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CHARISMATIC MODERNS:

PLURALISTIC DISCOURSE WITHIN CHINESE PROTESTANT COMMUNITIES, 1905-1926

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Whether in large cities or small villages, Chinese Protestant communities at the turn of the twentieth century participated in a vibrant Christian print culture. Protestant publications, at the forefront of China's emerging modern print culture, embodied the age's chaotic confluence of multiple authoritative paradigms for interpreting and ordering the world. In the pages of The Chinese Christian Intelligencer*, a popular Presbyterian publication, charismatic accounts such as stories of faith healing and Spirit-filled worship services abutted reports of cutting edge scientific developments and international newswires. This study shows the prevalence of charismatic modes within mainline Protestantism around the turn of the twentieth century. Pluralistic discourse in* The Chinese Christian Intelligencer *from 1905 to 1926 reveals the complex and multifaceted experience of modernity in China, especially at the grassroots.*

Keywords: China, Christianity, print culture, charismatic, healing, modernity

INTRODUCTION

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In the fall of 1906, *The Chinese Christian Intelligencer* (通問報 *tongwenbao*), a Chinese-language (白話 *baihua*) weekly that circulated in cities and villages all over China, reported double wonders. The first was news from the Sorbonne in Paris: Marie Curie had demonstrated that polonium, a recently discovered element, "inhibits the conduction of electricity." The second came from a village near Wenzhou (溫州) in the Chinese province of Zhejiang: A baby had risen from the dead. It had died of illness, and its parents had buried it under thick clay and stones. Then, four days later, as a good Christian woman was passing by, it had miraculously come back to life.[1] How were these double wonders received by the *Intelligencer*'s readers? What sort of connection might they have made between the two? The answers to these questions remain elusive because readers' direct responses to news stories were not printed in the *Intelligencer,* one of the most widely distributed Protestant Christian periodicals in China at the time. One thing that we do know from examining its pages is that Protestants in China in the early decades of the twentieth century were connected to multiple, overlapping modes of discourse as they sought to interpret the nature of reality and the potential of human experience.

In the first few decades of the twentieth century, processes of global modernization transformed the way in which millions of Chinese experienced the world, not only in bustling urban centers but even in rural areas, which became crisscrossed with railroads, telegraph lines, and postal routes. Throughout China, new modes of living,

[1] *The Chinese Christian Intelligencer* (hereafter *CCI,* Shanghai Municipal Library record no. J5030, Roll 1 of 3), September 18-October 17 1906, #214, 6, fiche 0269; *CCI,* September 18-October 17 1906, #214, 2, fiche 0265.

working, associating, thinking, and spending money transformed people's daily routines. Global communications and mass-mechanized printing technologies connected ordinary citizens to information and cultural influences as never before, from the latest developments in physics to social scientific theories to milk powder. For many educated urban elites, such as the luminaries of the New Culture movement of the late 1910s and 1920s, these new modes formed a complete package of thought and practice, a modern reality signifying rupture from China's traditional gender roles, culture, and popular religion. These secular modernizing reformers viewed popular religious belief as a vestige of "feudal" culture and a source of backwardness that had impeded China's progress. For these secular intellectuals, a modern mindset could spring only from total reliance on the authority of rational knowledge and the powerful new technologie and analytical methods that this rational knowledge produced. For example, Chen Duxiu, one of the leading voices within the New Culture movement and editor of the avant-garde magazine *New Youth* (新青年 *Xin qingnian*), argued that religious modes of interpreting life's meaning were empty: "The teachings of Christianity, especially, are fabrications out of nothing and cannot be proved."[2] For Chen, a modern mindset sprang from scientific rationalism and necessarily excluded religious modes of thought.

However, as Ryan Dunch has shown, contrary to the assumption that religion and modernity stand in opposition to each other, religious organizations like Western

[2] Chen Duxiu, "The True Meaning of Life" Rensheng zhenyi, *Xin qingnian* 4, no. 2 (February 1918), in William Theodore de Bary and Richard Lufrano, eds., *Sources of Chinese Tradition, Volume II,* 2nd edition (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 366.

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Protestant missions were significant transmitters of global modernity in China.[3] Within elite circles and at the grassroots, many individuals at the forefront of China's encounter with modernity embraced aspects of the new paradigm while retaining existing worldviews. The diverse Chinese Protestant community that authored, printed, distributed, and subscribed to the *Intelligencer* might have been viewed by urban elites of the time as either spearheading the advance of modernity or lagging far behind, depending on which story in this single fall 1906 issue they read—the polonium discovery or the infant resurrection. Yet Chinese Protestants' published discourse accommodated both of these accounts and the ontological assumptions that respectively underlay them. Chinese Protestants' embrace of the authority of scientific explanations did not entail a disavowal of beliefs in "miraculous" or charismatic power. Rather, their conversance with cutting-edge scientific developments and print technology coexisted with and in many cases facilitated the spread of charismatic discourse and practices within China in the early twentieth century.[4] The ideological pluralism of this community of Chinese Christians, some of whom belonged to the elite strata of society but many of whom did not, reflects their experience of modernity: complex, changeable, and contradictory.

[3] Ryan Dunch, "Beyond Cultural Imperialism: Cultural Theory, Christian Missions, and Global Modernity," in *History and Theory* 41, no. 3 (October 2002), 301-325, especially 319-322.

[4] David Martin argues that in Latin America and Africa, Pentecostalism—a strain of Christianity emphasizing charismatic experience, including tongues—"manifests and advances modernity" through its emphasis on pluralistic voluntarism, economic discipline, and use of modern media. David Martin, *Pentecostalism: The World their Parish* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 2002), 1-27.

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This article uses a national print community of Protestant Christians as a case study for how some Chinese at the grassroots integrated scientistic discourse and cutting-edge technologies into miraculous storytelling. This group of Chinese Protestants saw themselves as participants in the modern age, but on their own terms. Rejecting the atheist-modern package of the New Culture movement, these Chinese Protestants' worldview pluralistically accommodated hallmarks of modernity as well as charismatic approaches that to them also effectively engaged with the world as it really was.

In this article I first contextualize charismatic Christian discourse and practices much in evidence in the *Intelligencer* from 1905 to 1926. (Charismatic practices also appear after 1926, but because of space constraints, an increased spottiness in the sources after the mid-1920s, and a desire to maintain chronological proximity to the New Culture movement, the latest source that I use is from 1926.) This charismatic mode of Christianity included an emphasis on such practices as healing, exorcism, particularistic protection from disaster, and ecstatic vocal worship that was akin to glossolalia (tongues), though never explicitly identified as such. In this section I also discuss how recognition of mainstream Protestants' discursive pluralism helps complicate our picture of the global history of Christianity's encounter with modernity. In the second section of the article, I describe how the early adoption of printing technology and the development of print culture propelled the Chinese Christian community to the vanguard of modern awareness in China. Finally, in the third section I show how the *Intelligencer,* a popular Protestant publication, relied on the authority of rationalistic scientific discourse and modern technology to spread a charismatic worldview that exerted a lasting influence on twentieth century Chinese Protestantism. There are many aspects of modernity that

illustrate the rapid changes of the early twentieth century, such as new forms of housing or reconfigured gender roles, but I will focus on popular awareness and acceptance of scientific authority because this "scientism" constituted an ideological framework with—in theory, at least—an all-encompassing scope.[5] In this sense it occupied the same discursive space as the powerful religious ideas, texts, and exchanges that held national Protestant communities together. Both kinds of narratives—the scientistic and the charismatic—provided ontological, epistemic, and moral reference points that the *Intelligencer*'s editors and authors strategically disseminated through the same print networks to the same audience. The article's conclusion offers thoughts about how this discursive pluralism has continued to characterize Christianity in China, as well as the larger ideological landscape of Chinese society, into the twenty-first century.

Charismatic Discourse in the Chinese Religious Environment

For scholars of Christianity, "charismatic" is a term that in its most basic form describes the belief in or the experience of charismata (from the Latin word *charis,* "grace"), that is, phenomena such as healing, exorcism, visions, and speaking in tongues that Christians understand as gifts of the Holy Spirit. Charismatic modes have been part of the great stream of world Christian tradition since its establishment. Numerous groups including Quakers, the Lutheran revivalistic group The Awakened, the Irvingites, and

[5] In a recent essay, Grace Yen Shen defines "scientism" as discourse about science that positions it as "the epistemic and moral reference point for all other human activity." See Grace Yen Shen 沈德容, in Vincent Goossaert, Jan Kiely, and John Lagerwey, eds., "Scientism in the Twentieth Century," in *Modern Chinese Religion II, 1850-2015*, vol. 1 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015), 91-137.

early Mormons spoke in tongues, and healing practices have been a persistent feature of Christian history.[6] In the twentieth century, the term "charismatic" has been used to describe movements emphasizing charismata that followed in the wake of the international Pentecostal movement of the early twentieth century.[7] Accounts of charismatic phenomena such as healing, exorcism, particularistic protection, and ecstatic states of worship have long been part of the Chinese religious scene, including Buddhism, Daoism, and local cults.[8] In a 2001 study of local Chinese religion, Stephen Feuchtwang and Wang Mingming have offered a definition of "charisma" that easily encompasses Buddhist, Daoist, and Christian manifestations: "an expectation of the extraordinary."[9] Chinese religious studies scholars Vincent Goossaert and David Ownby have recently pointed out how this definition construes charisma as more than the innate powers of larger-than-life leaders and as mutually constructed by religious leaders and

[6] Stanley K. Burgess, ed., *Encyclopedia of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity* (Routledge, 2006), s.v. "Antecedents of Pentecostalism;" John Turner, *Brigham Young: Pioneer Prophet* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Amanda Porterfield. *Healing in the History of Christianity*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); James Robinson, *Divine Healing: the Formative Years, 1830-1880: Theological Roots in the Transatlantic World* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2011).

[7] See Allan Anderson, "Varieties, taxonomies, and definitions," in Allan Anderson, Michael Bergunder, André Droogers, and Cornelis van der Laan, eds., *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2010), 13-29.

[8] For example, see David Ownby, "Chinese Millenarian Traditions: The Formative Age," *American Historical Review* 104, no. 5 (December 1999), 1513-1530; Paul Cohen, *History in Three Keys: The Boxers as Event, Experience, and Myth* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997). For a contemporary example, see Fan Lizhu, "The Cult of the Silkworm Mother as a Local Community Religion in a North China Village: Field Study in Zhiwuying, Baoding, Hebei," *The China Quarterly* 174 (June 2003), 359-372.

