religions

MDPI

Article

Narratives of Religious Landscape: Reading Gender and Chinese Buddhism in the Travel Writing of Christian Women

Anne Baycroft

Department of History, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, SK S7N4L3, Canada; anne.baycroft@usask.ca

Abstract: This article explores the narrative descriptions of the Chinese religious landscape embedded within nineteenth century Christian missionary writings. I demonstrate the potential use of Protestant missionary writings as sources in the academic study of religion in China for both the physical descriptions of religious places that they contain and the narratives they express regarding the religious activities and identities of Chinese women. Of particular interest to this study are the religious encounters experienced between Christian and Buddhist women. My analysis of the travel writings of three Protestant women, Eliza Bridgeman (1805–1871), Helen Nevius (1833–1910), and Isabelle Williamson (d. 1886), illustrates that Chinese women were highly active within sacred spaces across China. This article contributes to discourses on the history of women and Chinese Buddhism, offers historiographical insights into the origins of Western academic studies of Buddhism in China, and provides alternate source material for information about religious continuity and change in early modern China.

Keywords: protestant missionaries; travel writing; missionary writings; Chinese Buddhism; Chinese religion; early modern China; women; religious landscape; narrative

Citation: Baycroft, Anne. 2022. Narratives of Religious Landscape: Reading Gender and Chinese Buddhism in the Travel Writing of Christian Women. *Religions* 13: 1062. https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13111062

Academic Editor: Mark Berkson

Received: 5 October 2022
Accepted: 31 October 2022
Published: 4 November 2022

Publisher's Note: MDPI stays neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

Copyright: © 2022 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

1. Introduction

In 1859, American Protestant missionary Helen Nevius (1833–1910) and her husband Rev. John Nevius (1829–1893) left Ningbo 寧波 to establish a mission station in the city of Hangzhou 杭州. While the terms of the Treaty of Tianjin 天津條約 would not be ratified until 1860, which formally ended the Second Opium War, Nevius and her husband entered Hangzhou having no legal right to reside within the city. Some four miles from the city walls, Helen and John were granted lodging in a "old monastery" by the abbot who lived there (Nevius 1869, p. 135). This lodging was at the foot of the Liuhe Pagoda 六和塔 (Romanianized by Nevius as "Loh-o-tah"), which Nevius describes as "a most interesting object" (p. 140). Aside from the appearance of the pagoda, its lofty height, internal staircase, and ancient brick façade, Nevius explains that, on the day of their arrival in April, the pagoda was occupied by "crowds of worshippers; many of whom remained throughout the night, chanting, beating drums, and making prostrations. I noticed that the women here seemed particularly devout" (p. 141). Nevius' observation about the ritual activity happening within a marked Buddhist space, particularly with reference to the presence and religiosity of women—as this article shows—was a common narrative scene described within the travel writings and journals of Protestant missionary women.

The personal writings of missionaries who lived in China during the nineteenth century offer an intimate and informative source of information about the religious activities of Chinese women. By taking a ritual-focused approach to these sources, this article explores the exemplary nuance of the Chinese religious landscape embedded within nineteenth century missionary writings.[1] Below, I introduce the writings of three missionary women, Eliza Bridgeman (1805–1871), Helen Nevius, and Isabelle Williamson (d. 1886).[2] I have chosen the travel writing of these three women for several reasons. First, for the commonality these women share and second for the 'pioneering' nature of their lived experience.

Bridgeman, Nevius, and Williamson were some of the first Protestant women to arrive in China during the nineteenth century. Their accounts represent the first perspectives on China published by Christian women. Their writing spans the five decades between 1840 to 1880, a period when the total number of married Protestant missionary women in China totaled less than twenty (Lobenstine et al. 1917). As a result, these women played a foundational role in the establishment of churches and schools within their respective mission fields. Eliza Bridgman established the first Protestant school for girls in Shanghai in 1850 (Bridegman 1853, p. 148). Helen Nevius' linguistic knowledge allowed her to write and publish vernacular language educational materials that were used extensively throughout missionary schools. Her most popular work was the Mandarin language Catechism *Yesujiao guanhua wenda* 耶穌教官話問答 (Nevius 1863), which was reprinted and used within missionary schools for decades following its initial publication (Hyatt 1976, p. 79). Williamson's *Old Highways in China* (1884) has maintained its relevance as a unique source of historical information about China. It was republished in 2010 as part of the Cambridge Library Collection on Travel and Exploration in Asia. I have chosen the written accounts of these three women because each travelled outside of their designated mission station and wrote prolifically about this experience.

Their recorded descriptions of Chinese women and religion came through witnessed observations and intimate conversations. Through immersion and the help of hired language teachers, these women learned to speak and write local Chinese dialects. Barred from formal preaching, women contributed to the mission cause of conversion by entering domestic and often segregated gendered spaces. Their personal writings are a rich source of information, yet their voices remain underutilized. Some, like Helen Nevius, took the time to document the religious spaces and ritual expressions she encountered. The analysis of missionary writings I present below illustrates that women were highly active within sacred spaces across China during the mid to late nineteenth century. A broader goal of this study is to outline the ways that Christian missionary writings can inform the academic study of Chinese religion. This work contributes to the growing scholarship re-examining the role of Christian missionaries within China's early modernization, and utilizes this history to inform our knowledge of both missionary and Chinese Christian identities (Ho 2022; Wu 2016; Barrett 2005; Reinders 2004; Yang 2004; Girardot 2002; Dunch 2001). Studies like Lutz (2010) and Ma Cheng (2010), which explore the rich lives of American and Chinese Christian women, highlight the difficulty in finding primary source material about these women.

Missionary writings are useful to the academic study of religion in China for two reasons. First, these writings describe the physical state of sacred sites across China. The locations of temples, monasteries, and graveyards described in these writings inform our knowledge of China's religious landscape and fill in gaps in knowledge about the destruction, continuation, or revival of these spaces over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Johnson 2017; Katz 2014; Goossaert and Palmer 2010). Second, missionary accounts often describe the ritual activities of the people (both lay and ordained) who inhabited these religious spaces. While analyses of the writings and works of individual male missionaries or mission communities are common (Sun 2018; Kaiser 2016; Harrison 2013; Scott 2010; Tan 2010; J. T. P. Lai 2012; Thelle 2006; Dunch 2001; Su 2000), little attention is given to the writing of missionary women in China (Lin 2011; Vaughn Cross 2012). My presentation of the narratives of Bridgeman, Nevius and Williamson draws attention to the unique contribution missionary writings offer in expanding narratives of the religious and ritual lives of Chinese women during the nineteenth century. These accounts are valuable for the information they reveal regarding the actions of monks, nuns, pilgrims, and temple visitors within religious spaces across China. The journals and travel writings of Protestant missionary women demonstrate that they were acutely aware of the bodily and ritual activities of many Chinese people.

