The Chinese Protestant Response to the Challenge of Nationalism — An Analysis of the Editorial Policy of the Wen-she

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Introduction

Many scholars of China are aware that the 1920s were the highest stage of the anti-Christian movement in the Republican period. The Christian Community was constantly threatened by attacks from the scientific world, from nationalistic gropus, and from various anti-Christian movements. Chinese Christian intellectuals who lived at this time began to examine themselves and the situation of Christianity in China. From the viewpoint of "wen yi tsai tao" (Literature is for conveying the Truth), Chinese Christian intellectuals had reached a conclusion that there must be something wrong in Chinese Christian literature, which had become a hindrance to the dissemination of the Truth. They therefore decided to introduce Christian culture through a Sinicized style of writing based on the ideas of the indigenous church.(1)

The Chung-hua Chi-tu-chiao Wen-she (National Christian Literature Association of China, Wen-she for brief hereafter) was the single most active and influential literary group to advocate the indigenization of Christianity in the 1920s. During the three short years of its existence, Wen-she and its opinion made a very strong impact on Christian circles and occupied a very important place in the history of the indigenization of Christianity in China.(2)

1 There are many works on the issue of the Indigenization of Christianity in China, such as Harris 1927; Rankin 1928; Woodwark 1946; Callahan 1951; Palmer 1964; Rhoads 1970; Hoyt 1971; Lutz 1971; Ng 1971; Yamamoto 1972; Varl 1974; West 1974; Thomson 1975; Shaw 1979; Ling 1980; Heininger 1981; Shen and Cao 1982; Reist 1983; Chao 1986; Wang C. 1987; Ho 1988; Ho 1988b; Cha 1988; Wang C. 1990a; Wang C. 1990b.

2 The significance and importance of the Wen-she are recognized by contemporary Christians and later scholars. For example, the three famed Christian writers (T'ang 1950; Hsieh 1950 and Ying 1950) were requested to write their reflections of the Chinese Christian publications of the past forty years in 1950, all of them expressed very high regard for the Wen-she. The contemporary Chinese newspaper, Shenpao, even says that the Wen-she was one of the three authorities in religious circles (Shen 1927b). Modern scholars, such as Sumiko Yamamoto (1972), Jonathan Tien-en Chao (1986) and Hebert Hoi-lap Ho (1988a) also set a high value on the Wen-she.
Wen-she Monthly, the official organ of the Wen-she, can fully reflect the ideas of practices of the Wen-she. It published twenty-eight issues from October, 1925 to June, 1928, thirteen books and seven pamphlets. The attraction of the Wen-she was not only the ideas and practices of an indigenous Christianity it offered, but also the poignant and unprecedented style of the Monthly. These two things made it unique and controversial among Christian circles and later caused the demise of this organization.

This essay, one of a series of studies on Wen-she, will explore how the editors of the Wen-she presented their ideas to the church circles and the public. I will try to find out how Chinese Christian intellectuals attempted to convince other Christians of the necessity and urgency of indigenization and how they appealed to the support and goodwill of other people. In other words, this essay will pay attention to their strategies instead of the content of their ideas. A study of the editorial policy of the Wen-she will offer an opportunity to help us to understand more about the nature and characteristics of the Wen-she as well as the Christian response to a changing society.

I. The Rise of the Wen-she

The anti-Christian movement of the 1920s started in 1922-3 and came to an end in 1928. Although it lasted only six years, Christian churches in China experienced an unprecedented impact on their activities. Because of the situation brought on by nationalistic fervor, Bolshevik influence and the Northern Expedition, many Chinese believers and Christian missionaries began to consider seriously the implications of changing times.

