board and sub-committees. The Chinese Christians also committed themselves to finding the financial sources for the new seminary, and the finance committee was composed of five Chinese Presbyterian church leaders. The first meeting of the provisional board asked each presbytery to make annual contributions to the new school and started a fund-raising campaign within the Chinese Presbyterian churches in Shandong Province.[19]

In March of 1920, the provisional board of the new seminary met again. W.M. Hayes, J.A. Fitch, T.N. Thompson, and R.A.Torrey, Jr. attended the meeting as the representatives of the Committee on Theological Education of the Shandong Mission. W.F. Junkin was also present at the meeting as the representative of the North Jiangsu Mission of the Southern Presbyterian Church. The meeting reported that a substantial amount of money and property were already pledged by the Chinese Christians across the

[18] See Minutes of a Meeting of the Provisional Board of Directors of the Shantung Theological Seminary, held at Weisian, Shantungm China, 4 December 1919, PCUSABS, RG82, 20-8, PHS, Philadelphia.

[19] Ibid.

province. [20] On the other hand, realizing the limitations of the financial resources of the Chinese churches, the board also requested the Presbyterian mission to provide annual aid toward the seminary.[21] Furthermore, Hayes was once again urged to accept the presidency of the seminary. Finally, the meeting took steps to secure the cooperation of the Southern Presbyterian Church and the Chinese Christian Church, an independent Chinese church with a Northern Presbyterian background. [22]

While looking for a permanent site for the new seminary, the board faced three options. First, the Milton Stewart Fund was planning to erect a "Bible College for China" in Shanghai and asked Hayes to head the college.[23] Acknowledging the financial benefits and possible broader influence of the proposed school, the Northern Presbyterian mission board and Shandong Mission were nevertheless nervous about "very serious disadvantages in placing the training of the ministry of all the Presbyterian Churches of a great province entirely under auspices which are independent of the cooperating Churches and Boards."[24] The second option was Jinan, the capital city of Shandong Province, and

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[20] The Chinese Presbyterian churches in four cities pledged $3,000.00 Some presbyteries and individuals pledged annual contributions of $30.00 to $100.00. A piece of land near Jinan was donated in case the seminary moved to the area. (Minutes of a Meeting of the Provisional Board of Directors of the Shantung Theological Seminary, Held at Weisien, 12 March 1920, PUCSABS, RG82, 20-5, PHS, Philadelphia.

[21] See Minutes of a Meeting of the Provisional Board, 4 December 1919.

[22] Ibid.

[23] In a letter dated on January 19th, 1921, E.C.Lobenstine gave some valuable information about this project of the Stewart Fund: " Mr.Blackstone was expecting to put a very large sum of money into the organizing and running for the first three or four years of this school. He stood out from the beginning for its location in Shanghai and as you doubtless know, has done everything he could to get Dr. Hayes tied up with it. When he found it was impossible to get those who were interested in such a college to agree to Shanghai as the location, he proposed to organize three Bible Schools, each with a theological department, one to be located in North-eastern China, one in Central China and the other at Shanghai. The first two were only to have two years of theological work and all students were to come to Shanghai for the third year or for post-graduate work. He hoped to bring out prominent workers from other countries for courses of lectures in the latter school." (E.C.Lobenstine to Arthur J Brown, 19 January 1921, PCUSABS, RG82, 20-13, PHS, Philadelphia).

[24] The Board of Foreign Missions to the Shandong Mission, 18 May 18 1920, PCUSABS, RG82, 20-8, PHS, Philadelphia.

the third option was Tengxian (Tenghsien), which was very close to the North Jiangsu region.

Always feeling uneasy with the Nanjing Theological Seminary, the North Jiangsu Mission and the Chinese churches in the mission field were very interested in this proposed new seminary in Shandong. The North Jiangsu meeting of August of 1920 indicated that "this seminary...is greatly needed by our field. ...We express gratification at seeing our Chinese brethren undertaking such a work, and our congratulations and best wishes and prayers for success and God's richest blessings."[25] The mission began to confer with the Chinese churches in regard to the possibility of cooperation. For both the mission and the Chinese churches in North Jiangsu area, the prospect of cooperation very much hinged on whether the seminary would be eventually located in Tengxian. The North Jiangsu Mission and the churches' position played a large part in the seminary board's decision to choose Tengxian as the permanent site. In 1922 the new Presbyterian seminary moved to Tengxian. Later the North Jiangsu Mission cooperated with Shandong Mission in the new seminary and sent Brown C. Patterson and George P.Stevens to teach there.

Two themes stood out in the stormy origin of the NCTS. First, the birth of the NCTS definitely had to do with the widening gap between theological conservatism and liberalism. Secondly, it was the Chinese Christians who took a surprisingly leading role in starting this conservative theological educational institution. As we will see, these two themes continued to feature prominently in the history of the NCTS.

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[25] The Minutes of North Jiangsu Mission 1920, China Mission Papers, PHS, Montreat, NC, 19.

For most of the 1920s, the NCTS experienced rapid growth. When the seminary was founded in 1919, it only had eighteen students. By 1920 the number of students increased to twenty-four. [26]After the seminary officially moved to Tengxian, the financial contributions from the Chinese and foreign sources provided new buildings and equipment for further expansion. In addition to the Mateer Memorial Institute, this new seminary made Tengxian an educational center for the conservative Christians across China. A new development came when women sought admittance to the classes. So a Women's Bible Seminary was opened in connection with the men's in the fall of 1922. The Women's Bible Seminary was under different administration. The women students attended the same classes with the men, even though their curriculum was different, and they did not take all the courses the men took.

For the school term of 1923-24, the student enrollment exploded at the rate of over 120 percent, and seventy-five men and nine women came to study in the NCTS from nine different provinces and even Korea. The number of faculty reached six, including the Northern and Southern Presbyterian missionaries and the Chinese Church leaders. [27] By the next school term, the entire number on the roster was 100 men and twenty-four women from thirteen provinces and Korea, and twelve missions and denominations. [28]

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[26] The North China Theological Seminary, The Printed Materials of the North Kiangsu Mission and Tengsien Station, 1932-35, China Mission Papers, PHS, Montreat, NC, 6.

[27] Report of the North China Theological Seminary, August, 1923-January, 1924, PCUSABS, RG82, 26-7, PHS, Philadelphia. The Northern Presbyterian missionaries were W.M.Hayes, A.B.Dodd, and the Southern Presbyterians were B.C.Patterson and G.P.Stevens. After 1927, M.A.Hopkins of the PCUS and A.L.MacLeod of the PCUSA also joined the faculty. Chinese faculty members changed considerably throughout the years.

[28] Report of the North China Theological Seminary, August 1924-January 1925, PCUSABS, RG82, 26-7, PHS, Philadelphia.

From 1925 to 26 the student roster stood at 105 men and thirty-four women. [29]and the peak of the seminary's enrollment, 135 men and fifty-one women, was reached just before the spring of 1927.[30] By the mid-1920s, the NCTS had surpassed the Nanjing Theological Seminary and become the largest seminary in China especially in terms of student enrollment.[31] but the size of the NCTS faculty was small in comparison to other seminaries.[32] During the late 1920s, mainly because of escalating fighting between the warlords and the Northern Expedition of the KMT forces, the work of the NCTS was interrupted from time to time, and its growth slowed down considerably. In 1928 the number of men fell off to sixty-five and the women to thirty. [33]But the NCTS quickly regained its strength by the early 1930s, and the number of students reached 102 men and thirty-one women for the 1933-34 term. [34] The term of 1934-35 saw a total of 149 students from sixteen provinces and twenty-two denominations.[35] The NCTS' report of 1937 indicated that there were seventy-two men students from twelve provinces and twenty-third different church bodies.[36] Throughout these years the NCTS remained the

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[29] Report of the North China Theological Seminary, August 1925-January 1926, PCUSABS, RG82, 26-7, PHS, Philadelphia.

[30] The North China Theological Seminary, Printed Materials, China Mission Papers, 7.

[31] In the fall of 1926 the Nanjing Theological Seminary had 100 students, and the theological school of Shandong Christian University had 43. Cressy, Christian Higher Education in China, 121.

[32] For the school term of 1925 to 26, the NCTS had seven faculty, some of whom split their time between the NCTS and the Mateer Memorial Institute.(Report of the NCTS, 1925-26). In 1926 Nanjing and Yenching had respectively 27 and 13 teachers on faculty, and at least five other seminaries had more than seven faculty members. (Cressy, Christian Higher Education in China, 125.)

[33] The North China Theological Seminary, Printed Materials, China Mission Papers, 7.

[34] North China Theological Seminary, President's Report for 1933-1934, PCUSABS, RG 82, 26-7, PHS, Philadelphia.

[35] Report of North China Theological Seminary, 1934-35, PCUSABS, RG82, 26-7, PHS, Philadelphia.

[36] The President's Report, North China Theological Seminary, in Minutes of the Shantung Mission of the PCUSA, 1937, China Mission Papers, PHS, Montreat, NC, 65.

seminary which "has the largest enrollment of students of any theological seminary in China."[37]

The NCTS was unique among all the seminaries in China not only because of its dramatic rise and the size of its student bodies but also because of its distinctive character in its teachings and administrative policies, which most explicitly embodied the conservatives' vision and understanding of theological education and mission. The formation of its character owed much to Watson Hayes who had been the founder of the seminary and served as its president throughout the 1920s and 1930s.

Watson M. Hayes had came to Shandong Province, China, in November of 1882 under the Northern Presbyterian Mission Board. The next year he started teaching geology, astronomy, and mathematics at Dengzhou College, headed by Calvin Mateer, and was elected the president of the college in 1889. Throughout the years Hayes translated and wrote some twenty-six scientific and theological textbooks in Chinese for the college and established himself as one of the most outstanding educational missionaries in China. In the meantime he had been involved in establishing a newspaper, post office, and a government university in Shandong. After Dengzhou College was merged with the Shandong Christian University, Hayes became a faculty member of the theological school but later resigned from that position and assumed the presidency of the NCTS. Theologically very conservative, Hayes gained a reputation as "a rock of Orthodoxy."[38] According to the Fact-Finders' Reports of Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry, "Dr.Hayes is by far the ablest exponent of the fundamentalist theology in China.

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[37] Fisher and Douglass, "The Church and its Leadership," 278.

[38] Extracts of Letter, attached to the letter from E.C Lobenstine to J Walter Lowrie, August 12, 1921.

Of the dogmatic school of President Patton and Dr. Machen of Princeton, he is doing for conservative Christianity in China what these scholars have done in America."[39] His long-time tenure as the NCTS president greatly shaped the character of the NCTS.

The NCTS was started partly as a protest against the modernist teachings in the Shandong Christian University, and it continued to maintain its own identity as an institution of championing the conservative cause. The NCTS made its own conservative theological position very clear from its beginning. When the Provisional Board of Directors of the new seminary met in March 1920, the purpose of this new institution was defined as follows: "First, To teach the fundamental doctrines of the Christian church as found in the Word of God. Second, To emphasize the Bible as the only sufficient rule of faith and practice. Third, to preserve conservative teaching with regard to Theology, Biblical criticism and Exegesis."[40] The authority of the Bible took a central place in the vision of this seminary.

As the fundamentalist missionaries were united around the Bible Union of China and began to launch offenses against the modernists in the early 1920s, the NCTS did not hesitate to express its sympathy with the fundamentalist cause and started to advocate its own conservative agenda and its differences from theological liberalism. In a statement written by W.M. Hayes, A.B. Dodd, and B.C. Patterson in 1924, it was declared that "the Seminary approves unconditionally of the theological position taken by the Bible Union of China." [41] The Creedal Statement of the NCTS made a strong point of the Bible and its authority: "We unreservedly believe what orthodox Christians of every denomination

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[39] Fisher and Douglass, "The Church and its Leadership," 281.

[40] Minutes of a Meeting of the Provisional Board of Directors of the Shantung Theological Seminary, Held at Weihsien, March 12, 1920.

accept as the Bible; namely, the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments. We believe the entire record to have been made under the guidance (inspiration) of the Holy Spirit. We believe what it records as history to be genuine history, its miracles to be actual facts, its prophecies to be truly prophecy, and its teachings to be the unique and supreme rule for faith and life."[42] Christ's deity, propitiatory sacrifice, resurrection, and the second coming were all firmly asserted by the statement. All faculty and board directors were required to subscribe to the statement annually.[43] To be a "Bible honoring" school and defend the "old gospel" against modernism became the essential spirit of the NCTS.

Watson Hayes never hid his own conservative position and his antagonism against modernism. "Personally," he asserted, "I am strongly conservative, and modern Modernism...is anathema to me."[44] Throughout the years at the NCTS, he persistently criticized modern biblical criticism and social gospel theology for damaging the integrity of the scriptures in their attempts to re-interpret and update the Bible according to the modern social and cultural circumstances. According to him: "At present there seems to be a great tendency to emphasize zeal in social work and respectability, to adapt Christianity to the demands of the age instead of the age to the demands of Christianity, while purity of doctrine is laughed out of court. However, reading the N.T., tends to confirm me in thinking that certain undesirable classes may be nearer the Kingdom of

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[41] North China Theological Seminary, The Printed Materials, 3.

[42] Ibid., 4.

[43] Report of the North China Theological Seminary, August 1923-Januray, 1924.

[44] W.M.Hayes to the Supporters of the North China Theological Seminary, 16 October 1933, PCUSABS, RG 82, 26-4, PHS, Philadelphia.

Heaven than those who tenaciously cling to false beliefs, and I am not prepared to say that purity of doctrine is less essential than purity of life. Neither are to be ignored."[45] Regarding the theory of evolution, he also rejected the evolution of species from species and insisted that such a theory "is both unscriptural and without reliable scientific proof." [46] As China was in great cultural transition and the dominance of the Confucian tradition was collapsing, Hayes argued, "we had hoped to replace the authority of the sages by that of the God Man, but modern doubts as to the trustworthiness of the Gospel records is also undermining His authority, and vitiated, passion-blinded, self-willed, Satan-controlled, human reason is the only left."[47] He believed "the teaching of doubt and disbelief, regarding some plain N.T.teachings as 'Academic questions'," never brought "any noticeable spiritual results;"[48] and even worse, the rampant rationalism and skepticism within the mission schools were at least partly responsible for the radical student movements and communist revolutionary tides in China:

> When there are missionaries who make known their disbelief in miracles and other teachings of the Bible, it is not much wonder that Chinese students go still further. The Chinese word for miracles means "footprints of Deity," and as there can be no human footprints where man does not exist, it is only a fair deduction that if there are no divine footprints, there can be no God. Some of our Mission schools have also been using the psychologies authorized by the Chinese Government, which teach the baldest materialism, so to say that the ground has been prepared for this Russian Communism is not an unguarded statement.[49]

Not surprisingly Hayes envisioned the NCTS as a counterattack against the modernist tide and an institution deeply rooted in the principle of the infallible authority

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[45] W.M.Hayes to Geo T. Scott, 22 November 1923, PCUSABS, RG82, 26-4, PHS, Philadelphia.

[46] W.M.Hayes to W.E.Blackstone, 17 August 1926, W.E.Blackstone Papers, #540, Billy Graham Center, Wheaton College.

[47] W.M. Hayes to Swarthmore Church, 4 August 1927, W.E.Blackstone Papers, BGC, Wheaton College.

[48] W.M.Hayes to Robert Speer, 27 August 1930, PCUSABS, RG82, 41-20, PHS, Philadelphia.

of the Bible. In his view what the NCTS stood for was precisely the "purity" of the doctrines and Bible over against modernism and evolutionary theory. "We teach the pristine gospel," he said, "without trying to improve it so as to 'bring it up to the thought of the present age' and stand by the Whole Bible,"[50] and "this Seminary adheres firmly to the great redemptive features of the Gospel....Here they (students) will find 'the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.'"[51] Hayes believed that the young men and women were attracted to the NCTS precisely by this conservative vision, and it was the NCTS' responsibility to "never graduate Christ-belittling, Gospel-doubting men who imagine that their ideas are as good, if not superior to those of St. Paul."[52] He took pride in the fact that all NCTS students "unite on the platform of a Bible whose history, prophecies, miracles, and Plan of Redemption are received as genuine facts and the record as reliable throughout; in other words the Bible is accepted as being what it purports to be," [53]and "in the flood of Modernism which is sweeping over China as well as the West....they have stood firmly for the infallibility of the Scriptures."[54]As an educational missionary, Hayes had a great faith in theological education as the best means to fight modernism. In stead of engaging in endless verbal war with the modernists, he advocated, "it is wiser to

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[49] W.M Hayes to Swarthmore Church, 19 November 1927, Blackstone Papers, GBC, Wheaton College.

[50] W.M. Hayes to Swarthmore Church, 21 June 1926, Blackstone Papers, GBC, Wheaton College.

[51] W.M. Hayes to Swarthmore Church, 15 May 1933, PCUSABS, RG82, 47-17, PHS, Philadelphia.

[52] W.M. Hayes to Swarthmore Church, 4 January 1930, PCUSABS, RG82, 41-20, PHS, Philadelphia.

[53] Report of the North China Theological Seminary, August 1924-January 1925.

[54] W.M. Hayes to Swarthmore Church, 16 February 1928, Blackstone Papers, GBC, Wheaton College,

do the best possible teaching so as to make better preachers, better pastors, and better evangelists than the Modernistic schools can possibly send out."[55]

As a result of this conservative vision of theological education, the curriculum of the NCTS was dominated by Old and New Testament courses. This was the case with the 1924 version of four year curriculum [56]and remained the same in the 1930s. The NCTS President's Report for 1933-34 stated,

> While new courses have been gradually introduced into the curriculum, the main stress is, as before, laid on the plain teachings of the Scriptures and on what "by good and necessary inference" is deduced from the same. There is no substitution of mere human surmises for the Divine Word, nor any attempt made to correct inspired language. The emphasis laid on God's own teaching we see is the main reason for students coming long distances to take their theological course with us. "Then [sic] that honor me, I will honor" holds good through all time; and, as we view it, there is nothing more dishonoring to any one than to distrust his word.[57]

Again the following year's report stressed that the NCTS' curriculum emphasized "particularly direct Bible study."[58] In 1933 the Board of Directors made a decision that all students be required to read through the whole Bible under the guidance of the faculty members and take the examinations. The reason given for this decision was that "our emphasis on the Bible is because we accept it as the Word of God, and the foundation of theology. Though men may have wisdom and knowledge, the Word of God is superior to all and is the perfect, trustworthy standard."[59]

However, it would be a mistake to treat the NCTS merely as a Bible-training school. Even in the early 1920s, in addition to biblical studies, its curriculum included

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[55] Hayes to Swarthmore Friends, 15 May 1933.
[56] See North China Theological Seminary, PCUSABS, RG82, 26-7, PHS, Philadelphia, 6-7.
[57] North China Theological Seminary President's Report for 1933-34.
[58] Report of North China Theological Seminary, 1934-35.
[59] Ibid.

rather intensive training in systematic theology, church history, homiletics, and such general studies as the biblical languages, English, music, and even comparative religion. [60]As the time went by, the NCTS curriculum was also enlarged by courses in Old and New Testament theology, Christian sociology, Old Testament archeology, geology, and biology. But even the broader curriculum also reflected the NCTS' anti-modernist stand. For instance, the courses on homiletics were heavily devoted to the "refutation of false religions and of modernism."[61] And the courses on archeology, geology, and biology were geared to testify to "the historical accuracy of the Bible, and to the creation of the world by Divine fiat, and not by methods of evolution."[62]

The major teacher in archeology and geology was B.C. Patterson. He came to China in 1891 under the Southern Presbyterian Church. After spending about three decades in North Jiangsu mission field, he came to teach in the NCTS until his retirement in 1939. In his memoir written in the 1950s, Patterson mentioned that one belief shaped his missionary career tremendously, and that was, "the Bible is God's word and does not only 'contain' it."[63] This belief gave him not only missionary motive but also "courage and strength to insist (with others) on a pure theological teaching."[64] He went on to explain the reasons for teaching a course in geology in the NCTS as follows:

> Our Christian students especially needed this course because it was definitely necessary for them to believe the Bible story was honestly true. The Chinese moral code was high and their religions all exhorted to do good and live...Why turn to a new religion and foreign to their culture? Also, evolution as taught by the government universities and too often by western missionaries, shattered a

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[60] See North China Theological Seminary, PCUSBS 6-7.

[61] Fisher and Douglass, "The Church and its Leadership," 280.

[62] Ibid.

[63] B.C. Patterson, "Memoirs of Brown Craig Patterson," Brown Craig Patterson Papers, PHS, Montreat, NC, 48

[64] Ibid.

> faith in the Revealed Word on which Christian religion was founded. So it was felt wise to equip our men to preach a word that was fundamentally genuine and true.[65]

In other words the aim of his course was to prove that "geology sustains the Bible." To reach this aim, he tried to convince his students that "the findings of the best geologists of the world was not out of harmony with Gen.:1st. They had nothing to fear from godless doubters."[66] Regarding the creation story and other miracles, Patterson demonstrated to his students that "there was a compelling reason for the miracle....Every story in the Bible that is subject to verification today has been found to be true."[67] So, to teach archeology and geology was not just to instill some scientific knowledge into the students' minds but to show them how God's special revelation was supported by the evidence from the general revelations. The NCTS' curriculum was designed to equip the Chinese Christians with orthodox doctrines and biblical literalism, and the relatively small proportion of courses on sciences and other secular knowledge were also offered to serve this ultimate goal.

In Christian schools in China of the 1920s and 1930s, as Peter Tze Ming Ng pointed out, religious teachings moved "beyond the mere teaching of the Christian Bible, to give more attention to its relevance to the Chinese cultural environments and social issues."[68] He called this development "secularization or modernization." This trend was common not only on college campuses but also within certain theological educational institutions. A good example was the School of Religion at Yenching University. After

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[65] Ibid., 56.
[66] Ibid., 58.
[67] Ibid., 60.
[68] Peter Tze Ming Ng, "Secularization or Modernization: Teaching Christianity in China since the 1920s," 5.1 Studies in World Christianity (vol. 5.1 part 1, 1999): 5

1925 its aim was changed from "training men for the Christian ministry" to "laying the foundation of Christian thought for China and ...building up Christian life in China."[69] In the meantime it began to significantly broaden its curriculum and offer such courses as "Psychology of Religion," "Philosophy of Religion," "History of Religion," "Religious Literatures," and "Religious Arts."[70] Over against this secularizing trend the NCTS' Bible and doctrine-centered approach and curriculum stood in sharp contrast, and the school never had any intention of broadening its curriculum in the way Yenching did.

Another interesting aspect of the NCTS' theological position was that although the seminary was controlled and staffed by the Presbyterian churches, it was never designed to be just a denominational seminary. Rather, it aimed to train church leaders for all Chinese churches regardless of denominations. The particular Presbyterian teachings on the curriculum were minimal, and "none are required to attend classes in which the form of Church Government, etc. taught is different from that of their own Church."[71] "All that is asked of any one is that he accept the Bible without reservation."[72] Therefore, the NCTS was able to gather an inter-denominational student body on the basis of common conservative beliefs. In this way the NCTS managed to maintain an identity of a union seminary under Presbyterian control.

One of the important characteristics of the NCTS was its emphasis on evangelism. Its goal was always to train leaders for the Chinese churches according to a conservative theological agenda: "The school aims by its teaching to train pastors and evangelists who

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[69] Quoted in ibid., 6.

[70] See ibid., 7-9.

[71] Report of the President of the North China Theological Seminary, September 1931 to June 1932, PCUSABS, RG82, 26-7, PHS, Philadelphia.

[72] North China Theological Seminary President's Report for 1933-34.

will influence the churches under their care to reverence the Bible as the Word of God, to look to the vicarious death of the Redeemer as the only way of salvation, and to follow His example as the life most pleasing to God."[73] To serve the emerging Chinese churches and strengthen the evangelizing forces was clearly a decisive factor in shaping the curriculum of the NCTS.

While the social gospel model of mission advocated the importance of social reform and services as the inseparable part of the Christian missions and a great number of missionaries were busy with building universities and hospitals in the 1920s and 1930s, the NCTS persistently held on to its single-minded evangelistic goal not only as the best way of spreading the gospel in China but also as a protest against the modernists' re-interpretation of mission goals and emphasis. Hayes was a staunch believer in the evangelicals' classical stress on "direct evangelistic work" as the primary task of the Christian missions and the prerequisite for social services. "I may be old fashioned," he said, "but wish once for all to say that the main business of the missionary is not to teach modern methods of farming, political science, philosophy, or modern languages....but to lead men to know God and Jesus Christ."[74] In his view to have the Chinese people know Christ should remain the main task of the missionary work in China. He believed that the Christian missions in China were in great danger of overemphasizing social reform at the cost of evangelism, and missionary work would consequently lose its focus. "Both we and they (students) believe in social betterment," Hayes declared, "but when it comes to acting as if the prime object in missionary work was to teach men how to raise larger

[73] North China Theological Seminary, PCUSABS, 1.

chickens, how to improve native pears, or how to acquire more property, may we not be permitted to recall Christ's words: 'What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?' Yes, we are old-fashioned missionaries!"[75] Here he clearly made a distinction between himself and the social gosplers.

For Hayes this overemphasis on social service had and would bring some serious consequences to the mission enterprises in China. One of these consequences he attacked most severely was the institutionalization and bureaucratization of mission work. He was very critical of "the grand mistake that had been made in pouring money by the thousands of dollars into the large purely educational institutions, paying high salaries to Chinese as well as foreign professors.[76] In his opinion these "extensive and expensive enterprises" might be good in themselves but were definitely not "proper objects of missionary work."[77] The financial resources and manpower were drained out of direct evangelistic work by the tendency of over-investment in educational and medical institutions in the urban areas. He pointed out that the situation further created a harmful tendency of institutionalization and bureaucratization of the mission and church administrations, which consumed the energy and time of a large number of missionaries, and also actually made some missionaries enthusiastic about prominent positions in certain large institutions in the cities but unwilling to take on the grass roots-level mission work in the vast countryside. In his own words, "There is too much time spent preparing for conferences and attending them as compared with direct, actual contact work....I notice

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[74] W.M.Hayes to Swarthmore Church, 16 February 1928, Blackstone Papers, GBC, Wheaton College. His words earned him a reputation of opposing "secular education." See C.H.Fenn to W.M. Hayes, 28 June 1930, PCUSABS, RG82, 41-20, PHS, Philadelphia.

[75] W.M.Hayes to Swarthmore Church,18 January 1927, Blackstone Papers, GBC, Wheaton College.

also a tendency among some to gladly make an excuse of teaching English in some High School, a student advisory office, a secretaryship, or chairmanship, etc, as an excuse for not rubbing up directly with crude heathenism."[78]

Sometimes he tended to make a sharp contrast between the missionary "elite" busy with the institutional work in the cities and these "pastor-evangelists" winning souls for Christ under harsh environments.

> It is not the men who receive big salaries, dress well, and are prominent (Not in actual work) but in the so-called Councils—telling others how to do it—who are really advancing the Kingdom, but men like Paul, willing to endure hardship. Some of these too, like him, are men of superior ability, tho visitors from America, seeing their bronzed faces and poor garments, and comparing them with the tony-looking young good-for-nothings in some of the big universities, are apt to refer to them as "second rate men." Such superficial judgments excite righteous indignation. They forgot that it was those whom the D.D. LL.D's of Jerusalem looked down on as "ignorant and unlearned men" but who "had been with Jesus," that He selected for His messengers and the result showed that He made no mistake.[79]

From time to time he implied that these institution-building missionaries were mostly influenced by modernism. In his opinion "fortunately Modernism is chiefly limited to the large cities. When it comes to the self denial required for the more difficult country work, the 'woe is me' spirit simply isn't there."[80] He concluded that "people who are mainly interested in getting a Ph.D, studying Russian, or having a 'good time,' but who are not interested at all interested in itinerating work, caring for the country churches, or holding

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[76] Hayes to Swarthmore Friends, 19 November 1927.

[77] W.M. Hayes to Swarthmore Church,10 May 1927, Blackstone Papers, GBC, Wheaton College.

[78] Hayes to Swarthmore Chucrh, 15 May 1933.

[79] Hayes to Swarthmore Church, 19 November 1927. Hayes repeatedly expressed similar views in some of his correspondence with Robert Speer. See W.M.Hayes to Robert Speer, 27 June 1933, PCUSABS, RG82 47-17, PHS, Philadelphia. See also W.M. Hayes to Robert Speer, 16 February 1933, PCUSABS, RG82, 47-17, PHS, Philadelphia.

[80] Hayes to Swarthmore Church, May 15, 1933.

classes for evangelists and inquirers...are not much use as missionaries."[81] When the Nationalist army's looting and killing of the foreigners in Nanjing caused a massive evacuation of missionaries across China in 1927, Hayes believed it was a good opportunity for "the elimination of much that they say is missionary work, 'but it is not,' and the restriction of missionary activities to those things which have a direct relation to evangelistic work."[82] When the Mission Board of the Northern Presbyterian Church had to cut back the mission programs during the Great Depression era, Hayes suggested recalling the personnel not directly involved in evangelistic work and cutting the expense in the central offices instead of the field work. [83] In addition, he always advocated that educational missionaries should also engage themselves in some evangelistic work.[84]

Obviously, Hayes was firmly convinced that there was a fundamental gap between the young, social-gospel oriented, and "elite" missionaries tied with mission bureaucracy in the cities and the older, conservative, less visible missionaries in the countryside in terms of their understanding of the meanings and tasks of mission. Under his pen the controversy between the modernists and fundamentalists sometimes sounded almost like the conflict between the "elite" missionaries in urban areas and the hardworking missionaries in rural areas. Based on his own emphasis on evangelism, he never doubted that the latter group of missionaries were the real backbone of the mission enterprises in China and the driving force for the evangelization of the country. No matter to what extent his view was valid in defining the missionary landscape in China of the 1920s and 1930s, his negative view of the growing missionary social programs did reinforce his

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[81] Hayes to Speer, 16 February 1933.
[82] Hayes to Swarthmore Church, 10 May 1927.
[83] W.M. Hayes to Robert Speer, 12 September 33, PCUSABS, RG82, 47-17, PHS, Philadelphia.

faith in so-called direct evangelistic work, and his stress on evangelism was shared by the faculty, the board of directors, and student bodies of the NCTS. It thus was a crucial factor in guiding the activities of the school. More significantly, Watson Hayes and the NCTS' standing for evangelism were a common conservative reaction to the social gospel and institution-building trend in the 1920s and 1930s. While fundamentalists and evangelicals were single-mindedly saving souls, liberals were busy with building the kingdom of God on earth. The old balance between evangelism and social services became a casualty of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy. The so-called "Great Reversal" or the weakening of evangelicals' social interests took place among conservative missionary circles in China.

As an institution dedicated to the training of ministers and evangelists, the leadership of the NCTS was fully aware that an effective church worker needed both biblical and theological knowledge and practical skills and experience. Therefore, curriculum and school activities of the NCTS were designed to give the students not only knowledge of the Bible and theology but also the opportunity to be involved in evangelistic work during the school years. Each school year lasted only five and a half months, usually from August of one year to January of the next, so the students were free for more than six months between the school years. One of the major purposes for this unique arrangement was to "give its students ample time for evangelistic work and thus test their ability to serve the churches, so that on graduation they will not be

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[84] Ibid.

inexperienced novices but men qualified by educational culture and practical experience to build up the church." [85]

To assist the local churches and sharpen their evangelistic skills, the seminary encouraged its faculty members and students to engage in the evangelization of the neighboring areas. "Each Sunday faculty and men and women students, following their own inclination, went out to near-by villages to preach."[86] The majority of the NCTS faculty also took an active part in the leading of revival meetings, Bible study conferences, and other evangelistic events. In 1934 Shankiang Presbytery designated an area with fifty-eight villages to be the seminary parish. A number of student gospel teams composed of five to six members were sent out to the villages, city preaching hall, the jail, the railway station, and leper asylum on Sundays. The financial support for this work came from voluntary contributions and weekend services offerings. In the first year of operation, more than fifty people were converted by these gospel bands.[87] For the school year of 1936-37, the total number of the gospel teams reached twenty-eight, and 125 people were admitted into local churches by baptism.[88] The students' evangelistic teams gradually gained a good reputation in the surrounding areas and were often in high demand. In fact the demand for the NCTS students was so high that there often were not enough students to meet the needs.[89] The students and graduates of the Women's Bible Seminary participated in evangelism just as enthusiastically and actively as the NCTS students. Most of them served as evangelists or Bible women and teachers and carried out

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[85] North China Theological Seminary, PCUSABS, 2.

[86] Report of North China Theological Seminary, 1934-35.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Report of the North China Theological Seminary, 1936-37, in Minutes of the Shantung Missions of PCUSA, 1937, China Mission Papers, PHS, Montreat, 92.

evangelization mainly among women. For years W.M.Hayes was very pleased by "the new spirit among the young women"[90] and very supportive of their evangelistic activities.

Another very significant feature of the NCTS was its persistent policy of maintaining Chinese control or governing of the seminary and strengthening the ability of self-support of the Chinese churches. As mentioned before, the founding of the NCTS was largely the result of the Chinese churches' deep dissatisfaction of being excluded from any substantial participation in the administration of the theological school of the Shandong Christian University, and it was the Chinese church that took the initiative to break away and start the new seminary. This event definitely highlighted the resolve and ability of self-governance on the part of the Chinese churches in Shandong Province. It was no wonder that the very first statement of the new seminary's purpose, drafted by the Provisional Board of Directors of the NCTS, made it very clear that "the seminary is mainly under the control of the Chinese church."[91]

Once again Hayes was one of the missionaries who were able to understand fully the frustration of the Chinese churches and their desire for more independence and power of self-governance. When the Mission Board of the Northern Presbyterian Church tried to pressure the Chinese churches back to the Shandong Christian University, Hayes wrote a lengthy letter to the Mission Board to plead the case of the Chinese churches. In it he passionately stated:

> The other method of keeping everything under the hand of the foreigner and preserving his cherished power has left a lesser Shantung Mission without a single native who is really a leader, nor have they had one for the last 50 years. What else could you expect when Chinese pastors of twenty or more years

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[89] See Report of the North China Theological Seminary, 1923-24.
[90] Hayes to Swarthmore Church, 21 June 1926.
[91] Minutes of a Meeting of the Provisional Board of Directors, Held at Weihsien, March 12, 1920.

