Introduction: “Christianity, Gender, and the Language of the World”

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Critics of cultural imperialism at home and abroad have prompted historians to pay good attention to the role of nation in framing Christian overseas missions. Yet women volunteering for missionary activity in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries rarely would have phrased their commitments as service to nation. In the rapidly secularizing United States, missionary volunteers came from church-going families and referred to a spiritual calling. Indeed, in 2014 when I first talked with a North American missionary daughter who had converted to communism and still lives in China, she expressed curiosity about what had become of the distant world of her childhood. “Do they still talk about the call, whether you have a call?” she asked about missionaries today.¹ The call came from God, and helped to demonstrate that your motives were pure—that you had spiritual motives for the abandonment of home ties for service on the other side of the world. Those assessing questions of missionary motive and identity must respect those spiritual motivations within the mix of identities carried to the field.

Recent historians of women and the empire in both Britain and the United States have made that point. Elizabeth Prevost’s assessment of the state of the field in British studies suggests that there “is a resistance to serious analyses of faith,” and sees in attention to faith real potential for exploring commonality and divergence within missionary communities. Picking up on Prevost’s work, Sarah Pripas-Kapit too suggests that historians of U.S. missions “have effectively privileged race over religion as an analytic category, producing histories of hegemony that position women missionaries simply ‘as products of a dominant discourse of nation and empire.’” Interestingly, scholars from the countries that were “missionized” appear to take religious faith more seriously, perhaps as a result of the extra scrutiny scholars accord to motivations for

1 Isabel Crook, informal conversation with Jane Hunter in Beijing, 22 June 2014.

conversion overseas—or maybe simply reflecting the largely secular character of the professoriate in the United States.²

Religion is important because in its pure form it summons ideas that extend beyond the temporal and earthbound. The basis of the missionary impulse was a belief in a universal thought system—judged to be so powerful and benign that it inspired extraordinary self-sacrifice among its early emissaries. For those on the receiving end who could get beyond the military force framing the missionary arrival, and the overarching righteousness that often accompanied it, aspects of that message could be formative. The message of Christian love in particular could be compelling for both men and women, especially for those who experienced childhoods in which patriarchal discipline had framed their upbringing. Y.C. James Yen (Yan Yangchu), who would go on to found a literacy movement and become one of China's most famous Christian converts, described the teacher responsible for his conversion, a missionary of the conservative British China Inland Mission. He "lived literally a Christian life" and "loved us, mothered us, fathered us ...," Yen recalled. "We believed in that Christ in whom he believed."³ If the message of Christian love characterized lessons from many denominations, especially in the 1920s and following, the role of Christian love came to especially define a women's missionary movement attempting to find its bearings in the midst of what many participants considered an increasingly secular, sinful, and war-mongering world.

The three papers in this theme issue provide fine-grained analysis of members of Christian communities from both sides of the missionary exchange—those traveling to the Far and Near East to missionize, those born in Christian communities in Asia, those who converted to Christianity and changed their lives as a result, and those who simply saw opportunities in the Christian presence and took them. They embed their studies in the important and telling details of particular place and time, and they show how that detail shaded or burnished the meaning of the Christian presence in Asia. The variety of

2 Elizabeth Prevost, "Assessing Women, Gender and Empire in Britain's Nineteenth-Century Protestant Missionary Movement," *History Compass* 7, no. 3 (May 2009): 782; Sarah Pripas-Kapit, "Piety, Professionalism and Power: Chinese Protestant Missionary Physicians and Imperial Affiliations Between Women in the Early Twentieth Century," *Gender & History* 27, no. 2 (August 2015): 352. See also, for instance, Wai Ching Wong, "Engendering Christian Mission in Asia: Understanding Women's Works in the History of Mission," *Asian Journal of Women's Studies* (Seoul) 9, no. 2 (2003): 38–65.

3 Quoted in Charles W. Hayford, *To the People: James Yen and Village China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 16.

circumstances on the ground contributed to richly different responses among participants, a range of reactions from relevant states, and an important lesson that eventually came back to congregations in the United States.