2. Women's Narratives of People and Place

2.1. Daughters of China (1853)

Eliza Bridgeman, an educator and advocate for women's education, published *Daughters of China* with the hope of introducing the women of China and America to one another. Bridgeman left America for China in 1844 and after one hundred and thirty-one days at sea, she arrived in Hong Kong 香港 on the 24th of April (Bridegman 1853, pp. 11–13). Her account, with the express purpose of introducing the reader to Chinese women, is a wealth of information. She recounts the dress and attitudes of the varying classes of women she encounters and describes the physical gendered spaces or "inner apartments" of the Chinese lady (p. 20). The nature of her work as a principal and founder of the first Protestant mission school for girls in Shanghai (Anderson 1999, p. 87), as well as her marriage to pioneering American missionary Elijah Coleman Bridgeman (1801–1861), brought her into intimate contact with Chinese people of varying backgrounds.

Shortly after her arrival, Bridgeman walked the suburban streets outside the walls of Canton (Guangzhou 廣州) and witnessed the blurred lines between commercial and religious space of the "Ningpo Exchange," a "large and massive structure" containing "apartments devoted to business, to [Chinese merchants] their meals, and to the worship of the Buddha" (Bridegman 1853, p. 16). She also travelled to more defined religious spaces, such as her visit to "Haichwang" temple (Hoi Tong Temple 海幢寺) on the island of Henan [Haizhu District 海珠区] off the coast of Guangzhou. Here, she witnessed the ritual ceremony of twenty-two Buddhist priests "performing their evening vespers" and describes the men's chanting and prostrations in front of the "three large and splendid idols" of the past, present, and future Buddha (pp. 41–43). Bridgeman and her husband eventually settled in Shanghai and from there she often accompanied her husband as he traveled to communities outside the city to distribute Christian literature. One such excursion brought her to Tianma Shan 天馬山, the mountainous region located (at that time) some twenty miles from Shanghai 上海. Bridgeman describes the scene as follows:

> After a long, but pleasant walk, crossing several little bridges over the canals, we reached the foot of the Tian-ma-Shan, or heavenly horse mountain, and commence the ascent. We were followed by a crowd of people . . . . On this hill there are two temples, one about halfway up, and the other at the summit. There is also a leaning pagoda, very ancient in its appearance . . . . We then continued the ascent, and were glad on reaching the top, to seat ourselves in the outer court of the temple and partake of some tea, brought by a priest of Buddha . . . . Before us was spread a cultivated plain of great extent, crossed by canals and serpentine foot paths, dotted here and there with little groves of trees, enclosed by a bamboo fence. These were cemeteries for the dead. On the right and left were thickly settled villages. Far in the distance was to be seen the city of Sung-kiang-foo [Songjiang 松江], which was marked by its pagodas. (pp. 143–45)

Bridgeman's narrative presents us with descriptive information that contributes to narratives of religious continuity in China. The "leaning pagoda" she mentions is the Huzhu Pagoda 護珠塔, which sits today on the west side of Tianma Shan Park 天馬山公园 in the Songjian district of Shanghai. While some of these landmarks, like the Huzhu pagoda and the Songjiang Square Pagoda 松江方塔, remain today, Bridgeman's locations of cemeteries mark sacred sites that are no longer identifiable on a modern map.

In addition, her writing offers perspectives on the customs, dress, and cultures of the Chinese women she meets. She explores the etiquette of the Chinese lady when she describes the home and hospitality of Mrs. Pawn, wife of salt merchant Pawn Tingkwa (pp. 22–27). Bridgeman dedicates chapters to the discussions of Chinese women and describes their social status, marriage rituals, and lack of education, though her narrative is empathetic. The information she presents about Mrs. Pawn and other Chinese women comes from the conversations they share. Because most Chinese women were illiterate, missionaries engaged in conversation as a means of educating women about Christianity. Interestingly, of all the women Bridgeman met during her time in China, only one was lit-

erate. "To-day we were much gratified with a visit from a Chinese lady, who knows both how to read and write. She is a widow, about forty years of age, and supports herself by teaching a little school, of twelve or fourteen pupils, near the city. She is the first woman we have met who is able to read. Several Christian books were put into her hands by my husband, which she read fluently. She professes the Buddhistic faith" (p. 158). Though brief, this exchange reveals information about the literacy and self-sufficiency of women who practiced Buddhism, a sentiment reiterated by her fellow missionary writers.

2.2. Our Life in China (1869)

American Presbyterian Helen Nevius and her husband John (1829–1893) left Boston harbor in September of 1853 and arrived in Ningbo the following year. *Our Life in China* journals the experiences Nevius underwent establishing missionary schools and church organizations within Ningbo and later Hangzhou. Her work brought her face-to-face with other women and her journal, like Bridgeman's, provides an intimate narrative of Chinese women and highlights their practice of Chinese religion on a common and localized level. On visiting the homes of Chinese women in Ningbo, Nevius wrote that she was "very kindly received, and listened to with attention" when paying visits to talk with both women of the "poorer classes" and "women in the more respectable and influential families" (Nevius 1869, pp. 33–35). However, it was older women that drew Nevius attention for their devout religious dispositions. Describing one such woman, she writes:

> One old woman, with whom I frequently exchanged visits, was the type of a numerous class in China. She was a strict religionist, and as perfect a Pharisee as I ever met. She was so complacent and self-satisfied that it seemed impossible to make any impression upon her. She had fasted from animal food for eighteen years; has spent much time and money in worshipping in the temples; and in various ways had accumulated a great store of merit for the future world. I remember on one occasion . . . we were talking of sin, of the evils of our own natures, etc. "No, no!" she exclaimed, "my heart is not sinful. It is perfectly pure and clean,—as white as snow . . . ." Speaking of the transmigration of souls, she said, "That must be so, or where would all the people constantly being born into the world get their souls from?" (p. 36)

Personal exchanges of religious thought between Chinese and missionary women, like this woman, are a valuable glimpse into the dynamic of women's religious dialogue. This notion of older Chinese women being devout in their religious practice is a reoccurring theme within Nevius' writing, no doubt because she encountered numerous women like the one described above. She explains that "Women in China, as elsewhere, are more religiously disposed than are men, and constitute, by far, the largest proportion of worshippers usually seen in Buddhist temples. Most of them are somewhat advanced in years. The more active duties and enjoyments of life are past, and the future, with its dreaded uncertainties, forces itself upon their attention" (p. 55). The tone of her description shifts, however, when she describes the temples and ritual activities of Buddhist monks.

