EXAMINING PROTESTANT MISSIONARY EDUCATION IN NORTH CHINA: THREE SCHOOLS FOR GIRLS, 1872-1924

THESIS
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ABSTRACT

The Protestant missionary enterprise in China in the late 19th and early 20th centuries was an enormous effort on the part of Western Protestant missionaries to convert a foreign civilization to Christianity and the Western way of life. One of the most important aspects of this campaign was the focus on education and the introduction of public missionary schools for girls into the Chinese context. Certainly many historians, such as Kenneth Latourette and Alice Gregg have produced broad works that touch on the subject of missionary schools for girls, and others, such as Ryan Dunch and Mary Jo Waelchli, have written fascinating case studies on individual schools.

This thesis will look at the phenomenon of female education in the public sphere, examining the development of missionary schools for girls in China between 1872 and 1924. Examining three schools as case studies, this thesis will argue that these schools were not uniform, but that each school was an institution responsive to desires of the local community in which it was located, the individuals who were associated with it, and the historical trends of the times. The intersection of these three disparate factors resulted in a series of schools linked by a common goal – the education and conversion of Chinese girls – but following very different paths. These paths would lead not to the conversion of China, as hoped by the missionaries, but would leave a lasting impression on education for girls in China.
Dedicated to my family
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CHAPTER 1

AN INTRODUCTION TO MISSIONARY SCHOOLS FOR GIRLS IN CHINA

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Protestant missionary enterprise in China in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries represented an enormous effort on the part of Western missionaries to convert a foreign civilization to Christianity and to the Western way of life. One of the most important aspects of their campaign was a focus on education and the introduction of public, in the sense that they were located outside the home,\(^1\) missionary schools into the Chinese context. While China had a long tradition of public education for boys, the idea of public schools for girls, especially in a religious context, was totally new, and in many ways absurd, to the Chinese people. Yet, despite the difficulties, the missionary educators, using a variety of techniques, succeeded in establishing many missionary schools for girls in China.\(^2\)

\(^1\) The use of the term “public education” or “public schools” does not refer to the American meaning of a government-run school available to any and all students without fees. In this case the word “public” denotes the physical location of the school in the public sphere, namely, outside of the home. As noted above, while schools for boys were often located in this public sphere, females were almost exclusively educated within the home.

\(^2\) It is difficult to tell exactly how many missionary schools for girls were established in China, even within a single denomination. Firstly, any numbers given are suspect, as they may have been prone to inflation by missionaries hoping for more financial support. Secondly, what is the definition of a missionary school for girls – did it have to have a separate schoolhouse, how many pupils, how long did it have to exist? Thirdly, the numbers available in various sources often do not match. According to Ida Belle Lewis’ 1919 report, The Education of Girls in China, there were only 3 Protestant mission schools for girls in 1849, but by 1896, there were 308 such schools reported. Alice Gregg’s China and Educational Autonomy, however, states that there were 38 girls’ boarding schools China in 1842. Gregg reports that by 1877 there were 464
Because of the position of missionary schools for girls in China at the intersection of several important scholarly discussions on China, such as those concerning Christian missions, the Protestant educational mission in general, female rights and education, and educational reform, there is a great deal of past scholarship that deals with these schools. The majority of these works are broad-spectrum discussions, and provide a wealth of general knowledge on the subject. The classic works of this type include Kenneth Latourette’s *A History of Christian Missions in China* (1929), Alice Gregg’s *China and Educational Autonomy: The Changing Role of the Protestant Educational Missionary in China, 1807-1937* (1946), and John Cleverley’s *The Schooling of China: Tradition and Modernity in Chinese Education* (1985). This broad view of the topic, however, can lead to over-generalization regarding the missionary schools for girls.

Later works, although influenced by revisionist trends in historical methods, which argue that “interpretations of the past are subject to change in response to new evidence, new questions asked of the evidence, new perspectives gained by the passage of time;” ³ often still subscribe to the broad overview format. Some of these works, such as Gael Graham’s *Gender, Culture and Christianity: American Protestant Mission Schools in China, 1880-1930* (1995), are part of the “new missionary history” movement, and emphasize meta-topics such as nation-building, nationalism and modernity. Others, such as Xiaoping Cong’s *Teachers’ Schools and the Making of the Modern Chinese Nation-State, 1897-1937* (2007) address the same topics from a non-missions perspective. That these works contain over-generalizations regarding the character and history of such schools. The vast disparity in numbers makes it extremely difficult to figure out exactly how many schools there were at any one time. One can only estimate that there were quite a few.

missionary schools for girls is almost inevitable, considering the large topics which they address. Unfortunately, this over-simplification can leave readers with a biased view of homogenous missionary educational institutions for girls.

Recently, however, several new works have addressed the topic of these missionary schools on a much smaller scale, generally through the medium of the case study, based either on a particular school or locale. Examples include Ryan Dunch’s *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China, 1857-1927* (2001), Kathleen Lodwick’s *Educating the Women of Hainan: The Career of Margaret Moninger in China, 1915-1942* (1995), and Mary Jo Waelchli’s PhD dissertation, “Abundant Life: Matilda Thurston, Wu Yifang and Ginling College, 1915-1951” (2002). These case studies have clearly pointed out the variables present in the specific school or location that made the subject of their study unique. Yet, due to their narrow focus on a single school or location, they are unable to project these variables onto other locations and schools to discover if either the schools or the variables work in similar ways.

This thesis locates itself between the two methodologies discussed above, the broad overview or narrow case study, by examining not the overall picture of missionary education for girls in China, nor the particulars of one school or town, but instead, by presenting three short case studies on three separate missionary schools for girls. Investigating the development of three missionary schools for girls in China beginning in 1872, when the first of the schools was founded, and 1924, when the Chinese government mandated that control of the schools be turned over to the Chinese, will allow this thesis to abandon the tradition of the broad overview and argue that the specific place in which the school was located, the people who were associated with it, and the historical
milieu, intersected to create a unique institution. The result is a series of schools linked by a common goal – in this case the education and conversion of Chinese girls – but following very different paths.

By comparing and contrasting three case studies this thesis will not only be able to present a more detailed analysis of each missionary school for girls and its developmental path than a broad overview, but will also draw conclusions on larger topics than a single case study would allow. This method permits investigation of the achievements of the missionary schools for girls in China and their legacies in Chinese education – the introduction of schools for girls into the public sphere, the model of gender-segregated schools, and the creation of pool of educated women to become teachers in government schools – on the level of three individual schools.

1.2 THE MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE IN 19TH-CENTURY CHINA:
A BRIEF BACKGROUND

The Treaty of Nanjing in 1842 ushered in a new era in Chinese history, one marked by the pressures of both internal revolt and external imperialism. This treaty, however, had implications beyond the military, political and economic areas. The Treaty of Nanjing granted foreigners permission both to trade and to reside in the five treaty port cities, allowing them to “build houses, hospitals, schools and places of worship” in Guangzhou (Canton), Xiamen (Amoy), Fuzhou (Foochow), Ningbo (Ningpo), and Shanghai. Western missionaries, whose activities in China had previously been extremely limited as a result of the ban on Christianity mandated by the Yongzheng

emperor in 1724, then entered the treaty ports in ever-growing numbers. As a result of further military conflicts between 1856 and 1860, additional concessions were demanded by the Western powers. By 1860, “missionaries were allowed to travel, proselytize and own land in the interior (as well as enjoy the privilege of extra-territoriality),” and various Protestant missionary boards in the United States, as well as other Western countries, immediately took advantage of the opportunity. By the 1860s, Christian missions had been established in most of the major cities on the eastern seaboard, and missionaries were determinedly pushing west into the interior.

Although the main aim of the Western missionaries was to convert the Chinese natives to Christianity, they had fairly exacting standards of what these Chinese Christian converts should look like. One of these was the idea of a “bible-reading church” espoused by Martin Luther, which of course, necessitated teaching the mainly illiterate lower classes – the main source of Christian conversions – to read. Since educating a girl was only possible in “social classes where girls were less of an economic burden,” namely the upper classes, missionary educators almost never met female Chinese who could read. Unfortunately for the missionary educator, Chinese culture placed “powerful taboos on the social mingling of men and women,” and male missionaries were unable to reach the female members of Chinese families. In order to remedy this

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7 Charlotte Beehan, “The Women’s Movement and Nationalism in Late Ch’ing China” (PhD diss. Columbia University), 39.
9 According to Evelyn Rawski’s *Education and Popular Literacy in Ch’ing China*, female literacy in the early nineteen century was estimated at 1 to 10 percent, and John L. Buck’s 1930 survey of rural literacy found only 2 percent of women had attended school, and only half of them could be considered literate.
problem, missionary schools for girls, staffed by missionary wives and an increasing number of single missionary women, were established in many mission stations.

1.3 THREE CASE STUDIES

This thesis presents three different missionary schools for girls as case studies in the development of Protestant educational institutions from 1872-1924: the Mary Porter Gamewell School for Girls (Beijing), the Precious Dew School for Girls (Taigu, Shanxi), and the Lydia Lord Davis School for Girls (Fenzhou, Shanxi). None of these schools have been dealt with in previous works in English, although Yin Wenjuan’s Chinese-language essay on the Bridgeman Academy, an early missionary school for girls in Beijing, treats the Mary Porter Gamewell School briefly.11 This thesis relies heavily on primary source material procured at the Oberlin College Archives (for the Precious Dew and Lydia Lord Davis Schools) and the Ohio Wesleyan University Methodist Archives (for the Mary Porter Gamewell School). Using these collections, this thesis is able to contribute to the ongoing scholarly conversation on missionary education for girls in China by presenting new information on previously unstudied schools.

The Precious Dew and Lydia Lord Davis Schools for Girls were run by the Oberlin Shanxi Mission (Congregationalist) and sponsored by both Oberlin College and the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), a Congregationalist missionary society based in Boston. The Mary Porter Gamewell School for Girls was administered by the Methodist Foreign Mission, and received

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funding from the Woman’s Foreign Mission Board of the Methodist Episcopal Church, also located in Boston. Yet, despite the similarities in their goal, an examination of each school between the years 1872 and 1924 – a period of over fifty years – will show very different paths of development based upon the geography, population, and politics of the region in which they were located.

On the most basic level, there were significant differences between the physical locations of the three schools. The Mary Porter Gamewell School for Girls, for instance, was located in the capital, Beijing. Thus, the missionary educators there encountered a population with a much higher degree of exposure to Western influence due to the presence of foreign legations established in the city in the early 1860s to negotiate with the Qing court and protect foreign interests in the city. The school was also located in the very center of the various reform movements as literati officials submitted their memorials to the throne urging educational change in the 1890s. Conversely, although both the Precious Dew School for Girls and the Lydia Lord Davis School for Girls were located in Shanxi province, the two contexts of Fenzhou and Taigu were quite different. Precious Dew school was located in Taigu, a small “district (xian) city with a population of 20,000 people” known for banking and the relative wealth of its inhabitants. Fenzhou, in contrast, was the “second-largest city in Shanxi with a population of 50,000.” As a prefectural (fu) city, Fenzhou was also the site of the annual prefectural-level civil examination. The differences in population, economic and educational level,

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14 Ibid., 7-8.
and exposure to Western ideas and practices would have significant influence on the
development of the three schools examined here.

There is also a significant difference in the issue of who was involved in the
mission schools. As noted above, the Mary Porter Gamewell School was run by the
Methodist denomination, and the Precious Dew and Lydia Lord Davis Schools by
Congregationalists. However, due to the physical distance between the missionaries and
the home mission boards, letters could take “as long as six months”\(^\text{15}\) to travel from
America to China with instructions for the missionaries, meaning that the missionary
educators were used to a great deal of autonomy in their running of the school. Thus,
individual personalities were much more important in the development of missionary
schools for girls than denominational affiliations. As the running of girls’ schools was
considered by be part of “women’s work” by missionaries, due to both the prejudices of
male missionaries as well as the Chinese cultural prohibitions that “barred male
missionaries from … [contact with] Chinese women,”\(^\text{16}\) it was generally the missionary
wives or single missionary women who actually ran the schools and created educational
policy.

Nor is the historical milieu in which the school existed inconsequential. Yet, it is
very important that one not tie this milieu too firmly to actual dates. For instance, while
the defeat of China by the Japanese in the First Sino-Japanese War in 1895 caused a great
outpouring of demands for reform from Chinese literati, this phenomenon was limited to
urban centers on the eastern coast, and, of course, the capital at Beijing. Certainly there
were no great viceroys determined to reform the educational system and promote female

\(^{15}\) Ibid., 6.
education hiding away in Taigu, Shanxi. So while the Mary Porter Gamewell School in Beijing was profoundly affected by this historical event, prompting it to begin expanding its curriculum to meet Chinese demands, it had very little impact on the Precious Dew School until years later, and even then the ideas had been distilled and muted by time and distance from the political epicenter of the country.

1.4 METHODS AND ORGANIZATION

This thesis is divided into five chapters – an introduction precedes three chapters of case studies, which are followed by a conclusion. Chapter 1 familiarizes the reader with the argument and content of the thesis, as well as briefly explaining the historical context of the missionary educational mission during this time period. The three case studies are chapters two, three and four, and cover each individual school in a chronological manner determined not by fixed dates, but instead by stages of development. If we examine the history of each school between 1872 and 1924, it is clear that although the Mary Porter Gamewell School, the Precious Dew School and the Lydia Lord Davis School might have been in very different situations in a given year, they both went through four basic stages of development – foundation, expansion, reconstruction, and indigenization. In order to facilitate the comparison between the different three missionary schools for girls that is the central theme of this thesis, despite their disparate dates of establishment and experiences, each case study will address these four stages, allowing the reader to make meaningful comparisons without the restriction

17 Both the Mary Porter Gamewell and Precious Dew Schools went through the four stages in the order represented in the text (foundation, expansion, reconstruction and indigenization). The Lydia Lord Davis School also went through each stage, but in a slightly different order (foundation, reconstruction, expansion and indigenization). For more information see chapter four: The Lydia Lord Davis School.
of set dates and times. The conclusion in chapter five will synthesize the information given in chapters two through four, and present the central supposition of this thesis.

The thesis itself, especially the discussion of the three schools presented in chapters two, three, and four, depend heavily upon primary sources. These sources are either archival materials or published journals and books written by the missionaries themselves or other observers of the Christian missions in China during the 1872-1930 time period. When dealing with these sources, the researcher must never forget their potential bias.

First of all, most of these sources, even diaries and letters to family members, were not private, and were generally meant for circulation among home congregations to encourage donations. Thus, there is the danger that positive aspects of the missionary schools for girls have been exaggerated and the less attractive facets of the mission minimized in order to appeal to potential donors. In this thesis, care has been taken to keep this potential bias in mind, and effort has been made to consult more than one source for important information or facts to increase the chance of historical accuracy.

The other important influence of the primary source materials on this thesis is their autobiographical nature, which could lend itself to an exaggerated sense of the authority of the individual. Letters, diaries, memoirs, and articles by individual missionaries often emphasized the importance of the writer to the events upon which they reported. This potential bias is problematic as it bears directly on one of the arguments presented in this thesis; that the individual missionary educators were fairly autonomous and thus exercised a great deal of personal authority in the administration of missionary schools for girls. In order to confirm the supposition of this thesis regarding the authority
and autonomy of the missionary educators in China, a great deal of attention was paid to the directives of the home Missionary Boards to the missionaries in the field. These directives were rather infrequent and quite general, due in part, no doubt, to the fact that it took roughly a full year for a letter to travel from China with policy questions to the Board, and then back again with answers. This finding supports the argument that individual missionaries had a great deal of personal authority and independence from supervision found in this thesis, despite the possible bias in the sources.

1.5 IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

While an analysis of only three case studies of North China missionary schools for girls, out of all of the schools in that area, not to mention in the rest of China, is not enough to make any definitive conclusions about the development of the missionary educational endeavor for women in China during this period, it is sufficient to raise some serious questions regarding the treatment of these schools in previous scholarly literature. For instance, statements like Alice Gregg’s claim that, “the years 1902-1909, which saw the remarkable development of government education, witnessed also the launching of a missionary system of education, and a rapid increase in the number of schools and institutions – most of this development took place between 1902 and 1905”18 paint a picture of missionary schools for girls with a broad brush. This statement is certainly true of the Mary Porter Gamewell School, located in Beijing, where the damages of the Boxer Rebellion in 1900 had been entirely physical and easily fixed with the help of indemnity money. However, the Precious Dew School as well as the Lydia Lord Davis School

certainly did not share in this supposed “rapid increase,” as the missionaries tried to reconstruct not only their physical mission, but also reassure the Christian converts that had just experienced terrible violence at the hands of the Boxers. Similarly, Kenneth Latourette wrote that “given the conditions in the West and in China, then, it was almost inevitable that the four decades after 1856 should be years of rapid expansion of Protestant missionary activity.”

