THE LIBERAL ARTS CURRICULUM IN CHINA’S CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITIES AND ITS RELEVANCE TO CHINA’S UNIVERSITIES TODAY

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts
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Abstract

This thesis considers the historical background, the development, and the characteristics of China’s Christian universities, with a special focus on their curriculum design. Through the lens of postmodern theory, the thesis explores the concept and essence of liberal arts education as reflected in the curriculum of the Christian universities through a qualitative methodology, focusing on the analysis of historical archival material. The purpose is to find insights for today’s trend towards reviving liberal arts education in China’s elite universities as a way of countering the influence of utilitarianism and neo-liberalism in an era of economic globalization.
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Chapter 1
Introduction

1 Background and contextual information

In his new book *You Can Do Anything: The Surprising Power of a “Useless” Liberal Arts Education*, George Anders (2017) elaborated on the strengths of liberal arts education in cultivating curiosity, creativity, and empathy which help graduates to succeed in this tech-dominated world. What then, is liberal arts education? Liberal arts education has a long history originating from the educational ideas of Socrates’ “examined life” and Aristotle’s “reflective citizenship” in Greco-Roman society (Nussbaum, 1998). This tradition has been developed in traditional British institutions, such as, Oxford and Cambridge. It was further developed in the North American context in the early founding of liberal arts colleges and universities, such as Harvard and Yale (Jiang, 2014). It focuses on the cultivation of a free citizen with seven arts courses, classics, religious studies, and moral education (Jiang, 2014). Developed over time and space, it is broadly recognized as an education that not only focuses on arts, humanities, and sciences, but also has an emphasis on the formation of character and the refinement and deepening of the moral ideals of the citizen. Liberal arts education, or liberal education, has a similar meaning to general education, and they share identical goals to help make free citizens for our society (Harvard Committee, 1946).

The opposite of liberal arts education is professional or technical education, which is prevalent and indispensable for today’s technology development and economic boom. Even seventy years ago, a classic Harvard report said, “we are living in an age of specialism, the problem is how to save general education and its values within a system where specialism is necessary” (Harvard Committee, 1946, p. 53). It is even truer in today’s situation. Compared with liberal arts education, vocational and professional education have held a dominant place around the globe, because they provide advanced scientific and technological experts for the industrial and information society (Godwin & Altbach, 2016). However, entering the 21st century, professional expertise cannot guarantee “a clearly defined career path” and the knowledge economy around the globe requires “a more flexible, globally competent, and critical labor force” (Godwin & Altbach, 2016, p. 6). Besides, globalization, rapidly changing technology, and the evolution of the knowledge economy require critical thinking and lifelong learning competency, which are
the hallmark of liberal arts education, or general education (Godwin & Pickus, 2017). Liberal arts education, or general education, cultivates students through free inquiry and creative expression, which will be good preparation for vital social challenges, such as environmental sustainability, public health, social inequality, and natural disasters (Godwin & Pickus, 2017).

Since the end of the 20th century, scholars and policymakers in China have been advocating cultural quality education, or general education, because specialized education cannot meet the social needs for versatile talents (Shi & Lu, 2016). There have also been growing concerns about the decline in moral standards and lack of social responsibility in the new generation of graduates in Chinese society in recent years (Godwin & Pickus, 2017). To cope with these problems, a new reform towards cultural quality education, or general education, or liberal arts education (synonyms used interchangeably according to Jiang Youguo) has taken place in elite universities such as Peking University, Tsinghua University, and Fudan University. It has been expanded to over 100 institutions with centers focusing on cultural quality education (Godwin & Pickus, 2017). Actually, liberal arts education or general education is not something new to China. It had been the characteristic of modern Chinese higher institutions in the first half of the 20th century (Kirby, 2017). Many universities at that time were shaped by a liberal arts model before turning to a Soviet model in the higher institution reorganization of the early 1950s (Hayhoe & Lu, 2010).

Among the newly established modern higher education institutions at the beginning of the 20th century, there were 16 Christian universities which played an important role in higher education development in China (Hayhoe & Lu, 2010). With decades of development, most schools evolved into colleges and universities with their names, titles, and locales being changed in the 1920s (Lutz, 1971). Among the 16 universities, there were 13 Protestant Institutions: St. John’s University in Shanghai, the University of Shanghai (Hu-chiang University), Soochow University, Hangchow Christian University, the University of Nanking, Ginling Women’s College, Shantung Christian University (Cheeloo University), Fukien Christian University, Lingnan University, Yenching University, Hwa Nan College, West China Union University, and Huachung Christian University (Central China University); and 3 Roman Catholic Institutions: Chen-tan University, Fu-jen University, and Tsinku University. The Christian colleges mentioned in this thesis were all integral parts of these 16 universities.
The Protestant institutions, established by North American missionaries (Hayhoe & Lu, 2010), made a significant contribution to societal development and met social needs with graduates of high quality. Therefore, at this time of renewed higher education reform in China, it should be helpful to look back at the practical experience of how liberal arts education was developed and met social needs in China's earlier history. An important factor of the liberal arts education was its curriculum design. This thesis analyzes the liberal arts curriculum in selected historical institutions, with the purpose of bringing insights or suggestions to educators and policymakers today, as they make plans or implement educational policies for cultivating talents to meet the social needs in a changing society in an era of globalization.

2 Research questions

With the purpose of this research stated above, I will explore the liberal arts education perspective in China’s Christian universities by examining their educational goals and curriculum modules from historical documents preserved in the Yale Divinity School Library.

The main question is: How did the curriculum in China’s Christian universities reflect a liberal arts education perspective?

By asking this question, I aim at finding out how liberal arts education was defined in their educational goals and what courses were offered at different time periods in the curriculum.

Sub-questions:

1) To what extent did the curriculum in China’s Christian universities copy or follow the curriculum of American liberal arts education?

2) How did that curriculum adapt to the Chinese context with Chinese classics being added in?

3) How did the developed curriculum in some universities include professional or vocational courses to meet the social needs?

4) How did they make a balance between professional training and the liberal arts curriculum?

5) How were religious courses included in the curriculum?
6) How far would the experience of Christian universities in history be relevant to current reform issues in China’s higher education curriculum?

These questions help to guide a further exploration of the liberal arts education elements in the curriculum of these Christian universities. Their specific features and adaptation to the Chinese context will be examined. The answers to these questions will present a deeper understanding of the transfer of the liberal arts education curriculum into a different culture and tradition, which could bring insights for the current reform towards a liberal arts education that suits the Chinese context. Scholars, researchers, and policymakers might find suggestions through the past experience of Christian universities in China that may be relevant to curriculum design and goal formation today.

3 Objective and significance

The objective of this thesis is to analyze the liberal arts education perspective in the informed curriculum and educational goals of China’s former Christian universities and to study the whole person education ideology which had been adopted at the beginning of last century in China. By exploring what kind of education they offered to students and how they cultivated students in an all-round way, I intend to find a connection to today’s general education or culture quality education in China, which also has a focus on the cultivation of a whole person – a citizen with creative thinking, the capability for innovation, professional skills, high moral standards, and a sense of social responsibility.

The significance of the study lies in the fact that it can give insights to help the current movement for a strong liberal arts element in higher education in the face of globalization. It is important to review and re-evaluate the mission and intrinsic nature of liberal arts education in a global context. The study on the balance of professional education and liberal arts education in an era of economic globalization should contribute to the cultivation of versatile talents with global competency to meet the needs of social and economic development.