The Wen-she was organized in the midst of the Anti-Christian Movement. The initial idea for the founding of this organization can be traced back to the establishment of the China Christian Literature Council (hereafter CCLC), organized by the China Continuation Committee in 1918 at the request of the British and American Conferences of Missionary Societies to allocate the distribution of the Missionary Societies' literature grants and to promote cooperation among Christian literary institutions (Shen 1926c:372-373; Shen 1928a:383). But even that organization was

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3 My previous studies on the Wen-she, see Wang C. 1990a; Wang C. 1990b; Wang C. 1990c.
4 The anti-Christian movement of the 1920s has been widely discussed by scholars. It is clearly presented in Lutz’s recent work (1988). Other related works include Yamamoto and Yamamoto 1953; Yip 1980; Lu 1981; Cha 1984; as well as Latourette 1929; Borg 1947; Sovik 1952; Varg 1958; Bates 1967; Cavendish 1970; Lutz 1971; Zha 1974; Yang 1978; Brelin 1980; Lam 1980; Chao 1983; Chao 1986; Yeh 1987; Hsieh 1988; Liu 1989.
not instructed to develop indigenous literary materials, which some members of the above Council felt were sorely lacking (Shen 1928b:100).

The National Christian Council (Chung-hua Chi-tu-chiao hsien-chin-hui, hereafter NCC) was established in 1922 and paid special attention to the importance of producing indigenous doctrinal literature. However, since it was composed of representatives of many different denominations, the NCC sought to avoid any literary project which might give rise to denominational differences. Therefore, it authorized the CCLC to "call together a picked group of Chinese writers, with one or two missionaries, to consider the type of literature now needed and the ways and means of producing same" (Annual report, NCC, 1922-23:47). The CCLC then called on eleven Christian writers and several missionaries (including Frank Rowlinson, John Leighton Stuart, Henry T. Hodgkin and R. Brooks) in September, 1923, to discuss the issue. All of the participants concluded that Chinese Christian literature must be indigenized, or it would be awkward and difficult to read, and lacking in vigor (Shen 1926b:1; 1926c:373; Shen 1927c:118).

At the end of 1923, the Association held a retreat at which they decided to create an organization to be called Chung-hua Chi-tu-chiao wen-tzu shih-yeh ts' u-chin shé (Society for the Advancement of Christian Literature in China, the forerunner of the Wen-she), and to be headed by Chinese with missionaries serving as their advisors. Two months later, the Society was formally founded and it adopted a provisional organizational outline. Chao Tzu-ch'en (T. C. Chao) was elected President and Ch'eng Ching-i (C. Y. Cheng), Yu Jih-chang (David Z. T. Yui) and others were named to the Executive Committee. Li Jung-fang and others were designated to serve as members of the Examining Committee on membership. In May, 1924, the Society held its first formal meeting in Shanghai. Since too few members were in attendance, Chao Tzu-ch'en was authorized to appoint a general secretary to initiate the Society's programs. Chao then appointed Shen Ssu-chuang (J. Wesley Shen), who occupied the Chair of Old Testament Studies at Nanking Theological Seminary, as the associate executive secretary of the Society and asked him to begin work at Soochow University. Since the Society lacked any funds, it started with a loan of two hundred U.S. dollars from Dr. D. Willard Lyon of the YMCA and a donation of 1,200 dollars from Rev. Edwin C.

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5 There were more than 130 Protestant societies operating in China by 1920. Both Chinese Christians and missionaries were aware of this phenomenon and considered having a central medium to coordinate missionary works. A National Christian Conference was called in May, 1922, and created the National Christian Council the following year (Rankin, 1928; Callahan 1951).
Lobenstine of the NCC. At this time, John R. Mott, head of the Institute of Social and Religious Research (hereafter ISRR), took an interest in the Wen-she and decided to offer financial assistance, which was a great help and source of encouragement to the members of the Association.(6) From March 1925 on, a provisional office with two staff members was set up at Soochow University. A national conference of the Wen-she was held on February 18, 1926, which adopted a formal constitution and changed the name of the organization to Chung-hua Chi-tu-chiao Wen-she. The conferees also decided to move its office from Soochow to Shanghai. The objective of the Society was stated to be: "to promote the production of indigenous Christian literature and encourage the reading of such materials by the Chinese."