This might have been true on the eastern seaboard and in large cities, but the experience of the Oberlin missionaries in Shanxi was quite different. Although they arrived in Taigu in 1883 with the goal of establishing schools “as soon as possible,” their first school was not established until 1889 due to resistance from the local rural population as well as confusion among the missionaries themselves as to their goals. By discounting the realities of the school’s location in North China and the people involved in the educational endeavor, both Gregg and Latourette have projected a false and overly generalized view of the missionary schools for girls in China.

Moreover, there are also problems with the much narrower view of missionary schools for girls in China presented in recent case studies. Although those case studies acknowledge the various influences that combined to create the unique institutions that they study, they fail to connect these influences to the broader picture. For instance, in Ryan Dunch’s well-written case study of the Chinese Christian church in Fuzhou, he states very clearly that “not all Protestants were the same; as we will see, even within the Fuzhou region [there were] differences.” He acknowledges the importance of individual people in the church. Yet, instead of carrying that idea on to note that this

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20 Carlson, Oberlin in Asia, 12.  
would apply to people anywhere, the very nature of the case study limits the range of his argument to Fuzhou. Mary Jo Waelchli’s dissertation on Ginling College, a missionary college for women in Nanjing, also suffers the narrow focus of the single case study. In this case, Waelchli asserts that “with the rise of nationalist, anti-imperialist and anti-religious fervor, the Christian colleges, funded and administered by Westerners, became a target.” Yet, she cannot support this claim effectively with only one example – that of Ginling College. The effect of this nationalism on other Christian educational institutions is beyond the context of the Christian college upon which she bases her case study. By addressing three different case studies, this thesis addresses the effects of the growing nationalist and indigenization movement among the Chinese after 1912 on three different schools. This thesis, therefore, hopes to find a middle ground between the two extremes of the extremely broad overview and the narrow single case study.

1.6 CONCLUSION

Therefore, although these three missionary schools for girls can indeed be subject to very broad characterizations upon which comparisons can certainly be made, they were also highly influenced by the people involved, the time period and the place in which they were located. By identifying this individuality as the key characteristic of missionary schools for girls in China, this thesis is in direct opposition to the homogenized picture of missionary schools for girls present in much of the scholarship on this topic. This thesis does not hope to correct any of the works that have come 22 Mary Jo Waelchli, “Abundant Life: Matilda Thurston, Wu Yifang and Ginling College, 1915-1951,” (PhD diss., The Ohio State University, 2002), 4.
before it, but instead to contribute to the ongoing scholarly conversation on this topic in two different ways.

First, this thesis offers the scholarly community information on three missionary schools for girls previously untreated in secondary literature in English. Although the Mary Porter Gamewell School was a long-lived institution in the capital city of Beijing, there is remarkably no treatment of this school available in English. The Precious Dew and Lydia Lord Davis Schools, located in inland Shanxi, are almost completely unknown to scholars in any language. This thesis hopes to offer scholars in the fields of women’s education or missionary history new information from archival research on these three schools and their contributions to the Protestant educational endeavor in China.

Second, by showing that over the course of the fifty years studied, a single school might have to change its recruitment strategies, curriculum, teaching methods, and even location several times to suit its current situation, this thesis asserts that the missionary school for girls was a highly adaptive institution that exhibited considerable differences from school to school. This thesis hopes to serve as an example of a different way to look at the Protestant missionary schools in China between 1872 and 1924; one which utilizes the case study methodology to acknowledge the individual nature of these schools, yet offers up more than one study in order to enable the researcher to investigate larger trends in the development of missionary schools for girls in China. These trends, such as the establishment of education for girls outside the home, gender-segregated schooling, and the shift to female teachers for girls’ schools, would have a lasting influence on the trajectories of educational development in China.
CHAPTER 2

THE MARY PORTER GAMEWELL SCHOOL

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The first missionary school for girls examined in this thesis is the Mary Porter Gamewell School for Girls (慕貞女子中學 Muzhen nüzi zhongxue). Originally called the Peking Girls’ School (sometimes referred to as the Peking School for Girls), this school was founded by Methodist missionaries in Beijing (北京) in 1872. Although the American Methodist missionaries had entered southern China in 1847, the Peking Girls’ School was the first Methodist school for females established in the newly opened (1869) mission in North China based in Beijing. The school was the special project of Maria Kane Brown and Mary Q. Porter, both representatives of the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church (婦女外方佈道會 Funü waifang

25 Ibid., 459.
26 Maria Kane Brown was sent by the New England Branch of the WFMS and was married in 1873 to fellow missionary George R. Davis, thereafter referred to as Maria Davis. Both names will be used in this paper as appropriate for the time period.
27 Mary Q. Porter was sent by the Western Branch of the WFMS and was married in 1882 to fellow missionary Frank D. Gamewell, thereafter referred to as Mary Porter Gamewell. Both names will be used in this paper as appropriate for the time period.
budao hui\textsuperscript{28}, a society “independent of, but closely related to,”\textsuperscript{29} the Methodist Mission Board. This society funded their own missionaries to China, focusing on women’s work and especially on the founding of schools for girls.\textsuperscript{30} In accordance with this focal point, when Brown and Porter arrived in China in 1871 they were determined to “organize a girls’ boarding school and to conduct evangelistic work among women.”\textsuperscript{31} The unflagging efforts of these two women, determined to offer an education to Chinese girls, would result in a school that would educate generations of Chinese girls.

The Mary Porter Gamewell School is an important case for the study of missionary schools for girls in China because of the unique factors that influenced its development. The most important of these factors was the school’s location in Beijing, the capital city of the Qing dynasty until 1911 and an important cultural and military outpost after the fall of the Qing. This location lent the Mary Porter Gamewell School several important advantages. One of these advantages was protection from the worst of the violence during the Boxer Rebellion in 1900 due to the presence of foreign legations and their soldiers in the city. Unlike the other two schools examined in subsequent chapters, the Mary Porter Gamewell School was able to function almost uninterrupted, with no loss of life, and with plenty of indemnity monies after the Rebellion with which to rebuild. The school was also poised to take advantage of the growing interest in Western learning among Chinese educational reformers in the 1890s and at the Qing

\textsuperscript{28} Yin, “Lishi – Xingbie – Shehui,” 351.
court after 1901. As a result, the Mary Porter Gamewell School became one of the “shining examples” of Christian missionary education in China.

The school was founded in response to increased interest in the development and education of Chinese women among foreign missionaries who were “devoted to the ideal of Martin Luther – a literate and Bible-reading church.” For, “if the Bible was the authoritative witness to the Christian Faith, as most Protestants believed, all Christians should at least be enabled to read it.” In order to achieve this goal the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church (WFMS) was established in 1869 to fund and send its own agents to China to focus on women’s ministry.

Woman’s ministry, as it was called, covered a wide range of activities, from house-to-house evangelistic missions to reach the “inner chambers” to offering medical services to women, but their main focus was educating girls and women to read and understand the Bible in order to spread Christianity in their homes and among their neighbors. When Maria Kane Brown and Mary Q. Porter arrived in Beijing in 1871 as representatives of the WFMS, after spending the winter in Fuzhou, they immediately set about establishing a school for girls.

The three months that Brown and Porter spent in Fuzhou were not wasted, as the two young women spent the time studying both Chinese and school management, as well as gaining some practical advice from the missionaries at the girls’ school there. With

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32 Charlotte Beahan, “The Women’s Movement and Nationalism in Late Ch’ing China” (PhD diss Columbia University, 1976), 39.
this head start on the Chinese language,\textsuperscript{37} as well as a firm idea of their goal and practical advice on to organize and run their school, they managed to establish a boarding-school for Chinese girls within six months of their arrival in Beijing. This quick beginning was facilitated first by the head start the two women gained in Fuzhou over the winter, secondly backing of the newly formed and well-funded WFMS in matters of financial support, and thirdly, by the personalities of the two women that volunteered for the task. Although Maria Kane Brown had no prior teaching experience, she had, at the age of twenty-three, set off alone across the world, determined to win China for God.\textsuperscript{38} Nor was Mary Q. Porter any less of a determined personality, and she had several years of teaching experience at various institutions, including two years at the Grandview Academy in Iowa, where she had taught Latin, physiology and English grammar.\textsuperscript{39} Though this teaching experience was hard to apply in a country where she was not fluent in the language, it gave Mary Q. Porter confidence in her ability to teach Christianity to the Chinese girls in her school.\textsuperscript{40}

The Peking Girls’ School, begun with three unwilling girls in 1872, would, by 1910, house and instruct a willing student body of over two hundred Chinese girls. This school, renamed in 1907 the Mary Porter Gamewell School for Girls in honor of one of its founders, would be one of the most long-lived schools and certainly an important

\textsuperscript{37} At this time it was not customary for missionaries to have studied the Chinese language prior to arriving in China. However, because both Maria Kane Brown and Mary Q. Porter arrived in Fuzhou in the winter when the rivers north were blocked and were thus delayed in Fuzhou for several moths, they did have some beginning language lessons. Although Maria Kane Brown later wrote that while in Fuzhou “we did not learn much Chinese,” (Lacy, \textit{A Hundred Years of Chinese Methodism,}, 64) the three months of lessons gave them a large advantage over missionaries who arrived at their post with no knowledge of the language at all.

\textsuperscript{38} Maria Kane Brown was born in 1847 in Massachusetts.

\textsuperscript{39} Gamewell, \textit{Mary Porter Gamewell}, ed. A. H. Tuttle, 10-11.
example of mission schools in China. This chapter examines the establishment, development and unique character of this missionary school for girls in China.

2.2 FOUNDATION: 1872-1890

When the Methodist missionaries set up their educational enterprise in China, they, like the Jesuits before them, hoped to attract the attention of the “better classes” to their schools and thus to Christianity. The Protestant missionaries believed that converting the literati elite was the key to converting the whole of China, “because of the [literati’s] influence on Chinese society as a whole.”41 The Chinese literati, however, wary of foreigners and their schools, responded with either indifference, believing that the foreign schools could have nothing to offer their children in the way of education, or with outright hostility, regarding them as agents of imperialism and domination on the part of the foreign powers.42 Therefore, in order to succeed in securing a student body, Brown and Porter were forced to abandon the idea of recruiting the daughters of the literati elite, for although some elite families did educate their daughters in the home,43 their distrust of foreigners and their teachings made it unthinkable that they would send their daughters to a mission school. The association of early missionaries such as Robert Morrison and Karl Gutzlaff with the foreign imperialist powers, mostly in the role of translators, only reinforced the suspicions of the Chinese regarding Western missionaries, and “anti-foreign feeling … concentrated itself increasingly in hatred of the

41 Beahan, “The Women’s Movement and Nationalism in Late Ch’ing China,” 41.
42 Zhang Junyong, Cong tu xiu cai dao yang bo shi (Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe, 2003), 18.
43 For more information on the education of upper-class girls in the Qing dynasty please see works such as Dorothy Ko’s Teachers of the Inner Chambers: Women and Culture in Seventeenth-Century China (1994) or Susan Mann’s Precious Records: Women in China’s Long Eighteenth Century (1997).
missionaries,\textsuperscript{44} as they were both highly visible reminders of foreign military intervention in Chinese affairs and executors of their own form of cultural interference.\textsuperscript{45}

Thus, when Maria Kane Brown and Mary Q. Porter attempted to organize a school for girls “without a scholar, without apparatus, without the language, and without an acquaintance with the habits and mental attitude of the people,”\textsuperscript{46} they realized the immensity of their task. Unable to overcome the prejudice of the upper classes, they focused their efforts on attracting students from the lower class Chinese families. In attempting to achieve this feat, these two women faced two major obstacles within the lower-class population with which they dealt. On one hand they had to contend with the commonly held Chinese belief that girls were not only unable to learn, but also that it would be a waste of time and money to try to teach them; on the other hand, they had to overcome the fear and the deep suspicions of the Chinese towards the foreigners who ran the schools. Therefore, the two missionaries had to focus their search for students upon the poor of China, where they used two main tactics, buying slave girls and offering free room and board.

Because of the relatively high number of beggar and slave-girls, this desperate population was often one of the first to be successfully recruited into missionary schools. The offer of a place to sleep and food to eat, in addition to freedom from abusive masters and mistresses, was enough of an incentive for these girls to submit to the care of


\textsuperscript{45} In order to effectively preach to the Chinese, missionaries set up Missions in various cities, which meant that not only were they living icons of foreign imperialism, they were also buying land and houses – a scarce commodity in Chinese cities – for housing the missionaries, their schools, churches and hospitals.

\textsuperscript{46} Gamewell, 	extit{Mary Porter Gamewell}, ed. A. H. Tuttle, 53.
foreigners, despite “hideous tales” of foreigners. When writing on one of her students in the missionary periodical *Heathen Woman’s Friend* for supporters of the China mission back in the United States, Mary Q. Porter reported that this little girl “still carries scars that bear sad witness that the lines of her early life have fallen in hard places.”

Sold by her father to a man who wished to procure a wife for his nephew, the girl was abused by her “future mother-in-law” until the man donated the girl to the Peking Girls’ School as a solution to the quickly unraveling family situation.

To attract the daughters of poor families, for whom the feeding and clothing of an extra daughter was more burdensome than the amount of labor she could contribute to the household, missionaries offered free room and board in exchange for attendance at their school. Mary Porter Gamewell noted that:

During the first year or two of the school’s existence about sixty girls came and went away again; only seven remained. Those who brought children to the school generally brought them only that the school might relieve them of the support of the children. … Sometimes the girls were left in school only long enough to get nicely clothed, and then were taken out of school and their clothes sold or pawned.

Nor was this a problem limited to the first few years of the school. Although in later years the instances of parents enrolling then removing their children in order to sell off the new clothes and supplies seem to have decreased, continued attendance was still

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49 Ibid., 189.
50 There is no mention in the primary sources that the missionaries at the Mary Porter Gamewell School went any farther than supporting their students. There is evidence that in some schools missionary educators were forced to offer a stipend to the family to pay for the privilege of educating their daughter. See Xiong’s *Zhongguo nüzi jiaoyu shi* page 181-182 for more information.
contingent on missionary support for the student. Indeed, in the 1884 report to the WFMS, Mrs. Jewell wrote:

As the education of girls in North China is considered of no importance [to the Chinese], scarcely a girl in the school but what is put there to be clothed and fed. If the parents were required to do this, the result would be that most of the girls would stay home where they might sew or do some other kind of work by which they might earn their food.  

The education offered to these poor girls was centered on two main goals: to enable the girl to read and understand the Bible that she might become a Christian, and to teach her to become a useful member of society. The first objective resulted in courses in basic reading and writing in order to teach Christianity and the Bible. These courses were taught by Chinese teachers because of the missionary’s unfamiliarity with the language. And although the missionaries would prefer to have them taught by a Chinese Christian convert, there were very few early converts who were literate, and the missionaries usually had to settle for an elderly traditional scholar, chaperoned by a Chinese matron. Classes in understanding the Bible stories and Christian morals were taught by the missionaries, with Chinese helpers to supplement the “stammerings in a strange tongue” attempted by the missionary women.

In order to prepare the girls for their futures as wives and mothers, missionary educators offered courses in domestic skills. These consisted of instruction in simple domestic tasks, such as sewing and mending, taught by the missionaries and their female

52 Fifteenth Annual Report of the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1884 (Columbus, OH: Ohio State Journal Printing Establishment, 1885), 28.
54 Ibid., 56. Although the sources do not mention that the missionary women had any help teaching, it is likely that some of the Chinese women attached to the school or the mission, such as the matron, cook or chaperone, all of which are mentioned in the sources, served as an “invisible translator,” helping the missionary women with the language.
Indeed, in 1882, Clara Cushman wrote in a magazine article that “every article of clothing is made in school, even to shoes and stockings.” This is one area where the ideas of the Chinese and Christian missionaries as to the proper teaching of girls overlapped. When Miss Francis Wheeler wrote the story of Chen Feng, a young Chinese girl, and her quest to attend the mission school for girls, she noted that the girl’s neighbor described the missionary teacher’s “object is to give the scholars a knowledge of our characters, and to instruct them in the use of the needle.” Upon hearing that the missionary school would offer “two meals daily” in addition to this teaching, Chen Feng’s father consented to her attending.

Despite the addition of these domestic tasks and basic learning to the curriculum, the education at the school remained heavily weighted towards religious instruction. In 1885 Clara Cushman wrote in a magazine article:

Instruction has been given in arithmetic, geography, physical evidences of Christianity, history of the life of Christ, Old Testament history, music, and Chinese classics. Also, during the year, each pupil has committed to memory portions of the Gospels and Epistles, varying from five to twenty-five chapters, according to each one’s ability.