[9] Stephen Feuchtwang and Wang Mingming, *Grassroots Charisma: Four Local Leaders in China* (New York: Routledge, 2001).

followers.[10] This definition of charisma as extraordinary *expectation* captures the fact that people experience or seek the charismatic because of their underlying assumptions about the nature of reality and human experience. For the purposes of this article I will speak of charismata in the Christian context, with an awareness of the wider worldviews created by the "expectation of the extraordinary."

The Chinese Protestants who read and wrote for the *Intelligencer* embraced charismatic discourse, eagerly reporting accounts in which extraordinary phenomena manifested the power of the Christian God. The intertwining of healing and exorcism accounts in mass-printed form alongside the latest news in scientific innovation signified a new and complicated awareness within those sectors of grassroots Chinese society most directly connected to modern influences around the turn of the twentieth century.

How did Chinese Protestants come to occupy this lively, in-between space? In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Catholic Christianity had become well established in China as a local religion, in competition with other religions such as Buddhism and Daoism in an ideological and administrative sphere subject to imperial state control.[11] But in the nineteenth century, as imperial control over religious activity and Chinese territorial sovereignty weakened, both Catholic and Protestant Christian communities

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[10] Vincent Goossaert and David Ownby, "Mapping Charisma in Chinese Religion, Introduction and Glossary," *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 12, no. 2 (November 2008), 3-11. doi: 10.1525/nr.2008.12.2.3

[11] See Eugenio Menegon, *Ancestors, Virgins, and Friars: Christianity as a Local Religion in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2009), 208-230; David Mungello, *The Spirit and the Flesh in Shandong, 1650-1785* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2001).

were able to increase and fortify connections to the world outside China.[12] These connections came into being through the itinerations of foreign missionaries, the experiences of Chinese Christians who went abroad and returned with new linguistic and technical skills, and the circulation of cultural materials such as images, music, books, and periodicals.

Ironically, around the same time that converts in China were accepting new Christian discourses of authority, in places such England, Germany, and United States, growing acceptance of scientific authority challenged literal understandings of creation and miracles in Christian scripture, giving rise to the theological split between liberal modernists and conservative fundamentalists.[13] This theological split was eventually reflected within the Chinese Protestant community, although along slightly different lines.[14] And yet generally speaking, in East Asia, as in Africa and the Pacific, in the early

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[12] See Henrietta Harrison, *The Missionary's Curse and Other Stories from a Chinese Catholic Village* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2013); Joseph Tse-Hei Lee, "The Christian Century of South China: Church, State, and Community in Chaozhou (1860-1990)," in Thomas Jansen, Thoralf Klein, and Christian Meyer, eds., *Globalization and the Making of Religious Modernity in China : Transnational Religions, Local Agents, and the Study of Religion, 1800-Present* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014).

[13] Nicolaas A. Rupke, "Christianity and the Sciences," in Sheridan Gilley and Brian Stanley, eds., *The Cambridge History of Christianity, Vol, 8: World Christianities c. 1815-c. 1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 164-180; Colleen McDannell, "Christianity in the United States during the Inter-War Years," in Hugh McLeod, ed., *The Cambridge History of Christianity, vol. 9: World Christianities c. 1914-c.2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 236-251.

[14] Daniel Bays, "The Protestant Missionary Establishment and the Pentecostal Movement," *Pentecostal Currents in American Protestantism*, eds. Edith L. Blumhofer, Russell P. Spittler, and Grant A. Wacker (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 50-68.

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decades of the twentieth century the dialogue between Christianity and science was structured in quite a different way because of the technological superiority and political power of the Western world with which Christianity was associated.[15] In China, Christian institutions in medicine and education were at the vanguard of modernization. Although many nationalistic Chinese intellectuals quite correctly argued—especially during the anti-Christian movement of the early 1920s—that Western Christian supernaturalism was no more scientifically defensible than Chinese folk supernaturalism, Christianity occupied a privileged position as the religion of the powerful Western nations whose technological, industrial, and cultural forms of modernity were transforming China.[16]

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[15] Thomas Jansen, Thoralf Klein, and Christian Meyer point out the way in which Christianity was associated with the "seemingly superior taxonomies" and "privileged status" of Western influence in China ("Introduction: Globalization and the Religious Field in China, 1800-present," in Jansen, Klein, and Meyer, eds, *Globalization and the Making of Religious Modernity in China: Transnational Religions, Local Agents, and the Study of Religion, 1800-Present* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014), 5. See also Thoralf Klein, "Christian Mission and the Internationalization of China, 1830-1950," in Vanessa Künnemann and Ruth Mayer, eds., *Trans-Pacific Interactions: The United States and China, 1880-1950* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 141-160. For discussions of the shared socio-geographical space of Christian missionary efforts and European colonial projects outside of China, see Ruth Marshall, "'Power in the Name of Jesus': Social Transformation and Pentecostalism in Western Nigeria 'Revisited,'" in Terence Ranger and Olufemi Vaughan, eds., *Legitimacy and the State in Twentieth–Century Africa: Essays in Honour of A.H.M. Kirk-Greene* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993), 213-246; Jehu J. Hanciles, "Conversion and Social Change: A Review of the 'Unfinished Task' in West Africa," in Donald M. Lewis, ed., *Christianity Reborn: The Global Expansion of Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004), 157-180; Brian Stanley, "Twentieth-Century World Christianity: A Perspective from the History of Missions," in Lewis, ed., *Christianity Reborn*, 52-86.

[16] Daniel Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 93, 107, 108. Mayfair Mei-Hui Yang has argued that contemporary Chinese intellectuals and leaders have a "postcolonial complex" that pushes them to perceive Christianity as relatively "scientific" and Chinese religion as "backward" and "superstitious."

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This particular "modern" versus "anti-modern" categorization that emerged around the turn of the century has exerted a strong influence on the relationship between religious movements, Chinese state, and society throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first. Early twentieth century reformers sought to classify acceptable and unacceptable forms of religion on the basis of their perceived suitability for creating modern citizens. For example, Vincent Goossaert and David Palmer have argued that, beginning in 1898, after centuries of occupying the highest position in an integrated system of rites regulating religious norms across the entire Chinese empire, the Chinese state began to pursue modernity in a newly created secular sphere and to see religious groups as competitors with the state.[17] As this modernizing project continued throughout the twentieth century, political and social reformers from the late Qing dynasty to the Nationalist regime to the Chinese Communist Party often saw religion as hindering the nation's progress because it consumed resources of time, talent, and devotion that might otherwise be funneled into nation-building, economic and scientific progress, and patriotism.[18] Chinese political and intellectual elites have tended to depict charismatic

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See Mayfair Mei-Hui Yang, "Spatial Struggles: Postcolonial Complex, State Disenchantment, and Popular Reappropriation of Space in Rural Southeast China," *Journal of Asian Studies* 63, no. 3 (August 2004): 719-755 (746). Christianity's public image may currently be in flux as the state under Xi Jinping seeks to curb its popularity.

[17] Vincent Goossaert and David Palmer, *The Religious Question in Modern China* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2011), 43-65; Vincent Goossaert, "1898: The Beginning of the End for Chinese Religion?," *Journal of Asian Studies* 65 no. 2 (May 2006): 307-335; Roger Thompson, "Twilight of the Gods in the Chinese Countryside: Christians, Confucians, and the Modernizing State, 1861-1911," in Daniel Bays, ed., *Christianity in China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996).

[18] See, for example, Rebecca Nedostup's insights into the "zero-sum game" that the Republican state perceived between itself and popular religious rituals: "Ritual Competition and the Modernizing Nation-State," in Mayfair Mei-

religious practices in particular as incompatible with the needs of modern nation-building.

Early twentieth century elite discourse about "religion" and "modernity" in China tended to deploy these two linguistic categories in narrow, polemical ways. Historian Rebecca Nedostup has shown, for instance, how the terms *zongjiao* (宗教, religion) and *mixin* (迷信, superstition) were neologisms that late Qing reformers imported from Japanese and used as tools to categorize certain forms of religiosity as either compatible with or detracting from the modern nation-building project.[19] Protestant Christian congregational worship, perceived to emphasize moral and ethical self-cultivation, was seen as *zongjiao*, while popular exorcistic rituals, perceived to focus narrowly on charismatic efficacy, were seen as *mixin*. Prevailing official hostility toward *mixin* even compelled many Chinese religious groups in the early Republican era to adopt the Protestant congregational organizational model.[20]

In sum, charismata are a longstanding feature of Christianity, popular Chinese religion, and indeed nearly all religions in general. In twentieth century Chinese history, however, charismatic religious discourse and practices have nearly always been dismissed by the state and most elites as fundamentally incompatible with modernity.

Hui Yang, ed., *Chinese Religiosities: Afflictions of Modernity and State Formation* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2008), 87-112.

[19] Rebecca Nedostup, *Superstitious Regimes: Religion and the Politics of Chinese Modernity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2009), 7-8.

[20] Vincent Goossaert, "Republican Church Engineering: The National Religions Associations in 1912 China," in Mayfair Mei-Hui Yang, *Chinese Religiosities,* 209-232.

This elite antipathy notwithstanding, as historian Prasenjit Duara has put it, "The realm of popular religion turns out . . . to be a reef upon which the Enlightenment project in China repeatedly crashes."[21] Throughout China's twentieth century history, popular religious traditions with charismatic beliefs and practices can be found in profusion. Even at the height of Maoism, Communist cadres struggled to clamp down on healing and exorcism rites within Christian congregations and do away with the use of holy water in local popular practice.[22] Today, as anthropologist Nanlai Cao has estimated, charismatic practices exist within 60 to 80 per cent of Protestant congregations in China, despite the state's ongoing efforts to compel Christianity to conform to the highly rationalized, ethically oriented form that the State Administration of Religious Affairs sanctions as "normal."[23]

If charismatic practices have been so widespread in global Christian and Chinese religious history, why is it so interesting to find them in a popular Christian Chinese-language periodical? The answer is that charismatic accounts are not as commonplace in documented sources on Chinese Christianity as one might expect. In the voluminous archival records of the London Missionary Society in north China in the first decades of the twentieth century, for instance, reports of hospital expenditures and school staffing

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[21] Prasenjit Duara, "The Campaigns against Religion and the Return of the Repressed," in *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 85.