Special Personal Significance

In our daily life, university graduates of my generation often feel that we lack critical thinking and comprehensive knowledge in many fields related to our daily life, such as medicine, logic, biology etc., even though we feel very confident in the professional skills required for our work.
The elder generation who graduated in the first half of 20th century is often considered as holistically educated people, judging from both their professional skills and capabilities in dealing with issues in everyday life. I have met or heard of several elders who graduated from the former Christian universities in the 1940s.

Ms. Jiang is an elder whom I met in a church in Shanghai. She was born in 1925. She is still hale and hearty now. She is knowledgeable, insightful, and well-disciplined. She speaks fluent English, knows basic knowledge of medicine, and exhibits skills in many professions. What has surprised me and makes her different from other elders is that she always keeps pace with the utilization of new technology in daily life, such as the application of smartphones. As a Christian, the good relationship with God and fruitful spiritual life are some factors contributing to her mental and spiritual state. Besides, her knowledge and wisdom might also be attributed to the education she received from a Christian university in Shanghai in the 1940s – the University of Shanghai (Hu-chiang University). Two other elders – Ms. Han and Ms. Wang, whom I heard about in church, exhibited the same capability and wisdom in their daily life. They both passed away ten years ago. They graduated in the 1940s from St. John’s University in Shanghai and Yenching University respectively. I heard a lot about them from friends in church and also read the biography of Ms. Wang. Their character, their life style, and their achievements led me into a quest to understand their educational background. The common ground is that they all graduated from the former Christian universities. This is the critical incident that strengthened my personal interest in this topic. Therefore, I have kept on thinking about the training model and educational goals of these Christian universities in China.

4 Structure of the thesis

While Chapter One introduces the thesis, Chapter Two presents a review of the literature. The first part examines the historical development of higher education in the Nationalist period of China from the aspects of levels and types of institutions, geographic distribution of institutions, and the development of women’s education in China. The second part presents a historical overview of the 13 Christian universities, their development stages, the influence of graduates, and the work of the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia – an agency which funded and supported them. Part three reviews the history of liberal arts education and discusses its essence and mission through different periods and contexts. The last part analyzes the current
educational trends and critical ideas, which will bring insights to today’s liberal arts education reform.

Chapter Three introduces the theoretical framework and research methodology of this thesis. The theoretical framework lies in the understanding of the goals of education and the philosophy and intrinsic value of liberal arts education. Postmodern theory is also employed to examine the development of liberal arts education through time and space. Through this lens, liberal arts education is viewed as contingent, not fixed in its curriculum and education forms, but consistent and unchanged in its mission and core values. These include critical thinking, moral reasoning, and the cultivation of citizens with social responsibility. The research is a qualitative study based on analysis of historical curriculum documents preserved in the Yale Divinity School Library. I also utilize some secondary literature to complement this archival data.

Chapter Four presents the data analysis and key findings of the research. Four of the 13 Protestant institutions are selected as a focus: one women’s college – Ginling Women’s College in Nanjing, two comprehensive universities – Yenching University in Beijing and Lingnan University in Guangzhou, and one comprehensive university with a strong medical college – West China Union University in Chengdu. The curriculum and course information from three special years are selected for each to analyze, between 1919 and 1947, reflecting three milestone periods in their development.

Chapter Five focused on an analysis and discussion of the findings in the curriculum of the four Christian universities through the lens of postmodernism. The way Chinese classics were integrated into American liberal arts education and the professional courses designed to meet societal needs are examined to interpret the Chinese characteristics of the liberal arts education that developed in this context.

Chapter Six is a conclusion of the thesis. It promises insights that may support the current movement for a strong liberal arts element in higher education in China as well as illustrate how values from Chinese civilization could serve to enrich conceptions of liberal arts education in a wider global context. The limitations of this thesis are also considered and it ends with the suggestions for future study in liberal arts education and Christian universities.
Chapter 2
Literature Review

This literature review starts with a general introduction to higher education development in the Nationalist period (1911-1949) in China. Following that, a special focus is given to the 13 Christian universities: their historical background, their development, their contributions, and the work and continuing influence of the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia which funded and supported these universities and has continued to promote whole person education in other areas of Asia after the close-down of the Christian universities in mainland China. Then previous research findings on liberal arts education are discussed – how it has developed over time both in the West and in China, and what the intrinsic value of liberal arts education is in an era of globalization. Finally, educational ideas and current debates about the concept of a good education are analyzed. The chapter ends with a discussion on how to revive liberal arts education in the face of globalization and the accompanying influences of utilitarianism and neo-liberalism.

1 Higher education in Nationalist China

Modern higher education originated in China at the end of the 19th century, with a few public universities founded by the Qing government and several missionary colleges established. It was during the Nationalist period that higher education institutions began to emerge in great numbers, developed, and matured in a difficult environment with internal political upheaval and external invasion and wars. Many scholars examined the higher education development during the period between 1911 and 1927, and they all agreed that the lack of a strong central government provided a comparatively favorable environment for vigorous experimentation with hundreds of universities and colleges at different levels (Hayhoe, 1996; Yang Rui, 2002; Yeh, 2000). After 1928, a series of administrative regulations on higher education were issued by the Nationalist government, which aimed at formalizing the education system (“Higher Education,” 1937), but many of them were not implemented due to the war situation (Gu, Li & Wang, 2010). In terms of geographic distribution, the higher institutions were mainly located in the coastal provinces with a large proportion in Beijing, Shanghai, and Nanjing (Yeh, 2000). The distribution was greatly influenced as the Sino-Japanese war started. Higher education was open to women at schools of
different levels at this time and a few women's colleges were founded to cultivate women leaders to serve the society (Yang Jie, 2014).

1.1 Different levels and types of higher institutions

The newly founded colleges and universities during this period were of various types and they were funded by different levels of government. According to a government report in 1937, there were three types of institutions according to their funding: national institutions, provincial institutions, and private institutions. Among each type, there were three levels: comprehensive universities, independent colleges, and technical schools (“Higher Education,” 1937). In The Alienated Academy, Yeh (2000) classified the institutions into four major categories according to their specific political histories and academic traditions: public universities founded under the Qing, private Chinese colleges, foreign missionary colleges, and public universities supported by the Nationalist government. With another criterion of classification, Hayhoe (1996) made a division related to their diverse founders: high-level bureaucrats, scholars, revolutionary intellectuals, missionaries, and in many cases a combination of these. In addition to the government's official report, a small group of institutions was also quite noticeable. They were established by the Communist party to provide special training programs for cadres in Shaanxi province after the Long March in the 1930s (Gu, Li & Wang, 2010; Hayhoe, 1996). No matter how they are categorized, the higher institutions of the nationalist period could be seen as a systematic constellation of schools, colleges, and universities of all levels, which had developed gradually after the collapse of the traditional institutions of the Qing dynasty.