This mix of subjects clearly indicates the heavy emphasis on Christianity and Christian doctrine by the missionary teachers. The annual report in 1882 states that the girls at the Peking Girls’ School “have committed the ‘Christian Primer’ and ‘Scripture Selections’ to memory,” suggesting that the educational curriculum at this time was primarily religious and rote in nature. This report also mentions that “only Christian books are

55 Ibid., 56.
56 Clara Cushman, “Peking School-Girls” Heathen Woman’s Friend Vol. XIV No. 2 (August 1882): 44.
59 Thirteenth Annual Report of the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1882 (Columbus, OH: Ohio State Journal Printing Establishment, 1883), 27.
used [in the school], and the day’s work closes with prayer," offering further proof of a basic curricula of reading and writing based upon religious tracts. Although these sources may have emphasized the Christian nature of the education in order to appeal to potential donors back in the United States, the fact that this focus on religious education is present in so many sources, including reports, magazines and letters, indicates that religious instruction was, in fact, the most important part of the missionary school curriculum at this time.

During these foundational years at the Peking Girl’s School, the women missionaries employed there as teachers and caregivers had a difficult time both attracting and retaining students. Their solution was to recruit among the destitute – beggars, slave girls, and poverty-stricken families – for whom the economic relief of mission school care was a powerful motivator. By offering an economic incentive for school attendance in room and board, as well as training in the domestic skills that the Chinese regarded as important, the female missionaries in Beijing were able to successfully establish the Peking School for Girls.

2.3 EXPANSION: 1891-1900

Prompted by increasing enthusiasm for “Western-style learning” among Chinese elites in the 1890s, missionary schools for girls expanded both in number and in the range of subjects taught. Although the inclusion of Western subjects in Chinese education and the public education of women had been brought up as part of the Self-Strengthening Reforms since the 1860s, there had been no significant progress in either regard. Some

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60 Ibid., 27.
Qing officials, such as Zhang Zhidong, set about opening technical schools, but although these schools were fairly numerous, the effect was limited to the specific localities under the jurisdiction of sympathetic officials. By the 1890s, however, Chinese literati, gentry and Qing government officials began to debate the merits of both Western-style and female education in the broader area of the capital city, and began both publishing monographs and writing memorials to the throne. This atmosphere of interest in educational reform came to a head in 1898 when the young Emperor adopted the ideas of reformers such as Liang Qichao and Kang Youwei, and instituted what became known as the “Hundred Days Reform.” Although this brief reform period was reversed by the Dowager Empress, it stands as testament to the widespread debate in the capital over the proper method of education in China, a debate that would flare up again in 1901.

The expansion of missionary school curricula and enrollment began earlier in Beijing than in other areas of China because of the cosmopolitan nature of the imperial capital. Although there were certainly powerful men on both sides of the debate, the missionaries in Beijing hoped to capitalize on the “new utility” of Western learning and education for women advocated by those on the side of reform “to help overcome prejudice against mission schools.” In other areas with less exposure to Western ideas, Chinese elites did not begin to advocate seriously for educational reform until after China’s humiliating defeat in the first Sino-Japanese War (1894-95). Thus, because of its location in the capital, the Peking Girls’ School was one of the first missionary schools for girls to show this change in the general focus of the curriculum and enrollment.

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61 Beahan, “The Women’s Movement and Nationalism in Late Ch’ing China,” 42.
As far as what courses were offered in this new curriculum, while it is possible to determine that it was shifting to include more non-religious topics, it is difficult to tell the exact list of courses. Missionary schools, even among the same conference or denomination, had no standardized curriculum, and many of the female missionaries had little to no teaching experience. As mentioned above, it seems that in the first stage of the Peking Girls’ School history, religious instruction dominated the curriculum. By the 1890s, however, Christian missionaries, hoping to capitalize on the Chinese interest in Western learning, began to include other subjects in their curriculum.

Although missionaries had previously only included the Chinese Classics in their curriculum to satisfy the expectations of Chinese society, at this point missionary educators seemed to soften in their opposition to the Classics as “heathen” works. They recommended that the Chinese Classics take a position in missionary school education similar to that of the Latin Classics in Western education where “the press of modern progress has greatly restricted the ‘sphere of influence’ of the classics.” Another missionary school educator wrote in 1896 that the curriculum of a girls’ boarding school was to be divided into “the four departments of religion, literature, so-called Western learning and mathematics.” Clearly, religious education was reduced in importance in this period, as new subjects were introduced. In the Peking Girls’ School, these new subjects included physiology, astronomy, history, letter-writing, Chinese composition,

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62 Besides the lack of uniformity mentioned later, I was unable to locate sources for this period that listed subjects taught at the Mary Porter Gamewell School.
vocal and instrumental music and English.\textsuperscript{65} Although some of these topics had been offered prior to this period, they were now offered in more depth. For instance, though the missionary schools had previously taught music, instruction was mainly limited to singing hymns in chorus. Individualized instruction and instrument lessons, especially the organ and piano, were now offered to interested students.

Additionally, new Western-style textbooks were introduced, especially in the study of the Chinese language. In this area they kept “some of the simpler [Chinese] books, like the Three and Five Character Classics,” but advocated that the main part of the teaching come from books such as the \textit{Hongkong Readers},\textsuperscript{66} which were described as “invaluable…[as they] give much interesting information, besides the knowledge of characters and their meaning.”\textsuperscript{67} The missionary teachers were more comfortable teaching from these Western-style language texts and believed that these books resulted in a much higher quality education than the old texts, such as the \textit{Sanzi Jing} (Three-Character Classic), which missionaries believed to only lend themselves to the old recitation-and-memorization style of learning.\textsuperscript{68} Other new Western-style textbooks mentioned are Williamson’s \textit{Aids to Understanding the Bible} and Mateer’s \textit{Mandarin Arithmetic}.\textsuperscript{69}

\textsuperscript{65} E. J. Newton, “Course of Study in Girls Schools” \textit{Third Triennial Meeting of the Educational Association of China} (Shanghai: American Presbyterian Mission Press, 1900) 150.
\textsuperscript{66} The \textit{Hongkong Readers} was a series of textbooks on the Chinese language written for the mission schools by missionary Charles Hartwell in the late nineteenth century. For more information on Hartwell and his career as a textbook writer, see \textit{Teachings of Experience in the Use of Terms for God and Spirit in Foochow} by Charles Hartwell.
\textsuperscript{67}Newton, “Course of Study in Girls Schools,” 149.
\textsuperscript{68} Although the missionary teachers at the Mary Porter Game well School did use this rote memorization teaching technique earlier in the school’s history, by this time the practice was largely abandoned as a teaching method, and was only retained in the context of memorizing Bible verses, much as is practiced in church Sunday Schools today.
\textsuperscript{69}Newton, “Course of Study in Girls Schools,” 150.
In order to facilitate this introduction of new subjects, as well as to further the “prescribed course” of study introduced for the first time in 1891, the Peking Girls’ School was divided “into two separate departments, Primary and High,” in 1892. These departments made up a “regular course of study, covering eight years, four in each department.” And although the primary school seems to have remained focused on religious studies and basic literacy, there is mention of new subjects taught in the high school, such as English. The popularity of the new course of study among the Chinese is evident in the increase in enrollment, necessitating that “ten new dormitories [be] built,” with room for one hundred students in 1893.

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70 Twenty-Third Annual Report of the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1891 (Columbus, OH: Ohio State Journal Printing Establishment, 1892), 48. It is unknown whether these textbooks were printed in Chinese, as only the English title was given in the source document.

71 Twenty-Fourth Annual Report of the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1892 (Columbus, OH: Ohio State Journal Printing Establishment, 1893), 41.

72 Ibid., 42.

73 Twenty-Fifth Annual Report of the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1893 (Columbus, OH: Ohio State Journal Printing Establishment, 1894), 40.
Table 2.1: Enrollment figures for the Mary Porter Gamewell School between 1879 and 1897. Drawn from *The Annual Report of the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, 1879-1897.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Primary School Enrollment*</th>
<th>High School Enrollment*</th>
<th>Total Enrollment</th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The Mary Porter Gamewell School did not separate into two divisions, Primary and High, until 1893.

This student body was also quite different from that which had attended the school prior to 1890. As discussed above, the original students of the missionary schools for girls were usually the destitute – beggars, girls purchased off the street, and daughters of poor families. As the missionaries in Peking “began making some conversions, and as their schools became familiar, well-governed institutions, school enrollment gradually rose along with the social class of those enrolling.”74 The missionaries no longer had to purchase students, and in some cases, even began to charge tuition. A major part of this increased enrollment was the daughters of Chinese Christian converts. By this time the

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74 Beahan, “The Women’s Movement and Nationalism in Late Ch’ing China,” 41.
first converts of the North China Mission had become parents who were only too happy to send their daughters to school. As early as 1892, missionary educators reported that of the number [of students] enrolled this year fifty are members of the church. Nearly nine-tenths of these pupils are from nominally Christian homes, which gives a higher grade of character, both mentally and morally, upon which to work than in any former year.\textsuperscript{75}

Although the rise in enrollment can in part be attributed to the new subjects offered at the school and the increasing attractiveness of the Western-style education provided by the mission school, a great part of it was due to increased numbers of converts.\textsuperscript{76}

Therefore, the missionaries succeeded in their attempt to adapt to the educational needs of the Chinese by offering a greater number of Western subjects in mission schools. However, when looking at the increased enrollment, it becomes evident that although some new non-Christian pupils were attracted by the promises of Western education, the greatest growth in enrollment came from the children of Chinese Christian converts.

2.4 RECONSTRUCTION: 1901-1911

Only two years after the failure of the reform efforts of 1898, China was plunged into violence as members of an anti-foreign secret society – the Boxers – rebelled against the presence of foreign powers in Shandong. In the summer of 1900, violence erupted across China as the Boxers swept through North China, destroying foreign property and killing foreigners and Chinese Christians. In 1901, many missionaries found themselves beginning the year with the difficult task of reconstructing their mission in the wake of

\textsuperscript{75} Twenty-Third Annual Report of the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1891 (Columbus, OH: Ohio State Journal Printing Establishment, 1892), 48-49

\textsuperscript{76} While the general movement towards educational reform did incline some non-Christian families to enroll in missionary schools for girls, and this did contribute to the overall growth in enrollment, the larger proportion of incoming students were the daughters of Chinese Christian families.

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the destruction and chaos of the Boxer Rebellion. In this case, the Peking Girls’ School and its missionary teachers were extremely fortunate, as their location in the capital city had allowed them to take refuge in the foreign legations in the city.\textsuperscript{77} Although “the skies were lurid with fires started wherever there was foreign property that could be destroyed,”\textsuperscript{78} the civilian missionaries were housed in the British Legation, as it was “less exposed than the other Legations”\textsuperscript{79} to Boxer attack. Hidden in this refuge, and guarded by the combined forces of the foreign Legations in Beijing, the missionaries, their students, and hundreds of Chinese Christians survived the attack. The buildings left behind, however, were burned.

The period of reconstruction was, for the Peking Girls’ School, also significantly shorter than for other missionary schools in China. Clara Cushman would write that “one of the best things that the Boxers did was to tear down our old cramped buildings with their brick beds.”\textsuperscript{80} And indeed, she was quite pleased to report that with the indemnity paid by the Chinese for the Boxer attacks enabled the mission school to build “large and up-to-date buildings” to replace those so conveniently destroyed by the Boxers. The dismissive treatment of the violent Boxer rebels by the missionaries in Beijing was entirely due to the circumstances that allowed them to emerge from the conflict relatively

\textsuperscript{77} The exact location of the Mary Porter Gamewell School is unknown. According to Mary Porter Gamewell in \textit{Mary Porter Gamewell}, the original school was established in a “little house vacated for us by Mr. Davis and Mr. Pilcher. To this house they made an addition of one large room and built beside it a small school-house” (Gamewell, p. 54). There is no mention of whether this house was in the main Methodist Mission, or elsewhere. It was also quite common for schools to move around as larger and/or better facilities came available.

\textsuperscript{78} Gamewell, \textit{Mary Porter Gamewell}, A. H. Tuttle, ed., 195.

\textsuperscript{79} Ibid., 217.

unscathed – in fact, Cushman seems to credit the Boxer rebels as a construction crew and source of income at the same time – but others were not so lucky.\textsuperscript{81}

Because of this short period of recovery, classes at the Peking Girls’ School continued with only a very short pause. Instead of facing a period of extensive reconstruction and renewal, the school continued to develop and grow. Thus, as “the 1895 and 1900 military defeats gave rise to an outpouring of nationalism and a determination on the part of the young to save China by any and all means at hand,”\textsuperscript{82} the Peking Girls’ School was poised and ready to serve as a shining example of Christian education. The missionaries hoped that now the Chinese would embrace the Christian educational ideal – and thus Christianity itself.

The Qing government did introduce a great number of reforms of education after 1900, consisting of a new system of empire-wide government schools for boys in 1901 and for girls in 1907. This reversal of the “old position of hostility towards Western innovations”\textsuperscript{83} engendered in the Peking missionaries a hope that in this new atmosphere of “educational possibilities”\textsuperscript{84} missionary schools would be adopted by the Chinese government as examples and guides for the new school system. At the Peking Girls’ School missionary teachers and administrators believed that their school would serve as

\textsuperscript{81} This reaction seems extremely naïve on the part of the Christian missionaries in Peking, yet there is no real evidence of a more nuanced understanding of both their position and the situation in China. Although there were numerous articles in missionary periodicals debating whether or not missionaries should demand indemnity for the Boxer rebellion, in the main, there is no deeper look at either the deeper causes or the results of the Boxer Rebellion apparent in the Methodist North China Mission. As will be discussed later, this will not be the case in other areas.

\textsuperscript{82} Beahan, “The Women’s Movement and Nationalism in Late Ch’ing China,” 59.

\textsuperscript{83} Rev. E. T. Williams, “The Government and the New Learning,” \textit{The Chinese Record and Missionary Journal} Vol. 30 No. 10 (October 1899); 499.

\textsuperscript{84} Rev. T. J. Arnold, “The Coming Problem,” \textit{The Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal} Vol. 31 No. 11 (November 1900); 571.
“the forerunner of a great educational movement.” Thus, where many other missionary schools for girls around the empire were desperately trying to pick up the pieces after the Boxer Rebellion, missionaries at the Peking Girl’s School enthused over the changes they saw in the native Chinese systems of education – such as the establishment of a national public school system and the incorporation of Western learning in their curricula – and the hoped that mission schools would secure the role of exemplars for that change.

The Peking School for Girls (after 1907 the Mary Porter Gamewell School for Girls) with its well-developed structure, high enrollment, and convenient location in the capital city, home of the Qing court, was perfectly placed to be that exemplar. And the school certainly was of interest to Chinese educational reformers, such that scarcely a week passed without “one or more parties for the influential classes come asking to be shown the school.” With a large and growing enrollment, one-hundred and ninety students in 1906, and two-hundred and eighty in 1910, the Mary Porter Gamewell School for Girls certainly seemed, to the missionaries at least, to be an ideal model. They took the visits and requests for advice to mean that the Chinese were ready to build a new national education system based on the Western Christian school model.

The influence of the missionary school example on the Chinese official reformers, turned out to be, unfortunately, significantly weaker than the missionaries at the Mary Porter Gamewell School had hoped. The reason for this disappointment lay in both the widely divergent goals of the Chinese educational reformers and the missionary

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85 Hubbard, Under Marching Orders, 209.
87 Ibid., 122.
88 Mary Ninde Gamewell, “From a New Member’s Note-Book,” Woman’s Missionary Friend (January 1910); 4.
educators, as well as the autonomous nature of the missionary schools. Ultimately, the purpose of the Western missionary enterprise was to convert the Chinese to Christianity. Although social programs like schools and hospitals were established, these were all created with the goal of turning the people to Christ. As the smoke cleared from the devastation of the Boxer Rebellion Christian missionaries called not for reform of the educational system as much as regeneration, as “regeneration is the clarion call of all true educationalists in China, because if the moral change is to be permanent it must be ensured by vital spiritual forces.” But in this hope they were to be disappointed, for “no mass conversions of an enlightened population ensued.” The Chinese officials’ goal – to create a national system of education which would strengthen the country and promote Chinese nationalism – could not co-exist with the main purpose of the Western missionary enterprise: to convert the Chinese to Western Christianity.

There was also the problem of missionary school autonomy. As has been stated several times in this thesis, the missionary schools did not form any sort of unified system. Certainly “there were no uniform standards for enrollment or for determining when a student had mastered a course and could be graduated - schools offered variable years of instruction.” Therefore, the missionary’s hope that the Chinese would adopt the Protestant missionary school system was foiled by the lose organization of schools themselves.

