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Distinguishing Spiritual Revolution
from Military Revolution:
Meditations on the Impact of Chinese
Literature by Protestant Missionary-Scholars
in Late Traditional China

LAUREN F. PFISTER

Abstract

We start our exploration of this theme by quoting from a notable article produced by the Scottish Congregationalist and missionary-scholar, James Legge (1815–1897). Legge states, “[M]issionaries have not merely to reform, . . . they have to revolutionize.” Though he employs this military term to describe missionary work in China, it is also obvious by his later elaborations that it is employed metaphorically. This is seen not only in his pro-Ruist (“Confucian”) stance, but also in the further elaboration of the methods of missionaries that should be pursued “in the spirit of Christ, *without striving or crying, with meekness and lowliness of heart*” [my emphasis]. He continues that each missionary should

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“make himself familiar with the Confucian books,” and so there is here a manifest difference between military and spiritual forms of revolution. Yet we should ask, what exactly are their similarities and differences?

In this article, consequently, I move through six meditations to seek to reveal the nature of the metaphorical use of “revolution” in Legge’s statement, and subsequently apply it to some specific Chinese Christian texts produced by notable missionary-scholars in China.

The characterization of modern military revolutions is based upon relevant works produced by Eugen Rosenstock-Huussy (1888–1973). Subsequently, the eight dimensions of military revolution he expounds are compared in great detail with the nature of the “spiritual revolution” that Legge supported. Following this analysis, the eight features of spiritual revolution are then applied to various Chinese Christian works produced by three notable missionary-scholars in China: the Scottish Congregationalist James Legge 理雅各, the German Lutheran Ernst Faber 花之安 (1839–1899) and the one time American Presbyterian and subsequently a Qing dynasty translation official, W. A. P. Martin 丁韪良 (1827–1916). By this means we are able to confirm that the spiritual revolution Legge described as necessary for missionaries was manifest within the pieces of literature chosen for this analysis.

Key words: revolution, military revolution, spiritual revolution; Eugen Rosenstock-Huussy, James Legge, Ernst Faber, W. A. P. Martin; 《浪子悔改》, 《落爐不燒》, 《約瑟紀略》, 《自西徂東》, 《天道溯源》

I. SPIRITUAL REVOLUTION?

In 1877 James Legge 理雅各 (1815–1897) wrote about the intentions of Protestant missionaries as being “revolutionary” in character:

Christianity cannot be tacked on to any heathen religion as its complement, nor can it absorb any into itself without great changes in it and additions to it. Missionaries have not merely to reform, though it will be well for them to reform where and what they can; they have to revolutionize; and as no revolution of a political kind can be effected without disturbance of existing conditions, so neither can a revolution of a people’s religion be brought about without heat and excitement.

Confucianism is not antagonistic to Christianity, as Buddhism and Brahmanism are. It is not atheistic like the former, nor pantheistic like the latter. It is, however, a system whose issues are bounded by earth and by time; and though missionaries try to acknowledge what is good in it, and to use it as not abusing it, they cannot avoid sometimes seeming to pull down Confucius from his elevation. They cannot set forth the gospel as the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation, and exhort to the supreme love of God and of Christ, without deploring the want of any deep sense of sin, and of any glow of piety in the followers of the Chinese sage.

Let them seek to go about their work everywhere—and I believe they can do so more easily in China than in other mission fields—in the spirit of Christ, without striving or crying, with meekness and lowliness of heart. Let no one think any labor too great to make himself familiar with the Confucian books. So shall missionaries in China come fully to understand the work they have to do; and the more they avoid driving their carriages rudely over the Master's grave, the more likely are they soon to see Jesus enthroned in his room in the hearts of the people.¹

From any perspective we might take, this statement cannot be easily categorized as a piece of “cultural imperialism,” or as merely an insensitive missionary diatribe against China, or as an unmitigated form of cultural colonialism. Even if these claims would be agreeable to most readers—for there are those who would insist on these perspectives anyway—there are serious complications with what Legge refers to as “a revolution of a people's religion,” which might be put in 21st century English as a Protestant revolution against Chinese religious traditions in the context of the late Qing dynasty. Whatever else that phrase might mean, we can understand how this would certainly foment intense debate and cultural conflicts which the subsequent phrase, “heat and excitement,” intend to describe.

So, if such a “religious” or “spiritual revolution” is not a “political” or “military revolution,” how would it still count as revolutionary in nature? The purpose of this series of meditations is to explain what such a spiritual revolution would involve, and to indicate its presence

¹ Quoted from an essay printed independently: James Legge, “Confucianism in Relation to Christianity,” Oxford, March 20, 1877, 12.

in the Chinese publications of three notable missionary-scholars:² the Scotsman, James Legge; the German, Ernst Faber 花之安 (1839–1899); and the American, W. A. P. Martin 丁韪良 (1827–1916).

Though readers might be struggling with the confrontational tone of a number of these phrases, there is also another dimension to this statement that affirms some very specific cultural linkages that would be unanticipated by Marxist critique, Orientalist *exposés*, or colonialist analysis. How is it, in Legge's understanding of the Qing empire and its cultural heritage, that "Confucianism is not antagonistic to Christianity," when there were so many "religious cases" during the second half of the 19th century, pitting Christian institutions and persons against the enfranchised Ruist ("Confucian") elite? If Ruism is not "atheistic" or "pantheistic," what does Legge positively have to say about it to indicate how its worldview would not be "antagonistic" to Christianity? If there is "good" within Ruist traditions to be acknowledged, is this found exclusively in "the Confucian books"? While Legge encourages missionaries to be more polite and not drive "their carriages rudely over the Master's grave," his own choice of words suggests that there had been missionaries who had displayed less "meekness and lowliness of heart" in the Qing empire than Legge himself would prefer. Indeed, if Jesus was to be "enthroned in his room

² The conceptual category of "missionary-scholar" has been defined and elaborated in Lauren F. Pfister, "China's Missionary-Scholars," in the *Handbook of Christianity in China*, vol. 2, *1800 to the Present*, ed. R. G. Tiedemann (Le Havre: E. J. Brill, 2010), 742–765. On pages 743 and 744 of this article, it describes these persons as part of the Protestant missionaries in China. Starting in the second and third generation of their missionary enterprise around the time of 1850, they were regarded as "some of the most informed, competent, and well-published Chinese scholars in European and North American contexts." While having served as part of the larger Protestant missionary group from as many as 29 different countries other than China during the late Qing dynasty, many of them served as "missionary-educators in their own religious institutions" in China, and published "Christian religious pamphlets and apologetic missionary works in Chinese languages." Besides all these significant works, the most notable among them "produced translations of Chinese canonical texts and indigenous Chinese linguistic tools," which led to the creation of other "important sinological interpretive works." It was these works which "set the standards for nineteenth and twentieth centuries['] European sinology and North American Chinese studies." Subsequently, the influences of their works extended for about a century, starting from about 1850 till the time when the Chinese Communist revolution succeeded in mainland China, or around 1950. It was after that period for at least four decades that foreign missionaries were no longer welcomed or allowed by officials to live in the country.

in the hearts” of Chinese people, where would Master Kong (“Confucius”) be placed? Where was his room? If Protestant missionaries were to “revolutionize” the religious orientations of millions of Chinese people, would there be any rooms in their hearts left for traditional Chinese teachings and values?

II. STRATEGIES FOR OUR INTERPRETIVE ENGAGEMENT

In this paper our main purpose will be to explore the nature of the spiritual revolution which James Legge describes, in order to gain some new insights into what the nature of this religious form of revolution might be, and so to be able to understand more clearly the complex picture which Legge laid out before his Anglophone audience in 1877. The way we will pursue this goal will involve the following steps.