This period was divided into two with 1928 as a watershed. Between 1911 and 1928, despite political chaos and warlordism, was a time of free development without much central government control over education (Yang Rui, 2002; Yeh, 2000). The institutions were founded and developed according to the funding, investment, and initiatives of patrons and various localities. After the nationalist central government was founded, a series of regulations were issued to establish control over education and education was used as a means to serve the interests of the nation (Yeh, 2000). Higher education institutions were required to register with government and legislation was promulgated with the aim of promoting professional curriculum and applied science to meet the social needs (Hayhoe, 1996). Similarly, the institutions under Communist party control were also used to serve the purpose of providing a workforce for the
revolutionary war by training political, military, economic and cultural cadres (Gu, Li & Wang, 2010; Hayhoe, 1996).

The development of higher institutions in this period was influenced by various models and traditions. At the beginning of the 20th century, with the return of scholars and teachers trained in Japan, Japanese education models had great influence in China with practical educational thinking and the pattern for a modern school system (Hayhoe, 1996). The German model was promoted by Cai Yuanpei, a famous educator and former president of Peking University. Influenced by German universities, he promoted the ideal of university autonomy and academic freedom (Hayhoe, 2001). The legislation in 1922 and 1924 was with strong American influence, since John Dewey had visited from 1919 to 1921 and his ideas had considerable influence. The Christian universities, founded by the North American missionaries, followed the liberal arts model of their patrons (Hayhoe & Lu, 2010; Lutz, 1971).

The institutions founded by the Communist party were heavily influenced by Mao’s ideology with the adaptation of Marxism and Leninism to Chinese tradition (Hayhoe, 1996). Due to the fact that China had been defeated in a series of foreign invasions and wars and was backward in relation to the newly developed industrial world supported by modern science and technology, the burgeoning of the higher education in China was more influenced by other country’s models than its own tradition. The latter was often regarded as an obstacle to new forms of education.

1.2 Geographic distribution

Although there were already a certain number of higher education institutions of all levels with different funding sources and patrons, the geographic distribution was imbalanced, with 60 percent concentrated in Beijing and Shanghai (Yeh, 2000). A large number of them were located in the coastal areas and only a few in the hinterland, which was perhaps due to the traditional patterns of education institutions of ancient China since the Song dynasty. At the provincial level, dozens were in Shanghai and Beijing, but none in the remote and hinterland provinces, such as Shaanxi, Guizhou, Qinghai, Ningxia, and Xizang (Hayhoe, 1996). With the full-scale invasion of the Japanese army came a disaster for people’s lives and the industrial development of the whole nation, and there was no exception for higher education institutions. According to Freyn’s research, a government report issued two years after the war stated that 77 out of China’s 108 higher education institutions had been uprooted (Freyn, 1940). A large exodus happened
with many universities moving to the southwest areas, such as Human, Sichuan, Yunnan, and Guangxi (Freyn, 1940; Hayhoe, 1996). Some private and missionary institutions remained on their original campuses, including Yenching University and Fu-jen University, without much interference and some escaped to the foreign concessions, such as St. John’s University in Shanghai and the University of Shanghai (its campus was occupied by Japanese troops), Soochow University, and Hangchow Christian University, which formed the Associated Christian College (Freyn, 1940). Many public universities moved to rural areas or the southwest provinces where the Japanese had no influence. Lianda (the National Southwestern Union University), a composite of three prestigious universities (Beida, Qinghua, and Nankai) relocated to Kunming in Yunnan province, after their campuses were destroyed by Japanese barbarism rooted in hatred against Chinese intellectuals (Freyn, 1940). This was a splendid example of higher education development in spite of the extremely harsh circumstances, with its remarkable quality of scholarship and influential intellectual leaders (Hayhoe, 1996). John Israel’s book about Lianda gives a vivid depiction of this unique university which produced a remarkable academic elite in spite of hardships (Israel, 1999).

1.3 Women’s education

For thousands of years in history, women were excluded from China’s official education system (Hayhoe, 1996). It was not until 1907 that the Qing government issued the regulations about primary schools for girls and normal schools for female teacher training (Hayhoe 1996, Yang Jie, 2014). The missionary schools contributed greatly to women’s education by setting a model (Lutz, 1971) and by introducing western approaches to women’s education in terms of theory and pedagogy (Gao, 1993; He, 1994). Modern intellectuals like Liang Qichao and Cai Yuanpei were also in support of women’s education (Hayhoe, 1996). According to Yang Jie, in 1922, the principle of gender equality in education was established by the government (Yang, 2014). Her findings were echoed in a research finding more than half a century earlier by Freyn, who stated that in the 1920s, most universities opened their doors for women students and there were a number of girls’ schools at the tertiary level, such as Beijing Women’s Normal College and Ginling Women’s College. The University of Shanghai was known as the first one which opened up equal access to men and women in 1920 (Freyn, 1940).
As the Christian primary and secondary schools for girls developed, a few of them evolved into colleges and universities. Between 1900 and 1950, there were three single-sex colleges for women in China, Ginling Women’s College in Nanjing, North China Union Women’s College in Beijing, later the Women’s Division of Yenching University, and Hwa Nan College in Fuzhou (Widmer, 2009). Among them, Ginling Women’s College had its first female president, Dr. Wu Yifang, in 1928, which was quite unusual at that time. These women's colleges had some influence on education for women more generally by providing a blueprint of a modern approach to education for women. Among the Christian universities in China, more women received education in coeducational institutions. This education prepared women for professions and careers and provided women with the opportunity of striving for equal rights with men in both education and work.

Yang Jie (2014) examined women’s education in the nationalist period in Shanghai, with findings showing that most of the girls who entered higher education were from upper-class families in terms of socio-economic background, and their perspectives were still influenced by the traditional feudal thought that it was important to be a good wife and mother at home. That was also due to the constraints from the society that women were not expected to go into professional fields and under this bias, women graduates were still faced with great challenges to find satisfactory jobs.

The previous research reviewed in this literature review section provides us with a panorama of the situation of higher education institutions in the Nationalist period: their origin, the developing periods and groups, the influence of the war, and their achievements. For ideological reasons, the research done from China’s side tended to be more focused on the public and private institutions, without enough attention given to the achievement of the foreign-sponsored ones. Some detailed research was carried on by scholars of different countries prompted by their own research interests. For example, John Israel did research on Lianda and Karen Minden on West China Union University – an institution with a strong medical college. Despite two books on women’s education (Yang Jie, 2014; Zhu, 2002), no other research with a special focus on women’s education in Nationalist China was found, although some of the research mentioned women education in general. Specific comparative studies about detailed or micro aspects of universities in that period were lacking, for example, studies of the curriculum, studies on graduates and
influences, or student background studies, which means that there is considerable space for future research.

2 Christian universities in China

This section first introduces the historical causes both in terms of the domestic and the international milieu for the burgeoning of Christian universities. The development of Christian universities was shaped by three historical turning points: the government registration in 1928, the Postwar plan in 1943, and the nationwide reorganization in 1951, which divided the half-century period from their inception to their demise into three periods: the inception amid political chaos, the secularization in the late 1920s, and the after-war planning in the later 1940s. The Christian universities played an important role in the development of modern higher education in China, with their special contribution in the area of higher education for women and training in modern medicine and nursing (Lutz, 1971). They also provided a model that influenced other institutions which were founded later (Wang, 2000). The influence of the Christian universities on Chinese society still continued even after their merging into other institutions. The United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia, an agency that once funded and supported the 13 Christian universities, continues to support whole person education in other areas in Asia. In this sense, the legacy of Christian education has been preserved and passed down. Currently, the United Board continues to promote whole person education through collaboration with several elite universities in China where the former Christian university campuses were located.