90 Beahan, “The Women’s Movement and Nationalism in Late Ch’ing China,” 59.
Instead, the real significance of the missionary schools for girls was “in their steady injection of new ideas, information, practices, and role models into Chinese society.”\textsuperscript{92} There were two main agents of this influence, Chinese officials interested in educational reform, and the Chinese women teachers at the new government schools for girls. The Chinese officials and educators that visited the Mary Porter Gamewell School so often in the first decade of the twentieth century were not there to adopt the Christian educational system wholesale, but rather to study, adapt, and selectively adopt those Western techniques and methods they deemed appropriate for Chinese schools and society.

One of things that these officials agreed upon was the necessity of female teachers at the new government schools established by imperial command in 1907. Yet, the number of educated women, and especially women educated in Western studies, was incredibly low. As a result, a great number of the early missionary school graduates would go on to teach at the government schools. Missionary educators were aware of this trend, and in 1896 wrote “it is probable that a large number of our pupils are to be day-school and boarding-school teachers,”\textsuperscript{93} and the necessity of adjusting the curriculum at the missionary schools for girls to the needs of these future teachers. It was the pool of qualified female teachers that would allow the government schools to expand so rapidly that only one year after girls’ schools were mandated by the government, “the number of girls in government-supported schools already exceeded that of mission schools.”\textsuperscript{94}

\textsuperscript{92} Ibid., 59.
\textsuperscript{93} Cogdal, “Girl’s Boarding Schools,” 206.
\textsuperscript{94} Kwok, \textit{Chinese Women and Christianity}, 17.
2.5 INDIGENIZATION: 1912-1924

Despite weathering the 1911 Revolution, which brought down the Qing dynasty and, in fact, the entire dynastic system in China, the Chinese Christian Church in general and the missionary schools in particular came under increasing attack as “foreign” institutions in the highly nationalistic environment of the early Republic. In order to satisfy increasingly restrictive government regulations, many of the schools, including the Mary Porter Gamewell School, made changes that resulted in a gradual indigenization of these institutions. The most important change made was to include native Chinese in the decision-making processes of school administration. By 1924, this process of the indigenization was generally complete, with most schools, including the Mary Porter Gamewell School for Girls, employing Chinese headmasters and complying with government regulations that forbade mandatory religious education in schools.

From the very beginning, missionaries had been forced to employ many Chinese in their girls’ schools, ranging from cooks to matrons to teachers, yet these Chinese were never involved in the running of the school itself. Management and administration of the missionary schools were the preserve of the more “enlightened” Western Christian missionaries. In an 1899 article, one missionary remarked on how fortunate it was that “the schools [mission schools] which have done most to introduce the sciences of the West, are not under [Chinese] control.” A common missionary complaint at this time was that if it was up to the Chinese, missionaries would only teach English in the schools, since the Chinese wanted to avail their children of the economic advantages speaking

95 Although the indigenization movement at this time was more generally directed at the Christian Church in China, this thesis will concentrate on the effects of this movement within the missionary school for girls.
English could bring. One missionary remarks in response to this particular debate that “we are better judges than the Chinese of what they need; we must not merely teach what they want.”

Another article notes the “growing sentiment in favor of giving no money to the Chinaman, either to teach or to preach.” The missionaries seem to have regarded the Chinese as either too irresponsible to be trusted with the powers of administration, or too ignorant to know what to do if they had it. This issue was the true sticking point with many Chinese, who believed that as long as the Western missionaries controlled the funding of the mission schools for girls, they would continue to be foreign institutions, regardless of how many Chinese were employed as teachers or staff.

After 1912, however, this negative attitude towards Chinese involvement in the management of the mission schools for girls began to change, and missionaries began to offer more and more administrative power and autonomy to their Chinese Christian partners. This change was a direct result of the nationalist fervor of the early years of the Republic of China. After the fall of the Qing dynasty, and indeed the entire dynastic system, in 1911, the fragmented Chinese society was united in its desire to see a strong China emerge from the ashes of the Qing. Faced with increased imperialism from the West, the Chinese reacted by rejecting foreign models, and their “demand for recovering educational rights, first made by intellectuals and young students, [came to be] echoed by people from all walks of life.”

98 Ibid., 16.
as foreigners, and Christianity as a foreign doctrine, from both government and popular sources, the missionaries had to adjust to increasing demands for Chinese control of their educational system. In order to break free of the seeming alienation of the missionary schools, which were by this time educating more students than ever before (though they were almost all Chinese Christians) from Chinese society, which was largely non-Christian, the missionary schools for girls worked to include native Chinese in its administration.

At the Mary Porter Gamewell School, this indigenization was a slow process. The school was located in a large and well-staffed mission center in the metropolis of Beijing, which hosted a large foreign population in the legations in addition to the missionary presence. As a consequence, the missionary educators at the school were not as dependent on Chinese helpers and teachers as in other locations. Although Chinese Christian teachers were an important part of the teaching staff, they had only a limited authority within the school, usually dealing only with student behavior rather than school curriculum or policy. For instance, in 1915 Gertrude Gilman reported that the five Chinese women teachers at the Mary Porter Gamewell School were “an important factor in the management, for they live right in the dormitories with the girls and there are many details they can manage better than a foreigner.”

The Mary Porter Gamewell School did not actively begin to indigenize its administration until the 1920s, when the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC) in China as

100 The missionary presence in Beijing was not limited to evangelists, but also included many missionary schools, and several schools for girls, including the Bridgeman Academy, The School of Gentleness, and the Bei Hua Girls’ Middle School. For more information see Yin’s “Lishi – Xingbie – Shehui,” page 348.
a whole was subject to “forced indigenization.” This is not to imply that the missionaries actively opposed indigenization, but rather, that “there is no evidence that the Methodist Episcopal Church established a mission in China in 1848 with a formal plan to indigenize a church.” Whether this indicated that the MEC missionaries felt that indigenization of the church in China was a primary goal that did not require spelling out, or that they had no plan to indigenize and instead intended to remain in charge of the church indefinitely, is unknown. Yet, the lack of a clear policy meant that when the movement “to make the church more nearly Chinese” gained momentum after 1918, it was often up to individual missionaries to decided exactly what form indigenization would take in their institution.

As for the Mary Porter Gamewell School for Girls, by 1924 “the administrative power of the school was handed over to the Chinese.” The missionaries taught only a few classes, and mainly concerned themselves with religious activities, now optional for all students. Although the church did not give up all of its administrative power in the school, it was much reduced. By 1924, as a result of increasing indigenization, both by Chinese Christian converts within the school and government regulations from without, the Mary Porter Gamewell School had become a Chinese Christian, rather than a Western Christian institution.

102 Marcelline D. Jenny, “Reading Between the Lines: The Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Indigenization Question in 1920s China” (PhD diss., Drew University, 2006), 1.
103 Ibid., 13.
2.6 CONCLUSION

The Mary Porter Gamewell School for Girls was a missionary school founded by members of the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Peking in 1872. Each of these facts – the people, the place and the time – seriously influenced not only the day-to-day running of this school, but also the general development of the school as an educational institution. While the school’s history in many ways echoes trends that will be found within later discussions of other missionary schools for girls, it is clear that in several areas, such as the financial support available to its founders, its proximity to the Qing court, and participation in the various educational reforms in the capital, the Mary Porter Gamewell School for Girls was unique.
CHAPTER 3

THE PRECIOUS DEW SCHOOL

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The second missionary school for girls examined in this study is the Precious Dew School for Girls, which eventually settled in Taigu (太谷), Shanxi Province. Originally founded by Lydia Lord Davis as the Fenzhou Girls’ School in 1893, this school was quite different from the metropolitan Mary Porter Gamewell School. Firstly, the Precious Dew School for Girls was located in Shanxi Province, an inland province at some distance from the capital at Beijing and even farther from the treaty-port culture of the eastern coast. Nor was it located in the capital of the province at Taiyuan, but instead out in the countryside. Fenzhou, a prefectural (fu) city of roughly 50,000 people, was located almost one hundred miles southwest from Taiyuan, the capital of Shanxi. Taigu, an even smaller city with a population of only 20,000 people was located roughly forty miles south of Taiyuan, and sixty miles northeast from Fenzhou. Travelers from Beijing had to travel over two weeks to Taiyuan, and longer to reach Taigu or Fenzhou, so both news and change came slowly to the area.

108 Ibid., 7-8.
* This map ends on the far right side as shown, with Taiku (Taigu) nearly cut off. The Yellow River can be seen in the middle of the map dividing Shensi (Shaanxi) and Shansi (Shanxi) provinces.

Image 3.1: 1924 Map of Shanxi and Shaanxi Provinces with Fenchow (Fenzhou) and Taiku (Taigu) Marked. *Fenchow* Vol. VI No. 2 (November 1924).

Secondly, the group of missionaries in Shanxi was also different from those in Beijing. The Oberlin Shanxi Mission (Congregationalist) was founded in 1882 when seven men and women, mostly Oberlin graduates, arrived in Shanxi province. These missionaries were supported both by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) based in Boston, and through donations from Oberlin College in Oberlin, Ohio. The Oberlin missionaries claimed to be “guided by the conviction that

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109 The original members of the Oberlin Shanxi Mission in 1882 were: Charles and Annie Tenney, Chauncy Cady, Iraeneus and Annette Atwood, and Martin and Emily Stimson.
biblical instruction was only possible among the literate,“110 and thus their mission would take education as its first priority. Yet, there seemed to be some confusion within the ranks of the new mission, with some claiming “a view to an educational and miss’y [missionary] work rather than to a miss’y and educational work,”111 and these “several missionaries were determined to proceed as soon as possible with the establishment of schools.”112 Others believed that “first evangelism took priority,”113 and focused their efforts in that direction. Thus, the mission, got off to a very slow start with missionaries following their own personal agendas. While Maria Kane Brown and Mary Q. Porter managed to successfully establish a school for girls within six months in Beijing, it was not until seven years after their arrival in China that the Oberlin Shanxi Mission opened their first school, a grammar school exclusively for boys, in Taigu (1889).114

There were a number of reasons why the Oberlin missionaries felt that for the first seven years of their mission “the times are not now ripe for beginning educational work.”115 The major obstacle seemed to be the “reluctance on the part of Chinese parents”116 to send their children to the foreign missionary compound for schooling. Members of the literati elite “could not believe that the foreign schools offered anything worth learning,” and the lower classes considered “education … a luxury which few felt they could afford.”117 Another problem was the suspicious attitude of the Chinese towards the foreigners, often compounded by their demands to buy land in the area, the

111 Nat Brandt, Massacre in Shansi (San Jose, CA: toExcel, 1999), 28.
112 Carlson, Oberlin in Asia, 12.
113 Ibid., 12.
114 Brandt, Massacre in Shansi, 32-33.
115 Minutes of the Annual Meeting, May 1887, Shanxi Mission, OSMA, OCA.
116 Brandt, Massacre in Shansi, 33.
117 Carlson, Oberlin in Asia, 12.
right to which was enforced by the unequal treaty system and often resulted in government intervention into village life. These attitudes combined to make it extremely difficult to secure students for a missionary school.

Added to these problems was a near-constant turnover in missionary personnel, which made it difficult to administer the school and keep teachers in it. Martin Luther Stimson, one of the Oberlin missionaries, blamed “the American Board in part for the failure of the Shansi Mission to accomplish more because it hadn’t sent out enough missionaries to man it.” Lydia Lord Davis was one of the “reinforcements” sent by the ABFM. A missionary wife with the Oberlin Shansi Band (Congregationalist), Lydia, with her husband Francis Davis, arrived in China in 1889.

Although Lydia Lord Davis was a graduate of the Normal School in Ada, Ohio, (now Ohio Northern University) and had taught second grade for three years in Ravenna, Ohio, she did not have any grand plan for continuing her educational work in China. She did not, however, approve of the Chinese failure to educate girls, and, prompted by the arrival of a blind beggar girl to the mission courtyard, decided to go against tradition and start a school herself. This blind beggar would become the first scholar at the Girls’ School, an institution that would move from place to place under the care of various missionary women before settling in Taigu in 1905 as the Precious Dew School for Girls.

Thus, the Precious Dew School for Girls was founded under circumstances quite different from those that shaped the Mary Porter Gamewell School discussed in the previous chapter. They were located in difference places and run by different people.

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118 For instance, Christian missionaries often appealed to the local yamen to uphold their “right” to buy property in China, and missionaries were commonly involved in the lawsuits of their converts.


120 Ibid., 39.
The educational institution founded in metropolitan Beijing with its large foreign presence and numerous missionary staff looks quite different compared to the school established in rural Shanxi where the bare handful of missionaries were routinely mobbed by curious Chinese who had never before seen a foreigner. This chapter will examine the unique development of the Precious Dew School for Girls.

3.2 FOUNDATION: 1893-1897

Francis and Lydia Lord Davis arrived in Tianjin China in 1889, and over the next three weeks, traveled 350 miles to Fenzhou. Lydia Lord Davis wrote in her unpublished memoir:

Our destination was Fenchow, a city of about fifty thousand. Our home was in a Chinese house in the central part of the city. It was built around an open court. It was supposed to be a haunted house, and so was sold to the missionaries. It was comfortable, but exceedingly primitive. Here we lived for five years – never seeing any ghosts, of course.  

It was during this time that, confronted with the fact that “only two girls I had met could read,” Davis decided to found a school for girls in the Fenzhou mission compound.

After having “a Chinese room prepared and whitewashed, with clean mats,” however, Davis was faced with the problem of attracting students to her school. As mentioned above, there was little enthusiasm among the Chinese for enrolling their children in missionary schools, let alone their girl children. While, by 1893, reformers in the capital in Beijing were advocating female education as a means of strengthening the nation, this attitude had not yet penetrated more inland areas such as Shanxi – certainly it...

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had not made it past the provincial capital at Taiyuan, miles away. So the Chinese reaction to a missionary school for girls was overwhelmingly negative. Davis recalls that:

> The Chinese all laughed at me for wanting a girls’ school, saying, “We never heard of such a thing. If girls can cook and sew, that is quite sufficient. Moreover, they couldn’t learn anyway.” – and, as a clinching argument – “take your book out to the stable; hold it up before the donkey; if the donkey can learn to read, then the girls can learn.”

As attested to by the various versions of this story, in which teaching women to read was likened to teaching animals such as horses and donkeys, this was a common attitude of the lower-class Chinese in regards to female education.

On the other hand, there was a long tradition of female education among some – although certainly not all – of the upper literati families. In these families daughters would be educated with their brothers up to a certain age (usually seven years), or private tutors would be employed “to teach the Chinese Classics,” to the females of the household. This traditional method of in-home education for girls preserved the Chinese cultural ideal of “男生外，女生内” (nan sheng wai, nü sheng nei, ‘A man lives outside, a woman lives inside’) which strictly divided men and women into two separate spheres – inside (women) and outside (men). The literati class, however, suspicious of foreign doctrine and disapproving of public education for girls, often refused to interact with foreign missionaries, leaving the missionaries no choice but to work with the lower classes.

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124 Ibid., 40.
125 Xiong Xianjun, Zhongguo nüzi jiaoyu shi (Taiyuan shi: Shanxi jiaoyu chubanshe, 2006), 181. This story is very similar to the one quoted above, and has a man telling the missionary visiting his house that trying to educate his daughter would be the same as trying to educate his horse. Another man, identified as a Christian in the text, kindly told the missionary that educating girls was foolish, since girls could not learn (哦，但女人们是学不会的).
126 Carlson, Oberlin in Asia, 12.
127 Wu Yan, Cong xiao jiao nü ren dao she hui ban bian tian (Chengdu: Sichuan Renmin chubanshe, 2003), 1.
Therefore, in order to attract female students to her school, Lydia Lord Davis embarked on a campaign that resembled in many ways that of Maria Kane Brown and Mary Q. Porter two decades earlier: she focused her attention on the truly destitute and desperate, offering financial inducements to enroll in her school. In fact, as mentioned above, her very first pupil was a young girl named Chin Huan (“Golden Circle”), a blind beggar who had wandered into the missionary courtyard looking for money or a bit of food. Chin Huan had “been sold by her mother to a wealthy family a short time before but severe sickness had resulted in blindness and she was no longer wanted.”

Unhealthy, blind and desperate, she became, in exchange for room and board, the first student in Lydia Lord Davis’ school for girls in Fenzhou. Chin Huan was joined by three daughters of an impoverished Christian convert, as well as by Half Cash, a girl found abandoned by the side of a road. Gathering these, and other, impoverished girls to her, Lydia Lord Davis founded her school for girls with “six girls in one small room in the large city of Fenchow – 1893.”