First of all, we will seek to clarify the nature of modern military or political revolutions, distinguishing them from other forms of war. This will be done on the basis of studies into “the European revolutions” produced by a German-American Christian social philosopher and intellectual, Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy (1888–1973).

Having done this, we will subsequently compare and contrast this account of “modern military revolutions” with the account of the Protestant “spiritual revolution” which James Legge described in 1877. In order to be systematic in this comparison, we will move step by step through Rosenstock-Huessy’s claims, and so seek to gain as thorough of a comparison as possible by this means.

Following this, we will show how Legge and two other Christian missionary-scholars during the late Qing empire (specifically, during the latter part of 19th century China) pursued their “spiritual revolution” by writing Chinese Christian literature. As already mentioned above, we will review pieces written by (1) the Congregational missionary representing the London Missionary Society in Hong Kong (1840–1868), and who later became the first professor of Chinese in Corpus Christi College of Oxford University (1876–1897), the Scots-

man James Legge;³ (2) the German Lutheran missionary from the Rhenish Missionary Society, Ernst Faber, who lived primarily in Shanghai. Faber later moved to Qingdao when it became a German colony in 1898, and died there the next year very suddenly after contracting typhus.⁴ Finally, famous work by (3) the Presbyterian American missionary (1850–1866) and later Qing dynasty educator who served as the president of the Tongwen Guan 同文館 (1869–1895), W. A. P. Martin,⁵ will also be reviewed.

III. THE NATURE OF MODERN MILITARY REVOLUTIONS

When Legge was referring to “political revolution,” he was apparently not aware of the developments of Karl Marx’s own account of radical revolution, but was thinking self-consciously of the earlier French revolution in the late 18th century which had rocked the cultural moorings of modern European states. Already in May 1873, when visiting the tomb of Master Kong in Qufu for the first time in his life, Legge wrote how he asked himself as he stood upon the burial mound, which of the

³ Though many works have now been written about James Legge in China, among the most important works in English about his missionary-scholar career has been this author’s two volume text entitled *Striving for “The Whole Duty of Man”: James Legge and the Scottish Protestant Encounter with China* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2004). In addition, a newly republished version of Legge’s famous Chinese Classics in five volumes was produced by the East China Normal University Press in Shanghai in 2010, including within these volumes updated scholarly essays introducing each volume, written by historians Liu Jiahe 劉家和 and Shao Dongfang 邵東方 (now the Chief of the Asian Division in the Library of Congress in Washington DC) along with this author, as well as a longer general introduction prepared by the scholar of overseas sinological traditions, Zhang Xiping 張西平, and this author.

⁴ I know of no monograph devoted solely to Ernst Faber’s life and works, but can refer to the following article for those who are interested: Lauren F. Pfister, “Ernst Faber’s Sinological Orientalism” in *Sino-German Relations Since 1800: Multidisciplinary Explorations*, eds. Ricardo K. S. Mak and Danny S. L. Paa (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2000), 93–107.

⁵ The earliest monograph devoted to the study of Martin was produced by Ralph R. Covell, *W. A. P. Martin: Pioneer of Progress in China* (Washington: Christian University Press, 1978). This was based on Covell’s more lengthy PhD dissertation completed in 1975 at the University of Denver, and entitled “Life and Thought of W. A. P. Martin: Agent and Interpreter of Sino-American Contact in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century.”

two, “Confucius or Napoleon, was the greater man?” Concluding that Master Kong was in fact the greater of the two, Legge noted that the “Chinese sage” had such a “lasting and profound . . . influence on such multitudes of his fellow man, and some of the moral and social principles which he enunciated with never lose their value.”⁶ Here again we not only see how Legge might devalue military revolution, and identify the term with that major 18th century French revolutionary leader, but also sense how questions of historical greatness went far beyond political power and military impact to matters of “moral and social principles.” Certainly, within Legge’s own mind, the religious revolution which Protestant missionaries sought to engender touched on similar moral and social values, and it was his conviction that the influences of Jesus could be even more profound than those of Master Kong in a culturally transformed China.

So, then, if there are not only differences, but also some likenesses between a “Christian spiritual revolution” and a “military revolution” which justify the use of this metaphor by Legge, we should seek to understand this claim in greater detail and with more precision. Certainly from a Marxist point of view there are most likely radical differences in the account of the nature of human beings and the impact of the industrial revolution that are central to a classical Marxist understanding of the need for revolution, which Legge would not have agreed with. Therefore it seems legitimate to ask once again, what kind of “revolution” was in Legge’s mind when he could speak in the same context of both “heat and excitement,” and also urge Christian missionaries to become “familiar” with the Confucian or Ruist scriptures?

One major theorist of “Western revolutions” was the German polymath, an ethnically Jewish and intellectually Christian social philosopher, Eugen Rosenstock-Huussy (1888–1973). Among his works dealing with the concept of revolution were two massive volumes, one completed in 1938 under the title, *Out of Revolution: Autobiography of Western Man*,⁷ and another written in German first in 1931 and then revised in 1951, entitled *Die Europäischen Revolutionen* [The Europe-

⁶ Quoted in Norman J. Girardot, *The Victorian Translation of China: James Legge’s Oriental Pilgrimage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 95.

⁷ A new edition of this older work has been published under the same name, with an introduction by one of the author’s students, now a retired professor from Harvard Law School, Harold J. Berman. See Eugen Rosenstock-Huussy, *Out of Revolution: Autobiography of Western Man* (Providence, RI: Berg, 1993).

an Revolutions].⁸ Having created his own influences in both Harvard University and Dartmouth College after leaving a Nazi-dominated Germany in the early 1930s, Rosenstock-Huessy sought to resolve several mysteries about these European revolutions before China went through its own. After his death in 1973, a former colleague at Harvard and long-time admirer, George Allen Morgan, summed up insights gleaned from Rosenstock-Huessy's long-term interests and writings about revolution. Here below eight of his fourteen main claims regarding the nature of revolutions will be summarized. These will be applied to aspects of the 1949 revolutionary Chinese situation, which Rosenstock-Huessy did not comment on because he had no means to study it in any thorough manner.⁹

What should be emphasized from the outset is that these claims were not meant to advocate a historicist determinism related to each and every revolution, so that there was no variety or no possibility of other nuances in these nationalized revolutionary experiences. On the contrary, what Rosenstock-Huessy sought to reveal were common patterns of human experiences stemming from within different national revolutions, and so by means of these insights could both capture shared dimensions of revolutionary experiences in terms of these patterns, while also indicating why their later self-reflective enlightenments would necessarily be different.

1. First of all, each revolution breaks out in the most backward country within a particular international setting which has been galvanized historically by some form of revolutionary ideology. This simple fact must be seen as ironic from a Marxist point of view, since it was not anticipated by Marx, who argued instead that revolution should

⁸ The first version, published in Jena by Eugen Diederichs in 1931, was subtitled "Volkscharakter und Staatsbildung" [The Character of Peoples and the Formation of States], while the second version published twenty years later was slightly longer and took the title, *Die Europäischen Revolutionen und der Charakter der Nationen* [The European Revolutions and the Character of the Nations] (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1951).

⁹ Selectively cited from George Allen Morgan, *Speech and Society: The Christian Linguistic Social Philosophy of Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1987), 63–65. Since Rosenstock-Huessy wrote his initial versions of these volumes in the 1930s, they preceded the Maoist-Marxist revolution by at least a decade; his second edition of the German version was being completed just as the second Chinese revolution was taking place. As far as I know, there is no later work that he produced that dealt at any length with the 1949 Chinese revolution.

first occur among the working classes within the most advanced capitalist settings.