Like many other missionaries, Nevius experienced bouts of ill health while living in China and spent time vacationing in the countryside hoping to "benefit from the purer air" (p. 44). In the late 1850s, she retired to the renowned Buddhist mountain and pilgrimage site of Putuoshan 普陀山 with the hope of alleviating her illness. In her first impression of Putuoshan, Nevius writes that "it is more than eight hundred years since this island was first devoted to religious purposes; and some of the buildings were constructed at that time. Others again are of much more recent date, but all, even the newest, have a dilapidated, faded appearance, which indicates a great falling off in resources" (p. 46). While she notes the island's history of imperial patronage and describes the large marble tablets gifted by Emperor Kangxi 康熙, (r. 1661–1722) over a century earlier, Nevius perceives the decrepit sate of Putuoshan's temples to be a result of the resident monastics' incompetence. She explains "[t]here are numerous other buildings [on the island], -some used as temples for the idols, and some as sleeping places for the lazy stupid priests, who doze away their

lives in this pretty retreat. Had they any spark of energy or ambition, they would make some effort to rescue these buildings from the decay and ruin in which we now find them" (p. 47).

We are made aware by Nevius that the prestige of the past is no longer felt in the temples at Putuoshan. It is a common theme throughout missionary writings to perceive the decline and disrepair of religious buildings, temples, or shrines as the result of a flawed religious system. The perceived past glory and current ruin and neglect of Putuoshan is indicative of a very Protestant notion of "religion". It is alluded to that government neglect is a result of an overall decline in Buddhist patronage, which is made evident by the low number of resident monastics. This narrative is perpetuated in Nevius' writing despite the clear evidence that older Chinese women were constantly found occupying Buddhist space. However, as I discuss below, not all Buddhist pilgrimage sites were perceived in the same light.

2.3. Old Highways in China (1884)

Another female author of note is Isabelle Williamson (d. 1886), a member of the London Missionary Society and wife of Scottish Protestant missionary Alexander Williamson (1829–1890). By 1864, the couple settled in Yantai 煙臺 (Chefoo), Shandong province 山東. Her writing details her life in Shandong and her travels in northern China accompanying her husband as he preached and disseminated Christian literature. Williamson explains that after becoming familiar with the language and the "habits and etiquette of the women" of Shandong she embarked on four journeys through China (in 1873, 1875, 1881, and 1882), which are retold within *Old Highways in China*. Her writing describes the numerous social situations in which she encounters Chinese women of varying station and class. Like Bridgeman and Nevius, Williamson took notice of the place and actions of women within the domestic and public sphere. Her narrative reiterates the fact that women were active participants across the Chinese religious and economic landscape.

On an excursion outside the city of Laizhou 莱州, Williamson encountered the colorful scene of a small-town market. The liveliness she depicts is intricately related to the town's temple and the activities of women. She writes:

> Next morning we came to a small town where a genuine county fair was going on. I was astonished to see so many women buying and selling. There were charred and wrinkled forms of womankind, also middle-aged peasant women, and a small portion of young women . . . . At the entrance to the town is a lovely little temple built on a height. The temple is like a miniature palace . . . the square in front of this temple a noisy market was being held, a genuine small county fair.
>
> The flight of steps which led up to the idol shrine had been taken possession of by the women. On the lowest step sat a rather pretty woman about twenty-four years of age displaying for sale a fine black fowl . . . . Higher up the step leading to the shrine eggs were placed in baskets of all sizes and salted eggs in great abundance, carefully guarded by old crones. (Williamson 1884, pp. 66–67)

The name of this shrine or its idol remains unknown to the reader. It was most likely dedicated to a local deity and served as a City God temple or ancestral shrine. Bridgeman's lack of identifying information leads me to believe that this shrine was not overtly identifiable as Buddhist or Daoist. This ambiguity in the classification of sacred spaces is found again in a later experience described by Williamson.

Williamson travelled further afield from the coast of Shandong, and spent significant time around the capital city of Jinan 濟南 where women's activities were witnessed with greater religious dedication. "In our ten days' stay" she writes, "we had seen hundreds of its [the city's] women, and found them exceedingly devout, in the way. There were many fine, matronly women who had for twenty or more years scarcely missed attending the temples at the new and the full moon, the first and the fifteenth of the Chinese months . . . . I found women who eagerly upheld their idols, and even among themselves were emphatic on the merits of a favourite shrine" (pp. 170–71). South of Jinan, Williamson visited the

famed historical site of Mount Tai (Taishan 泰山). She recounts the imperial patronage and long history of the mountain as a sight of worship and pilgrimage. Of interest to me is her description of a visit she paid to a nunnery during her descent from the mountain peak:

> By the side of a brawling stream we came down, and finally the coolies deposited me at the door of a pretty temple. Out came three or four of the occupants, each smoking a long pipe. They escorted me in after a fashion that took my companions by surprise. But the explanation was simple: the place was a nunnery, and they were nuns, dressed in every way like priests, and with large feet. "North Pole Queen" was the name of this temple or nunnery.
>
> . . . A most romantic spot these nuns had chosen, and they had a most comfortable home. They were intelligent women, and gave me a graphic description of the great temple in Tai-ngan-foo [Tai'an 泰安] of which we have spoken. Temple after temple on the hill had fallen to decay; but they were always rebuilt at an enormous expense. The imperial treasury was always ready with grants of money. Only recently the whole place had undergone repair.
>
> These bright and lively nuns claimed kin with me, for had we not the same large feet and were we not living to help our fellow creatures? The eldest, who was a scholar, and who enjoyed the fun of my making Chinese quotations, declared that I ought to come and live with them and teach the pilgrims. They told me they got very large sums of money, and they beautified the temple with it. Rich ladies often came to stay with them during the pilgrimage time. (pp. 185–86)

Mount Tai has an extensive history as a site of imperial ritual sacrifice, and is a sacred center of Daoist and Buddhist worship. Again, Williamson does not provide much identifying information about this 'nunnery' aside from her translation of its name. It is most likely that 'North Pole Queen' refers to the Daoist temple Doumugong 斗母宫 [the Palace of the Mother of the Big Dipper]. This temple site, and Williamson's nondescript classification of it, speaks to the specific religious environment of Mount Tai in particular, and of China in general. As Claudia Wenzel recently argued, Mount Tai has had a long history of housing both Buddhist and Daoist practitioners, including Buddhist nuns, however it remains unclear if the nuns Williamson befriended were Buddhist (Wenzel 2022). Nonetheless, the site exemplifies the fluidity of China's religious landscape and Williamson's description illustrates the varied activities of women within these spaces.