[22] For healing and exorcism in the True Jesus Church during the Maoist era, see Melissa Inouye, "Miraculous Mundane: the True Jesus Church and Chinese Christianity in the Twentieth Century" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2010); for holy water, see Steve A. Smith, "Local Cadres Confront the Supernatural: The Politics of Holy Water in the PRC, 1949-1966), *The China Quarterly* 188 (December 2006): 999-1022. doi:10.1017/S030574100600052X.

[23] Nanlai Cao, "Gender, Modernity, and Pentecostal Christianity in China," in Robert Hefner, ed., *Global Pentecostalism in the 21st Century* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013), 149-175.

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are many and reports of healing miracles are few.[24] In general, Christian institutions that printed publications, took minutes of meetings, administered large transnational bureaucracies, and preserved everything in archives have tended to produce a corpus of primary sources that document relatively rationalized forms of Christian practice. Individuals at the grassroots who laid healing hands on their brothers with tuberculosis or cast devils out of their neighbors did not always attract the approving report of the missionary historian. Major Pentecostal groups such as the True Jesus Church did have a national centralized administration and many printed publications; however, these collections are still much smaller than those held in the majority of Chinese Christian archival collections, many of which were maintained by Western missionary denominations. This disparity in the availability of sources has resulted in many more historical studies of highly rationalized forms of Christianity in China (Christian colleges, medical missionaries, national Christian organizations, etc.) than of charismatic forms.

Existing literature on early twentieth century Protestant Christianity

Existing scholarship on Protestant Christianity in China tends to paint two different historical pictures. On the one hand, there are studies of churches run by or recently descended from Western missionary denominations, representing what historian Daniel Bays calls "the Sino-foreign Protestant establishment," connected to a network of

[24] Council for World Mission Archives, 1866-1939, Reports, North China, Box no. 1-12, Hong Kong Baptist University Special Collections and Archives MFC 266.00951 L846 CN.

modern Western-style medical, educational, civic, and governmental institutions.[25] One illuminating example of this work is historian Ryan Dunch's study demonstrating Fuzhou Protestants' creation of modern civic institutions such as the YMCA and disproportionate representation in the rising urban professional class.[26] On the other hand, there are studies of "indigenous," "sectarian," or "independent" churches established by Chinese leaders, associated with charismatic practices such as healing, exorcism, particularistic protection, glossolalia, and other rites that often suggest to researchers a genealogical connection to the native Chinese popular religious tradition. In this expanding field of historical research on native Chinese Christian movements, historian Lian Xi's book on "popular Christianity" represents a substantial recent contribution. Lian focuses on independent Chinese movements and leaders largely from the 1920s and 1930s in order to capture what he calls the "indigenous religion of the masses . . . characterized by a potent mix of evangelistic fervor, biblical literalism, charismatic ecstasies, and a fiery eschatology not infrequently tinged with nationalistic exuberance."[27] Much recent work on Pentecostalism, a strain of Protestant Christianity that took firm root in China with independent churches founded in the 1910s and 1920s, also fits into this latter category.[28]

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[25] Bays, *New History of Christianity in China,* 99. See also numerous examples of classic work on the Sino-foreign Protestant establishment in Daniel Bays, ed., *Christianity in China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996).

[26] Ryan Dunch, *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001).

[27] Lian Xi, *Redeemed by Fire: The Rise of Popular Christianity in Modern China* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 2. R.G. Tiedemann comments on the recent increase in China-centered studies in "Introduction," *Handbook of Christianity in China, Volume 2, 1800-present,* ed. R.G. Tiedemann (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2010), xv.

[28] See, for instance, the Chen-Yang Kao, "The House-Church Identity and Preservation of Pentecostal-Style Protestantism in China," in Francis Khek Gee Lim, ed., *Christianity in China: A Socio-cultural Perspective* (Routledge:

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So there are well-established bodies of work on “modern” or “establishment” or “Western” Protestantism, and “charismatic” or “popular” or “indigenous” Protestantism. What is missing so far is a corpus of studies that bridge these two discourses.[29] The *Intelligencer* provides an important new perspective. It was a mainstream, modern Protestant Chinese-language publication with two editors, one American and one Chinese, and contributors from varied regional and denominational backgrounds. It was dedicated to spreading scientific awareness and highlighting charismatic occurrences within Christian communities. The *Intelligencer* was established in 1901, and numerous charismatic accounts appear in its pages at least as early as 1905 and throughout the 1930s. Miracle stories thus begin to appear prior to mid-1906, when the first published Pentecostal newsletters were sent out into the world, and late 1907, when the first Pentecostal missionaries arrived in China.[30] Throughout the 1910s and 1920s, when

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Oxon and New York, 2013) p. 207-219; Deng Zhaoming, “Indigenous Chinese Pentecostal Denominations,” in *Asian and Pentecostal: The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asia*, ed. Allan Anderson and Edmond Tang (Baguio City, Philippines: Regnum Books International, 2005), 437-466, 438; Lian Xi, “A Messianic Deliverance for Post-Dynastic China: The Launch of the True Jesus Church in the Early Twentieth Century,” *Modern China* 34 (October 2008), no. 4: 407-441; Chen-Yang Kao, “The Cultural Revolution and the Emergence of Pentecostal-style Protestantism in China,” *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 24, no. 2 (May 2009): 171-188; Daniel H. Bays, “Indigenous Protestant churches in China, 1900-1937: A Pentecostal case study,” in *Indigenous Responses to Western Christianity,* ed. Steven Kaplan (New York: New York University Press, 1995), 124-143.

[29] An important work that does bridge the gap between charismatic modes among Chinese and Westerners in a major mission denomination is Alvyn Austin, *China’s Millions: The China Inland Mission and Late Qing Society* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007).

[30] Daniel Bays, “The Protestant Missionary Establishment and the Pentecostal Movement,” in Edith L. Blumhofer, Russell P. Spittler, and Grant A. Wacker, eds., *Pentecostal Currents in American Protestantism* (University of Illinois Press, 1999), 50-68.

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China was in the throes of the New Culture movement, and the 1930s, when the Nationalist party-state worked to eliminate "superstitious" practices and promote progressive norms, the pages of the *Intelligencer* confirm readers' extensive engagement with the modernizing civic programs of the day. Yet this discourse existed alongside such charismatic reports as news of an opium addict in Hubei being healed through communal prayer and a Sichuan, man who healed his neighbor's sickness by praying, singing hymns, and preaching to exorcise the devil that was in him.[31]

How does this pluralistic discourse in the *Intelligencer* from 1905 to 1926 shape our understanding of Christianity in China? In the first place, it shows the deep roots of charismatic modes within Chinese Protestant history, a history that has been dominated by accounts of hospitals and schools.[32] In contradiction to secular Chinese academics' attempt to disown "superstitious" charismatic Christianity as foreign corruption, or numerous Western academics' tendency to assume that contemporary charismata are built entirely on foundations laid by the classical Pentecostal, it is clear that charismatic Christianity's history likely stretches far back into the nineteenth century, when the first Protestant missionaries arrived, and possibly has cross-over connections to centuries of Catholic practice established during the Ming and Qing.[33] In the second place, the dual

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[31] *CCI*, January 14-February 12, 1907, #236, 3, fiche 0406; November 1926, #1226, 8, fiche 0936.

[32] This revises the picture we first gained from Daniel Bays's pioneering 1995 article on the True Jesus Church, in which he suggested that such charismatic elements as miracles, especially divine healing, appeared in Chinese Christianity only after the arrival of Pentecostal and "sectarian" [i.e. non-mainline denomination] groups. Bays, "Indigenous Protestant churches in China," 139.

[33] Xu Tao 徐弢. "Dangdai jidujiao 'ling'en yundong' ji qi dui zhongguo de yingxiang" (The "Charismatic Movement" within Contemporary Christianity and its Influence on China), *Zhongguo Zongjiao* (*China Religion*), May 2008: 63-64.

discourses of scientism and charisma in the *Intelligencer,* a major Presbyterian periodical, demonstrate that instead of appearing only in "native," "indigenous," or "sectarian" churches, charismatic discourse was also prominent within major Western-run missionary denominations in the late Qing and Republican eras. Hence we should be careful to avoid automatically categorizing scientistic forms of modernity as "Western" or charismatic forms of modernity as "Chinese."

In sum, the outpouring of charismatic discourse within some sectors of Chinese Protestantism at this time did not simply signify the advance of a new American theological movement (Pentecostalism) or the gravitational pull of native Chinese religion on Christian norms, but something larger and more universal.[34] The Protestant community represented by the *Intelligencer* provides a case study in how Christians around the world were beginning to experience and understand the charismata at the core of their faith tradition at the dawning of the modern age.[35] It also shows how some non-elite Chinese mustered a variety of discursive approaches to explain a changing world.

[34] Anthropologist Joel Robbins has emphasized that what appears to an outside observer to be continuity may actually be "rupture" between Pentecostal Christian movements and local religious traditions. He points out that the set of charismatic practices that make Pentecostalism distinctive, such as glossolalia, exorcism, possession, healing, and so on, appear to constitute a global norm that does not allow for really significant modifications, but which often appear to observers as representing something that has probably always been at the heart of local religious practice. Joel Robbins, "On the Paradoxes of Global Pentecostalism and the Perils of Continuity Thinking," *Religion* 33, no. 3 (July 2003): 221-231. See also Karla Poewe, ed., *Charismatic Christianity as a Global Culture* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1994).

[35] See Ann Taves, *Fits, Trances, and Visions: Experiencing Religion and Explaining Experience from Wesley to James* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), for a discussion of new ways of interpreting "involuntary experiences" around the turn of the twentieth century. See also Robert Hefner, ed., *Global Pentecostalism in the 21st Century* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013); Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal*

This is not to say that all major Western Protestant denominations in China embraced charismatic modes of Christian doctrine and practice, or that there is no connection between charismatic Christianity and China's native religious traditions. With regard to Western denominational positions on charismatic Christianity, acceptance varied. For instance, within the Christian & Missionary Alliance, charismata were recognized as valid and actively sought as early as 1905.[36] Within the London Missionary Society in north China at this time, missionaries identified ecstatic vocal worship as a sign of the Holy Spirit but beyond this did not report or discuss explicitly supernatural miracles of healing, exorcism, or particularistic protection.[37] However, although not every mission denomination was as charismatically oriented as the Presbyterian mission institutions that funded and produced the *Intelligencer,* the numerical strength of the Presbyterians and the reputation and widespread popularity of the periodical make it impossible to dismiss the charismatic mode of Chinese Christianity as marginal or heterodox for the time. Nor should we be too quick to categorize charismatic modes as distinctively "Chinese," "native," or "indigenous," as if to distinguish them from some imagined non-charismatic Christian norm. As Henrietta Harrison has sensibly put it,

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Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first Century (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1995). See also Ralph Hood and Paul Williamson, *Them That Believe: the Power and Meaning of the Christian Serpent-Handling Tradition* (Berkeley and California: University of California Press, 2008), for an American case study of charismatics in Appalachia whose movement also emerged in the early twentieth century.