In the early 20th Century, U.S. statesmen and scholars were likely to see the impact of West on East to be simpler—unidirectional, and positive. President Woodrow Wilson's political project of “making the world safe for democracy” was also a moral one, and those who supported missions often concurred with his hopes of remaking the world. Cornell geographer George D. Hubbard, most noted for a geography of Europe, authored a largely dispassionate 1922 book on the geography of the city of Chengdu in the interior Chinese province of Sichuan. There he found what Wilson and others were seeking—an Asia seeking to modernize, and looking to the West to learn how to do it:

The foreign residents [who number only 300 or so]...exercise a very powerful influence, not only in religious, educational, & medical circles where most of them nominally work, but in business, politics, and sanitation. The advice of the foreigner is sought in many ways, and his influence is felt in hundreds of places. His work serves as a model in building, living, dressing, and in social and political intercourse. His ideals point the way in nearly every avenue of life and activity.

Hubbard was not a missionary, nor did he spend a significant amount of time in Asia. He likely fell victim to Chinese courtesy as well as the impressions of his countrymen in this overblown description. Yet its vigor speaks to the power of such visions of transnational influence within academic communities in the United States. The power of this perspective also has impacted several generations of historical writing that organize Asian history around the response of Asian leadership to the energetic West.⁴

Connie Shemo's article “‘Her Chinese Attended to Almost Everything’: Relationships of Power in the Hackett Medical College for Women, Guangzhou, China, 1901–1915” challenges the lingering impact of this vision—the idea that Western people and ideas were the natural engines behind innovation in Christian communities abroad. Her work focuses specifically on the medical education of women in Guangzhou in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, a

4 George H. Hubbard, “The Geographic Setting of Chengtu,” *Bulletin of the Geographical Society of Philadelphia* 21, no. 4 (October 1923): 136; Paul A. Cohen, *Discovering History in China: American Historical Writing on the Recent Chinese Past* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984).

case that would seem to be an ideal instance to demonstrate both the greatest influence of Western missionary energy and its most positive outcomes. Those who question the merits of many missionary projects (including myself in earlier work) almost invariably pay tribute to the efforts of missionary women to open schools for girls and to bring Western and modern medicine to China. Shemo's article goes to the heart of both instances of this best-case argument, suggesting that the genesis of medical education for women, the germ that eventually emerged as a full-blown medical college, lay not with its U.S. funder or with female medical missionaries but instead with the initiative of Chinese female students and health practitioners.

Shemo argues convincingly that three young women who had studied at a missionary secondary school asked for admission to the medical school for men in 1879 for their own reasons. This request from Mui A-kwai, an abandoned wife, and two others "came in the absence of any American women physicians to act as role models" and three years before these first female missionary physician came to China. For impoverished women, medical education in a mission setting offered an opportunity for self-support previously only available to those women who had done informal apprenticeships with their parents. In short, single Chinese women with few options set change in motion when they asked permission to join male students to gain the skills in school that other women might learn at home.

The male management of Presbyterian Canton Medical School conferred and accepted the early applicants in 1879, with the female Hackett College opening later. Thereafter, it is clear that Mary Fulton shared the work with Chinese staff that the missionary literature described as "assistants." When an inspection committee visited in 1914, it reported that these assistants were doing the bulk of the work. As early as 1914, then, well before missionary institutions moved to transfer leadership roles to Chinese in response to anti-foreign and nationalist demonstrations, real power was devolving in fact, if not in title. Shemo's close and thoughtful look at innovation and power within one mission institution in the end teaches us to surrender chestnuts of all kinds. "Viewing the Hackett in this light," as she tells us, "complicates portrayals of American missionary physicians on one hand as heroines, and on the other as imperialists." It suggests instead that, contrary to Hubbard's depiction of a Western-obsessed modernizing Chinese population, that students, "assistants," and other Chinese in the missionary orbit regarded their Christian affiliations through a pragmatic lens—seeking to maximize opportunities for themselves, take resourceful control of their destinies, and also remain open to strategic collaborations—with or without the acknowledgment of distant missionary propagandists. That this hard-headed thinking should be the case

for those that the missionary presence most significantly advantaged suggests how many topics in American-East Asian exchange are due for this sustained scrutiny and skepticism.