> standing were put under a young man who had barely finished his language studies and absolutely without experience?
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> Gentlemen, you evidently do not realize it, but you are at the parting of the ways. We see that the young and middle aged men, who are leading the City Evangelistic Work, are reaching people and cities whom we could not touch,...for behold there is a Chinese in control,...The Chinese church is now beginning to tackle its work. Shall we throttle the child whom we have reared just when it is beginning to assert itself because it does not approve of some of our plans for it? Some years ago, we were exhorted not to cling to power but to yield wisely to native leadership. It now looks as if the shoe was on the other foot and the exhorted must become the exhorters.[92]

Hayes's point was very clear: the moment had come when Chinese Christians wanted and were able to take the matter into their own hands, to run their own seminary, and to train their own ministers.

From the moment of its founding, one of the indispensable aspects of the self-identity of the NCTS was that it was a Chinese theological school under the control of the Chinese Presbyterian churches especially in Shandong and North Jiangsu. Tracing the school's origin, the NCTS statement of 1924 declared that "the Hwa Bei (North China) Theological Seminary is in a peculiar sense the school of the Chinese church."[93] It went on to define the administrative structure of the NCTS as follows:

> The control of the school is vested by the churches concerned in a Board of Directors, two from each presbytery or similar body taking part therein, one member being elected each year. Missionaries, members of the Chinese Presbyteries, are eligible to serve, though the majority of the directors are Chinese. Co-opted members, not to exceed in number one-fourth of the elected directors, may be chosen from other ecclesiastical or missionary bodies. Should other Chinese churches wish to share officially in the Seminary, application to do so will received cordial consideration.[94]

There is no doubt that, for the period of 1920 to 1937, Watson Hayes was the dominant figure in the life of the NCTS. He taught theology, raised funds, and almost single-

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[92] Hayes to the Secretaries of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, May 1,1920.
[93] North China Theological Seminary, PCUSABS, 1

handedly ran the school administration. In addition the Shandong Mission of the Northern Presbyterian Church and the North Jiangsu Mission of the Southern Presbyterian Church were strong supporters of this seminary and more importantly provided the teaching staff. Nevertheless, the Board of the Directors was elected by the Chinese churches, and the majority of the board members was Chinese Christians. Even foreign members of the board were chosen by the Chinese Presbyterian churches, although the foreign missionaries also made annual reports to their respective missions.[95]

Chinese Christians also assumed significant roles in the teaching at the NCTS. For most of the years, at least half of an average of seven to eight full-time faculty members was Chinese. Among all the Chinese faculty members, Ding Li-mei (Ting Li Mei) and Jia Yu-ming (Kia Yu Ming) were most prominent. Ding Li-mei (1871-1936) was one of the earliest Chinese evangelist with "a nationwide reputation."[96] After graduating from Calvin Mateer's Dengzhou College, he worked as a pastor and teacher in Shandong Province. In the 1910s he became a well-known evangelist particularly among students. After serving on the NCTS faculty from early 1920s to early 1930s, Ding re-entered evangelistic work. Jia Yu-ming (1880-1964) was also a graduate of Dengzhou College. Throughout his career he established himself as one of the top conservative Chinese systematic theologians, exegetes, and educators. In 1916 he joined the faculty of the Nanjing Theological Seminary. Then he was appointed to the vice-presidency of the NCTS in early 1920s. After leaving the NCTS in the early 1930s, Jia headed several theological and Bible training institutions in southern parts of China. Less famous than

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[94] Ibid. 2.
[95] Report of the North China Theological Seminary, August 1923-January 1924.
[96] Bays, "Growth of Independent Christianity," 313.

Ding and Jia, Zhang Xue-gong (H.K.Chang) received some training at the Princeton Theological Seminary and became a frequent speaker in numerous evangelistic and revival events across China in the 1930s. When W.M. Hayes started to transfer the NCTS leadership to Chinese Christians in 1937, Zhang was appointed co-president with Hayes.

Chinese Christians even took on significant responsibilities in financial support of the seminary. When the seminary was opened, Chinese Christians made rather considerable financial contributions. The NCTS therefore pursued two related policies: to keep the expenses of the seminary low and to encourage financial commitment on the part of the Chinese churches. Again the major promoter of these policies was Watson Hayes. Of course the adoption of these policies had to do with the lack of financial back-up from the mission board of the Northern Presbyterian Church and poor economic conditions of the rural areas from where the NCTS drew most of its students. However, they also significantly reflected Hayes' inclination toward anti-institutionalization and his vision of theological education and its relation to the emerging Chinese churches.

Hayes was keenly aware that the NCTS aimed to train the future leaders for the Chinese churches especially in rural areas. In his view the students' capability of enduring hardship and self-support was just as crucial as the orthodoxy of their beliefs for the future of the churches in China. He was quite critical of certain wealthy theological educational institutions that lured young people with financial subsidies. In the NCTS President's Report of 1925 to 1926, Hayes summarized his view and the NCTS' position as follows:

> We would like to see the student body practically entirely self-supporting, believing that the student who earns his education will value it all the more,...but as long as other institutions offer considerable financial inducement

> to men while attending school, our hands are manifestly tied. All will probably realize the importance of men on graduation being willing to accept the small salaries which the churches, with few exceptions are able to pay: otherwise the problem of the rural church, constituting the bulk of the Christian constituency in China, presents a serious problem. The culture of the students during their seminary course has a very direct relation to this problem.
>
> We might give more aid but prefer to draw students by higher inducement than mere financial considerations, and earnestly urge that others join us in this stand...against the dependent spirit which has led the Mission Church generally to believe that it is more blessed to receive than to give. To overcome this spirit we should work from the top down, rather than reverse, and so should begin with the future leaders.[97]

Hayes felt so strongly about the self-support of the native churches that, after the Nanjing Incident, he urged his mission board to seize this opportunity and start reducing the funding in the mission fields: "I hope ...that the Chinese church may more and more take the guidance of its own work, but the trump of Gabriel is needed to warn our Boards against indefinitely continuing the supply of funds for institutions and work from which the missionaries have been dropped. In case the missionaries are withdrawn, the funds should also be withdrawn—not all at once but with a firm ...annual decrease. Otherwise we shall have a permanent—and worse than a permanent—sycophant church on our hands."[98] Hayes admitted that his suggestions would not be popular with those "who are more concerned with social service and the cultural aspects of Christianity than they are with its evangelistic spirit" and "who are enamored with modern Chinese liberalism." But he insisted that "the truth should be told."[99] Under his leadership these visions and

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[97] "Report of the North China Theological Seminary, August 1925—January 1926." The competition from other seminaries with better financial aid created some problems for the NCTS. According to its report of 1931 to 32, " some students...are drawn elsewhere by the offer of having all expenses paid...So far as building up a strong, self-reliant church is concerned, this is decidedly taking a retrograde course." (Report of the President of the North China Theological Seminary, September 1931 to June 1932, in Minutes of the Shantung Mission, 1932, China Mission Papers, PHS, Montreat, NC, 64)

[98] Hayes to the Swarthmore Church, 10 May 1927, Blackstone Papers, BGC, Wheaton College,

[99] Ibid.

principles were applied to the financial matters and the students' life at the NCTS. He truly believed that the NCTS could help the Chinese churches stand on their own feet by raising new generations of church leaders with a spirit of independence.

Throughout the years the expenses of the seminary were kept as low as possible, and the Chinese churches were encouraged to make contributions. Hayes stated the principles of the financial support as "faith and economy."[100] For the school year of August 1924 to January 1925, the total expenses of the seminary amounted to M $3,264.11, which largely consisted of the salaries of the Chinese faculty and building maintenance.[101] Of this total amount M $1,236.67 came from Chinese churches, students, and individuals. For the next school year the total expenses were M $3,165.02 toward which Chinese contributions amounted to M $916.51.[102] As the seminary with the largest enrollment, the NCTS had considerably lower expenses and a higher percentage of Chinese contributions to its budget than a number of other seminaries. For the school year of 1933-34, the total expenditure of the NCTS was approximately M $5000.00[103] and ranked number seven among the top eleven seminaries in China.[104] And the NCTS was one of only two schools that did not receive any income from the mission boards but received contributions from the Chinese churches. During the same school year, Yenching School of Religion and Nanjing Theological Seminary had the largest

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[100] North China Theological Seminary President's Report for 1933-34. With this kind of word, Hayes felt proud of the fact that the NCTS largely relied on the voluntary support of the American and Chinese sources rather than regular budget of the board, and his admiration of the CIM and its well-known stand on financial matter also testified of his inclination to the so-called "faith mission principle." (See Hayes to Speer, 12 September 1933).

[101] The foreign faculty still received their salaries from the mission boards. See Report of the North China Theological Seminary, 1924-25.

[102] Report of the North China Theological Seminary, 1925-26.

[103] North China Theological Seminary President's Report for 1933-34.

expenditures and heavily relied on endowments from the foreign sources.[105] This relatively small budget enabled the NCTS to endure the impact of the Great Depression rather easily. The NCTS' financial relationship with the Northern Presbyterian Mission Board will be discussed later. But here it is enough to point out that Hayes did hesitate to appeal to the mission board for funds, even when there was a need and possibility for such funding, partly because he was worried that the Chinese churches and students would decrease their contributions once they realized the NCTS had a "wealthy" mission board behind it. This would be a nightmare for him, for he insisted that "I do want to see the Chinese church stand on its own feet, and do not want to take a backward step."[106]

The low expenditure made the costs of living and studying in the NCTS rather cheap and thus enabled many students with minimal economic means to accept theological training here. Throughout the years the NCTS charged neither tuition nor housing for all students. A student committee ran the board and managed to maintain a very low cost, and the costs of heat, baths, and electric lights were also very cheap.

The NCTS was very cautious in giving any extra financial assistance to the students. Only the students sponsored by the presbyteries under the Synod of North China received half of their board expense from the seminary, and the presbyteries and students paid the other half. These students also got free books and travel. In addition the NCTS did give aid to some students enrolled from far away. But all other self-supporting students and the students from other churches and missions were supposed to pay for the

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[104] Smith, The Development of Protestant Theological Education in China, Appendix B, "Statistical Chart of Theological Seminaries and Bible Schools, 1933-34."

[105] Ibid. According Smith's survey, from 1933-34, Nanjing had eleven full-time faculty and fifty-eight students, and Yeching had five full-time faculty and thirty students. The NCTS had only ten faculty

actual cost of board, cloth, travel, and books,[107] and they formed the majority of the student body.[108] The seminary's annual report for the year 1924-25 marked this financial arrangement as a significant progress from the situation when the seminary was established in 1919. At that time Chinese churches and students paid no part of their board, travel, books, and other expenses, and presbyteries also subsidized the students for the support of their families. Six years later this subsidy for families was completely dropped, and "now in this seminary a man pays to go to school instead of being paid to go."[109]

The NCTS leadership was determined to continue to decrease gradually the existing financial support. Starting from 1925 the costs of lights and bathing were dropped from the free list for the presbyteries' sponsored students. In the meantime the NCTS tried to create the opportunities for students to obtain the means for self-support. In fact one major purpose of having a single five and half months semester per year was to have the students free for almost half a year so that they could make a living and provide for their families.[110] During the semester the students could actually earn some income by engaging in evangelistic activities in nearby areas.[111] Of course it is debatable to what extent the NCTS was supported by the Chinese churches. The contributions from the Chinese sources never accounted for more than half of the school's expenses. But it is

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but 133 students. Smith, The Development of Protestant Theological Education in China, Appendix B, "Statistical Chart of Theological Seminaries and Bible Schools, 1933-34."

[106] Hayes to Scott, 15 February 1927.

[107] See Report of the North China Theological Seminary, 1923-24.

[108] Report of the North China Theological Seminary, 1925-26.

[109] Reports of the North China Theological Seminary, 1924-25

[110] See North China Theological Seminary, PCUSABS, 2.

[111] See Report of the North China Theological Seminary, 1923-24.

also a fact that the NCTS was among the very few seminaries that made serious and consistent efforts to encourage the self-support of the Chinese churches.

Strengthening the Chinese self-government and self-support was just part of the NCTS' efforts to build an indigenous church in China. While other seminaries like Yeching and Nanjing sought to raise the academic standard of theological studies and organize departments, which offered a higher grade theological course in English to college graduates, [112]the NCTS continued to shun any attempts at Westernizing the teachings and students' life. All classes in the NTCS were conducted in Mandarin, and English was simply taught as an elective course. On behalf of the NCTS's insistence on Mandarin teachings, Hayes argued that "just as the German princes of the Reformation era insisted in the presence of Charles V, in speaking German on German soil, so we believe that in training men to preach to the millions of China, it is better to speak Chinese on Chinese soil."[113] Of course all meetings of the Board of Directors were conducted in Chinese. In guiding the students' life, "the school also aims by its Chinese dormitory system and mode of life to avoid training its men to a semi-foreign style of living beyond the ability of the Chinese churches to sustain."[114] The NCTS never had any intention of detaching its students from their own indigenous cultural and living settings. The mission of the NCTS was always to equip the Chinese churches with highly trained ministers and evangelists who held orthodox beliefs, committed themselves to the evangelization of the masses in the urban and rural areas, were willing to work independently under harsh conditions, and were capable of building indigenous churches.

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[112] See Smith, The Development of Protestant Theological Education in China, 122.
[113] Report of the North China Theological Seminary, 1923-24.
[114] North China Theological Seminary, PCUSABS, 2.

This vision of theological education was certainly different from the social-service oriented, rather academic, and mostly urban liberal seminaries in China.

To establish Three-Self and indigenous churches had long been the goal of many missionaries and mission societies since early years of Protestant missionary movement in China.[115] In the nineteenth century the Three-Self cause was advocated by such famous missionaries as Karl Gutzlaff, an independent German missionary and John Nevius of the Northern Presbyterian Church. As Chinese churches grew stronger in the early twentieth century, the Three-Self movement gained new momentum. However, as Wilbert Shenk pointed out, most of foreign missionaries favored "gradualism rather than revolutionary change."[116] For the first half of the twentieth century, the accomplishment of the movement was minimal. Daniel Bays observed that this was especially the case with so-called "Sino-foreign Protestant establishment" dominated by modernists and moderates.[117] The rapid development of expensive educational and medical institutions made the goal of the Three-Selfs even more difficult to achieve. On the other hand, the emerging indigenous conservative Christian groups were Three-Self from the very beginning. The case of the NCTS showed that conservative missions were in general more consistent in their efforts to make the churches indigenous and also made more achievements than their liberal counterparts.

Not surprisingly the North China Theological Seminary gained a lot of attention of the fundamentalists in both China and North America. The split within the Theological

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[115] For a survey of the Three-Self movement in China, see Wilbert R.Shenk, "The Origins and Evolution of the Three-Selfs in Relation to China," International Bulletin of Missionary Research 14 (January 1990): 28-35.

[116] Ibid., 32.

[117] See Bays, "Growth of Independent Christianity," 308-309.

School of the Shandong Christian University was cited as another evidence of the wide spread of modernism, and the mission board of the Northern Presbyterian Church was accused of giving in to the British Baptists and forcing the Presbyterian missionaries and Chinese Christians to stay in the union even by compromising with modernism.[118] In the case of the NCTS, the fundamentalists clearly saw a useful weapon for agitation and attack against the modernists and the mission boards. It was no wonder that, among the fundamentalist groups, the NCTS quickly gained the reputation as "a protest against the rationalistic teaching of our missionaries," [119] "a shining example of true testimony,"[120] and "the only theological school in China of seminary grade which is conservative."[121] The NCTS particularly featured prominently within the fundamentalist network of evangelist and missionary training institutions in North America. In 1926 John Innis of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles declared that "it is very encouraging to see how the numbers at the North China Seminary are increasing. It is another unquestionable evidence we have that, in spite of all the fuss and noise made by Modernists, the heart of the church in China is beating true, and I believe that the great rank and file of the missionaries and Chinese Christians are absolutely loyal to the Gospel of Jesus Christ."[122] During the 1930s the NCTS was constantly compared with the newly founded

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[118] Extracts of Letter, Attached to the letter from Lobenstine to J. Walter Lowrie, 12 August 1921.

[119] Quoted in the Board of Foreign Missions of PCUSA to China Council and Missions in China, 8 December 1925, PCUSABS, RG82, 27-17, PHS, Philadelphia.

[120] Charles G Trumbull, "Foreign Missionary Betrayals of the Faith, A Crisis Confronting the Whole Church," The Sunday School Times (March 23, 1935): 195.

[121] Hayes to Scott, 22 November 1923.

[122] John Innis to W.E.Blackstone, 14 October 1926, Blackstone Papers, BGC, Wheaton College.

Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia and sometimes simply referred to as "the Westminster Seminary of China."[123]

In the eyes of the fundamentalists, the NCTS was one of the theological educational institutions they still could trust. They spoke highly of both spiritual life and academic standard of the seminary. In an article written by Albert Dodd of the NCTS for The China Fundamentalist, the NCTS was claimed to be "by far the largest Theological Seminary in all China as well as second to none in educational standard." [124]But to many educational missionaries particularly inclined to liberal theological views, the second part of the statement was definitely questionable. A common view among many missionaries was that the academic standard and student quality at the NCTS were lower than such seminaries as Nanjing and Yenching, and thus it was "a second grade institution."[125] When C.H. Fenn, a secretary of the Northern Presbyterian Mission Board, implied that "this seminary is somewhat of a second class affair." Watson Hayes was furious and demanded that he withdraw his statement. In refuting Fenn's claim, Hayes insisted that

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[123] "News from the Front." The Independent Board Bulletin 1 (January 1935): 12. See also J.Edward Blair: An Open Letter to Dr. Robert E. Speer, 8 April 1935, J Gresham Machen Papers, Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia.

[124] Albert B Dodd, "The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Christ in China," The China Fundamentalist, (January-March, 1930): 15. An article on the The Sunday School Times praised the NCTS and the affiliated Women's Bible Seminary in these words, "These two schools combined are not only the largest theological center in China, of high grade teaching and real scholarship in the Chinese and foreign professors,...but they also constitute a bulwark of evangelical religion for the nascent Church of China." (Charles Ernest Scott, "A Great Missionary's Fifty Years in China, Watson M Hayes, DD., Evangelist, Teacher, Author, and Scholar." The Sunday School Times (June 10 1933): 388.

[125] Quoted in B.C.Patterson to Home Church, 30 March 1937, Missionaries' Correspondence Collection (January –September 1937), PHS, Montreat, NC. According to the NCTS statement of 1924, the qualification for entrance into the seminary was college and middle school graduates who were required to take some extra junior college courses. (See North China Theological Seminary, PCUSABS,3) According to The Laymen's Inquiry Fact-Finders' Report which was considered to be unexpectedly objective and generous toward the NCTS, the actual entrance requirement for the NCTS was junior middle school, and lower than Yenching, Nanjing, and some other schools. Most of the students at the NCTS belonged to the category of junior middle school, and "with the exception of three teachers, the scholastic equipment of the faculty is not of a high degree."(Laymen's Inquiry Fact-Finders' Report, 281)

the diploma course at the NCTS had the same standard as Nanjing Theological Seminary and the Theological School of the Shandong Christian University.[126]

The relationship between the NCTS and the mission board of the Northern Presbyterian Church, which was located in New York, was ambiguous and troublesome. After the split within the Shandong Christian University occurred and a new seminary was proposed, the mission board opposed the proposal mainly on the grounds that it was not necessary to have two rival seminaries in the same region. [127] When the conservatives constantly implied that the board's opposition to the NCTS was the result of tolerance of liberalism, the board tried to downplay the theological aspect of the controversy within the university and claimed that "the chief immediate issues were not doctrinal, but largely administrative and personal."[128]After much correspondence and consultation, a compromise was finally reached between the board and the NCTS in May 1920. The board gave permission for this new seminary and allowed Hayes and Dodd to teach there, who were still financially supported by the board. Besides a very small amount of annual funding, the board would not be responsible for any expenses of the new seminary, and the NCTS was expected to raise its own funds from both the Chinese churches and non-Presbyterian sources in North America.[129] In the view of the board, the NCTS was "thoroughly Chinese in ownership and control."[130]

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[126] W.M.Hayes to C. Fenn,13 November 1934, PCUSABS, RG82, 26-4, PHS, Philadelphia.

[127] Arthur Brown to William S. Jackson, 26 June 1924, PCUSABS, RG82, 26-4, PHS, Philadelphia.

[128] Ibid.

[129] See W.M.Hayes to George Scott, 11 January 1924, PCUSABS, RG82, 26-4. See also George T. Scott to William S. Jackson, 26 March 1924, PCUSABS, RG82, 26-4, PHS, Philadelphia.

[130] George T. Scott to William S. Jackson, 26 March 1924, PCUSABS, RG82, 26-4, PHS, Philadelphia.

Since the NCTS was a project initiated by the Chinese Presbyterian churches and a few missionaries like Hayes outside the board's plan, the school came as a surprise to the board. Even after the compromise was reached, the mission board's attitude toward the NCTS was still lukewarm and sometime even suspicious. Only a few years later, the board began to acknowledge that "a large and good work is being done" in Tengxian.[131] However, the ambiguous or, in the mission board's word, "unique" nature of the relationship between the seminary and board remained and soon became apparent in a string of financial controversies. [132]

After the NCTS was moved to Tengxian, Hayes registered the property of the new seminary in the board's name at the U.S.Consulate in Shandong Province without the approval of the board. According to Haye's explanation, "registration in no way involves the Board in complications—it simply enables those in charge here, in case of destruction by mobs, bandits, or soldiery to file their claims with the American Consul."[133] Upset by Hayes' action, the board reiterated that "neither our Presbyterian Board nor any of its Missions has any authority or responsibility for the property or maintenance of the institution."[134] The status of the NCTS became even odder: it was registered under the name of the mission board and run by the Presbyterian missionaries, but it was actually an independent enterprise financially and administratively.

Then a serious dispute regarding the fund-raising of the NCTS arose. Soon after the NCTS was established, it was necessary for the NCTS to raise funds from overseas, even though the Chinese churches made significant financial contributions to the

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[131] C.B. McAfee to G.T. Scott, 22 April 1925, PCUSABS, RG 82, 27-12, PHS, Philadelphia.
[132] Scott to Jackson, 26 March 1924.
[133] Hayes to Scott, 22 November 1923.

enterprise. Conservative organizations and personalities in North America, such as the Milton Stewart Fund and William B. Riley of Minneapolis, were especially prominent in securing the funds toward the founding of the NCTS.[135] For the most part of the 1920s, the Milton Stewart Fund continued to contribute to the salaries of two prominent Chinese faculty members, Jia Yu-ming and Ding Li-mei. It was no wonder that Hayes called W.E. Blackstone of Stewart Fund "one of the friends who had stood by us from the very first."[136] While the NCTS rapidly grew, it continued to rely on the donations from foreign sources, and Hayes and other foreign missionaries worked hard to raise funds without appealing to the mission board for funding.

As the largest conservative seminary in China, the NCTS indeed was a big attraction for many potential conservative donors who began to lose confidence in the mission boards of their churches. Certain NCTS faculty such as Albert Dodd started to appeal directly to the conservative home constituency, including some Northern Presbyterians, for funds. For instance, in one of the letters, Dodd allegedly made an appeal on behalf of the NCTS: "If you know of persons of means who are giving to the other Mission enterprises because they do not approve of the position taken by certain officers of our Board, please ask them to remember us who are carrying on a work for the Presbyterian Church."[137] Even W.M.Hayes himself wrote numerous letters to his home churches and constantly highlighted the conservative status of the NCTS and its differences from liberal seminaries, even though he never made such a direct appeal as Dodd did. It did not take long for some Presbyterian churches in the United States to

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[134] Scott to Jackson, 26 March 1924.
[135] See Patterson, "Memoir," 53-54
[136] W. M. Hayes to W.E. Blackstone, 13 July 1926, Blackstone Papers, BGC, Wheaton College.

begin diverting their mission offerings from the mission boards directly to the NCTS. The mission board of the Northern Presbyterian Church was infuriated by these "entirely unauthorized, direct and indirect appeals to the Board's constituency"[138] and viewed the actions of the missionaries associated with the NCTS as a serious violation of the original agreement. One of the board secretaries was so upset that he wrote to other members of the board and accused those missionaries, who were "making these appeals to the home church with the deliberate statement that only gifts made in that way can guarantee a use of money from the churches to promote orthodox Christianity," of being "fundamentally disloyal to the Board." He assumed that they had "hearty encouragement from Dr.Watson Hayes." He then went on to ask the board to "deal aggressively and firmly with the missionaries in the Shantung Mission" and suggested "they should be hauled up on the carpet" or at least the amount of money they had raised should be deducted from the total appropriations allocated to the Shandong Mission.[139] While the board expressed its dissatisfaction to the Shandong Mission and the NCTS, it tried to persuade these home churches to send their gifts to the mission board again.

Through correspondence Watson Hayes angrily protested the board secretaries' accusations and actions. By defending Dodd and other missionaries' fund-raising activities, he asserted that there were indeed people dissatisfied with the mission board, and "their number seems to be increasing"; and the conservative reputation of the NCTS was "the perfectly valid ground" for appealing to the home churches for funds.[140]

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[137] Quoted in Hayes to Scott, 22 November 1923.
[138] Board to China Council and Missions in China, 8 December 1925.
[139] W.P.Schell to Speer, Brown, and Others, 22 November 1923, PCUSABS, RG82, 26-4.
[140] Hayes to Scott, 22 November 1923.

He charged that "our esteemed Board of Foreign Missions seems to regard itself as the only agency through which funds from Northern Presbyterians should reach the heathen world," and questioned whether one could be considered "disloyal" by sending the contribution directly to the mission fields. By making these claims, Hayes said, "the P.B.F.M Secretaries, in their zeal for absolute control were overworking this language and its implications to their own hurt."[141]

For Hayes the controversies on the issues of the property registration and direct contribution were not just financial matters but reflected the deeper theological differences between the mission board and the NCTS. In a letter to George Scott, a secretary of the mission board, he declared that "the key to the whole situation lies just here: you do not, and I do, wish an out and out conservative school."[142] He was convinced that in order to get rid of the conservative seminary, the board intended to crush it financially or starve it out by blocking any direct contribution from the home constituency.[143] More than once he pleaded with the board for peace and support: "We here have neither time not desire to cross swords with the authorities in New York, but this school must go on....So once more I beg of you....do not try to break down what 'the Lord is manifestly blessing.'"[144]

To the mission board, opposing the NCTS on account of its conservative theological position was a very serious and potentially very damaging charge. Thus, the board categorically denied this charge, and claimed that "the Board is as zealous as Dr.Hayes for sound evangelical teaching....The Board has not opposed a 'conservative'

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[141] W.M. Hayes to G.T. Scott, 7 June 1924, PCUSABS, RG82, 26-4, PHS, Philadelphia.
[142] W.M. Hayes to G.T. Scott, 29 April 1924, PCUSABS, RG82, 26-4, PHS, Philadelphia.
[143] W.M. Hayes to G.T. Scott, 11 January 1924, PCUSABS, RG82, 26-4, PHS, Philadelphia.

seminary nor encouraged a 'liberal' one in China ....The Board stands squarely upon the platform of the evangelical Gospel...as the Gospel is understood by the Presbyterian Church....The Missions are entirely free to make their seminaries as conservative as they choose."[145]

However, the board did question whether Hayes' version of orthodoxy contained in the creedal statement of the NCTS should be the standard one that everyone should accept. George Scott explained the position of the board as follows: "There is, of course, no question of the propriety of an individual to sign up to the fullest possible doctrinal statement that he may wish, the only question is as to the propriety of a Mission requiring any of its members to assent to any belief that would seem to go beyond the official doctrinal standards of our Presbyterian Church."[146] It was evident that, in the eyes of the mission board, the theological position of Hayes and the NCTS went too far and thus could not be the standard expression of orthodoxy. As long as the official standard of the Presbyterian church was upheld, the board wanted to allow and promote tolerance and cooperation among those who had phrased and defined "orthodoxy" differently. Here the board indirectly admitted that there was indeed a theological difference between the conservatives like Hayes and the mission board.

By 1933 another controversial issue had arisen between the mission board and the NCTS. The mission board suddenly changed its mind and decided to claim the ownership of the NCTS property. On the ground that "practically all of the funds came from Americans and from sources within the constituency of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.,"

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[144] Ibid.
[145] Brown to Jackson, 26 June 1924.
[146] George Scott to W.M.Hayes, 28 January 1924, PCUSABS, RG82, 26-4, PHS, Philadelphia.

the board declared that "this property will henceforth be held by the Board for the sole benefit of the Chinese Church."[147] This new move shocked and angered Hayes and the faculty of the NCTS. A resolution taken by a faculty meeting restricted the board's authority to the securing of redress in case of destruction of the property and re-asserted the power of the Board of the Directors of the NCTS in all other matters.[148] Through extensive correspondence with the board, Hayes argued forcefully for his essential point: the property belonged to the Presbyterian Church in China instead of the mission board. "It is quite inexplicable," he said, "how, when the New York office attempted to prevent the establishment of the Seminary by shutting off funds from it, any secretary should now, when it has proved to be a success, claim its property....We certainly must preserve to the Chinese Church what was intended for it."[149] Through these struggles against attempts to destroy or control the NCTS, Hayes and his colleagues carefully and forcefully tried to guard the seminary's identity as the conservative institution under Chinese control. But one thing did differentiate Watson Hayes from some of the most vocal and belligerent fundamentalists. He always engaged in these arguments with the mission board through private correspondence and never made them public, as he pointed out in a letter to a board secretary: "Though at times under considerable provocation, I have refrained from making any public statements, because in my judgment it is better to do our washing at home."[150] Furthermore, Hayes maintained a cordial relationship with Robert Speer throughout these years and sometimes praised his theological views on such issues as the

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[147] Mission Board to China Council and Missions in China, 18 December 1933, PCUSABS, RG82 47-9, PHS, Philadelphia.

[148] Action Taken on Date by the Faculty of the North China Theological Seminary Regarding its Property, 28 October 1933, PCUSABS, PHS, RG82, 26-7, PHS, Philadelphia.

Laymen's Foreign Mission Inquiry.[151] He always conducted his hottest debates with the secretaries under Speer instead of Speer himself. This perhaps prevented any chance of the final show-down or break off between the NCTS and the mission board.

Throughout the years the NCTS had attracted a large number of Chinese Christians across the country to pursue theological training. When asked why so many Chinese Christians came to the NCTS, a Chinese Christian leader replied: "It is strictly conservative in its teaching, it is under the control of the Chinese Church, and it has a goodly number of Chinese on its faculty."[152] Indeed, its conservative theological position and its emphasis on indigenization made the NCTS stand out among the major seminaries in China of the 1920s and 1930s. From 1919 to 1933, the NCTS graduated 204 men, and the Women's Bible Seminary graduated sixty-two women.[153] They served the churches across the country. Through its large number of graduates, the NCTS exerted an important and long-lasting influence on the character of the Chinese churches. Along with the independent Chinese evangelists, churches, and revival movement flourishing in the late 1920s and early 1930s, the NCTS contributed to the formation of the evangelical and conservative tradition of the Protestant churches in China. The Fact-Finders' Report of the Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry made the following statement about the impact of the NCTS:

> It was interesting to find that fully 60 percent of the Christian missionaries and church members in China are Fundamentalists...It may be due to this fact that so few men of first-class scholastic standing are attracted to the seminaries...

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[149] W.M. Hayes to the China Council, 18 August 1933, PCUSABS, RG82, 26-4, PHS, Philadelphia.

[150] Hayes to Fenn, 13 November 1934.

[151] See W.M. Hayes to Robert Speer, 16 February 1933, PCUSABS, RG82, 47-17, PHS, Philadelphia.

[152] Report of the North China Theological Seminary, 1923-24.

[153] Hayes to the Supporters of the North China Theological Seminary, 16 October 1933.

> In view of its fundamentalist outlook it is difficult to imagine the North China Theological College making contact with the Chinese intelligentsia of the cities. But there can be little doubt of the strength and success of its preaching and teaching among the country people, that vast population forming over 80 per cent of all the inhabitants of China.[154]

No matter how accurate this percentage of the fundamentalists of the missionaries and Chinese Christians was, this statement was correct in emphasizing the NCTS' contribution to the development of the grass-root level churches, especially in the rural areas of China. The NCTS did not produce prominent Chinese Christian thinkers and scholars but educated generations of pastors and evangelists for a great number of rural and urban churches.

In the 1920s and 1930s, the Presbyterian missionaries associated with the NCTS took a strong interest in the rise of independent Chinese evangelists and revival movements such as those led by Song Shangjie (John Sung).[155] Ni Tuo-sheng, Wang Ming-dao, and others associated with the Bethel Mission. Most of their reactions to these evangelists and their teachings and evangelizing activities were positive. The missionaries endorsed their preaching of "the pure gospel" [156] and their awakening of the cold churches and individuals by calling for repentance and cleansing from sin. The Chinese evangelists' antagonism against modernist theological teachings and social gospel was appreciated by the fundamentalist missionaries in China. As a matter of fact, Song had held evangelistic meetings in Tengxian, and it was reported by a NCTS foreign professor

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[154] Laymen's Inquiry, the Fact-Finders' Report, 282.

[155] Song Shang-jie (1901-1944) graduated from Ohio State University with a Ph.D. in chemistry in 1926, and then studied in Union Theological Seminary. After returning to China, he joined the Bethel Band, an evangelistic team associated with the Bethel Mission in Shanghai. Song later became an independent evangelist and led numerous revival meetings across China in the 1930s. Largely because of his preaching style, foreign missionaries gave him the name "Billy Sunday of China."(Marguerite Mizell to Home Church, 17 April 1936, Missionary Correspondence Collection, PHS, Montreat, NC).

that "our students received a great spiritual uplift and as a result are most earnest in carrying on the work of reaching the unsaved."[157]

However, many missionaries' endorsement of the indigenous evangelical revivals tended to be cautious, and they from time to time expressed their reservations about certain aspects and consequences of the revivals. For instance, Watson Hayes was critical of the fact that "too much stress is laid on holding big meetings for 'gathering up' the Christians...and too little to direct work among the non-Christians."[158] Some missionaries felt frustrated by the "Little Flock" and other indigenous groups' proselyting effort among the older missionary churches. [159]

In Shandong one strain of the revival movement particularly caused a very strong opposition from many Presbyterian missionaries and local Chinese churches. The so-called "Spiritual Grace Movement," a Pentecostal type of revival movement, rose in Shandong Province in the early 1930s. As mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, the influence of the Old School tradition was quite strong within the Shandong Mission. The conservative Presbyterian missionaries like W.M. Hayes disliked liberals' enthusiasm for critical thinking as well as certain holiness teachers' overemphasis on religious experience and practice at the cost of doctrinal knowledge and theological reasoning. In a letter to Robert Speer, Hayes observed that the best missionary candidates like the Mateers would "make much more effective missionaries than the mere intelligentsia or

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[156] Martin A. Hopkins to Home Church, 1 July 1936, Missionary Correspondence Collection, PHS, Montreat, NC.