[36] Michael D. Wilson, "Contending for Tongues: W.W. Simpson's Pentecostal Experience in Northwest China," in *Pneuma* 29 (2007): 281-298.

[37] Council for World Mission Archives, 1866-1939, Reports, North China, Box no. 1-12, Hong Kong Baptist University Special Collections and Archives MFC 266.00951 L846 CN, fiche 694, reports for the year 1905 by Arnold E. Bryson and Edith S. Murray on a revival in Ts'angchou (Cangzhou 滄州).

when we examine the two traditions of Christianity and Chinese popular religion, “we begin to see firstly that each of these great traditions contains an immense variety of different practices, beliefs, and ideas, and secondly that the two traditions sometimes overlap.”[38] Given the importance placed on efficacy (靈 *ling*) in the native Chinese religious environment, Chinese Protestants (missionaries and converts) were naturally eager to demonstrate that their God, the “one true God,” had power to answer prayers and petitions. Charismatic narratives frequently played a role in conversion. Out of the thirty-four miracle stories that I found in the *Intelligencer* in issues between 1905 and 1926, five of these began or ended with conversion.[39] A person would hear of a close acquaintance’s miraculous recovery from illness through Christian methods such as prayer, or perhaps experience such a recovery personally, and subsequently accept baptism. Within the Chinese religious market, the value of charismatic experience was

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[38] Henrietta Harrison, *The Missionary’s Curse and Other Stories from a Chinese Catholic Village* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2013), 4. For example, she points out, Chinese Catholic village practices—group chanting of litanies and rosaries, village pilgrimages to pray for rain, and visionary trances—not only resembled popular Buddhist or Daoist practices, “but would also have been deeply familiar to southern Italian Catholics a few generations ago.”

[39] *CCI,* January 25-February 22, 1906, #195, 3, fiche 0118 (an old woman with a chronic illness opposed her son’s Christian baptism but eventually came to church seeking healing, became a Christian herself, and was healed); January 25-February 22, 1906, #199, 3, fiche 0150 (a man was beaten by bandits, received prayers for recovery, recovered, and was baptized); November 16-December 15, 1906, #225, 6, fiche 0322 (an old woman suffered bitterly from illness, was exhorted by Christians, requested prayer, was healed, studied the gospel, and was baptized); April 1919, #844, 10, fiche 0308 (a family was healed of their illnesses and converted); July 1919, #858, 26, fiche 0413 (a mother refused to let her son convert, until he became sick, upon which the mother asked for Christians to pray for her son and allowed the entire family to convert, whereupon her son’s sickness got better).

widely recognized, and the main unit of currency was a story. This is why the Protestants were so keen to exploit modern technologies to publicize these stories far and wide.

This study of charismatic modernity in the *Intelligencer* therefore shows that the nexus of old and new ideas, ontologies, and hermeneutics that formed many Chinese Protestants' worldviews around the turn of the century was both self-contradicting and mutually affirming. In practice, divine miracles and scientific wonders supported a universalistic worldview in which citizens of all nations stood together at the edge of a modern wilderness, held together through both emergent technologies and the Creator's sovereign power. Riffing on Mayfair Yang's use of the term "religiosities" to emphasize the plurality of religious expression in modern China, we might think of twentieth century China as an arena of plural "modernities" within which the exclusivist, atheistic rationalism of urban elites was but a minority proclamation among the clamor of many other self-consciously modern voices.[40] Despite the attempts of successive Chinese regimes and thinkers to define modernity and to prescribe specific ways in which the Chinese could achieve it, the unfolding of history over the course of the past century has shown "modernity" to be tirelessly plural, a means as well as an end.

Methodology

My sources for this research are drawn from the *Chinese Christian Intelligencer,* printed weekly in Shanghai from 1901 to 1948 by the Christian Literature Society for China (廣學會 *Guangxue hui*), supported by Presbyterian institutions in China and in the

[40] Yang, *Chinese Religiosities*, 18.

This is the accepted version of the article. The final version of the article is in *Twentieth Century China* 42, 1.

United States.[41] Its editors were the Reverend Samuel Isett Woodbridge (1856-1926), a Presbyterian missionary, and Cheng Chunsheng (dates unknown), a Chinese Christian.[42] Regrettably, the *Intelligencer* did not regularly print a masthead, and Woodbridge's 1919 book on American Presbyterian mission history, *Fifty Years in China,* gives no information about Cheng Chunsheng, except a photograph with a caption. In it, Cheng wears a long scholar's gown and stands next to Woodbridge. Woodbridge, educated at Princeton Theological Seminary (one of the birthplaces of the American fundamentalist movement) before being ordained and traveling to China in 1882, was at this time an informal consultant on Chinese affairs for U.S. president Woodrow Wilson. President Wilson was first cousin to Woodbridge's late wife Jeanie Wilson Woodrow Woodbridge.[43] According to Woodbridge, the purpose of the *Intelligencer* was threefold: to explain the Bible, to disseminate useful knowledge such as news, telegraphs, and "scientific explanations of familiar phenomena," and to support the church by opposing

[41] Samuel Isett Woodbridge, *Fifty Years in China: Being Some Account of the History and Conditions in China and of the Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States There from 1867 to the Present Day* (Richmond, VA: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1919), 206.

[42] Woodbridge, *Fifty Years in China*, 210. Unfortunately, because the issues that I consulted did not show any sort of editorial masthead besides an address, I cannot be sure of the Chinese characters used in Cheng Chunsheng's name.

[43] Jeanie had died in 1913, leaving behind eight children, four of whom became missionaries in China. Frank Price, ed., *Our China Investment: Sixty Years of the Southern Presbyterian Church in China: with Biographies, Autobiographies, and Sketches of all Missionaries since the Opening of the Work in 1867* (Nashville, TN: Executive Committee of Foreign Missions, Presbyterian Church in the United States, 1927), 16, 170, 175; Eugene P. Trani, "Woodrow Wilson, China, and the Missionaries, 1913-1921," *Journal of Presbyterian History* (1962-1985) 49, no. 4, CHINA MISSIONS IN HISTORY (Winter 1971): 328-351; Woodrow Wilson, *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson, vol. 7,* ed. Arthur S. Link (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), 637.

proposals to establish Confucianism as China's state religion in 1917 and thereafter, carrying "extensive and encouraging church news," and "spreading the fires of revival."[44]

Clearly, publishing miracle stories and accounts of energetic revivals would fit Woodbridge's third stated purpose and his fundamentalist theological training. However, the breadth of topics and diversity of authorship in the *Intelligencer* suggests that these miracle stories did not simply reflect Woodbridge's personal priorities, but instead were a prominent feature of the wider Chinese Protestant community. Of the reader-generated testimonies and reports that frequently included accounts of healing, exorcism, and particularistic protection, some were reported secondhand and some were submitted directly by individuals from various denominational backgrounds including Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, London Missionary Society, and the China Inland Mission. Other content included theological discourses, illustrations of scenes from the Bible, news of missionary work abroad, personal testimonies, and church-related reports.

One of the earliest Protestant periodicals to be established in China, the *Intelligencer* also had one of the largest and most geographically extensive circulations, already reaching institutional subscribers in eighteen Chinese provinces, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, the South Pacific, South Africa, Australia, Singapore, San Francisco, and Canada after its first five years.[45] In 1907, Presbyterian missions reportedly claimed the

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[44] Woodbridge, *Fifty Years in China,* 206. For an overview of the constitutional issue, see Liu Yi, "Confucianism, Christianity, and Religious Freedom: Debates in the Transformation Period of Modern China (1900-1920s), in Fenggang Yang and Joseph Tanney, eds., *Confucianism and Spiritual Traditions in Modern China and Beyond* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), 247-276.

[45] Rudolf Loewenthal, *The Religious Periodical Press in China, with 7 maps and 16 charts* (Peking: The Synodal commission in China, 1940), Chart III; *CCI,* January 14-February 12, 1907, #235, 1, fiche 0404.

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highest number of baptized adherents in the country. The *Intelligencer's* circulation was national. Its content was produced by reader-contributors from all over the country (as many as 300 in 1919).[46] These local reports on church meetings or individual experiences in large cities like Xiamen and Ningbo and small villages from rural counties like Yanzhou (兗州), Shandong, and Wujingfu (五經富), Guangdong, suggest a similar geographical diversity in the *Intelligencer*'s readership.[47] In the lunar year straddling 1905 and 1906, place-names mentioned in miracle stories alone came from ten of the nineteen Qing provinces that existed at the time; about two rural locations were mentioned for every major city. While the official circulation of the *Intelligencer,* "said to be the largest of any religious weekly in China," was 3,700, subscribers were often mission stations or leaders of local congregations; one copy might be passed from hand to hand and read by many people.[48] The paper was still in circulation in 1938, when it was described in one review of religious periodicals as the "most important Presbyterian paper; fundamentalist and interdenominational in scope," with a circulation of 5,000.[49]

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[46] Woodbridge, *Fifty Years in China,* 205.

[47] *CCI*, late 1905-late 1906, roughly fiche 0005-0107.

[48] Donald MacGillivray, ed., *A Century of Protestant Missions in China (1807-1907): Being the Centenary Conference Historical Volume* (New York: American Tract Society; Shanghai: American Presbyterian Mission Press, 1907), 403. These circulation numbers were surpassed by the circulation figures for the Seventh-Day Adventist monthly, *Signs of the Times* (Shizhao yuebao), which stood at 10,000 subscriptions in 1916 and 70,000 in 1937. Joseph Tse-Hei Lee and Christie Chui-Shan Chow, "Publishing Prophecy: A Century of Adventist Print Culture in China," in Philip Clart and Gregory Adam Scott, eds., *Religious Publishing and Print Culture in Modern China* (Boston and Berlin: DeGruyter, 2015), 51-90 (56-57); Löwenthal, *Religious Periodical Press,* 87.