Most Wen-she members were church leaders of the time; Ch'eng Ching-i was the general secretary of both the NCC and the Church of Christ in China; Yu Jih-chang served as the general secretary of the YMCA in China for twelve years and as the chairman of the NCC for ten, Liu T'ing-fang (Timothy Tingfang Lew) was the dean of the Religious College of Yenching University; and there were many other distinguished church leaders like Frank Rawlinson, Henry T. Hodgkin, John Leighton Stuart, Chao Tzu-ch'en, Hu I-ku (Y. K. Woo), K'ung Hsiang-hsi (H. H. K'ung), Wang Cheng-t'ing, Wang Chin-hsin, Yen Yang-ch'u (James Y. Yen).

The first issue of the official organ of the Wen-she--the Wen-she Monthly--appeared in October, 1925, and the last (Volume 3, Number 8) in June, 1928. The stated purpose of the Monthly was to promote indigenous Christian literature and indigenous Christianity. Later, the contents of the Monthly were enlarged to include discussion on "Christian thought and practices." In 1926, Shen Ssu-chuang was appointed the Acting General Secretary of the Council, and Wang Chih-hsin, a professor of Chinese Studies at Nanking Theological Seminary, was invited to become the editor of the Monthly. According to one scholar, frequent contributors to the Monthly can be divided into three groups: professors at theological seminaries, church leaders, and those who worked for various literary institutions of the Protestant church. As for the contents of the Monthly, in addition to Christian literature, it also included articles on Christian thought, church history, church and society, church and state, and Chinese

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(6) Chinese Christians appealed for financial support for such a society to the Institute of Social and Religious Research in 1923 and this case was discussed by the Institute in September 1923. (Minutes of the 20th meeting of the Institute of Social and Religious Research, Sep. 28-30, 1923. Rockefeller Archive Center, IV 3 A Box 2, Folder 10.) The Institute in 1924 decided to grant US$6,000 dollars for the first year and John D. Rockefeller, Jr., the sponsor of the Institute, agreed that such an appropriation was within the scope of the purpose of the Institute. (Raymond G. Fosdick to Falen M. Fisher, Feb. 25, 1925 and John D. Rockefeller, Jr. to Falen M. Fisher, 27, 1925. Rockefeller Archive Center, IV 3 A 5 Box 2, Folder 14.)
The Wen-she Monthly was the most outspoken religious publication of its time. The period during which the Monthly was published witnessed many important historical events, such as the Anti-Christian Movement, the Northern Expedition and major reforms in Christian education initiated by the Nationalist Government. The Monthly responded without hesitation to the questions of indigenization and the relationship between church and state, and it clearly expressed a sympathetic attitude toward the Nationalist Government. The editors conceived of it as a forum for public debate and provided its readers with the opportunity to exchange views and opinions in a special section. These measures made the Wen-she Monthly both challenging and controversial in the eyes of various churchmen. Some conservative Christians and foreign missionaries were not happy about this situation and even sought to bring the publication to an end. While they criticized the Monthly publicly they also wrote to its sponsor--the ISRR in New York-charging the magazine with provoking unrest among the Christian population (Shen 1928c:12). As a result, among other factors, the ISRR decided to discontinue their support of the Wen-she and this decision forced Wen-she to suspend its activities after publishing the June, 1928, issue. (7) The main impetus of the indigenization movement during the Republican period died with this final issue of the magazine, a fact that underscores the unique position the Wen-she occupied in Chinese church history.