Williamson's account demonstrates the gendered dynamic of Chinese sacred space. Her identity as a woman granted her entrance into the home of these nuns and elicited immediate comradery with them—a space closed off from her male counterparts. In less formal sacred spaces, like the local town ancestral temple, women were active participants in seemingly non-religious behaviors, such as selling goods on the temple steps. By surveying multiple accounts of missionary women, we begin to see how religious spaces across China existed on a spectrum of marked imperial patronage and upkeep. The nunnery at Mount Tai described by Williamson as "pretty" and "romantic" contrasts greatly to the "dilapidated" and "faded" appearance of the Buddhist temples of Putuoshan described by Nevius. Surveys of the accounts of missionary women contribute to a narrative of Chinese religion that highlights regional variation, economic status, and cultural difference, but nonetheless illustrates a prominent ritual devotion of Chinese women. Yet, missionary women's narratives of Chinese religion remain overlooked within the academic study of religion.

3. Missionary Writings in the Academic Study of Religion

The writings and publications of Protestant missionary men are foundational to the field of sinology and religious studies. The historiography of these academic traditions traces back to the foundational work of theologically trained men, like James Legge (1815–1897), Joseph Edkins (1823–1905), and Samuel Wells Williams (1812–1884), whose writings and teachings on Chinese religion and culture played a formative role in the foun-

dation of Chinese studies within Western academia. James Legge's textual translations,[3] S. W. Williams' (1848) *The Middle Kingdom*, and numerous works by Joseph Edkins[4] were demonstrably influential. The published work of these male authors was widely read and circulated among their Protestant missionary peers who sought to inform their own knowledge of Chinese religion through linguistic studies and classical Chinese texts. The reach of these men's sinological and philological scholarship far surpassed the audiences of fellow foreign missionaries. The popular accounts of Chinese culture and religion they produced permeated Western educational institutions. James Legge eventually became the first Professor of Chinese at Oxford, Williams became the first professor of Chinese language at Yale, and Joseph Edkins' prolific publications found wide circulation and influence among both English and Chinese audiences.[5]

The scholarly works of these men are thus intricately connected to Western academic traditions, yet not all missionary publications forged a place within the sphere of academic influence. For example, many Protestant women wrote and published for both a Chinese and English reading audience, yet these publications did not receive the same academic accolades as their male counterparts.[6] While some scholars are beginning to explore the role of Protestant publications for Chinese women (Dunch 2009) and bridge the gaps between gender studies and religious studies (Kang 2017), there is a lack of particular focus on missionary women as authors and sources of historical information about Chinese religion, ritual, and culture. One reason for the neglected use of missionary sources within contemporary scholarship is the difficulty in reading through moral judgments and cultural prejudice. However, Eric Reinders (2004) explains that the prejudice of missionaries towards Chinese people was largely rooted in missionaries' linguistic limitations. Without a shared language, the body became the main means for which missionaries learned about Chinese people and religion, simply because the body is more apparent and easily understood than the mind. Despite the obvious motivational bias and orientalist ignorance of these authors, missionary writings are an extremely powerful resource because of the blatant bodily observations they possess. As Reinders explains, "[w]hile the rational mind of the Other may not be evident, their bodies apparently are. Bodies are more immediately perceivable to any foreigner fresh off the boat. This sense of immediacy is still a fantasy: the foreign body is ultimately no more and no less inscrutable than the mind. However, because bodies are apparently and relatively immediate to visual perception, representations of the human body become crucial depictions of the foreign, carrying potent messages about the foreigner's culture" (Reinders 2004, p. 15). The inherent value of missionary observations can be found in the "immediacy" of what these writings tell us (Barrett 2005, p. 521). Missionaries wrote what they saw, and what they saw often contradicted pre-existing academic claims about Chinese Buddhism. The immediate focus of some missionaries, most notably women, came to fall upon bodies, on the physical actions, practices, and rituals performed by individuals within religious spaces. The written accounts of missionary men and women that methodologically identify religion through the ritual actions of Chinese people, as opposed to textual analysis of doctrine, remain absent from religious historiography.

4. Protestant Presuppositions

The neglect of female missionary voices as sources of information within the burgeoning field of religious studies in the nineteenth century may in large part be a result of what Gregory Schopen (1991) so poignantly addressed within "Archaeology and Protestant Presuppositions in the Study of Indian Buddhism". Schopen makes the case that the preference of claiming religious legitimacy and truth within textual source material versus archeological evidence has led to a misrepresentation of Indian Buddhism. The ideological changes brought about by the Protestant reformation, as Schopen argues, did not "allow actual religious practice to have any meaningful place in defining the nature of 'true religion'" (Schopen 1991, p. 21). The ramifications of this change have been felt throughout the historical development of the field of religious studies, and on academic definitions

of "religion" itself.[7] For Protestant missionaries, especially those with a theological education, rationality was evident in the written word and the perceived authority of sacred text. Protestant dispositions toward textual rationality over other forms of religious practice, such as ritual, is deeply rooted in the very origins of Protestantism.

Martin Luther's (1483–1546) revolutionary Ninety-Five Theses, as Lyndal Roper explains, "began from an Augustinian understanding of the nature of penance, and of human beings and all their actions as fundamentally sinful. Dour as this anthropology might seem, it was liberating for Luther, because if all our actions are inherently sinful then we cannot strive to reach perfection by doing works, such as fasting, saying prayers, or hearing masses" (Roper 2015, p. 45). Luther's theses demonstrated a clear criticism of the misplaced authority given to the efficacy of ritual or acts of penance. The currents of his criticism against ritual can be felt in Protestant accounts of Chinese religion. Protestant presuppositions influenced the identification of religious authority in Indian—and by extension Chinese—Buddhism within academic circles. However, as I have illustrated above, inherent presuppositions do not mean that missionary writings are devoid of critical information about the religious lives of Chinese people; rather, the opposite is true. Missionary women took an almost exclusive look at the ritual activities of Chinese men and women.

Western academics have awarded preference to the religious knowledge of missionary men, which in turn has perpetuated presuppositions that lead to false (and sometime lasting) narratives. Examples of this are particularly rampant within the academic study of Buddhism. This issue is explored by Tarocco (2007, pp. 7–11) who argues that the negative images of Buddhism perpetuated within Western academia, such as Joseph Edkins' claim of Buddhism's loss of "proselytizing power" at the hand of Christianity, perpetuated themes of a Buddhist decline in China. Edkins' view is called into further question when we consider the perspective of Chinese women's religious practices present within the writing of missionary women. The examples I have discussed above reveal that missionary women were highly attuned to recognizing the religiosity of Chinese women through their religious or ritual activity. Oftentimes, the religious denominations of the people and sacred spaces described by female authors alludes our clear identification. By comparison, their male counterparts like Legge and Edkins work diligently to identify, define, and classify Chinese religions in a systematic way, and speak of Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism as historically, doctrinally, and theologically different. Yet on the ground in China, these so-called religious traditions are witnessed as practically congruent.