2.1 Historical background

The Domestic Background

The late 19th and early 20th centuries witnessed great social and political changes in China. The imperial examination system, which served as the dominant method of recruiting civil officials for more than one thousand years, was abolished in 1905 to meet the urgent social needs of modern education in science and technology. The last imperial dynasty, the Qing, collapsed in 1911. After that, China experienced decades of political turmoil and warfare till the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 1949.

Since one of the unequal treaties, the Treaty of Beijing, signed in 1860, foreign missionaries were permitted to enter inland China for missionary work, and church schools sprang up rapidly
in the following decades (Wang, 2000), which signified the beginning of modern education in China. Entering the 20th century, modern universities emerged and developed all over the country. Between 1911 and 1937, over one hundred public and private institutions were founded on the local, provincial, or national level, with a large variety of models and types (Hayhoe, 2001). Among these new model higher education institutions, a unique group, the Christian universities, established by missionaries from North America, was quite noticeable.

The International Background

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a surge of piety and activism, and a growing sense of religious and social duty arose on many American college campuses. As a result, thousands of college graduates from across the United States and from Canada joined foreign mission work, most through the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions (SVM). A great number of the student volunteers who went overseas served in China for Protestant missions by becoming teachers or faculty members in Christian schools and colleges (Lautz, 2009). The experiences of these missionaries shaped a Western-style education in the Chinese context and brought the Christian schools and colleges into existence. American foreign missions and specifically the SVM perhaps was the major external stimulus which promoted the burgeoning of these universities. In addition, the mission societies from Canada and Great Britain also contributed significantly to the collaboration work of the Christian universities in China (Hayhoe & Lu, 2010).

The Driving Force – Faith in Christianity

Without faith and mission, there is no reason for the young graduates from well-known universities to cross over the ocean to China, a foreign land with uncertainty and unknown obstacles, leaving their kith and kin behind. The SVM candidates were well-educated and well-meaning young people with the mission of serving the people and improving the world. As Lautz (2009) stated:

Yet many students approached the prospect of being missionaries with humility and quite often with some degree of uncertainty. Most believed they simply had no choice but to accept their duty as Christians: “This is God’s plan for my life and I know of none better for helping humanity and doing good,” wrote one candidate. (p.16)
Likewise, it was the same spirit of Christian service that propelled the Chinese people who engaged in education careers in the Christian universities. Two distinguished Catholic thinkers, Ma Xiangbo and Ying Lianzhi, who contributed to Chinese higher education by initiating the establishment of two famous Catholic universities, can also be taken as an example. They were educational entrepreneurs sharing the common vision that a modern university can serve as the transforming agent in a society and bring about radical change. Their farsighted unique vision originated from both consummate love of traditional Chinese culture and a strong commitment to Christian faith (Hayhoe, 1988).

2.2 Development stages

The period from 1900 to 1950 was not a happy one in Chinese history, with political upheaval, student movements, foreign invasion, and civil war, coming one after another. The Christian universities survived hardships and obstacles over this difficult period and then failed to survive the institutional reorganization in 1951, which finally terminated their mission in mainland China.

*The Anti-Christian Movement and Government Registration*

In the 1920s, three movements (a student movement, an anti-Christian movement, and an anti-imperialism movement) were popular among students and young intellectuals and these movements greatly impacted the teaching work in Christian universities. The causes for these movements lay in the awakened awareness of Chinese people that imperialism together with foreigners’ privileged rights and sense of superiority over Chinese people oppressed and humiliated the Chinese nation. In these Christian universities, what some missionaries preached was not the real Christian faith, but the superiority of western culture, which stirred up antagonism among the students (Wang, 2000).

When the Nationalist Party gained power in 1928, the country was unified under its rule. To consolidate its hold on state authority, the Nationalist government issued restrictive regulations on course offerings, the distribution of programs of study, and extracurricular activities in what was seen as a restoration of educational rights. All schools were required to register with the state and turn over administrative control to Chinese nationals (Rigdon, 2009). To register with the Government, a university must meet some regulation requirements, such as, having a Chinese
president, with more than half of Chinese members in the Board of Control, no propagation of religion in its purpose, conforming to the standards issued by the Ministry of Education in curriculum design, and no religious courses among required subjects. There were some disadvantages if a university did not register, such as, there would be no exemption from tax on imported apparatus and equipment, graduates would not be eligible for government scholarships for study abroad, nor could graduates hold positions in registered schools (Thurston & Chester, 1956). As a result, the Christian universities registered in Nationalist government and modified their departments and curriculum. After the registration, there was no direct Christian proselytization in the teaching program and it was not a requirement for students to attend religious activities on campus.

*The Postwar Plan*

In 1943, a Planning Committee for the Christian universities in China was constituted in New York for the purpose of making future development planning for the Christian universities in postwar China. In the following years, several conferences were held by the committee to discuss the future goal, nature, academic development, and organizations of these Christian universities. In the reports issued by the committee, the previous educational goal of Christian education was reiterated, that is, to serve Christian purposes, promote liberal arts education, and make contributions to Chinese society (Liu, 2009). There were different opinions towards details of the report from the Christian universities. The committee accepted the advice from some universities and made the final report, stating that both undergraduate and graduate education were equally important and that all institutions should maintain equally high standards of academic excellence and Christian character (Liu, 2009). However, due to the breakout of the civil war and the founding of the People’s Republic of China, the postwar plan had to be canceled.

*The Nationwide Reorganization of Higher Education Institutions*

In 1949, the People’s Republic of China was founded with the Communist Party taking power. In the new political regime, the Chinese leaders turned to join the socialist world under the communist system, which was expressed in terms of educational ideology as a drastic shift from what had been an American-influenced model to a Soviet model (Hayhoe, 2001). Under the influence of the Soviet advisors, the new Chinese government made a plan to reorganize and reconstruct the colleges and universities nationwide, with the aim of creating a larger number of
specialized institutions to meet the nation’s macroeconomic development needs. According to the reorganization plan, all private universities, including the Christian universities should be abolished, with their departments and faculties divided and merged into other institutions and universities. Although there was some resistance from the faculties and universities, the reorganization plan was implemented and completed in 1952.

2.3 Contributions and influence

As stated above, the Christian universities played an important role by making a special contribution to women’s higher education. Besides, they did not only take leadership in modern medicine and nursing but also maintained high standards in education and training in these two fields (Lutz, 1971).

Modern medical training and nursing faced many difficulties in the pioneering work done in the Chinese context. Medical education was an expensive undertaking and the greatest challenge was lack of facilities, equipment, laboratories, and textbooks. The initiation of nursing as a profession faced a problem with status acceptance from the public, because most nursing work was undertaken by relatives and servants at home in China at that time (Lutz, 1971). Despite the difficulties and challenges, several Christian colleges were established between 1900 and 1930, with a great contribution made to society by their graduates as medical elites. Among them, the outstanding ones were Peking Union Medical College, West China Union University, Cheeloo Medical College, and Hsiang-Ya Medical College. Minden (1994) presented a portrait of an influential medical college in West China in her book Bamboo Stone: The Evolution of a Chinese Medical Elite. She described the growth of the college and its contribution to society in the first half of 20th century China by doing an empirical study with historical document analysis and interviewing of former graduates.