II. Promotion of Indigenous Churches and Literature

When the forerunner of the Wen-she, the Society for the Advancement of Christian Literature in China, was organized in 1924, the members of the Society already pronounced its major purposes as "to promote the production of indigenous Christian literature and to encourage the reading of such materials by the Chinese."(8) These purposes can be simplified as the "promotion of indigenous churches and literature" which was later kept in the constitution of the Wen-she and became a major message

7 At this time, the three members of the Wen-she Monthly resigned. The Wen-she then published a new magazine "Yiwei." However, the Wen-she ran a note in the second issue (Feb. 1930) announcing that they had decided to end the "nominal existence" of the Wen-she (Yamamoto, 1972:81).
8 The original constitution of the Chung-hua Chiu-chiu wen-tou shih-chih edu-chin-she can not be located. But a revised version of this constitution was printed in the first issue of the Wen-she Monthly.
transmitted by the Wen-she Monthly.

Even in the preparation period, Chao Tzu-ch'en and Shen Ssu-chuang had mailed famed church figures letters, inviting contributions of articles on the subjects of "indigenous churches" and "indigenous Christian literature." Since the response to their call was rather enthusiastic in the latter subject, Chao then decided to give a strong emphasis on indigenous Christian literature in the Wen-she Monthly. Therefore, articles on indigenous literature became the main feature of the first five issues.

Twenty-nine articles on Christian literature were published out of the total of thirty-five articles in the first five issues of the Wen-she Monthly. Most of them came by invitation and most contributors were Wen-she members. These authors included church leaders (such as Cheng Ching-i, Yu Jih-chang), theological professors (such as Liu T'ing-fang, Wang Chih-hsin, Chao Tzu-ch'en), famed leaders in the literary field (such as Donald MacGillivray and Evan Morgan of the Christian Literature Society), heads of Christian universities (John Leighton Stuart of Yenching University and W. B. Nance of Soochow University).

Most of the contributors shared the same view about the current problems of Christian literature. Their criticisms can be summarized into three key aspects: (1) excessive control by foreign missionaries, (2) ill-equipped and ill-prepared writers for church publications, (3) lack of coordination in their common publication efforts and logistics. Consequently, Wen-she also proposed various reforms to attain the common purpose of preaching "the Way" in China. Their proposals for reform of church literary enterprises included the right of autonomy; the cultivation of indigenous literary talent; the improvement of teaching in Chinese history and literature in Christian schools and universities; the contextualization of Christian literature to the needs of society; the rise of the spirit of criticism among Christian readers; the integration of Christian faith and Chinese culture; and the cooperation among Christian literary services.

Only a few articles sounded slightly different viewpoints. For example, MacGillivray and Morgan of the Christian Literary Society considered the current "cooperation" between foreign missionaries and Chinese writers was best for contemporary Christian literary service (MacGillivray 1925:20-22; Morgan 1925:314-318). Ch'en Chin-yung, a writer of the Christian Literary Society, regarded the Wen-li style of writing as the most advanced and beautiful in Chinese literature (Ch'en 1925:39-43).

It was apparently the editor of the Wen-she who attempted to identify problems.

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9 For a detailed discussion on the Wen-she's ideas on literature indigenization, see Wang C. 1990b.
and solutions and to convince the readers of the importance of indigenous churches and Christian literature to Christianity through the pens of church leaders and theologians. This message was repeatedly given in the first five issues of the *Wen-she Monthly*. While the writers and readers gradually reached a common understanding on the aspect of indigenous Christian literature, they also found out that there was redundancy in this kind of article. Therefore, the contents of the *Monthly* were enlarged to include discussion on "Christian thought and practices" from the sixth issue on. The most striking change is that the percentage of articles on "indigenous Christian literature and indigenous Christianity" dropped from more than ninety percent of the first five issues to less than thirty percent of the issues that followed.

