Christian mission in the twentieth century developed and expanded its influence on the “wave of globalization” (Satyavrata 2009, 198). Yet, the relationship between globalization and missionary work in the context of colonialism is contested. Colonialism unfolded primarily through trade, military and political power, and contributed to the spread of alternative cultural products at the local level through education, the imposition of a foreign language, the introduction of modern technology, and the transformation of religions. While colonialism may have opened the door for the global expansion of the West, it also sustained colonial powers by transforming the lifestyle, mentality, and values of the colonized. Political authorities and military forces were the conscious and main actors of colonialism. Missionaries were regarded among the key mediators of this globalization process through their work in the mission fields, which were, arguably colonies of Western countries.

Motivated by the expectation of the imminent second coming of Jesus and the need to spread the gospel message, the Pentecostal movement joined this missionary force alongside its Protestant and Catholic predecessors in the early twentieth century (Anderson, 2007). Empowered by “Spirit baptism” and equipped with the ability to “speak in tongues,” Pentecostals single-mindedly set out to spread the gospel. China, in particular, was one of the countries where Pentecostals felt burdened to save lost souls. However, the Pentecostal movement’s expansion into China in the 1920s coincided with a time in China’s history marked by nationwide political and social chaos called the “Anti-Christian movement” (see Hodous, 1930; Yamamoto, 1953; Lutz, 1976, 1988; Chee, 1988; Duara, 1991).
Missionaries who had experienced the Boxer rebellion in the early twentieth century regarded this movement as more severe and destructive. However, both movements were nationalistic reactions to the imperial oppression of the West and also resistance movements against globalization, which was believed to erode the distinct cultural, linguistic and social heritage of Chinese culture.

The Anti-Christian movement started out as a debate between intellectual Christians and non-Christians in public forums, journals and newspapers, but in 1924 devolved into a violent national campaign launched by the collective force of the military, government officials, intellectuals, merchants and a large uneducated population, influenced by Russian communism. Missionaries took advantage of free entry to the treaty ports and spread Christianity through medical, educational and humanitarian means. Although they might have been well meaning, the Chinese identified them with Western imperialism. This deep-seated mistrust caused litigation and rumours about abuses in their hospitals and orphanages despite the social welfare from which some of them benefitted. It was common for mission properties to be destroyed, converts scattered, and lives threatened. Compared to Protestant and Catholic missions that had developed since the 1840s, Pentecostal missions were more vulnerable when facing the same political turmoil. The mission of the Pentecostal Holiness Church (PHC) is one example. This chapter focuses on the mission work of the PHC in China under the leadership of William H. Turner between 1924 and 1928, the years when the Anti-Christian movement became radicalized and violent. More specifically, it methodologically relies on the writings of the missionary Turner, which offers insight into a Pentecostal response to the Anti-Christian movement (see Duke, 1986; Adeney, 2009; Ahlstrand, 2009; van der Laan, 2010).

The Anti-Christian Movement as Resistance to Globalization

Ancient China, which was guided by Confucianism in its political, educational, familial, social and religious systems, had found sufficiency in its tradition and developed a sense of superiority over other countries and tribes. The country was described as a closed system for five thousand years, until the outbreak of the opium war, which nakedly displayed to the West that bullets and a few canons could easily defeat this empire, claiming to be the centre of the world. The Qing Empire was forced to sign the Treaty of Nanking with the British Empire in 1842, which demanded