Female authors were more inclined to identify Chinese religion through individual expression or ritual activity, while male accounts often apply Western methods of textual and doctrinal study to identify Chinese religion. The result of a doctrinal focus over religious practice led male authors, like William A. P. Martin (1827–1916), to grapple with the alleged incompatibility of Chinese religion despite the clear fluidity of religious practice. He writes:

> Logically the three are irreconcilable, the Taoist being materialism, the Buddhist idealism, and the Confucian essentially ethical. Yet the people, like the state, make of them a unit by swallowing portions of each. In ordinary their lives are regulated by Confucian forms, in sickness they call in Taoist priests . . . and at funerals they have Buddhist priests . . . Besides the women and the priesthood the two sects last named have very few professed adherents, though the whole nation is more or less tinged by them. (Martin 1900, p. 289)

Martin held great influence in China among his missionary and Chinese colleagues as a result of his translation work, employment as an advisor to Chinese officials, and appointment as president of the Imperial University of Peking (Covell 1993, pp. 28–31). At the time, Martin was perceived as an American authority on China. His perspective on Chinese religion was perpetuated through his popular book *The Cycle of Cathay* (1900). As the quotation above shows, Martin presented a narrative of Buddhism and Daoism as having "very few professed adherents" despite his clear recognition of the religious devotion of Chinese women. Men like Edkins and Martin presented an authoritative voice

on Chinese religion which has had a lasting impact upon the academic study of religion and contributed to the erasure of women from the historical narrative. This is an issue that has been taken up by scholars like T. H. Barrett, who reasons that the study of Chinese religion in "the English-language world sustained a description of religion in China that was at very considerable variance with the facts" (Barrett 2005, p. 509). However, we should not avoid missionary writings because of the disconnect some of these writings have perpetuated. Rather, scholars should reexamine these sources because of the "immediacy" they offer. How much more so is the case within the narrative accounts of missionary women?

5. Contemporary Sketches of Missionary Women

Contemporary engagements with missionary writings, and the journals of missionary women, follow the precedent set by Fairbank and Barnett who illustrated the profound influence missionary writers had in "transmitting images of China to the West while also shaping Chinese views of the outside world" (Fairbank and Barnett 1985, p. 4). Missionaries were a conduit for the transmission of images and ideas between China and the West. The cultural connectivity of the missionary enterprise is a theme thoroughly explored within contemporary scholarship, with special focus being given to the ways missionary enterprise shaped both knowledge and identity within the colony and the metropole.[8] Despite the admirable results of recent scholarship on gender and Chinese religion (Kang 2017; Lutz 2010; Dunch 2009), what remains undervalued are the personal accounts, journals, and diaries missionary women produced. If, as this scholarship suggests, missionary women benefited directly from evangelical Protestantism's "social gospel" to the extent that they held influence and agency within missionary institutions both home and abroad, why do their written accounts and personal histories not find the same notoriety as their male counterparts? As I have demonstrated above, missionary women in China—women like Bridgeman, Nevius, and Williamson—wrote and published their own accounts of Chinese religion and culture. The type of social welfare and educational work available to them gave these women access into areas of Chinese social life that foreign men were not privy to.

An additional layer of analysis can be found when we acknowledge the relationships between missionary and Chinese women and how those relationships were the result of a gendered religious dialogue. The religious knowledge exchanged between Christian and Buddhist communities in East Asia during the nineteenth century is predominantly male knowledge. This is evident within the preferential status given to men like Henry Olcott (1832–1907) and Timothy Richard (1845–1919), who were active participants in the translation of textual sources of Buddhist and Christian knowledge (Nakanishi et al. 2018; P.-c. Lai 2009; Ban 2014). It is clear from the examples above that Christian women were granted access into spaces not accessible to men, which lead to contrasting modes of engagement with Chinese women, and by extension with Chinese religion. Knowledge exchange was not a textual translated affair, rather it was highly individual and intimate. The location and form of Chinese and Western women's religious encounters and transfer of knowledge warrant greater attention.

6. Conclusions

My aim in highlighting the narratives of Eliza Bridgeman, Helen Nevius, and Isabelle Williamson has been to show the value of these writings as primary sources of information. The travel writings of Buddhist missionary pilgrims of the past like *The Record of a Pilgrimage to China in Search of the Law* (Nittō guhō junrei gyōki 入唐求法巡禮行記) by the Japanese monks Ennin 圓仁 (793–864) and the later biography of Chōnen 奝然 (938–1016) in *Biographies of Eminent Monks of the Eastern Country* (Tōgoku kōsōden 東國高僧, comp. 1688) have long been used as primary sources in the study of the religious and social landscape of China from the Tang and Song dynasty. Missionary travel writings offer a similar function. Their accounts contain information about the location and existence of sacred spaces in China. The physical locations of temples described in these writings can be used to in-

form our knowledge of China's religious landscape and fill in gaps in knowledge about the location and existence of sacred sites that were destroyed, neglected, or sustained and maintained throughout time. It would be advantageous to bring missionary accounts into geo-spacial research of growing significance within the fields of Chinese history and Buddhist studies.[9]

Moreover, the studies of missionary women's travel writings need to engage with pre-existing scholarship on Chinese women and religion. A wealth of Chinese and English language scholarship focused on Chinese women in Buddhism and Daoism in premodern China (Grant 2008) exists, yet, as Kang argues, our picture of "modern Chinese religious life . . . is a predominantly masculine picture in which women either were missing or peripheral in elite discussions then, and the scholarly coverage now" (Kang 2017, p. 8). Chinese women were not peripheral within religious spaces, and the written accounts of Bridgeman, Nevius, and Williamson prove this. The narratives of missionary women can inform knowledge of women's history in modern Buddhism and missionary women's writings can help recenter gender within this religious scholarship.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: Not applicable.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