III. Discussion on Christian Thought and Practices

The *Wen-she Monthly* entered the second stage from the sixth issue on. The contents of the *Monthly* now included four subjects, i.e., indigenous Christian literature, indigenous Christianity, Christian thought and practices. The former two now occupied less than thirty percent of the contents and the latter two more than seventy percent. These statistics seem to show that the *Monthly* did not stress the importance of indigenization of Christianity. However, further thought and analysis will suggest that the evolution of the contents of Christian thought and practices is an inevitable path by which to implement and develop in depth the indigenization of Christianity.

From the viewpoint of the contemporary social context of China, we also find out that the *Monthly* had to enter the field of Christian thought and practices. China at that time was in an unstable situation of the post-May Fourth period. Many new doctrines were introduced into China and Chinese intellectuals tended to approach questions pertaining to national affairs and social realities from the viewpoints of democracy and science. If Christianity wanted to take root in China, it had to match the prevalent spirit and thought, and accommodate Christian practices to the contemporary social context.

Articles on Christian thought can be divided into two parts. The first part is on theology, such as "Hsi-po-lai jen ti lai-sheng kuan" (Hebrew view of next life); "T'ien-fang hsueh-li yu Chi-tu-chiao" (Arabian theory and Christianity); "Hsin-shin ho-i lun" (On the consistency of faith and conduct); and translation of parts of Harry Emerson Fosdick's *The Modern Use of the Bible*. The second part is on the relationship between Christianity and contemporary thought, such as "Chin-hua lun yu Chi-tu-chiao" (The-
ory of Evolution and Christianity); "T'ien-yen yu tsung-chiao" (Evolution and Religion); "Chi-tu-chiao yu she-hui k'o-hsueh" (Christianity and Social Science); "Chin-tai k'o-hsueh-chia ti tsung-chiao kuan" (Modern Scientists' view of Religion); "Che-hsueh yu tsung-chiao" (Philosophy and Religion); "Chi-tu yu ching-chi ko-ming" (Christ and Economic Revolution); "Chi-tu-chiao yu ti-kuo chu-i" (Christianity and Imperialism); "Wu-ch'an chieh-chi ti Yeh-su" (Proletarian Jesus); and "Chi-tu-chiao shih chin-pu ti tsung-chiao mo?" (Is Christianity a Progressive Religion?) From this selection of articles we can tell that the authors attempted to prove that Christianity was not inconsistent with the sciences and was accepted by scientists. Furthermore, Christianity was also progressive, revolutionary, anti-imperialist and belonged to the proletariat. In other words, the authors wanted to identify Christianity with the contemporary spirit of the times.

We will be not surprised at the trend of their articles if we understand the background of the anti-Christian movements which had their origins in the May Fourth Movement, Nationalism and Communism. In fact, we can have a clearer picture of the authors' efforts from their articles on Christian practices. The articles on this aspect tell Chinese Christians where to place themselves in this changing society. There were plenty of articles in this category, such as "Kuo-min cheng-fu hsia ti Chi-tu-chiao" (Christianity under the Nationalist Government); "Ch'ing-t'ien po-jih hsia ti Chi-tu-chiao" (Christianity under [the flag of] Blue Heaven and White Sun); "Sun-wen chu-i yu Yeh-su chu-i" (Sun Yat-senism and Jesus-ism); "Ko-ming ti Yeh-su" (Revolutionary Jesus); "Wo-men ti ko-ming kuan" (Our View on Revolution); "Fan-chiao chung ying you ti tzu-hsing" (The Right Self-examination in the Tide of the Anti-Christian Movement); "Chi-tu-t'u tui-yu tsui-chin tang yu ti t'ai-tu ho ts'o-shih" (The Right Attitude and Measures of Christians towards the Current National Situation). The *Montlhy* even devoted a special issue (Volume three, Number two) to "Christianity and Politics: A symposium," which contains seven articles by famed church figures. In order to encourage response and discussion in this field, the Wen-she also publicly solicited writings on "Christian Attitudes toward National Affairs" with awards of money and later published these awarded articles in the *Montlhy*.