Shemo's carefully argued case study sheds light on Chinese student innovation in one missionary setting. The constraints and possibilities on the ground changed missionaries as well as students. Sometimes remaining for years, investing much of their lives in the dilemmas of worlds distant from hometowns, their perspectives evolved in reaction to political, social, and economic circumstances they never could have anticipated. Amanda Izzo's rich essay in this issue "By Love, Serve One Another': Foreign Mission and the Challenge of World Fellowship in the YWCAs of Japan and Turkey" follows one transnational Christian organization (with two faces), the American and the World's Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), and its surprising evolution in two locations in the Far and Near East. As in the West, the YWCA hoped to provide healthy recreation and services for all classes of girls and women who were facing similar challenges around the world. If the challenges were the same everywhere, however, the YWCA came to learn that the solutions needed to respond to circumstances on the ground were as varied as the peoples of the globe. During the 1920s, at a time of renewed nativism and immigration restriction in the United States, the YWCA's foreign chapters were learning how to address the specific differences they were encountering as they attempted to reach out to local populations. As Izzo puts it, earlier "YWCA leadership had celebrated the heritage of the 'Anglo Saxon races' as the root of association success, but by 1924, they acknowledged that associations were 'too few and too Anglo-Saxon.'" All foreign missionary organizations in theory aspired to put themselves out of business, as Christianity took root in Eastern and Southern soil. YWCAs in particular, with their youthful and modern staff, appeared to be especially successful in achieving this goal as they aimed to "develop leaders in each nation."

Izzo's article introduces readers to Michi Kawai, one of the World YWCA's most successful early national leaders, and her accomplishments in prying control of the YWCA in Japan from foreign hands. Her rise within the organization was almost as rapid as Japan's in these prewar years. By 1916, she had become the "general secretary" (the equivalent of the chief executive officer) of the YWCA in Japan. A Christian convert, the product of an American Presbyterian missionary school and a graduate of Bryn Mawr College, she had only the year before returned to Japan to take up a position teaching English. In short, she already had English fluency, an extensive education in cross-cultural exchanges, and the appropriate skills to negotiate the Western evangelical community. Izzo is especially interested in Kawai's strategic campaign to free the Japanese YWCA from foreign oversight. Even before Kawai had become general

secretary herself, she began to educate the World's YWCA executives about the problems stemming from foreign leadership. When in 1917, the year after she became general secretary, the U.S. chapter offered to send more foreign workers to solve staffing needs, Kawai boldly rejected the offer. The consternation Kawai's forthright independence caused in the YWCA's American leadership included a suggestion from one U.S. administrator that she was "anti-foreign" and that headquarters needed to replace her.

Despite this static, though, evidence suggests that when it passed authority to Michi Kawai, the World YWCA headquarters had chosen well. Kawai effectively communicated her mission in public speeches in the United States, led successful programming in Japan, and created a Japanese board at a time when anti-colonial protestors worldwide were rejecting Christian religion because of its foreign leadership. Izzo believes that World YWCA executives were disappointed that Kawai was not acting deferentially, as one might have expected from someone who had grown up under the guidance of Japanese gender mores. The fact was, though, that Kawai had reached maturity partially in a Christianized world—the world of American women's education both in Japan and Philadelphia. In selecting her to lead the Japanese YWCA, American leaders were appointing a border-crosser who could manage them skillfully, as well as helping the YWCA to achieve one of its most challenging goals—the obsolescence they both sought and resisted.

Michi Kawai sought to nurture a Japanese Christianity, remaining a Christian throughout her life. The YWCA faced quite different circumstances in Turkey, however, and here, foreign nationals on the ground made surprising accommodations with a new political regime to see their work continue. In theory, the World YWCA had the same hopes for Turkey that it had elsewhere, that once exposed to the light of Christian truth, those following other religions (in this case Moslems) would turn to the "higher type of civilization" that Christianity offered. The traumas of the Greco-Turkish War (1919–1921), including the Armenian genocide, however, changed the perspective and the goals of local YWCA workers, who provided shelter and tried to help. "The association had once hopefully envisioned a martial-like subjugation of Islam in Istanbul ...," Izzo concludes. "After the revolution, it sought peace."