[157] Ibid.

[158] Hayes to Speer, 16 February 1933.

[159] P. Frank Price's Mission Letter, 15 November 1934, China Mission Letter, Montreat.

the 'zeal without knowledge' class." [160]As the fundamentalists in North America increasingly felt embarrassed and offended by Pentecostalism emerging from Keswick tradition in early twentieth century, the fundamentalist missionaries in the Reformed tradition detected and resisted "heretical" teachings and practices in the rampant Spiritual Grace Movement.

For some Presbyterian missionaries and churches in Shandong, two aspects of this movement seemed most problematic and even offensive. First was the movement's emphasis on the experience of being filled by the holy spirit, speaking in tongues, visions, miracles, and long and loud prayers and other emotional actions. These were called "extreme emotionalism" [161]or "emotional excess "[162]by the missionaries. Watson Hayes was much troubled by all these manifestations of supernatural abilities and "much yelling and shouting in prayer;"[163]and he criticized severely those "who apparently believe that the Lord is a God of disorder."[164] Secondly, Hayes and other missionaries were very critical of the crude and "imaginary exegesis" common among the followers of the movement. [165] The movement had a strong tendency of anti-intellectualism, and it was propagated that "it is not necessary to read the Bible or prepare for teaching or preaching because the Spirit will tell them what to say."[166] Denying the necessity of any theological education and relying on spontaneous guidance from the spirit, the movement resulted in

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[160] Hayes to Speer, 16 February 1933.

[161] Ibid.

[162] The Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA to China Councils and Missions in China, 18 December 1933.

[163] W.M. Hayes to Robert Speer, 1 March 1933, PCUSABS, RG82 47-17, PHS, Philadelphia.

[164] Report of the North China Theological Seminary, 1930-31, PCUSABS, RG82, 26-7, PHS, Philadelphia.

[165] Hayes to Speer, 1 March 1933.

[166] B.C.Patterson to Home Church, 9 February 1934, Missionary Correspondence Collection, PHS, Mpntreat, NC.

what the missionaries called "fantastic expositions which make Origen appear quite sane."[167]

Hayes was convinced that these wild excitements "seem to be one of the devices of the Evil One to retain his hold, and sometimes a movement that has begun well and promises good results is manipulated by him so as to do more harm than good."[168] To his concern the Spiritual Grace Movement even started to invade the NCTS campus. Hayes acknowledged that, under the influence of the movement, some people at the school got so involved with spiritual exercises that "the excessive amount of time given to devotional exercises may interfere with the prime purpose of the school."[169] Ding Li-mei, the famous evangelist and faculty member, also came under its influence and began to advocate the role of the spirit and the ability to speak in tongues. When he found out other faculty members had an opinion quite different from his, Ding resigned from the NCTS faculty.[170] Some seminary students even criticized that Hayes had not been born again.[171]

To counter the influence of the Spiritual Grace Movement, Hayes emphasized that "nothing but a thorough knowledge of the profound truths of Christ and the Apostles will prevent men from advancing their own crude and erroneous ideas."[172] Consequently, the NCTS put even more stress on the studies of the New Testament, because, according to Hayes' annual report, "in these times of farfetched exegesis in the Chinese pulpit, it is

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[167] Report of the President of the NCTS, September 1931-June 1932, in Minutes of the Shantung Mission, 1932, China Mission Paper, PHS, Montreat, NC.

[168] Hayes to Speer, 1 March 1933.

[169] Report of the North China Theological Seminary 1930-31.

[170] See Hayes to Speer, 1 March 1933.

[171] B.C.Patterson to Home Church, 9 February 1934.

[172] Report of the North China Theological Seminary 1930-31.

important that the students know just what the Scriptures do teach."[173] It was perhaps not a coincidence that the NCTS leadership launched a Bible-reading campaign among its students in 1933. The influence of the movement on the campus quickly abated.[174]

The Presbyterian missionaries' opposition to the Pentecostal revival in Shandong testified to the traditional tension between the conservative Reformed tradition and holiness teachings. The conflict between the fundamentalist missionaries and Pentecostal groups in the mission field to a great extent paralleled the conflict in North America. As George Marsden pointed out, "After Edwards's time revivalist theology in America moved steadily toward emphasizing the human side of religious experience."[175] The Wesleyan holiness teachings of the nineteenth century further intensified the tendency toward the personal experience of consecration instead of conformity to doctrine, human response instead of God's sovereignty, and eradication of sinful nature instead of depravity of human nature. During the second half of the nineteenth century, the Keswick teachers worked hard to reconcile holiness teachings and Calvinist views, and their Reformed version of holiness teachings switched its focus from experience and contemplation to service and action. They thus managed to make their version of holiness teaching one of the major forces among the fundamentalist movement. But the tension between two traditions remained.[176] On the one hand, the guardians of the Calvinist tradition found the Methodistic Holiness' emphasis on perfectionism and holiness experience harmful and offensive. On the other hand, the formers' lack of holiness

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[173] Report of the North China Theological Seminary 1931-32.

[174] See The President's Report, North China Theological Seminary, 1936-37, in Minutes of the Shantung Mission of the PCUSA, China Mission Papers, PHS, Montreat, NC.

[175] Marsden, Fundamentalism and American Culture, 99.

[176] See ibid., 94-95, 98-99.

experience was much criticized by the advocates of holiness movement. As the Pentecostal teachers drifted away from mainstream holiness tradition and developed their teachings of spiritual gifts in the early twentieth century, the fundamentalists considered their teachings "aberration" and "absurd delusions" and could no longer view them as their allies. [177]

In China many fundamentalist missionaries accepted the Keswick holiness teachings and enthusiastically embraced their practical implication of missionary activism. Influenced more by the Old School tradition, Watson Hayes was not an eminent advocate for the Keswick movement. But he welcomed the practical implications and consequences of the Keswick teachings in evangelism. In fact he always took a pride in his students' dedication to evangelistic services. Furthermore, the fundamentalist missionaries generally appreciated the evangelical revivals led by Song Shang-jie, Ni Tuo-sheng, and Wang Ming-dao and their impact on the Chinese churches, for their basic message of repentance and re-birth was largely acceptable to the fundamentalist missionaries, and the mainstream of the indigenous revival movement never showed significant zeal for spiritual gifts. [178] In fact such prominent figures in the fundamentalist movement as Jonathan Goforth, Ruth Paxson, and Grace W. Woods were deeply involved in revivals in China.[179] But most of the fundamentalists were disgusted by the Pentecostal groups' emotionalism. The Presbyterian fundamentalists like Hayes were especially appalled by their disregard of traditional doctrines, theological training, and

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[177] Ibid., 95.

[178] See Leung Ka-lun, "奋兴布道家对华人教会的塑造," (The Revivalists' Influence on the Character of Chinese Church), Jian Dao No. 11 (January 1999):108.

[179] Goforth started his revival in Manchuria in 1907 and later brought his campaigns to many cities and provinces in China. Ruth Paxson was a frequent speaker at revival gatherings. Grace W. Woods (1923-

church polity. Significantly, in the early years of the 1930s, Hayes identified two enemies of sound faith and doctrine: the modernists and the "spiritual fanatics."[180] Despite his constant criticism of liberal "elite" missionary educators and scholars and his frequent praise of grass-root pastor-evangelists, Hayes in his fight against the Spiritual Grace Movement showed he was not anti-intellectual. In fact the North China Theological Seminary was itself a powerful testimony to the intellectual nature and Bible-centered character of the fundamentalist movement in China.

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28) was the founder of the "World Wide Prayer Movement" (1924) and one of the key players of the Shanghai Revival in 1925.

[180] Hayes to the Supporters of the North China Theological Seminary, 16 October 1933.

CHAPTER VI

THE FUNDAMENTALISTS' ATTITUDE TOWARD The CHURCH UNION MOVEMENT

In 1922 Paul Hutchinson observed, "Mention of a union institution before a conservative is something like the traditional red rag waved before a bull."[1] Exaggerated somewhat, these words pointed to one of the issues about which the fundamentalist missionaries felt most suspicious and negative: the liberal-dominated church union movement and institutions. In fact the fundamentalists' separations from the Nanjing Theological Seminary and Shandong Christian University can be viewed as their revolts against this type of union institution.

As Kenneth Latourette pointed out, "The ecumenical movement was in large part the outgrowth of the missionary movement."[2] In the great missionary expansion of the nineteenth century, inter-denominational communication and cooperation already began to develop in the arrangements of "comity" and joint ventures of education, publication, and charity. In addition the emerging native churches started to challenge denominationalism and other forms of Christian disunity imported from the West. By the early twentieth century, an international ecumenical movement took shape. The landmark event was the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910. It summed up the

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[1] Paul Hutchinson, "The Conservative Reaction in China," The Journal of Religion, 2 (July 1922): 348.

previous efforts to unite Christians and made it possible for various missionary agencies to plan together the future work. The success of the Edinburgh Conference owed much to vision, wisdom, and labor of John R. Mott (1865-1955), a Methodist layman. To carry on the Edinburgh Conference's work, a Continuation Committee was created to promote worldwide Christian cooperation and unity. Mott was elected its chairman. The next major event was the founding of the International Missionary Council in 1921. It aimed to strengthen Christian fellowship and coordinate missionary activities.

In China the cause of Christian unity started quite early and grew rapidly throughout the nineteenth century. A.R. Kepler (1901-42) was a Northern Presbyterian missionary and the first General Secretary of the Church of Christ in China. In an essay he wrote in 1928, he traced the origin of church union movement back to Robert Morrison, the first Protestant missionary to China, on the ground that Morrison's mission society--the London Missionary Society-- was inter-denominational.[3]

As different denominations and mission societies from different countries worked side by side to evangelize China during the second half of the nineteenth century,[4] a practical advantage of cooperation was quickly discovered by the missionaries. Joint efforts were started in Bible translation, publications, and educational and medical missions. Such mission organizations as the CIM and YMCA drew their resources from various denominations and countries. The comity principle was widely accepted across

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[2] Kenneth S. Latourette, "Ecumenical Bearings of the Missionary Movement and the International Missionary Council," in A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948, vol.1, eds. Ruth Rouse and Stephen C.Neill (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1954), 353.

[3] A. R.Kepler, "Movements for Christian Unity," in China Christian Year Book, 1928, eds. Frank Rawlinson and others (Shanghai: Christian Literature Society), 73.

[4] In 1874 there were twenty-nine mission societies working in China. In 1889 there were forty-one societies. In 1889 more than half of all missionaries were British, about forty percent were Americans, and

the missionary communities. Furthermore, a few local Chinese Presbyterian churches even succeeded in achieving church union within their own confessional traditions. The growing momentum for Christian unity was most evident in two China missionary conferences in 1877 and 1890. The conferences gave the Protestant missionary community opportunities to discuss the common issues confronting them, coordinate their future work, and strengthen the consensus and solidarity in missionary message, theology, and goals. By nature the conferences were missionary gatherings, and only two Chinese were present in the 1890 conference.[5] A significant development in the conferences was growing criticism of Christian disunity caused by denominationalism and national prejudices. More and more missionaries saw that the missionary competition led to confusion on the part of Chinese people and the waste of mission resources. Some missionaries thus came to the conclusion that it was a mistake to transplant denominationalism from the West to China. Consequently, it was declared that "be it ours to preach the Gospel and rear a new united and glorious Church in this land...and not denominationalism only, but let nationality go to the winds!"[6]

After the Boxer Rebellion, more mission societies arrived in China.[7] The cause for Christian unity gained new urgency and momentum. The Centenary Missionary Conference of 1907 resolved to call for a national Christian body—the Christian Federation of China. In addition the conference adopted a series of resolutions to reaffirm the missionary consensus on doctrines, mission's goals and methods, and the Christian

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the rest came from the Continent of Europe. (Latourette, History of Christian Missions in China, 406). By 1906 the number of Protestant mission societies in China reached sixty-seven. (Ibid., 594)

[5] Wallace C. Merwin, Adventure in Unity, The Church of Christ in China (Grand Rapids, MI: William B.Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974), 43.

[6] Quoted in Kepler, 74.

attitude towards Chinese traditional culture. Just as the 1877 and 1890 conferences, the 1907 conference was dominated by foreign missionaries. Among its 1,170 delegates, only six or seven were Chinese.[8] The strong sense of missionary unity and solidarity in the conference was based on a deeper theological consensus shared by most of Protestant China missionaries in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Around the 1911 Revolution, efforts towards church union and missionary cooperation greatly accelerated and reached new heights in China. The changing social and cultural situation in Chinese society gave Protestant missionaries new incentives to greater cooperation and union. To meet growing social demands for better schools and other services, many mission societies found it necessary to consolidate their hospitals, universities, and even seminaries. Most of the large missionary educational and medical institutions established in this period were the result of inter-denominational cooperation. Furthermore, the mounting pressure of the nationalist movement made it more urgent to rid fledging Chinese churches of any foreignness including denominationalism, and foster truly indigenous churches. To counteract anti-Christian campaigns and spread the gospel under difficult circumstances, more and more missionaries and Chinese Christians were convinced that they badly needed to support one another and unite their strength and resources.

Another crucial factor affecting the church union movement was the maturity of Chinese churches. As Chinese Christian communities grew stronger and more independent in the early twentieth century, Chinese Christians started to take leadership

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[7] By 1906 the number of Protestant mission society in China reached sixty-seven. (Latourette, History of Christian Missions in China, 594)

[8] Merwin, Adventure in Unity, 43.

roles in the life of churches. For them Western denominationalism was irrelevant and even absurd in the Chinese setting and harmful to the progress of Christianity in China. As Latourette pointed out, "Transplanted from the countries in which they had originated and from the historical settings in which they had arisen, the denominations and confessions often seemed to have little reason for continued existence, to be almost anachronisms." [9] The sentiment of anti-denominationalism was widely shared by the emerging Chinese Christian leadership. Liberal church leaders and intellectuals viewed denominationalism as the obstacle to indigenizing Christianity in China, and they were prominent in mainstream ecumenical enterprises such as the NCC. On the other hand, many conservative and evangelical church leaders viewed denominations as an unbiblical invention. Although their suspicion of liberalism and a separatist tendency prevented them from participating in the mainstream ecumenical movement, most of their evangelistic operations were inter-denominational, and the congregations they founded were not based on Western denominationalism.

With the growing demand for Christian unity, the Chinese criticism of denominationalism, and the impact of the international ecumenical movement, early sporadic efforts of cooperation were transformed into a self-conscious and well-coordinated movement of church union in the 1910s and 1920s. The most significant and well-known events of this movement were the founding of the China Continuation Committee, the National Christian Conference, and National Christian Council.

With the mandate of the 1910 World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh, John R. Mott came to China in 1913 and presided over five regional conferences. In these

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[9] Latourette, "Ecumenical Bearings," 377.

conferences the representatives of the churches and missions in each region gathered to prepare for a national conference and elect their delegates to the conference. In the same year the national conference was held in Shanghai and decided to establish the China Continuation Committee (CCC). The CCC was designed to be a temporary and self-perpetuating body composed of both foreign missionaries and Chinese Christians, and at least one third of 120 committee members were Chinese.[10] The function of the CCC was to serve as a means of promoting the communication and coordination among the Christian forces in China.[11] Under the leadership of its two secretaries, Cheng Jing-yi (Ching Yi Cheng or Chen Ching I) [12]and E.C.Lobenstine, the CCC drew together missionaries of different denominations and nationalities and strengthened the coordination of a variety of missionary organizations, especially those headquartered in Shanghai. Furthermore, it encouraged the indigenization of the Chinese churches and supported the unification of the churches of the same denomination. It even spoke on behalf of the Christian communities on certain broader moral and religious issues. One especially valuable project sponsored by the CCC was the publication of a comprehensive survey of the Christian missionary enterprises and churches in China, The Christian Occupation of China. The work of the China Continuation Committee culminated in the opening of the National Christian Conference in Shanghai in May of 1922.

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[10] Ibid., 378. Merwin, Adventure in Unity, 43.

[11] For the history, aims, and accomplishments of the CCC, see E.C.Lobenstine, "Report of the China Continuation Committee to the National Christian Conference," in The Chinese Church as Revealed in the National Christian Conference eds. F.Rawlinson, Helen Thoburn, and D.MacGillivray (Shanghai: The Oriental Press, 1922 (?)),47- 77.

[12] Cheng Jing-yi (1881-1939) was a pastor in an independent church in Beijing in his early years. He gained international fame at the Edinburgh Conference. For the second half of his life, he became the Secretary of the NCC and Moderator of the Church of Christ in China.

The 1922 National Christian Conference was truly a milestone in the history of the ecumenical movement in China. Unlike previous three missionary conferences, this conference was no longer a purely missionary gathering. First, the conference delegates reflected the rapid growth of Chinese churches. One half of its 1, 200 delegates were Chinese, and all Protestant denominations working in China were represented.[13] Cheng was elected the chairman. Second, the focus of the conference was no longer on the issues facing foreign missionaries. Instead, the theme was "The Chinese Church." Under this theme the conference surveyed the wide range of church work such as evangelism, publication, education, rural, and industrial services and made numerous recommendations.

The most significant achievement of the conference was the formation of the National Christian Council (NCC). It was heralded that "for the first time in China representative Christian opinion found national and united expression."[14] The conference adopted a constitution for the NCC. According to its constitution, the NCC was an advisory body and had no authority on the matters of doctrine and ecclesiastical polity. Its main functions were "to foster and express the fellowship and unity of the Christian Church in China and the realization of its oneness with the church throughout the world" and to help "the development of the Church in self-support, self-government, and self propagation."[15] The NCC also aimed to promote evangelization of Chinese society and facilitate communication and coordination among missionaries, Chinese Christians, and

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[13] A.R.Kepler, "Movements for Christian Unity," 83. Merwin, Adventure in Unity, 43

[14] Frank Rawlinson, "Interpretative Introduction," in Chinese Church, eds, Rawlinson, Thoburn, and MacGillivray, iii.

[15] " Resolution on Constituting a National Christian Council," in Chinese Church, eds. Rawlinson, Thoburn, and MacGillivray, 694.

church-related national agencies.[16] The council was composed of one hundred members representing major denominational churches and missions, non-denominational mission societies. universities, literature societies, and the YMCA and YWCA.[17]

The NCC held its first annual conference in May of the next year. Cheng Jing-yi and E.C.Lobenstine became the general secretaries of the NCC. Under their leadership the NCC carried out a wide diversity of programs—religious education. literature. Christianization of the home and economic relations. rural construction. relief. and international relations. In 1932 the Council inaugurated a Five Year Movement to revive and expand the Christian forces in China in the wake of anti-Christian movements in the 1920s.

In the 1910s and 1920s. the developments of Protestant missionary movement and Chinese society created new opportunities as well as new difficulties for the church union movement in China. Some contemporary advocates and observers of the union movement already noticed this.[18]One of the new difficulties was the widening gap between liberals and conservatives. During these decades the Protestant mission consensus so dominant in the conferences of 1877. 1890. and 1907 was crumbling.

With so many Protestant denominational mission societies working in China and the controversy between the modernists and fundamentalists raging, it was a formidable task to bring a wide range of mission groups together and make the NCC a truly representative body of the Protestant communities in China. "With 130 denominational groups in China and 170 electing units to be considered," Frank Rawlinson. the long-time

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[16] See ibid. 695.
[17] Ibid., 696.

editor-in-chief of The Chinese Recorder claimed, "the 'National Christian Council'...is as representative as possible under existing intricate circumstances."[19] In order to attract and include as many as missions and churches in the NCC as possible, a point was emphasized over and over again in the discussions and resolutions of the National Christian Conference: the conference and council would avoid formulating any doctrinal standard or at least keep its theological position as broad as possible. Rawlinson made the following comparison between the missionary conference of 1907 and this conference of 1922:

> In trying to find some expression for its belief the Conference said little about creeds as such; in 1907 there was considerable said as to whether any or what creed should be taken as a guide. This Conference attempted to get down to the fundamentals beneath the creeds. In 1907 it was to some extent a question of which denominational position came nearest to expressing the belief of all. In 1922 the issue was to find an expression of faith that left denominational statements unimpaired while finding one through which all could in some measure express their faith. Another side to this problem was the necessity of so stating this common faith that it did not take out of the hands of the denominations the responsibility of having their own tests and left them free to decide what tests should be applied to those who represented them on the National Christian Council in connection with which this question came up. The Conference desired a common expression of faith in a common Lord but not necessarily uniformity of statement. [20]

Here Rawlinson was making a very important point: as the Protestant missionary consensus was becoming history and many missionaries could no longer agree on many theological issues, it would be a very difficult, if not impossible, to reach a theological consensus and formulate a comprehensive common confession of faith and doctrine for the whole Protestant community in China.

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[18] See Latourette, "Ecumenical Bearings," 380-81. See also Kepler, "Movements for Christian Unity," 82-83.

[19] Rawlinson, "Interpretative Introduction," iii.

[20] Ibid., viii.

Consequently, to oppose any theological and doctrinal uniformity and leave the missions and churches to make their own decisions in this regard became a central tenet of the National Christian Conference and Council. The NCC leadership deeply believed that Christian unity with a theological pluralism was both possible and desirable. Liu Ting-fang's (T.T.Liu or Lew) famous phrase "to agree to differ but resolve to love" conveyed the belief very well.[21]

At the very beginning of the "Constitution of the National Christian Council," it was clearly stated that "it is understood that matters of doctrinal and ecclesiastical polity lie outside the province of the National Christian Council. In regard to other matters the functions of the Council shall be advisory."[22] In other words "the Council has no legislative or mandatory authority. It is not a super-church or a super-mission Board....The Council does not deal with theological differences, any more than it deals with ecclesiastical differences between the several missions and churches which cooperate in it."[23]

It was no wonder that the NCC, at least in its early years, was always very cautious in making any statement that sounded like an official theological formula or a creed. When unable to avoid completely the theological issues, the NCC tried to keep its theological agenda to a minimum or "get down to the fundamentals beneath the creeds." One of these "fundamentals" could be seen in the following statement: "While it does not touch questions of church order or of theological differences, the Council is

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[21] Timothy Tingfang Lew, " Church of Christ in China," in Chinese Church, eds. Rawlinson, Thoburn, and MacGillivray, 228.

[22] "Constitution of the National Christian Council," in The China Mission Year Book 1923, Appendix I, eds, Frank Rawlinson and others (Shanghai: Christian Literature Society, 1923), 329.

[23] Logan H. Roots, "The National Christian Council," in Christian Mission Year Book, 1923, 61.

commissioned to help all Christian people to understand one another and sympathize with one another as being essentially of one heart and will in devotion to our one Lord and the advance of His Kingdom."[24] In other words, in order to keep itself above any denominational and theological differences and controversies, the NCC often made its own theological position neutral. However, when the NCC claimed a sort of theological neutrality, it often found itself having to spell out a theological bottom line on which all participating missions and churches could agree. Even behind its claim of theological neutrality there was a theological presupposition. Rawlinson's point was quite telling: "This Conference attempted to get down to the fundamentals beneath the creeds." What was implied here was that the creeds were less important than the fundamental beliefs behind them. The denominational traditions and historical confessions might be divisive, but the common truth contained in these traditions and confessions were unifying. The problem was how to find the basic, common truth. Not surprisingly, one of the issues raised by the National Christian Conference was the need to distinguish "the essential" from "the non-essential." According to the conference report on the present state of Christianity in China, "missionaries and Chinese preachers alike have emphasized non-essentials in a way which is another indication of some deep-seated weakness....This often leads him (preacher) to stress matters of theological opinion and church order which cloud his fundamental Gospel of the love of God in Christ."[25] In the context of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy of the early twentieth century, liberals could more easily accept this view than conservatives. To detach the essential Christian truth from its

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[24] Ibid., 62.

[25] "The Present State of Christianity in China," in Chinese Church, eds. Rawlinson, Thoburn, and MacGillivray, 202.

historical and cultural trappings was a basic approach of liberals. Following this approach liberals were able to dismiss traditional views of biblical authority and the supernatural and discover core Christian beliefs, which would be re-invented and enriched in modern cultural and social context. On the other hand, conservatives had quite different views about what constituted the non-essentials, and suspected that liberals simply rejected too many "fundamental truths" as non-essentials.

In fact the liberals' voices were much louder than those of the conservatives in the National Christian Conference in 1922. Some Chinese church leaders and intellectuals were leading figures and prominent speakers in the conference. They were among the most vocal liberals who advocated an overhaul of Christian doctrines. Their words explicitly spelled out what were the fundamentals and essentials in the liberal mind. For instance Zhao Zi-chen (T.C.Chao), a well-known Christian scholar, addressed the conference on the topic "The Strength and the Weakness of the Church in China." In his speech he launched an attack on current theological thinking of the churches in China. According to him,

> The Church today is frankly rigid and dogmatic in thought, still presenting herself in cloaks of the 4th and 16th centuries. She does not lay sufficient emphasis upon life. Instead of attempting to allow interpretations of experience to agree with life, she has more and more turned to the mediaeval recipe of placing life upon the Procrustean bed of worn out theories and interpretations. Thoughtful people fear that the Church is defending certain ancient metaphysical concepts instead of Christ, enthroning prejudices instead of God, worshipping the Bible, instead of Saviour, emphasizing traditions instead of life, preaching orthodoxy instead of the gospel, perpetuating accretions instead of the essence of Christianity. [26]

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[26] Zhao Zi-chen (T.C.Chao), "The Strength and the Weakness of the Church in China," in Chinese Church, eds. Rawlinson, Thoburn, and MacGillivray, 209.

Zhao made distinctions between Christ and the Bible and between the gospel and tradition. He implied the former was the core of Christian truths. In his view maintaining the truthfulness of the biblical texts and church tradition only led to biblical literalism and dogmatism. Obviously, Zhao's progressive theological thinking made him believe that biblical literalism and dogmatism belonged to the past and traditional doctrines had to undergo fundamental changes in order to remain relevant in an age of science and progress.

Another prominent Chinese speaker was Liu Ting-fang (T.T.Liu or Lew). In his speech he made a strong point about the authority of the Bible. He argued that the Chinese church "shall not show any anxiety for the Bible by any negative means or unnecessary attempts to put a human fence round the eternal truth of God, for its protection. Not the Bible alone, but all the teachings of the Church, she shall gladly submit to any true scientific tests and trials."[27] His point was so bold that he was later asked by a Chinese delegate to answer the following questions: "Can human knowledge be put on an equality with Scriptures?" "Can human investigation criticize the Bible?" "Does Dr.Lew's remark...imply an attack on the Bible Union?"[28] Apparently Liu declined to answer the first two questions, but categorically denied that he was opposing the Bible Union.[29] In line with liberal missionaries, liberal spokesmen of Chinese churches identified theological conservatism as a serious weakness of the churches. For them, the NCC was a medium for fundamental changes in theology and practice of Chinese churches.

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[27] Lew, "The Church of Christ in China," 227.
[28] Chinese Church, eds. Rawlinson, Thoburn, and MacGillivray, 238.
[29] Ibid.

For liberals within the NCC, one of the essentials of Christianity was a Christ of love and social justice instead of a Christ with supernatural origin and power. They insisted that Christ's life and death were a manifestation of God's love towards humans and a call for a mutual love among humans. Therefore, they argued, the message of the gospels was essentially ethical and social. The task of Christian churches was to apply the ethical ideal of Christ to real life and social context and thus establish God's kingdom on the earth. This social- gospel thinking proved to be one of the most important factors in shaping the NCC's programs. The National Christian Conference's report on the future task of the church acknowledged the necessity of "the conversion of the hearts and minds of men." But it quickly emphasized that "we maintain that the Church of Christ is a social fact and that the Gospel carries a social message....We believe that the Church must look with lively concern upon the material welfare of the Chinese people."[30] A social application of the Christian message and the transformation of Chinese society were viewed as major goals of Christian missions and churches in China and an effective way to make the gospel appealing to the larger public in Chinese society. Not surprisingly, the National Christian Conference passed resolutions on social issues such as industrial standards.[31] The constitution of the NCC also asserted that one of the functions of the NCC was "to consider the needs of China on a nation-wide basis and plan for the evangelization and uplift of the whole nation."[32]

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[30] "The future task of the church," in Chinese Church, eds. Rawlinson, Thoburn, and MacGillivray, 323.

[31] For the contents of the resolution, see "Resolution on Industrial Standards," in Chinese Church, eds. Rawlinson, Thoburn, and MacGillivray, 691.

[32] "Resolution on Constituting a National Christian Council," in Chinese Church, eds. Rawlinson, Thoburn, and MacGillivray, 695.

It was evident that liberals had a greater influence in the National Christian Conference and Council, even though the conference and council tried to keep themselves above the denominational differences and theological controversy. This fact reflected a general trend in China of the 1920s: as the old Protestant mission consensus lost its power to maintain unity and peace between liberals and conservatives, the mainstream church union movement was step-by-step sliding to liberalism. In the 1920s and 1930s, the NCC leadership began to steer the organization further to the liberal side of the missionary movement. Throughout these years the NCC sponsored such prominent liberal and social gospel spokesmen as Sherwood Eddy to make evangelistic tours in China, and its publications became a mouthpiece for liberal views. Furthermore, the themes of "applied Christianity," "social and industrial problems," and "international relations" featured more and more prominently on the NCC's agenda. As the NCC's social gospel tendency became increasingly stronger, it frequently issued "a call to examine and follow the way of Christ in personal and social life—a call emphasizing the fundamentally spiritual nature of the Christian message and at the same time stressing the necessity of working this message out through a fearless readjustment of the individual life in accordance with the example and teachings of Jesus."[33] Consequently, the NCC gradually established itself as one of the prominent liberal institutions in China.

While inter-denominational advisory bodies emerged, the denominational union also developed rapidly. Anglicans, Lutherans, and Methodists all made progress in their denominational union efforts. The most successful and significant achievement was the Presbyterian one. At the turn of the century, some Presbyterian Church bodies in central

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[33] Henry T. Hodgkin, "National Christian Council in 1927," in China Christian Year Book 1928,

and north China began to express their desire to unify Chinese churches founded by foreign missions from different countries. In 1901 a proposal for a federal union with six autonomous synods was made by a Presbyterian conference, and it gradually gained support of mission boards and churches in China. The next major step of the Presbyterian union was the formation of a Synod of Central China by five presbyteries in 1906. The following year the Chinese churches and foreign missionaries related to the Northern and Southern Presbyterian Churches and the Presbyterian Churches in Ireland, Scotland, England, and Canada established a Federal Council of the Presbyterian Churches in China. During the following years, the Council and its member churches worked toward a united Presbyterian Church and new General Assembly. The First Assembly met in Shanghai in 1922 in the wake of the National Christian Council. Six synods, twenty-six presbyteries, and 77,000 communicant members were represented by the assembly.[34] Since the Chinese churches firmly opposed any name with denominational overtone, the name of "The Church of Christ in China" was adopted.

As the Presbyterian union grew, other denominational societies and churches—the London Missionary Society, the American Board of Commissioners, the English Baptists, the Disciples, the Swedish Missionary Society, the United Brethren, the American Friends Mission, and even some indigenous churches—expressed their interest in joining the union and began negotiations. Many years of negotiations and efforts culminated in 1927 when the First Assembly of the Church of Christ convened. This church body brought together sixteen church groups. The major groups were Presbyterian and Reformed churches from North America, Scotland, Ireland, England, and New Zealand.

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eds. Frank Rawlinson and others (Shanghai: Christian Literature Society, 1928), 67.

The rest of the member churches were from the Brethren and Baptist traditions, the London Missionary Society, American Board Congregational Churches, and independent churches. Cheng Jing-yi was elected the first Moderator, and A.R.Kepler, the first General Secretary. The Church of Christ accounted for almost one-third of the Protestants in China at that time.[35] Before the Church of Christ, all church unions were achieved within the same confessional traditions. This was "the first church union in China to go beyond confessional lines."[36] From 1927 to 1937, the Church of Christ in China continued to grow and accepted more church groups with Baptist, Methodist, and Congregational backgrounds as new members.

However, as the NCC did, the Church of Christ had to face how to accommodate to such a diversity in theology and ecclesiology under one roof. Asher R. Kepler, a key figure in bringing the church union into reality, envisioned the union as follows:

> The Church of Christ in China...is not an effort after a glorified larger denominationalism. It is not an attempt toward conformity. It is not an endeavor for uniformity. It is a holy venture to secure all evangelical bodies in China to unite in one organic body for worship, mutual edification and service, asking none to sacrifice beliefs which they deem vital to Christian living, none demanding of the others conformity to their particular tenets, but each bringing their contribution to the enrichment of all, each believing in the loyalty of the others to our Lord Jesus Christ and to the fundamentals of our Christian Faith.[37]

Very much like the National Christian Council, the Church of Christ in China discovered that the unity agreement could only be reached and maintained on a very minimal and murky theological and doctrinal basis or the so-called "fundamentals of our Christian faith." Kepler further stated that the doctrinal basis of the Church of Christ sought "to

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[34] Brown, Earthen Vessel and Transcendent Power, 212.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Merwin, Adventure in Unity, 9.
[37] A.R.Kepler, "Movements for Christian Unity," The China Christian Year Book 1928, 86.

express only that modicum of doctrine which all must hold in common if the Religion of Jesus is to be conserved. The Doctrinal Basis of Union, therefore, is an effort to enable those churches...to unite on the same basis which bound together the Christians of the Early Church."[38] Theologically the church never issued any creed but only a brief, comprehensive statement.[39] The lack of doctrinal and ecclesiastical coherence left the Church of Christ short of a fully functional church body. Kepler admitted "although the ultimate aim was complete union, the Church in actuality was a kind of loose federal union, with most authority remaining at the synodical level."[40]

In general the leadership of the Church of Christ in China and its constituency were largely liberal or moderate. Liberal mission organizations such as The Chinese Recorder heralded the founding of the Church of Christ as "the biggest actual achievement of Christian unity yet recorded in China."[41] Its first General Assembly of 1927 declared that the basic Christian faith needed to "be interpreted against the background of Chinese civilization and adapted to the life of the people."[42] Throughout the years the Church of Christ in China endorsed and supported the programs of the NCC.

As the union movement in the early twentieth century tried to overcome the barriers of denominationalism, ethnic, and nationalities, it was increasingly challenged by the widening theological gap between liberals and fundamentalists. The fundamentalists found it more and more difficult to sit along with their modernist counterparts within the same institutions. In 1928 A.R. Kepler pointed out: "Just as the 'term controversy'

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[38] Kepler, "Movements for Christian Unity," 86-87.