The education which Lydia Lord Davis provided, despite previous Oberlin missionary statements about the importance of literacy, was highly religious in nature. She proudly tells readers that “soon [Chin Huan] was committing to memory whole books of the New Testament and singing hymns constantly.” Although Chin Huan was blind, and thus would be unable to learn to read and write Chinese, it seems that all

128 Lydia Lord Davis, “Beginnings in the Girls’ School” Fenchow (November 1924); 4.
129 Ibid., 4.
130 The reason for this change in emphasis is not known. It could have to do with the difficulty of teaching Chinese, a willingness to reconcile with members of the group whose main focus was proselytization, or Lydia Lord Davis’ personal interests. Another possibility is that reading and writing was given a larger emphasis than recorded here, as most of the source material on this early period had to do with the education of Chin Huan, who was blind, and therefore unable to learn how to read and write.
131 Ibid., 4.
of the students at the school would follow this general curriculum. This focus was a result not only of mission policy, but also a result of the fact that the only teachers at the school were Lydia Lord Davis, who was at first far from fluent in Chinese and “a woman who [Davis] thought would be suitable as a teacher and matron.” Davis’ limited Chinese was certainly insufficient to teach complicated subjects such as the Chinese Classics, and given the paucity of Chinese women who could read, noted earlier, the Chinese female teacher and matron was almost certainly illiterate. Despite this lack of broad education, the economic benefits seemed sufficient to draw and retain students, since, “after a few years the number [of students] had increased to fifteen girls.”

After residing in Fenzhou for five years, Francis and Lydia Davis moved to the walled village of Rencun (任村), located fourteen miles to the northeast of Taigu, in 1895. They had thought to found a new Mission station, the third after Taigu and Fenzhou, and when they moved Lydia “took her school girls along.” That these girls simply moved with their teacher is indicative of their status in society – most of them were orphans, or rescued from the street – who either had no parents to protest that they were being taken away, or whose parents thought it worthwhile to dispose of one more mouth to feed.

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133 Ibid., 6.
135 Heebner, “Pioneering Education for Girls” Fenchow (November 1924); 6.
3.3 EXPANSION: 1898-1900

In 1897 the Davis family returned to the United States on furlough, leaving the administration of the school at Rencun in the hands of another Oberlin Shanxi Mission missionary. Mrs. Tinnie Thompson took on administration of the school for two years, during which time she decreed that the school would “admit girls with unbound feet only,” which led to a decrease in enrollment, with only eight students in 1898. When Mrs. Thompson died in the summer of 1899 the school was assigned to Miss Mary Louise Partridge. Miss Partridge, who preferred to be called by her middle name, had arrived in Shanxi in 1893. Her work prior to 1899 focused on evangelizing village women in the area around Taigu and, although she was based in Li Man, a small village about five miles outside of Taigu, she toured the countryside to talk with women about the Gospel. Soon after she assumed responsibility for the girls’ school in Rencun, however, she came to the conclusion that “the more I teach the better I like it.” She then “brought the schoolgirls to Li Man, holding classes in her own quarters until she could rent additional space.”

This short period in the history of the Precious Dew School (1897-1900) was quite unsettled, with three different missionary teachers, two different locations, and very little monetary support. In her 1899 report on the Girls’ School, Louise Partridge wrote:

> With no school room, insufficient sleeping room, no teacher, high prices, little money and one half the pupils raw and undisciplined, it was a struggle and unsatisfactory. But the girls did their own work, became

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136 Louise Partridge to Alice Moon Williams, Report of the Girls’ School for 1899, OCA
138 Louise Partridge to Alice Moon Williams, May 29, 1899, Williams Papers, OCA.
139 Brandt, *Massacre in Shanxi*, 89.
accustomed to the routine of school life, were brave little helpers in economizing and learned moderately. ¹⁴⁰

Louise Partridge, disappointed with the result of that first year of schooling, was soon able to secure a new Chinese teacher, “Ruth [Fan], the T’ung Chow girl for the school,”¹⁴¹ in early 1900. Restoring order to the school, Partridge does not mention an actual curriculum, but clearly mentions new subjects being taught, such as biology, physical geography and Mencius.¹⁴²

Although it is clear that the type of education offered by the school was shifting from a primarily religious curriculum to one that featured various Western subjects as well, the reason for this change is not as obvious in this case as it was in the Mary Porter Gamewell School in Beijing. There the desire for reform and self-strengthening of the country on the part of various Chinese officials, culminating with the Hundred Days Reform on the part of the Emperor in 1898, was a potent social force. In inland Shanxi, however, the missionaries had neither the advantage of proximity to the Qing court and reformist literati nor that of some other provinces such as Guangdong and Hubei, where reform-minded governors like Zhang Zhidong helped spread this impetus towards educational change.¹⁴³

That something of the movement reached Shanxi is clear, for the Girls’ School, currently in Li Man, did respond to an external impetus for educational change by adding these new subjects, but it is difficult to tell whether this influence came from the Chinese

¹⁴⁰ Louise Partridge to Alice Moon Williams, Report of the Girls’ School for 1899, OCA
¹⁴¹ Louise Partridge to Alice Moon Williams, March 25, 1900, Williams Papers, OCA
¹⁴² Louise Partridge to Alice Moon Williams, May 29, 1899, Williams Papers, OCA.
¹⁴³ See William Ayers Chang Chih-tung and Educational Reform in China chapter five for a discussion of the schools founded by Zhang Zhidong, mainly in Guangdong and Hubei, between 1885 and 1898. Pages 105-106 give a list of these institutions.
people outside the mission or from the missionaries themselves, who, through access to some centralized mission association or journal, could have been aware of the greater Chinese receptiveness to new subjects. In this case it is probable that the information on the reforms in the capitol and other large eastern cities arrived by means of journals and newsletters. There are no sources available that show that the missionary educators were told of these changes by Chinese natives, yet, several letters from missionary women mention that they tried to keep as up-to-date with the missionary periodicals as possible. The missionaries often treated these journals as circulars, reading them and passing them on. For instance, Luella Miner wrote in a letter that she had recently received an “Oberlin News, which Mrs. Sheffield sent me from T’ungchow,” \(^{144}\) in all likelihood she would send it on to another missionary in China when she was done. Thus an article about the state of affairs in other areas, such as Beijing, Shanghai or even the US, was available (sometimes significantly after the fact) in rural Shanxi.

3.4 RECONSTRUCTION: 1903-1911

The Boxer Rebellion in the summer of 1900 was a catastrophic event for the Oberlin Shanxi Mission and the missionary school for girls at Li Man. On July 31\(^{st}\), 1900, the six Oberlin missionaries stationed in the Taigu area and many of their Chinese associates were killed by Boxer rebels.\(^{145}\) Among those killed were Mary Louise Partridge, the Chinese teacher Ruth Fan, and several students from the girls’ school.\(^{146}\) In

\(^{144}\) Luella Miner to Alice Moon Williams, May 30, 1904, Williams Papers, OCA.


\(^{146}\) A list of the missionaries who died in Taigu is given in Nat Brandt’s Massacre in Shanxi pp. 294-95.
all, fifteen Oberlin missionaries were killed, contributing to the total of one-hundred and fifty-nine foreigners murdered in Shanxi in the summer of 1900.\textsuperscript{147} The death toll among the Chinese Christian community was even higher.\textsuperscript{148} The massacre was “another Alamo, with no survivors,”\textsuperscript{149} leaving the Christian mission in Shanxi totally destroyed.

Dr. Iranaeus Atwood, a former Oberlin missionary who had lived in Shanxi “volunteered to return to China to help restore the Shansi Mission,”\textsuperscript{150} and was part of the missionary delegation to Shanxi in 1901. Dr. Atwood reburied the discarded remains of the Oberlin Shanxi missionaries in a fine cemetery in Taigu on August 9\textsuperscript{th}, 1901.\textsuperscript{151} He was joined by his wife in 1903, and a new group of Oberlin missionaries; Dr. William and Mary Hemingway, Rev. Paul and Miriam Corbin, and Miss Flora K. Heebner arrived in Shanxi in 1904 to rebuild the Mission.\textsuperscript{152}

When Mrs. Atwood arrived in Taigu in the fall of 1903, she found “seven girls, the remnant of Miss Partridge’s school.”\textsuperscript{153} Although there had been seventeen girls in the school when it was destroyed, several of them had been killed and others fled. Mrs. Atwood took the older girls “to study in Bridgeman Academy, Peking,”\textsuperscript{154} and the younger girls were placed in a co-educational school run by a Chinese Christian until the

\textsuperscript{148} The exact number of Chinese Christians who died is not clear. In Paul Leaton Corbin’s “The Third Decade of the Shansi Mission” account he states that “over fifty [Chinese] Christians and inquirers lost their lives.”
\textsuperscript{149} Ibid., 2.
\textsuperscript{150} Ibid., 2.
\textsuperscript{151} Brandt, \textit{Massacre in Shansi}, 273.
\textsuperscript{152} Ibid., 275.
\textsuperscript{153} Alice Moon Williams, “Oberlin’s Great Investment in China” \textit{The Oberlin Alumni Magazine} Vol. V No. 4 (January 1909); 146.
\textsuperscript{154} “Taiku Station: Report of Woman’s Work,” 17.
girls’ school could be rebuilt. When Miss Flora Heebner arrived in 1904, the care of re-establishing the school for girls fell to her.

In 1905 the school for girls was reopened in Taigu, and it “was named ‘Precious Dew’ in memory of two martyrs, Miss Bird and Miss Partridge – this is the meaning of their names in Chinese.” Though it started with only eight girl students, there was a rapid increase in enrollment:

By June of the first year, the eight scholars had become fifteen. In 1906 there were 21 girls, in 1907 25, in 1908 27 and 1909 27 (the limit of accommodation in those quarters). In 1910, in new quarters in the South Suburb, 33 scholars have been received by crowding, but no further growth can be allowed, until we have the much-hoped-for Girl’s School Building.

Although this school was significantly smaller than the Mary Porter Gamewell School for Girls in Beijing, it seems that part of the reason for the much smaller enrollment was the limited space for the school. Located as it was in a small city in inland Shanxi, the school was not as well-funded as its counterpart in cosmopolitan Beijing. The missionary reports and letters all echo a constant need for funding for the school, and the difficulty of running the institution on a limited budget. Nor was financial support forthcoming from the local officials or population. Given the indifference of the local Chinese officials, and the relative paucity of reform-minded literati in Shanxi Province, the Precious Dew School for Girls lacked the financial support needed to make the sweeping changes found in missionary schools for girls in large urban areas.

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Despite the above, there is ample evidence of new topics being taught at the Precious Dew School, such as arithmetic and the Chinese Classics.\textsuperscript{157} The annual report to the ABCFM in 1907 stated that “we have been able to take another important forward step in advancing the school curriculum – it is now the same as the preparatory course for the [Bridgeman] Academy and the Union Woman’s College in Peking.”\textsuperscript{158} And in 1911 the range of topics taught was sufficient to require four teachers:

Miss Gehman was in charge, and has taught seven classes in the mornings. Miss Chia Fu Lien took up the duties left by Mrs. Su, and Wang Chiu Hua, another of our Peking girls spending the year at home under the physician’s orders, has also helped in teaching. Mr. Wang taught the Classics as last year, and the work has gone by very easily with such a full staff of teachers.\textsuperscript{159}

Another change, more directly related to the educational reform movement by Chinese educational reformers occurring in the large urban cities to the east, was the introduction of new textbooks by the Chinese.\textsuperscript{160} The expansion of public education and the new market for Western-style textbooks “represented an enormous educational and commercial opportunity for responsive publishers.”\textsuperscript{161} Publishing houses such as the Commercial Press raced to produce texts that would suit the new “modern” system of education that was set up by the Empress Dowager starting in 1901.\textsuperscript{162} The result was that the students at the Precious Dew School for Girls, even as far from the center of

\textsuperscript{158} Ibid., 12.
\textsuperscript{159} “Taiku Station: Report of Woman’s Work,” 19.
\textsuperscript{160} These new textbooks, most of them written and printed by the Chinese, were printed in response to the reforms initiated by reform-minded Chinese officials who, although they advocated the inclusion of Western subjects and Western methods, did not usually approve of Christianity. Thus the texts were generally non-religious in nature.
\textsuperscript{161} Christopher Reed, \textit{Gutenberg in Shanghai: Chinese Print Capitalism, 1876-1937} (Vancouver, UBC Press, 2004), 211.
\textsuperscript{162} Ibid., 188.
educational publishing in Shanghai as they were, were introduced to new topics and reintroduced to old ones in the new textbooks.

For instance:

A new set of textbooks are in use, along modern educational lines. Elementary science textbooks, and the new language study as developed in Mrs. Jewell’s primer, and Wang Hang Tang’s readers seems to please the girls and are easier and more attractive by far than the old hit-or-miss system of learning characters. Except for the committing to memory the Bible and some Chinese classics, the old system of parrot-like memorizing has gone out of use, and no one is sorry.  

This particular statement is interesting both as a testament to the changing educational curriculum and teaching methods in the Precious Dew School, but also to show how far from the more “modern” Mary Porter Gamewell School this particular institution was. The primer of which the report speaks was written by Mrs. Jewell, who was the principal at the Mary Porter Gamewell School. So while the missionaries in Beijing were active in the educational reform movement and writing new textbooks, the missionaries in interior Shanxi Province were recipients of these new materials after the fact, rather than active participants in their production.

3.5 INDIGENIZATION: 1912-1924

Compared to the trauma that accompanied the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, the Oberlin Shanxi Mission emerged from the Chinese Revolution in 1911 relatively unscathed. With the establishment of the Republic of China in 1912, however, foreign institutions such as the missionary schools came under increasing amounts of censure. The reaction of the Oberlin missionaries to the increasing levels of nationalistic fervor

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among the Chinese was dictated both by their relative distance from the urban centers on the eastern coast in which the “China for the Chinese” movement centered, and the welcoming attitude of the missionaries towards cooperation with the Chinese government and people. Because of these two factors, the Precious Dew School for Girls was fully indigenized prior to 1924, when the government enacted laws to enforce such action.

The location of the Precious Dew School for Girls was a major factor in this early indigenization. Taigu was not only located in inland Shanxi, far from the Westernized treaty ports, but it also lay in the rural areas of that province, south of the provincial capital of Taiyuan. This out-of-the-way location meant that, other than the Oberlin missionaries, foreigners very rarely visited. The total number of foreigners living in Shanxi at this time is unknown, but, at the time of the Boxer Rebellion there were only roughly one-hundred and sixty foreigners living in the province at the time. At that same time, there were “more than 900 foreigners in the capital [Beijing] – diplomats, troops of eight nations and missionaries.” Because of this numerical disadvantage, from the very beginning of the Mission, the Oberlin missionaries were much more dependent on the help of native Chinese and Chinese Christian converts than their counterparts in other cities with a larger foreign presence.

The Oberlin missionaries also took a much more cooperative view of the role of their schools within the greater system of Chinese education. Although they retained the missionary ideal of their institutions as examples of modern education, they also did not

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165 Corbin, “The Third Decade of the Shansi Mission,” 2.
wish to place themselves in opposition to native Chinese educational efforts. As early as 1914, the Shanxi District Annual Report to the ABCFM stated that:

[Christian Schools] must in no sense attempt to rival the government schools, that is, work in opposition with them. Christian educators should be friendly allies of government education, and Christian schools helpers to government schools. The example of our schools should stimulate better work. We should work in closest harmony with the Government schools, and wherever feasible unite with them.  

And while there is necessarily a gap between report and actual practice, there are several examples of this spirit of cooperation on the part of the missionary schools, such as the inclusion of Chinese natives on the Educational Board of the Mission in 1913, and the incorporation of Chinese officials into school ceremonies such as graduation.

As for the Precious Dew School for Girls itself, it is clear from the sources that new subjects were being introduced at this time. A 1915 report lists “classes of ‘thousand characters,’ history, geography, arithmetic, Chinese, hygiene, psychology, social science, worship, [and] home economics.” While some of these subjects are familiar from earlier periods, psychology and social science are certainly new. The most dramatic change, however, was in school administration, with the appointment of a

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168 Ibid., 25.

169 “Commencement Exercises Memorial Academy Taikuhsien,” *Oberlin Shansi Memorial Association News Bulletin* (October 1913); 1.

170 It is not clear what exactly this subject involved. It could refer to the Chinese Classics, or to the *Qianzi Wen* (Thousand-Character Essay) that was used as a primer in China, or something else entirely.