Later in the 1920s, following this transformative experience, the new Turkish state asked the YWCA to choose. It prohibited Christian organizations from recruiting, educating, and trying to convert Moslem students. The YWCA would have to decide—did it exist for Christians only, an organization seeking to provide niche services for a minority or did it have a larger role to play in multi-ethnic, modern Turkey—and by projection in the world to come? The foreign staff elected relevance over purity. In a truly extraordinary act, in 1925 they

decided that the YWCA should sacrifice its name and its Christian identity in order to most truly fulfill its Christian mission. In 1925, the YWCA registered as a secular institute of education under the name the American Girls' Service Center (AGSC). Over the next few years, while still affiliated with the World YWCA and with YWCA-recruited U.S. women staffers, the AGSC promoted religious and ethnic harmony, and enrolled increasing numbers of Moslem members. Only in the early 1930s, when the AGSC realized it needed to remove a Christian pledge to enlist Moslem board members did the World YWCA draw the line. Even as the World YWCA severed formal relations with what some might have considered a Christian project gone rogue, however, the YWCA of the USA pledged ongoing "sympathetic interest"—continuing to help with staffing until the 1980s.

This outcome reveals the significant evolution of the YWCA and its personnel on the ground, and even in its headquarters in the West. Years ago, Jonathan Spence famously argued that the various Westerners who went to China in the 18th and 19th Centuries "to change China," instead had been changed themselves.⁵ Izzo's recounting of the Turkey YWCA represents another important chapter in that transnational story, going beyond Spence's insight. The situation in Turkey caused both sides of the organization—those on the ground and those in London and New York—to discover the extent of their flexibility. Although the World YWCA eventually severed its formal relationship with the Turkish "service center," it turned out that the bonds connecting the YWCA of the USA and the Turkish AGSCs could stretch quite far before finally parting. Izzo's Turkish example tells us something important about the meaning of global Christian evangelism. That meaning emerged in context, in looking and indeed becoming something quite different depending on the circumstances in which it was deployed. YWCA work in Turkey took a different path because of two decisions—one state-made, the other the YWCA staff made on the ground in response. As a result, a Christian organization refashioned itself to emphasize one particular part of its mission—its message of toleration, sisterhood, and love—at the expense of articulating any explicit Christian identity at all.

The actions of another state—in this case imperial Japan—also had a profound impact on the fortunes and challenges of Christian evangelism in Asia in ways that might seem paradoxical. As the Japanese military bore down on its Asian neighbors, the people in its path looked more kindly than before on the Western missionaries amongst them. Already a Japanese colony, Korea set the pattern early in the century. The initiatives of Western evangelists no longer

5 Jonathan Spence, *To Change China: Western Advisers in China, 1620–1960* (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin Books, 1980).

seemed so heavy-handed, and could even appear useful, as Koreans confronted a massive imperialist master at far closer quarters.⁶ Christianity emerged as an attractive option in Korea in result. After the anti-foreign demonstrations of the 1920s, Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists similarly reconsidered their perspective on Christian missionaries as the Japanese worked their way across China. The same was true on a smaller scale in the island empire itself. Noriko Ishii's fascinating article "Difficult Conversations across Religions, Race and Empires: American Women Missionaries and Japanese Christian Women during the 1930s and 1940s" shows us the ways Christianity could function as a lever for at least a few extraordinary women seeking a separate way in wartime Japan.

Noriko Ishii describes two Japan-born Christian leaders of courage and creativity, one a missionary, one her student, who juggled national and religious identities before and during world war. The story of the student Takeda Kiyoko and her mother begs a feminist reading that shows the ways that Christianity perhaps could serve as leverage against Japanese authoritarianism for Japanese people. Takeda's mother, a young widow struggling to run the estate she had inherited, reflected on her own wide reading and surveyed the possibilities for her talented daughter. She found attractive the opportunities in the Christian community, associated in Japan with conservative modernity and women's education. A theme in Ishii's essay is the creative ability of key figures in Takeda's life to achieve "imagination through difference" as they sought a better world than the one they knew. In Takeda's life, the first such visionary was her mother, who hoped that a Christian and cosmopolitan education might better prepare her daughter for the life opening before her.