2. Secondly, each revolution follows a pattern of development that proceeds in the following manner: provoked by a point of “cultural pressure” created by otherwise unresolvable tensions among the people within a nation, it moves through further stages of upheaval and arrogance, ending in a stage of humiliation. This is to say, the ideals motivating each revolution always fail to be realized, but reach a point of cultural transformation that both embodies its impact and rejects its extremism.

3. Thirdly, every revolution occurs during a period when a great cultural *angst* takes over a nation, constituted by “the fearful sense that the old order has given up the ghost.” This anxiety is directly related to the particular history of that country and people, and so is a rejection which shapes the preferred form of rationality and enlightenment that the revolutionaries desire to instill within the new world they sought to realize.

4. As a consequence, each revolution seeks a different kind of freedom, a freedom “from something old and for the creation of a new order.” There is therefore some sort of “dialectic of revolutions whereby the oppressed in one stage are liberated in the next.”

5. Rosenstock-Huussy goes on to claim that each revolution exports its particular contribution to revolutionized forms of life “most effectively during its period of humiliation, not during the initial upheaval.” So, for example, one sees new forms of “soft power” that highlights distinctive cultural contributions which China’s newly emerging capitalists prepare for international markets, yet all of these developments could only begin to be realized within the PRC during the post-Mao period.

6. Furthermore, all revolutions make claims that their revolutionary program is designed to change the whole of humanity, but in the end they “take root in a particular country and [so] shape the national character of that country.” This is why a different kind of rationality will tend to predominate along with its special form of enlightenment in various countries which have experienced revolutions in different periods of world history. One would consequently expect to find post-modern deconstructionism predominating in contemporary France, while a democratic pragmatism would still weigh heavily in academic circles within the United States of America, and a concern for a higher

harmony reached through the dialectics of theory and practice within the post-Mao years in the People's Republic of China.

7. Revolutions create distinctive institutions which continue to nurse the post-revolutionary character of a nation until it becomes effete "after several centuries of one-sided repetition." Among these institutions are the creation of new "holidays" which "symbolize the respective revolutions," and a "new political language" which captures the energizing spirit of its revolutionary ideals. Afterwards, it requires "enrichment" by subsequent revolutions which "regenerate the stagnant older ones."

8. Finally, each revolution "has its own eschatology and leaves the preceding one behind." Mao's revolution started with a new vision of a world that could uphold the rights of farmer-peasants, and not those of the oppressed workers in the cities, as in the case of the earlier Russian revolution. This would also explain why there were needs to address hopes of the agrarian populace by land reforms and communes, so that each person would have something to eat and a place to live, even though the truly communistic society would not be achieved.¹⁰

IV. LINKING THE MODERN CHINESE MARXIST REVOLUTION WITH EURO-AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY TRADITIONS

From this summary of eight basic ideas revealing Rosenstock-Huessy's understanding of the international and cultural significance of revolutions in general, there are several issues that can now be clarified in a more direct manner.

First of all, the linking up of the different histories of Euro-American and Chinese revolutions as a single and continuous history of a particular kind of modern transformative experience reveals patterns of life shared by all nations and peoples who have

¹⁰ These contributions of the 1949 Chinese Communist Revolution were highlighted in the philosophical account of Mao Zedong's 毛澤東 thought in Feng Youlan's seventh and last volume of his final work in the history of Chinese philosophy. See Feng Youlan 馮友蘭, *Zhongguo xiandai zhexue shi* 中國現代哲學史 [A History of Contemporary Chinese Philosophy] (Hong Kong: Zhonghua shu ju, 1992), 144–178; for discussion relevant to these matters, see especially 166–171.

undergone revolutions. This combined history records the rise and fall of a dialectical cultural transition, one both culturally transformative in character and yet following patterns that regularly corrected the extremes which revolutionary ideals fueled but always failed to realize.

What this implies for an understanding of the Maoist Marxist revolution in the mid-20th century has been indicated in part already in our brief reflective statements related to Rosenstock-Huessy's more general account of European revolutions. In the mid-20th century China was not the most advanced economic country in the East Asian region, nor a powerhouse of capitalist development, but instead a country that has endured devastating wars and was struggling to maintain its national sovereignty, especially with the Japanese intrusions into the mainland which began already in the early 1930s. It was instead, and quite the opposite of Marx's own principled accounts of the conditions in which revolution would arise, the "most backward" country within the East Asian context of that period, so that revolutionary fervor came not from the cities, which had capitalist tendencies, but from the country-side, where Mao fomented his own form of "new democracy."

Though Chinese scholars can develop these matters in greater depth, it is very clear that the comparison between the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China was a critical theme during the first decade of the Chinese revolutionary era.¹¹ Though Rosenstock-Huessy wrote his studies of European revolution long before Mao's "Great Cultural Revolution" began in 1966, we can see easily how this became the extreme expression of the ideals of the Chinese Communist revolution, and led to an immense "humiliation" of the country as a whole.¹²

¹¹ A study worth considering in this light is Frank Dikötter's volume, *Mao's Great Famine: The History of China's Most Devastating Catastrophe, 1958–1962* (New York: Walker and Co., 2010), which deals with the anticipations of the great famine and the cultural pressures and anxieties which motivated Mao's choices related to that major disaster.

¹² Literally hundreds of monographs have been written in Chinese and other languages related to the humiliating nature of the "Cultural Revolution," but among the major works in this realm one could cite as representative the English rendering of an original Chinese work produced by Yan Jiaqi and Gao Gao, translated by Daniel W. Y. Kwok and others, entitled *Turbulent Decade: A History of the Cultural Revolution* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996). In a more recent text Gao Mobo has indicated the problems Chinese intellectuals and others face in dealing with the extreme character of this major stage in the Chinese Revolution, see *The Battle for China's Past: Mao and the Cultural Revolution* (London: Pluto, 2008).

The development of China's "soft power" in the contemporary age once again fits the analysis Rosenstock-Huessy presents, because it offers an international influence shaped by the powers of the Chinese revolution, but now returning to cultural sources that predated the revolution and are taking on new and modern forms of cultural expression.¹³ In this light, the particular way mainland China has been transformed by the Maoist Marxist revolution can now be identified through this dialectic of war, extremity, and reversal, suggesting how the unique character of current Chinese capitalism and its socialist ideological development is both a product of a European-inspired Marxist revolution, and also its rejection (as a continuing military form of revolution) and overcoming (with the development of a post-hardline-Marxist and post-secular society).¹⁴

All this being revealed through this initial meditation on the nature of military revolution, we nevertheless intend to focus our attention now to renew our effort to understand what James Legge meant by the "revolutionizing" function of Protestant missionaries' work, or what we are now calling a "spiritual revolution." What we will do, then, is to move through a systematic comparison of the account of military revolutions, and compare these claims with the efforts and influences of Protestant missionary enterprises in the period from about 1850 to 1950. By this means we are hoping to clarify what are the features of this "spiritual revolution" and how the both share elements with military forms of revolution, while also being a distinct kind of cultural transformation.¹⁵

¹³ Once again, a large number of volumes taking up this interpretive angle, with a notable number of Chinese authors participating in these studies and debates. Some representative works in this realm produced during the last few years include Li Mingjiang, ed., *Soft Power: China's Emerging Strategy in International Politics* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2009); Kevin Caffrey, ed., *The Beijing Olympics: Promoting China—Soft and Hard Power in Global Politics* (London: Routledge, 2011); Michael T. Barr, *Who's Afraid of China? The Challenge of Chinese Soft Power* (London: Zed Books, 2011); Wang Jian, ed., *Soft Power in China: Public Diplomacy through Communication* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Sun Jing, *Japan and China as Charm Rivals: Soft Power in Regional Diplomacy* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012); and Kenneth King, *China's Aid and Soft Power in Africa: The Case of Education and Training* (Oxford: James Currey, 2013).