172 Some of these subjects, for instance psychology (and social science, although it is difficult to tell exactly what that means), are not even mentioned in the curriculum of larger schools like the Mary Porter Gamewell School in Beijing. In fact, this is the only source that mentions such topics taught, leading to the conclusion that rather than psychology being a part of the general curriculum, it was perhaps the interest of a particular teacher at this school who decided to teach it. This echoes the trend, also seen in the Mary Porter Gamewell School, to add “college-preparatory” type subjects to the curriculum.
Chinese headmistress. Although Miss Flora Heebner, the former principal of the Precious Dew School, moved on to administer the school for married women (generally educating Bible Women\textsuperscript{173}), she was replaced by Miss Alzina Munger and her assistant, Miss Liu Lan Hua.\textsuperscript{174} When Miss Munger left for the United States on furlough in 1920, “Miss Liu stepped under the responsibility [sic]” and became the principal.\textsuperscript{175} Nor was this the only example of the importance of native Chinese in the school – for they served as teachers as well as administrators. Jeannette Ferris, upon her visit to the Precious Dew School in 1920, wrote:

> The other members of the faculty are Chinese, Christians of course, and splendidly loyal. All of them could teach in government schools at one-half to one-third more salary than the mission pays them, but they are loyal because the school needs them. The authorities are eager to secure our graduates as teachers in government schools.

Thus it is clear that by 1920 the Precious Dew School was quite thoroughly indigenized, with native Chinese in positions of authority at all levels.

This willing inclusion of Chinese Christians in the administration of the Precious Dew school is quite different from the situation in the Mary Porter Gamewell school in Beijing, where various factors – such as a lesser dependence on Chinese Christian natives, a larger number of missionary personnel, and the lack of a clear policy on the indigenization from the sponsoring Methodist Episcopal Church – resulted in a slower process of indigenization. In Taigu, the mission was much smaller, usually staffed by six to eight missionaries, and the foreign population in the entire province was less than that

\textsuperscript{173} A Bible Woman was a native Chinese woman who was taught Christian precepts and the Bible in order to proselytize Chinese women in their homes. Sometimes these women would learn spoken English in order to serve as translators, but their education was primarily evangelical in nature.


\textsuperscript{175} Ibid., 6.
of Beijing. Although there is no evidence of a written indigenization plan by the Oberlin Shanxi mission, there was, as noted above, a greater acceptance of Chinese agency within the church and church institutions. Thus, the process of indigenization occurred earlier and more thoroughly within the Precious Dew School for Girls than in the Mary Porter Gamewell School, as native Chinese already held positions of greater authority by simple necessity.

3.6 CONCLUSION

The Precious Dew School for Girls was founded in 1893 in Fenzhou, Shanxi, by Mrs. Lydia Lord Davis. All three of these factors – time, location, and the personalities of the missionaries involved in its administration – would heavily influence the subsequent development of the school. Perhaps the most important of these factors in creating the unique trajectory of development in the Precious Dew School was its location in rural Shanxi. The small towns or villages in which it was located, Fenzhou, Rencun, Li Man and Taigu, were placed far from the educational reforms and movements of the eastern coast. Therefore, although the Precious Dew School existed in the same time period as other missionary schools for girls, the slow dispersion of new ideas and heavily urban nature of educational change at the time resulted in the Precious Dew School experiencing a very different society in any given year than did the Mary Porter Gamewell School in Beijing.

Similarly important, but still linked to the location of the school, was the attitude of the missionaries who ran it. The location meant that there was not a large foreign population available to support the missionaries and their schools, necessitating greater
involvement by the native population in the running of the school. Yet, quite aside from this necessity, from the sources available, it seems that the missionaries in Taigu were also much more open to participation by the native Chinese Christians. The efforts of school teachers and Christian converts were frequently praised in reports, articles and letters, quite frequently by name; this was less common in the literature on the Mary Porter Gamewell School. It is likely that, due to the location of the Precious Dew School for Girls, the necessity of involving native Chinese in the administration of the school allowed these Chinese to demonstrate their competence in this area, encouraging the missionaries to allow them more authority. The positive attitude of the Oberlin Shanxi missionaries towards Chinese agency led to a more thorough and earlier indigenization of the Precious Dew School for Girls than for other missionary schools for girls at the time.
CHAPTER 4

LYDIA LORD DAVIS SCHOOL

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The third missionary school for girls examined in this thesis is the Lydia Lord Davis School for Girls, located in Fenzhou, Shanxi. As noted in the previous chapter, Mrs. Lydia Lord Davis began a school from girls in Fenzhou, Shanxi Province, in 1893 as part of the Oberlin Shanxi Mission. In 1895 Lydia Lord Davis and her husband moved to the small village of Rencun, taking with her the girls students from Fenzhou. It was this group of girls that would move from place to place under the tutelage of several different missionary women and that later formed the core of the Precious Dew School for Girls in Taigu, Shanxi. There would be no real contact between the two schools after this parting in 1895, despite their being run by the same missionary congress and location in the same province.

As for Fenzhou, however, there would not be another girls’ school established after the Davis’ move to Rencun. At the time only two missionary families were stationed there, the Prices and the Atwaters, which left only four able-bodied adults to carry out all of the Mission projects. Both Charles Price and Ernest Atwater were much involved in the boys’ school in Fenzhou, leaving the subject of girls’ education, as was customary, to their wives. But Eva Price, by far the more experienced missionary in
Fenzhou, felt that she had all the duties she could handle in “taking care of the children, studying with the teacher an hour each day, doing my sewing, and overseeing the place in general.”\(^{176}\) Lydia Lord Davis had commented on this attitude in her letters home, writing that “Mrs. Price I like more and more though in missionary matters she is no help because she thinks all her duty is to her family, while I think my family will be brought up as well as hers and I can do much besides.”\(^{177}\) After Lydia Lord Davis left, neither Eva Price nor Mrs. Atwater\(^ {178}\) seem to have shown any inclination to start a girls’ school, and Eva Price even remarked that she felt inadequate to the task as “I do not know much of the language and what I have is not very correct.”\(^ {179}\) Because of this attitude, there was no new girls’ school established in Fenzhou until the arrival of new missionaries after the Boxer Rebellion.

In 1909 a new missionary school for girls was established in Fenzhou and named after Lydia Lord Davis in honor of her accomplishment in founding the first school for girls in the city. The Oberlin missionaries, despite the many years between the founding of the first school in 1893 and the second in 1909, considered the school to be “a continuation of Mrs. Davis’ school.”\(^ {180}\) These later missionaries would claim this descent because it enabled them to pick up where Lydia Lord Davis left off, allowing them to


\(^{177}\) Lydia Lord Davis to Dear Home Ones, December 5, 1893, Davis Papers, OCA.

\(^{178}\) In the time between Lydia Lord Davis’ move to Rencun and the deaths of the Oberlin missionaries in the boxer Rebellion there were in fact two Mrs. Atwaters. The first, Jennie Evelyn Pond Atwater, died in 1898 and Ernest Atwater married his second wife, Elizabeth Graham, that same year. Neither of the two Mrs. Atwaters seemed interested in missionary work outside the home, although Elizabeth Graham had been a missionary teacher in China prior to her marriage.


establish their new school without the difficult period of foundation that each school normally faced. Although Lydia Lord Davis had not revolutionized Fenzhou, she had set a precedent for female education that the Lydia Lord Davis School for Girls could draw on to legitimize itself.

This chapter will examine the Lydia Lord Davis School for Girls from its origin in 1893 to the period of forced indigenization in 1924. Comparing this school and the metropolitan Mary Porter Gamewell School in Beijing will show the differences between two quite disparate schools, separated by time, location and personnel. Yet, by comparing the Lydia Lord Davis school with what can be called its “sister school,” the Precious Dew School for Girls in Taigu, it will become clear that the unique aspects of people, place and time can create very different institutions despite common beginnings or goals.

4.2 FOUNDATION: 1893-1895

The establishment of the Girls’ School in Fenzhou is detailed in the previous chapter; in 1893 Lydia Lord Davis readied a room, secured a teacher, and through various mechanisms enrolled a few local girls. At this time in that place the very concept of a school for the public education of girls was shocking to the Chinese population. Davis writes that the idea of a school for girls, particularly a public school, was “a perfectly unheard-of thing in that part of the country.”[^181] In this case much of the opposition to the idea had to do with the backwater location of Fenzhou in inland Shanxi. The expansion of public education in the late Qing dynasty was concentrated in “economically and

culturally advanced areas.”¹⁸² One of these areas was, of course, the capital at Beijing, where the Mary Porter Gamewell School was founded two decades earlier in 1872. Thus the foundation of a girls’ school in Fenzhou, “the farthest inland of the stations of the American Board in China,”¹⁸³ when the majority of missionary education, let alone education for girls, “took place primarily in the coastal areas,”¹⁸⁴ is quite important. Although the number of missionary schools increased rapidly during this period in the treaty ports and the coastal areas of China, these schools had the ready backing and influence of the foreign powers, an authority that while certainly present in inland Shanxi, was much less dominant.¹⁸⁵

As mentioned previously, Lydia Lord Davis had to overcome two main points of opposition to female education from among the poor Chinese who were the primary audience for missionary activities: the idea that teaching girls was useless; and the notion that the education of daughters was a waste of time. Of the two, the first was more difficult to overcome, as it affected not only the parents, but the girl herself. For instance, chapter three mentions the incredulous response of the Chinese parents to Lydia Lord Davis’ first inquiries into recruiting their daughters into her school – she was told that she might as well try to teach a donkey to learn to read. And when students could be found, they were often dismayed by the academic standards set before them because of their own belief in their inability to learn. The best example of this behavior comes from the first students at the Mary Porter Gamewell School who told onlookers that “we are crying

¹⁸³ William R. Leete, “The Strategic Location of Fenchow as a Mission Station” *Fenchow* Vol. I No. 2 (October 1919); 28.
¹⁸⁴ Cong, *Teacher’s Schools*, 34.
because we have a teacher so stupid as to think that girls can learn anything out of books.”\textsuperscript{186}

The only remedy for this way of thinking was, of course, to prove it false. By founding her school for girls and successfully teaching the girls the, at that time, quite limited curriculum of religious education, which included at least some measure of reading and writing, Lydia Lord Davis proved that girls indeed could learn. The example of Chin Huan, “Golden Circle,” the young blind beggar who was the first student of the girls’ school “committing to memory whole books of the New Testament,”\textsuperscript{187} despite her inability to see, was conclusive evidence of the ability of girls to learn.

The other problem was the reluctance of Chinese parents to expend resources to educate a girl child. In fact, the common term for a girl at that time in Fenzhou translates as “commodity-on-which-money-has-been-lost,”\textsuperscript{188} indicating the contempt felt by a family for a girl child whom they would be required to feed, clothe and care for until she could be married off into another family, essentially forever lost as a source of labor to her natal family.\textsuperscript{189}

The Chinese is nothing if not practical, and he feels that it would be a great waste to have his daughter educated, since another family than his own would reap the benefits of her ability. He feels, as Dr. Arthur Smith picturesquely puts it, that it would be “like putting a gold chain around the neck of someone else’s puppy, which may at any time be whistled off, and then what will have become of the chain.”\textsuperscript{190}

\textsuperscript{186} Margaret Burton, \textit{The Education of Women in China} (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1911), 32.
\textsuperscript{187} Lydia Lord Davis, “Beginnings in the Girls’ School” \textit{Fenchow} Vol. IV No. 2 (November 1924); 4.
\textsuperscript{188} Nat Brandt, \textit{Massacre in Shanxi} (San Jose, CA: toExcel, 1999), 68.
\textsuperscript{189} Interestingly, a great number of the early students in missionary schools for girls were “little daughters-in-law,” who had the dual advantages of not being overly valued by their adopted family-in-law and that this meant that the people sending her to school were the family of the husband who would benefit from her skills. There are other mentions of girls being sent to school by their promised husbands who wished them to be educated.
\textsuperscript{190} Burton, \textit{The Education of Women in China}, 32.
This problem was much more easily overcome than the other, since Lydia Lord Davis could offer sufficient economic incentive to parents to turn this “waste” into a money-making endeavor just by offering room and board. And, of course, beggar girls did not have a family to object to the waste of their valuable labor.

Thus, it is clear that by its brief tenure in Fenzhou from 1893-1895, the school for girls founded by Lydia Lord Davis, regardless of where it would later travel and under whose direction it would develop, was the foundation of the Lydia Lord School for Girls. By breaking through Chinese suspicion of foreigners and their reluctance to see value in female education to found a successful school she set a precedent for educating girls in Fenzhou. 191 Not only did the girls she educated emerge from the missionary school with useful skills like needlework, they could also read and write. In the Chinese culture, where literacy was highly valued and the written word considered almost sacred, the ability to read and write was a source of pride, even in a woman. Grace McConnaughey, one of missionary educators at the Lydia Lord Davis School, reported in 1915 that after finishing two years of school, one of their students left to be married, and that “you can be assured that the big six-foot husband is proud of his little wife, the only woman in the village who can read.” 192 By demonstrating that, firstly, the missionaries were sensitive to the loss of labor that educating a daughter would entail and were willing to support the girls to ease the burden on the family, and secondly, that the missionary schools could

191 Although Davis’ initial success was certainly dependent on the backing of the Western powers and her recruitment of beggar girls, who were not valued by Chinese society. However, the fact that her school showed positive results (that girls were able to learn) and that no harm came to the girls was important in demonstrating the usefulness (or at least that there was no active harm) of educating girls.
successfully teach the girls to read and write, Lydia Lord Davis paved the way for the school which would bear her name in 1909.

4.3 RECONSTRUCTION: 1903-1909

The Boxer Rebellion in the summer of 1900 resulted in the deaths of all of the Oberlin Shanxi missionaries in Fenzhou. The station was, at that time, still manned only by the two families discussed earlier: Charles and Eva Price, and Ernest and Elizabeth (Lizzie) Atwater. Although they had been warned in June to “be careful and not venture outside the Mission compound,”193 the missionaries seemed unaware of the true severity of the situation and argued about the appropriate course of action for several weeks. The last week in July the local magistrate, who had been friendly towards the small missionary contingent, died and was replaced by a personal friend of the notoriously pro-Boxer anti-foreign governor Yu Xian. The missionaries knew then that it was time to flee. Their attempts to escape by themselves on July 31st were thwarted, and instead they were forced to hire carts to take them, escorted by government troops, out of Shanxi on August 15.

Despite the official promises that “they were to be safely escorted to the coast,”194 the Oberlin missionaries were set upon by twenty soldiers in the small village of Nankaishi on August 15, 1900. “The soldiers killed everyone – Ernest and Lizzie Atwater [who was nine months pregnant at the time] and their daughters Celia and Bertha;

193 Brandt, Massacre in Shansi, 258.
194 Dr. Irenaeus Atwood, “Report of Shansi Mission, 1901,” Williams Papers, OCA. 67
Charles and Eva Price and their daughter Florence, Their bodies were thrown into a mass grave.

Thus, even though the school did not exist at the time of the Boxer Rebellion, the years between 1903 and 1909 were an important time for several reasons. The first is the shift in the Chinese attitude towards public education for girls. As mentioned in the previous chapter, private schools for girls were approved by the Empress Dowager in 1901 and reform-minded officials and upper-class Chinese began to open girls’ schools. This change meant that missionaries, who had always considered female education important to the conversion and civilizing of China, were able to open more schools for girls’ and that the schools already established increased in enrollment, and females made up nearly half of the student body at Christian schools as early as 1902.

Ibid., 267.
Table 4.1: Percentage of Female Student in Christian Missionary Schools in 1902.
Adapted from Xiong Xianjun, Zhongguo nüzi jiaoyu shi (Taiyuan shi: Shanxi jiaoyu chubanshe, 2006), 233.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of School</th>
<th>Number of Schools</th>
<th>Total Number of Students</th>
<th>Number of Female Students</th>
<th>Percentage of Female Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academy (书院)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1814</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day School (天道院)</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>1315</td>
<td>543</td>
<td>41.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School (高中等学堂)</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>6393</td>
<td>3509</td>
<td>54.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical School (工艺学堂)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>50.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical School (医学堂及服事病院)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten (小孩劝物学堂)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>~97</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (总计)</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>10158</td>
<td>4373</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second reason that this period was important was that it gave the new group of missionaries, newly arrived from Oberlin, time to reconstruct the Mission in Fenzhou. This reconstruction, unlike the one in Taigu, where the buildings “were all burned or destroyed,” did not involve the reconstruction of the physical mission. When Dr. Atwood visited in 1901 he noticed that the “mission buildings in Fenchow-Fu…were found intact with the exception of door and windows.” New deeds for mission properties were issued, and the missionaries had very little trouble repairing the damage to the Mission, helped by the large indemnity paid to them by the Shanxi government.