Notes

1. My focus on ritual and religious activity within this article is informed by the work of Catherine Bell (1992, 1997), as well as recent studies of Chinese religion that purposefully approach modern religion through the ritualistic or performative aspects of contemporary religiosity, such as: (Johnson 2017; Katz 2016; Goossaert 2011; DuBois 2011; Chau 2010).
2. There are a number of memoirs and travel writings by missionary women I have not discussed here, but they are nontheless remarkably valuable. See: (Anderson 1920; Duncan 1902; Guinness 1889; Davies 1901) as well as the prolific travelwriting pertaining to central and west China produced by Mildred Cable and Francesca French, see (Cable and French 1927). These works are published accounts and do not begin to represent the amount of unpublished women's writings housed in archival collections, see (Crouch et al. 1989).
3. Over the course of the 1860s–1870s, Legge translated the Five Classics 五經 of the Confucian canon complete with commentary. See (Legge 1861–1872).
4. Edkins produced a number of studies, grammars, and vocabularies of the Chinese language, which found wide use among missionaries and foreigners seeking to learn Chinese. Edkins' work had a significant influence on western philology and religious studies. See (Edkins 1871, 1880).
5. There is a wealth of English and Chinese language scholarship that explores the intellectual, cultural, and political contributions of these well-known missionary men. For further information on the life and work of James Legge see: (Chow 2022; Girardot 2002; Pfister 1998; Birrell 1999; Wang 2008; Wong 1997). For information on the life and work of Samuel Wells Williams see: (Guan 2018; Yabuki 2017; Chang 2012; F. W. Williams 1888; Bailey 1884). For information on the life and work of Joseph Edkins see: (Eicher 2022; Kilcourse 2020; Orlandi 2019; Bushell 1906).
6. For bibliographic information on the publications of Protestant missionaries in China see: (Wylie 1867, 1876; MacGillivray 1907; Christian Publishers' Association of China 1933). While most authors are male, women's publications are included within these catalogues. Wylie's (1867) biographical sketch of protestant authors includes the names of eleven women who published original or translated Chinese works, this included: Helen Nevius, Sara Jane Holmes (b. 1836), Martha Foster Crawford (1830–1909), Mary Ann Russell (1828–1887), Mary Greenleaf Rankin (1828–1923), Maria Jane Taylor (1837–1870), Lucy Ann Knowlton (1826–1907), Caroline Phebe Keith (1821–1862), Mrs A. B. Cabaniss (birth and death unknown), Mary Cunnyngham (birth and death unknown), and Lydia Mary Fay (1804–1878).
7. My approach to the critical historiographical studies of religion both as a term and academic field is informed by the work of Campany (2003), Smith (2004), and Taylor et al. (1998).
8. Reeves-Ellington et al. (2010) and Semple (2003) focus on the development of missionary women's identity in order to highlight the transnational history of British and American women. The chapters within these two studies contribute to recent trends within missionary studies in the colonial context (Hall 2002; Ramusack 1990; Harries 2007; Hunt 1999; Comaroff and Comaroff 1991) which acknowledges how the missionary enterprise shaped the experiences and identities of missionaries within the col-

onized spaces they worked, as well as the national and social identities of British and Americans in the metropole. The aim of such studies is to explore the transference of knowledge between colonizer and 'other'.

9 This work, to date, includes historical information sourced from Chinese gazetteers, Chinese classical texts, records of eminent Buddhist Monks (*Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳 collections), stone inscriptions and Buddhist temple networks (Hung et al. 2010; Wu et al. 2013; Yan et al. 2020). For GIS database projects centering on Asia and Asian religion see: Harvard's Chinese Historical Graphic Information System ((CHGIS 2022). https://chgis.fas.harvard.edu/ accessed on 3 October 2022); The University of Arizona Centre for Buddhists Studies' Buddhist Geographical Information System ((BGIS 2022). https://cbs.arizona.edu/buddhist-geographical-information-system-bgis accessed 5 October 2022); The Singapore Historical GIS ((Singapore Historical GIS 2022). https://shgis.nus.edu.sg/ accessed on 3 October 2022) and Singapore Biographical Database ((Singapore Biographical Database 2022). https://sbdb.nus.edu.sg/ accessed on 3 October 2022).

References

Anderson, Emma T. 1920. *A'Chu and Other Stories*. Washington, DC: Review & Herald Publishing.

Anderson, Gerald H., ed. 1999. *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions*. Michigan and Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing.

Bailey, James Muhlenberg. 1884. Obituary: Samuel Wells Williams. *Journal of the American Geographical Society of New York* 16: 186–93.

Ban, Bai. 2014. On the boom of English translation of Chinese Buddhist scriptures originated in late Qing Dynasty. *Foreign Language Teaching and Research* 46: 273–81.

Barrett, Timothy H. 2005. Chinese Religion in English Guise: The History of an Illusion. *Modern Asian Studies* 39: 509–33. [CrossRef]

Bell, Catherine. 1992. *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Bell, Catherine. 1997. *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Birrell, Anne M. 1999. James Legge and the Chinese Mythological Tradition. *History of Religions* 38: 331–53. [CrossRef]

Bridgeman, Eliza Jane Gillett. 1853. *Daughters of China: Or, Sketches of Domestic Life in the Celestial Empire*. New York: Robert Carter & Bros.

Buddhist Geographical Information System (BGIS). 2022. Available online: https://cbs.arizona.edu/buddhist-geographical-information-system-bgis (accessed on 5 October 2022).

Bushell, S. W. 1906. Rev. Joseph Edkins, D.D. *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 38: 269–71. [CrossRef]

Cable, Mildred, and Francesca French. 1927. *Through Jade Gate and Central Asia: An Account of Journeys in Kansu, Turkestan and the Gobi Desert*. Edinburgh: Constable & Co., Ltd.

Campany, Robert Ford. 2003. On the Very Idea of Religions (In the Modern West and in Early Medieval China). *History of Religions* 42: 287–319. [CrossRef]

Chang, Ya-mei. 2012. Rewriting Liaozhai Ziyi: Samuel Wells Williams's Constructing of Chinese Literary History with Translating-Editing. *Compilation & Translation Review* 5: 225–45.

Chau, Adam Yuet. 2010. *Religion in Contemporary China: Revitalization and Innovation*. London and New York: Routledge.

Cheng, Ma. 2010. 往日琐事*: 一位美国女传教士的中国记忆 [The Day of Small Things: Chinese Memories of an American Female Missionary]*. Jinan: 山东画报出版社.

China Historical GIS (CHGIS). 2022. Available online: https://chgis.fas.harvard.edu/ (accessed on 3 October 2022).

Chow, Alexander. 2022. *Scottish Missions to China: Commemorating the Legacy of James Legge (1815–1897)*. Leiden: Brill.

Christian Publishers' Association of China. 1933. *Classified Index to the Chinese Literature of the Protestant Christian Churches in China*. Shanghai: Kwang Hsueh Publishing House.

Comaroff, John L., and Jean Comaroff. 1991. *Of Revelation and Revolution, 2: The Dialectics of Modernity on a South African Frontier*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Covell, Ralph R. 1993. God's Footprints in China: W. A. P. Martin and Interfaith Dialogue. *American Presbyterians* 17: 233–42.