Another point which deserves attention is the Wen-she's attitude toward foreign governments and foreign missionaries. In the environment of anti-imperialism,
the Wen-she tried to tell its readers that not all foreigners held imperialist attitudes. Articles on this topic included "Wai-jen yen-chung ti chung-kuo ko-ming kuan" (Chinese Revolutionary Spirit in Foreigners' Eyes); "Chi-tu-chiao yu ti-kuo chu-i" (Christianity and Imperialism); "Chi-tu-chiao yu tzu-pen chu-i" (Christianity and Capitalism) and several notes about petitions of American missionary groups to the U.S. President for the abolition of unequal treaties with China. Another topic, the origin of communism, or that Russia was not an ideal model for China, included articles like "Su-o ch'eng-kung le ma" (Did Russia Succeed?); "Hsin-o yu shao-nien" (New Russia and Youth); "Su-o ti hsia ti tsung-chiao" (Religions under Russia).

Generally speaking, the Wen-she held a friendly attitude toward the Nationalists and, the later Nationalist Government. They, however, did not praise the Nationalists without reservation. Whenever they found unfriendly attitudes or trends among of the Nationalist members or party, they fought back immediately. For example, when two members of the Nationalist Party wrote articles opposing the proposal about the abolition of anti-religious slogans in the Nationalist party, the Wen-she editors immediately fought back and started a war of ink in a Nationalist newspaper. They even later reprinted all the articles of this paper war in the Wen-she Monthly. Another case is when the Nationalist Government enforced party education in schools; an author of the Wen-she criticized this practice. That is because the Nationalists requested all schools to have a Sun Yat-sen memorial meeting every week, bow to the picture of Sun Yat-sen and read Sun's will in the memorial meeting. In the eyes of this author, these acts looked like service, worship and doctrine-reading in religious practices. In the second stage of the Wen-she Monthly, the editors and authors kept their awareness toward politics until the end of this Monthly.

IV. Criticism and Introduction

A free translation of the section "criticism and introduction" should be "book and article reviews." The review section had not been seen in other contemporary Christian publications. At that time, only a few Christian bulletins had an introduction section but few of them dared to give fair or poignant comments on other Christian publications. Therefore, this section became a major and rather unique

11 Those articles were published in the appended version entitled Chi-tu-wu of the Min-kuo jih-pao (Republican Daily) of the Shanghai edition.
characteristic of the Wen-she Monthly.

The idea of the book review section was raised at the earliest stage of the Wen-she. T. C. Chao reported to the first meeting of the executive committee that "[we] should publish a bulletin regularly to introduce books and magazines of Christianity...... to encourage the reading of such materials" (Chao 1925:50). This idea was written into the constitution of the Wen-she and was put into practice in the Monthly until the last issue.

The Wen-she Monthly began writing the reviews of books from the very first issue. In the second issue, the editor used the name "p'i-p'ing yu t'ao-lun" (Criticism and Discussion) for the section title. For the third and fourth issues, the title of this section became "shu-pao p'ing lun" (Comments on Books and Bulletins). From issue 9-10, this section was formalized and was entitled "p'i-p'ing yu chieh-shao" (Criticism and Introduction). The editor reversed the title in the fifteenth issue as "Chieh-shao yu p'i-p'ing" (Introduction and Criticism) and kept that title to the end.

A way to improve Christian literature suggested by the Wen-she was to raise the spirit of criticism among Christian readers. The editors of the Wen-she Monthly conceived of the Monthly as a forum for public debate and gave its readers opportunities ot exchange views and opinions in this section. The Wen-she believed that objective criticism based on truth, knowledge, and experience would be constructive to the Christian literary enterprise. Therefore, the Wen-she gave a special welcome to the book and article reviews. From issue 9-10 on, the editor put two lines under the section head, "We welcome contributions to this section. Readers can give comments on any kind of books and bulletins based on their observation. No matter what opinion they have, we are pleased to publish them." In order to balance their viewpoint and diminish unnecessary trouble, the editor also gave the authors space to fight back. The Monthly carried another note, in which it said that "those who wrote reviews were not necessarily without bias and those who were criticized could rebut their reviews based on truth and knowledge" (WS 2.2:69). Therefore, the Monthly welcomed reviews and never changed or polished the contents of the reviews.