[39] The whole text of "Doctrinal Bond of Union" can be found in "The Constitution of the Church of Christ in China," Part 1, Article 3, in Adventure in Unity, by Merwin, 214.

[40] Merwin, Adventure in Unity, 65.

chilled the enthusiasm for unity after the 1877 Conference, so now a big divisive force, 'fundamentalism' vs 'modernism,' appeared on the scene....This controversy, ...unfortunately retards the movement towards Unity."[43] The China Inland Mission's relationship with the National Christian Council was perhaps the most well-known and telling case in this regard.

Since its founding in 1865, the China Inland Mission had rapidly developed into the largest Protestant mission in China. The CIM was motivated and shaped by complete obedience to the Great Commission and premillennial urgency. This mission intended to bring the gospel to as many individuals in inland China as possible in a short period of time. The China Inland Mission represented a very dynamic mission model in the sense that the mission was supposed to be always moving, evangelizing, or "occupying" rather than becoming institutionalized and localized. Compared to such missionaries as Timothy Richard, Hudson Taylor and the CIM were obviously more conservative in theology. However, by the early twentieth century, the CIM did not see any necessity of distancing itself from the cause of unity and cooperation among the Protestant missionaries, and the mission was present in the missionary conferences of 1877, 1890, and 1907.

During the first half of the twentieth century, the CIM continued to grow. In 1905 the CIM and its associated missions had 205 mission stations and 849 missionaries. By

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[41] "Editorial: Some Questions Prominent in Christian Thinking in China," Chinese Recorder 58 (November 1927): 682.

[42] Quoted in Merwin, Adventure in Unity, 56.

[43] Quoted in Merwin, Adventure in Unity, 83.

1919 these figures had increased to 246 and 960.[44] From 1927 to 1936, the number of central stations from which C.I.M. missionaries were working increased by 104.[45]

During these years the CIM felt the growing impact of liberal theology and became increasingly concerned.[46] The CIM leadership believed this trend was "deplorable modern theological drift"[47] and sensed a great danger to its mission vision. In response to liberal trends, the CIM held to its own theological position centered on the biblical authority, the divinity of Christ, and his second coming and resisted any attempt to undermine its own conservative theological foundation. In response to the modernist re-interpretation of the scripture and doctrines, the CIM reiterated that "our doctrinal standards remain unchanged."[48] While the liberal missionaries eagerly attempted to accommodate to China's changing social and cultural environment, Robert Glover, the assistant CIM Home Director for North America, declared that "what changing China needs, before and above all else, is the redemptive message of the unchanging CHRIST."[49] What was implied in the statement was that, no matter how the world changed, the CIM always maintained its conservative theological and doctrinal standard and its commitment to the proclamation of the gospel.

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[44] Stauffer and others, Christian Occupation, 343.

[45] Leslie T. Lyall, A Passion for the Impossible: the China Inland Mission, 1865-1965 (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1965), 107.

[46] The liberal influence can been seen even within the ranks of the CIM missionaries, especially among the new recruits. Some new missionaries were terminated and sent home, because of their doubts about certain traditional doctrines. See the CIM Minutes, 6 March 1934, The CIM Papers, #215, 2-43 BGC, Wheaton College. See also Minutes of Special Meeting of Council, 17 March 1933, CIM Papers, 2-42, BGC, Wheaton College.

[47] Howard Taylor, "By Faith...", Henry W.Frost and the China Inland Mission (Philadelphia: The China Inland Mission, 1938), 314.

[48] The China Council to the Directors and Members of the Councils of the Home Lands, 2 November 1928,CIM Papers, 2-20, BGC, Wheaton College.

[49] R.H.Glover, "Changing China and Unchanging Message," China's Millions (August 1929): 116. Another common phrase was "new conditions, but the old gospel." (A.Keith MacPherson, "New Conditions, But the Old Gospel," China's Millions (March 1927): 46)

To emphasize the continuity of its conservative position and to avoid any misunderstanding of the CIM's doctrinal basis, the CIM China Council thought it necessary to reaffirm its faithfulness to the doctrinal position laid out by Hudson Taylor. In 1922 the council declared, "In view of the spread of Modernism in the Christian world outside the Mission, ...it was stated that the regrettable spread in China of Modernist views had increased a sense of uneasiness in the minds of many. It was agreed in the interests of the Mission, that the Council should take this opportunity of reaffirming their adherence to the statement of the Doctrinal basis of the Mission and meaning attached to its language as contained in the letter of Mr.Hudson Taylor to Mr.Theodore Howard of January 1, 1903."[50]

Consistent doctrinal principles decided the CIM's responses to many questions raised by the rising tide of modernism. The CIM felt its biblical message was challenged by modernism and thus responded that "we of the China Inland Mission, by God's grace, go forth as men and women who are persuaded that the Word of God is from beginning to the end the Word of the living God, authoritative, accurate, historically trustworthy."[51] Furthermore, the CIM disapproved of the social gospel's emphasis on social services and thus reiterated the classical evangelical argument that the root of all social problems was sin and "the only cure for sin is new creation wrought through faith in Jesus Christ the living Saviour."[52] The CIM leadership was concerned with the institutionalization of mission work and over-development of social programs. R.H.Glover complained that "during recent years direct evangelism has by many Missions been pushed more and more

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[50] Minutes of Council Meeting Held in Shanghai on 17 April 1922 CIM Papers, 2-39, Wheaton.
[51] China's Millions (July 1927): 100.
[52] Glover, "Changing China and Unchanging Message," 116.

into the background in China, in favour of the more popular programme of higher education, social service and industrialism, until these latter have come to absorb very largely the time and strength of the missionary body."[53] He went on to call for "restoring evangelism to its rightful place at the center of all missionary effort." [54] In line with this mode of thinking, the CIM carefully prevented its evangelical work and purpose from being overwhelmed by medical and educational works. According to one of the CIM China Council's resolutions of 1925, "the council, whilst recognizing the evangelical value of properly conducted medical work, felt, as the result of experience, that there was sometime a danger attaching to such special courses, lest these having them should be diverted from the direct preaching of the Gospel and teaching of the Word of God, for which the Mission existed."[55]

Concerned with the modernist threats to its doctrinal position and mission practices, the CIM watched very carefully the theological orientation and policies of the National Christian Council. Even before the National Christian Conference was officially convened in May 1922, the proposal to establish the National Christian Council was carefully deliberated by the CIM China Council. A meeting held on April 17, 1922, expressed a great deal of caution or even reservations about the NCC: "The Council...gave careful consideration to the question of the attitude which the Mission should adopt toward this organization; the need of care and vigilance was felt lest our

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[53] Ibid.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Minutes of China Council Meeting, 16 December 1925, CIM Papers, 2-39, BGC, Wheaton College.

doctrinal position as a Mission should be compromised by participating in a movement which in some respects the Council recognised as being of real importance and value."[56] Obviously, the CIM did not reject the proposed NCC. But to preserve its own doctrinal integrity, the same council meeting instructed its director, D.E. Hoste, to write to the secretary of the China Continuation Committee to express its concerns and requests. One of the requests stated, "Whilst unable to give a final pronouncement pending consideration of the subject at our Conference, the Council, with their present light, did not feel that they could advise the Mission's joining the organization unless there were in the Constitution a distinct statement as to the Deity of Christ and salvation through His Atonement."[57] The China Council also indicated that its missionaries held quite different opinions about whether the CIM should participate in the proposed NCC.

When the National Christian Conference opened in May 1922, the China Inland Mission and its associated missions sent a total of sixty-one delegates. In the discussion regarding the proposed National Christian Council, D.E. Hoste brought up the CIM's concern and stressed the necessity of having a doctrinal statement: "It appears to many of us that in order to definitely confirm and safeguard the central, essential Christian character of the Council, something should be placed in its constitution, and that its membership should be based upon some definite statement of Christian faith, not a creed.... In view of what is going on in the West it is wise that this first effort to start a China Christian Council should safeguard the future. It is much easier to do it now than it will be later on."[58]Obviously, Hoste based his argument on the welfare of the Chinese

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[56] Minutes of Council Meeting held in Shanghai on 17 April 1922.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Chinese Church, eds. Rawlinson, Thoburn, and MacGillivray, 648-49.

church. He viewed a statement as a necessary measure to protect the Chinese church from the modernism imported from the West. He went on to propose a doctrinal resolution for the NCC: "Whilst it is understood that matters of doctrine and ecclesiastical polity are outside the province of the National Christian Council, it is agreed that in order to affirm and safeguard its essential Christian character, its membership should be based upon the following three fundamental Christian truths: (1). The Deity of our Lord ; (2). Salvation through His atonement; (3). The trustworthiness and authority of the whole Bible."[59] He made it clear that on these three key points stood the fundamental differences between the conservatives and liberals.[60] Hoste's proposal was echoed by other conservative missionaries. Ruth Paxson demanded that "this organization must have doctrinal background. Every organization has one whether it is stated or not: and so this council cannot fail to have one."[61]

In order to push the conference to adopt a doctrinal resolution for the NCC, the CIM and other conservative delegates appointed a small delegation to meet the Business Committee of the National Conference on this matter. But they soon found out that passing a doctrinal resolution was strongly opposed by a number of conservative delegates. For these delegates their support and their home boards' approval of the NCC were all contingent on the understanding that the NCC was only an advisory body and had no authority on doctrinal and esslesiastical matters. They feared that inserting a doctrinal statement in the constitution of the NCC would make the organization a super-church body. Their opposition was so strong that the CIM leadership felt "this would

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[59] Ibid., 648
[60] Ibid., 649.
[61] Ibid., 650.

have meant not only a division in the missionary body, but a split in the evangelical section of it."[62]

After debates on the matter, the Business Committee worked hard to reach a compromise. The alternative they recommended was to pass a doctrinal resolution by the National Christian Conference rather than insert a statement into the constitution of the NCC. Since most of the membership of the NCC would be drawn from the conference, the Business Committee argued, the NCC would be committed to the doctrinal position endorsed by its members.[63] This resolution was presented to the conference and approved by the majority. The key part of the resolution read as follows:

> We the members of the Conference joyfully confess our faith in, and renew our allegiance to, God the Father Almighty, Jesus Christ, His Son, our Lord and Saviour, Who loved us and gave himself for our sins, and the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life; and acknowledge our loyalty to the Holy Scriptures as the supreme guide of faith and conduct, and to the fundamental Christian beliefs held by the churches to which we severally belong. The Conference however is not constituted as a church council with authority to pass upon questions of doctrine and of church polity or to draw up a credal or doctrinal statement of any kind. While the Conference believes it to be a matter of vital importance that the Church of Christ in China should be established on a basis of true faith and sound doctrine, it recognises that the authority to determine what are the essential affirmations of the Christian faith lies with the several churches of which those attending this Conference are members. Any National Christian Council which may be appointed by this conference will not in any sense be a church council, and therefore not competent to exercise ecclesiastical functions.[64]

Clearly, this carefully worded resolution was designed to make a doctrinal statement without impinging on the freedom of the denominational boards.

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[62] Report of CIM Mission Conference Shanghai, 1 May 1922, CIM Papers, 3-40, BGC, Wheaton College, 124.

[63] See ibid.

[64] Chinese Church, eds. Rawlinson, Thoburn, and MacGillivray, 693-94.

The resolution was deliberated by several CIM meetings in Shanghai and eventually accepted by majority votes. Upon the presentation of the resolution to the conference, D.E. Hoste seconded the motion and stated that the resolution "gives a simple clear statement of the fundamental doctrines of the ever blessed Trinity and ...some of us wish that it had been worded with greater force and exactitude in some points."[65] He then urged the delegates to adhere to the resolution: "I suggest that the moral effect of this resolution will be greatly enhanced if all of us should see our way, in the presence of God, to rise and unanimously record our belief as set forth in this resolution."[66] To Hoste and the CIM leadership, the resolution was not completely satisfactory but was acceptable. Thus, even with the lack of any doctrinal statement in the Constitution of the National Christian Council, the China Inland Mission decided to join the NCC.

Instead of putting the issue and related debate behind it, the CIM's decision to join the NCC intensified the debate on this issue among its missionaries. Some missionaries expressed doubts about the doctrinal orthodoxy of the NCC, and were concerned that the CIM might compromise its own theological position by joining the organization. They kept questioning the CIM leadership's decision and even mounted protests. One of these missionaries was J. Falls. In his correspondence with D.E. Hoste, he expressed his strong opposition. According to an official CIM account, "Mr Falls argued that as we rejected candidates who did not hold the doctrinal tenets of the Mission, it was inconsistent for us to have fellowship with another organization, some of the members of which would also be rejected, were they to apply to join the C.I.M. Further he feared that such combinations might in the future be the means of strengthening apostasy and even anti-Christian

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[65] Ibid., 659.

movements."[67] Falls felt so strong about the CIM's decision on the NCC that he filed his resignation from the mission.

Hoste and the CIM China Council's responses to Falls were very significant in explaining the reasoning behind joining the NCC. First, Hoste pointed to a historical fact that, while all CIM workers were required to hold to its doctrinal position, Hudson Taylor did attend missionary conferences and was even involved in committees consisting of people with theological views very different from those of the CIM.[68] Second, the China Council emphasized the importance of unity within the Christian community in China, and the CIM should contribute to this cause without compromising its own doctrinal standard. In the Council's words: "The general principle would seem to be that if we can co-operate with others without compromising essential truth, it is well to take this course. Evidence is thus afforded to outsiders of the oneness of the Christian community; a point of the more importance in a country like China, where that community is a comparatively small body, confronting a vast non-Christian world."[69] Third, the China Council argued that "experience had shown that the influence of the Mission was of value in restraining union Bodies from action detrimental to the cause of evangelical truth."[70]

Fourth, Hoste indicated that the CIM would watch closely the course the NCC took, and the CIM's continuing relationship with the NCC would be contingent on the latter's actions on certain key issues. Along this line the CIM asked Hoste to write to the secretary of the National Christian Council and state, "We should be glad if he can give

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[66] Ibid.

[67] Minutes of Council Meeting Held in Shanghai on 15 January 1923, CIM Papers, 2-39, BGC, Wheaton College.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Ibid.

us an assurance that the Council will not at any time issue or commend books whose teaching is contradictory to the doctrinal views of the Mission, also that speakers when appointed by the Council, will not then propagate such views, otherwise we feel it will be better for us now to reconsider our relationship with the National Council, before it is actually started as a fully organized body."[71] The last point explicitly revealed the overall attitude of the CIM toward the NCC. Indeed, the CIM never had full trust and confidence in the NCC. While recognizing the necessity and importance of Christian unity, the CIM nevertheless maintained watchfulness over the NCC and its program.

As the theological position of the China Christian Council became increasingly liberal, the uneasiness and concern with this trend on the part of the China Inland Mission was quickly growing. A growing number among the ranks of the CIM missionaries was convinced of the necessity of severing the CIM's connection with the NCC. According to O.Schmidt, the Superintendent of the Alliance Mission (German) associated with the CIM, "I know that quite a number of missionaries will feel more relieved if that connection has gone....Some looked out for any explanation how we could go together with modernists."[72] The CIM's connection with the NCC even became a concern among its conservative constituency.[73] Less than three years after the NCC was officially

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[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid.

[72] Minutes of Council Meeting Held in Shanghai on Friday, 12 March 1926. CIM Papers, #215, 2-39, BGC, Wheaton College.

[73] Russell Howden to D.E.Hoste,4 February 1926, attached to Minutes of Council Meeting Held in Shanghia on Friday, 12 March 1926. In this letter, Howden brought Hoste's attention to Charles H. Coates' criticism of "the misguided refusal to protest against this modernist misuse of delegated power, shewn [sic] by certain large evangelical missions whose administrators decline to withdraw their representation upon the National Christian Council, despite the wide protests of their constituent missionaries." (Charles H. Coates, The Red Theology in the Far East (London: Chas J Thynne & Jarvis, Ltd., 1926), 141.)

founded, the CIM began to re-examine its relationship with the NCC and seriously considered the severance of the tie between them.

In the early months of 1926, D.E. Hoste traveled to confer with the CIM missionaries, the associated missions, and the Chinese church leaders on the possible withdrawal from the NCC. The CIM China Council also received feedback from their missionaries. Two different views emerged. A small number of missionaries expressed their doubts "if this was the wisest step to be taken" on the ground that "we can't very well do without that institution. It is a kind of clearing house in all things that have anything to do with mission work."[74] A. Lutley, the Superintendent of Shansi, made a rather strong case against withdrawal. He argued that for Chinese Christians, Christian unity was much more important than the theological and doctrinal differences originated in the West: "There is, therefore, I believe a real danger, should we withdraw from the N.C.C., that we lose the confidence of many of the Church Leaders connected with the Mission."[75]Lutley also pointed out that the NCC currently included a large number of conservative evangelicals and the CIM should maintain connection with them. Therefore, Lutley suggested that the CIM file a protest against the modernist tendency within the NCC instead of immediate withdrawal. "In so important a matter as the withdrawal of our Mission from the N.C.C.," he pleaded, "it appears to me that we ought to give them every opportunity of explaining what has been done, and of correcting the impression that has been given."[76]

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[74]"Extract from the letter of Rev.A.Berg, Superintendent of the Swedish Mission in China, attached to Minutes of Council Meeting Held in Shanghai on Friday, 12 March 1926.

[75] Extract from the Letter of Rev. A.Lutley, Superintendent of Shansi, attached to Minutes of Council Meeting Held in Shanghai on Friday, 12 March 1926.

[76] Ibid.

However, the majority of opinion seemed to favor immediate withdrawal. The CIM China Council meeting on March 12, 1926 reported that "there was a widespread and general sentiment in favour of withdrawal."[77] The people who held this opinion included CIM delegates to the NCC. What also concerned the Council was that the CIM's connection with the NCC began to damage the CIM's image as a conservative evangelical mission. A Chinese church leader mentioned that "the continuance of the Mission's connection with the N.C.C. was being regarded in some quarters as an indication that the Mission itself was becoming imbued with modernistic views."[78] The opinions from the CIM home headquarters in London and Germantown, Pennsylvania, also urged that, "from the point of view of the interests of the Mission in Great Britain and North America, separation of the Mission from the N.C.C. should be effected without delay."[79]

The China Council meeting held in Shanghai on March 12, 1926 also reviewed recent actions of the NCC which the CIM considered unacceptable. The Council listed its major complaints as follows:

> The N.C.C. had recently assumed responsibility for inviting speakers from Western countries to address conferences and other gatherings of missionaries and Chinese leaders in China. This involved the Mission in immediate responsibility for the doctrinal views and teaching of those thus invited. Further, an appeal for funds, for the preparation and publication of literature, largely of a modernistic tendency and character, had been endorsed and issued by the N.C.C., which Body undertook to distribute such funds as might be sent it in accordance with the wishes of the donors. It was evidently impossible for the Mission to escape responsibility in this matter also....
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> Another important fact was referred to; namely, the publication of articles by one or more prominent members of the N.C.C. which it was difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile with the doctrine of our Lord's deity. Whilst it

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[77] Minutes of Council Meeting on 12 March 1926.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Ibid.

> was true that these articles were not issued under the auspices of the N.C.C., the Council felt strongly that the Mission should not be in fellowship with those responsible for the publication of such views.[80]

In the eyes of the CIM, these new developments indicated that the NCC was no longer a neutral association of both conservative and liberal missionaries but had begun to slide to the liberal side. The CIM's tie with the NCC only served to make the CIM itself liable to this liberal tendency, and thus violate its own doctrinal principles. Based on all these opinions and facts, the China Council unanimously reached the conclusion that "the connection of the Mission with the N.C.C. should now be severed."[81] On March 15 of the same year, D.E. Hoste sent an official letter to the National Christian Council to terminate the CIM's relationship with the NCC, and the NCC accepted the CIM's official withdrawal two months later.

In writing to a friend, Hoste reviewed the CIM's three years participation in the NCC in retrospect: "I am convinced...that we were right in making a patient, prayerful effort to maintain fellowship with other Missions, and am also persuaded that we have thereby been able to accomplished much positive good, and avert much positive evil...In matters of this kind, however, a point is reached when, failing a widespread revival of sound doctrine, separation is forced upon us, by the increasing development of error, if we are to remain loyal to vital truth and principle, to say nothing of conserving the practical interests of the Mission."[82] This passage clearly points to the complicated nature of the relationship between the CIM and the NCC. From the moment of the NCC being officially proposed in 1922, the CIM recognized its value as a symbol of Christian unity

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[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid.
[82] D.E.Hoste to J.Russell Howden, 12 March 1926, CIM Papers, 2-39, BGC, Wheaton College.

but held serious theological and doctrinal concerns and reservations. In other words the CIM always felt nervous and uneasy with the NCC and some of its programs, and its participation in it was always conditional. By the end the CIM leadership felt victimized by increasing modernist tendencies of the NCC and no choice but to withdraw.

The fact that the CIM stayed within the NCC for about three years and then withdrew showed that the fundamental reason underlying this separation was not a conflict between separatism and church union but rather a conflict between two different visions of church union. The CIM always appreciated and stressed the importance and value of Christian unity, cooperation, and fellowship. In fact the CIM took pride in its own nature as an inter-denominational organization. In the 1924 China Mission Year Book, D.E. Hoste contributed an article entitled "Cooperation in the C.I.M." to the section on "Cooperation Movements in China" and illustrated the vision and practices of inter-denominational cooperation within the CIM. He wrote,

> In the case of the C.I.M., the foregoing principles find their expression in a common understanding as to doctrine, which, in the light of present day thought and speculation, may be regarded as strict and conservative; whilst in respect of denominational tenets, it allows full liberty within the compass of the generally recognized churches of ecclesiastical bodies of Protestant Christendom. The Mission has not a full, comprehensive creedal statement of its own. That would hardly be consistent with its interdenominational character. It simply interprets certain great doctrines of the Christian Faith, in what has been recognized by all the great denominations as the strictly conservative and evangelical sense.[83]

While leaving ecclesiastical matters to the participating denominations, the CIM had maintained conservative doctrinal standards since the days of Hudson Taylor and persistently required its missionaries to adhere to them. In the CIM's vision, genuine Christian unity was based on a common theological and doctrinal commitment. This

vision was contrary to the original purpose of the National Christian Council, which avoided any substantial or official doctrinal statement. It goes without saying that a NCC drifting toward modernism was bound to run into conflict with the CIM.

The CIM's controversy with the NCC and its eventual withdrawal from it was one of few occasions that brought the CIM into a face-to-face confrontation with its liberal counterparts. Except for some of its individual missionaries' prominent roles in such fundamentalist enterprises as the Bible Union of China and occasional verbal attacks on modernism in its publications, the CIM as a whole did not pursue a persistent policy of fighting modernism and never allowed its own attention and energy to be diverted from direct evangelism. For the CIM the best response to modernism was to spread the "pure gospel." After the 1926 separation from the NCC and the1927 evacuation caused by the Nanjing Incident, the CIM reflected on its previous mission work and decided to launch a "Forward Movement." The goals of the movement were to further rapidly the transfer of mission churches to Chinese leadership, the training of Chinese evangelists, and the evangelization of unreached regions and population. To achieve these goals, the CIM sent home churches the requests for two hundred new missionaries.[84] The movement tremendously boosted the CIM's evangelistic campaigns in China.

Among the conservative missionary organizations in China, the China Inland Mission was not alone in having a troublesome and difficult time with the National Christian Council. In 1926 the Christian and Missionary Alliance also withdrew from the

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[83] D.E.Hoste, "Cooperation in the C.I.M.," in China Mission Yearbook, 1924, 181-82.

[84] See A. Lutley, "The Forward Movement—Retrospect and Prospect," China's Millions (July 1931): 119-20.

NCC. Their withdrawals were widely viewed by the fundamentalists as the evidence of the modernist nature of the NCC. [85]

Some conservative missions like the Southern Baptists and the Lutherans never joined the NCC. Another mission that refused to join was the North Jiangsu Mission of the Southern Presbyterian Church.

The North Jiangsu Mission did send four delegates to the National Christian Conference held in 1922 in Shanghai. On the issue of the proposed National Christian Council, its delegates presented a report to the mission and recommended that the PCUS "do not recognize nor finance the permanent National Christian Council."[86] Besides the potential financial and administrative burdens, the report also cited two significant reasons: "The National Christian Council refused to give any unequivocal statement of the religious beliefs of the Council to be established....Strong opposition to the Council has been manifested among Chinese pastors and organizations as well as in some of the Missions."[87] The report also laid out its condition for cooperation with other denominations: "The North Kiangsu Mission wishes to express its desire for closer cooperation with Missionaries of other denominations on the basis of faith in the whole Bible, and the fundamentals of the Christian Religion."[88] This report was adopted by the North Jiangsu Mission and sent to the Mid-China Mission, the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions of the PCUS, the General Assembly of the PCUS, and the NCC.

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[85] See "The National Christian Council of China," The Independent Board Bulletin 1 (April 1935): 11.

[86] The Minutes of the North Kiangsu Mission, August 1922, China Mission Papers, PHS, Montreat, NC, 17.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Ibid.

In a lengthy letter to the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions, the four delegates systematically elaborated on their views of the NCC and their reasons for opposing any participation in the organization. Some of these reasons reflected a strong tendency of anti-institution. For instance, the letter emphasized that "we are already over organized and have too much machinery....Is not what the Church at home and on the Mission field needs,--less organization and more of the Spirit's power, less of human methods and machinery and more of the living Christ? The proposed Council and accompanying general and regional Conferences are not what is needed. They draw valuable men from doing direct Mission work in preaching and teaching the Gospel."[89] In the letter some influential Chinese church leaders were cited as opposing the NCC on the ground that the scheme wasted financial resources and was simply too expensive for the Chinese churches to support. Thus the letter denied that the NCC was originated by the Chinese churches and blamed the "a vigorous foreign propaganda" since the Edinburgh Conference for it. It asserted that "the men who favor the new movement are not men of long religious experience, nor are they the ones who have built up the Chinese Church. They are mostly young men who have been educated abroad in 'liberal' institutions, and hold radical views. The men who do not favor the movement of which the National Council is a part, are the active pastors and evangelists who have born the burden and heat of the day and have largely built up the Chinese Church."[90] While the advocates for the NCC stressed the Chinese origin of the NCC and foreigness of the

[89] Delegates of the Mission to the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions, 13 September 1922, Bridges Papers, PHS, Montreat, NC.

[90] Ibid.

doctrinal dispute, the conservative North Jiangsu Mission reached the opposite conclusion.

What primarily concerned the North Jiangsu delegates seemed to be the modernist theological orientation of the NCC. First of all, the letter complained that "the affiliations of the promoters are with Modernism" and its whole nature was modernist: "The movement is largely a modernist movement. While some conservative men are on the various Committees, the majority are men of modernist sympathies. The Chinese put forward as speakers and leaders in the National Conference, with the exception of Dr.Chen Ching I (Cheng Jing-yi), were mainly of the same class. The whole general drift of the movement, both as regards religious beliefs and administration, is opposed to the convictions and policies of our Southern Presbyterian Church."[91]

Obviously, the North Jiangsu Mission held a much more negative view of the NCC than the China Inland Mission at the time of founding the NCC. The North Jiangsu delegates especially singled out the NCC promoters' theological and doctrinal vagueness to support their view. According to their letter, "This movement, like other union movements, is popular with men who hold radical views, because it practically removes all religious standards, and allows each other to believe and teach what he pleases, with none to say him nay."[92] The letter was highly critical of the theological statement the National Christian Conference made in the resolution regarding the NCC and concluded "that statement was purposely vague, and dodged the vital issue between radicals and evangelicals."[93] The NCC leaders' appeal to tolerance, freedom, and love did not produce

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[91] Ibid.
[92] Ibid.
[93] Ibid.

much effect in having the conservatives soften their insistence on a clear-cut doctrinal assurance on the part of the NCC. The North Jiangsu delegates were very upset by the NCC advocates' refusal to give any such assurance.

Even worse, the letter argued, the NCC and the union movement it represented would produce some very harmful consequences. First, "one inevitable result of the whole movement will be the spread of unsound doctrine, because union carries with it the virtual rejection of standards of doctrine." [94] Second, "because the forcing together of conservative and radical men in one institution will be productive of strife and bring harm to the cause."[95] Therefore, in the view of the North Jiangsu Mission, the formation of the NCC might not be beneficial to the cause of Christian unity at all.

Overall, the North Jiangsu's attitude toward the National Christian Council was much more critical than that of the China Inland Mission. As the latter hoped to witness to its conservative position within the NCC, the former was convinced of the modernist nature of the whole NCC enterprise from the very beginning. As a conservative Presbyterian organization, the North Jiangsu Mission did not find it difficult to reach its decision. But with its holiness theological background and interdenominational nature, the CIM understandably held hope for the NCC for a few years. From the beginning the North Jiangsu Mission categorically declined to be involved in the NCC and had no any connection with it. Largely because of the North Jiangsu Mission's position, the Southern Presbyterian missions in China were never able to reach a unified policy regarding the National Christian Council.

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[94] Ibid.
[95] Ibid.

Among the fundamentalists in China of the 1920s, the National Christian Council quickly gained the status of one of the most prominent liberal institutions and the symbol of the liberal church union movement and thus became a favorite target for attack. The fundamentalist attack on the NCC and the liberal church union movement most commonly concentrated on the following aspects.

First, the NCC was flatly condemned as "a thoroughly modernistic organization."[96] According to Henry M. Woods, a Southern Presbyterian missionary and a renowned scholar of Chinese language, "This council refuses absolutely to give any guarantee as to sound teaching. It is estimated, probably correctly, that about 80% of the members will be modernists....Leaders of the Union movement deny nearly all the great truths of the Gospel."[97] Charles H. Coates was a CIM missionary and the author of the inflammatory The Red Theology in the Far East. In attacking the NCC, Coates declared that " an extensive modernist propaganda in English and Chinese literature, and in special 'retreats' for Chinese evangelists, is being promoted and sponsored by them. In these retreats modernism's main plank, the adaptation of Christianity to the ancient faiths of the Chinese people, in all the sinister implications of that subtle phrase, is a foremost subject of propaganda."[98]

It was no wonder that the NCC and the church union movement in general were accused of trying to "lead Christians away from the solid ground of Scripture, to estrange them from the Christ of Scriptures and from historic Christianity....and encourage the

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[96] Hugh White to James B. Hutton, 26 December 1930, White Papers, PHS, Montreat, NC.
[97] Hnery M. Woods to Thompson, 5 August 1922, Bridge Papers, PHS, Montreat, NC.
[98] Coates, Red Theology, 140.

young people to seek guidance and help in liberal, social and worldly institutions."[99] The NCC leadership's sympathy with the Nationalist Revolution was also often cited as another evidence of the modernist nature of the organization.[100] Therefore, The Presbyterian Standard, a conservative journal in North America, came to the conclusion that the NCC was composed of "men holding almost every form of unbelief."[101] Under the pens of the fundamentalists, the NCC and church union movement were identified as the stronghold and source of the modernist propaganda. It was so much so that "Unionist" was almost synonymous with "Modernist"[102]; and "the pro-Council men" were interchangeable with liberals; and "the pro-Bible men," with fundamentalists.[103] Almost any union institution, especially in education, could immediately cause the fundamentalists to raise their eyebrows in suspicion.

Second, the NCC and union movement were thought to be a modernist plot or conspiracy to dominate the missionary movement and Chinese churches. Even before the National Christian Council was founded, some fundamentalists like Hugh White had already begun to suspect that "the China Continuation Committee through the combination of boards in New York is getting control of the mission boards at the home base, and thus of all mission work."[104] Although the NCC repeatedly stated its own advisory nature, the fundamentalists never put much faith in these statements. Henry M. Woods was convinced that "the new N.Council which (is) claiming that it is not a Super-

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[99] "An Open Letter to Dr. Mott," The China Fundamentalist (October-December 1930): 20.

[100] See Hugh White, "The Influence of Bolshevism in China," in Pennsylvania Manufacturers' Journal (October 1929): 44-45, Copy in White Papers, PHS, Montreat, NC.

[101] Quoted from "Open Letter from Dr.Chester to the Editor of the Presbyterian Standard," N.D., Bridge Papers, PHS, Montreat, NC.

[102] White to Hutton, 26 December 1926.

[103] White, "What the 'Christian Observer' Leaves Out," White Papers, PHS, Montreat, NC, 2.

Government will be really such. It aims to dictate the policies of all Missions, to control all funds in time, and practically to take the Chinese Church away from the direction of the Missions who have hitherto taught them and done everything for them, and put them under the direction of the Comm. dominated by the YMCA and New Theology."[105]

Hugh White believed that "the manipulators of this movement have for years pursued the policy of side-tracking conservative Bible men, and placing men of their choosing in the strategic positions."[106] By demonstrating how the CCC managed to have Edgar E. Strother removed from the position of the General Secretary of "Christian Endeavor," he tried to back up his claim that the modernists were taking over educational, medical, and publishing institutions through the union movement. Of course, in the opinion of the fundamentalists, the final goal of these "unionists" was to have modernism become the dominant influence in the missionary movement.

Third, the most serious danger and threat the union movement posed for most fundamentalists was its appeal to tolerance and unity but giving up any doctrinal standard. This appeal was precisely what confused many conservative missionaries and caused them to compromise their principles and enter into union with the modernists. By doing so, the fundamentalists warned, they were actually helping the modernists achieve their goal. In Henry M. Woods' words, "Unfortunately some good but misguided conservative men, deceived by the clamor for 'union', are playing into the hands of the radicals:"[107] "Union irrespective of belief, that is what Union means, you are bound to give up if you

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[104] Hugh White, "Our Foreign Mission Secretaries and the New York Boards," Bridges Papers, PHS, Montreat, NC.

[105] Woods to Thompson, 5 August 1922.