¹⁴ Regarding the nature of post-secularity in contemporary China, please consult Lauren F. Pfister, "Post-secularity within Contemporary Chinese Philosophical Contexts," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 39, no. 1 (March 2012): 121–138.

¹⁵ Questions related to cultural transformation in Chinese contexts has been addressed in part of the essay written by this author and entitled "Philosophical Explorations of

V. COMPARING CHRISTIAN “SPIRITUAL REVOLUTION” AND MODERN “MILITARY REVOLUTIONS”

Taking the eight elements of modern European military revolutions as the basis for our comparison, and moving through them step by step, we can gain a more precise picture of what James Legge himself may not have fully realized, but nevertheless did point toward, when he used the verb “revolutionize” to describe the actions of 19th century Christian missionaries. As a preamble to this discussion, we ought to recall that there had been other kinds of cross-cultural encounters between other forms of foreign religions during the various eras of imperial Chinese history, and none of them obviously involved spiritual revolutionary intentions as described by Legge as inherent to the goals of the modern Protestant missionary movement. For example, from India and Central Asia came various forms of Buddhism (primarily from Indian representatives of various Mahayana schools, and also some from Theravadan traditions) starting in the latter parts of the Han dynasty, which only gradually took root in cultural China, and became “sinified” in ways that have continued to stimulate vast realms of scholarly studies. Following the emergence of Buddhist forms of life in China, there were also Persian Zoroastrian and Manicheist representatives who entered the Tang dynasty, along with the Syrian, Persian, and Central Asian (and later on other) forms of Islam, and the well-known Syrian and Persian forms of Oriental Christianity, which has been described primarily as the “Nestorian form” of Oriental Christianity. These forms of Christianity developed during the Yuan dynasty through contacts with Mongolians, so that there were Mongolian Nestorian Christians met by Italian Franciscan Roman Catholic forms of Christianity during the 12th century. Nevertheless, due to cultural transformations beyond their control, these various forms of Christian traditions and all of the other foreign religions mentioned above, except perhaps for Islam, left very little cultural impact subsequently in Chinese history.

the Transformative Dimension in Chinese Culture,” *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 35, no. 4 (December 2008): 663–682.

So it is notable that some several hundred years later, during the Wanli era of the Ming dynasty (in the late 16th century), European Jesuit scholars from Italy, France, Spain, and other countries, entered into mainland China. They were followed by others from Dominican, Franciscan, Augustinian and other orders of Roman Catholicism, and initiated religious communities that continued to have a presence within the mainland from that time until the present, which has now extended for more than five centuries. It is known that one of the first Chinese writings of Matteo Ricci was on the concept of “friendship,” which stands as a symbol of the form of cross-cultural engagement which Ricci and his Jesuit colleagues sought to embody within the Ming and later Qing dynasties. Even the first mission of the Russian Orthodox Church was allowed to enter Qing dynasty China during the early 18th century, but their primary concern was to care for persons and families belonging to the Russian empire, and so their presence and impact within the Qing period was almost imperceptible.

Generally speaking, then, none of these specific religious traditions sought to employ a “revolutionizing” form of evangelistic methods, even though they were more or less involved with cross-cultural transformative encounters (depending on the period and the forms of religious life). This does not mean that 17th and 18th century Roman Catholic cultural engagements with the Qing imperial house did not have any political implications—especially as seen in the debates over Ruist and ancestral rites between the Roman pope (through his emissaries) and the Kangxi emperor—but they did not take the form of a revolutionary challenge (whether military or spiritual) of the current Ruist ideology. Instead, they sought some selective forms of cross-cultural creative adaptations. These encounters were definitely connected with technological and cultural extensions of Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, French, and English expanding colonization and imperial interests during the 17th and 18th centuries (in spite of events in what we now associate with India, Indonesia, Philippines, Siam [Thailand], Macao, Formosa [Taiwan] and Japan), but they did not set out national plans to employ military means to assert their mercantile and/or religious presence within Qing imperial settings.¹⁶

¹⁶ These are described in detail in the studies produced by Samuel Hugh Moffett, *A History of Christianity in Asia*, vol. 2, *1600 to 1900* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1998).

Nevertheless, during the 19th century European expansionism in various cross-cultural realms became more diverse and more aggressive.¹⁷ Though there has been much written about the opium trade promoted within the British imperial international settings that became a major source of mercantile conflict, due both to its addictive qualities and its medical effectiveness, their mercantile engagements also involved numerous other aspects. These included the commodities of tea and porcelain, and transporting “coolie” labor forces to other countries (in Australia, USA, and South American settings). In addition there were still other activities where Protestant missionaries were often involved, incorporating them into their overall missionary strategy; these included empirical medical work, translation and publishing efforts, educational promotion, and other “soft culture” influences.

So, in the light of all these developments, how was this Protestant form of “spiritual revolution” similar to and yet also distinct from the modern military form of revolution? What will be pursued in this section is a step by step comparison and contrast with the eight features previously identified in Rosenstock-Huessy’s account of the European revolutions, so that we can construct a clearer and more precise picture of what exactly counts as a “spiritual revolution.”

¹⁷ An important series of books on all the themes that will be mentioned in this paragraph has been produced by the historian of the largest Protestant missionary society in China (the China Inland Mission), A. J. Broomhall. From 1981 to 1989, Broomhall produced a seven volume set that is a historical *tour de force*; because he was also balanced in his assessment of missionary activities, and was an advocate for the China Inland Mission, his work has not been given the credit that is due for its thorough historical research, use of original sources, and relatively balanced historical assessments. The general title of the whole series is called *Hudson Taylor and China’s Open Century*. For the sake of readers who may not know of this remarkable series, the titles of each volume and the year of its publication will be given in what follows. All of them were produced in Sevenoaks, England, jointly supported by Hodder and Stoughton Publishers and the Overseas Missionary Fellowship (the subsequent name given to the organization that was formerly the China Inland Mission). It is notable that in spite of the more neutral title given the whole series, a number of the titles for specific volumes bear a military metaphor to describe its content. So here, once more, we see the “revolutionizing” factor in Protestant missionary attitudes which Legge was intuitively as well as self-consciously describing as a former missionary for the London Missionary Society. Here follows the titles of each book in the series and the year of its publication: book 1, *Barbarians at the Gates* (1981); book 2, *Over the Treaty Wall* (1982); book 3, *If I Had a Thousand Lives* (1982); book 4, *Survivor’s Pact* (1984); book 5, *Refiner’s Fire* (1985); book 6, *Assault on the Nine* (1988); and book 7, *It is not Death to Die!* (1989)

1. Religious revolution occurs primarily by stimuli from outside a people or nation that has not previously known Christianity.

In this regard, spiritual revolution does not follow the main pattern of military or political revolutions, especially those which are based upon a classical Marxist theory of the emergence of a revolutionary self-consciousness among the indigenous proletariat of any particular capitalist country. Yet, as Rosenstock-Huessy has explained, this Marxist assumption was not the real situation where revolution came, because they arose in the least capitalized countries, but did involve various internal groups of national people who opposed the current rulers.

Quite to the contrary, the Protestant spiritual revolution was primarily an event stimulated into activity by foreign persons. In most cases, Protestant foreign missionaries and their indigenous Chinese missionaries were not driven merely by economic concerns, but in the context of the Qing empire were involved with Chinese and other people-groups representing different levels of society and from many different kinds of linguistic and sub-cultural contexts. This has linguistic and cultural dimensions to it that will be explored later in our discussions.