There are two cases worth mentioning here. The first one is an article written by Ch'en Chin-yung who praised the elegance of the Wen-li and criticized the use of pai-hua and punctuation. Although the Wen-she urged the use of the modern style of writing, the editor still published this unpunctuated article. In the following issues, there were three article reviews which gave strong criticism and ridicule of Ch'en's article. Another article, written by Yang Ch'eng, held a very liberal attitude toward Christianity and regarded the Virgin Birth, the Second Coming of Christ, the Resurrection of the Body as mythic and unscientific (Yang 1926: 3-20). The editor let other re-
view articles rebut those ideas. However, many readers could not agree with the open attitude of the Monthly.

As the editor, Shen Ssu-chuang, has said, "Wen-she had opened a new stage for Christian publications. In the past, other Christian bulletins only gave a few flattering words in their book introductions and no one had tried to give an analytical and serious review" (Shen 1927a:99). Shen considered that all reviews in the Monthly were based on knowledge. However, Shen also understood that many Christian writers were used to hearing flattering language and could not bear honest words. The policy of the Wen-she Monthly inevitably offended many Christian publishers and writers.

V. Portraits, Poems, Novels, Plays and Songs

While Shen Ssu-chuang was the editor of the Wen-she Monthly, he kept it as a serious church publication. This style began to change at the time Wang Chih-hsin became the editor in September, 1926. Many literary and artistic works were added to the contents of the Monthly and made it more lively and readable than before.

When Wang Chih-hsin took over the editorship, he put a note in issue 9-10, which said "this bulletin is soliciting fiction and literary works with handsome payment. We welcome very much this kind of work" (W's 1.9-10:1). Although we do not know how "handsome" his payment was, the next issue of the Monthly began to carry novels. The issue after that issue was the Christmas issue and it contained illustrations, a prayer, a drama and several novels, besides three other articles. Fifty-two out of the eighty-four pages were for literary and artistic works in that special issue. This literary emphasis was maintained by the editor in the following issues.

There must have some reason for the editor to make such an unusual decision to include literary and artistic works in a Christian monthly. The editor, in his explanatory note in the nineteenth issue, said that

"The indigenous Christianity lays stress on experience, instead of outward appearance. Then, how can we 'express' and 'develop' our experience? There are a few new paths, i.e., poems, novels, fine arts, drama (including movies). It seems that I have given undue emphasis to feeling. Yes, when we have this kind of feeling, we then can produce indigenous theology, and indigenous doctrine and everything which belongs to knowledge. Then, this feeling can dominate our behavior and influence our 'will'. Therefore, we welcome everythins which relates to the above topics and want to offer a payment [for contributions]." (Shen 1927d:1)
This paragraph shows that Wang Chih-hsın thought that those Christianity-related indigenous literary and artistic works could stimulate the feeling of indigenization of the readers and then make them experience and practise this feeling. This was a new way by which the Monthly tried to move Chinese Christians into the way of indigenization.

In other places, the editor revealed that there might have been some financial reasons behind the use of the portraits of distinguished church figures in the Monthly. Several issues carried the portraits of the Apostle Paul, John Calvin, Francis of Assisi, and John Wesley. Besides the apparent evangelistic reason for these portraits and the accompanying short biographies, Wang Chih-hsın said that "The circulation of the Shihpao had declined. However, after they added portraits to their newspaper, it became prosperous. Then why can we not publish portraits of famed Christian figures?" (Shen 1926:1) In order to have a better effect, the Monthly especially used copper plate paper for these portraits. The Monthly clarified the reason they used portraits and hoped the readers could help promote circulation and subscription of the Monthly.