[106] Hugh White, "The Future of the Presbyterian Church in the United Sates," White Papers, PHS, Montreat, NC.

unite with men whose beliefs are totally unlike our own."[108] Hugh White was dismayed by some conservatives' "illusions" about union movement. He believed that no other than Satan was behind the union. In his own words, Satan "muzzles the Evangelicals with the fallacious idea of courtesy towards Modernist colleagues. Union conferences, union institutions, union journals are all based on the policy of not discussing whether the Bible is true or not."[109] He was convinced that the union movement would do great harm to the conservative cause and the conservatives were being taken advantage of by their modernist enemies. He said, "Cooperating... in the big union movements, broad charity has led men to recognize as colleagues those who seem to have the Christian spirit even though they do not believe in the fundamental principles of the Bible. No one could foresee that men of this class, thus recognized, would get control of the union movements, and use, or rather abuse the law of courtesy to hush up all opposition to destructive criticism and all strong testimony for the integrity of the Bible."[110]

Furthermore, the fundamentalists believed the presence of the conservative evangelicals in the union institutions would help the spread of modernism within the Chinese churches. This was the point Charles Coates made: "The continued presence of this evangelical representation has been able to secure is that the modernistic activities of the Council are receiving thereby an evangelical imprimatur, and that modernist teaching is being imbibed by the Chinese churches under the false sense of security thereby induced."[111] That was why the fundamentalists felt that "we shrink back from the thought

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[107] Woods to Thompson, 5 August 1922.
[108] Henry M. Woods to Thompson, 3 February 1923, Bridges Papers, PHS, Montreat, NC.
[109] Hugh White, "We Must Separate to Save our Faith," White Papers, PHS, Montreat., NC, 5.
[110] White, "Our Foreign Mission Secretaries and the New York Boards."
[111] Coates, Red Theology, 141.

that, through our support, we might be found strengthening the modernist position and so share the responsibility for the deplorable spiritual state of the churches."[112] With its tremendous prestige among the fundamentalists, the China Inland Mission never had to face harsh criticism for its decision to join the NCC. However, many fundamentalists did feel very uneasy with the CIM's action and expressed their feeling indirectly. This was especially evident in Charles Coates' complaint that the administrators of certain large evangelical missions "decline to withdraw their representation upon the National Christian Council, despite the wide protests of their constituent missionaries."[113]

Fourth, some fundamentalists were deeply concerned with some conservative missionaries' involvement in the liberal dominated church union movement. With a sense of crisis, they repeatedly urged that "we must separate to save our faith."[114] Without a common faith in the Bible and a doctrinal consensus, they argued, a true union was impossible. In 1921 R.A.Torrey, who headed the Moody Bible Institute and took part in the founding of the Bible Union of China, declared that "I do not see any possibility of a rational union between those who believe the Bible is the infallible Word of God and those who believe the Bible is chiefly folk-lore. It is madness to be so eager for union that you are willing to sacrifice Jesus Christ and His truth for union."[115] An editorial of The China Fundamentalist asked:

> How can we be expected to work together with so-called "Christian leaders" who regard Salvation as an evil superstition, or with those whose evident intent it is, either by peaceful penetration and well-directed propaganda or by evangelistic campaigns of the "Streeter" type, to undermine the faith both of foreign missionaries and of Chinese leaders? It is evident that our interests clash

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[112] "Have Modernists Changed?" The China Fundamentalist (October-December 1929): 20.
[113] Coates, Red Theology, 141.
[114] White, "We Must Separate to Save our Faith."
[115] R.A.Torrey, "Christian Unity and the Bible Union," BBUC no.5 (December 1921): 15.

> and our aims are diametrically opposed to each other. Hence the futility of the appeal to join their movements on the premise that each individual is entitled to interpret the person of Jesus or the meaning of evangelism in terms of his own. We are plainly warned in God's Word not to be unequally yoked together.[116]

For the fundamentalists they and their modernist counterparts were theologically incompatible, and a scheme of unifying two parties under a doctrinally neutral organization was not workable. They were frustrated by some mission boards and missionaries' attempts to "temporize with this evil for the sake of peace"[117] or to enter union with anyone at any cost. For them this approach was a futile "crying peace, when there is no peace."[118]

Hugh White was particularly critical of conservatives' continuing association with mainstream church union movement. He believed this was "the worst action" they could take.[119] In his view, as the modernists were propagating their theology and getting control of missions, the conservatives had no choice but to separate themselves from the modernists: the splitting of missions or churches seemed necessary as well as inevitable. He urged that "either the modernists should leave the Evangelical churches and institutions, or we must give up our inheritance, save our faith, and go forward."[120] On the other hand, White did acknowledge that some modernists "have done work which has been invaluable to China and to Christianity. Our aim should not be to overthrow any good work that such men may do, but to prevent the misappropriation of funds, and the

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[116] "Have Modernists Changed?" 47.

[117] Open Letter from Dr.Chester to the Editor of the Presbyterian Standard, Bridges Papers, .PHS, Montreat, NC.

[118] Ibid.

[119] Hugh White to The Presbyterian Standard, 17 November 1922, Bridges Papers, PHS, Montreat, NC.

[120] White, "We Must Separate to Save our Faith," 5.

efforts to get control."[121] When the modernists stop attempts at getting control, White said, "then there will be hope of peace."[122] He also allowed fundamentalists to continue their cooperation with the modernists on such issues as relief and welfare. However, "they must withdraw from all union with Modernism when those unions affect their beliefs."[123] Furthermore, Hugh White was not a denominational isolationist. In his view, after the fundamentalists withdrew from the liberal dominated union institutions or denominations, they would find a new common bond among themselves in the battle against modernism. In his own words, "when the denominations have thus fought side by side, hearts will be welded by the fire in an iron pact of love. We shall find ourselves united by the Lord himself,"[124]and "we should cultivate the spirit of unity and co-operation between those of all nations and denominations who are one at heart in believing the whole Bible."[125]

Hugh White's position is important in revealing the fundamentalists' vision of church union. For them a genuine Christian union had to be founded upon a clear-cut common belief in biblical authority and orthodox doctrine. As Nelson Bell said when he defended the Bible Union of China, "It is not against Union—it is Union, and on the only basis we can accept."[126] R.A.Torrey made the point even clearer: "I believe in union, but I believe in Jesus Christ and in the Bible as the Word of God first....On the absolute and final authority, the absolute dependability, of the Bible as the inerrant Word of God. This

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[121] Ibid., 8.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Ibid.
[124] Ibid.,9.
[125] Ibid., 11.
[126] Neslon Bell, "The Bible Union of China: Why, When, What," 4.

is where we should stand together."[127] Even Charles Coates could admit that "Christian union, if on a true and Scriptural basis, is among the highest corporate ideals before the Church of Christ." [128] In fact fundamentalist did organize their own union institutions such as the Bible Union of China according to their vision.

Finally, the fundamentalists raised serious questions about the practical impact the formation of the NCC would have on missionary work. True to their anti-institutional tendency, the fundamentalists complained that the NCC was an expensive institution that would drain the resources and thus weaken the badly needed evangelistic work. In a lengthy letter to a friend, Henry M. Woods, a member of the Jiangsu Mission, criticized that "it is an expensive move which our Church is urged to support, tho' we haven't the money to keep up our regular Mission work. Is it right to take money contributed to preach the Gospel among the heathen, to support a movement which our Mission does not need?"[129] Echoing Woods' point, Hugh White asserted that "The Council...will put a heavy financial burden on the home churches....The preachers, teachers, doctors, who are bearing the burden of the direct work will have their funds cut down to support a set of 'bosses' who use all their influence to shelter the destructive critics."[130] During the years of the Great Depression, Watson Hayes, always in favor of less bureaucracy and more evangelists, repeatedly made suggestions to his mission board that the grants to the NCC should be cut because "that body is an epiphyte which absorbs much good sap. What we need is more genuine mission work and very much less would-be oversight. There is entirely too much conference, council and confab, and too little of the co-worker spirit.

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[127] Torrey, "Christian Unity and the Bible Union,"14.
[128] Coates, Red Theology, 139.
[129] Woods to Thompson, 5 August 1922.

We need workers, not directors."[131] For the fundamentalist critics, the root of the bureaucratic tendency was the modernists and social-gospelers' theological thinking and preoccupation with large social projects. The modernist theological teachings were always their primary target, and over-institutionalization of mission enterprise remained a relatively minor issue. But the conservative missionaries' anti-institutionalization tendency affected the developments of such conservative organizations as the CIM and NCTS. In the 1920s and 1930s, these organizations deliberately shunned huge administrative structures and financial commitment to costly social projects.

At this point the mission boards found themselves being held responsible for wasting resources by contributing financially to the NCC. In 1933 an editorial in The China Fundamentalist accused certain home boards of spending $200,000.00 on the NCC in the first five years and no less in the next five years, even though "not more than one-third of the mission organizations now recognize the China NCC."[132] As some denominational mission boards were accused of financing and cooperating with the modernist NCC, the boards' relationship with the NCC quickly became a point of conflict between the boards and fundamentalists in China as well as North America. "The only safe and honorable course for the Foreign Board to take," Albert B. Dodd of the North China Theological Seminary suggested, " is to decline to put the money of consecrated givers into any union or cooperative enterprize not on an out-and-out evangelical doctrinal basis."[133]

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[130] White, "What the 'Christian Observer' Leaves Out," 4.

[131] W.M.Hayes to Robert Speer, 27 June 1933,PCUSABS, RG82, 47-17, PHS, Philadelphia.

[132] "A Forward Movement among the Board," The China Fundamentalist, (July-September 1933): 7.

[133] Albert B. Dodd to Robert E Speer, 15 March 1933, PCUSA, RG82 47-16, PHS, Philadelphia.

Once again Hugh White found himself at odds with the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions of the PCUS on the issue of church union. In 1920 North Jiangsu Mission authorized Henry M. Woods to compile a conservative Chinese Bible Encyclopedia based on the work by James Orr in two years. The purpose of this project was to counter the influence of the modernist literature, especially James Hasting's The Dictionary of the Bible. With the advice of the Mission Board of the PCUSA and the China Continuation Committee, the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions of the PCUS declined to finance the project. Upset by the committee's action, White launched a public campaign in the Presbyterian journals and papers accusing the committee of surrendering to the influence of the modernist CCC and refusing to "uphold our missionaries in this effort to combat the tide of Rationalism sweeping over China."[134] White's direct attack on the committee touched off a fierce exchange of letters between the committee and himself and between the committee and its home constituency including churches and journals. What outraged the committee most was that White through his public accusations had helped create a impression among the home constituency that "our Executive Committee has failed to take a decided stand upon the doctrinal differences among our missionaries in China, thus creating the impression that a union of discordant elements is more to be desired than a contention for the faith once delivered to the saints."[135] In a letter to White, S.E. Chester, the head of the Executive Committee, complained that this prevailing impression had led to the decrease in the home constituency's financial contribution to the Executive Committee of Foreign

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[134] White, "Our Foreign Mission Secretaries and the New York Boards."
[135] Albert Johnson to Johnson, 9 February 1923, Bridges Papers, PHS, Montreat, NC.

Missions in the PCUS.[136] On the issue of the mission's relationship to the union institution, Hugh White once again proved himself a trouble maker for the mission board.

Besides the National Christian Council, the Church of Christ in China--the most successful and broadest inter-denominational church union accomplished in 1927--also drew heavy fire from the fundamentalist side. What troubled the fundamentalists seemed to be that this was "an 'inclusive church union' on a very meagre creedal basis."[137] In a letter to the Mission Board of the Northern Presbyterian Church, Albert B. Dodd wrote, "The doctrinal basis of the Church of Christ in China is too indefinite to insure adherence to those doctrines which your General Assembly regards as essential. They have even declined to acknowledge the doctrine of the Trinity in that doctrinal statement."[138] Focusing on this theological and doctrinal looseness, Henry M. Woods blasted this church:

> The Presbyterian Church of China, the largest, is being pressed into union with the Congregationalists of U.S.A. and those of England, who are for the most part radical in teaching just as they are in America, and our Presb't standards are being sacrificed, and guarantees of doctrine thrown away, to meet the demand for union. In other words, yielding to the ceaseless clamor for a false unity (which is external and not based on oneness of belief or on the Word of God) the Presbyterian Church is being wiped out of existence to form a hybrid body, which has little or no backbone, a theological jelly fish; this movement if not checked, will ruin the now promising and conservative Presbyterian Church of China, and will prove a powerful propaganda for Modernist infidelity. That's why the Modernists all favor union. They know that Union means the spread of Modernism. Union means the wiping out of Church Symbols, the abolition of all effective standards of belief.[139]

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[136] S.H.Chester to Hugh White, 31 October 1922, Bridges Paper, PHS, Montreat, NC.

[137] "The League of Christian Churches," The China Fundamentalist (January-March 1930): 11.

[138] Albert B. Dodd to the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, 21 April 1933, PCUSABS, RG82 47-16, PHS, Philadelphia.

[139] Woods to Thompson, 5 August 1922.

Wood's labeling the Church of Christ as "a theological jelly fish" clearly reflected the fundamentalists' concern with the lack of doctrinal and theological commitment of many of the union institutions of their times. In the eyes of fundamentalists, the Church of Christ was a typical liberal union institution. For Woods the loose theological position of the Church of Christ served to open the way for the inroads of modernism that threatened not only common conservative doctrine but also Presbyterian tradition. His concern and feeling were shared by many conservatives within the churches and missions of the Reformed tradition.

Consequently, as the Church of Christ was transformed from a Presbyterian union into a multi-confessional union, some conservative presbyteries decided to stay out. In November of 1929, the delegates from five presbyteries in Shandong and Jiangsu, Canadian Presbyterian Mission in Manchuria, and the Christian Reformed Mission met on the campus of the North China Theological Seminary in Tengxian, Shandong Province. The meeting organized the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Christ in China. The Assembly included eighty congregations, eighty-eight ministers, and 17,766 church members.[140] Jia Yu-ming was elected the moderator, and the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Longer and Shorter Catechisms were adopted as their doctrinal standards. One of the first actions of this new Assembly was to receive the NCTS as the training institution for its minister teams.

According to Wallace Meriwin, these churches' "chief objections to union lay in their strong loyalty to traditional Presbyterianism and its doctrines."[141] In a way this

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[140] A Mission Letter from Martin A Hopkins, 9 December 1929, Missionary Correspondence Collection, PHS, Montreat, NC.

[141] Merwin, Adventure in Unity, 61.

assessment is correct. One of the major purposes of forming the new Assembly was certainly to preserve the Presbyterian heritage in the face of the growing union movement. All participating churches of the continuing assembly, as Merwin pointed out, were "strongly conservative and Calvinist."[142] Traditionally, the Old School Presbyterian churches were suspicious of inter-denominational joint ventures and feared that these ventures would compromise distinct Presbyterian teachings. The Old School suspicion and concern certainly played a part in bringing the continuing Presbyterian congregations in China together.

However, this joint action of the conservative Presbyterian churches was also designed as a witness and protest against rampant modernism in general. The continuing Presbyterian groups' concerns transcended mere Presbyterian tradition. It was no wonder to hear Martin A. Hopkins, one of the witnesses of the whole event, saying, "It is impossible to overestimate the stabilizing effect that such a body will have upon the whole Christian movement in China, because it is composed of men who know what they believe and why they believe, and are willing to sacrifice for their faith."[143] The formation of the new General Assembly revealed that, in opposition to the church union movements, many fundamentalists often held dual intentions: to preserve common orthodox beliefs as well as their particular denominational traditions, for they feared both were seriously threatened by the union movement.

As mentioned before, the fundamentalists did have their own vision of Christian union. One of the most significant manifestations of this vision was the League of Christian Churches. As the fundamentalists within the missionary community and

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[142]Ibid.

Chinese churches became increasingly dissatisfied with the liberal church union movement, they obviously felt the need to form a conservative counterpart to the National Christian Council. As a result the League of Christian Churches was established.[144] In North America the separatist fundamentalists like Carl McIntire pursued a similar course and set up the American Council of Christian Churches in 1941 as the fundamentalist alternative for liberal Federal Council of Churches. The effort of the fundamentalists in China preceded McIntire's organization.

In November 1929 on the campus of the North China Theological Seminary, about fifty delegates convened to organize a League of Christian Churches "upon a sound, evangelical creedal basis."[145] In addition to the newly founded General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Christ in China, the delegates came from more than a dozen mission and church bodies including the Northern and Southern Presbyterians, Southern Baptist, American Lutheran Mission, and Mennonites. The Anhui (Anhwei) Churches of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, the Bethel Mission, China Inland Mission Church Council of Honan Province, and some European Mission bodies associated with the CIM also decided to join the league but were able to send their delegates. The delegates from six bodies had been given full power to act on behalf of their missions, and other delegates were received as individual members. [146] These participating missions and

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[143] A Missionary Letter from Hopkins, 9 December 1929, PHS, Montreat, NC.

[144] The League of Christian Churches was viewed as "a rival of the N.C.C." (Latourette, Ecumenical Bearings, 382).

[145] A Missionary Letter from Hopkins, 9 December 1929.

[146] "The League of Christian Churches," 10-12.

churches were theologically conservative. A total of 30,000 members were reported by December of the same year.[147] Hugh White was elected the first president.

The conservative orientation of this league soon became evident, as the conference unanimously adopted a creed. The creed was referred to as "a working basis of cooperation," and "its aim is to stress some modern denials of the essentials of Christianity."[148] The creed was centered on the infallible authority of the Bible: " We believe that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are all inspired by the Holy Spirit, and so are our only infallible rule of faith and practice."[149] The adoption of the creed laid down a conservative doctrinal foundation for this fellowship of conservative missions and churches. Furthermore, "the aim of the League is to join together all of like precious faith, whether church bodies or individuals, on a sound doctrinal basis for mutual cooperation in the Preservation of the faith in its purity, in deepening the spiritual life, and in aggressive evangelism."[150] The League of Christian Churches, with its doctrinal agenda and goal of strengthening the unity and cooperation of the conservative forces, was indeed a powerful witness to the fundamentalist version of church union.

In an open letter signed by all the Chinese and foreign leaders of the league, the league further explained its vision and tasks. The letter stated, "We desire to avoid all mere controversy, but see the need of standing shoulder to shoulder to guard the churches committed to our care and to press forward the work of God in this land. Whilst we abide

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[147] "The Second Triennial Meeting of the League of Christian Churches," The China Fundamentalist (July-September 1932): 28.

[148] A Missionary Letter from Hopkins, 9 December 1929.

[149] Ibid.

[150] Ibid.

in firmest loyalty to our several churches and their doctrinal standards, and see no gain in disbanding our denominational affiliations, yet we join hands for the prosecution of the great task which lies before us."[151]

The letter apparently tried to make it clear that the league was a conservative association grounded on a conservative doctrinal and evangelistic agenda but by no means a super-church. As far as the tasks of the league were concerned, the letter set evangelism as its top priority: "aggressive evangelism, the preaching of the Word, and the study of the Bible must take first place in all mission work."[152] The functions of other aspects of mission work were also clarified: "as aids to evangelism, we believe that hospitals, schools, literary work are still invaluable methods of work."[153] The league viewed mission schools as a major battle ground between the fundamentalists and modernists: " And we would especially stress the need of schools that are loyal to the Bible....Another essential line of work, which we feel this League should undertake....is to provide text-books which give the best scholarship without evolution and other forms of destructive teaching which pervade most of the courses now in use."[154] In this letter a conservative missionary agenda was explicitly spelled out by the leadership of the League of Christian Churches.

By the time the second triennial meeting of the league was held in June 1932 at Tengxian, memberships in the league reached about 75,000 thousand. [155] The CIM personnel constituted the largest section of its membership, and the Presbyterians were

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[151] "A Challenge to Faith by Leaders in the League of Christian Churches," The China Fundamentalist (April-June 1930): 8.

[152] Ibid., 9.

[153] Ibid.

[154] Ibid., 9.

the second largest body. Other major participating denominations included the Christian and Missionary Alliance Churches, the Free Methodists, Southern Baptists, and Mennonites. Seventy-nine representatives of twenty-two denominational groups attended the second conference.[156] The conference reviewed the reports of the committees. One of the great successes of the league was its official organ—The Morning Light. By 1932 this bi-monthly Chinese journal issued 1,500 copies.[157] Furthermore, the conference continued to push for its plan of preparing sound textbooks. It was reiterated that "the preparation of sound religious text books and books expounding the basic truths of Christianity and defending them against the present day attacks of so-called 'modernism' is of the most urgent importance and should be pushed as fast as funds are available."[158] In order to better coordinate the league's work, the conference made efforts to obtain both a Chinese and a foreign executive secretaries, and appoint thirteen provincial secretaries.[159]

On the matter of cooperation with non-member church bodies, the league insisted on its doctrinal standards as the precondition for any possible cooperation. Thus, the conference resolved to encourage "cooperative efforts with other denominations or bodies of the same faith with ourselves."[160] To contain the modernist influence, the League also resolved to "request the various Missions to employ as teachers in Christian Schools only those...who fully believed the Bible," and "the various Mission Boards to send out more

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[155] "The Second Triennial Meeting of the League of Christian Churches," 28.
[156] "The Second Triennial Meeting of the League of Christian Churches," 26.
[157] Ibid., 29.
[158] Ibid.
[159] "The Second Triennial Meeting of the League of Christian Church," 30.
[160] Ibid., 30.

missionaries who are heartily in sympathy with our doctrinal statement to serve the Chinese Church."[161]

The third triennial conference of the League of Christian Churches was held in Kaifeng, Henan Province in May 1935. The delegates represented more than thirty denominations or religious bodies in thirteen provinces. The total number of delegates and visitors were about 200. [162] The CIM sent the largest number of delegates. The fourth conference, scheduled to take place in Tianjin in 1938, was not held apparently because of the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War.

During its short history, the League of Christian Churches remained a loose alliance or fellowship of conservative foreign missionaries and Chinese Christians, even though some attempts were made to turn this fellowship into an organization.[163] The league never had a chance to become a missionary and church bureaucracy like the NCC. For the first four years, it did not have any full-time secretary, and most of its daily businesses were run through correspondence. Its expenditure and income were low,[164] and it relied on the donations from individuals and churches in North America and China. The conservative leadership of the League of Christian Churches deliberately avoided bureaucratic tendency, as it was pointed that "the League has felt no call to follow the example of that other organization, which with the objective of a unified control of mission work, obtained from certain mission boards hundreds of thousands of dollars."[165]

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[161] Ibid., 30-31.

[162] "The Keifeng Triennial," The China Fundamentalist (April-September 1935): 8.

[163] See "A Kuling Letter to the League," The China Fundamentalist (October-December 1934): 22-23.

[164] According to the 1932 report of the League, its total disbursements were $1,396.57, and total receipts were $2,511.57. ("The Second Triennial Meeting of the League of Christian Churches," The China Fundamentalist (July-September 1932): 28-29.

[165] "A Kuling Letter," 23.

Along with the NCTS and CIM, the League of Christian Churches showed how the conservatives in the mission field reacted to over-institutionalization of mission work, which was allegedly caused by the modernist influence.

Financially, although the League of Christian Churches very much depended on the contributions from North America, a significant portion of its income was actually from Chinese Christians.[166] Administratively, the Chinese Christians also took many key positions and shared the responsibilities with foreign missionaries. Of fifteen members of its executive committee from 1932 to 1935, seven were Chinese.[167] In the second national conference of the league, Chinese leadership was greatly strengthened. Some conservative Chinese church leaders rose to the top leadership positions of the league. Jia Yu-ming was elected the president. Yang Shao-tang [168] served as vice-president, and Ding Li-mei, as the chairman of the Evangelistic Meetings Committee. In addition to Hugh White, the league also gathered some of the most prominent or flamboyant fundamentalist missionaries at that time. Arie Kok, the chancellor of the Netherlands Legation, served as the general secretary and chairman of the Publicity Committee. Albert Dodd and Martin Hopkins of the NCTS served as the English Stated Clerk and Assistant Treasurer. In 1935 conference more younger conservative Chinese church leaders were added to the executive committee. One of them were Zhao Jun-ying (Calvin Chao) who was converted and educated by the Southern Presbyterian missionaries and later became a famous evangelist among college students and overseas Chinese communities. Some of

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[166] See "The Second Triennial Meeting of the League of Christian Churches," 29. For individual Chinese Christians' financial contribution to its triennial conference, see "The Keifeng Triennial," 9.

[167] "The League of Christian Churches," The China Fundamentalist (October-December 1934): 21.

[168] Yang Shao-tang (1900-66) was educated in the CIM school in Shansi Province and the North China Theological Seminary. A dynamic preacher, writer and educator, he became well-known among

the league's most important ministries such as The Morning Light and the League of Evangelical Students were also run by Chinese Christians.

Since the League of Christian Churches aimed to bring conservative missionaries and Chinese Christians together, it was eager to build the connection with the rapidly growing revival movement among Chinese churches. On its staff were some of the top native evangelists and church leaders. Before the Kaifeng conference convened in 1935, a missionary preparation meeting held in Guling was encouraged by current revivals in China and declared that "the church in China is coming into a new period, one in which only men who have been born again will be acceptable."[169] The meeting then urged that "Kaifeng must link up with the great revival movement."[170] As a result the Kaifeng conference invited some of the prominent figures of the evangelical revival movement to attend as visitors. Among them were Wang Ming Dao, Chen Chong-gui (Marcus Chen), and Wang Zai (Leland Wang).

As were their missionary counterparts, most of conservative Chinese evangelists and church leaders were highly critical of the mainstream church union movement. Wang Ming-dao was a powerful anti-modernist voice within Chinese churches. He frequently labeled modernists as "non-believers." In his view it was neither possible nor biblical to unite believers and non-believers, "truth" and "falsity." True union was only possible among the true believers of the gospel. He was convinced that church union was the devil's plot to corrupt truth by the modernist teachings. Therefore, he called for

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evangelical churches in China. He taught in a seminary in Shanghai. In the 1950s, he participated in the Three-Self Movement.

[169] "A Kuling Letter," 22

[170] Ibid.

separation between believers and non-believers.[171] Yang Shao-tang held a similar view. He rejected any possibility to enter a union with those who denied Christ's divinity, atonement, and resurrection. But he also denounced extreme separatism based on minor disagreements on polity and exegesis. As long as Christians accepted one true God and faith and the highest authority of the Bible, Yang argued, they should unite. [172] Obviously, these conservative Chinese Christians and fundamentalist missionaries all opposed a liberal version of church union but embraced an evangelical version.

Furthermore, denominational traditions never meant as much for the Chinese Christians as for many foreign missionaries. In fact most of these Chinese evangelists frequently crossed denominational lines in their evangelistic campaigns. Based on their biblical literalism and their personal experience, some like Wang Ming-dao and Ni Tuo-sheng (Watchman Nee) developed very negative views of Western denominationalism and often criticized denominations and their traditions as "unbiblical" human inventions. They had no major theological difficulty being involved in conservative church union enterprises founded by conservative missionaries.

On the other hand, as Daniel Bays pointed out, most Chinese evangelists were strongly independent.[173] And they very carefully maintained their independence from foreign missions, and sometimes intentionally distanced themselves from mission enterprises. They relied on the cooperation of missions and churches in their evangelistic campaigns but refused to place their ministries under the total control of any

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[171] See Wang Ming-dao, 真伪福音辨 (Discernment of Gospel) (Hong Kong: The Bellman House Publishers, 1987), 32-37.

[172] See Yang Shao-tang, "合一的问题" (The Issue of Church Union) in 近代华人神学文献 (A Source Book of Modern Chinese Theology), ed. Lam Wing-hung (Hong Kong: China Graduate School of Theology, 1986),386.

denominational mission and church. Partly because of the influence of rising nationalist sentiment in China, some of them developed strong anti-foreign stances and constantly exploited anti-mission rhetoric. [174]Although they might appreciate the fundamentalist missionaries' cause, their tendency towards independence prevented them from developing a deep, direct, and long term organizational relationship with the missionary fundamentalist movement. This was especially the case with Song Shang-jie, Ni Tuo-sheng, and Wang Ming-dao. Some other conservative Chinese evangelists and church leaders such as Ding Li-mei, Yang Shao-tang and Jia Yu-ming were more closely connected to foreign denominational missions and had been working side by side with foreign missionaries for a long period of time. They were more willing to cooperate with conservative foreign missionaries in church union. The formation of the League of Christian Churches in China marked the beginning of a closer cooperation between the missionary fundamentalist movement and conservative Chinese Christian groups. Unfortunately, the process was interrupted by the war.

Since the 1920s a prevailing impression has been that the fundamentalists were the enemies of the church union and ecumenical movement. This was implied in Paul Hutchinson's conclusion quoted at the very beginning of this chapter. As a matter of fact, the fundamentalists, at least the majority of them, never opposed the idea of Christian unity and cooperation as such. What they insisted on was that true Christian unity and union institutions had to be based on an orthodox theological consensus and common orthodox doctrinal standards. What troubled them was both the union institutions '

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[173] See Bays, "Growth of Independent Christianity."
[174] See Leung, "The Revivalists' Influence on the Character of Chinese Church," 115.

deliberate minimizing of its theological commitment under the name of love, tolerance, and individual freedom and the modernists' dominance in the union's theological thinking and programs. Of course some missionary fundamentalists' rejection of the church union movement at least partly had to do with their enthusiasm to save their particular denominational traditions. But most of them still cherished the common doctrinal bonds between themselves and the fundamentalists within other denominations and still believed in the real possibility and necessity of Christian unity on a conservative doctrinal and theological agenda. Therefore, the primary reasons and motivations behind the fundamentalists' antagonism toward the church union movement were theological and doctrinal instead of denominational and ecclesiastical. They were aware of the importance of Christian unity just as much as their liberal counterparts. In their minds it was the liberal camp that aggressively attempted to take over the missionary movement through the union institutions and consequently forced separation upon conservatives. Even as the fundamentalists refused to join or else withdrew from the union institutions, they formed their own inter-denominational fellowships according to their own vision of Christian unity.

CHAPTER VII

THE CONTROVERSIES OF THE 1930S

The fundamentalist missionaries' anti-modernist campaigns were most intense in the first half of the 1920s. The founding of the Bible Union of China, the division within the Nanjing Theological Seminary, the establishment of the North China Theological Seminary, and the China Inland Mission's withdrawal from the NCC all occurred before 1926. During these years the fundamentalists set their agenda, gained national prominence, and founded their own institutions. From 1926 to 1930, while the fundamentalists consolidated their forces by forming such organizations as the League of Christian Churches, they did not exchange fire with their modernist foes on any major issues, and thus the quarrel between two parties quieted down considerably. However, the easing of tension did not last very long. By the early 1930s a new round of controversies had broken out between the fundamentalists and modernists in China. The two camps fought each other over three major issues: the dispute between the China Sunday School Union and the World Sunday School Association in late 1920s and early 1930s, the findings of the Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry published in 1932, and Pearl Buck's ensuing criticism of missionary enterprises. The debate went on until the Sino-Japanese War erupted.

The Controversy over the China Sunday School Union

The first major confrontation between thee fundamentalists and the modernists in the 1930s was triggered by the division between the China Sunday School Union and the World Sunday School Association. This controversy highlighted the fundamentalists' determination to deter the modernist takeover of Christian publications and popular religious education in China.

The world Sunday school movement was an important part of the modern Protestant missionary and ecumenical movements. The movement originated in Gloucester, England, around 1780. Sunday schools were originally started to provide troubled urban children with some elementary training in reading, writing, and arithmetic. They soon became religious educational enterprises to teach children the basic Christian message and bring them to the Christian faith. The Sunday school movement rapidly spread to North America and continental Europe, and the American Sunday School Union was founded in 1824. Sunday schools also became a very popular and effective tool of evangelization and education in foreign mission fields. Started as a spontaneous movement, Sunday schools were gradually integrated into established church and mission structures and aimed not only at children but also at adults. By the late nineteenth century, the worldwide Sunday school movement was unified. The World Sunday School Association (WSSA) was founded in 1889, and served as a coordinating and publishing agency for Sunday schools around the world. The Sunday school movement was

interdenominational by nature and dominated by lay persons from England and North America. One of the major contributions made by the Sunday school unions in Britain and America was to produce teaching materials. The most commonly used teaching materials were the Uniform Lessons.

From the nineteenth century to the early 1920s, the Sunday school movement had a clear evangelistic goal and emphasized Bible-centered teachings. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, the movement underwent fundamental changes. Its curriculum was broadened to include more social and ethical issues such as home life, industrial life, and international relations. The emphasis was switched from solely biblical teachings to meanings of the biblical teachings in a real-life context. The pedagogical methods were increasingly based on "a scientific approach and procedure."[1] The churches in the mission fields also began to challenge the Uniform Lessons and demanded more indigenous teaching materials. In 1928 at the Los Angeles convention of the WSSA, Robert M. Hopkins, a minister of the Disciples of Christ, was elected the general secretary. During his tenure from 1928 to 1938, Hopkins led the reform to broaden the WSSA's programs and gave them greater social dimensions and a scientific basis.

The earliest record of a Sunday school in China is 1848, after which Sunday schools developed rapidly. By the end of the nineteenth century, one eighth of churches in China had Sunday school operations.[2] Sunday schools played a very important part in evangelization. In order to coordinate and promote Sunday school work, the 1907 Centenary Missionary Conference created a Sunday School Committee. In 1910, through

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[1] Gerald E. Knoff, The World Sunday School Movement (New York: The Seabury Press, 1979): 103.

the cooperation of the WSSA, the Committee was able to appoint Elwood G.Tewksbury as its first full time general secretary and adopted the name of the China Sunday School Union (CSSU). The CSSU was governed by a General Committee consisting of thirty-five members, twenty of whom were elected by several missions involved in considerable Sunday school work.[3] Those members living in the Shanghai area formed the Executive Committee. The CSSU also functioned as a member institution of the World Sunday School Association (WSSA). The general secretary of the CSSU served as the Field Secretary of the WSSA. In addition the WSSA financially supported the CSSU. For most of the 1920s, the WSSA and the Stewart Evangelistic Fund were two major financial contributors for the CSSU. Its own annual sales income also helped the CSSU cover its expenses.

When the Sunday School Union was founded in 1907, it was committed to improving the Sunday school work and religious education by providing teaching literature. CSSU quickly became "the most representative organization" [4] in Sunday school work in China and a major agency in publishing the curricular materials for the Sunday schools and Bible studies of churches across the country. By 1920 the total circulation of Sunday School Lesson Note literature in China was approximately 200,000 copies per week, and 140,000 of them were published by the CSSU.[5] The CSSU also made efforts to train Sunday school teachers. Another major publication of the CSSU was

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[2] Cindy S. Wong, "主日学对信徒培育的贡献及新禧年的新展望" (Sunday School Ministry, Its Contributions, Problems and Prospects) Jian Dao 13 (December 1999): 360.

[3] E.G.Tewksbury, "China Sunday School Union," in The China Mission Year Book, 1924, eds. Frank Rawlinson and others (Shanghai: Christian Literature Society, 1924), 191.

[4] T.H.Sailer, "Religious Education," in Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry Fact-Finders' Reports, China, vol. 5. 324.