In this light, then, Legge's reminder that Protestant missionaries should become "familiar with the Confucian books" meant that they were willing to work both in advanced cultures among elites such as the Chinese literati (*shen* 紳) found in the Qing empire, and also among commoners or so-called "peasants" (*nongmin* 農民), who were conceived as being among those who were less culturally advanced, many times being illiterate or only semi-literate, and sometimes being completely primitive in their form of life (especially in certain parts of Western China among the mountain people-groups).¹⁸ Precisely in this sense, then, spiritual revolution is not determined by the cultural condition of the "target culture" as much as by the interaction between foreign and indigenous Protestant missionaries (of whatever denominational commitments) and the people-groups and cultures of those with

¹⁸ A general account of these different levels of cultural engagement can be discerned within the study by Ralph Covell, *The Liberating Gospel in China: The Christian Faith among China's Minority Peoples* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995).

whom they seek to present the claims and powers of Christian wisdom and its religious form of life. This broader social foundation for their “spiritual revolution” provides a very different set of conditions that shapes this form of cultural transformation in many different ways than the transformative impact of military revolutionary activities.

2. Because of a diverse set of cultural engagements in a spiritual revolution, there is no single pattern of relationship between Christian missionaries and various cultures.

What Rosenstock-Huessy describes as points of internal “cultural pressure” and unresolvable politico-cultural tensions, leading to military actions that are destructive and arrogant, and moving into a period of cultural humiliation, cannot be easily or generally applied to social movements related to spiritual revolution. One alternative interpretation of these cross-cultural possibilities has been produced by H. Richard Niebuhr in his book, *Christ and Culture* (1931) to a five-fold pattern relating Christ to cultures: Christ above culture, Christ of culture, Christ against culture, Christ and culture in paradox, Christ the transformer of culture.

Nevertheless, there has been a major interpretive challenge to Niebuhr’s categories in recent years, mainly because of ambiguities in his understanding of culture and lack of consistency in its use in relationship to the person of Christ.¹⁹ What D. A. Carson claims in his critical assessment of Niebuhr’s work is, first of all, that there are not just five specific categories of the relationship of Christian entities, the God of Christians, and the cultures in which they take root. Secondly, Carson carefully points out that the entities being involved in these relationships are not completely exclusive of each other, and those relationships for Christians in any cultural setting are all based on a shared foundation of understanding what God has done in and through divine revelation. He argues that there are four fundamentally shared dimensions of God’s work in human histories within all cultures which Christians should recognize. These include the Creation and the Fall, Israel and the Law, Christ and the New Covenant, Heaven and Hell. It is these four dimensions which provide the foundation for Christian

¹⁹ See. D. A. Carson, *Christ and Culture Revisited* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2008).

missionaries (as representatives of Christ—a factor Niebuhr did not always clarify) to address various cultural modes, sometimes handling a number of those mentioned by Niebuhr simultaneously (due to the needs of different kinds of persons they encountered). Carson’s thorough critique of Niebuhr’s influential account adds weight to the sense that the Protestant spiritual revolution embraces a shared worldview and sets of values that would challenge alternative worldviews and values, producing the “heat and excitement” which Legge pointed out would be part and parcel of such a spiritual revolution.

It is significant to point out, then, that Legge later referred to his own stance in relationship to the Qing culture dominated by Zhu Xi’s Ruist ideology as one that was “sympathetic but not neutral.”²⁰ This suggests a certain level of affirmation of shared truths and experiences, and also other aspects of cross-cultural encounter and divine work that would necessarily involve changes within Chinese settings. This stands in radical opposition to the principled opposition to the “oppressive past” which modern military revolutions regularly promoted.

3. Does a spiritual revolution occur during a period of cultural angst?

What the Christian missionaries tended to address was not a cultural problem of a particular period, but a general human problem that they associated with the concept of “sin.” Because this dealt with the falling away from God’s will in thought, choice and actions,²¹ this was more of a daily matter within all human experiences rather than a particular historical period.

Indeed, there were some foreign Protestant missionaries who “read” the Opium Wars in 1842 and from 1858 to 1860 as acts of God that

²⁰ Wanting to raise the tension within this attempt at a hermeneutically justified self-understanding of Legge’s approach to Ruist traditions in particular, Girardot refers to Legge’s “aggressive sympathy” as a way in which his comparativist work was integrated into his Protestant worldview. See Girardot, *The Victorian Translation of China*, 452–454.

²¹ In the Westminster Larger Catechism which Legge had studied as a child in Scotland, the 24th question asks “What is sin?” and the answer is that “Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, any law of God, given as a rule to the reasonable creature.”

“opened the doors” to the Qing empire, but it is generally recognized that these military intrusions tended to produce a wide-ranging level of political and cultural resistance, and did not naturally or culturally nurture a readiness to consider Christianity as a life alternative. Nevertheless, it has been the case that Christian missionaries may have greater impact in the midst of cultures that are facing specific kinds of internal instability than among those where a stable cultural model and form of life has been established for a long period of time, especially if the ideological form of that cultural model bears features which stand in contrast to Christian views of reality and social values.

4. The “freedom” of the Christian form of “spiritual revolution” is a freedom from sin to become a “new person,” a “new human” in the Spirit of Christ.

As a consequence, the cultural diversity of Christianity is reinforced, because persons and cultures are changed from within by the movement of the Creator and Redeemer of all humankind. We have here a triangular movement of transformation, involving the Living God, specific cultures, and particular persons, and so something more complex than the dyadic units which H. Richard Niebuhr had cleverly conceived. As a consequence of this inherently diverse set of cultural expressions of Christianity, an interest in linguistic dialectical differences and the vast variety of sub-cultural forms of life continued to be addressed by foreign and indigenous missionaries in the Qing dynasty in order to offer to various kinds of people-groups within the Qing empire the opportunity to engage in this form of spiritual freedom.²² The ability to communicate at various social levels of linguistic and ritual articulateness was perceived as a means to express that spiritual freedom to different kinds of persons and people-groups.

This also suggests that there are good reasons for having indigenized forms of Christian religion, because the spiritual revolution that Chris-

²² For example, see in the seminal study recently published by John T. P. Lai, *Negotiating Religious Gaps: The Enterprise of Translating Christian Tracts by Protestant Missionaries in Nineteenth-Century China* (Sankt Augustin: Institut Monumenta Serica, 2012), Lai indicates how one particular text prepared for children and Sunday Schools, entitled in English *The Peep of the Day*, was published in *wenyan*, Mandarin, Cantonese, Braille, and dialects in Fuzhou, Ningbo, Shanghai and Suzhou. See *Ibid.*, 151.

tian missionaries promote stimulates growth from within the culture and the persons who live in that culture. This includes the necessary links created by translations of the Bible and other classical Christian texts, as well as other forms of life.²³ This has in fact been confirmed by a vast amount of historical studies in numerous cultures where Christian missionaries have gone into previously unknown or unresponsive cultures.

5. Christian institutionalization works in a different pattern from that of a military revolution.

This is manifest in the fact that in military revolutions, revolutionaries seek to destroy the past and leap into a future distinct from past relationships; the Protestant form of spiritual revolution Legge prefers is one which will seek to affirm what is good within a culture, and challenge what is bad or evil within it on the basis of spiritual reformation and change. In this regard, there is a greater amount of cultural continuity, and in many ways it can be synthetically constructive (depending on the culture). In the case Legge himself presented, he understood Ruist cultural traditions to be generally more amenable than Hindu or Buddhist inspired cultures; for this reason, then, he was willing to consider some kinds of mutual appreciation and cultural support, rather than being merely destructive of all Ruist traditions in principle. An example of this is his promotion of “Sabbath culture” as a particular form of Chinese Protestant life; it was the indigenization of a theme developed initially in Scottish Presbyterian forms of life, but brought into Hong Kong Chinese lifestyles and justified on the basis of biblical teachings, even in spite of the rampant capitalist materialism that

²³ As addressed in works by Jost Zetsche, *The Bible in China: History of the Union Version, or the Culmination of Protestant Missionary Bible Translation in China* (Sankt Augustin: Monumenta Serica, 1999), Mai Jinhua (麥金華 George Mak), *Da Ying shengshu gonghui yu guanhua “He he ben” shengjing fanyi* 大英聖書公會與官話《和合本》聖經翻譯 [British and Foreign Bible Society and the Translation of the Mandarin Chinese Union Version] (Hong Kong: Christian Study Centre on Chinese Religion and Culture, 2010), and appropriate sections of John Lai’s *Negotiating Religious Gaps*.

reigned in mercantile sectors within the colony at the time Legge lived there.²⁴

6. There were/are universal claims presented by Christian missionaries to Chinese persons, clearly found in their Qing dynasty publications.