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196 Dr. Irenaeus Atwood, “Report of Shansi Mission, 1901,” Williams Papers, OCA
The true toll of the Boxer Rebellion in Fenzhou was in terms of lives. Not only were the missionaries killed, but hundreds of Chinese Christians as well.\textsuperscript{197} Dr. Atwood noted that “the enemy took special pains to make a clean sweep of the strong and useful members of this growing church,”\textsuperscript{198} namely, the Chinese Christians who did not recant. Therefore, reconstruction in Fenzhou consisted more of reassuring the “panic-stricken remnant of the native church”\textsuperscript{199} than actual physical rebuilding. The new missionaries, Dr. William and Mary Hemingway, Rev. Paul and Miriam Corbin, and Miss Flora K. Heebner, spent the years 1903-1909 soothing those who were “fearful of a repetition of the Boxer massacres”\textsuperscript{200} and making new converts to support the resumption of social work in Shanxi. Rev. Paul Corbin described the work of the missionaries during these years, saying that “friendly relations had been re-established with the people in the field, the scattered flocks collected, and all the mission activities possible under the circumstances had been resumed.”\textsuperscript{201}

4.4 EXPANSION: 1910-1911

Although the expansion of the missionary school curriculum and enrollment preceded reconstruction in both the Mary Porter Gamewell School and the Precious Dew School, in the case of the Lydia Lord Davis School for Girls, curricular changes and the increase in numbers of students came rapidly after the school was re-established in 1909.

\textsuperscript{197} According to Joseph Esherick’s \textit{The Origins of the Boxer Uprising}, (p. 305) roughly 2,000 Chinese Christians were killed in Shanxi. The precise number for either Fenzhou or Taigu is unknown, but must have run in the hundreds. \textsuperscript{198} Ibid. \textsuperscript{199} Corbin, “The Third Decade of the Shansi Mission,” \textit{Ten Years After: A Sketch of the Reconstruction of the Shansi Mission Since 1900, And The Annual Reports for 1910}, 2. \textsuperscript{200} Paul Leaton Corbin, “New Oberlin in China,” \textit{Oberlin Shansi Memorial Association News Bulletin} No. 3 (October 1913); 4. \textsuperscript{201} Corbin, “The Third Decade of the Shansi Mission,” 4.
The date explains the phenomenon: by this time the Chinese government had not only reformed the educational system to include Western subjects and teaching methodologies, but had also mandated public education for girls. The development of the Lydia Lord Davis School for Girls, re-established as it was during such a period of positive attitudes towards missionary schools and schools for girls, resulted in an exceptionally rapid expansion of curriculum and enrollment.

The “new development in all educational lines in China” and the “parents [who] are anxious that their children should have the best opportunities” challenged the missionaries to “meet [their] greatest opportunity.”202 In response to these demands more missionaries arrived, and the school opened in 1909 under the direction of the Miss Gertrude Chaney203 with thirteen girls; four more entered after the Chinese New Year. The missionaries stated that “many more wanted to come, but because of the many workmen on the place, it was thought best to take no more.”204 These laborers were working to complete the Girls’ School Building, which would allow more students to board at the school. And indeed, a school bulletin from 1912 would confirm the rapid growth of the school, “among other things mentioned was the number of pupils as something over forty, and teachers, as six.”205

In 1909 there were only three teachers, consisting of two missionary women, Miss Chaney and Miss McConnaughey, and one Chinese woman, Mrs. Wang.206 Two more Chinese Christian women served as matron and cook. These three women were

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203 Gertrude Chaney would later marry fellow missionary Rev. Watts Orsen Pye and later sources will refer to her as Mrs. Gertrude Chaney Pye.
205 Josie E. Horn, “The Lydia Lord Davis School for Girls,” Fenchow (November, 1924); 1.
responsible for teaching a curriculum of both Western and traditional Chinese subjects. Although there is no list of the precise curriculum, the subjects taught at this time was supposed to be the same as that offered at the boys’ school, which was made up of, “(a) Mathematics and Sciences; (b) The Chinese Classics and Literature; (c) Western and Chinese History; (d) The English Language; (e) Biblical Studies.”

Records from other schools during this period indicate that while similar courses were offered at girls’ schools, they were given in much less depth (for instance, Algebra was not taught at the girls’ school) and courses in home economics were added. There is record that in addition to the above, the girls’ school included daily calisthenics led by Miss Chaney.

This expansion of curriculum was much easier for the missionaries at the Lydia Lord School for Girls than at other institutions because of the late period during which it occurred as well. Not only were the new subjects more accepted, but there was already a pool of female graduates of mission schools from which to hire teachers. As mentioned above, Mrs. Wang, the Chinese teacher at the Lydia Lord Davis School in 1909, was “a graduate of the Bridgeman School,” a missionary school for girls in Beijing. Older schools had been graduating female Chinese Christians for years, and most of these women went into education.

4.5 INDIGENIZATION: 1910-1924

Because of the large number of mission-trained Chinese Christians available when the Lydia Lord Davis School was re-established in 1909, native Chinese were

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involved in school administration from the very start. Although missionaries tended to be in supervisory positions, their admiration for their Chinese colleagues is clear. In the case of the Lydia Lord Davis School for Girls in 1909, although Miss Gertrude Chaney is listed as having “general charge” of the school, it is the three Chinese women, Mrs. Wang, Mrs. Keng and Mrs. Sung who are depicted as administering the day-to-day workings of the school and largely responsible for the high quality of the institution. The annual report states that “with these three women in charge, the school is making a name of its own.”

There is evidence of this attitude towards the native workers in the school throughout the early years of this period. For instance, the Gertrude Chaney’s annual report for 1912-13 stated:

The best influence in the school during the year has been the wholesome enthusiastic spirit of Mrs. Hao. She is a rare teacher among these people and carries an inspiring influence into all her work, so even the smallest girl in school loves and respects her and wants to be like her. The production of women with just such a spirit is the highest aim we can place before our work.

And in the 1914 report:

Our teachers have proved that they are not mere wage earners. … Mr. T’ien has given, as always, that untiring effort and interest to his work that leaves its lasting import upon all who are associated with him. He is, I believe, in the best sense of the term “a Christian gentleman,” and the reputation that our school now holds is in a large measure due to him. Mrs. He, with her splendid executive ability, has had the responsibility of the school dormitories.

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210 “Ibid., 23.
These glowing reports all emphasize the wonderful example that these Chinese Christian teachers provide for the students as well as their teaching or administrative ability. Unlike the missionaries that ran the Mary Porter Gamewell School, who seemed more interested in the example of Western missionary women on the girls, the Oberlin missionaries in Fenzhou seem to focus more on the positive influence of native Chinese Christians as examples for the students. Whether this stems from a conscious realization that native Chinese serve as better examples to other Chinese on the part of the missionary, or simply that the missionaries were aware of the positive results is unclear.

As to the relationship between the Lydia Lord Davis School for Girls and the Chinese government, specifically the government schools, it seems to parallel very nearly that of the Precious Dew School discussed in the previous chapter – that is of cooperation and recognition. This is most likely due to the fact that the two schools were run by the same missionary group, which followed a common policy. If anything, the missionaries at the Lydia Lord Davis School seem to have enjoyed a slightly greater degree of friendship with the local government school than the Precious Dew School. The Lydia Lord Davis School records mention “invit[ing] the girls from the government school here in the city to an entertainment presented by our girls,”213 and the presence of “government school girls and teachers”214 in the audience at the school commencement.

In many other areas the school philosophies differed. Most notable here was the Lydia Lord Davis School’s greater enthusiasm about the inclusion of Chinese teachers in the administration of the school, and the greater amount of time and care that went into developing its curriculum. But these particular differences can be attributed to the fact

that the Lydia Lord Davis School was established at a time when the Chinese government was promoting both Western learning and education for girls. For example, the Lydia Lord Davis School is the only one for which there is evidence that the missionaries had the time to plan out their curriculum in advance, and were able to hire qualified Chinese Christian teachers to teach it. Miss Gertrude Chaney wrote in 1913 that “[the students] failed to meet our expectations in numbers but we have not regretted this fact in some ways, for it has given us an opportunity to introduce a good many new methods in our work and get it thoroughly organized.” In contrast, the Precious Dew School for Girls had consistently higher enrollments and less free time for teachers and administrators to plan ahead. The low enrollment at the Lydia Lord Davis School for Girls in the first year were quickly made up in subsequent years to the level of the Precious Dew School, but that extra time in the first year allowed teachers and staff to make any necessary adjustments prior to that time.

By 1919, the process of indigenization was quite advanced, with the missionaries working fairly closely with local officials. Miss Grace McConnaughey wrote in April:

A letter came from the Yamen this morning asking us to co-operate with the government in the anti-footbinding campaign so our big-footed women are going out this afternoon, and tomorrow, with about twenty from the government schools, to make house-to-house visitations and see that bindings in all cases are removed. It is truly a big step.

And on a more macroscopic level, in 1920 it was reported that the Chihli-Shansi Educational Association, an association that deliberated on educational goals and curriculum and issued broad educational regulations to assist with standardization of the various schools across these two provinces, would included native Chinese as members.

216 Grace McConnaughey from Fenchowfu, Shansi, April 25, 1919, McConnaughey Papers, OCA.
This association has formerly been made up of those foreigners in these two provinces who are interested in educational work. At this meeting, however, the constitution was changed to include as members all the Chinese teachers in our schools, so that they may have an opportunity of sharing equally in the solving of their educational problems.\(^{217}\)

Thus, while it seems that the level of indigenization at the Lydia Lord Davis School for Girls by 1924 was quite similar to that of the Precious Dew School, it is important to note that the period of indigenization for the former started in 1909 with the re-establishment of the school as native Chinese were incorporated into the structure of administration as teachers and mentors for the students. Among all three of the schools reviewed in this thesis, the Lydia Lord Davis School for Girls provides the earliest evidence of significant indigenization before the founding of the Republic in 1912. Although there is a similar intensification of this process in the Precious Dew School in the late 1910s, corresponding to the heightened nationalist awareness of the May Fourth Movement in 1919, the early appearance is indicative of the greater willingness on the part of the Oberlin missionaries in Fenzhou to accept the Chinese converts as intellectual equals.

4.6 CONCLUSION

After reviewing the developmental path of the Lydia Lord Davis School for Girls, it is clear that this school experienced many of the same events and challenges as the Mary Porter Gamewell School and the Precious Dew School. However, it is clear that the differences in time period, people involved, and the location of the school uniquely shaped the development of the Lydia Lord Davis School to follow a unique course.

The most obvious and important change is the closure of the school in Fenzhou when Lydia Lord Davis moved to the village of Rencun in 1895. Although Mrs. Davis and her schoolgirls were gone, the foundations for female education had been laid and would eventually come to support two institutions: the Lydia Lord Davis School in Fenzhou and the Precious Dew School in Taigu. The fact that there would be no girls’ school in Fenzhou for over ten years is due to the location of Fenzhou and the personalities of the missionaries stationed there. Fenzhou was sited sixty miles southwest of Taigu, and even farther from the provincial capital at Taiyuan, in the “socially conservative Shanxi area” where the idea of reforming education to strengthen the dynasty, so prevalent in Beijing and the urban coastal areas, had not yet penetrated. Thus, there was no native Chinese pressure to reopen the school after Mrs. Davis left.

Nor was there any particular desire to reopen a school for girls in Fenzhou on the part of the missionaries who were assigned there. As noted, a girls’ school was considered to be the provenance of the missionary women and neither of the two women present in Fenzhou in 1895, Eva Price and Jennie Atwater, were interested in carrying on Lydia Lord Davis’ work. Eva Price, plagued by bouts of depression and feelings of inadequacy, found that maintaining a Christian home in China to be as much as she could handle. Jennie Atwater was periodically ill, and died in 1898. The new Mrs. Atwater, Lizzie, seemed to share Eva’s preference for setting an example of Christian living by caring for her family rather than engaging in more direct efforts such as teaching a school.

These two factors – the nature of Fenzhou and the personalities of the missionaries there – combined to interrupt the development of education for girls for

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fourteen years between the closure of the school for girls in Fenzhou in 1895 and the re-establishment of that school in 1909 as the Lydia Lord Davis School for girls. This meant that the school missed the expansion of interest in Western-style education and female public education in the late 1890s, the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, and the period of general reconstruction shortly afterward. When the school was re-established, it took on a character quite different from that of other missionary schools for girls, even from its “sister institution,” the Precious Dew School for Girls. Even though the two schools originated in the same base, Lydia Lord Davis’ small girls school, and were run by members of the same missionary conference, there were significant differences between the institution that had run continuously since 1893, weathering Chinese disapproval and the violence of the Boxer Rebellion; and the other, reopened in the reformist atmosphere of the first decade of the 20th century with a crop of native Chinese Christian men and women ready and able to teach the large number of girls who wished to attend school.
CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis investigates the establishment and development of missionary schools for girls in China from 1872 to 1924. Although there has been a considerable amount of scholarship which touches on this topic, including that on Chinese education, educational reform, and female education, the majority of such research has failed to note the highly individualized nature of the missionary schools for girls during this period. The scholarly manuscripts which have addressed the unique character of the schools are mainly case studies, and thus by nature cannot extend their argument beyond the single case upon which they focus.

In order to examine both the differences and the reasons behind those differences, this thesis has investigated three separate schools for girls run by American missionaries: the Mary Porter Gamewell School, the Precious Dew School, and the Lydia Lord Davis School. By using more than one case study, this thesis places itself between the broad-brush view of works such as Kenneth Latourette’s *A History of Christian Missions in China*, and single case studies such as Ryan Dunch’s *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China, 1857-1927*. This approach allows for the detailed research necessary
to highlight the differences between separate missionary schools for girls, as well as for a broader base of comparison across three different cases.

5.2 SIMILARITIES IN MISSIONARY SCHOOLS FOR GIRLS:
THE FOUR STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

All three missionary schools for girls followed a fairly comparable developmental path, which can be divided into four stages: foundation, expansion, reconstruction, and indigenization. Because of the different locations of the schools, they developed through these stages at somewhat different times. Although they generally occur in order, and are associated with certain events in world and Chinese history, the dates of when each stage occurs for each school are different due to local conditions. This section will give a general overview of each stage, focusing on the characteristics of the missionary girls’ school during the period.

The first phase of the development of a missionary school for girls was that of foundation. During this stage missionary schools were rarely purely educational endeavors and were established as an adjunct and aid to evangelization. The schools, once established, however, usually enrolled only a few students, and these girls were usually from the dregs of Chinese society: beggars, slave girls, and daughters of the destitute poor. Although the missionary educators hoped to attract the better classes to their schools, “believing that if the literati adopted Christianity, the great mass of the
Chinese population would follow suit,” the “members of the gentry were overtly hostile to the foreign presence.”

Even among the lower classes, however, it was not easy for the missionaries to secure girl students. For poor families a daughter was “counted as a loss on the ‘account books’ of the family,” as another mouth to feed. To compensate the families for the loss of what little labor she could provide, missionaries often had to resort to offering economic incentives, from providing room and board and thus relieving the family of the burden of providing for the child, to “actually paying the heathen students to attend school.” And when these inducements failed to fill the schoolroom, missionaries took in beggars and bought slave girls, making the first missionary schools for girls “scarcely distinguishable from foundling homes.”

The curriculum offered by the missionary school for girls at this stage was largely religious in focus, with “more than three-quarters of each day was devoted to the study of Christian literature.” Instruction in reading and writing Chinese, while considered important in order to enable Chinese girls to read the Bible, was difficult since most missionaries did not have the language skills or the textbooks to teach Chinese. Thus, “when missionaries first opened schools, they had little choice but to use traditional

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teachers and texts.”

Fearing the influence of these traditional, non-Christian teachers, this instruction was limited in time and scope.

The second stage of development of missionary schools for girls was that of expansion. During this phase, schools responded to the desires of the Chinese reformers, beginning with the Self-Strengthening Movement in the 1860s and gaining broader support after the humiliating defeat by the Japanese in 1895, for a broader education with Western topics and teaching methods. Missionary educators, hoping to use the new popularity of Western learning to promote their schools and gain new converts, expanded the curriculum of missionary schools, including those for girls, to incorporate new subjects. Instead of “Sunday schools every day,” the missionary schools for girls offered a “comprehensive, rather than narrow and special” curriculum which included “the four departments of religion, literature, so-called Western learning and mathematics, besides miscellaneous studies such as music, writing, etc.”

As the emphasis on religious instruction faded, and new Western subjects were offered, missionary schools for girls began to be “appreciated by the practical-minded.” These Chinese “began to see Western knowledge as a source of power that could not entirely be scorned,” and “began to take advantage of the schooling

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226 Kwok, *Chinese Women and Christianity*, 16.
missionaries offered.”\textsuperscript{230} Some of these were Chinese Christians, but the increasing secularization of the mission school curriculum also attracted non-Christians who wished to secure a “secular, Western education (rather than a Confucian one),”\textsuperscript{231} for their daughters. With this increased interest, missionaries no longer had to “seek students, and [it] became possible to select students.”\textsuperscript{232} Therefore, mission schools for girls during the expansionist stage increased their enrollment, and in some cases, even began to charge a small tuition.