With the process of secularization, the Christian universities developed many professional and vocational subjects and courses to meet urgent social needs. Besides the fundamental science curriculum in mathematics, physics, and chemistry, there were also specialized science curricula in zoology, botany, astronomy, physiology, and biology in these Christian universities. Lingnan University even developed applied science programs directly relevant to the local situation of China – the study of agriculture (Dunch, 2009). Moreover, many practical courses such as economics, journalism, engineering, archives and library science, were opened in these
universities. The Christian universities had twice as many disciplines in the natural sciences as those in other public and private universities (Zhang & Waldron, 1991).

The number of students increased greatly from the 1920s. By 1947, the total student body in the Christian universities reached 12,000, accounting for 12%–20% of all university graduates in those years (Zhang & Waldron, 1991). Many graduates from the Christian universities worked as leaders or influential figures in banking, diplomacy, customs, law, and medical areas. For example, the famous modern litterateur and novelist Lin Yutang, diplomat Gu Weijun, and Minister of Finance Song Ziwen, in the Republic of China, were all graduates of St. John’s University in Shanghai. Lin Qiaozhi, a graduate of Beijing Union Medical College, laid the foundation for the modernization of gynecology and obstetrics in China, by working as a physician with the spirit of serving people from her Christian faith.

**Continuous Influence after Amalgamation**

Even after the amalgamation into new higher institutions, the influence of the Christian universities still existed, but in a less visible way, providing faculty and academic support within the newly reorganized institutions. Many of their campuses became the basis of famous normal or provincial universities in China. For example, the campus of Ginling Women’s College is still used by Nanjing Normal University, the campus of Yenching university is used by Peking University, and the campus of St. Johns’ University in Shanghai is used by the East China Institute of Political Science and Law (Hayhoe, 1988). The excellent academic disciplines of many famous universities in China today can be traced back to their origin from these Christian universities, which indicates that the academics and research in the Christian universities were outstanding at that time. Although the universities were abolished, their spirit and ethos can still be found in the institutions that succeeded them. For example, Qinghai Medical College was established with the help of many faculty members from Sichuan Medical College in Chengdu whose core faculty were from the West China Union University (Hayhoe & Lu, 2010)

**2.4 The work of the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia**

The Christian colleges and universities in China were funded and organized by different denominations or boards of missionaries in the beginning. With their development, some colleges merged and the boards collaborated with each other to make a better contribution to
Christian higher education. In 1922, the Associated Boards for Christian Colleges in China were established with their work focusing the 13 Christian universities. Its name was changed to the United Board for Christian Colleges in China later, and at last changed to the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia, which is the name used till today (Corbett, 1963). Its work included support for capital construction, library collection, and students and faculty sponsorship. After 1951, with the close-down of the Christian institutions in mainland China, the focus of its work was shifted to other areas outside mainland China, such as Taiwan, Hong Kong, and India. In the 1950s and 1960s, the United Board organized the compiling of a series of monographs of the Christian universities after their close-down in mainland China. It was hoped that the fruits of the experience could be garnered and passed down to the future generation, with the prospect of the restoration of these universities (Thurston & Chester, 1956). In the early 1950s, with the proposal from a group of enthusiastic Chinese educators, Tunghai University in Taiwan was founded with the support from the United Board, and with aim of inheriting the grand tradition of the 13 Christian universities to promote whole person education (Tunghai University, n.d.). After the restoration of diplomatic relations between China and the USA in 1979, reconnections with mainland China were built and contributions were made to improve teaching and learning (The United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia, n.d.).

The mission and spirit of the United Board today is still for the promotion of whole-person education, making efforts in cultivating an intellectually, spiritually, and ethically educated person. This is the legacy and heritage of the former Christian universities in China. It has projects supporting whole person education in universities in different countries in Asia. Currently, it has collaborative work with several elite universities in mainland China, such as Central China Normal University, Fudan University, Nanjing Normal University, Nanjing University, Shandong University, Sichuan University, Suzhou University and Zhongshan University (The United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia, n.d.). Many of these universities are using the campuses of the former Christian universities and have departments and faculty originated from these Christian universities. The whole person education in these universities today in some sense may be seen as a revival of the former liberal arts education in the campuses of the former Christian universities. The traditions and ethos that the United Board formerly carried out in China and later promoted through Asia have returned most recently. The
liberal arts curriculum in the former Christian universities is thus pertinent and important for today’s whole person education in the elite universities in China.

2.5 Previous research and limitations

The research on the topic of Christian universities in China has experienced three stages (Zhu, 2002). The first period was in the 1950s. The study of these universities was from a micro perspective. Historical documents were collected and the histories of these universities were published by the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia. The second period was from the 1960s to 1970s. The study was from a macro perspective and the representative works are *China and the Christian colleges* by Jessie Lutz in 1971 and *Christian Higher Education in Changing China 1880-1950* by William Purviance Fenn in 1976. The third period started in the late 1980s. The focus turned back to micro perspectives, with specific research on different aspects of Christian education. Several research conferences and symposia were held in mainland China and Hong Kong. The major research findings in this period were *Eastern and Western Culture and Christian Universities* by Zhang Kaiyuan and Arthur Walden in 1991. Tze Ming Ng from Hong Kong also focused on the study of Christian universities, and his major works are *Changing Paradigms of Christian Higher Education in China* (2002) and *Chinese Christianity—An Interplay between Global and Local Perspectives* (2012). What was unique about the third period was the involvement of scholars within mainland China who introduced perspectives from the Chinese side.

Some previous studies focused on the curriculum of China’s Christian Universities from different perspectives. Lutz (1971) reported the curriculum development and expansion in the Christian universities in a broad historical context. Dunch (2009) examined the subjects of science, religion, and the classics in the curriculum in the era of 1920s when social movements imposed pressures. Edward Xu Yihua (2009) studied liberal arts education in one of the Christian universities – St. John’s University in Shanghai, by analyzing its English language teaching and campus culture.

The previous research was comprehensive and inclusive, from both macro and micro perspectives, with different topics touched upon. For example, Yu Ningning (2014) did research on the enrollment standards of the Christian universities; Xu Yihua (2010) did a study focusing on the theological studies in Christian universities in China; Zhu Feng (2002) did a comparative
study on the two women’s colleges – Ginling Women’s College and Hwa Nan College. Special cases were studied, such as Minden on a medical elite in Bamboo Stone (1994), and Philip West on Yenching University and Sino-Western Relations (1976). Different researchers did studies on Christian universities in China based on their own backgrounds and approaches. From the Western side, more studies of their contribution and influence were done, while from the Chinese side, some scholars did research from a point of view of regarding these Christian universities as a kind of cultural imperialism from the Marxist or Maoist approach, with Tan Shuangquan (1995) as an example. Most scholars held a neutral unbiased stance in their research on Christian universities in China. Although there was some research about the curriculum of the Christian universities, such as Lutz from a general focus and Xu Yihuan on St John’s English language curriculum, there were no comprehensive and comparative studies in this area with the curriculum as a major focus.

3 Liberal arts education

This part of the literature review begins by discussing liberal arts education from the aspects of history and tradition. Then liberal arts education in the American context is discussed. The new trend of liberal arts education in different societies is also analyzed. It ends with a discussion about the challenges and resistances to liberal arts education in an era of globalization.