Nevertheless, these universal values were argued from the angle of basic human experiences of sin, brokenness, salvation, renewal, transformation and eternal hope. As a consequence, indigenized forms of Christianity were established and nurtured by Christian missionaries who may contribute new forms of life to the international expressions of Christianity, precisely because they are encouraged to become indigenous and form their own leadership. When this did not happen, then something more like a colonial presence was established which retarded the spiritual growth and spiritual revolution among indigenous Christians. It is the nature of their relationship with the living God which bridges the cultural differences, and need not become a source of conflict with other forms of Christianity.

In Legge's own case, he participated in this dimension of indigenization by supporting the advancement of his Chinese colleague and co-pastor, Ho Tsun-sheen (He Jinshan 何進善, 1817–1871). Ho became the first published Chinese Protestant theologian, working with Legge as a member of the London Missionary Society in Hong Kong from 1843 till his death.²⁵

²⁴ Find a thorough summary of this “Sabbath culture” expression in Chinese Protestant forms of life first established in Hong Kong in Pfister, *Striving for “The Whole Duty of Man,”* 2:224–228.

²⁵ Described in greater detail in both Pfister, *Striving for “The Whole Duty of Man”* and Lauren F. Pfister, “A Transmitter but not a Creator: The Creative Transmission of Protestant Biblical Traditions by Ho Tsun-sheen (1817–1871),” in *Bible in Modern China: The Literary and Intellectual Impact*, eds. Irene Eber et al. (Sankt Augustin: Institut Monumenta Serica, 1999), 165–197.

7. There are holidays related to the “spiritual revolution” which Protestant missionaries sought to institutionalize.

The distinctive elements of Christian transplants within new cultures develop over generations, particularly among those who become self-conscious of their own spiritual history. These included (1) seventh day worship holidays during every week, (2) institutionalization of Christmas and Easter holidays (but with some wide variance depending on the denominational and national background of the foreign missionaries), (3) beginning new traditions of worship and new lists of indigenous saints. These were added to the Christian calendar of the particular Protestant tradition of which they are a part, but do not necessarily transform the Christian calendar in its basic form.

8. The eschatologies of military revolutions and Protestant spiritual revolution varied greatly.

Military revolutions have regularly had an alternative form of socio-political life as their goal (such as a communist form of social justice, working on the basis of need and not on the basis of capitalist advancement, and pursuing other humane activities beyond working time on the basis of personal interest). In the Marxist tradition there was the belief in a final threshold that would be reached, so that a global movement of justice would be initiated, and a new form of property ownership based on some type of communal or communist form of life would be realized. In contrast to this this-worldly vision of justice, the eschatologies of different forms of Protestant Christianity share (with the vast majority of other kinds of Christianity) the hope for eternal life in heaven with God and with those who are God’s people, and believe that there is a hell which needs to be confronted if one has not become aligned to God’s will. This is a more general form of apocalyptic eschatology drawn from biblical sources, and so is not unique to each Christian expression in cultures that have been influenced by Christian missionaries. Some have also adopted some

distinctive forms of social life (such as the Hakka Christian villages,²⁶ the later the communal Christian community in Suzhou city in Gansu province in the 1930s²⁷ as well as some attempts of this form of life by the “little flock”),²⁸ but these were not necessarily the most important elements within their religious eschatologies.

VI. REFLECTIONS OF SPIRITUAL REVOLUTION IN CHINESE WRITINGS BY PROTESTANT MISSIONARIES

According to John Lai’s study, most of the Protestant translations of Christian classics from western Europe and North America were not very successful in attracting Chinese persons to the Christian worldview, mainly because they were translations of texts written for other cultural settings, and so what they discussed was not always relevant to the forms of Chinese life found in the late Qing dynasty.²⁹ On the other hand, Lai has underscored the point that the most successful among all the Chinese tracts prepared by foreign Protestant missionaries and their Chinese co-laborers were original works in Chinese, not translations.³⁰ Notably, the pieces of Christian literature we will now

²⁶ This became part of the Hakka Christian traditions described in the study by Jessie and Rolland Lutz entitled *Hakka Chinese Confront Protestant Christianity, 1850–1900: With the Autobiographies of Eight Hakka Christians and Commentary* (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 1998).

²⁷ As described in the earlier writings of Mildred Cable and Francesca French, who along with French’s elder sister, Evangeline French, became itinerant missionaries in the regions of north-western China during the 1920s and 1930s as missionaries associated with the China Inland Mission. See Mildred Cable and Francesca French, *Dispatches from North-western Gansu* (Philadelphia: China Inland Mission, 1925).

²⁸ As indicated by many books about Watchman Nee (Ni Tuosheng 倪柝聲) and the sectarian Protestant movement he helped to establish in the Republican period in China called the “little flock.”

²⁹ Summarized from the conclusion of Lai, *Negotiating Religious Gaps*, 213–214. There (p. 214) the missionary John Ross added his criticism of this feature of many Chinese tracts prepared by foreign missionaries and their helpers: “My first serious objection to most of the Christian literature is that it is merely composed of translations from Western books in Western style and as if for Western readers. . . . I regard literal, or very close translations from Western works on our religion as a serious obstacle to the promulgation of the truth.”

³⁰ This is underscored in the self-conscious effort of some foreign missionaries in China to offer more opportunities to Chinese Christians who could write their own litera-

review for aspects of the spiritual revolution which we have been describing above were each and every one creative works produced by these foreign missionaries and their Chinese co-workers. Significantly, among the most well-received pieces of Christian literature in Chinese were two of these works—the most influential being Martin’s *Tiandao suyuan* 天道溯源 or *Evidences of Christianity*, and the fourth most influential including Ernst Faber’s work, *Zi Xi cu Dong* 自西徂東 or *Travelling from West to East*.³¹ Though James Legge’s three tracts written in Chinese were not mentioned in this list, they were all prepared as original pieces for specific Chinese audiences in the 1850s and 1860s in Hong Kong.³² These included his two short tracts on the famous New Testament parable of the Prodigal Son, *Langzi huigai* 浪子悔改³³ and the story of the friends of the prophet Daniel who were thrown into a massive oven because they refused to submit to a foreign king and worship an idol, *Luo lu bu shao* 落爐不燒.³⁴ In addition, there was the longer tract prepared in the form of a short novel produced in a popular style, with poetic introductions to each chapter, and lithographic images placed at the beginning of certain chapters, entitled *Yuese jilue* 約瑟紀略.³⁵

Here we will take a specific strategy to approach this linkage of these special Chinese tracts and books to the varying aspects of spiritu-

ture, rather than produce translations of foreign literature, and so “promoting a Chinese authorship” among gifted Chinese Christians. See Lai, *Negotiating Religious Gaps*, 114–116.

³¹ Noted in Appendix D of Lai, *Negotiating Religious Gaps*, 289–290. These works were ranked among 20 of the most influential texts or kinds of texts rendered into Chinese by Protestant translators, many being foreigners, and some being indigenous Chinese Christians. This assessment was made by a survey of the missionaries and Chinese pastors who participated in the 1907 China Centenary Missionary Conference in Shanghai.