[49] Löwenthal, *Religious Periodical Press,* Chart III.

Presbyterians were a major segment of the Chinese Christian population. With 52,258 communicants, in 1907 Presbyterians far outnumbered adherents in other major Protestant groups including Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Methodists, "interdenominational" Bible Societies, and independent missions.[50] The Presbyterian Mission Press, where the *Intelligencer* was initially printed, was a major Shanghai printer. Later issues from the 1930s, after Woodbridge's death in 1926, show that the *Intelligencer* was being printed at Shanghai's Jingxin Press (競新印書館 *jingxin yinshuguan*).

My research in the *Intelligencer* is based on issues from 1905 to 1948, held in the Shanghai Municipal Library.[51] I read through all of the issues available, although there are significant gaps in which either complete issues are missing or Christianity-related content is missing and only newswires have been preserved.[52] During the 1930s and 1940s, in particular, issues were either printed or archived with sharply decreasing

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[50] MacGillivray, *Century of Protestant Missions in China,* 674.

[51] I first used this archival collection for my Ph.D. dissertation, "Miraculous Mundane: Chinese Christianity in the Twentieth Century" (Harvard University, 2010). On subsequent visits in 2016 I read further in the collection and gathered additional material.

[52] Issues of the *CCI* are held at the following U.S. institutions: Columbia University (1911), Cornell University (n.d.), Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace East Asian Collection (1946), Southern Methodist University (1916), Union Theological Seminary Archive (1911), Union Theological Seminary Burke Library (1916, 1920). Xiaoxin Wu, ed., *Christianity in China: A Scholar's Guide to Resources in the Libraries and Archives of the United States,* Second Edition (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2009), 526. This exhaustive reference of Wu Xiaoxin's includes entries for numerous Presbyterian collections, including the records of the Presbyterian Church in the US, Board of Foreign Missions held at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, CA, but the only places where copies of the *Intelligencer* are archived in the US appear to be those listed above.

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frequency, reflecting the disruptions within Chinese society during these years. Despite these discontinuities, however, as far as I can ascertain, accounts of miraculous beliefs and practices appear regularly throughout the entire run of the Library's holdings of the *Intelligencer*. These miracle stories shared issues with a variety of secular stories such as a report on electric lights in London and Rome, methods for "Repelling Ants," and friendly advice that "Using Morphine Is A Bad Way to Get Over Opium Addiction."[53]

PROTESTANT PUBLISHING AND MODERN PRINT CULTURE IN CHINA

Chinese Protestants were on the cutting edge of a particular activity that has come to be very closely identified with modernity in the twentieth century: printing. Because of its longstanding links to foreign technology and communications, the Chinese Protestant community was perhaps the most developed of all social subgroups except for the scholarly elite in terms of the production, circulation, and consumption of printed texts, particularly periodicals.

Chinese Christian publications

There is widespread agreement that mass mechanized printing technologies were introduced and popularized in China by Christian missionaries. My focus here will be on Protestant foreign missionary publishing projects, but of course it is important to note that, beginning in the late 1500s with the earliest Jesuit missionaries, Matteo Ricci and Michele Ruggieri, Catholics in China have been engaged in a variety of scholarly and

[53] *CCI*, February 4-March 5, 1905, #181, 3B, fiche 0010; January 25-February 22 1906, #186, 7, fiche 0053; June 22-July 20 1906, #206, 39, fiche 0201.

This is the accepted version of the article. The final version of the article is in *Twentieth Century China* 42, 1.

evangelical printing projects. In their volume on religious publishing and print culture in modern China, Philip Clart and Gregory Adam Scott write:

> This modern print revolution in China was largely initiated by Christian missionaries, who established presses to print English- and Chinese-language Bibles, tracts, and other religious works. From about 1807 to 1876, mechanized printing in China was the exclusive domain of missionaries and their converts based along the South China coast, a period during which Protestant and Catholic mission groups founded dozens of printing houses.[54]

Of course, advanced printing technologies and well-developed regional networks of publishing and book distribution had existed in China for centuries before the arrival of Western missionaries.[55] Nevertheless, it was Western missionaries' introduction of mass mechanized printing technologies such as lithography, lead type, and photolithography in the nineteenth century that changed the face of Chinese print culture. Facing numerous obstacles to evangelizing China, the earliest Protestant missionary in China, Robert Morrison, had first resorted to a publishing mission in 1810 with a translation of the Book

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[54] Clart and Scott, *Religious Publishing and Print Culture,* 9.

[55] Christopher A. Reed, "From Woodblocks to the Internet: Chinese Printing, Publishing, and Literary Fields in Transition, circa 1800 to 2008," 4-5, in *From Woodblocks to the Internet: Chinese Publishing and Print Culture in Transition, circa 1800 to 2008*, eds. Cynthia Brokaw and Christopher A. Reed (Brill, Leiden and Boston, 2010); Andrea Janku, "The Use of Genres in the Chinese Press from the Late Qing to the Early Republican Period," in Brokaw and Reed, *Woodblocks to the Internet,* 130; Kai-Wing Chow, *Publishing, Culture, and Power in Early Modern China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 23; Cynthia Brokaw, "Commercial Woodblock Publishing in the Qing (1644-1911) and the Transition to Modern Print Technology," in Brokaw and Reed, Woodblocks to the Internet, 44; Su Jing, "*Jindai diyizhong zhongwen zazhi: chashisu meiyue tongji zhuan* (The First Modern Chinese Magazine: the Chinese Monthly Magazine)," in *Wenxian xuecong kan: malisun yu zhongwen yinshua chuban* (*Documentary Collections*: *Morrison and Chinese Printing and Publication*), (*Xuesheng shuju yinhang*, Taipei, Taiwan 2000), 153.

This is the accepted version of the article. The final version of the article is in *Twentieth Century China* 42, 1.

of Acts.[56] Throughout the nineteenth century, Chinese colporteurs traveled from town to town and city to city selling Bibles or sections of the Bible such as the Gospels for subsidized prices.[57]

The treaty port of Shanghai with its foreign concessions and large missionary population emerged as the center of modern publishing in China, which before the 1860s had been restricted to colonial Hong Kong. *The Church News* (教會新報 *jiaohui xinbao)* was published in Shanghai from 1868 to 1874 by Methodist missionary Young J. Allen (1836-1907). It was one of China's first magazines devoted to news reports and background essays, and was also notable for its social criticism and calls for reform. The Catholic Imprimerie at Tushanwan (土山彎印書館 *tushanwan yinshuguan*) in the Shanghai suburb of Xujiahui (徐家匯) in 1882 used state-of-the-art lead type to print *I-wen-lou* (益聞綠 *Yiwenlü*), and was the first Chinese periodical with a native Chinese editor, Jesuit priest Li Wenyu (李問漁, 1840-1911).[58] Missionary printing operations in Shanghai trained hundreds of printers and apprentices , creating a skilled labor force

[56] Su Jing, "*Jindai diyizhong zhongwen zazhi: chashisu meiyue tongji zhuan* (The First Modern Chinese Magazine: the Chinese Monthly Magazine)," in *Wenxian xuecong kan: malisun yu zhongwen yinshua chuban* (*Documentary Collections*: *Morrison and Chinese Printing and Publication*), (*Xuesheng shuju yinhang*, Taipei, Taiwan 2000), 153.

[57] George Kam Wah Mak, "The Colportage of the Protestant Bible in Late Qing China: The Example of the British and Foreign Bible Society," in Clart and Scott, *Religious Publishing and Print Culture*, 17-50.

[58] Joachim Kurtz, "Messenger of the Sacred Heart: Li Wenyu (1840-1911) and the Jesuit Periodical Press in Late Qing Shanghai," in Brokaw and Reed, *Woodblocks to the Internet,* 82-91, 96.

This is the accepted version of the article. The final version of the article is in *Twentieth Century China* 42, 1.

forcommercial workshops in the Jiangnan (江南) region and eventually around the country.[59]

Beginning in the 1870s, missionary publications faced increasing competition from secular publications, most of them based in Shanghai and in the Jiangnan region. Shanghai commercial periodicals such as the *Shanghai Journal* (申報 *Shenbao*, 1872-1949), the *Shanghai Daily* (新聞報 *Xinwenbao*, 1893-1960), and the *Eastern Times* (時報 *Shibao*, 1904-1939), in time eclipsed the missionary publications in circulation numbers.[60] Paul Katz's fine-grained study of modern religious publishing in China has shown that mass publishing expanded across all religious traditions in the Republican era, creating print networks that facilitated collaborations and non-elite outreach and reshaping the environment in which texts vied with each other for popularity.[61] For example, about 300 Buddhist periodicals came into being between 1912 and 1949.[62]

Aided by industrialization, this new printing technology enabled what Christopher Reed calls "the radical centralization of printing" in China.[63] Whereas previously printing networks had been primarily regional and decentralized, now a single press in a city like Shanghai could churn out thousands of copies of a publication for national

[59] Kurtz, "Messenger of the Sacred Heart," 82.

[60] Janku, "The Use of Genres in the Chinese Press," 112.

[61] Paul Katz, *Religion in China and Its Modern Fate* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2014), 69-108.

[62] Jan Kiely, "Spreading the Dharma with the Mechanized Press: New Buddhist Print Cultures in the Modern Chinese Print Revolution, 1866-1949," in Reed and Brokaw, *Woodblocks to the Internet,* 185-212.

[63] Reed, "Woodblocks to the Internet," 6.

This is the accepted version of the article. The final version of the article is in *Twentieth Century China* 42, 1.

distribution in a very short amount of time. For instance, when the negotiators of the Paris Peace Conference at the end of World War I failed to return German territorial concessions to Chinese sovereignty, the news was telegraphed to China and appeared in some newspapers across the country within a few hours, sparking the wave of nationalist demonstrations beginning May 4, 1919.

Global networks, awareness, and action

The spread of mass print culture contributed to widespread global awareness, including awareness of scientific developments and modern organizational structures. Both Protestant and Catholic missionary organizations relied on the circulation of periodicals to connect to national and transnational networks that provided support for information-sharing, personnel recruitment, and financial support.[64] As a tiny and often isolated minority in a vast country, Christian missionaries and converts strengthened their identity and shared devotional resources by reading and contributing to national and international Christian publications.