[5] "The Chinese Church. Religious Education in the School," The Christian Occupation of China, eds. Stauffer and others, 391.

the Sunday School teachers' training materials. By 1920 the CSSU had introduced ten varieties of British and American teacher training books into China. [6] By the same year, about 2,000 Chinese leaders had obtained a Teacher Training Certificate prepared by the CSSU.[7]

By nature the CSSU was a union organization. It was an inter-denominational cooperative venture and was supposed to represent the interests of the cooperating church bodies. According to its constitution, two-thirds of the membership of its executive committee should be "electively representative of the evangelical denominations or churches."[8] Accordingly, the CSSU Constitution defined its doctrinal position as the following: "The China Sunday School Union Committee is representative as regards its literature, which emphasizes those aspects of Biblical truth which are held in common by the churches of the larger denominations, and are contained in their Standards and Declarations."[9] This was the so-called "Common Zone policy." It placed the organization on a theological basis, which was increasingly viewed to be evangelical and conservative in the 1920s and 1930s.

When the CSSU was established in the early twentieth century, Sunday school work was generally considered a tool of evangelization. The CSSU's curriculum was designed to transmit the knowledge of Bible to children and adults who came to churches. Its curricular materials were thus Bible-centered. Methodologically, it adopted nineteenth-century educational theory, which stressed the imparting of information. This

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[6] Ibid., 392.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Quoted from "The Sunday School of China—Should They Hold True to the Bible?" The Sunday School Times 74 (August 20, 1932): 433.

[9] Quoted form Ibid., 433-34.

was further strengthened by evangelical missionaries' emphasis on preaching. The result was a heavy reliance on lecture and exposition.[10]

In the late 1910s and 1920s, the CSSU and its programs were increasingly under criticism. This had to do with rising social and cultural concerns among missionaries, arrivals of growing number of newly trained Chinese and foreign educational professionals, and the popularity of John Dewey's Problem Method.[11] Many critics complained that the CSSU's programs and publications were methodically outdated, irrelevant to real life and changing social needs, and unattractive to young people. They urged that Christian religious education in China cease to teach just doctrine and begin to address broader social and moral issues. Adoption of an experimental method was also strongly recommended. It was further pointed out that attendance at Sunday schools had been steadily declining.[12] An increasing number of missionaries and organizations were so dissatisfied with the CSSU and its programs that they started to design their own alternative Sunday school courses and materials. Obviously, what was at stake here was not just pedagogics but also the purpose and doctrinal orientation of Sunday school work in China. This challenge to the old Sunday school system paralleled a general trend within the worldwide Sunday school movement during the 1920s and 1930s.

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[10] For evaluation of the CSSU curriculum, see Sailer, "Religious Education," 304, 352.

[11] John Dewey, the famous American philosopher of pragmatism, visited and lectured in China from 1919 to 1921. His philosophy exerted a great influence on Chinese intellectuals of the early twentieth century. He advocated a philosophical and educational approach that emphasized investigation and experiment rather than mere transmittal of knowledge.

[12] In 1923, the Methodist Episcopal Church had 1,098 schools with 65,351 pupils. In 1927, they had 779 schools with 40,986. In 1925, the PCUSA had 667 Sunday schools with 37,348 pupils. In 1928, they had 443 Sunday schools with 23,948 pupils. Besides the anti-Christian movement, the CSSU and its traditional educational approach were also held responsible for the decline by many critics. (Sailer, "Religious Education," 309- 13).

E.G. Tewksbury came to China with the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in 1898. After spending his first sixteen years at a mission station in North China, he was appointed to the position of the general secretary of the CSSU in 1910. Described as a "fundamentalist and a pre-millennialist,"[13] he always believed that the only purpose of the CSSU was to promote the study of the Bible. Somewhat open to new educational methods, Tewksbury was never interested in broadening the CSSU's curriculum to include social issues and was never very enthusiastic about adopting modern experimental methods. It was no wonder that he was under mounting pressure and criticism from liberal and moderate parties with missionary community and Chinese churches. However, his stand for the preaching of gospel and Bible reading was greatly appreciated and supported by conservatives associated with the CIM and other missions. They viewed the CSSU as "the only organization to which they can look for satisfactory help in their Sunday School work."[14]

As the fundamentalist-modernist controversy intensified in the 1920s, the division between conservatives and liberals regarding the CSSU also deepened. E.G. Tewksbury quickly identified himself with the emerging fundamentalist movement and took a leadership role in the Bible Union of China. The most controversial aspect of the CSSU was its so-called "Common Zone policy" or its conservative theological position. According to a conservative interpretation, the "Common Zone policy" meant that "nothing that violates any evangelical belief of any of the denominations represented in

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[13] Sailer, "Religious Education," 307.

[14] Minutes of the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions of the PCUS, vol.27 (September 1932), 24.

the China Sunday School Union is permitted to have any place in its literature."[15] By defending this policy, the CSSU gradually gained a reputation as a conservative stronghold in China. In 1932 the conservative Sunday School Times based in Philadelphia praised its "evangelical character and testimony" lavishly: "For more than twenty years the China Sunday School Union has stood uncompromisingly for the old faith, the whole Bible, and the only Gospel of salvation through the shed blood, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ."[16] On the other hand, liberals considered the "Common Zone policy" a major obstacle to modernization of the Sunday school work in China. In 1930 the liberal Christian Century complained that

> Up to the present moment, the attempt to instruct the youth of China in Christian ideas, as carried on in the Christian Sunday schools, is in terms of a dogmatic that is completely opposed to every principle of knowledge that young China is absorbing in that nation's new schools. Because of the effort to have no single word in any Sunday school literature that might offend the most determined heresy hunter among the fundamentalist missionaries—and China has a good many of them—the Sunday schools, which should be equipping new Christians for a new day, have been living in a bygone age.[17]

In the highly charged atmosphere in China, the leadership of the World Sunday School Association decided to pressure the CSSU to reform itself. Around the time of its 1928 Los Angeles convention, the WSSA was in transition from a narrow evangelistic approach to a broader social and "scientific" approach to the Sunday school movement. Robert M. Hopkins and other leaders of the WSSA were apparently upset by the conservative CSSU's refusal to overhaul its doctrinal orientation and programs according to the changing social situation. They felt that although the CSSU was originally created

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[15] "The Sunday School of China—Should They Hold True to the Bible?" The Sunday School Times, 434.

[16] Ibid., 433.

[17] "Can Christian Mission Be Saved?" The Christian Century 47 (March 12, 1930): 328.

by the 1907 Missionary Conference as a union institution, it was increasingly dominated by conservative leadership and missions and thus became unresponsive to growing dissatisfaction and requests of moderate and liberal elements of its constituency.

In late 1929 Hopkins paid a visit to China. In a series of intense meetings with the CSSU officials, he tried to persuade the CSSU to change its constitution so that "the service to be rendered by the China Sunday School Union shall in the future not be limited to the so-called zone of common agreement as to evangelical doctrines, but shall be extended to include any service which any considerable part of its constituency may desire."[18] In other words the CSSA was asked to loosen its rigid conservative position and broaden its programs. Furthermore, Hopkins made it clear that it was the time for the CSSU to get a new mandate from the missions and churches so that it became responsive to all its supporters. To achieve this goal, Hopkins suggested, a Sunday school committee composed of the representatives from cooperating churches should be appointed within the executive committee of the CSSU, and this new committee should have final authority to "determine the policies of the Union in the light of present conditions and needs."[19]

After internal debates the CSSU declined to comply with the requests of the WSSA. Its final resolution stated that "the China Sunday School Union go forward under its present Constitution and the policy which is well-known both to its constituency and supporters."[20] One strong reason behind the CSSU's action was that certain conservative

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[18] "The Sunday School of China—Should They Hold True to the Bible?" The Sunday School Times, 434.

[19] D.Willard Lyon, "The China Sunday School Union," The Chinese Recorder 60 (January 1930): 61.

[20] Quoted in ibid., 61.

missions and churches would withdraw if the "Common Zone policy" were dropped. In fact the China Inland Mission strongly opposed accepting the WSSA's requests and threatened to withdraw in case the CSSU yielded to the pressure from the WSSA. [21]

Consequently, in January of 1930, the WSSA took action to sever its relationship with the CSSU and discontinued Tewksbury's salary and rental allowance. The WSSA explained its action in the following words: "In view of the present inability of the China Sunday School Union to become the administrative body upon the field for the work of religious education, directly representative of the co-operating churches and missions and fully responsive to them for the determination of policies and the formation of programs, it is recommended that future support from the World's Sunday School Union be conditioned upon the reorganization of the China Sunday School Union."[22]

Afterwards, the WSSA began to seek a new partner that desired a more social and comprehensive approach to religious education in China. From 1930 to 1931, it conducted a general survey of religious education in China in cooperation with the Church of Christ in China and the National Christian Council. Eventually, the WSSA entered a partnership with the National Committee for Christian Religious Education, which was started by the China Christian Educational Association in 1918 and later associated with the NCC.

But the CSSU decided to continue its work without support from the WSSA and asked Tewksbury to stay on as its general secretary. While the WSSA continued to make grants toward the costs of the CSSU's Sunday-school literature, the CSSU started

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[21] See Sailer, "Religious Education," 324.

[22] "The Sunday Schools of China—Should They Hold True to the Bible?" The Sunday School Times, 434.

appealing to its conservative constituency and receiving increasing contributions from the churches and mission organizations in China and abroad. The sales of its publications also increased considerably for the next few years.[23]

The officers of the WSSA always denied that their severance of the relationship with the CSSU was based on theological or doctrinal disagreements and insisted that their only motive was to make the CSSU administratively more responsive to its broader constituency and improve its educational method and programs.[24] Perhaps to the surprise of the WSSA and its supporters, the WSSA's action immediately touched off a wave of strong protests and outcry from the fundamentalist camp in China and their supporters in North America. Refuting the WSSA's denial of any theological agenda and motive behind its action, the CSSU, the League of the Christian Churches, The Sunday School Times, and many individual missionaries pointed out that at the heart of the dispute was a doctrinal issue.[25] In emphasizing the necessity of maintaining the "Common Zone policy," the CSSU stated that

> The China Sunday School Union sees clearly that the maintenance of this policy is the only way in which a union Sunday School organization can be "the servant of the churches in China."...The China Sunday School Union therefore insisted that this doctrinal policy be considered as a closed question. If it should be left open, some of the largest bodies in China would cease to co-operate.
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> Inasmuch as the doctrinal issues involved were made clear to Dr. Hopkins on his recent visit to China, the conditions which the World's Association have made regarding the continuance of its grant can only be

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[23] See "Report of Representative on the Committee of the China Sunday School Union," Minutes of the North Kiangsu Mission, 18-23 May 1932, China Mission Papers, PHS, Montreat, NC, 33.

[24] See "The Sunday Schools of China—Should they Hold True to the Bible?" The Sunday School Times, 434. See also Minutes of the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions, vol.26 (July 1931), 19.

[25] As a fact, at least some modernist agencies and personalities also believed that the dispute between the CSSU and the WSSA was theological and doctrinal by nature. For instance, an editorial of The Christian Century stated that "some of the mission boards have at least awakened to this situation, under the prodding of the World Sunday School Union, and are now planning to leave the Sunday school organization in China in the hands of the dogmatists while they organize a new body of their own." "Can Christian Mission Be Saved?" The Christian Century, 328.

> interpreted as a demand that the China Sunday School Union hold its historic and unifying doctrinal policy as an open question. This, the Committee is not prepared to do.[26]

The CSSU clearly saw the theological implications behind the constitutional changes demanded by the WSSA. According to its interpretation, the basic assumption behind the WSSA's demand was that the "Common Zone policy", along with the organizational structure and pedagogical methods, should be subject to change. Therefore, the real danger would be that the CSSU's conservative doctrinal basis could be altered. This danger was what made the fundamentalist elements in China and North America feel so upset about the action of the WSSA.

The fundamentalists largely viewed the WSSA's demand to the CSSU and its ensuing withdrawal of support as a plot to introduce modernism into the work of the CSSU.[27] A joint statement by two China missions of the Southern Presbyterian Church insisted that the real issue at dispute was "the matter of theological policy" and went on to say that "the decision of the World's Sunday School Association to support the National Committee for Christian Religious Education instead of the China Sunday School Union was because the latter organization was looked upon as being too conservative in its theological outlook and the introduction of more liberal elements was desired."[28] Along the same line, The Sunday School Times condemned the WSSA's action as one more incident in which the so-called union organizations like the WSSA actually discriminated against "the preponderating Conservative element on the foreign mission field."[29]

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[26] Quoted from "The Sunday Schools of China—Should They Hold True to the Bible?" The Sunday School Times, 434.

[27] See ibid.

[28] Minutes of the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions, vol.28 (April 1933), 17.

[29] "The Sunday Schools of China," The Sunday School Times, 434.

Therefore, the conservatives were called to fight this latest modernist attempt to take over yet another missionary institution.

The CSSU's refusal to comply with the WSSA's demand was widely hailed as "the faithful and courageous stand."[30] Many conservative missionary organizations and media called upon the mission boards and home churches to divert their resources from the WSSA to the CSSU. In September of 1932, two Southern Presbyterian China Missions asked the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions to request the WSSA to correct the situation. Otherwise, the two missions argued, "our constituency should be asked to send their contributions for Sunday School work in China direct to the China Sunday School Union in Shanghai."[31] In a statement of the same year, the League of Christian Churches, "being concerned for the children under its care, would express sincere satisfaction in the course of the China Sunday School Union, and would advise the home constituency to continue their support of it."[32]

The dispute between the CSSU and WSSA was the first serious skirmish between the fundamentalists and modernists in the mission field in the 1930s. It highlighted the dilemma of union institutions in China in the midst of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy. The CSSU was a union institution and a product of Protestant mission consensus at the beginning of the twentieth century. As the CSSU steadily slid to the fundamentalist side, liberals and even some moderates found it more and more difficult to cooperate with conservative missionaries. The deepening polarization of the missionary community made it almost impossible for fundamentalists and modernists to work within

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[30] Ibid.

[31] Minutes of the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions, vol. 27 (September 1932), 24.

[32] "The Sunday Schools of China," The Sunday School Times, 434.

the same institution. Therefore, the division between the CSSU and WSSA reflected the demise of a Protestant mission consensus in China.

The Controversy over the Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry

The controversy centered on the China Sunday School Union was just a prelude to the coming storm. The new storm erupted when the result of the Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry was published and Pearl S. Buck unleashed a wave of harsh criticism of the missionary enterprise in China between 1932 and 1933.

By the end of the 1920s and early 1930s, the Protestant foreign mission enterprises were at a turning point. The debates between conservatives and liberals brought missions' theological foundations, goals, and methods into question. In North America, there were signs of waning of the public support for foreign missions. Under such circumstances a group of Northern Baptist laymen were convinced of the necessity of a thorough investigation and study of the basis, purposes, and operation of overseas missions, so they originated the project of the Laymen's Inquiry of Foreign Missions in January of 1930. With the financial backing of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., unofficial representatives from seven denominations formed a team of directors and Executive Committee. Along with three other countries, China was selected as one mission field where the inquiry was made. The inquiry process was divided into two stages. The first stage was an "impartial" and "scientific" accumulation of data.[33] Several groups of researchers were dispatched to collect data in the fields from the end of 1930 to

September of 1931. The second stage was evaluation or appraisal of the collected data. A Commission of Appraisal of fifteen members was appointed to make "an objective appraisal" of missionary activities.[34] William Ernest Hocking (1837-1966), a Harvard philosophy professor, was invited to be the chairman of the Commission of Appraisal. The final outcome of the project was the seven volumes of final reports published in 1932. Re-thinking Missions, a one-volume version of the report, was also released in the same year. The inquiry and its reports made a comprehensive survey of all major aspects of foreign missions: the indigenous church, education, literature, medical work, agriculture, industrial development, women's work, and administration. Its method of investigation was supposed to be scientific, and its appraisal was supposed to be objective.

However, it soon became very clear that the theological orientation of the Laymen's Inquiry and its Report undoubtedly inclined to liberalism. Under the influence of liberal theology and Hocking's idealist philosophy, the report embraced and heralded theological developments along liberal lines. Furthermore, it challenged the traditional mission model aimed to "to transmit the letter of doctrine"[35]and called for "a shift of concern from other-worldly issues to the problems of sin and suffering in the present life."[36] With a strong social gospel overtone, the report called to replace the preaching-centered and soul-saving evangelism with a manifestation of Christian love through social services.

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[33] See William Ernest Hocking, ed. Re-thinking Missions, A Laymen's Inquiry after One Hundred Years (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1932), x.

[34] Ibid., xi.

[35] Ibid., 16.

[36] Ibid., 19.

Concerned with rising tide of secularism in modern world, William E. Hocking was convinced that a "world faith" was needed to offset harmful effects of secularism. In the controversial section of "General Principles," which he wrote for Re-thinking Missions, Hocking systematically articulated an inclusive view of religion and a "collaborationist approach" to non-Christian religions.[37] He over and over asserted the existence of substantial constructive elements within non-Christian religions. According to his view, the relation between religions should be "a common search for truth,"[38] and Christians should cooperate with the believers of other religions in this common search. The report thus came to the conclusion that "the Christian will therefore regard himself a co-worker with the forces which are making for righteousness within every religious system."[39] Combining Hocking's religious inclusivism and the social gospel's enthusiasm for the kingdom of God on earth, the Laymen's Report redefined the aim of missions as follows: "To seek with people of other lands a true knowledge and love of God, expressing in life and word what we have learned through Jesus Christ, and endeavoring to give effect to his spirit in the life of the world."[40] The report deplored the fact that most missionaries were ill-qualified to fulfill this aim and recommended that the number of the missionaries on the field be reduced and only those with highest quality or highly trained experts in social services be sent to the fields.[41]

The reactions to the Laymen's Report were immediate and various. The report touched off extensive and intense debates within and beyond churches and missionary

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[37] The term "collaborationist approach" was quoted in William R.Hutchison, Errand to the World, 162.

[38] Hocking, Re-thinking Missions, 47.

[39] Ibid., 40.

[40] Ibid., 59.

communities. Since the division between conservatives and liberals was especially deep in China, the conflict of opinions regarding the report was very sharp there. The report was enthusiastically praised and embraced by the most liberal elements among the missionary community. One of the most enthusiastic and best-known supporters of the Laymen's Report was Pearl S. Buck (1914-33).

Buck's parents, Absalom and Carrie Sydenstricker, were from West Virginia. Under the mission board of the Southern Presbyterian Church, they arrived in China in 1880. For most of the time, they were associated with the conservative North Jiangsu Mission. Pearl S. Buck grew up with her parents in the North Jiangsu area. After spending her college years in North America, she left for China as an educational missionary under the mission board of the Southern Presbyterian Church in 1914. Three years later, because of her marriage, she was transferred to the mission board of the Northern Presbyterian Church and headed a small school for girls in a poor region of Anhui (Anhwei) Province. In 1921 she moved to Nanjing and began teaching English literature in Nanjing University. Her missionary career was typical of traditional roles most women missionaries took: they were most likely engaged in educational and medical work, which were traditionally considered secondary and auxiliary to preaching-centered evangelism. In the late 1920s, Buck embarked on a new career path. She gradually became famous by writing and publishing novels. Her literary career culminated in her earning the Nobel Prize in 1938. She left China in 1934 and never returned. She died in 1973.

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[41] See Ibid., 108.

Throughout the years Buck grew increasingly critical of the traditional mission model characterized by preaching, conversion, and antagonism toward native religions. She developed a great appreciation for Chinese culture and religions and ordinary Chinese people's character and virtues. Instead of conquering the land for Christ and saving the heathens from darkness, she now argued, the new missionaries should embody Christ's spirit of love and freedom through serving and sharing and should promote friendship and cooperation between different races and civilizations.[42] Her new view corresponded to the fundamental change in missological thinking of the women's worldwide missionary movement after the First World War. The traditional mission motives to civilize natives and liberate them from the bondage of their own traditions were being replaced by new motives to cooperate equally with native partners for the cause of peace and justice.[43] As some scholars pointed out, Buck's change of view seemed to be a combined result of her long-time experience of the conservative North Jiangsu Mission, her intimate relationship with ordinary people in Chinese society, her exposure to China's nationalist movement and modern cultural trends, and the changing theological thinking of women missionary circles.[44]

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[42] See Pearl Buck, "Is There a Place for the Foreign Missionary?" The Chinese Recorder 58 (February 1927): 100-107.

[43] For transition in women missionaries' missiology , See Dana L. Robert, American Women in Missions, A Social History of their Thought and Practice, Chapter 4 & 6.

[44] John Leighton Stuart believed this perhaps had to do with her experience with the fundamentalist North Jiangsu Mission. See Stuart, Fifty Years in China, 45. According to Lian Xi, "there is little doubt that the years spent with the sand-colored farmers in the northern country, her childhood education in China's cultural tradition, and finally her witness of China's unfolding revolution, and her growing sympathy for the nationalistic ideals of the vibrant new generation, were shaking the very foundation of her mission." Lian Xi, Conversion of Missionaries, 114. For Pearl S. Buck's relationship with new missiological thinking of women missionary movement, see Robert, American Women in Mission, 297-98.

When the Laymen's Report came out, Pearl S. Buck was immediately attracted by its critique of current mission enterprise and its emphasis on inter-religious collaboration and social services. She wrote a review of the Laymen's Report for The Christian Century in December 1932 and took the opportunity to spell out her views.

Buck's essay lavishly praised the Laymen's Report as "the only book I have ever read which seems to me literally true in its every observation and right in its every conclusion."[45] It endorsed the report's understanding of a new type of mission. Buck went on to ridicule missionary preaching and championed a social service oriented missionary approach: "Let the spread of the spirit of Christ be rather by mode of life than preaching. I am weary unto death with this incessant preaching. It deadens all thought, it confuses all issues....Let us cease our talk for a time and cut off our talkers, and try to express our religion in terms of living service."[46]

In a speech she presented to a gathering of the Presbyterian women and Board officials in November of 1932 in New York, Buck launched an even more severe and sweeping attack upon foreign missions. With the eloquence of a novelist, she directly attacked the characters of missionaries and portrayed the missionaries as "ignorant," "arrogant," and "mediocre people,"[47] and a missionary as "being too often a little man."[48] Her indictment was that "missionaries have not been big enough for their times"[49]and called that "we must send abroad a higher type of person than the average American."[50]

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[45] Pearl S. Buck, "The Laymen's Mission Report," The Christian Century 49 (November 23, 1932): 1434.

[46] Ibid., 1437.

[47] Pearl S. Buck, "Is There a Case for Foreign Missions?" Harper's Monthly Magazine 166 (January1933): 145.

[48] Ibid., 147.

[49] Ibid.

[50] ibid., 153.

Corresponding to the position of the Laymen's Report, Buck advocated a Christology stripped of "the magic of superstition"[51] and declared that "I do not believe that any religion is comprehensive enough to exclude all others....It is not necessary to discover or assert the superiority of Christianity over other religions."[52] Furthermore, she reiterated her disgust of preaching in favor of social services and opposed using the social services "as a bait for enticing anyone into belief in a creed or into belonging to an organization."[53] Challenging almost every aspect of evangelism, she went on to say that "the old reasons for foreign missions are gone from the minds and hearts of many of us,"[54] and "the whole basis of missions" needed to be changed.[55] In her view the new basis for missions should shift "the emphasis from preaching to a people to sharing a life with them."[56]

In many ways Pearl S. Buck's criticisms of missions were even more influential or sensational than the Laymen's Report both inside and outside the churches. Surely, her criticism was much less systematic and scholarly than the one of the Laymen's Report, and most of her views actually just echoed what the report had already said. But with her fame and talent, Buck's relentless attack on missions helped sharpen the edge of the charges laid out by the Laymen's Report and made the conservatives feel even more threatened. In addition there were two more aspects in Buck's criticism, which made the Presbyterian mission establishment and her conservative opponents nervous. First, her attack on missionaries received significant publicity, and it was to some extent a

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[51] Ibid., 151.
[52] Ibid., 152.
[53] Ibid., 154.
[54] Ibid., 150.
[55] Ibid., 154.

reflection of growing negative view of the American public toward the Protestant mission enterprise. Second, her identity as a woman missionary made her outspoken challenge to the current status of a male-dominated mission establishment especially significant. With her celebrity status, she could afford to express what many women missionaries felt in a way few women could do. Furthermore, her mission theology was largely identical with the dominant missological thinking of women missionaries of her days and in direct contradiction to the mainstream fundamentalist thinking championed by a group of missionary men. Pearl S. Buck's case demonstrated that gender indeed played a role in the ongoing controversy between fundamentalists and modernists.

The publication of the Re-Thinking Missions and Pearl S. Buck's severe criticisms threw the whole Protestant overseas mission enterprise into question. Many mission organizations and missionaries felt the urgent need to respond. Generally speaking, the reaction to the Laymen's Report by the denominations and their mission boards were mixed. They found its practical recommendations helpful but its theological basis problematic. William Hutchison called this as "a centrist position."[57] A good example for this "centrist position" was the reaction of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Northern Presbyterian Church. In November of 1932 and March of 1933, the board adopted several resolutions regarding the Laymen's Report. On the one hand, these resolutions recognized many good "practical elements in the Report which can aid in the improvement and advance of its work."[58] On the other hand, they declared that "the

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[56] Ibid.

[57] Hutchison, Errand to the World, 165.

[58] A Statement Regarding the Evangelical Loyalty of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., Adopted by the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. on January 15, 1934. Machen Papers, Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia.

Board definitely disavows those parts of the volume 'Re-Thinking Missions' which are not in harmony with New Testament teachings and not in agreement with the doctrinal position of the Presbyterian Church."[59]

One of the most influential and eloquent responses to the report was made by Robert E.Speer (1867-1947), the long-time senior secretary of the mission board of the Northern Presbyterian Church. Conservative in theological orientation, Speer cherished ideals of Christian unity and social implications of historical doctrines. He always insisted on the necessity of a doctrinal basis for foreign missions, but his emphasis on Christology and its existential significance made his doctrinal position less rigid than fundamentalism. True to the nature of his theological thinking, Speer made "a polite rebuttal" in his lengthy essay entitled " 'Re-Thinking Missions' Examined."[60] First of all, Speer acknowledged that the Laymen's Report was an objective and able document and applauded the noble motives behind the whole project. He did not doubt that the authors of the report sincerely wanted to help improve the efficiency of mission work. In addition he showed great appreciation of some of the practical recommendations made by the report.

However, Speer rejected the "unsound" and "dangerous" advice given the Laymen's Report.[61] He was most troubled by the report's humanistic Christology and its denunciation of Christian uniqueness in its approach to the non-Christian religions. He pointed out that the report's discarding of the divinity of Christ and the meanings of his

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[59] Ibid.

[60] Hutchison, Errand to the World, 169.

[61] Robert E.Speer, "Re-thinking Missions" Examined (New York: Fleming H.Revell Company, 1933), 16.

death and resurrection was simply not acceptable to the church.[62] "For us," he insisted, "Christ is still the Way, not a way, and there is no goal beyond Him or apart from Him, nor any search for truth that is to be found outside of Him, nor any final truth to be sought by a universal religious quest."[63] For Speer this belief in Christ as the only way to salvation was still the guiding principle for the Christian attitude toward other religions.

Then he went on to rebuke the Laymen's Report's attempt to advocate social services and cooperation with non-Christian religions as the primary new missionary motives. Citing the missions' home constituency's unwillingness to support purely philanthropic projects on the mission fields, he reaffirmed the validity of the evangelistic ends of any mission activities. Furthermore, Speer criticized the report's evaluation of the missionary personnel as being "not just"[64] and raised some questions about the soundness of the methodologies of the "Laymen's Inquiry of Foreign Missions." Robert Speer's response to the Laymen's Report was praised by moderates, and welcome by some conservatives. However, liberals found it disappointing. An editorial of The Christian Century accused Speer of "adopting the mode of reasoning characteristic of fundamentalism."[65]

The unusually acerbic and public attack of Pearl S. Buck embarrassed the mission board of the Northern Presbyterian Church and outraged the conservative party in the church and on the mission fields. Despite the mounting pressure to take disciplinary action against Buck, the officials of the mission board were very reluctant to do so but tried to persuade her to soften her remarks regarding the missionaries and "help her to use

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[62] Ibid, 31.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid., 38.

her fine powers a little more constructively than in some of these recent missionary utterances"[66] In Joel A. Carpenter's words, the board was "soft-pedalling" the Pearl S. Buck case.[67] Even after she resigned from the missionary position in April of 1933, the board accepted her resignation with "deep regret" [68]and still argued that "the Board has in no sense 'dismissed' her and certainly not because of her 'too liberal and modernistic views.'"[69] It was no wonder that the mission board's attitude toward Pearl S. Buck drew heavy fire from such top fundamentalist leaders as J. Gresham Machen.

When the editorial of The Christian Century deplored Speer's adoption of the fundamentalist tone in his criticism of the Laymen's Report, it made an important point that Speer was a conservative but not a fundamentalist.[70] Indeed, the theological starting points and frameworks of Robert Speer and the fundamentalists were very much the same. But the fundamentalists in general reached more negative conclusions and harsher judgment about the Laymen's Report than did Speer. This was especially the case in China where the fundamentalist movement was strong and its reaction to the report was massive. The Bible Union of China, the League of Christian Churches, and other fundamentalist bodies immediately issued the statements to condemn and repudiate the report. The fundamentalist missionaries launched a wave of verbal attacks on the report and Pearl S. Buck.

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[65] "Dr.Speer on the Laymen's Report," The Christian Century 50 (February 8, 1933): 185.

[66] Cleland B. McAfee to Marvin M. Walters, 7 December 1932, PCUSABS, RG82, 45-9, PHS, Philadelphia.

[67] "Introduction," in Modernism and Foreign Missions, Two Fundamentalist Protests ed. Joel A. Carpenter (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1988).

[68] Quoted from Carpenter, "Introduction."

[69] " Cleland B. McAfee to Clifford M. Buck, 17 May 1933, PCUSABS, RG82, 47-1, PHS, Philadelphia.

[70] "Dr.Speer on the Laymen's Report," The Christian Century, 185.

Troubled by the ambiguous doctrinal stance and refusal of mission boards and moderate missionaries to take sides in theological debates, some fundamentalist missionaries actually welcomed the coming of the Laymen's Report and Buck's criticism as a rare event, which made it impossible to hold theological neutrality. According to Robert H.Glover, the Home Director for North America for the CIM, the report "has brought the vital issue between Christianity and Modernism squarely into the open and has called upon missionary administrators and workers to declared unequivocally where they stand."[71] He further complained that "there has been altogether too much evasion and side-stepping, too much thinking and talking in terms of gray instead of plain black and white."[72]

Impressed by Robert E. Speer's refutation of the Laymen's Report's theological orientation and defense of doctrinal orthodoxy, Albert B. Dodd of the North China Theological Seminary praised Speer's criticism of the report as "a cause of great thanksgiving."[73] Believing that " 'Re-Thinking Missions' has brought foreign missions to a distinct parting of the ways," he obviously viewed Speer's article as an "indication that our Board will come out definitely on the right side, breaking once and for all with that so-called 'modernism.'"[74] Feelings and wishes like Dodd's were quite common among the fundamentalists in China at that time.

However, some fundamentalists felt uneasy with Speer and others' acknowledgement of the existence of good elements in the report and overall positive

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[71] Robert H.Glover, "The Power of the Gospel in Demon-Shadowed Lands," The Sunday School Times, 75 (July 1, 1933): 435.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Albert B. Dodd to Robert E. Speer, 15 March 1933, PCUSABS, RG82, 47-16, PHS, Philadelphia.

motives of its authors. L. Nelson Bell was one of them. A native of Virginia, Bell served as a Southern Presbyterian missionary doctor in Jiangsu Province, China, from 1916 to 1941. With his unusual literary talent and relatively young age, Bell was a frequent contributor to such fundamentalist magazines as The Bible for China and quickly arose as a young star of the missionary fundamentalist movement in China. Forced to return to the United States by the Second World War, Bell was deeply involved in the evangelical cause in association with his son-in-law, Billy Graham.

In the midst of debates about the Laymen's Report, Bell was dissatisfied with many mission boards' official responses to the report. He privately complained that "too many try to talk of the good in the report, not recognizing that the good in it is only what many others have known and stated for years."[75] In contrast Bell's own judgment of the Laymen's Report was very negative: "In regard to the Laymen's Report, people cannot understand their position unless they realize that these people are not Christians....If ever there was a piece of Satan's work, that Report is it."[76] He never hesitated in denouncing the report as "a definite anti-Christian report"[77]and its authors as being "spiritually blind (all are the rankest kind of modernists)"[78]and "Unitarians in belief."[79]

Nelson Bell's judgment of the nature of the Laymen's Report was echoed by other fundamentalists. Jonathan Goforth, a Canadian Presbyterian missionary in China since 1888, declared that "nothing could be clearer than that the Appraisal Commission is the

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[74] Ibid.
[75] Nelson Bell to his Mother, 20 January 1933, Nelson Bell Papers, BGC, Wheaton College.
[76] Nelson Bell to his Mother, 28 January 1933, Nelson Bell Papers, BGC, Wheaton College.
[77] Nelson Bell to his Mother, 10 March 1933, Nelson Bell Papers, BGC, Wheaton College.
[78] Nelson Bell to his Mother, 15 January 1933, Nelson Bell Papers, BGC, Wheaton College.
[79] Nelson Bell to his Mother, 12 February 1933, Nelson Bell Papers, BGC, Wheaton College.

enemy of the cross of Christ."[80] In a statement issued on April 20 1933, the Executive Committee of the Bible Union of China claimed that "this book heads up the boldest and most determined attack which Christian Missions have experienced in modern times."[81] On this point Robert Glover could not agree more with the Bible Union. He was obviously convinced that the Laymen's Report was the part of a modernist conspiracy: "This Laymen's Report is a deliberate and considered attack upon the evangelical missionary undertaking with intent to capture it and divert it into purely humanistic channels."[82] What was the proper response he suggested? "We must meet this attack and face this issue squarely, and no less vigorously than they."[83] The Bible Union's statement urged all believers, mission boards and church leaders to "repudiate the partisan and disloyal finding of this unrepresentative Commission and to refuse all moral and financial support to such schemes as may be instituted to further them. [84]

Without doubt, there was a sharp contrast between Robert Speer and the fundamentalists' overall judgment of the Laymen's Report. For the former the report was an "able," "objective," and informative document with serious theological flaws. For the latter it was nothing other than an unprecedented modernist offensive with the devil behind it. Outraged by the Laymen's Report and Pearl S. Buck's attacks, the fundamentalists concentrated their heaviest fire on the following aspects of report and Buck's remarks.

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[80] "Jonathan Goforth on the Laymen's Report," The Sunday School Times 75 (February 25, 1933): 134.

[81] "A Statement and a Criticism Regarding the Laymen's Foreign Mission Inquiry and Appraisal," The Bible for China no.63 (May 1933): 8.