³² In fact, these three tracts are not mentioned at all in Lai’s book, though other translation works prepared by Legge are mentioned. One suspects that because they were not translations of other literature, which is the focus of Lai’s work, they were not included, and justifiably so.

³³ Based on the story found in the New Testament, Luke 15:3–32.

³⁴ As found in the Hebrew Scriptures, in the context of Daniel 1–3.

³⁵ See also the following study of this work of Legge by John T. P. Lai 黎子鵬 entitled “*Shengjing de Zhongguo yanyi*: Li Yage shizhuan xiaoshuo *Juese jilue* (1852) yanjiu” 《聖經》的中國演義：理雅各史傳小說《約瑟紀略》（1852）研究 [The Bible’s Chinese Dramatic Novel: Studies of James Legge’s Historical Novel, *A Brief Record of Joseph* (1852)], *Hanxue yanjiu* 漢學研究 [Chinese Studies] 31, no. 1 (March 2013): 161–185.

al revolution. We will not deal with each of these pieces separately, but will use specific details found in these works to illustrate how some facets of these works respond to aspects of the spiritual revolution which James Legge had indicated. We will do this by itemizing the ways those aspects in these missionary-scholars' Chinese literature correspond to the eight different aspects of spiritual revolution elaborated in the previous section.

1. Religious revolution occurs primarily by stimuli from outside a people or nation that has not previously known Christianity.

All of the Chinese literature we are discussing are authored by foreign missionaries, and much of the Chinese literature in translation produced by tract societies for Chinese audiences bore the names of foreign missionaries. Some of their names became quite famous in their own day, including those whose Chinese literature we are studying here, as well as the Welsh Baptist, Timothy Richard 李提摩太 (1845–1919). Nevertheless, we should also indicate that these foreign missionaries regularly had some degree of help by Chinese co-laborers in their preparation of these texts. As a case in point, James Legge described how Pastor Ho Tsun-sheen had regularly read and revised his materials, even as he had read and revised Pastor Ho's own writings.³⁶ In addition, he credited Pastor Ho for writing in an elegant style that was appreciated by educated Chinese persons who were not Christians at the time they read his materials, and so the level of his Chinese was able to reach those with literary training. As a consequence, though Legge's name appeared on these leaflets, they were regularly reviewed and edited by Pastor Ho.³⁷

³⁶ The comments above and following this statement are made explicit in James Legge's unpublished manuscript, "Sketch of the Life of Ho Tsun-sheen," probably written in 1872, within a year after Pastor Ho passed away. Now held in the Bodleian Library.

³⁷ Lai underscores that many of the Chinese co-laborers remained unnamed in these Chinese tracts, even though they had served a significant role in providing Chinese linguistic support and editorial services to the foreign missionaries. See Lai, *Negotiating Religious Gaps*, 107–114. These tracts of Legge only mention Legge's own name, but he did leave notice that Pastor Ho had regularly helped him with his Chinese expression when he prepared these texts. In this light it is notable that the first English novel that was translated by the younger Ho was credited to him by Legge, and so already in 1843 Legge honored his Chinese friend, who later became his

2. Because of a diverse set of cultural engagements in a spiritual revolution, there is no single pattern of relationship between Christian missionaries and various cultures.

Here we would want to emphasize that though there were prevailing civilizational trends within the Qing dynasty that marked off major traditions from minor ones, the Qing empire was multi-cultural, ruled by Manchurian leaders, including a majority of ethnic Han people-groups who spoke different languages (and so represented different Han cultures), as well as numerous minority groups under its political governance. As a consequence, there were tracts written in Cantonese by James Legge (the two smaller tracts on the Prodigal Son and Daniel's friends), while others were written to address a more educated audience (the more literary pieces being produced by Ernst Faber and W. A. P. Martin). Nevertheless, the point here is that within these diverse ligatures of literature—and there are many more than represented by these three figures' works—they approached different kinds of persons in different ways. Within these there was some agreement with values and claims found in Ruist scriptures: Legge in his tract on Daniel's friends explicitly appealed to a passage in the *Mengzi* 孟子 where the ancient Ruist philosopher argued that choosing righteousness instead of life at certain times was necessary for a moral and noble person, as did Daniel's friends.³⁸ Among those who also shared this affirmation of certain Ruist moral values was Ernst Faber.³⁹

“co-pastor” (Legge's own term) in the London Missionary Society station in Hong Kong. See [He Mengmei], *The Rambles of the Emperor Ching Tih in Kēang Nan: A Chinese Tale*, trans. Tkin Shen [alias Ho Tsun-sheen], ed. James Legge (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1843).

³⁸ This appears on the last page of that tract, and cites the *Mengzi* 6A:10 in Chinese, referring to Master Meng very respectfully as *Mengfuzi* 孟夫子.

³⁹ Details of this positive use of the *Mengzi* for Protestant apologetics in 19th century Chinese tracts has been described in Lauren F. Pfister, “The Mengzian Matrix for Accommodationist Missionary Apologetics: Identifying the Cross-cultural Linkage in Evangelical Protestant Discourse within the Chinese Writings of James Legge (1815–1897), He Jinshan (1817–1871) and Ernst Faber (1839–1899),” *Monumenta Serica* 50 (2002): 391–416. This article has recently been published in Chinese as “Shiying zhuyi chuanjiao hujiao guan zhi ‘mengzi moshi’” 適應主義傳教護教觀之「孟子模式」, *Jidujiao wenhua xuekan* 基督教文化學刊 [Journal for the Study of Christian Culture] 26 (Autumn 2011): 82–114.

Nevertheless, while Faber would support honoring parents,⁴⁰ reading scriptures,⁴¹ and reading good books⁴² within the Chinese cultures that were grounded in Ruist values, he explicitly decried the tendency to seek revenge supported by certain Ruist doctrines,⁴³ the drowning of girl babies⁴⁴ in vast arrays of Chinese societies, and opposition to the general use of opium that became addictive and was causing ruin at many levels of the Qing empire.⁴⁵ A further example of basic affirmation of shared values is found in W. A. P. Martin's *Tiandao suyuan*, when he employs the "seven feelings" found in the *Zhongyong* 中庸 to discuss the nature of the soul and its engagement with the surrounding world.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, in the same volume Martin indicates the differences that the three traditional Chinese teachings have regarding the nature of the soul and its destiny in contrast to Christian doctrines; in this context he mentions critically Buddhist beliefs in the karmic influences of previous lives, Ruists as having no belief in any soul or *postmortem* existence, and Daoists promoting long life without death in this world.⁴⁷ So here we have manifold evidence within these Chinese texts of a variety of affirmations and criticisms related to different kinds of traditions within Chinese civilization as well as different levels of Chinese society.

⁴⁰ See Hua Zhian (花之安 Ernst Faber), *Zi Xi cu Dong* 自西徂東 [Travelling from West to East], vol. 3 (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 2002), chapter 40, 130–134.

⁴¹ Found in Hua, *Zi Xi cu Dong*, 4: chapter 46, 151–156.

⁴² Discussed in Hua, *Zi Xi cu Dong*, 5: chapter 64, 224–230.

⁴³ In the section discussing the Christian ethics of "loving one's enemies" where revenge is not permitted, found in Hua, *Zi Xi cu Dong*, 1: chapter 12, 33–35.

⁴⁴ As seen in Hua, *Zi Xi cu Dong*, 2: chapter 25, 78–81.

⁴⁵ Notably, Faber clearly indicates that the drug was first developed in India and transported to China by English merchants, but then became a crop grown by Chinese persons themselves, to the detriment of all levels of Qing society. So he argues for the government to stop its expanded use because of its terrible destructiveness among those who become addicted to the drug. Discussed in *ibid.*, chapter 22, 66–71.