These global networks of communication were not only useful for identity-building and news, but also for the exchange of resources. While typically missionaries used Western-language publications to solicit funds from donors overseas, Chinese staff and congregants who worked with the missionaries would have been aware of the role of

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[64] See Henrietta Harrison's article on the French Catholic "Holy Childhood Association" as an early example of a transnational aid organization. The journal of the Holy Childhood Association was published in fourteen different languages and served as a major international fundraising organ. "'A Penny for the Little Chinese': The French Holy Childhood Association in China, 1843-1951," *The American Historical Review* 113, no. 1 (February 2008), 72-92.

publications and correspondence in connecting the mission stations with overseas financial support. In this two-way exchange, miracle stories attracted more donations than committee reports. Through church networks, a rural Chinese woman with little education might learn of an exciting outpouring of the Holy Spirit at a revival in Wales. A pastor in Canada might preach about the faith of the martyrs who died in the Boxer uprising. The two-way flow between China mission fields and Western Christians was characterized by an exchange of the precious commodity of charisma. Inspiring stories of miraculous medical recoveries, divinely inspired good works, and devotion under persecution would be sent back to enthusiastic readers who were more than happy to pay for a share.

Beyond the circulation of purely religious resources, the global infrastructure laid down by Chinese Christian periodicals allowed for the flow of money for nonreligious purposes in numerous novel and modern ways. For instance, the *Intelligencer* often played a role in raising funds from several churches for relief for natural disasters, such as floods in Hunan over several weeks, June-August 1906, and in Hunan and in the Jiangbei region, for a week in November-December 1906).[65] Dozens of small churches scattered across the nation would forward money to the *Intelligencer*'s offices, which would then be aggregated and dispatched to where it was need. It was not that much harder to send money overseas. In 1906, the *Intelligencer* publicized an ongoing fundraising project of the Shanghai Christian Prayer Society (上海耶穌教祈禱會 *shanghai yesujiao qidaohui*). The group had raised around 500 silver dollars for survivors

[65] *CCI*, June 22-July 20 1906. #206, cover page, fiche 0198; Nov. 16-December 15 1906, #228, 1, fiche 0345.

of the San Francisco earthquake.[66] In 1919, a church in Heilongjiang reported having collected 4,000 yuan for World War I victims from domestic donors, plus an additional 1,000 yuan from overseas Chinese.[67] Booksellers who advertised in the pages of the *Intelligencer* explained that those who did not live close enough to come to their shops in person could send postage stamps through the mail as payment for books that would then be shipped out.[68]

In sum, Protestant print networks not only maintained communications between far-flung Christian communities and church institutions, but also created an entire infrastructure that bolstered Christian identity, delivered a globally sourced supply of faith-promoting miracle stories, and even facilitated the redistribution of actual money whereby small individual contributions were visibly aggregated into something substantial. All of these functions drew individual Chinese Christians into a globally aware and active community.

CHARISMATIC MODERNITY: MIRACLE STORIES IN *THE CHINESE CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER*

The scientistic worldview that formed one side of the *Intelligencer's* evangelistic coin is evident in Woodbridge's stated intent to provide "scientific explanations of

[66] *CCI*, May 23-June 21 1906, #198, 14, fiche 0141. It is not clear whether this money went to the Chinese community in San Francisco or to the San Francisco community at large. If it went to the community at large, this was likely one of the earliest examples of grassroots Chinese foreign aid. Ten Shanghai institutions are listed as having participated in the latest phase of the aid drive, including a Baptist church, an American Methodist church, an English Methodist church, Moore Memorial Church. a Presbyterian church, the London Missionary Society, the Seventh-Day Adventist church, a "Gospel Church," "Church of Christ," and a "Sino-Western Academy."

[67] *CCI,* April 1919, #844, 8, fiche 0306.

[68] *CCI*, August 20-September 17 1906, #213, cover page, fiche 0248.

familiar phenomena." But what about the other side of the coin: expectations of extraordinary phenomena? Urban elites with an exclusivist, strictly rationalist view of modernity would have considered this "superstition," and yet in the *Intelligencer* we glimpse a pluralistic discourse. The *Intelligencer* promoted acceptance of scientific authority and technologies but also mustered new resources to more effectively promulgate its core message of reliance on the Christian God, whose power both superseded and was embodied by these tools of the time.

In what follows, I will illustrate these overlapping discourses in five ways, addressing, first, the use of rationalistic discourse to discredit popular religious rivals; second, the use of modern media such as print and photographic technology to document miracles; third, reliance on mass publication and distribution to raise awareness of the possibilities of collective action; fourth, the use of print culture to give "face" to the entire readership by printing powerful stories of Christians whose faith was validated; and fifth, the creation of standardized miracle-story narratives to demarcate acceptable boundaries for charismatic accounts.

Debunking popular religion

The *Intelligencer* featured a recurring feature called "World of Darkness" (黑暗的世界 *hei'an de shijie*) which shone a disapproving spotlight on Chinese popular religion. . For instance, one "World of Darkness" report from early 1907 related the tragic tale of a family whose members very piously rose early on the day for worshipping the God of Wealth. Unfortunately, while they were burning paper votive offerings, the

flames flared out of control. The roof caught on fire. Not only their house, but scores of other houses were burned. "How pitiful!" read the *Intelligencer'*s report. "We truly hope that those who worship the God of Wealth will switch their reverence to the true God and be happy." In this story it was the people's unfortunate use of material goods in their worship, as if physical actions could guarantee spiritual rewards.e From the tone of the article, the subjects' mistake was clear: they had wrongly ascribed spiritual value to crude materials, and in so doing had ironically ended up destroying their home.. The *Intelligencer*'s commentary made it clear that those who believed in the invisible Christian God would never be so foolish as to believe that they could propitiate divine favor through the fiery consumption of physical goods, a process that was not only wasteful but also dangerous.[69] The impoverished family was depicted as pitifully foolish for having resorted to such a material ritual.

This rationalistic skepticism was selective, however. Elsewhere in the *Intelligencer,* similar feats of physical efficacy were commonly accepted and preserved by Christians in the form of faith-promoting stories. Within the "World of Darkness" reports, narratives about "false" native physical efficacy and "true" Christian physical efficacy are structurally parallel. The only difference is in the name of the superhuman being, such as the Bodhisattva Guanyin or Jesus. For example, the story of a devastating flood in Hunan in 1906 followed the same pattern often used for "heathen" stories. "It rained incessantly," the report read. People drowned. Crops were destroyed. The city was flooded . Domestic animals perished. The officials went to the local temple and offered

[69] *CCI,* January 13-February 12 1907, #237, 2, fiche 0412.

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sacrifices to local deities.[70] They even organized the elaborate *jiao* (醮) ritual, but there was no response from Heaven. Therefore they resorted to prayer to the Christian God, asking for a miracle in which "God would soon stop the rain." o Interestingly, this feature never gave the long-term results, but the results were not essential to the story. What was essential was to show how prayers to popular local deities were certainly wasted but that prayer to the Christian God was not...[71] Hence the same critical anti-superstition rationalist spotlight used to illuminate the "World of Darkness" was not used to make similar exposures in the world of Christian charismatic discourse.

Miracle journalism

While one might assume that modern journalistic standards and recording equipment would stifle charismatic discourse, in at least a couple of examples in the *Intelligencer*, careful observation and documentation using the latest equipment confirms the experience of the charismatic.[72] For instance, a 1924 article titled "A Heavenly Vision with Sound and Color" was a firsthand account by a Christian preacher in a village in Jiangsu province. On a Sunday with clear blue skies, he was standing in a grove of trees outside a house:

[70] See Jeffrey Snyder-Reinke, *Dry Spells: State Rainmaking and Local Governance in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Asia Center, 2009).

[71] *CCI,* June 22-July 20 1906, #203, 3, fiche 0175.

[72] For another meditation on the use of scientific [medical] evidence to support miraculous narratives, see Jacalyn Duffin. The Doctor Was Surprised; or, How to Diagnose a Miracle." *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 81, no.4 (2007): 699-729.

> Suddenly, everywhere was light, like Paul on the road to Damascus. I lifted up my head. Light streamed out to the northeast, then stopped. This light was brighter than summer lightning. But it moved more slowly than lightning. After about a minute, when the light vanished there was a big sound that was hard to describe. It was loud like thunder, not "violent," but like an exalted person giving orders, like a great oxhide drum, "dong, dong, dong". . . This was about a minute. Then it seemed as if there was a war in the air. The people of several villages came out to watch. Church people asked me, "Pastor, what is this?" I don't understand, but I do know that visions are a sign of Jesus's second coming.[73]

The account of this heavenly vision was written journalistically, with close observations of details including reference to the points of the compass, the time of the phenomena, the precise quality of the light and the sound. At the same time these physical observations were extrapolated into possible charismatic manifestations, such as the voice of God or the struggle between invisible forces. The whole purpose of the story was to authenticate the imminence of Christ's second coming. It was presented as a modern news report, an account of a supernatural experience that was observed by many. The close attention to sensory detail is intended to demonstrate the genuineness of this divine manifestation.

Modern reporting technology also appears in a July 1919 article in the *Intelligencer* titled "Jesus Drives Out Mute Devil." In this article, Yu Dahong (于達洪 dates unknown), a farmer in the Jiangbei region, had been bedridden with illness in the previous year to the point where he had been mute for five months running. Neither Western medicine nor local spirit mediums could heal him. Eventually a missionary prayed for him three times. Miraculously, Yu was cured. Thereafter Yu went to the local Tianhu Church (佃湖會堂 Tianhu huitang), where the pastor Bai Xiusheng (白秀生 dates

[73] *CCI*, July 1924, #1825, 51, fiche 0638.

unknown) took a picture of him to capture the miraculous moment and to affirm to all "that Jesus saves people everywhere, working great miracles."[74] Beyond the step of merely writing about the miracle, the pastor secured a photographic image that—although it could not broadcast Yu's divinely restored voice—could vouch for the fact of his existence.

The power of collective action

One example of the Protestant Christians' innovative use of print publications was the use of distribution networks to heighten people's awareness and expectations about the fruits of organization. One particular aspect of organizational culture frequently visible in the bulletins and features of the *Intelligencer* is a new style of collective organization. For thousands of years, of course, Chinese society was arguably the most organized of all societies on earth, with local families grouped into a tiered structure of administrative units of tens and hundreds all accountable to higher authorities for tax and census purposes. The examples of collective organization in the flood relief drives or the revival reports of the *Intelligencer*, however, are more horizontal in their orientation and hint at the beginnings of a transformation in the way in which groups of people relate to each other that is still underway in the twenty-first century.