3.1 Liberal arts education history and tradition

The concept of liberal arts education originated from an ancient slave-owning society in which the freemen or ruling class who were concerned with rights and duties of citizenship received liberal education and training seven arts, while the slaves were trained in vocational and professional education and did menial work (Harvard Committee, 1946). The seven arts that were appropriate for a free man included the trivium (grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic) and the quadrivium (geometry, arithmetic, music, and astronomy) (Jiang, 2014; Roche, 2010). This originated from Greco-Roman philosophy regarding the examined life and reflective citizenship, as proposed by Socrates and Aristotle respectively (Nussbaum, 1998). It means to “liberate the mind from the bondage of habit and custom, producing people who can function with sensitivity and alertness as citizens of the whole world” (Nussbaum, 1998, p. 8). As the society changes over time and democracy has become the basic principle, “we are concerned with a general education – a liberal education – not for the relatively few, but for a multitude” (Harvard
Committee, 1946, p. ix). Liberal arts education in the contemporary society is not meant to be for the ruling class, or minority, but for the majority and for all social classes.

Liberal arts education was well developed in the tradition of Oxford and Cambridge in England, and then Harvard and Yale. This tradition was brought into China when the missionaries who themselves were graduates of liberal arts education came to build Christian schools (Bays & Widmer, 2009). An important modern work talking about liberal education is *The Idea of A University*, written by British Scholar John Henry Newman in the 19th century. Newman proposed education for education’s sake, not for making a profit or being used as a tool. At the turn of the 20th century, there were debates about the topic. Harvard, Yale, and Columbia initiated reform in their curriculum in order to meet the social needs (Lu & Xu, 2007). At the turn of the 21st century, facing with internationalization and globalization, new challenges are posed: what should be the place for liberal arts education and how to balance a liberal arts education with professional and vocational education under the global influence of neo-liberalism? In 1994, a symposium was held to talk about the development of liberal arts education in the United States (Farnham & Yarmolinsky, 1996). In 2012, the presidents of several prestigious liberal colleges in the United States gathered and discussed the fate and mission of liberal arts colleges in the new era (Chopp, Frost & Weiss, 2014).

Liberal arts education has three distinctive features: an interdisciplinary mode, a broad curricular range, and elemental skills training (Godwin & Altbach, 2016). The graduates are supposed to have a broad range of knowledge, including arts, humanities, social and natural sciences, critical thinking, problem-solving, analysis, communication, global citizenship, and a sense of social responsibility. In the process of development, the elements of self-reflective citizenship and democracy are emphasized. In American liberal arts education, autonomy and independence are highly valued with the liberal arts philosophy of developing participatory citizens in a democratic society (Etzrodt, Hrebenar, Lacktorin, & Nilson, 2016; Godwin & Altbach, 2016). These traditions and values formed the Western society and ideology which emphasize autonomy and creative thinking based on individual work. General education and whole person education share the same meaning and focus as liberal arts education. Although there are different interpretations about the scope of liberal arts education, as against general education and whole person education, in this thesis, I take the stance that they are similar in their focus,
objectives and essence in terms of the global trend of a requirement for experts with multidisciplinary and versatile skills.

3.2 Liberal arts education in the American context

The modern liberal arts tradition has been well developed in the United States with the founding of universities and liberal arts colleges. The early higher education institutions in America are the liberal colleges, either independent institutions or parts of a university, some coeducational and others single sex. They are not primarily vocational in their focus and usually require four years for the bachelor’s degree (Harvard Committee, 1946). Because the United States is home to many prominent liberal arts colleges and there is also a prevalence of general education requirements in many public and private institutions across the country, liberal arts education is regarded as distinctively American (Godwin & Pickus, 2017).

In the whole American higher education system, liberal arts formed the key elements of the curriculum (Godwin & Altbach, 2016). Harvard and Yale followed this tradition from England and built the foundation for liberal arts curriculum for the country in which classics, Latin, and philosophy courses were taught. It focused on “strengthening and enlarging the faculties of the mind and to familiarize it with the leading principles of the great objects of human investigation and knowledge” (Jiang, 2014, p. 5). The Yale Report in 1828 constituted a kind of national curriculum by affirming the importance of classical studies in Greek, Latin, and other traditional knowledge themes (Yale Report, 1828). With social development, the national commitment to modern liberal arts curriculum was diminished (Geiger, 2014). The influence of theology and religious subjects was decreased considerably in the whole curriculum (Rudolph, 1977).

In the past two decades, despite dramatic changes in American higher education, the liberal arts curriculum has remained in most colleges and universities. Since the Harvard report, the term general education is more often used. General education, in this sense, does not refer to something vague or airy, such as knowledge in general or universal education, but refers to the cultivation of a responsible human being and citizen, which is the opposite of the purpose of special education for training in a profession (Harvard Committee, 1946).

Recently, liberal arts education is under criticism with a trend favoring more practical and career-oriented approaches (Godwin & Pickus, 2017). However, liberal arts education is not
something unchanging. While retaining its essence, it has exhibited ample evidence of adaptability to the American context which might be seen as characterized by the Protestant spirit. As Logan and Curry (2015) argue, the formation of this adaptability is “dented by the Revolution and subsequent wars, prodded by German research ideals, molded by pragmatism and progressivism, and always subject to the demands and general spirit of the American public” (p. 68). The variability, adaptability, and portability signify its maturation, keeping some mixture of the classical ideals and meeting the special needs and desires of society. The spirit or value of academic freedom is the driving force for the generation of new knowledge and supports its development (Logan & Curry, 2015). Kirby and van der Wende (2016) also affirmed that the core spirit of the liberal arts has been kept and passed down through generations, with its goal of cultivating independent thinkers with intellectual, artistic, moral, civic, and scientific capacities for life-long learning.

3.3 New trends around the globe

Outside America, liberal arts education has taken root and flourished in foreign lands. Liberal arts education was the distinctive feature of higher education in China in the first half of the 20th century (Kirby, 2017). It could also be found in postwar Japan with strong American support and influence on its higher education systems. In recent years, there are new experimentations with the liberal arts model in Hong Kong, India, and mainland China to meet the requirements of preparing creative thinkers and versatile experts.

Japan

During the long period of reconstruction after the Second World War, Japan was influenced by the United States, with many universities being organized following an American model. General education elements could be found in undergraduate studies (Etzrodt, Hrebenar, Lacktorin, & Nilson, 2016; Godwin & Altbach, 2016). Many branch campuses of American universities, following a liberal arts model, were established, but the outcomes were not satisfying. With the stress from financial problems, many campuses were closed down. The remaining American liberal arts university branches are facing obstacles from Japanese traditional culture which focuses on “discipline, harmony, patience, loyalty, moderation, teamwork, a strong work ethic, and respect for seniority” (Etzrodt, Hrebenar, Lacktorin, & Nilson, 2016, p. 67). These values seem inconsistent with some features of the liberal arts
Mainland China

With higher education expansion to a mass system in the late 1990s, there have been problems of graduate quality and the meeting of social needs. Some policymakers advocated general education or culture quality education at this point, focusing on the breadth of knowledge, which is the synonym of liberal arts education in China’s context (Jiang, 2014). This ideal has been implemented in many top universities in recent years. Shi Jinghuan and Lu Yi (2016) studied different characteristics of liberal arts education under three typologies (empiricism, idealism, and pilot zone) in recent years and concluded that an elective course system might be a way out based on the understanding that liberal education is an ideal and there are different approaches in reality. Li Manli and Lin Xiaoying (2003), viewing the issue from a different perspective, criticized the elective course system for being too perfunctory. Shi and Lu (2016) also proposed a future direction for liberal arts education in China: avoiding conformism, focusing on innovation and the inclusion of diversity.