However, the publication of the portraits did not continue beyond seven issues. The reason for this was possibly because they wanted to cut down printing expenses.

In the category of literary works, there were nineteen novels, many modern and traditional poems, and several dramas and plays. These literary works were widely spread in the issues edited by Wang Chih-hsın, and only one issue did not have any at all. Most of literary wroks were Christian-related and sometimes were colored with the ideas of modernism. Some old church practices, domineering foreign missionaries and conservative pastors who resisted reforms were ridiculed in the novels. At the same time, the Christian spirit and idea of indigenization were honored. Many works were products of significance and were very readable.

Another unusual feature of this section was the promotion of indigenous Christian hymns. Wang chih-hsın, in another Christian weekly edited by him, explained why he promoted indigenous Christian hymns. "In the past," he said, "all hymns used by the churches were translated works. Now the people who urge indigenous churches hope anxiously to have some kind of indigenous hymns. That is, to compose Chinese hymns based on Chinese melodies. Those who contribute this kind of works will be handsomely rewarded once their works have have been accepted." (Monthly 2:1:advertisement page) However, no one answered the call for hymns until Chang Shih-chang contributed two Christmas songs to the 21st issue. It is probable that this kind of work needed special technique and few Christians were equipped with this skill at that time.

Generally speaking, adding literary and artistic works to Christian bulletins was
a very rare phenomenon. Furthermore, it was a new attempt to promote church reforms and to spread the message of indigenization through literary works. Those literary products were not only readable but also transformed the originally serious Christian bulletin into a lively and persuasive publication.

Conclusion

*Wen-shē* symbolized the Chinese Christian intellectuals' response to the challenge of the times and the *Wen-shē Monthly* was the crystallization of their thought and efforts. Through the arrangement of the editor and the writings of the authors, this *Monthly* became the vanguard of indigenous Christianity in China. It strongly and effectively stimulated the contemporary Chinese Christian churches and their fellow Christians and thus left an important record of the history of indigenization of Christianity in China.

From the varied aspects of their thought, attitude and way of doing things, we can clearly understand the influence of the May Fourth Movement and Nationalism—the dominant thoughts of the time. The use of *pai-hua* and punctuation, the response to Darwinism, Marxism, and imperialism, the bold and active style of writing, varieties of literary works, skeptical and agnostic approaches—promoted and adopted by the *Monthly*, all were a part of the May Foruth Movement.

The failure or success of the *Wen-shē* could be evalutaed from two angles. From the angle of failure, the editors of the *Wen-shē* did not have enough understanding of their own ability or enough support from Chinese Christians. They therefore recklessly started conflicts in their *Monthly* against the foreign missionaries, conservative Chinese pastors and Christians. Their theory and promotion of indigenization of Christianity were not well-argued and they also did not offer a complete set of practices for Christians to adopt. The articles in the Monthly were mixed with different suggestions, sometimes contradictory to each other. From this aspect, they had no chance to win the war and their failure was doomed from the beginning.

However, if looked at from another angle, we might get a different picture. Those Christians of the *Wen-shē* who were able to foresee the need of Christianity in the future, stepped forward bravely to awaken their fellow Christians and to point out the direction for indigenization. They had different methods to convey their message to other Christians in the *Monthly*. They also did not exclude other opinions but kept it as an open forum for public debate. While they identified with their fellow countrymen and the Nationalists, they did not lose their Christian position but tried
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to integrate Chinese culture and Christianity. History has proved that indigenization is an inevitable way to effectively preach the Gospel in a non-Christian culture. Maybe from this aspect, we can say that the Wen-shhe won the battle in the long run.

List of Cited References

Abbreviation:

CCYB.....China Christian Year Book
CMYB.....China Mission Year Book
CR......Chinese Recorder
WS......Wen-shhe yueh-k’an


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