Many miracle stories were narrated as community achievements, instances in which the likelihood of the hoped for but uncertain miraculous intervention was increased. In this sense efficacy became tied not to an individual professional religious practitioner (as in the case of the Daoist spirit medium or the Buddhist monk) but to the

[74] *CCI*, July 1919, #858, 7, fiche 0410.

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collaboration of the community of lay believers. Just as Chinese popular religious rites such as the festivals of the birthdays of local deities reinforced community identity, many Christian miracles reported in the *Intelligencer* were community spectacles in which the participation of the entire congregation could call down divine attention and favor.[75]

The charismatic practice of collective prayer was instrumental in bringing together a socioeconomically diverse group of volunteers in a new kind of community association. A crucial difference between these Christian community rites and the rites of a popular temple cult, which both demarcated community boundaries and propitiated divine protectors, comes down to the shared work of the rite itself. While in a temple community, individual participation usually consisted of a monetary contribution to fund the religious specialists such as the priest or operatic troupe in conducting the rites, in the Protestant congregation individuals all co-produced the rite together.

For example, an article from the spring of 1906 in Laohekou (老河口), Hubei, told of a Christian man who contracted a respiratory disease that severely affected his breathing and threatened his life. Various neighbors attributed his illness to his Christian conversion, but he steadfastly maintained his faith, saying that he would face death and see the Lord. "All in the church heard of him, admired him, and prayed for him," read the article. "They asked the Lord to heal him and stop up the mouth of the devil. Now he has already received the Lord's blessing and has been healed . . . It was through the power of

[75] For studies of the function of the local community in Chinese religion, see Adam Yuet Chau, *Miraculous Response: Doing Popular Religion in Contemporary China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), and Thomas DuBois, *The Sacred Village: Social Change and Religious Life in Rural North China* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2005).

This is the accepted version of the article. The final version of the article is in *Twentieth Century China* 42, 1.

many . . . ."[76] Another report on the Yushu Church (榆樹教會 Yushu jiaohui) in Jilin from April 1919 stated that, when a church member's son and daughter sickened, the "church members prayed day and night." Eventually, through additional prayer from the pastor's wife, the pastor, a church deacon, and others, the son and daughter were both healed.[77] In both of these cases, the completion of the miracle depended on the collective mobilization of the local face-to-face Christian community. The potential of this collective mobilization was then proclaimed in print to an even larger virtual Christian community.

Sharing "face"

A fourth type of strategic use of print networks by Chinese Protestants is the use of periodicals to collect and redistribute a commodity of almost inestimable value in Chinese culture: face (面子*mianzi*). By absorbing the stories of other Christians who earned the admiration of others (especially local elites) because of their faith, coreligionist readers could also absorb a degree of group pride and heightened status.

For example, one article gave an account of a Christian named Wang Zi'an (王自安 dates unknown) who in November of 1906 at noon was traveling across Ten Heart Lake (十心湖 Shixin hu) when suddenly a fierce wind came up, causing swells that overturned three boats. Twenty people drowned. The local county magistrate, Li,

[76] *CCI*, April 24-May 29 1906, #199, 3, fiche 0150.

[77] *CCI*, April 1919, #847, 39, fiche 0355.

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dispatched people to pull bodies out of the water and to buy coffins. At seven o'clock in the evening, those tending the bodies were surprised to find that among the dead was one living man (Wang). They helped him over to where Magistrate Li was supervising the operations. Magistrate Li asked his name and hometown. Wang's traveling bag was retrieved and the magistrate saw that "there was a gospel book inside," reportedly prompting Li to remark:

> So, you go in for the foreign religion? I have long heard that Jesus is the savior of the world and that the gospel book is the book of life. This miracle of returning to life from amongst the dead is something that happened today. So this religion cannot be false. From now on I will not mock the gospel or slander Jesus.[78]

After this admiring speech, the article reads, the Magistrate Li sent a message to the Christian pastor at the local Gospel Chapel to take care of Wang Zi'an and also sent money for his expenses.

This is the dream of any member of a persecuted minority: to win the approbation of a powerful person, to favorably influence this person's opinion, to demonstrate the value of one's minority network (in this case, the ready assistance of the local pastor), and to generally come out on top. In this particular story, the specter of elite disdain for "superstitious" charismatic Christianity was completely banished by the magistrate's reported admiration for the efficacy of Wang's Christian practice. Before the days of print, this story may have spread by word amongst only Wang's congregation and the congregation of the Gospel Chapel, but in 1906 this story of resurrection and vindication was vicariously enjoyed by over three thousand subscribers and numerous members of their local social networks all over China.

[78] *CCI,* December 16 1906-January 13 1907, #230, 30, fiche 0369.

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Demarcating boundaries of charismatic experience

One more way to think about the productive partnership between a charismatic agenda and modern print culture as unfolded in the pages of Protestant publications is the idea of publication as regulation, that is, as publicly distributed parameters for the proper format, substance, and limits of a miracle story. Stories were rendered in a narrative form that was easily comprehended and transmitted. For instance, main protagonists were always identified by name, place, and occupation. The phrase 醫藥無效 (*yi yao wu xiao* "doctors and medicine were useless") was a stock phrase that recurs regularly in several accounts not just in the *Intelligencer,* but in other Protestant publications as well. Although they broke the conventional bounds of ordinary expectations, these accounts of charismata also observed unwritten boundaries that kept them from the realm of heresy.

The relationship between Protestant print culture and charismatic experience had two sides. On the one hand, Christian charisma could be good and publications could amplify its positive effects. Protestant Christian publishers deployed sophisticated print technologies in order to discredit alternative sources or interpretations of charisma and to share its triumphant fruits. On the other hand, Christian charisma could be bad and publications had to safeguard against its negative effects. Whole religious communities might split off from each other, led by prophets and visionaries claiming that their charismatic power trumped theological learning or institutional tradition. Charismatic wonder could disintegrate into that theologically undesirable and politically uncomfortable state of "superstition." Against the background of this delicate balance, miracle stories in Protestant publications provided acceptable templates for charismatic experience that could be borrowed without giving rise to destabilizing tendencies. For

instance, descriptions of revival meetings did not describe chaotic emotional disorder or blasphemous claims to wield divine power, but only cathartic weeping and, using Biblical phrases, “the gifts of the Spirit” (聖靈之恩賜).[79] Certain cases of Christians who have transgressed these boundaries, such as Pentecostals in the 1920s, are sometimes included as cautionary tales of what *not* to do.

This wariness about Pentecostalism did not arise because of the mere existence of charismatic modes within Pentecostal practice. As we have seen, a baseline of charismatic discourse and practice had existed within mainstream Protestant Christianity for decades before the twentieth century. What made the Pentecostals distasteful in the eyes of the local and national religious leaders who contributed to and published the *Intelligencer* is that they engaged in sheep-stealing (winning converts not from unbaptized “heathen” but from existing Christian congregations) and they claimed constant, routine access to the gifts of the Spirit。

It is a testament to Chinese Christians’ familiarity with charismatic modes that when the Pentecostal True Jesus Church was trying to expand nationally in the 1920s and 1930s, simply proclaiming charismatic miracle stories did not pack enough of a punch in terms of intra-Christian distinction. In order to distinguish their church from others, leaders of the True Jesus Church had to emphasize their distinct theological positions on specialized issues such as glossolalia as a sign of the baptism of the Holy Spirit and thus salvation.[80] Even prior to the arrival of the first Pentecostal missionaries in 1907, the

[79] *CCI,* December 26, 1905-January 24, 1906, #183, cover page, fiche 0023.

[80] See Inouye, “Miraculous Mundane,” Chapter One.

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Intelligencer's accounts of Spirit-filled revival meetings described so many awed accounts of ecstatic weeping (噴噴稱羨而不已也 , "breathlessly calling out their desire without stopping"), "seeking the gifts of the Spirit" (求聖靈之恩賜), "the same Spirit present as on the Day of Pentecost, with all things in common" (大有五旬有無相通之風) and hours of nonstop communal, repetitive, vocal prayer, it seems clear that a form of tongues-speaking was going on although it was never explicitly named.[81] Within the Chinese popular religious tradition there was already a precedent whereby a religious specialist might become possessed by a divine power and speak in an unrecognizable language.

Hence ecstatic states of worship with divine vocalizations were already part of the religious scene. What was so audacious about the Pentecostal message was that it cast glossolalia as a universal experience certifying salvation that could be expected in every redeemed Christian believer. Such a claim to routinized, everyday access to divine power was beyond the scope of accounts of the *Intelligencer*, which described charismatic events as occurring regularly but always providentially—always welcome, hoped-for, but not completely taken-for-granted signs of God's grace. A 1919 warning about the True Jesus Church in the *Intelligencer,* for example, criticized True Jesus Church members who "boast about . . . being filled with the Holy Spirit, being able to speak in tongues,

[81] *CCI,* December 26 1905-January 30, 1906, #182, fiche 0017; December 26 1905-January 30 1906, #183, fiche 0023; January 25-February 29 1906, #186, 3, fiche 0049. In *New History of Christianity in China* (135), Bays makes a similar observation about tongues-speaking in revivals that was not explicitly reported as such.

being able to work miracles."[82] Indeed, so central were the True Jesus Church's claims to frequent miraculous efficacy that it kept meticulous miracle statistics from 1917 to 1947, recording the time, place, miracle worker, and result of people healed from maladies such as deafness, tuberculosis, and even death.[83] Even to an audience well versed in charismatic accounts, it was Pentecostals' proprietary claims to miracles that put them over the *Intelligencer*'s line of acceptable charismatic practice. By criticizing this internally competitive variety of charismatic discourse, the editors of the *Intelligencer* took measures to protect their print flock from institutional disintegration or unwarranted tarring with the brush of superstition.

CONCLUSION

In the pages of *The Chinese Christian Intelligencer,* we see the powerful motive force of two streams of discourse that began to converge in popular consciousness around the turn of the twentieth century. Scientistic modes of thought and technological applications transformed Chinese life in significant and enduring ways. Among secular elites, a strictly rationalist worldview was viewed as the defining ethos of modernity, whereas religious paradigms including charismata were seen to exemplify backwardness and "superstition." And yet within the Chinese Protestant community, which encompassed urban and rural dwellers, the educated and the uneducated, a few people of means and many more people of modest circumstances, other forms of modernity existed that embraced charismatic beliefs and practices and mobilized new discourse,

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[82] *CCI,* April 1919, #846, 31, fiche 0343.