The third stage of development for missionary schools for girls in China – reconstruction – was the only one with a set beginning date. The Boxer Rebellion in the summer of 1900 was a catastrophe for the missionary endeavor in China, as the anti-foreigner violence broke out all over China. In the aftermath of the attacks on foreign property and people, missionaries faced the immense task of rebuilding their properties and reassuring their remaining converts. Therefore, the missionary schools for girls in the period after 1900 were characterized by the reconstruction – physical, mental and spiritual – of the missionary educational endeavor. While the monies paid to the missions by the Boxer indemnity helped achieve the rebuilding, and often expansion, of the school building themselves, the reconstruction of curriculum and recruitment of students dominated the missionary school development in this period.

Missionary educators hoped to use a new curriculum to take advantage of the Chinese shock at the violence and destruction of the anti-foreignism Boxer Rebellion and

\textsuperscript{230} Graham, \textit{Gender, Culture and Christianity}, 35.
\textsuperscript{231} Ibid., 41.
\textsuperscript{232} Walter Lacy, \textit{A Hundred Years of China Methodism} (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1948), 144.
their desire to move “away from confrontationalism toward cooperation.” The missionaries, therefore, attempted to create a curriculum which would “balance Western academic subjects with Chinese values and traditions.” The result was an increasingly secularized curriculum to “complement the wave of government-sponsored reformism,” which touted education and Western learning as the best way to strengthen the nation and the Qing dynasty. This new curriculum included subjects such as “mathematics, science, geography, foreign language (usually English), music, group singing and physical education … along with a continuing emphasis on the Confucian classics and ethics.” By serving the interests of the Qing government and educational reformers, the missionaries hoped to attract positive attention and increase the number of Christian converts.

It was during this third stage of reconstruction that the missionaries began to see their schools as shining examples not only for the Chinese in general, but also for the Chinese government. In 1901 the Dowager Empress had ordered “all officials at home and abroad, all governmental bureaus, and all ministers in western lands to survey western methods,” resulting in a number of memorials to the throne regarding education. As missionary educators were “conveniently at hand and best fitted for the task,” the missionaries recorded that interested officials “often [sought] from them

234 Graham, Gender, Culture and Christianity, 160.
236 Graham, Gender, Culture and Christianity, 160.
237 Cyrus Peake, Nationalism and Education in Modern China (New York: Columbia University Press, 1932), 36.
238 Ibid., 31.
information and advice.”239 For instance, Qing viceroy Zhang Zhidong “consulted Chinese Christians Mary Stone and Ida Kahn and missionary Gertrude Howe about his plans to open a school for girls in Shanghai.”240 Unfortunately, while missionaries hoped to be the primary influence on the new ideas of Chinese education, when the empire-wide public educational system was enacted for boys in 1904, followed by one for girls in 1907, they were unable to capitalize on their position as experts in “Western Learning.” Instead, the Qing government adopted Japan as their model. The officials felt that Japan had proved its strength as a nation through its recent string of victorious wars, and had the advantage of already having distilled “Western education” into an Asian form which “combin[ed] a moral education that emphasized Confucian thought with modern sciences.”241 Yet, the claim that China simply copied the Japanese educational model242 is cast into doubt by the fact that China retained gender-segregated schooling for girls, especially above the level of kindergartens, until the Chinese Communist Revolution in 1949, while the Japanese system was co-educational far longer.243 At this time, however, the official interest in female education and the missionary model gave new legitimacy to

242 In his essay, “Borrowing from Japan: China’s First Modern Educational System,” Hiroshi Abe writes on page 57 that “They [China] copied Japanese education in all aspects, including the system, its purposes, contents, and methodology.” Yet, the Japanese system was co-educational.
243 According to Patricia Tsurumi’s “Education and Assimilation in Taiwan under Japanese Rule, 1895-1945,” Japanese education was co-educational up to the Higher School level. Dr. James Bartholomew (OSU) in an email on May 26, 2009, indicated that Japanese schools were co-educational to grade six (Middle School). The Chinese system, however, only very slowly introduced co-education for children above the kindergarten level, which was in keeping with the Chinese tradition that girls and boys should be separated at the age of 7.
the missionary educational endeavor which resulted in higher enrollments and greater acceptance by the Chinese people.

The last stage of development of missionary schools for girls was that of indigenization. Missionary schools, as a part of the foreign missionary endeavor, had always been viewed as foreign in “organization, administration, personnel, and support,”\(^\text{244}\) by the Chinese. During this phase, however, missionary girls’ schools faced pressure to indigenize from both without and within. From within the mission itself, encouraged by the “growth in the number of and sophistication of Chinese Christians [and] Chinese nationalistic agitation,”\(^\text{245}\) Chinese Christian educators demanded equality with missionary educators and “higher positions and greater responsibilities.”\(^\text{246}\) Though some missionaries continued to argue that “the Chinese are not yet sufficiently developed in character, discipleship, and ability to exercise independent leadership among their own people,”\(^\text{247}\) many missionary educators came to recognize their own “excessive foreign control”\(^\text{248}\) of missionary schools. The result was that the missionary schools for girls during this stage of development showed evidence of increasing Chinese authority as a result of agitation from within the Chinese Christian community.

There were also significant pressures on the missionary schools for girls to indigenize from outside the mission community, specifically, from the Chinese government. The Chinese government, in whatever form, had tried several times to gain


\(^{246}\) Graham, *Gender, Culture, and Christianity*, 157.


\(^{248}\) Graham, *Gender, Culture, and Christianity*, 157.
control over private missionary education in China, both directly as well as through control of textbook production. Now, however, “the rise of national sentiment in China [was] paralleled by an increasing opposition to, and official regulation of, the propagation of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Christianity in schools.”

Although governmental regulations regarding missionary schools, such as the ones issued in 1907, 1913, and 1917, had not been “strictly enforced because of the support given to missionaries by their respective governments,” increasing opposition to foreign institutions and increased governmental organization led to both harsher and more strictly enforced regulations after 1918. Chinese nationalist fervor was directed against “all foreign establishments in China, most notably educational establishments,” resulting in demonstrations in 1922 and 1924. These demonstrations and the changing views of the Chinese towards missionary control of educational institutions in China only added to the impetus of the Chinese Christians to indigenize the missionary schools for girls.

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249 Peake, *Nationalism and Education in China*, 143.
250 In 1907 the Qing National Board of Education decided that no foreign schools would be registered with the government, and that no recognition would be given to their graduates. In 1913 this regulation was reiterated by the new Nationalist Ministry of Education, and in 1917, the Ministry ruled that no religious teaching or ceremony should be compulsory and non-Christian students should be admitted and given equal treatment to Christian students in the mission schools.
5.3 DIFFERENCES IN MISSIONARY SCHOOLS FOR GIRLS:

THE THREE ASPECTS

In fact, each school took quite different paths within each stage, as a result of the intersection of three aspects: the time, the place, and the people involved. This section will investigate these three factors and their impact on missionary schools for girls.

The date is the most obvious factor in missionary school development. Although missionaries might have tried to separate themselves from general Chinese life, building missionary compounds with high walls “as security against the physical and sensory assaults of an impoverished urban population,”253 they were inevitably influenced by the events and attitudes of the time. Yet, the development of the mission schools for girls cannot be said to adhere to any particular timeline. For instance, they are divided chronologically by the date of their establishment. The Mary Porter Gamewell School was founded in 1872, and the Precious Dew and Lydia Lord Davis schools both sprang from the same small girls’ school founded over twenty years later in 1893, rendering fixed time periods irrelevant when discussing the early development. For example, the Foundation stage discussed above occurred in the Mary Porter Gamewell School between 1872 and 1890, yet the same phase of development occurred in the Precious Dew School between 1893 and 1897, and the Lydia Lord Davis School between 1893 and 1895. Thus, while the historical milieu certainly influenced missionary school development, it cannot be generalized, but instead must be applied to each school individually.

The one event common to all three of these schools was the Boxer Rebellion in the summer of 1900. Even the Chinese Revolution in 1911, through which two of the

schools sailed unaffected, failed to have such an impact as the violent anti-foreignism of the Boxers in North China. Yet, even here, where the missionary schools were linked by a common event, the effect of that event on each school was quite different. The Mary Porter Gamewell School’s buildings were destroyed, yet the teachers and students survived by fleeing to the foreign legations in Beijing. At the Precious Dew School in Li Man, Shanxi, all of teachers and several students were killed and the mission properties burned. And although the Lydia Lord Davis School did not exist physically at that time, the murder of the missionaries in Fenzhou, as well as a great number of their Chinese Christian converts, delayed any re-opening until 1909.

The primary reason for this disparity was location. While scholars might make sweeping statements of the state of missionary school education and the attitude of the Chinese towards the mission schools for girls, these can usually only be successfully applied to the Mary Porter Gamewell School, located in metropolitan Beijing. This was particularly true for the 1890-1900 decade, during which time Chinese officials and literati were advocating educational reform and the inclusion of Western topics in schools. The influence of this new attitude of acceptance towards Western education prompted a blossoming of new curricula in missionary schools for girls, as missionary educators sought to take advantage of the “new utility, plus familiarity [that] continued to help overcome prejudice against mission schools.”

Yet, when examining the three missionary schools it is quite clear that the only school to be influenced in this way was the Mary Porter Gamewell School, whose period of expansion coincides perfectly with this educational reform movement. This is because the Mary Porter Gamewell School,

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254 Beehan, “The Women’s Movement and Nationalism in Late Ch’ing China,” 42.
located in the Chinese capital at Beijing, was physically at the heart of the debate: officials memorializing the throne sent their propositions to Beijing. Schools located in inland provinces, in rural areas or small cities, did not have the benefit of this atmosphere of educational reform, and by the time the ideas did trickle down to the provinces, it was years later. For the Precious Dew School, located in the rural village of Li Man, Shanxi Province, the expansion stage did not start until 1897 and lasted to 1900.

Conversely, location was also partially responsible for the earlier onset of the indigenization stage in the Lydia Lord Davis School, and the more thorough process of indigenization in the Precious Dew School, as opposed to the Mary Porter Gamewell School, though they both entered the phase in the same year (1912). The Lydia Lord Davis and Precious Dew Schools were both located in inland Shanxi province, roughly three and a half weeks travel from Beijing by “horse or litter, and, where the road was wide enough, by cart.”\textsuperscript{255} Isolated from the foreign settlements in Beijing and other large cities on the eastern coast, the missionary educators in Shanxi were dependant on couriers to carry mail to their foreign compatriots, and “exchanges of letters between Shanxi and Oberlin of the Board offices in Boston might take as long as six months.”\textsuperscript{256} This meant that the missionary educators in Shanxi were, from the very start, much more dependent on Chinese teachers and staff. Whereas the Mary Porter Gamewell School was located in Beijing with a large contingent of foreigners, including many missionaries as well as armed soldiers to enforce extraterritoriality, the Mission stations in Fenzhou and Taigu had none of these upon which to fall back, and thus had to maintain a different sort of relationship with the Chinese in their missions and towns.

\textsuperscript{255} Carlson, \textit{Oberlin in Asia}, 6. \\
\textsuperscript{256} Ibid., 6.
The people involved were also quite influential in the development of the missionary schools for girls. The best example of the importance of personality is to compare the development of the Lydia Lord Davis School and the Precious Dew School. Both of these missionary schools for girls were “twin branches from the same root,” the school for girls in Fenzhou, thus were founded at the same time. They were both located in inland Shanxi province, roughly sixty miles apart, and run by the same group of missionaries, the Oberlin Shanxi Band. Despite all of these similarities, the development of these two schools was markedly different because of differences among the individual missionaries involved.

Lydia Lord Davis, who founded the original school in Fenzhou in 1893, was dedicated to the idea of female education in China. A schoolteacher by profession, Davis spent countless hours studying Chinese “with a wet towel around [her] head,” despite there being “no such requirement … enacted of the married women” to learn the language. Even though she had children of her own, she was determined to open a school, and she succeeded. When she and her family moved to the missionary station at Rencun in 1895, she took her schoolgirls with her – this small nucleus would eventually grow to be the Precious Dew School in Taigu. Yet, after the students left Fenzhou, none of the other missionary wives present took over in the area of girls’ education, despite Davis’s success. Instead, there would be no school for girls in Fenzhou until after the Boxer Rebellion, when a group of new missionaries re-established the Fenzhou school, naming it after the founder back in 1893, Lydia Lord Davis.

257 Flora Heebner, “Pioneering in Education for Girls” Fenchow Vol. VI, No. 2 (November 1924); 6.
259 Ibid., 81.
The reason for this long hiatus was not time, or location, but the individual personalities of the missionaries in Fenzhou between 1895 and 1900. Missionary education for women and girls was left to missionary women, married or single, because of Chinese “gender taboos [which] barred the female half of the population from the preaching of men.”

Thus, there were two candidates to take up Lydia Lord Davis’ mantle in 1895: Mrs. Eva Price and Mrs. Jenny Atwater. Unfortunately for the state of girls education in Fenzhou, neither one was interested in re-opening the girls’ school. Eva Price, the senior missionary wife in Fenzhou, suffered from loneliness, bouts of depression and feelings of inadequacy, and described her life in China as “one of endurance.” Believing herself unfit for educational work, she limited her work to caring for her family in order to set the example of a Christian home for the many Chinese “callers who come to see what we look like.” Jenny Atwater, who was suffering from ill health and would later die in 1898, also restricted her role to that of mother and caretaker to her husband and children.

Thus, after carefully examining the development of missionary education for girls in three different schools, the Mary Porter Gamewell School, the Precious Dew School, and the Lydia Lord Davis School, it is clear that while there were certainly broad similarities in the developmental stages of each school, they were tempered by the individualized nature of each school. Identifying the four general developmental stages – foundation, expansion, reconstruction, and indigenization – allows the scholar to

261 Eva Price to Dear Father and Mother, January 4, 1899, in *China Journal 1889-1900: An American Missionary Family During the Boxer Rebellion: with the letters and diaries of Eva Jane Price and her family*, foreword by Harrison E. Salisbury; introductory notes and annotations by Robert E. Felsing (New York: Charles Schribner’s Sons, 1989), 189.
262 Charles Price to Dear Father and Mother, October 25, 1899, in *China Journal 1889-1900*, 207.
conveniently make generalizations regarding missionary schools for girls between 1872 and 1924, but does not capture the richness and detail needed to fully understand these institutions.

5.4 CONCLUSION

By presenting three short case studies of missionary schools for girls, this thesis is able to focus on both the individual differences between each school, as well as make comparisons between them relating to larger topics. Thus, although this thesis clearly shows that while these schools did not come to dominate the changing Chinese educational system due to their individual and autonomous nature, it also asserts that, overall, they made several important contributions to education in turn-of-the-century China.

First, missionary schools for girls were clearly the first institutions devoted to the education of girls outside the home. The idea of this public education for girls was, by varying degrees depending upon the audience, considered unnecessary and dangerous by the Chinese who believed that if a girl were to be educated, it should occur in the home. By demonstrating that girls could be successfully taught in the missionary schools, missionary educators such as Mary Porter Gamewell and Lydia Lord Davis offered the Chinese a new paradigm of educational practice.

Second, although this new paradigm was ultimately passed over in favor of the Japanese system of education, aspects of the missionary school system were retained; namely, the separation of girls and boys into separate schools. As discussed above, the Japanese educational system was coeducational up to the middle or high school level, and
while the Chinese did institute coeducational schools in the kindergartens, the Chinese educational officials retained the missionary schools’ model of gender-segregated education in some of the primary schools, and most of the middle and high schools.

Third, because the Chinese government was determined to staff girls’ schools with female teachers to preserve morality, many of these teachers were graduates of Christian missionary schools for girls. The missionary schools for girls had, in a sense, a head start on the government schools. The Mary Porter Gamewell School, for instance, had been educating and graduating girls for thirty years before the Chinese government instituted schools for girls in 1907. Thus, when the government officials looked for women to teach at the new government schools for girls, the missionary schools for girls had already produced a pool of qualified applicants. Although government normal schools quickly began to educate women to become teachers, it is important to note that for the first two to three years (approximately from 1907 to 1910) the vast majority of teachers at government schools for girls were educated at the missionary schools. Thus, the missionary schools for girls were important to the development of government schools for girls after 1907 because they helped to provide the teachers needed to fuel the rapid growth of these schools.

Therefore, by using a different sort of methodology, one which compares and contrasts three separate case studies instead of providing a broad overview or a narrower focus on a single case study, this thesis is able to examine the achievements and failures of three missionary schools for girls in China – The Mary Porter Gamewell School, The Precious Dew School and the Lydia Lord Davis School – between 1872 and 1924 with a greater level of detail but without losing sight of the larger picture. It is the hope of the
author that this thesis might benefit future scholars in this area, both by offering an analysis of these previously unstudied schools, as well as by providing a different structure of investigation.
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