Crouch, Archie, Steven Agoratus, Arthur Emerson, and Debra Soled. 1989. *Christianity in China: A Scholar's Guide to Resources in the Libraries and Archives of the United States*. New York: M.E. Sharpe.

Davies, Hannah. 1901. *Among Hills and Valleys in Western China: Incidents of Missionary Work*. London: S.W. Partridge & Co.

DuBois, Thomas David. 2011. *Religion and the Making of Modern East Asia*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Duncan, Annie N. 1902. *City of Springs or Mission Work in Chinchew*. Edinburgh & London: Oliphant Anderson & Ferrier.

Dunch, Ryan. 2009. Christianizing Confucian Didacticism: Protestant Publications for Women, 1832–1911. *NAN NÜ* 11: 65–101. [CrossRef]

Dunch, Ryan. 2001. *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China, 1857–1927*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Edkins, Joseph. 1871. *China's Place in Philology: An Attempt to Show That the Languages of Europe and Asia Have a Common Origin*. London: Tubner & Co.

Edkins, Joseph. 1880. *Chinese Buddhism: A Volume of Sketches, Historical, Descriptive, and Critical*. London: Tubner & Co.

Eicher, Sebastian. 2022. Echoes of Victorian Hellenism in Mid-Nineteenth-Century China: Joseph Edkins' Recurring Column 'Western Literature' (*Xixue Shuo* 西學說) in the Journal *Liuhe Congtan* 六合叢談 (Shanghae Serial). *Annali Di Ca' Foscari. Serie Orientale* 58: 650–71. [CrossRef]

Fairbank, John King, and Suzanne Wilson Barnett, eds. 1985. *Christianity in China: Early Protestant Missionary Writings*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Girardot, Norman J. 2002. *The Victorian Translation of China: James Legge's Oriental Pilgrimage*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Goossaert, Vincent. 2011. The Heavenly Master, Canonization, and the Daoist Construction of Local Religion in Late Imperial Jiangnan. *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 20: 229–45. [CrossRef]

Goossaert, Vincent, and David A. Palmer. 2010. *The Religious Question in Modern China*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Grant, Beata. 2008. Women, Gender, and Religion in Premodern China: A Selected Bibliography of Secondary Sources in Chinese and Western Languages. *Nan Nü* 10: 152–75. [CrossRef]

Guan, Yu. 2018. Review of Selected Works of Samuel Wells Williams. *Journal of Cultural Interaction in East Asia* 9: 113–21.

Guinness, Geraldine. 1889. *In the Far East: Letters from Geraldine Guinness in China*. Edited by Lucy E. Guinness-Kumm. London: Morgan & Scott.

Hall, Catherine. 2002. *Civilising Subjects: Colony and Metropole in the English Imagination, 1830–1867*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Harries, Patrick. 2007. *Butterflies & Barbarians: Swiss Missionaries & Systems of Knowledge in South-East Africa*. Oxford: James Currey.

Harrison, Henrietta. 2013. *The Missionary's Curse and Other Tales from a Chinese Catholic Village*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Ho, Joseph W. 2022. *Developing Mission: Photography, Filmmaking, and American Missionaries in Modern China*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Hung, Jen-Jou, Bingenheimer Marcus, and Wiles Simon. 2010. Digital Texts and GIS: The Interrogation and Coordinated Visualization of Classical Chinese Texts. Paper present at 2010 International Conference On Computer Design and Applications, Qinhuangdao, China, June 25–27. [CrossRef]

Hunt, Nancy Rose. 1999. *A Colonial Lexicon: Of Birth Ritual, Medicalization, and Mobility in the Congo*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Hyatt, Irwin T. 1976. *Our Ordered Lives Confess: Three Nineteenth-Century American Missionaries in East Shantung*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Johnson, Ian. 2017. *The Souls of China: The Return of Religion After Mao*. New York: Vintage Books.

Kaiser, Andrew T. 2016. *The Rushing on of the Purposes of God: Christian Missions in Shanxi Since 1876*. Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers.

Kang, Xiaofei. 2017. Women, Gender and Religion in Modern China, 1900s-1950s: An Introduction. *Nan Nü* 19: 1–27. [CrossRef]

Katz, Paul R. 2014. *Religion in China and Its Modern Fate*. Lebanon and New Haven: Brandies University Press/Historical Society of Israel.

Katz, Paul R. 2016. Religious Life in Western Hunan during the Modern Era: Some Preliminary Observations. *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 25: 181–218. [CrossRef]

Kilcourse, Carl S. 2020. Instructing the Heavenly King: Joseph Edkins' Mission to Correct the Theology of Hong Xiuquan. *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 71: 116–34. [CrossRef]

Lai, John Tsz Pang. 2012. *Negotiating Religious Gaps: The Enterprise of Translating Christian Tracts by Protestant Missionaries in Nineteenth-Century China*. Sankt Augustin: Institut Monumenta Serica.

Lai, Pan-chiu. 2009. Timothy Richard's Buddhist-Christian Studies. *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 29: 23–38. [CrossRef]

Legge, James. 1861–1872. *The Chinese Classics: With a Translation, Critical and Exegetical Notes, Prolegomena, and Copious Indexes*. London: Trubner & Co., 5 vols.

Lin, Meimei 林美玫. 2011. 妇女与差传:19 世纪美国圣公会女传教士在华差传研究 *[Women and Missions: Research on the Missionaries of the American Episcopal Mission in 19th Century China]*. Beijing: 社会科学文献出版社 Social Sciences Literature Press.

Lobenstine, Edwin Carlyle, and The China Continuation Committee, eds. 1917. *The China Mission Year Book*. Shanghai: The Christian Literature Society for China, vol. 8.

Lutz, Jessie Gregory. 2010. *Pioneer Chinese Christian Women: Gender, Christianity, and Social Mobility*. Bethlehem: Lehigh University Press.

MacGillivray, Donald. 1907. *Descriptive and Classified Missionary Centenary Catalogue of Current Christian Literature*. Shanghai: Christian Literature Society.

Martin, William A. P. 1900. *The Cycle of Cathay*. New York: Fleming H. Revell Company.

Nakanishi, Naoki 中西直樹, Eisho Nasu 那須英勝, and Mitsuya Dake 嵩満也, eds. 2018. *Bukkyō Eisho Dendō No Akebono 仏教英書のあけぼの [The Dawn of Buddhist Missionary Documents in English]. Ryūkoku Daigaku Ajia Bukkyō Kenkyū Sōshi 龍谷大学アジア仏教研究叢書 [Ryūkoku University Research Center for Buddhist Cultures in Asia Monograph Series] 3*. Kyoto: Hōzōkan.