In the age of mass higher education in China since the late 1990s, the large enrollment of students has hindered the implementation of a small scale liberal education model. Based on the overall environment and system, an empirical model with a pilot and elective courses seems more feasible, without changing the overall education system (Shi & Lu, 2016). The idealism model, which was proposed in *General Education in a Free Society* by the Harvard Committee (1946) is not applicable for most universities in China, due to higher education traditions and the system of administration (Shi & Lu, 2016). However, there have been small-scale trials in newly founded special universities, such as United International College (UIC) in Zhuhai city, Guangdong province. Ng (2016) studied the example of UIC and argued that a mixture of Confucianism with traditional Western liberal arts education could be realized in the Chinese context. Small private institution as UIC, with the model of “a focus on high quality undergraduate education, small class size, a high level of student-teacher interaction, a 4-year campus residence, a 2-year general education curriculum” might not be transferable to other large-scale institutions in the age of massification (Ng, 2016 p. 62). In addition, in the Chinese context, small-scale private institutions with high tuition are faced with difficulty in recruiting
students because public institutions are considered to be more prestigious and attractive to students.

**Hong Kong**

Influenced by British colonization, Hong Kong’s higher education system is more similar to the British model, with a focus on specialization. In recent years, changes have been made in Hong Kong. With a goal of cultivating well-educated responsible citizens with creative and critical thinking, a broader perspective, and intellectual, collaborative, and communication skills, the government in Hong Kong issued a new policy for general education, which was implemented in eight universities in 2012 (Postiglione, 2016). A foundation school year was added to the original three-year curriculum, with common core courses added for all students in four areas: scientific technology and literacy, humanities, global issues, and China’s culture, state, and society (Postiglione, 2016).

**India**

Similar to Hong Kong’s experience, India’s higher education policies were influenced by British dominance during the colonial period. Liberal arts education has been a new concept to Indian society. The small group class, close interaction between students and faculty, and a broad curriculum seem to be a new idea that is hard to imagine for students and their parents in India (Modrowski, 2016). In recent years, to enhance students’ competitiveness in the global society, liberal arts education is experimented with in small-scale institutions. Modrowski (2016) examined the liberal arts implementation in an institution in India. There have been changes in classroom and curriculum, but it is more akin to a cross-cultural experience for students. Some resistance is put forward by the faculty and traditional education pedagogy (Modrowski, 2016). The purpose of education in this institution is to prepare students for global competitiveness and entering foreign institutions, or for training in openness to foreign cultures, which is different from the essence of American liberal arts education that focuses on whole person capability and autonomy.

From these experiences, liberal arts education seems to have difficulty in finding appropriate soil for its flourishing as in the American context. Possibly for political reasons, liberal education has been replaced by the term general education or culture quality education (Jiang, 2014). In Hong
Kong, it seems to be a combination of Confucianism and Western ideology because of its history of colonization has made possible a relatively inclusive social context. In India and Japan, liberal education was confronted with resistance from tradition and culture which respect authority and conformity, rather than individual autonomy. Therefore, whether there is a unified liberal arts education model that is compatible with different cultures and traditions needs to be further explored.

In this new trend of liberal arts education, many trial models have been proposed by scholars. For example, Zha Qiang (2017) proposed that the crucial attributes of university graduates required for the 21st century are collaboration, social and economic entrepreneurialism, cultural intelligence, persistence, and creativity. Yong Zhao (2017) agreed that smart machines could not realize and exhibit these human characteristics, which makes liberal arts education necessary for the age of machine learning and Artificial Intelligence. A new model for Stanford education has also been proposed. In this new model, the students are expected to couple their disciplinary pursuit with the purpose of learning, with the help of a teaching hub for core competencies such as Scientific Analysis, Quantitative Reasoning, Social Inquiry, Moral and Ethical Reasoning, Aesthetic Interpretation, Creative Confidence, and Communication Effectiveness, etc. (Zha, 2017).

3.4 Challenges for current liberal arts education reform

Although there could be an inclusive version of liberal arts education in the age of globalization, its implementation to many institutions with different system and sizes would still face many challenges. For example, Shi and Lu (2016) argue that liberal arts education cannot be implemented on a large scale, which implies that it serves the elite or the minority. Even in the United States, specialization is highly valued because policymakers and leaders want to ensure that education outcome meet the job market needs – “postsecondary education directly contributes to the economy and produces jobs for graduates immediately upon completion of study” (Godwin & Altbach, 2016, p. 6).

New Challenges

The main challenges for current experimentation with liberal arts education, as Godwin and Altbach (2016) summarized, are quick employment for graduates, financial problems, and a
shortage of qualified faculty in the age of mass higher education. In a world where utilitarianism and neoliberalism dominate, the most important factors for investment in education are the outcomes. As was argued by Logan and Curry (2015), the primary attention in education is paid to what the return on investment should be in a business-minded culture (Logan & Curry, 2015). Liberal arts education, focusing on skills such as writing, logic, independent thought, and whole person cultivation, has no direct return in immediately remunerative employment. In the United States, the value of liberal arts education is still promoted, because “graduates of prestigious liberal arts colleges and research universities, in the American system, benefit from the status of the institutions” (Godwin & Altbach, 2016, p. 14). Technological innovation has had its influence on education and has altered the delivery mode of knowledge for many. MOOCs and other internet involved pedagogy have become prevalent and dominant ways of learning in the current world. This is in contrast with the learning mode or pedagogy of traditional liberal arts education, which focuses on small class teaching and close interaction between students and faculty (Logan & Curry, 2015; Kirby & van der Wende, 2016).

The challenge for China might be a tendency to conformism, which was pointed out by Zha (2017), in that following American peers and imitating Western practices, and also adding courses to the curriculum, has increased the workload of students (Zha, 2017). Kirby (2017) argued that the breakthrough for the implementation of liberal arts education might be autonomy in the institution and freedom in the system.

Obstacles and Resistance

In some countries, there is strong cultural and tradition resistance to Western ideology in liberal arts education. In Japan, “the realization that the moral values of Japanese culture are fundamentally different from the core values typically supported in liberal arts education leads to the conclusion that the application of liberal arts in Japan could create a severe ethical problem” (Etzrodt, Hrebenar, Lacktorin, & Nilson, 2016, p. 80). Autonomy and independent critical thinking might take alternative forms in Japanese society. In India, the overemphasis on global perspectives and global faculty implies the lack of confidence in local culture. The cross-cultural or internationally oriented curriculum is utilized to promote student competitiveness in the international arena. Traditional pedagogy views the teacher as the expert and ultimate authority, which is in sharp contrast with Western teaching that encourages autonomy and independent
thinking with student-centered pedagogy (Modrowski, 2016). In China, balancing between meeting domestic needs and the aspiration of entering global competitive ranking is an obstacle in the process of implementing an inclusive liberal education pedagogy (Postiglione, 2016). The limitation might be its focus on the breadth or interdisciplinary character of the curriculum, not the core essence, or intrinsic value.