[82] Glover, "The Power of the Gospel," 436.

[83] Ibid.

[84] "A Statement and a Criticism," The Bible for China, 12.

First, the fundamentalists raised questions about the soundness of the investigative methods of the Laymen's Report and the creditability and legitimacy of its findings. Contrary to the report's claim that its investigation was "thoroughgoing" and "scientific,"[85] most of its conservative critics found the range and depth of its investigation simply too limited and superficial to support its own claims. In early 1933 the conservative Tengxian station of Shandong Mission of the Northern Presbyterian Church issued its own statement regarding the Laymen's Report. The statement argued "we feel that the work of the Commission was done superficially, due, in part, to the small amount of time spent in each country and the visitation of a limited number of Mission stations, so they were able to see but a small part of the work. It is not surprising that their conclusions and criticisms are much in error both as to actual facts and as to what is being done on the field."[86] Robert H. Glover made a similar complaint. He charged that the appraisers of missions only spent two to three weeks in the major cities in China and never came into any significant contact with over a thousand CIM missionaries in China.[87]

As a medical missionary, Nelson Bell was very much upset by the report's conclusion that the medical mission was a disappointment. He observed that "this Commission stresses the scientific approach to all problems, but it is interesting to note that there is no word of commendation for medical missions and mission hospitals. They failed to say how many of these hospitals they visited. They also failed to state that they sent out a questionaire to hospitals which was not answered by many because many of the

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[85] See Hocking, ed. Re-thinking Missions, ix-x.

[86] Committee of Tenghsien Station, Why We Do Not Approve the Laymen's Report? n.d. Machen Papers, Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia..

questions carried implications which could not be answered without full debate."[88] He did his own investigation and discovered that the medical appraisers of the report only paid very brief visits to a maximum of forty out of around 220 hospitals in China. His conclusion was that the medical section of the Laymen's Report "was not scientifically prepared, nor was it factually based."[89] He ridiculed the appraisers in this way: "They could meet very few real missionaries sitting in luxurious hotels in Shanghai."[90]

In the opinion of the fundamentalist critics, the serious flaws in the investigative methods of the report were the results of the investigators' theological bias. "Its whole personnel was Modernist or Unitarian from its inception."[91] Therefore, the Bible Union asserted, "there were few if any of the members of either Commission that were sympathetically interested in the aims and evangelistic emphasis of the distinctively conservative church groups and Missions....The conclusions of such a Commission could not therefore in any real sense be regarded as impartial appraisals even of the Missions supposed to have been studied." [92]

In the eyes of fundamentalists, the highly "partisan attitude" of the report no doubt discredited its claims of objectiveness and impartiality. As a matter of fact, many fundamentalist critics believed that the investigators of the report came to the field merely to look for particular evidence to support their own liberal theological presuppositions

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[87] Glover, "The Power of the Gospel," 435.

[88] Nelson Bell to the Editor of the North-China Daily News, n.d. 1933, Nelson Bell Papers, BGC, Wheaton College.

[89] Quoted from John C Pollock, A Foreign Devil in China, The Story of Dr.L Nelson Bell, An American Surgeon in China (Minneapolis, MN: World Wide Publications, 1971), 144.

[90] Nelson Bell to his Mother, 28 January 1933, Nelson Bell Papers, BGC, Wheaton College.

[91] "Jonathan Goforth on the Laymen's Report," The Sunday School Times, 134.

[92] "A Statement and a Criticism," The Bible for China, 9-10.

and bias against evangelical missions. That was why the report was "based not on 'facts' but theories."[93]

The Laymen's Report's undeniable theological inclination, the Bible Union argued, also contradicted its status as a comprehensive inquiry into entire mission enterprises,[94] and it was actually a product of "a minority group engaged in an aggressive campaign (of) the promotion of modernist principles and methods."[95] In addition the seven mission boards involved in the project were not responsible for the selection of the project personnel and could not represent other mission organizations in China. [96] What the Bible Union implied was that the findings of the Laymen's Report should be considered neither official nor representative.

For many fundamentalist critics, the partisanship of the Laymen's Report and Pearl Buck was most evident in their prejudice against their conservative counterparts. Ironically, they pointed out, the liberals' enthusiasm for religious tolerance was often offset by their arrogance toward and intolerance of evangelical missionaries. Nelson Bell took full advantage of this weakness of the liberals' position. He argued that "this Commission pleads for sympathy with, and tolerance for all non-Christian religions. It is strange that they do not extend to evangelical Christian missionaries and Missions the same sympathy and tolerance. Their attitude to them is the opposite."[97]

The fundamentalist critics of the Laymen's Report found its overall theological position very troubling and unacceptable. For them the report posed a serious threat to the

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[93] Nelson Bell to Benjamin Clayton, 17 January 1933, Nelson Bell Papers, BGC, Wheaton College.

[94] See "A Statement and a Criticism," The Bible for China, 9-10.

[95] Ibid., 12.

[96] See Ibid., 9.

gospel and fundamental Christian beliefs in its attempt to reinterpret Christian doctrines in line with modernism. Jonathan Goforth observed "how completely anything said by the Lord Jesus Christ is ignored. The shifting weathercock of theological opinion is to be the future basis for foreign mission motive!"[98] The Bible Union also denounced the report's rejection of the essential Christian faith: "The published Report not only proposes a drastic revolution in missionary methods, but is also an open rejection of the Gospel Message itself....It disparages the Gospel which has been proclaimed from the beginning of Missions as commissioned by our Lord Jesus, as no longer suited to the world's needs. It clearly implies that the scriptural statement that the Lord Jesus Christ is the only Way of salvation, must now be considered as obsolete."[99] The Bible Union went on to re-assert its loyalty the "fundamentals" of Christian faith: "The entire Gospel Message as contained in God's Infallible Word; in the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ; in His Incarnation and His Substitutionary Atoning Death for man's sin; and in His bodily Resurrection."[100] For the fundamentalist individuals and groups, it was beyond question that the theological inclination of the Laymen's Report clearly revealed its modernist or "anti-Christian" nature, and it must be categorically refuted and rejected in defense of the authority of the Bible.

As mentioned before, the Laymen's Report was particularly explicit in advocating its cooperative approach to non-Christian religions. When the Protestant missionaries set their feet on China's soil in the early nineteenth century, they were immediately

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[97] Nelson Bell to the Editor of the North China Daily News, n.d.1933, Nelson Bell Papers, BGC, Wheaton College.

[98] "Jonathan Goforth on the Laymen's Report," The Sunday School Times, 134.

[99] "A Statement and a Criticism," The Bible for China, 10.

[100] Ibid., 11.

confronted with highly sophisticated religions and philosophies. Since then the proper relationship with non-Christian religions had become an ever-present issue of the Protestant missionary movement in China. In the nineteenth century, the vast majority of missionaries dismissed Chinese religious traditions as heathenism and identified them with darkness and falsity. But a small group of progressive missionaries such as Timothy Richard, W.A.P. Martin, and Young Allen found many positive elements in Chinese religions and urged missionaries to fulfill rather than destroy them with the gospel. At the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century, more and more missionaries recognized goodness in native religious traditions, even though Christ's uniqueness and finality were never doubted.

As the gap between liberal and conservative missionaries was widening in early decades of the twentieth century, the issue of non-Christian religions once again became one of the focal points of contest. The Laymen's Report's almost relativistic stance in this issue significantly compromised Christ's uniqueness and went far beyond Timothy Richard's classic inclusive views. Not surprisingly, the report's conciliatory approach to non-Christian religions ran right into conflict with the fundamentalist' position in this regard and immediately caused strong reactions from fundamentalists. For the fundamentalists there was only one truth or one way to salvation, and it could only be found in Christ. The difference between Christianity and non-Christian religions was not the one between good and the best, imperfect and perfect religious systems but rather between truth and error, light and darkness. The legitimacy of Christian missions lay in the finality of Christ. The statement of the Tengxian station summed up the fundamentalists' position on this issue: "We repudiate the Inquiry's statement with

reference to non-Christian religions...for we believe that Christ alone is 'the Way, the Truth, and the Life.' So far as the way of salvation of men is concerned, the other religions are a delusion and an error."[101] Therefore, Christianity and other religions were by nature mutually exclusive, and there was virtually no possibility of collaboration between the true and false religions as the Laymen's Report defined and called for.

In their efforts to repudiate the view of religions in the Laymen's Report and defend the uniqueness and truthfulness of Christian tradition over other religions, the fundamentalist critics most commonly resorted to the following basic arguments. (1) The biblical argument. With their unshakable belief in the infallible authority of the Scriptures, the fundamentalists often cited biblical teachings to support their judgment of other religions. What was said in the statement of the Tengxian station was quite revealing: "What is deemed the lack of the missionaries' appreciation of the good in other religions is not due to their failure to appreciate the good in them, but to their firm conviction that the words of the Apostle are still true that Jesus is the only Name, and 'In none other is there salvation.'"[102] In the view of the fundamentalists, the Bible had already rendered a clear-cut verdict against other religions, and the verdict was still valid.

(2) The practical argument. The truthfulness of Christianity and falsity of non-Christian religions could be powerfully verified by their respective practical results in society and personal life. In a letter to the home church, Nelson Bell cited Chinese superstitions and the inferior place of women in the society as proofs of darkness and corruption of non-Christian religions and went on to conclude that "there is a lack of the comfort, the hope, the peace, the radiant happiness that Christ brings. I find a sombreness,

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[101] Why We Do Not Approve the Laymen's Report? Machen Papers, Westminster Seminary.

a dullness in the life that is in contrast to the abundant life Christ gives. The Christian Chinese show a marked contrast to those who have not known the fearing-removing, joy-bringing salvation of Christ."[103]

While Bell's words emphasized the psychological benefits of Christianity, the statement of the Bible Union made a sweeping affirmation of its social benefits:

> From India, China, Japan, Korea, Africa, New Guinea, the Islands of the Pacific, and other countries, a mass of incontestable evidence is available to prove the power of the Gospel to deliver men from the power of sin, to purify their lives, and to bring in its train incalculable blessings upon society by the reform of evil customs and cruel practices. We deny the implication made in the Report (p. 31) that heathen religions are not at the root of corrupt Oriental customs and society, and that Christianity is not responsible for the blessings and conditions which have been the heritage of those who have lived in happier lands.[104]

After listing his personal observations of the "immorality and vice in those Eastern lands...in the name and practice of those religions," Robert H. Glover simply could not believe the Laymen's Report's "amazing ignorance of the real facts about these Eastern cults."[105]

Occasionally some missionaries also resorted to a sort of historical argument, which is worth noting. They liked to point to the historical fate of Nestorian Christianity in China from the seventh to ninth century as a warning of the great danger caused by mixing the gospels with errors of other religions. In the mid-seventh century, Nestorian missionaries arrived in China from central Asia. They were patronized by imperial rulers of the Tang Dynasty and spread widely across the empire. One of their missionary

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[102] Ibid.

[103] Nelson Bell to Home Church, 14 November 1930, China Missionary Correspondence Collection, PHS, Montreat, NC.

[104] "A Statement and a Criticism," The Bible for China, 11.

[105] Robert H. Glover: "The Irrevocable Great Commission," The Sunday School Times, 75 (June 24, 1933): 416.

strategy seemed to be syncretism or a heavy borrowing of Buddhist and Daoist terminology to convey their message. This strategy was commonly viewed as one of the reasons for their gradual decline and eventual disappearance in China. The fundamentalists apparently took the historical lesson of the Nestorian mission very seriously. In their view the Nestorian failure powerfully testified to the perils of Christian compromise with non-Christian religions, and the Laymen's Report was repeating the historical mistake of Nestorians. A typical fundamentalist argument ran as follows: "If the Commission could have its way, that Gospel which has been the means of turning so many from the power of Satan unto God would be set aside and replaced by soft compromises and puny social service displays. Compromise brought disaster on Christianity under the Nestorians, for they hobnobbed with the religious sects of the land, and this prudent Commission presses for a repetition of that folly."[106] Compromise brought tragedy to the church in China many centuries ago. For the fundamentalist missionaries, this historical lesson provided one more reason why the compromise the Laymen's Report proposed had to be categorically rejected and a battle had to be fought to prevent the historical tragedy from happening again.

Another aspect of the Laymen's Report and Pearl S. Buck's criticisms also drew heavy fire from the fundamentalist camp, namely, their advocacy of a social service type of mission and degrading of preaching-centered evangelism. Indeed, the fundamentalist missionaries never denied the roles and value of medical, educational, and other philanthropic aspects of missions. These aspects in their view were not only displays of Christian love but were also very useful means of leading people to the gospel. For them

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[106] "Jonathan Goforth on the Laymen's Report," The Sunday School Times, 134. See also W.S.

the liberal position the Laymen' Report and Buck advocated contained two major errors and threats to the evangelical understanding of missionary social services. First, it emphasized the roles of social services and cooperation with other religions in social improvement to such extent that they replaced evangelism as the main theme of mission enterprise. Second, it stripped missionary social projects of their evangelistic goals. In fact, the fundamentalists concluded, the modernist position was yet another indication of their drifting away from the Great Commission and betrayal of traditional evangelism.

In response to the Laymen's Report, the Tengxian station of the Shandong Mission of the PCUSA made a clear, firm and balanced statement of the conservative position on the issue:

> The missionary has always been in the forefront of such charitable work, however he considers this the fruits, not the message of the Gospel.
>
> We believe that socially men will not be changed effectively till their hearts are changed through the Gospel by the Spirit of Christ, and every other effort to lift the social status of the masses apart from Christ is superficial and ends in failure. No plans, however good they may be, can break the power of sin in the heart of anyone, anywhere, until that person comes into vital relation to Christ so that what is most needed is not more social work but the [sic] more fully proclaiming and living the Gospel of Christ.[107]

This passage reiterates the classic evangelical conviction that an individual's change is the prerequisite for social change. Based on this conviction, the fundamentalists enthusiastically reaffirmed the central place of preaching-centered evangelism at all mission enterprises. The Bible Union simply stated that "the 'foolishness of preaching' so disparaged by this Report is the God-appointed method which alone is indispensable, whatever be the type of missionary service."[108] If you disregarded preaching, the

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Moule, "The Bible for China," The Bible for China no.18 (October 1924): 7.

[107] "Why We Do Not Approve the Laymen's Report?" Machen Papers, Westminster Seminary.

[108] "A Statement and a Criticism," The Bible for China, 10.

fundamentalists argued, you disregarded the Great Commission. That was why Jonathan Goforth declared that "His last act on earth was to issue his Great Commission. That Commission was in fullest accord with all Scripture....That urgency of mission motive at the beginning must hold the same paramount place today."[109] By insisting on the validity of the Great Commission, Goforth and his fellow fundamentalist missionaries rejected the new missionary motives proposed by the Laymen's Report: social service and inter-religious cooperation.

As a medical missionary, Nelson Bell always maintained the indispensable role of preaching and evangelization in missionary medical work. He stated his theology of evangelism in this way: "It is our constant aim to help the bodies of these people all we can...but we still believe the soul of the patient is infinitely precious and it is our constant prayer that God will help us do the best job we can on their bodies, that thru [sic] this we may point them to Christ who saved us, and who is so willing to save them."[110] Clearly, he held the classical evangelical view that the final goal of medical mission should always be the winning of souls for Christ. As a matter of fact, preaching and evangelization became characteristic of Qingjiangpu (Tsingkiangpu) General Hospital in Jiangsu Province, where Nelson Bell served from 1916 to 1942 under the North Jiangsu Mission of the Southern Presbyterian Church. Bell felt increasingly frustrated by the fact that rampant social-gospel thinking put priority on the means--social and charitable work rather than the end--evangelization. As a result the zeal for evangelism was weakened, and evangelistic activities were diminishing from many missionary schools and hospitals. In a letter to the home church, Bell complained: "I am sick of so many of the 'Social

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[109] "Jonathan Goforth on the Laymen's Report," The Sunday School Times, 134.

programmes' and 'Social Gospel' of today.....With all my heart I believe it is a higher calling to try to arouse in the hearts of my patients a longing to 'return to the Father'. I am sure too that after all the social problems of our present civilization will never be met until first things are put first."[111]

In the heat of debate about the Laymen's Report and Pearl S.Buck, Bell wrote an article to repudiate Buck's attacks on missions. At the end of the article, he blasted Buck's criticism of preaching. He first pointed to the fact that "there are hundreds of thousands of believers in China today who were won by the preaching or the Gospel." Then he concluded "it is unthinkable that one should go as a missionary and have in one's heart the knowledge of God...and then remain silent....It is the preaching of the Cross, the Gospel of redemption from sin thru [sic] faith in the shed blood of the Savior, which is the 'power of God' and despite the learned findings of Commission, the tirades of prominent novelists [sic], and the opposition of those who hear but reject, most of the missionaries will continue to preach the Gospel."[112] The new mission motive propagated by the Laymen's Report, Bell warned, would eventually weaken the vitality and cutting edge of missions. Only the unconditional obeying of the Great Commission and fearless preaching could truly motivate and empower missionaries. In his own words, "faith in the God and Christ of the Bible, with its inspiring message, and with the urge of the Master's command, 'Go ye—make disciples of all nations' has down thru [sic] the ages resulted in fearless preaching, regardless of the opposition."[113] For Nelson Bell and his fellow

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[110] Bell to Benjamin Clayton, 17 January 1933, Bell Papers, BGC, Wheaton College.

[111] Nelson Bell to Home Church, 8 October 1933, Bell Papers, BGC, Wheaton College.

[112] Nelson Bell, "Personality Versus Preaching," February 1933, Bell Papers, BGC, Wheaton College.

[113] Nelson Bell to the Editor of the North China Daily News, n.d. 1933, Bell Papers, BGC.

conservative missionaries, preaching and evangelization had been and would remain the center of Christian missions. Neither the advice of the Laymen's Report nor Pearl S. Buck's ridicule would change their position.

In the 1920s and 1930s, different political and ideological forces and movements competed with one another to solve China's political and social problems. In order to make the Christian message relevant in a fast changing society, most liberal and even many moderate missionaries adopted a social activist attitude. Politically, they favored a gradualist and reformist approach to social equality and justice. Such liberal organizations as the YMCA and the NCC were increasingly involved in the labor movement and rural reform. Although they were appalled by the violence of the Nationalist and Communist revolutions, socially active missionaries agreed that some of the revolutionaries' goals could be identical with their own. From time to time, the most liberal and radical elements among the missionary community even expressed their sympathy with the Russian Bolshevik revolution and its influence in China. On the other hand, most conservative missionaries never got involved in any social and political movements as deeply as did their liberal counterparts, even though they were not shy of giving their opinions on political issues. What characterized the political attitude of conservative missionaries was their strong and vocal anti-radicalism and anti-communism. They showed hostility toward not only the Communist revolution but also the Nationalist revolution. Outraged by their modernist enemies' sympathy for and participation in the "leftist" social movements, fundamentalists were convinced that religious apostasy always went hand in hand with political radicalism. In their struggle with modernists, they quickly realized that this was one of the modernists' weakness they could exploited.

One of their favorite weapons was to identify modernism with Bolshevism or any form of political radicalism.

In criticizing the Laymen's Report, the fundamentalist missionaries detected the connection between the report's liberal theological orientation and its leftist political stance. The report recommended that "missions should maintain in so far as possible friendly relations with leaders of every variety of economic thought —capitalist, socialist, and communist."[114] These recommendations, in Nelson Bell's view, were simply inconceivable and impractical. He commented that "we have seen too much of the hell-inspired results of Communism in China to desire either 'friendly relations' or 'an open mind' with its leaders."[115] Bell came to the conclusion that the Laymen's Report's political error showed "the inevitable tendency of those who cut loose from the Bible and Christ."[116] Here Bell was reiterating a common conservative belief that theological modernism would eventually lead to political radicalism.

Because Pearl S. Buck targeted the characters of missionaries, her sweeping comments naturally caused considerable resentment on the part of missionaries. Indeed, not just conservative missionaries were upset by Buck's severe criticisms, but the conservatives seemed more willing to spell out their feelings in clear and even militant rhetoric. Under the pens of some missionaries, Pearl Buck was portrayed as a "renegade missionary" with "an attitude of superiority to the missionaries;"[117] and her articles were

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[114] Hocking, ed., Re-thinking Missions, 254

[115] Nelson Bell to Benjamin Clayton, 17 January 1933, Bell Papers, BGC, Wheaton College.

[116] Nelson Bell to Benjamin Clayton, 17 January 1933, Bell Papers, BGC, Wheaton College .

[117] Quoted from Nelson Bell to his Mother, 20 January 1933, Bell Papers. A Missionary Letter to Home Church, 5 February 1933, China Missionary Correspondence Collection, PHS, Montreat, NC.

referred to as being "truly pitiful—really tragic."[118] A Southern Presbyterian missionary from North Jiangsu, who had personally known Buck's parents for years, deplored that "it is distressing to those of us...to witness her sad defection and departure from all the things that her parents and her early associates held sacred," and "everything that she has uttered of late tends to discredit her father and the gospel."[119] Feelings of betrayal and sadness were perhaps common among the members of the conservative North Jiangsu Mission. Nelson Bell was especially upset by Buck's favor of highly trained missionary experts and ridicule of preachers and evangelists. He insisted that God would continue to "use only those who undertake His work in the power of His Holy Spirit, rather than in faith in their own personalities and persuasive methods" [120] Some missionaries began to point their fingers at the mission board for failing to detect Buck's error earlier. W.M. Hayes of the North China Theological Seminary was quite surprised by the board officials' apparent ignorance of Buck's views for such a long time. In a letter to Robert Speer, he asked: "Can it be that they have kept track of all her writings? [sic] Has any one ever heard of her leading any one to Christ?"[121] In Hayes' mind Buck had long proved herself to be an "unsound" and incompetent missionary.

The Laymen's Report and Pearl S. Buck caused the most intense and comprehensive controversy between the fundamentalist and modernist missionaries in China of the 1930s. The controversy highlighted several important issues at stake: doctrinal orthodoxy, Christian missions' attitudes toward non-Christian religions, the

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[118] A.H.Patterson to Home Church, 28 December 1932, China Missionary Correspondence Collection, PHS, Montreat, NC.

[119] A Missionary letter from Jas R. Graham, 4 February 1933, China Missionary Correspondence Collection, PHS, Montreat, NC.

[120] Bell, "Personality Versus Preaching," Bell Papers, BGC, Wheaton College.

relationship between evangelism and social responsibilities, and the Christian political stance. The direct outcome of the debates was the further widening of the gap between the fundamentalists and the modernists on these issues.

The Controversy over China Missions of the Independent Board of Presbyterian Foreign Missions

In North America, the Laymen's Report and Pearl S. Buck's criticism also triggered a new round of confrontation between the fundamentalists and modernists. The central issue of controversy was foreign missions. The debates were particularly intense within the Northern Presbyterian Church. Led by J. Gresham Machen, the fundamentalists of the Northern Presbyterian Church took on the mission board and launched attacks on its alleged tolerance and even support of modernism on the mission field. Modernism in China featured prominently in the debates in the United States, and debates in the United States also made direct impact on the controversy in China. The debates between Machen and the Northern Presbyterian mission board were perhaps the best case for the mutual support and two-way flows of influence between the fundamentalist movements in two countries.

J. Gresham Machen (1881-1937) was born to a lawyer's family in Baltimore and reared in Old School Calvinism and Southern cultural legacy. After graduating from the John Hopkins University, he studied at the Princeton Theological Seminary for several years. Decided to embark on a career of New Testament scholar, Machen studied in Germany under some leading liberal biblical and theological scholars from 1905 to 1906.

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[121] W.M.Hayes to Robert Speer, 18 January 1933, PCUSABS, RG82, 47-17, PHS, Philadelphia.

Overcoming a brief inner struggle of faith, he reclaimed his Old School Calvinist heritage and the Princeton tradition. After starting his career as an instructor and assistant professor of New Testament at Princeton Theological Seminary in 1906, Machen published several major works and established himself as the "chief intellectual spokesman for conservative Presbyterians."[122] His works systematically articulated the theological agenda for the fundamentalist cause in North America. Staunchly opposing any attempts to compromise such "fundamental truths" as inerrancy of the scriptures and the supernatural aspects of Christ's life and death, Machen quickly emerged as one of the leading figures for the fundamentalist faction within the North Presbyterian Church.

However, his anti-modernist campaign suffered serious defeats in the late 1920s and early 1930s. After the General Assembly of 1929 confirmed a plan to reorganize the Princeton Seminary in order to break the militant conservatives' dominance there, Machen left the seminary with other three professors and started a new seminary known as Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia.

Machen's next major fight with modernist influences centered upon the Board of Foreign Missions of his denomination. For many years Machen had been suspicious of the doctrinal orthodoxy of some missionaries sent out by the board, even though he did not made any significant accusation. By the end of the 1920s and beginning of the 1930s, he was increasingly troubled by the allegedly vague doctrinal positions of certain officials of the board and the board's apparent tolerance of the modernist influence in the mission field. When the Laymen's Report and Pearl S. Buck's case emerged, Machen decided it was time to take action. Convinced that "the Board of Foreign Missions of the

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[122] Marsden, Fundamentalism and American Culture, 137.

Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A is deeply involved in Modernist and destructive propaganda,"[123] Machen presented an overture to the Presbytery of New Brunswick in early 1933. The main purpose of his overture was to urge the General Assembly to take steps to safeguard the board's loyalty to the orthodox Christian doctrine. Furthermore, he wanted the board to be aware of "the great danger that lurks in union enterprises at home as well as abroad."[124]

To support his overture, Machen wrote a lengthy article. In it he filed six major charges against the board. The first two charges had to do with the board's handling of the Laymen's Report and Pearl S. Buck. In Machen's view the board's statement regarding the Laymen's Report was too weak and " dodged the issue."[125] The board simply neglected its duty in allowing Buck stay in its missionary ranks, and it failed to dismiss her after she made her sweeping denunciation of Christian truths and evangelical missionary enterprises.[126] In addition Machen took issue at Robert Speer's theology and his response to the Laymen's Report. After praising Speer as "one of the most eloquent men of our time."[127] Machen asserted that "he takes no clear stand in the great issue of the day, but rather adopts an attitude of reassurance and palliation."[128] Machen believed that Speer's ambiguous theological position and his preoccupation with unity and peace at the cost of doctrinal firmness were misleading the mission board and doing harm to the interests of missions.

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[123] Machen, "The Investigation of the Board," in Modernism and the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. in Modernism and Foreign Missions, Two Fundamentalist Protests, ed. Joel A. Carpenter .

[124] Machen, "The Proposed Overture," in Modernism and the Board.

[125] Machen, Modernism and the Board, 11, 7.

[126] See ibid., 12-18.

[127] Ibid., 58.

[128] Ibid., 60.

Eventually Machen's overture was defeated at the 1933 General Assembly. The assembly vindicated the doctrinal orthodoxy of Robert Speer and the mission board. The defeated fundamentalist faction went on to form an Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions in June 1933, and Machen became its first president in October of the same year. The formation of the independent board led to a series of disciplinary actions against Machen and his followers by the Northern Presbyterian Church. In 1936 Machen and other officials of the new board were finally suspended from the ministry by the General Assembly of the PCUSA. In the wake of this event, Machen and his followers founded their own denomination—the Presbyterian Church of America.

One of the major issues in Machen's dispute with the mission board was the modernism among the Northern Presbyterian missionaries in China. As a matter of fact, the last section of Machen's article for his overture in 1933 consisted of materials collected by Albert B. Dodd and Arie Kok, both of whom had been involved in missions in China for a long time. These substantial materials constituted almost one third of whole article and provided formidable evidence of modernist tendencies of a few Presbyterian missionaries and organizations in China. In his fight against the mission board of the Northern Presbyterian Church, Machen no doubt got significant help and support from fundamentalist missionaries in China.

Machen's major liaison in China was Arie Kok, who led double careers. In the 1920s and 1930s, he was a diplomat of the Netherlands Legation in Beijing. A devout and conservative Christian, Kok had a consistent interest in the Protestant missions in China and was extensively involved in fundamentalist Christian enterprises such as the Bible Union of China and the League of Christian Churches. Among the missionary community

in Beijing, he became a leading fundamentalist figure.[129] In an obvious attempt to collect more evidence to strengthen his case against the mission board, Machen sent Kok a cable on February 23, 1933. In replying to Machen's request, Kok wrote that "I consider it a great privilege to cooperate with you in the matter of bringing the facts concerning modernism on the mission field to the attention of the Church and Mission authorities at home."[130] He also indicated he had asked Albert Dodd and Martin Hopkins of the North China Theological Seminary to collect information about the modernist influence in the Shantung mission field of the Northern Presbyterian Church, and he collected information about modernist influence in the North China field. In addition Kok contacted Hugh White for any valuable information.[131] Eventually, the most substantial materials came from Arie Kok and Albert Dodd. Machen made good use of these materials in his attack on the mission board. In a letter dated to April 17, 1933, Machen expressed his gratitude to Kok and acknowledged "your help was quite fundamental in the whole contention."[132] Even after Machen's overture was defeated, Kok continued to provide him and the Independent Mission Board with the information on the existence of modernism in China. He also played a major part in distributing in China the pamphlets of Machen's overture and argumentation.

The materials provided by Albert Dodd concentrated on the mission board's funding of the Christian Literature Society (CLS) --one of the oldest and most prestigious

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[129] His home once was the center of the Evangelical Fellowship Meeting—a regular gathering of about forty conservative figures in Beijing area, held every Sunday afternoon. See "Welcome Word from Mr. Andrews," The Independent Board Bulletin, 2 (August 1936): 7.

[130] Arie Kok to J Gresham Machen, 2 March 1933, Machen Papers, Westminster Seminary, Philadelphia.

[131] See ibid..

[132] J.Gresham Machen to Arie Kok, 17 April 1933, Machen Papers, Westminster Seminary, Philadelphia.

inter-denominational publishing houses in China. Dodd charged that the CLS was responsible for publishing a number of modernist works by Eddy, Fosdick, Kagawa, and others. And the obvious implication of his accusation was that the mission board's cooperation with the CLS actually helped the modernist propaganda in China. It was over the issue of the mission board's support of the CLS and other union institutions that Albert Dodd engaged in a dispute with the board for several years and eventually broke his relationship with the board in 1934.

A native of Illinois, Albert Dodd (1903-42) graduated from Westminster College, Missouri, in 1898, and Princeton Theological Seminary in 1902. The examples of many missionary martyrs in the Boxer Rebellion in 1900 led him to apply to the mission board of the Northern Presbyterian Church in 1903. He arrived in Shandong Province of China in the same year. For the next sixteen years, Dodd worked as an evangelist, a teacher, and a principal of a boy's school. In 1919 he joined Watson Hayes in founding the North China Theological Seminary and taught the Old Testament at the NCTS. In 1942 he was repatriated by the Japanese. From the 1950s to 1970, he did mission work in Southeast Asia and died in 1972.[133]

As a long-time member of Tengxian mission station of the Northern Presbyterian Church and the North China Theological Seminary, Dodd shared their conservative doctrinal position and antagonism against modernism. In the early 1930s, Dodd became increasingly concerned with roles of the mission board and China Council of the Northern Presbyterian Church in funding the "unsound" union institutions. In providing Machen

[133] For the life of Albert B. Dodd, see "Albert B Dodd, Highlights from the Life of a Missionary Warrior," by the Foreign Missions Committee of the Women's Synodical of the Bible Presbyterian Church, Cape May, New Jersey, printed by the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, 1977.

with evidence of the board's supporting the CLS, he advised that "one thing I think your group should protest against earnestly to the Board and further if necessary is their placing of funds in the hands of Bodies from which they demand no guarantee of a doctrinal nature, or at least no sufficient guarantee to secure the use of those funds in the furtherance of the true Gospel. This is certainly not playing fair to the givers at home, nor to the orthodox churches on the mission fields."[134] His concern about the union institutions was certainly common among the fundamentalist missionaries for the 1920s and 1930s. The union institutions that came under his suspicion were "the creedless National Christian Council of China, the creedless universities, union schools for missionaries' children, the practically creedless union theological seminaries."[135] Raised in the Old School Presbyterian tradition, Dodd was particularly concerned with the modernists' dismissal of Christian historical creeds and liberal union institutions' refusal to endorse any real doctrinal standards. As so many Christian institutions turned "creedless," Dodd vowed to keep fighting the trend: "I intend to protest myself alone or with the few missionaries I may get to stand by me, and, if the protest is unheeded, carry it further up until it is heeded."[136]

Dodd kept his words. Throughout 1933 he wrote letter after letter to the Northern Presbyterian mission board and China Council to protest funding the union bodies, which allegedly did not give any definite doctrinal guarantees. He continued to target the alleged misuse of the China Council's Christian Literature Fund in supporting the CLS and other "unsound" institutions. In a lengthy letter to Robert Speer, Dodd complained about the

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[134] Albert Dodd to J.Gresham Machen, 21 April 1933, Machen Papers, Westminster Seminary, Philadelphia.

[135] Ibid.

"trend in union and cooperative work toward infidelity in China" and "the irresponsible way in which funds from America are being turned over by the Missions, China Council and Board to boards of directors, cooperative organizations and non-Presbyterian church courts without committing such controllers of mission funds to any definite doctrinal standards."[137] Then he suggested that "the only safe and honorable course for the Foreign Board to take is to decline to put the money of consecrated givers into any union or cooperative enterprise not on an out-and-out evangelical basis."[138]

In the same letter, Dodd also claimed that "there are a considerable number of our own Northern Presbyterian missionaries who reject as untrustworthy much that is in the Bible."[139] He urged the board to review constantly the theological standings of the old missionaries and carefully examined doctrinal orthodoxy of new missionary candidates. In an obvious attempt to push the board to follow his advice, Dodd often pointed to the potential negative reactions from the home constituency: "Now I believe our givers have a right to expect of both the Board and our Mission organizations on the field greater care that their gifts go only into work that builds up instead of pulling down. They have a right also to expect that the Board and Missions will use every precaution to prevent unsound missionaries from coming out to the foreign field."[140]

Dodd certainly knew the power and influence that the home churches held upon the policy of the mission board. It was not a surprise that he and some of his fellow missionaries in Tengxian sent a letter to a number of ministers in America in April of

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[136] Ibid.
[137] Albert Dodd to Robert Speer, 15 March 1933, PCUSABS, RG82. 47-16, PHS, Philadelphia.
[138] Ibid.
[139] Ibid.
[140] Ibid.

1933, and brought the matter directly before the home constituency. Dodd's communication with J. Gresham Machen served the same purpose.