[83] True Jesus Church, *Thirtieth Anniversary Publication*, "Survey of Recorded Extraordinary Miracles and Marvelous Circumstances in the True Jesus Church" (Zhen yesu jiaohui feichang shenji qishi denji diaocha biao), N25-N35.

technologies, and organizational networks to support the wondrous dimension of human reality. Such complex and engaged ways of interacting with the world went far beyond the narrow categorization of “superstition” as formulated by secular elites. Chinese Protestants, with their cosmopolitan interpersonal and communications networks, saw themselves as aligned with the modern paradigm that rejected the irrational and misguided idol worship of traditional Chinese popular religion. Although they did not shine the same scrutinizing spotlight on their own Christian faith and practice, they had mastered rationalist discourse. They experienced modernity not as a hegemonic revision of all aspects of reality but as a new discourse with compelling intellectual and cultural authority that was frequently useful for interpreting the state of the world and the meaning of human actions. Modern mass mechanized printing technology and print culture were aids the *Intelligencer* deployed to further its highest priority: reminding readers of the enduring miraculousness of the world and God’s ability to bend the laws of nature and transform the parameters of human experience.

The widespread dissemination of this interpretive and practical pluralism in print not only facilitated complex ways of engaging with the world within the Chinese Protestant community, but also shifted the balance of power between lay readers and ecclesiastical hierarchies by connecting readers directly with everyday experiences of divine power. Divine power was even seen as being fully invested within the newspaper itself, available to those who read it. In 1919, an article in the *Intelligencer* reported that a member of the official class had read the paper and learned about the doctrines of Jesus from it. He subsequently read additional Christian materials and introduced others to Christian teachings. “So we can see,” the article concluded, “that the newspaper’s power

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brings people to the Lord."[84] Pentecostal publications adapted this subversive use of texts even further by coaching readers on the process by which they could receive a personal experience of the Holy Spirit. In a way we might even see technology not only in the machines and production processes that produced these miracle stories, but in the miracle stories themselves. Each story described a process that could theoretically be duplicated and that was intended to produce a certain religious experience, all independently of a religious "professional." Readers were able to connect directly with the narratives' charismatic potential.

The power of modern print culture to connect readers to new ways of seeing and doing was not limited to Christianity. Just as Pentecostal publications had aimed to connect people with divine power by guiding their study and interpretation of the Bible, exegetical guides such as Ding Fubao's *Dingshi foxue congshu* (丁氏佛學叢書 Ding's Buddhist Studies Collectanea) gave educated readers new resources with which to interpret the Buddhist scriptures and access the super-normal power they embodied without participating in the teacher-disciple structures traditionally used in Buddhist learning.[85] Just as Protestant publishers used modern technologies and distribution networks to declare a message of divine efficacy that persisted in the face of modern skepticism, Buddhist publishers such as Ding Fubao collected and printed examples of miraculous occurrences associated with reciting or possessing the Diamond Sutra, a

[84] *CCI*, July 1919, #857, 11, fiche 0404.

[85] Gregory Adam Scott, "Navigating the Sea of Scriptures: Ding's Buddhist Studies Collectanea, 1918–1923," in Clart and Scott, *Religious Publishing and Print Culture,* 91-138.

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Buddhist scripture.[86] Just as *The Chinese Christian Intelligencer* had used scientific reasoning to support the authenticity of Christian charismata, such Daoist periodicals as the *Immortals' Way Monthly* (仙學月報 xianxue yuebao) had drawn on science to bolster Daoist alchemy.[87] While there is no way to directly link mid-nineteenth century Christian publishing projects to these later Buddhist and Daoist ventures in the early twentieth century, as shown above, it is clear that Christian publishing, especially periodicals, set an important precedent.

Understanding the historical relationship between charismatic discourse, scientistic discourse, and technology has direct relevance for understanding China's pluralistic ideological environment in the twenty-first century. Twenty-first century Chinese society is striking by virtue of the charismatic paradigms that are widespread—and increasingly visible—within a nation governed and educated by an atheist, Marxist party-state. These charismatic paradigms occur within a variety of religious traditions from Buddhism to Daoism, but Protestant Christianity in its charismatic form—some would say "charismatic/Pentecostal" to acknowledge the strong influence of Pentecostal groups such as the True Jesus Church since the 1920s—is currently experiencing the highest rates of growth.[88] Today, after services in state-sanctioned urban churches,

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[86] Scott, "Navigating the Sea of Scriptures," 112-113.

[87] Xun Liu, "The Print Culture and Revival of Inner Alchemy," in *Daoist Modern: Innovation, Lay Practice, and the Community of Inner Alchemy in Republican Shanghai* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2009), 241-255.

[88] I have recently argued that the best term to characterize the mode of Chinese Christianity emphasizing healing, exorcism, and other gifts of the Spirit is "charismatic," not "Pentecostal," since the latter term refers to a historically or theologically distinctive strain of Christianity while the former term, "charismatic," is more broadly descriptive.

elderly retirees gather to exorcise evil spirits from afflicted friends. Visionaries at Christian revivals declare that they are seeing—played out in their mind as if projected onto a screen—the sinful deeds of members of the congregation. College students weep as they hold the bread and grape juice that symbolize Christ's body and blood.[89] Official state-sanctioned positions on such charismatic practices are of course that these practices are superstitious and do not constitute "real spirituality."[90] But for the practitioners themselves, the discourse of charismatic efficacy fits naturally within a twenty-first century context. "Speaking in tongues is very simple," a young woman at an officially registered Protestant church in Nanjing told me, waving her mobile phone.[91] "Kneel. Say, 'In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.' Then say '*haliluya* [hallelujah].' It's like you're calling God on the phone, and '*haliluya'* is God's phone number."[92] Increasingly repressive efforts to rein in Protestant Christianity, from pulling crosses off of chapels in

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Melissa Inouye, "Miraculous Modernity: Charismatic Traditions and Trajectories within Chinese Protestant Christianity," in John Lagerwey, Vincent Goossaert, and Jan Kiely, eds., *Modern Chinese Religion II 1850 – 2015*, Vol. II (Boston and Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2015), 884-919.

[89] In state-sanctioned Three-Self Patriotic Movement congregations, the Lord's Supper rite may utilize red wine, but in congregations of the True Jesus Church (which are registered as Three-Self Patriotic Movement congregations but maintain their own distinctive theology and styles of worship), grape juice is used.

[90] For example, an article in a 2001 issue of *Tianfeng*, the official state-sponsored Protestant publication, is titled "Do not mistake 'superstition' for 'spirituality.'" This article cautions that practices widespread within Protestant Christianity such as "healing sickness and exorcising, speaking tongues, preaching in a moving way, praying and weeping, or fasting for days" were not proper expressions of Christian spirituality. Fang Zheng, "Mo ba 'mixin' dang 'lingxing'" ("Do not equate 'superstition' with 'spirituality'"), *Tianfeng,* December 2001, 16.

[91] Technically the church is a state-sponsored generic "Christian" church as stated on the bland sign outside the chapel, but in actuality the church is a congregation of the True Jesus Church with a distinctive Pentecostal flavor.

[92] Interview with "Ms. Ju" (pseudonym), March 13, 2009, Nanjing.

This is the accepted version of the article. The final version of the article is in *Twentieth Century China* 42, 1.

Zhejiang to shutting down house church meetings in Beijing, signal the party-state's discomfort with such wide-ranging ideological pluralism that is nevertheless a fact of life in a post-Maoist, globalized society.

What about the baby, mentioned at the beginning of the article, who "came back to life"? Apparently it all began when the baby sickened, died, and was buried under two feet of clay and big rocks. A Christian lady was out in the mountains gathering clay four days later and heard a strange sound, which she eventually pinpointed as coming from the clay. She dug and there was the baby, crying. The ants had started to eat around the outsides of its eyes but it was alive. She took it to the village, but the villagers said that it would be bad luck to bring it through the front gate. So she brought it through the back gate and cleaned it up. People came from all over to gawk at the pitiful looking baby. Eventually a man came forward. He said that the child was his baby, that it had taken ill, and that he and its mother thought that it had died. He correctly identified all of the articles of clothing that the baby had been wearing when it was buried. Apparently the baby had grown into a child of around seven or eight years old, no different from other children, at the time the story was published.[93]

This story is particularly interesting because its narration simultaneously invoked two kinds of interpretive authority: charismatic grace and rationalistic science. There were two sorts of "miraculous" or Christian elements. The first was the kindness of the Christian lady who found the baby and cared for it despite its grotesque condition. "Were it not for the love of the woman with faith in the gospel, the baby would be dead," noted

[93] *CCI*, September 18-October 17 1906, #214, 2, fiche 0265.

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the author. The second was the element of miraculous revival after being given up for dead.

Although the expression *fusheng* (復生 "resurrected," "came back to life") appeared in the title, the body of the article itself stopped just short of explicitly claiming that the baby had been brought back from the dead by divine intervention. However, the author narrated a lengthy chain of events to show that the baby was apparently genuinely dead at the start and, in the event that it was not dead when buried, how unlikely it was that the baby would have survived for four days underneath the clay and stones. Clearly, the reader was supposed to praise God for this great miracle.

And yet this was not the story's only parting message. In closing, having narrated a story of natural laws being cheated, the author dispensed advice that also drew pluralistically on the authority of Western medical knowledge. The clear implication was that, as miraculous and faith-promoting as the story of the baby in the clay might be, it might not happen again. In any future encounters with death, the reader's surest recourse was to science: "Wu Xinhuang (口欣璜), the Western doctor in Jiaxing (嘉興), gives the following advice to ascertain whether a person is really dead. Put a mirror by the person's nostrils. If an hour passes and there is no mist on the mirror, the person is truly dead."

The world that entered the cities and villages of Chinese Protestants in the early decades of the twentieth century was one in which multiple worldviews, hermeneutics, techniques, and material objects came together in a productive but often unstable dynamic. No matter what scorn urban elites such as Chen Duxiu heaped upon charismatic religion, the *Intelligencer*'s many readers and contributors around China were

stakeholders in the modern project, taking new modes of thinking and ways of living in stride. The diverse Protestant community held together across the newly compressed global time and space by *The Chinese Christian Intelligencer* embraced this changing world in its multiple modalities of wonder and possibility.

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