Nevius, Helen. 1863. *Yesujiao Guanhua Wenda 耶穌教官話問答 [Christian Catechism in the Mandarin Language]*. Shanghai: American Presbyterian Mission Press.

Nevius, Helen. 1869. *Our Life in China*. New York: Robert Carter and Brothers.

Orlandi, Giorgio. 2019. Joseph Edkins and the 'Discovery' of Early Chinese: The Linguistic Ideas behind the First (Partial) Reconstruction of the Sound System of Early Chinese. *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 29: 519–41. [CrossRef]

Pfister, Lauren F. 1998. The Legacy of James Legge. *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 22: 77–82. [CrossRef]

Ramusack, Barbara. 1990. Cultural Missionaries, Maternal Imperialists, Feminist Allies: British Women Activists in India, 1865-1945. *Women's Studies International Forum* 13: 309–21. [CrossRef]

Reeves-Ellington, Barbara, Kathryn Kish Sklar, Connie Anne Shemo, and Duke University Press. 2010. *Competing Kingdoms Women, Mission, Nation, and the American Protestant Empire, 1812–1960. E-Duke Books Scholarly Collection*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Reinders, Eric. 2004. *Borrowed Gods and Foreign Bodies: Christian Missionaries Imagine Chinese Religion*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Roper, Lyndal. 2015. Martin Luther. In *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Reformation*. Edited by Peter Marshall. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 42–75.

Schopen, Gregory. 1991. Archaeology and Protestant Presuppositions in the Study of Indian Buddhism. *History of Religions* 31: 1–23. [CrossRef]

Scott, Gregory Adam. 2010. The Dharma Through a Glass Darkly: On the Study of Modern Chinese Buddhism Through Protestant Missionary Sources 彷彿對著鏡子觀看的佛法：藉由基督教傳教士的史料研究現代中國佛教. *Shengyan Yanjiu* 聖嚴研究 2: 47–73.

Semple, Rhonda Anne. 2003. *Missionary Women: Gender, Professionalism, and the Victorian Idea of Christian Mission*. Woodbridge, Suffolk and Rochester: Boydell Press.

Singapore Biographical Database. 2022. Available online: https://sbdb.nus.edu.sg/ (accessed on 3 October 2022).

Singapore Historical GIS. 2022. Available online: https://shgis.nus.edu.sg/ (accessed on 3 October 2022).

Smith, Jonathan Z. 2004. *Relating Religion: Essays in the Study of Religion*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Su, Jing 蘇精. 2000. 馬禮遜與中文印刷出版 *[Morrison and Chinese Printing and Publishing]*. Taipei: 臺灣學生書局.

Sun, Yiping. 2018. Research and Commentaries on Buddhism by Norwegian Missionary Karl Ludvig Reichelt. *Hualin International Journal of Buddhist Studies* 1: 142–58. [CrossRef]

Tan, Shulin 谭树林. 2010. 美国传教士伯驾在华活动研究 *(1834–1857) [A Study of the Activities of American Missionaries in China (1834–1847)]*. Beijing: 群言出版社 Qunyan Press.

Tarocco, Francesca. 2007. *The Cultural Practices of Modern Chinese Buddhism: Attuning the Dharma*. London and New York: Routledge.

Taylor, Mark C., Tomoko Masuzawa, Jack Miles, Jonathan Z. Smith, David Tracy, and Edith Wyschogrod. 1998. *Critical Terms for Religious Studies*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Thelle, Notto R. 2006. Changed by the East: Notes on Missionary Communication and Transformation. *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 30: 115–21. [CrossRef]

Vaughn Cross, Carol Ann. 2012. 'Living in the Lives of Men': Martha Foster Crawford. *Social Sciences and Missions* 25: 102–28. [CrossRef]

Wang, Hui. 2008. *Translating Chinese Classics in a Colonial Context: James Legge and His Two Versions of the Zhongyong*. Bern: Peter Lang.

Wenzel, Claudia. 2022. Towards a Buddhist History of Mount Tai. *Journal of Chinese Religion* 50: 1–44.

Williams, Frederick Wells. 1888. *The Life and Letters of Samuel Wells Williams, LL.D.: Missionary, Diplomatist, Sinologue*. New York and London: G.P. Putnam's sons.

Williams, Samuel Wells. 1848. *The Middle Kingdom: A Survey of the Geography, Government, Education, Social Life, Arts, Religion, &c., of the Chinese Empire and Its Inhabitants*. New York and London: Wiley & Putnam.

Williamson, Isabelle. 1884. *Old Highways in China*. London: Religious Tract Society.

Wong, Man Kong. 1997. Christian Missions, Chinese Culture, and Colonial Administration: A Study of the Activities of James Legge and Ernest John Eitel in Nineteenth Century Hong Kong. Ph.D. thesis, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China.

Wu, Albert Monshan. 2016. *From Christ to Confucius: German Missionaries, Chinese Christians, and the Globalization of Christianity, 1860–1950*, 1st ed. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Wu, Jiang, Daoqin Tong, and Karl Ryavec. 2013. Spatial Analysis and GIS Modeling of Regional Religious Systems in China: Conceptualization and Initial Experiments. In *In Chinese History in Geographical Perspective*. Edited by Jeff Kyong-McClain and Yongtao Du. Lanham, Boulder, New York, Toronto and Plymouth: Lexington Books, pp. 179–96.

Wylie, Alexander. 1876. Appendix: Catalogue of Publications by Protestant Missionaries in China. In *Catalogue of the Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs Collection, at the United States International Exhibition, Philadelphia, 1876*. Shanghai: Statistical Department of the Inspectorate General of Customs.

Wylie, Alexander. 1867. *Memorials of Protestant Missionaries to the Chinese: Giving a List of Their Publications*. Shanghai: American Presbyterian Mission Press.

Yabuki, Susumu. 2017. S. Wells Williams' Contribution to the Opening of Japan: With Special Reference to the Perry's so-called White Flag Documents. 横浜市立大学論叢社会科学系列 68: 123–46.

Yan, Yingwei, Kenneth Dean, Chen-Chieh Feng, Guan Thye Hue, Khee-heong Koh, Lily Kong, Chang Woei Ong, Arthur Tay, Yi-chen Wang, and Yiran Xue. 2020. Chinese Temple Networks in Southeast Asia: A WebGIS Digital Humanities Platform for the Collaborative Study of the Chinese Diaspora in Southeast Asia. *Religions* 11: 334. [CrossRef]

Yang, Fenggang. 2004. Between Secularist Ideology and Desecularizing Reality: The Birth and Growth of Religious Research in Communist China. *Sociology of Religion* 65: 101–19. [CrossRef]