⁴⁶ Ding Weiliang 丁韪良 (W. A. P. Martin), *Tiandao suyuan* 天道溯源 [Evidences of Christianity in Wen-li], revised ed. (Shanghai: The Chinese Tract Society, 1909), part 1, chapter 5, 12 recto.

⁴⁷ Seen *ibid.*, part 2, chapter 1, 20 recto.

3. *Does a spiritual revolution occur during a period of cultural angst?*

Was Legge's understanding of the "heat and excitement" involved in the spiritual revolution he was describing in 1877 bound up with an insight into a cultural *angst* among Qing dynasty citizens? His own evangelical training had focused on confronting personal sins, but the concept of a cultural anxiety, in the sense of what Paul Tillich would later describe through the prism of modern art, was something not intended in his account. Even though something truly cultural in scope did occur in the anxieties of Chinese Ruist scholars in the face of the victory of the Japanese navy over the Qing navy in 1894 and 1895, the writings of Legge and Faber were too early to address this, and the content of Martin's book could not be related to it. Of course, Faber's reference to the problems of opium were significant, and had a strong hold on the Chinese public imagination due to its devastating effects, but it did not appear to produce so much of a cultural anxiety as an anger against those who brought it into the empire. So it would seem that Legge did not fully comprehend this possibility, and neither Faber nor Martin addressed it in a substantial way, even though Faber did sense the personal and familial despair born by many due to opium addiction.

In this light of this claim, however, it would be appropriate to note that historical documentation indicates that the most dramatic growth of Protestant Christianity occurred during the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), which certainly involved a wide-spread cultural demise that may well have included such a cultural *angst*.⁴⁸ The irony here, however, is that Rosenstock-Huussy's thesis in this regard was seeking to describe the preamble to revolution. In fact, this other form of profound anxiety occurred in the midst of the destructive chaos which the so-called Cultural Revolution involved—in a sense of it becoming an anti-cultural militant extremism that was not at all a preamble to further revolution, but the indication of a profoundly principled destructive-

⁴⁸ This author has addressed this theme in the context of an essay honoring the scholarship of the internationally recognized German sinologist, Wolfgang Kubin. See Lauren F. Pfister, "Brothers in the Spirit," in *Zurück zur Freude. Studien zur chinesischen Literatur und Lebenswelt und ihrer Rezeption in Ost und West. Festschrift für Wolfgang Kubin*, eds. Marc Hermann, Christian Schwermann, and Jari Grosse-Ruyken (Nettetal: Steyler Verlag, 2007), 55–82.

ness promoted under the ideological hammer of a “cultural” purification of the initial revolutionary stream of energy.

4. The “freedom” of the Christian form of “spiritual revolution” is a freedom from sin to become a “new person,” a “new human” in the Spirit of Christ.

If there was one theme that united all three missionary-scholars’ works in Chinese, it would be this theme. Each of Legge’s tracts addresses some aspect of spiritual rebellion or negligence before the Living God; Faber’s book addresses the question of governmental crimes and private sins in a chapter dealing with the “authority of the true way,” where he speaks of the repentance of some criminals and clemency that might be given to them by the ruler, using this as an analogy for how persons stand in the presence of the Supreme Lord (shangdi 上帝).⁴⁹ While Martin did not focus extensively on the problem of sin, he dedicated at least four chapters to the process of the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus Christ that made salvation possible, and the role of the Holy Spirit and faith in actualizing that possibility in the renewed lives of Christian believers.⁵⁰

5. Christian institutionalization works in a different pattern from that of a military revolution.

Rather than simply rejecting the past indigenous teachings in principle, these missionary-scholars selectively affirmed aspects of Ruist teachings and traditions, as already illustrated above.

6. There were/are universal claims presented by Christian missionaries to Chinese persons, clearly found in their Qing dynasty publications.

Clearly these were related to the revelations of the Supreme Lord offered to all peoples from all nations, and described explicitly in these

⁴⁹ Consult Hua, *Zi Xi cu Dong* 2: chapter 27, 84–88.

⁵⁰ See Ding, *Tiandao suyuan*, part 3, chapter 3–8, 49 recto–70 recto.

terms. These were the main themes adopted in the first and second book of Martin's *Evidences of Christianity*, the first dealing with various proofs for the existence of the supreme deity, and the second offering various arguments for the authority of the Christian Scriptures, all of which were appealing by means of universal claims. For his part, Faber argued for the value of public laws (*gongfa* 公法), claiming that they would bring in the new modern age of the Great Unity (*datong* 大同). These were in his words the "public laws of all countries" (*wanguo gongfa* 萬國公法).⁵¹

7. There are holidays related to the "spiritual revolution" which Protestant missionaries sought to institutionalize.

It is unquestionable that a new "Sabbath culture" was created among the Protestant Chinese communities. So it is not surprising to find that in Faber's work, in the fifth part devoted to "faith" (*xin* 信), there is a chapter describing "maintaining the Sabbath meeting" (*quanshou anxi hui* 勸守安息會).⁵² Though other Christian holidays might have been mentioned—such as Christmas and Easter holidays—none of the works we have consulted in this paper do so.

8. The eschatologies of military revolutions and Protestant spiritual revolution varied greatly.

Questions related to eternal life were mentioned only briefly in Legge's tracts, particularly in the ones on the Prodigal Son and Daniel's friends. More lengthy discussions of divine righteousness and the impact of salvation were presented at the end of the second part of Faber's work and in the whole of the second part of Martin's work.

⁵¹ As discussed in Hua, *Zi Xi cu Dong* 2: chapter 29, 91–95.

⁵² As found in Hua, *Zi Xi cu Dong* 5: chapter 67, 235–237.

VII. CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

What we have sought to do by this lengthy article is to elaborate what constituted the nature of the Protestant spiritual revolution which James Legge wrote about in 1877, and then to apply what had been learned to specific texts produced in Chinese by Legge himself, as well as the German missionary-scholar, Ernst Faber, and the independent missionary and Qing dynasty translation official, W. A. P. Martin. Though Legge himself was not a specialist in the study of military revolutions, he sought to use this imagery as a metaphor for the work he pursued for more than thirty years as an “agent” of the London Missionary Society in Hong Kong. Taking his metaphor as a conceptual challenge, we have sought to apply later studies of military revolutions by Eugen Rosenstock-Huussy to assist us in understanding the commonalities between military and spiritual revolutions, and to pinpoint those realms where the two forms of revolution clearly are distinct. On this basis, then, we have systematically sought to link up the features of the Protestant revolution we have described by this means to themes found in five works written and published in Chinese by Legge, Faber, and Martin. Notably, we find a great consistency between our 21st century meditations on the nature of spiritual revolution and the content of those 19th century Christian works in Chinese.

It is not without consequence that the nature of the Protestant spiritual revolution is generally more at odds with military revolution than it is consonant with it. What this may suggest is that any simple linkage of Protestant missionary methods with some form of “cultural imperialism” should be more carefully analyzed, since the militant forcefulness of political revolutions asserts methods that are generally diametrically opposed to the spiritual revolution promoted by “meekness and lowliness of heart.” Nevertheless, where these spiritual virtues are lacking in missionary history in China and elsewhere, it would be right to criticize those who have acted with values and attitudes which do not reflect the character of the Protestant spiritual revolution which Legge insisted should be the concern of those who served as foreign missionaries in the last decades of the Qing empire. Certainly there have been cases where foreign missionaries were compromised in precisely this manner, but they were far fewer than any Marxist critique or colonialist analysis might imagine.

This being the case, it is hoped that this study could help scholars consider more carefully and precisely the nature of the cross-cultural character of Protestant missions, and so also offer new insights into various aspects of this phenomenon which James Legge described as a “revolution of a people’s religion,” and what we here have referred to as “spiritual revolution.”