After initial confusion at the lax practices of Christian education at Kobe College, Takeda herself chose to undergo baptism, although already the Christian community was in trouble with the militarists. Takeda was in New York, studying with noted philosopher Reinhold Niebuhr, when Japanese planes bombed Pearl Harbor. The Japanese government asked her to return to Japan, but Niebuhr encouraged her to stay and she faced an existential crisis. When she finally decided to return, she had been away long enough that she was no longer quite the same person. Others found her behavior strange, and she remarked on the silence of her compatriots. In her quest to understand her countrymen, Ishii shows, she came to think of the quiet, war-weary populace as "humans in shells"—still possessing their full humanity, but protected within a brittle, resistant casing. Takeda Kiyoko would devote the rest of her ongoing

6 Hyae-weol Choi, *Gender and Mission Encounters in Korea: New Women, Old Ways* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 10.

life to the project of cracking those shells and nourishing in postwar Japan a Christianity that blended her own odyssey with the needs of her birth country.

Takeda Kiyoko's decision to return to Japan during the war had been courageous. She had ties in the American Christian community, and knew that she could be a figure of suspicion, packing her bag for a long stay when the Japanese police summoned her for interrogation. In this position, she shared common ground with an early mentor at Kobe College, Charlotte DeForest. During the years of these articles, current or former members of Christian communities in Asia were often important to policy-makers precisely because of their potential for both gain and harm. This was especially true of those who had been born and partially raised overseas, providing them with a double inheritance. The biographies of so-called "mish kids," such as DeForest, suggest the power, promise, and perplexity of their unique role, an area worth further investigation.

DeForest's student Takeda remembered "DeForest as an exceptional missionary, conversant in Japanese language with a profound understanding of Japanese people and culture." As was customary, DeForest had left her birth-country Japan in her teen years to complete her education in the United States, electing to serve as a missionary in Japan herself shortly after her graduation from Smith College in 1903. She studied Japanese over four years upon her return to Japan as a missionary, laying down new proficiency on what was likely a childhood familiarity with the sounds and rhythm of the language. Like other children everywhere, she also probably had acquired some ability to read the world socially, acquired when young as she traveled beyond the mission gates. Like Michi Kawai, she moved quickly through positions of responsibility, by the age of thirty serving as acting "principal" of Kobe College, and five years later becoming its president. Like her more famous contemporary J. Leighton Stuart in Beijing, who became U.S. ambassador to China, DeForest may well have earned some of her respect and success as a cultural intermediary, communicator, Christian, and college president from the informal lessons she learned under the age of ten as she responded to cues from the open, omnivorous world of childhood.

DeForest struggled as she attempted to integrate Christian doctrine with the demands of the Japanese government and the needs of her students and colleagues. In 1914, she had written a biography of her father, a missionary in Japan for 37 years, emphasizing his unusual appreciation of Japanese culture, his conversations with Buddhist priests, his ecumenical projects, and respect for his environment. This provided an important exercise for her in establishing familial precedents for her Christian practice with Japanese characteristics—her life's work, shared with her student Takeda Kiyoko. Ishii reasonably considers

her flexibility a triumph for Japanese Christianity, but in letters to her sister she worried over whether she was over-stepping the strict limits of Christian orthodoxy in accommodating state demands that her college support Shintoism. DeForest constantly was patrolling the line between these two divergent religious cultures. According to churchmen in the United States, J. Leighton Stuart, her colleague in China representing the Southern Presbyterians, actually crossed that line; his superiors back in Virginia charged him with “heresy” for modernist tendencies, the result of his efforts to translate Christianity into a Chinese spiritual vocabulary.⁷ DeForest represented a more liberal board (the northern Congregational board, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions). In exercising “imagination through difference,” in Ishii’s powerful phrase, Stuart and DeForest were creating bonds useful for those who sought harmony among the citizens of the world, but threatening to those who expected them to choose sides.