The mission board of the PCUSA was obviously upset by Dodd and his fellow fundamentalists' agitation among the home churches. In his reply to Dodd, Speer criticized Dodd for failing to file the protests through proper channels according to the ecclesiastical arrangement and the constitution of the Northern Presbyterian Church. He also pointed out that Dodd's correspondence served to provide the fundamentalist controversialists with "additional ammunition."[141] Acknowledging that there might be many things needing correction in the mission operations, Speer nevertheless felt deeply hurt by the militant methods by which Machen and Dodd pursued their cause and considered them unwise and un-Christian. In his opinion the missionaries who held "unsound" views "should be dealt with in a far more wise and Christian way, and in the hope not of producing schism but of healing it and bringing all parties to a common mind in the truth of Christ."[142] In refutation of Dodd's criticism of the CSL, Speer on other occasions pointed out that most of the CSL publications were evangelical books, including some works by Watson M.Hayes and Albert Dodd himself, and only about three or four out of twelve-hundred were modernistic books.[143]

Dodd's assistance to Machen in the latter's attack on the mission board of the PCUSA was especially irritating to the board officials. For the board it was simply outrageous for one of its own missionaries to lend his help to its vicious critic. George T.

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[141] Robert Speer to Albert Dodd, 28 July 1933, PCUSABS, RG82 47-16, PHS, Philadelphia.

[142] Ibid.

[143] The Answers Given by Dr.Robert E. Speer to the Ten Questions Relative to Modernism in the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., Machen Papers, Westminster Seminary, Philadelphia.

Scott, a secretary of the mission board, wrote to Dodd and asked: "When you disagree with the Board's policy of union and of cooperation with other evangelical churches and agencies, would it not be well for you to make your protest and your constructive proposals through the proper channels of our own Board family...rather than to supply a fighting enemy of our Board 'testimony with regard to modernism in China in enterprises supported in part or in whole by our Foreign Board or with which our Board is connected?'"[144] In the eyes of the board officials, Dodd had already committed a serious offense by bypassing regular constitutional procedure and directly appealing to the home churches. Even worse, his appeal was made to one of the most formidable foes of the mission board. C.F.Fenn, another board secretary, described Dodd's behavior as a "disloyal act of playing into the hands of the Board's avowed enemies."[145]

The pressure the board put on Dodd did not produce any significant effect on him. He argued forcefully for his case and continued to defy the board. He implied that the board was mistaking "radically modernistic commissions" as friends and "thoroughly evangelical ministers as "fighting enemies."[146] In his view the board simply took the wrong side in this fight for truth. It became very clear that Dodd had already begun to sympathize with Machen and the Independent Board. Furthermore, Dodd rejected Speer's criticism of his militant method and declared that "I thoroughly believe in putting chief emphasis on the positive declaration of the great truths of the Gospel message, but I do not believe our Master would have us use that method exclusively....The problem of

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[144] George T. Scott to Albert B. Dodd, 24 April 1933, PCUSABS, RG 82, 47-16, PHS, Philadelphia.

[145] C.F.Fenn to Members of Executive Council, 19 November 1934, PCUSABS, RG82, 50-9, PHS, Philadelphia.

[146] Albert Dodd to George T. Scott, 4 August 1933, PCUSABS, RG82, 47-16, PHS, Philadelphia.

dealing with false brethren...demands something more than the method you have prescribed."[147] Dodd's insistence on his uncompromising and separatist attitude and his refutation of Speer's appeal to Christian love and harmony were very telling in clarifying the differences between the militant fundamentalists and moderate conservatives.

When he found that the mission board continued to grant funds to the CLS and other cooperative bodies despite the protests from himself and Tengxian station, Dodd was so disappointed that he felt he could no longer recommend the mission board of the PCUSA to "givers for Foreign Missions who wish to give only for the propagation of the true Gospel."[148] Disgusted by being called "disloyal" for criticizing the board, Dodd admitted his attempt to reform from within was a total failure.[149] It was just a matter of time before Dodd handed in his resignation as a missionary under the Northern Presbyterian mission board, an action he took in November of 1934.

However, Dodd's resignation immediately caused some serious concerns on the field. Watson Hayes of the North China Theological Seminary wrote to Speer and other board officials to plead Dodd's case and urged them not to accept his resignation. In his letter to C. H. Fenn, Hayes defended Dodd's right to criticize publicly the mission board and ridiculed the board officials' attempts to maintain so-called "loyalty to the Boards": "So far as I know there are only two governments in the so-called civilized world that sternly repress all public criticism, and I should be very sorry to see your Board line itself up with them."[150] He went on to warn the board that the acceptance of Dodd's resignation could serve to damage further the board's image among its conservative constituency and

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[147] Albert Dodd to Robert Speer, 31 August 1933, PCUSABS, RG82 47-16, PHS, Philadelphia.
[148] "Dr. Dodd's Testimony," Independent Board Bulletin 2 (March 1936): 11.
[149] Ibid.

thus divert considerable financial contributions to other conservative mission agencies such as the CIM.[151]

Paul R. Abbot (1910-45) was the chairman and executive secretary of the Shandong Mission of the Northern Presbyterian Church in the early 1930s. A theological moderate and missionary administrator, he worked hard to maintain peace among the Northern Presbyterian missionaries and keep the missionary operations in Shandong running smoothly. In the case of Albert Dodd, his concerns were very similar to Hayes'. He was afraid that Dodd's resignation would give the fundamentalist camp another weapon for their agitation against the board.[152] Describing the fundamentalists as "money getters," he asserted Dodd's resignation would be definitely used to gain support for the fundamentalist cause from the home constituency.[153] Robert Speer also realized the seriousness of the matter. Still locked in the battle with Machen and his followers in North America, the board certainly did not want to create another sensational case of the board's intolerance of conservative missionaries for their enemies. Therefore, Speer considered deferring a final action on Dodd's resignation.[154] But the board finally decided to accept his resignation in January of 1935. In an obvious attempt to fend off potential fire from the fundamentalists, the board denied its dispute with Dodd had to do with doctrinal and theological differences.[155]

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[150] W.M Hayes to C.H.Fenn, 13 November 1934, PCUSABS, RG82, 26-4, PHS, Philadelphia.

[151] See ibid.

[152] See Paul R. Abbot to C.H.Fenn, 14 June 1934, PCUSABS, RG82, 49-17, PHS, Philadelphia..

[153] Ibid.

[154] See Robert Speer to C.H.Fenn, 23 November 1934, PCUSABS, RG82, 50-9, PHS, Philadelphia.

[155] Quoted from "Introducing our New Missionaries," The Independent Board Bulletin, 1 (May 1935): 4.

Of course Dodd categorically rejected the board's claim and insisted that the real issue between him and the board was a doctrinal one.[156] When the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions was founded, Dodd welcomed it as a positive move. In his response to Speer's criticism of the new board, Dodd argued that "as I understand it, the new Board intends to foster rather than interfere with any truly out-and-out evangelical work now being carried on by our Board. In this way they [sic] should be a great help in the real constructive work that the Assembly's Board is doing, as well as in discouraging its destructive work. Why then should it be looked upon as a rebel and enemy?"[157] Not surprisingly, after his resignation from the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA, Dodd officially joined the Independent Board in April of 1935. He continued his work at the North China Theological Seminary under the new board.

Dodd's resignation provided the fundamentalists with new ammunition in their attack on the mission board of the Northern Presbyterian Church. Dodd's lengthy testimony and criticism of the board were carried in The Bulletins of the Independent Mission Board. The mission board of the PCUSA was accused of compromising orthodox doctrines in the name of tolerance and flexibility and joining hands with modernism. Its missionaries were expected to do the same. According to the Independent Board, an attitude of compromise and indifference towards doctrinal standards were another form of modernism. Robert Speer and his mission board were certainly guilty of this form of modernism. [158]

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[156] Ibid.3.
[157] Albert Dodd to Robert Speer, 31 August 1933, PCUSABS, RG82, 47-16, PHS, Philadelphia.
[158] See "Modernism Described", The Independent Board Bulletin, 1 (November 1935): 14-15.

Albert Dodd's dispute with the mission board of the Northern Presbyterian Church showed that J. Gresham Machen's battle with the board in North America further divided the Northern Presbyterian missionary ranks in the mission field. Through its missionary supporters like Dodd, the Independent Board quickly extended its influence to China. About one year after its inauguration, the Independent Board sent Henry W.Coray and his wife, its first missionary couple, to China in November of 1934. Before their arrival in the field, Charles J. Woodbridge, the General Secretary of the Independent Board wrote to W.M. Hayes, the president of the North China Theological Seminary and his three colleagues and asked for their help in securing housing and language training for the Corays in Tengxian. With the consent of the other members of Tengxian station, the Corays were invited to come to Tengxian. Hayes and Tengxian station were apparently aware of the gravity of their decision to host the Corays in their relation to Shandong Mission and the board in New York. To minimize possible negative reaction from the board, Hayes had the Corays live in one of the NCTS building, which Hayes did not consider as the property of the board. When informing Robert Speer of his decision in June of 1934, Hayes carefully explained that "we have friends on both Boards, just as you have both Modernists and Conservatives among your supporters, consequently it seemed advisable to emulate your example and try to carry water on both shoulders."[159] This was a clever move on the part of Hayes to avoid angering Speer by hosting his enemies.

Hayes' careful move soon turned out to be futile in preventing a negative reaction from the board. The reaction was immediate, strong, and even furious. The words of Paul R. Abbot, the chairman and executive secretary of the Shandong Mission, expressed the

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[159] W.M. Hayes to Robert Speer, 9 June 1934, PCUSABS, RG82, 26-4, PHS, Philadelphia.

common feeling of the leadership of the Northern Presbyterian missions: "We are pained at the moral obtuseness which would permit a group of people taking their stipend from the Board to commit an act of this kind. It may not be irretrievable but is very sad indeed."[160] For the board it was simply unbelievable for its own missionaries to help the missionaries from a rival board recently born of a bitter fight with itself.

As illustrated in the fifth chapter, the relationship between the NCTS and the mission board of the PCUSA was ambiguous and stormy. Although the NCTS tried to maintain its administrative and financial independence of the board, its foreign faculty members were on the payrolls of the mission boards of the Northern and Southern Presbyterian Churches. The Northern Presbyterian missionaries on the NCTS faculty constituted the core group of the Tengxian mission station of the Shandong Mission. Therefore, the board in New York could exert considerable influence on the Tengxian station and the NCTS through the Shandong Mission. It did not take long for the mission board to put pressure on the missionaries in Tengxian through the Shandong Mission. Paul R. Abbott came to Tengxian and had a long talk with the missionaries there. He warned the group that "their action could not help but be interpreted as an unfriendly and disloyal one to the Board, that it was an overt act in a course which might split the Mission." He even implied that their action was "the raising of the flag of revolt."[161]

It was evident from the beginning that the Tengxian groups' willingness to host the Corays had to do with their sympathy with the Independent Board. One member of Tengxian station declared that their action was "a sign of their faith. ...What they are

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[160] Paul R. Abbot to Courtenay H. Fenn, 30 October 1934, PCUSABS, RG82, 49-17, PHS, Philadelphia.

[161] Abbott to Fenn, 14 June 1934.

standing for."[162] A few missionaries in Tengxian seemed even willing to separate from the board over this issue. However, Hayes and most of the missionaries there were not ready to take steps toward splitting the Shandong Mission. Hayes repeatedly explained that he was simply doing an act of Christian charity, which he would extend to any young missionary couple.[163] He reconfirmed that he had no intention of breaking off his friendship with Speer and the board. "Dr.Speer has always been a steadfast friend," he said, "I would not willingly cause him any pain....I am still loyal to the old Board." [164] He accused Abbott of "making a mountain out of a mole hill."[165] Once again, Hayes pointed to the potential negative consequences the actions of the board could cause at home In his view the board's high-handed handling of the Corays and NCTS could furnish the supporters of the Independent Board with new ammunition and decrease financial contributions to the board.[166]

Nevertheless, the constant pressure from the mission board and Robert Speer himself did eventually play a key role in making Watson Hayes change his mind. Shortly after their arrival in Tengxian, Hayes began to urge the Corays to move to Beijing. He explained to the board that this was the result of the shortage of spaces in seminary due to an "unusual influx of new students."[167] The Corays left Tengxian in early 1935.

As the controversy surrounding the Corays developed, a few Southern Presbyterian missionaries proposed inviting the Corays to Suxian (Sutsien) station of the North Jiangsu Mission. This proposal apparently met significant opposition from the

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[162] Quoted from ibid.

[163] See A Note from W.M.Hayes to Paul R. Abbot, July 1934?, PCUSABS, RG82, 49-17, PHS, Philadelphia.

[164] Ibid.

[165] Ibid.

Presbyterian missionary community in China.[168] The Executive Committee of Foreign Missions of the Southern Presbyterian Church was alarmed at the prospect of getting entangled in the raging controversy within the Northern Presbyterian Church. In June of 1935, it decided not to host the Corays in any of its mission station. The committee gave the following reasons:

> In general it is our feeling that we ought to avoid any entanglements in the dispute that is causing so much distress in the Northern Presbyterian Church just now. It is not a question as to where our sympathies might lie one way or the other in the issue that has developed at Tenghsien (Tengxian). Whatever our opinion might be at that point we feel that we ought to regard it as an administrative problem with which as a third party we have nothing to do...Indeed, we believe we would lay ourselves open to the charge of meddling if we proposed to take a stand on one side or the other.
>
> It is our conviction that any invitation that might be extended to the Corays either by individuals at Sutsien or officially by the station would be looked upon as a violation of the neutral position which we as an outside missionary society ought to maintain.[169]

The Executive Committee obviously viewed the struggle between Machen and the mission board of the PCUSA as a purely internal affair of the Northern Presbyterian Church. It did not want its own missionary body to be divided by an external dispute. The decision of the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions of the PCUS apparently prevailed, and the conservatives of the North Jiangsu Mission did not stand up to protest.

Henry W. Coray and his wife soon settled down in Beijing. His short and controversial stay in China already convinced him that "the Foreign Board (the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A) has certainly worked up

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[166] See ibid.

[167] W.M.Hayes to Robert Speer, ? November 1934, PCUSABS, RG82, 50-8, PHS, Philadelphia.

[168] See Abbott to Fenn, 30 October 1934.

[169] The Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Foreign Missions of the PCUS, (June 1935), PHS, Montreat, NC, 25-26

sentiment against us out there."[170] His experience deepened the bitter feeling of the Independent Board toward the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA. "The Coarys are utterly devoted to the cause of Christ," the Independent Board asserted, and "they are being opposed because they will not profess loyalty to a board which is demonstrably disloyal to Christ."[171]

In Beijing Arie Kok played host to the Corays who even stayed in his house for several months. While engaging in language study there, Henry W. Coray was apparently quite active in the circle of the conservative missionaries in Beijing. He was invited by Kok to attend the third Triennial Convention of the League of Christian Churches in June of 1935 as the official representative of the Independent Board. Upon Kok's request, the Independent Board actually made a small financial contribution to the convention.[172] Eventually, the Corays chose Harbin, a city located in northern Manchuria, as their mission field.

Besides the Corays the Independent Board had three more missionaries by 1936: Albert Dodd, Egbert W. Andrews, and Richard B. Gaffin. The Corays' arrival was perhaps most controversial. Their brief stay in Tengxian provoked a minor skirmish between the conservative Tengxian group and the Northern Presbyterian mission board and further complicated the strenuous relationship between them. Together with Albert Dodd's switch to the Independent Board, the Corays' arrival brought the controversy in

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[170] "The Corays Meet with Opposition," The Independent Board Bulletin 1 (February 1935): 10.

[171] Ibid.

[172] In February of 1935, the Independent Board sent one hundred U.S. dollars to Kok, which were used to cover the travel expenses of more than four Chinese Presbyterian leaders. See Arie Kok to J. Gresham Machen, 16 January 1935, Machen Papers, Westminster Seminary, Philadelphia. See also J.Gresham Machen to Arie Kok, 18 February 1935, Machen Papers, Westminster Seminary, Philadelphia.

North America directly into Chinese scene and added a new factor to the already intense debates about the Laymen's Report and Pearl S. Buck.

The 1930s were a turbulent time for the Protestant missionary community in China. The conflicts and tensions over the issues of the China Sunday School Union, the Laymen's Report, Pearl S. Buck, and the Independent Board brought the fundamentalist-modernist controversy among China missionaries to its second peak.

In the meantime the tension between China and Japan was rising dramatically. Since the late 1920s, the Japanese army stationed in Manchuria had adopted a policy of aggression in China. In September 1931 the Japanese troops took control of the whole Manchuria and founded the puppet empire of Manchukuo. Militarily not strong enough to resist the Japanese aggression, the Kuomingtang (KMT) government tried to stop the Japanese by diplomatic means. But the Chinese efforts were futile, and the Japanese continued to penetrate North China and strengthen their political and military presence. In July 1937 the Japanese army launched a massive attack on Chinese troops near Beijing and started an all-out war to conquer China. Japanese troops advanced from the northern provinces toward the southern provinces. By August 1937 Shanghai fell. Four months later Nanjing fell. The war dragged on for eight years.

The eruption of the Sino-Japanese War drastically changed the fate of the Protestant missionary enterprise in China. As the battle zone kept widening, more and more missionaries were forced to focus their attention on the safety and survival of the missionaries and native Christian communities. They were no longer able to extensively engage in doctrinal debates. This new situation effectively took the heat out of the

fundamentalist-modernist controversy among China missionaries. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941, most American and British missionaries in the areas occupied by Japanese were arrested and sent to the concentration camps, and many missionary institutions had to be closed down. On December 8,1941 the Japanese troops rounded up the American and British faculty members at the North China Theological Seminary and disbanded the student body. Watson M. Hayes, its founder and long-time president, spent his last days in a concentration camp. Many other mission institutions in China met the same fate. An era in missionary history in China, marked by the fundamentalist-modernist controversy, came to an end.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

In the early twentieth century, China was the most important mission field around the world. Once China opened its door to the outside world in the mid-nineteenth century, the country caught the enormous attention of major denominations and mission organizations in the West. Its vast territory and large population and rich cultural tradition posed a tremendous challenge to the Christian missionary movement. For American Protestant churches, which had just started their overseas missionary adventures in the early nineteenth century, China emerged as the most fascinating and important mission field. From the mid-nineteenth century to the 1950s, enormous manpower and financial resources were invested in the field by the mission societies from North America and Europe. For years China was considered one of the most strategic mission fields in Protestants' efforts to evangelize the world.

Not surprisingly, the spread of modernism in China in the early twentieth century caused serious concerns in North America. For fundamentalists China was the most crucial battle ground in their fight against modernism in mission fields. In North America many fundamentalists viewed modernism in China as the key target in attacking the modernist influence within foreign mission enterprise. In the meantime many fundamentalist missionaries in China were aware that their fight in China was a part of the larger international fundamentalist cause. For the fundamentalist missionaries, the

connection with the fundamentalist movement at home proved to be a great advantage and weapon. In cooperation with some of the most well-known fundamentalist figures and institutions such as W.H. Griffith Thomas and The Sunday School Times, the fundamentalist missionaries were able to agitate directly among the home constituencies of missions. In brief the fundamentalist movement in China was not an isolated phenomenon but a part of a larger international fundamentalist movement in the 1920s and 1930s.

In China the fundamentalist-modernist controversy was a watershed of the Protestant missionary movement. It marked the final demise of the nineteenth-century Protestant mission consensus. The controversy served to highlight and deepen the differences between the liberals and conservatives over the issues of the doctrinal foundation of missions, evangelism, social services, and attitude toward non-Christian religions. In their attempt to re-interpret the Christian message according to China's social needs and cultural heritage, the liberals stressed the ethical and social implications of the gospels and set social transformation as the new goal of mission work. Devaluing the traditional preaching-centered evangelism, the liberal social-gospel model of mission heavily inclined to social involvement and build-up of missionary educational, medical, and other institutions. On the other hand, a conservative and evangelical mission model also took shape. What primarily characterized this evangelical model was its adherence to the historical doctrines and traditional evangelical message, its reconfirmation of evangelistic goals of mission work, and its zeal for preaching-centered evangelism over social programs. Accordingly, such prominent conservative missionaries as Watson Hayes and the CIM leaders were critical of mission work as institution building.

In the 1920s and 1930s, the missionary fundamentalist movement in China had two peaks. During the first half of the 1920s, the fundamentalists rallied under several major institutions such as the Bible Union of China and the North China Theological Seminary and launched a series of anti-modernist campaigns. In the early 1930s, the division within the China Sunday School Union, the publication of the Re-thinking Missions, and Pearl S. Buck's criticism caused another wave of strong fundamentalist reaction. In the fundamentalists' struggle against the modernist influence in China, the character and impact of the missionary fundamentalist movement became clear.

The Nature , Character, and Diversity of the Fundamentalist Movement

The fundamentalist movement among Protestant missionaries in China was deep-rooted, its scope was wide, its dynamics was powerful, and its impact was deep and long-lasting. The movement's concerns, its debates with the modernists, and its organizational dynamics were far more complicated than what we have grasped so far.

In their battle against modernists, conservative missionaries from the CIM, American Presbyterian missions, and other mission societies organized a series of inter-denominational institutions. There were fundamentalist alliances such as the Bible Union of China and the League of Christian Churches, fundamentalist theological educational institutions such as the North China Theological Seminary, and fundamentalist publishing houses such as the China Sunday School Union. The North Jiangsu Mission of the PCUS and the Tengxian mission station of the PCUSA became the powerhouses for the fundamentalist movement. In addition conservative mission societies like the China

Inland Mission and Christian Missionary Alliance were associated with the fundamentalist cause. These institutions formed an anti-modernist network for the fundamentalists and provided a badly needed platform from which the fundamentalists from different denominations and organizations could voice their common concerns. The fundamentalist network or alliance drew its members from a wide range of denominational mission societies, independent mission organizations, free-lance missionary circles, and even Chinese churches. Most of the fundamentalist missionaries remained members of their own mission organizations, while joining the new fundamentalist fellowship.

This study shows that although the fundamentalist movement was a broad anti-modernist alliance, it had a common theological core or agenda. The key fundamentalist doctrinal tenets included the truthfulness and infallible authority of the whole Bible as the inspired word of God, the deity of Christ, his virgin birth, his substitutionary atonement, his bodily resurrection from the dead, and the authenticity of the miracles both of the Old and New Testaments. In brief the fundamentalists reasserted the authority of the whole Bible and the supernatural dimension of the gospel in response to the modernists' advocacy of higher criticism and their humanistic and naturalistic re-interpretation of the scriptures.

Concerned with the spread of the social gospel and the explosion of social projects at the cost of evangelistic activities, the fundamentalists also reiterated their common belief in personal sin as the root of all social evils and the utmost importance of personal salvation. They insisted on the central place of preaching in mission work and the priority of evangelism over social service. Furthermore, the fundamentalist

missionaries rejected the liberal missionaries' reconciliatory and cooperative approach to non-Christian religions, and firmly stood for the uniqueness and finality of Christ.

While the influence of the evangelical theological consensus of the nineteenth century was still strong in the early twentieth century, other distinct theological trends such as premillenialism, holiness teachings, and Pentecostalism began to make their way into the Protestant missionary community in China. The Presbyterian Old School tradition and Princeton theology were also brought in by the American Presbyterian missionaries. However, when the conservatives from various theological backgrounds tried to form a united front against their common enemy—modernism--they needed to find a common theological ground among themselves. The above-mentioned doctrinal positions on biblical authority and the supernatural aspects of the gospel were the common and crucial points upon which all the fundamentalists could agree. For the fundamentalists these positions were the doctrinal bottom lines that eventually distinguished them from the modernists. Individual fundamentalist missionaries might have their own particular theological views on less essential issues such as millenialism, but they were united in taking a stand for the orthodox Christian doctrines which were identified as "the fundamentals." As a matter of fact, when the fundamentalists were united in such organizations as the Bible Union of China and the League of Christian Churches, they often deliberately stressed the conservative theological consensus and downplayed any controversial and divisive theological topics and views in order to keep peace among their own ranks and to appeal to a broader conservative audience.

The hallmark of fundamentalists in China was their militancy in battling modernism. Despite their diverse theological make-up and denominational backgrounds,

the fundamentalist missionaries were mobilized and rallied by an urgent sense that the "fundamental Christian truth" and the foundation of Protestant missions in China were being undermined by godless modernism, and they had to come to their defense. For the fundamentalists the future of Christian missions and churches in China hinged on this battle between orthodox doctrines and modernist heterodoxy, and thus a public campaign against the modernist movement was badly needed. In the face of the modernist threat, fundamentalists argued, "tolerance" and "cooperation" ceased to be virtues, and neglect and silence would cause great harm. Many scholars of fundamentalism in North America have pointed out that the fundamentalist movement was characterized by a uncompromising and militant stance. For instance, George Marsden argued, "Fundamentalists are not just religious conservatives, they are conservatives who are willing to take a stand and to fight."[1] His words hold true in the case of China missions.

In the 1920s and 1930s, the fundamentalists often called themselves "evangelicals," or "conservatives." Indeed, in many cases, these names were interchangeable with the term "fundamentalists." However, not all theologically conservative missionaries were fundamentalists. Some conservative missionaries could agree with the fundamentalists on such issues as the authority of the Bible and supernatural Christology and regretted the rise of modernism. But they avoided the public denunciation of modernists and failed to join the anti-modernist campaign for the sake of peace and harmony within missionary community. These conservatives were moderates rather than fundamentalists.

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[1] Marsden: "Introduction: Defining Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism," 1.

Furthermore, this study reveals the significant diversity within the fundamentalist camp. To stereotype the fundamentalists as a bunch of closed-minded folks with "old-fashioned" theological views was a mistake often made by their modernist critics. In the 1920s and 1930s, the mainstream of the fundamentalist movement was actually a group of moderate or mild fundamentalists. This group included some of the most prominent and widely-respected mission leaders of the time, such as Archdeacon W.S.Moule, James W. Lowrie, D.E.Hoste, and Watson M. Hayes. They played leadership roles in most of the major fundamentalist institutions. These moderate fundamentalists also felt strongly about the modernist threat and the necessity of a conservative defense of faith and orthodoxy. However, they tried to steer the fundamentalist institutions and movement in a constructive and positive course. Instead of fully engaging in a "negative campaign" of destructive polemics against modernists, they believed that the best way to fight modernism was the propagation of the orthodox doctrines and the promotion of conservative evangelism. Even when they engaged in debates with modernists, they tried to carry them out with the spirit of "Christian charity" and in a positive, constructive manner and rhetoric. In addition moderate fundamentalists highly valued Christian unity and tried to make the fundamentalist cause more appealing to the broader constituency in the churches and missionary community. Although they were dissatisfied with the denominational mission boards' tolerance of modernist influence, moderate fundamentalists were nevertheless willing to work with the boards to solve the problems instead of taking their disputes directly to the public or the home constituencies.

The extreme wing of the fundamentalist camp was always a minority group. What primarily distinguished Hugh White, Albert Dodd, and the Christian Fundamentals

League for China from the mainstream of the fundamentalist movement was more intense, vocal belligerence and militancy of their anti-modernist campaigns. They did not hesitate to engage in aggressive polemics against modernism, and tended to make sweeping public accusations and denunciations of modernists as well as moderates. In comparison with moderate fundamentalists, they had a stronger separatist tendency. In other words they were more likely to sever their connection with anyone embracing "unsound" theological views. The extreme fundamentalists within denominations were willing to bypass the authority of their mission boards and directly appeal to the home churches for their cases in a very public way. They were very critical of the mission boards' tolerance of modernists within the missionary ranks and often attempted to pressure the boards to change their policies by directly bringing the matters to the home constituencies. Despite their small numbers, the extreme fundamentalists caused a lot of noise, sensations, and notoriety that were disproportionate to their numbers. In many controversies between fundamentalists and modernists, they played the roles of the chief "agitators" and "troublemakers." Occasionally, they even complained about the lack of toughness on the part of moderate leadership of the fundamentalist camp in their anti-modernist campaigns.

The Missionary Fundamentalist Movement's Chinese Roots and North American Connections

The missionary fundamentalist movement in China of the 1920s and 1930s was shaped by the fundamentalist movement in North America as well as its Chinese context. Since the 1920s there has been a debate about whether the fundamentalist movement in

China was simply an importation from North America or an inheritor of the nineteenth-century missionary tradition. [2] This study shows that both claims were only partially correct.

The missionary fundamentalist movement of the twentieth century emerged as a part of an international fundamentalist movement, and it had undeniable theological and organizational connections with the fundamentalist cause in North America. It was by no means just a continuation of the evangelical missionary tradition of the nineteenth century. By the early decades of the twentieth century, the theological make-up of the fundamentalist camp in China contained many new elements introduced from overseas, particularly from North America. Such leading fundamentalists as W.H. Griffith Thomas, R.A.Torrey, and A.C.Dixon from North America played vital roles not only in introducing new conservative ideas but also in directly stirring up controversies and rallying the conservative elements in China. Some important issues at debate in China, such as biblical authority and the church union movement, were the same issues debated in North America. In the early 1930s, the same controversy regarding Re-thinking Missions and the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions was raging simultaneously in China and America. The conflict over the China Sunday School Union was also international by nature.

On the other hand, the fundamentalist movement in China was significantly shaped by its mission and social contexts in China. The roots, theological agenda, and

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[2] In the 1920s and 1930s, some critics of the fundamentalist movement claimed that the recent fundamentalist reaction owed much to the agitation of prominent fundamentalists from overseas. In the meantime the fundamentalists argued they were simply defending "an unchanging message," or "the old gospel." (See "An Unchanging Message for a Changing World" China's Millions (June 1940): 84. See also "New Conditions, but the Old Gospel" China's Millions (March 1927): 46). Some contemporary scholars tend to view the fundamentalist movement as an importation from North America.

practical issues of the fundamentalist movement in China were not completely identical with the movement in North America. In many ways the former had its own concerns unique to the mission field and was thus a genuine phenomenon on the Chinese scene. As this study illustrates, a leading force within the fundamentalist camp was the old generation of conservative missionaries like D.E. Hoste, W.S. Moule, J.W. Lowrie, and J. Goforth. They felt the need to defend the evangelical mission tradition challenged by newly arrived modernist missionaries in China. Theologically, the central doctrinal themes of the fundamentalist movement in China were biblical authority and the supernatural aspects of the gospel. The presence of other strains of fundamentalist ideas such as premillenialism was less visible within the fundamentalist movement in China than in North America. The context of the mission field made the fundamentalists in China emphasize common bonds but downplay differences among themselves. Furthermore, the goal of the fundamentalist missionaries in China was different from those in North America. In China the fundamentalist missionaries did not share North American fundamentalists' concern with the modernist corruption of "Christian civilization." Rather, launching anti-modernist campaigns, they wanted to maintain a "sound" foundation for the mission enterprise in order to bring the emerging Chinese churches the "fundamental truth" and protect them from the modernist influence. This goal made the fundamentalist missionaries particularly sensitive to any modernist degrading of the scriptures and the "supernatural truths" in missionary education and publication. They attacked or re-interpreted the theory of evolution only in relation to their defense of biblical authority but never launched any massive cultural debate over "creationism versus evolutionism" as fundamentalists did in North America. In the

Chinese context of religious diversity, the modernists' rejection of Christian uniqueness and advocacy of a collaborative attitude toward non-Christian religions were especially outrageous to fundamentalist missionaries. They resisted the modernists' approach to non-Christian religions as a denial of the legitimacy of Christian mission and a fatal threat to the evangelization of China. Finally, as China went through revolutionary changes, fundamentalist missionaries also added a political dimension to their anti-modernist campaign by linking modernism with Bolshevism.

The Missionary Fundamentalist Movement's Relationship with Indigenous Conservative Protestants

This study demonstrates that the fundamentalist movement was not a purely internal matter of the foreign missionary community in China, and its impact went beyond the missionary enterprise. As the emerging conservative Chinese churches took initiative and lead in the work of missions and churches, the conservative missionaries' roles were no longer to initiate and shape the native evangelical movement and conservative churches in China but to strengthen them. In this regard their contribution was significant and substantial.

As mentioned before, one of the primary motivations of the fundamentalist movement was to safeguard the Chinese churches against the modernist influence. The fundamentalist missionaries were very concerned with the orthodoxy of Chinese churches. Their enemy lists included some of the most prominent liberal Chinese theologians and church leaders such as Zhao Zi-chen and Wu Leichuan. Moreover, fundamentalist organizations like the Milton Stewart Evangelistic Fund were enthusiastic

in sponsoring retreats and training conferences that featured Wang Ming-dao, Wang Zai, and other famous conservative Chinese evangelists. The publishing houses run by the fundamentalist missionaries were geared to propagate "orthodoxy" among Chinese Christians. Through the North China Theological Seminary and other educational institutions, the fundamentalist missionaries made a very significant contribution to the emergence of generations of conservative leadership within Chinese churches. In such national fundamentalist organizations as the League of the Christian Churches, such prominent conservative Chinese Christian leaders as Jia Yu-ming and Yang Shao-tang worked side by side with the fundamentalist missionaries and fought together for the faithfulness of missions and churches.

The emerging conservative Chinese evangelists and church leaders were staunch believers in infallible biblical authority and supernatural Christology and emphasized soul-saving evangelism instead of large social projects. They categorically rejected the modernist theology. Someone like Wang Ming-dao was vocal and persistent in attacking modernism and the social gospel throughout his evangelistic career. It was no wonder that the fundamentalist missionaries often counted the conservative Chinese church leaders as their comrades in the battle against modernism in China. In the 1920s and 1930s, the conservatives and liberals within Chinese churches occasionally exchanged fire and condemned each other as "false teachers or prophets."[3] The conflicts within the Chinese churches were never as frequent and intense as among the foreign missionaries. Under the circumstance of Chinese society and churches, conservative and liberal factions could pursue their own goals separately and did not have to frequently cross

swords. Nevertheless, the gap between the conservative Chinese Protestants and their liberal counterparts was clearly widening. With their sympathy for conservatives and rebuke of liberals, the fundamentalist foreign missionaries in China reinforced this trend within the Chinese Protestant churches. The twentieth-century development of Chinese Protestant churches has proved that the fundamentalist missionaries exerted greater influences than their modernist counterparts on the growth and the character of Chinese Protestant community. But their contribution to China's cultural and social transformation was less impressive than that of the modernist groups. Considering the fundamentalist missionaries' persistent enthusiasm for spreading the "pure" gospel and lack of interest in social projects, this result should not come as a surprise.

[3] See Wang Ming-dao, 真伪福音辨(Discernment of Gospel) (Hong Kong: The Bellman House Publishers, 1987). See also "今日基督教的危机" (The Crisis of Christianity Today) 真理与生命(Truth and Life) (October, 1936), 334-35.

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