Church doctrine was one thing, national loyalty another, still jealously held. Ishii shows how Charlotte DeForest carefully choreographing her relationships with authorities in both Japan and the United States. DeForest was in the United States at the time of Pearl Harbor; thereafter, she strategically sought roles that allowed her to work for Japanese interned in the United States, and spared her from working against Japan. DeForest managed to evade job offers from the intelligence-gathering Office of Strategic Services, instead helping worthy Japanese detainees to prove their loyalty. For her latter role, she attracted curiosity and even a “camouflaged examination,” to see if she could be trusted. Fortunately for her, the examination preceded the cataclysm that ended the war, which tore DeForest apart as it devastated few others in the United States. Her journals referred to “horrors beyond our conception,” and caused DeForest to consider renouncing her affiliation with the United States. On 11 August 1945, Ishii reports, DeForest declared in her journal that she was neither American nor Japanese, “but first and foremost ‘Christian.’” “Our religion should make us supernational,” she wrote, repeating a contemporary she remembered from the speech of a Japanese Christian colleague at Kobe in 1937. It was this moment that triggered some later defections from the United States, including Manhattan project physicist Joan Hinton, who expatriated to Mao Zedong’s China in 1948 partly in distress at the consequences of her collaboration on the atomic bomb. Government suspicions of Charlotte DeForest appear never to have risen to the level of “collaboration,” the ultimate accusation of patriotic

7 Yu-ming Shaw, *An American Missionary in China: John Leighton Stuart and Chinese-American Relations*, Harvard East Asian Monographs (Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1992), 71–87.

betrayal. Other Asia-born “mish kids,” of course, especially during the subsequent Cold War, would not be so fortunate. Sichuan-born John Service and John Paton Davies lost their State Department jobs under suspicion of near-collaboration for their roles in “losing” China to the Communists.

This introduction ends with some thoughts about terminology and issues for future research, especially regarding such bicultural figures as DeForest. The experience of growing up in two worlds presented DeForest (and others like her) with an unusual and important inheritance—an inheritance of two powerful if incomplete senses of belonging and membership, often confusing, but also enriching. She shared this identity with other notable figures in American-East Asian relations, many of them also the offspring of missionaries. Along with DeForest and Stuart, who became missionaries themselves, and Service and Davies who went to the U.S. State Department, one can note Edwin O. Reischauer, ambassador to Japan and scholar of Japan, Ida Pruitt, founder of the social work program of Peking Union Medical College, and Pearl Sydenstricker Buck, Nobel-prize winning author. These figures combined both a deep commitment to Asia, born of their own early experiences and identifications, and a kind of cultural fluency, an ability to see the world conditioned by the receptive brains of children first noticing the larger world around them.

The default word scholars frequently use to describe the world views of such figures is “cosmopolitan” which the Oxford English Dictionary defines as follows: “Belonging to all parts of the world; not restricted to any one country or its inhabitants.” This term appears in the articles here. Yet the term’s definition suggests a broad—and possibly shallow—acquaintance with many parts of the world. It fails to account for the depth of experience of Charlotte DeForest, Pearl Buck, and some of the other bicultural figures who figure so prominently in American-East Asian relations. The language some of them used to describe their fractured experience was powerful. Lucius Porter, a faculty member at Yenching College in Beijing and a close colleague of fellow “mish kid” Leighton Stuart, came from an extensive missionary family with “aunts, uncles, and cousins” as well as parents working in the China mission field. Porter himself grew up in Shandong and, according to historian Philip West, felt that his experience on the borders “of three great cultures,” with “Chinese customs from boyhood, British ways of expatriate society in Peking and Tientsin, and the American missionary culture of his home and formal education” left him “a marginal man.”

Ida Pruitt and her brother remained at their parents’ mission station in Shandong province for most of their childhood, and when Ida finally came to the United States, she considered herself “a freak.” Her ties with her Chinese amah and the local village were strong, and she ultimately rejected the

demanding ways of her parents' Christianity. As she matured, she saw herself, according to her biographer, as a mediator and a bridge, a "thread weaving back and forth" discovering "a purpose in life, a method of interacting with the world, and a self-definition" in her ability to transcend her status "in the margin between her two countries." John Fairbank knew many of these figures in Beijing, and analogized Pruitt to her contemporary Pearl Buck, who also, as she wrote, "grew up in a double world, the small clean Presbyterian world of my parents and the big loving merry not-too-clean Chinese world." As Buck observed, "there was no communication between them," leaving it up to her to try to build them through her writing.⁸ Of course, millions of migrants and immigrants and their children are familiar with the kinds of challenges missionary offspring experienced—without some of the same institutional supports. Second generation immigrants have wrestled famously with cultural conflicts between home and school or workplace, and often elected assimilation, with all its costs, at the expense of ties with grandparents and parents and countries of origin. Missionaries were largely not immigrants but temporary sojourners, and their children always knew that for their parents "home" was somewhere else.

Instead, we should consider the resonance of another set of terms Marjorie King introduces in her exemplary biography of Ida Pruitt. In considering her subject's double identity, King refers to today's "global nomads' or 'third culture kids,'" who have grown up in a culture distinct from their parents' home cultures. These bi-cultural moderns, frequently subjects of discussion in the fields of international education and college counseling, often share the "feeling of not fully belonging in any country," while also laying claim to membership in at least two countries, an experience that King sees in Pruitt. Michigan State sociologist Ruth Hill Useem and her husband John in the 1950s and 60s generated the concept of a third culture to refer to such experiences, focusing especially on the semi-colonial childhoods of the offspring of U.S. missionaries and members of the military in geographical India. In 1999, educators David Pollock and Ruth Van Reken provided a name for those who had grown up in these cultures—"Third Culture Kids" (TCKs). They defined a TCK as one who has spent "a significant part of his or her developmental years outside the parent's culture," in the process building relationships with several cultures "while

8 Philip West, *Yenching University and Sino-Western Relations, 1916–1952*, Harvard East Asian Series (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), 27; Marjorie King, *China's American Daughter: Ida Pruitt (1888–1985)* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2006), 45; John King Fairbank, *Chinabound: A Fifty-Year Memoir* (New York: Harper & Row, 1982), 48.

not having full ownership in any.” (TCKs often discover that they do not fit in completely anywhere except with each other.)⁹

Of course today, the number of those who have grown up outside their parents’ native culture as sojourners has swelled as business people join the ranks of diplomats, missionaries, information technology professionals, and graduate students living temporarily outside their home society. Today, they are an especially important global population, those who resist a simplistic and exclusive nation-based identity, instead looking at problems and misunderstandings from a perspective that is both more complex and more internationally inflected. A hundred years ago, they were less common. Then as now, they offer challenges to the centrality of the nation state in determining identity, and also significant opportunity for global understanding across boundaries.

Sociologist Chan Kwok-Bun’s rich essay “Both Sides Now: Culture Contact, Hybridization, and Cosmopolitanism” considers this reality of internationally-raised children as it figures increasingly in global cities such as Singapore, Tokyo, Shanghai, New York, and Sydney. Acknowledging the divided loyalties and identities of those who have personal experience in more than one culture, he asks this question: “Can this ‘doubleness’, or even multiplicity, of ethnicity be put to good use, not only in economic terms, but also in terms of its potential to facilitate cross-cultural and cross-national understanding?” Chan provides a useful typology, imagining the various ways in which cultures of origin (A) and destination (B) can interact within individuals. His final category—“innovating”—describes the evolution that those who work with Third Culture Kids often observe. He acknowledges the pain that sometimes accompanies such divided loyalties, but also sees the opportunities. “[T]he good news is C, a new product, a new culture, a novelty,” he explains. “At this moment the cosmopolitan star is born.”¹⁰ As historians, we might ask what this means for historical research and the practice of history. Do we have evidence of the difference that this global experience might mean, especially in the birth of the new cosmopolitan “star”?

From the beginning of Charlotte DeForest’s career, she worked on integrating her two realities, early on realizing that she would need an account of her

9 King, *China’s American Daughter*, p. xvi; John Useem and Ruth Hill Useem, “The Interfaces of a Binational Third Culture: A Study of the American Community in India,” *Journal of Social Issues* 22, no. 1 (March 1967): 130–43; David C. Pollock and Ruth E. Van Reken, *Third Culture Kids: Growing up Among Worlds* (Boston: Nicholas Brealey, 2009), 13.

10 Kwok-Bun Chan, “Both Sides, Now: Culture Contact, Hybridization, and Cosmopolitanism,” in *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism: Theory, Context and Practice*, Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen, eds. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 194.

missionary father that provided her some support in her own efforts to fuse her American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions “origins” with a Japanese cultural “destination” that could co-exist with state Shintoism. Her horror at Hiroshima helped her to see that her primary loyalties, always Christian, could not be national, but must be “supernational,” an earlier and more optimistic phrasing of today’s “transnational.” But others in these papers without DeForest’s childhood experience in Asia also contributed significantly. Michi Kawai returned from the United States as a young adult equipped with tools well-suited to wrestle power from U.S. administrators. Takeda Kiyoko brought a U.S.-acquired sensibility back to Japan during the war, and with it contributed to a Japanese-inflected Christianity useful to a traumatized nation trying to deal with an occupying army. And the American YWCA workers in war-ravaged Turkey learned what their faith meant to them—and what it did not mean. In surrendering the vocabulary of Christianity and Christian control, they hoped that a message of interfaith love and tolerance might live on—poignant given today’s realities in that part of the world.

The figures Connie Shemo hopes to change are her readers—seeking to bring them to a fresh perspective on the entire missionary enterprise. She pushes the insights of the past few decades one step further. In her telling, it was not just that Chinese students made innovative use of the messages and programs that missionaries brought to Southern China. Instead, she shows how the interests of Chinese female students actually may have elicited such initiatives as the founding of Hackett Medical School, relocating the spark of creativity away from the mission rooms of Boston, Chicago, and New York, and positioning it in the aspirations of young women seeking better options in Guangzhou and elsewhere.

Altogether, these articles help to illuminate the important insights David Hollinger offered in his 2010 presidential address to the Organization of American Historians. Hollinger did not address directly the cultural imperial critique of the foreign missionary effort, focusing instead on what liberal Protestants—missionaries and others—learned in the mission field, and what they brought home to millions of American mainstream congregations across the nation in mid-century. The liberal Protestants that these essays represent are not so prominent in today’s religious landscape, Hollinger acknowledges. Often, historians have considered them the losers in the competition to define the meaning of modern Christianity. Hollinger argues otherwise. In the mid-20th Century, the foreign missionaries serving in Asia saw the world around them and brought their insights and commitments home. In pulpits and publications, they introduced the millions of parishioners in mainstream congregations to the tremendous varieties of religious experience, in the process

diluting the exclusive claims of Christian orthodoxy, and laying down a template for today's multiculturalism. Hollinger attributes today's diversity commitments, which we see millions defending vigorously today in airports and protest marches throughout the country, to several sources, but prominently among them "the egalitarian impulses and the capacities for self-interrogation that ecumenical Protestants brought to the great American encounter with diversity during the middle and late decades of the twentieth century."¹¹

Hollinger points to one example of this phenomenon that young American women on the ground in Turkey foreshadowed in the 1920s. In 2010, (a year after the national YWCA made a similar move), the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) announced a name-change. As a result of the organization's "vibrancy and diversity," the YMCA posted on its website that it would no longer include "Christian" in its name. Thereafter, it was to be known simply as "The Y." Like those on the ground in Turkey, it did not intend to lose its Christians principles—on the contrary.¹² The essence of those principles—the importance of diversity and tolerance—however, required the relinquishing of labels perceived to exclude. What ecumenical Protestants around the world learned and taught over the past half century and more, through all their errors, was that Christian rituals and doctrines and even nomenclature were less important than Christianity's central messages of world fellowship, Christian love, and human dignity.

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12 Ibid., p. 48.

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