4 Educational thought and current higher education trends

4.1 Educational thought development

Social norms and traditional values are passed down from generation to generation. In the same way, education develops and evolves through history while maintaining its central mission. As is stated in the Harvard report (Harvard Committee, 1946):

> Education can therefore be wholly devoted neither to tradition nor to experiment, neither to the belief that the ideal in itself is enough nor to the view that means are valuable apart from the ideal. It must uphold at the same time tradition and experiment, the ideal and the means, subserving, like our culture itself, change within commitment. (p. 51)

The 20th century witnessed dramatic development of higher education around the globe. Higher education experienced the transition from elite education to mass education, and then to universal education, according to Martin Trow, an influential researcher in higher education development (2010). He was the first one who proposed the notion of elite education and mass education in his theory on the development of higher education, which was accepted by both researchers and practitioners. The development or expansion process from elite education to mass education was different in each country according to their unique historical, social, economic, and cultural characteristics. The problems and conflicts around elite education and mass education, or between liberal education and professional or vocational education were long and hotly argued with different stances based on egalitarianism, democracy, and functionalism (Trow, 2010). Even before the expansion of higher education, researchers and scholars had discussed this topic. Thorstein Veblen (2015) had criticized American universities for becoming more secular and utilitarian. The university system in his time was heavily influenced by the business world. This is reflected in his seminal book, *The Higher Learning in America: The Annotated Edition: A Memorandum on the Conduct of Universities by Business Men*, with the first edition published in 1918. Another influential book on this topic is *General Education in A Free Society by the Harvard Committee*, which discussed the educational purpose and the
general education or liberal education needed for a democratic society in which professionalism prevailed and technology developed quickly (Harvard Committee, 1946). These works were published a long time ago, the former almost a century ago, and the latter more than a half century. Yet the problems and situations they discussed are still relevant to the social conditions of this age when there is a trend of economic globalization with the influence of utilitarianism and neoliberalism on education.

China’s higher education expansion was much later than the American and European process. From 1998 to 2008 its enrollment of students expanded almost six-fold. Despite the great accomplishment, many problems became evident after the expansion process (Knight, Deng & Li, 2017). Levin and Xu were also aware of and talked about these problems, such as faculty quality, graduate quality, labor market requirements. (Levin & Xu, 2005). With a special focus, He Yu and Mai Yinhua (2015) studied the employment problems of graduates due to the outdated curriculum, lack of funding, and mismatch between disciplines and the practical needs of society. These studies both examined the existing problems and implied the great need for future reform in the trend and direction of higher education in China. The topics discussed in relation to future trends are as follows: What is the applicable curriculum for current graduates, preparing them for the requirement of globalization? What might be the adequate balance between vocational education and liberal arts education courses? Many scholars have devoted effort to researching liberal arts education in this era of globalization. In the 1990s, with a focus on quality of university graduates coming from government policy, a revival of general education or quality education (the expression for liberal education in the Chinese context) can be found in the elite universities in China, such as Peking and Fudan (Li & Lin, 2003; Jiang, 2014). More recently, Godwin and Pickus (2017) discussed the current reform of liberal arts and science education in China from the aspects of an interdisciplinary study, faculty incentive and development, innovative pedagogy, and drawing on tradition, at this pivotal moment of globalization.

4.2 Tradition and Confucianism

In Chinese tradition and philosophy, there is also deep thought about character development and person-making. The ancient classics and Confucianism teaching were aiming at cultivating civic leaders in humanism. These traditions were in accordance with the goals of liberal arts education
with a focus on faculty mentoring, exploration of a wide-range of ideas, and self-discovery (Godwin & Pickus, 2017). The Four Books (四书), the Five Classics (五经), and the Six Arts (六艺) were regarded as the fundamental curriculum or the basic disciplines for a civilized education in ancient China. The Four Books, including The Great Learning, The Doctrine of the Mean, The Analects, and The Mencius, are collections of sayings and teachings of Confucius and his disciples, which aimed at the cultivation of personal advancement for one’s own self. The Five Classics, including The Classic of Changes, The Classic of History, The Classic of Poetry, The Classic of Rituals, and The Spring and Autumn Annals, are also the core curriculum of the imperial exam. The Six Arts refers to six practical disciplines, including rites, music, archery, chariot racing, calligraphy, and mathematics. These are regarded as skills or capacities that need to be mastered by a well-educated person. It can also be found that the aspects of moral education, academic study, physical education, and social training from the Six Arts, are valuable in liberal arts education (Jiang, 2014). Jiang (2014) maintained that the purpose of ancient education in China was the cultivation of the person towards ultimate moral perfection and an all-round development that could be regarded as “an ancient parallel of liberal arts education” (p. 30).

On the topic of liberal arts education curriculum, De Bary explored the liberal education thought in Confucianism and found it is a universal philosophy (2013). Gu Mingyuan (2001), an outstanding scholar in comparative education in China, emphasized the importance of cultural tradition in education and using it to serve the global community. Gu Mingyuan’s idea is agreed by Robert Neville (2000) with his thoughts elaborated in Boston Confucianism, which proposes that Confucianism should be used for the world community, not confined as an East Asian thought or philosophy, as the ideas of Plato and Aristotle have not been confined within Greek culture. Gan Yang, from Hong Kong University, stated that without the traditional culture, ancient civilization, and Chinese classics, the liberal arts education curriculum is not complete (Lu & Xu, 2007). Therefore, drawing on lessons and insights from historical experience could be helpful for China’s higher education as it moves towards globalization and internationalization. The curriculum design in the Christian universities which included both Western classics and Chinese classics and made a balance between professional and general education should be a good example for the reform today. The Christian universities’ experience of adapting the curriculum into the Chinese context and meeting the social needs at that time should be a highly
significant topic for discussion today as universities face reform and new development trends. That is the main purpose of the thesis.

4.3 Critical opinions of Chinese education and the concept of person-making

Following Project 985 and Project 211, both for enhancing China’s university competitiveness, China launched a new project for higher education development in September 2017, called ‘Double First-Class Plan,’ aiming at building world-class universities and world-class disciplines (Ministry of Education, 2017). This reflected that China wants to enter the League Tables and build its higher education institutions according to the criteria of world-class universities in global university rankings. The success of Shanghai PISA, the remarkable performance of Shanghai students in the 4th Program for International Student Assessment, shows that Shanghai’s education has a leading position in the world (Zhao & Deng, 2016). These facts could be the indicators of China’s education success with tangible statistical figures and easily observed results. However, besides the economic success and professional and technology development in the past few decades made by institutions and researchers, there are also critical opinions on education in China in recent years.

Currently, higher education in China is often criticized as being materialistic and instrumentalized, and students are not taught to be well-rounded, self-aware, ethical and spiritually caring individuals. There is actually a deterioration in morality and spirituality in China. Education wipes out creativity and imagination (Zhao & Deng, 2016). Zhao (2016) argued that “social Darwinism, materialism, and instrumentalism run rampant and dominate the cultural landscape” and the young generation is influenced by an unhealthy worship of utilitarianism and money (p. 166). This is agreed by Jiang’s research (2014) that in three elite universities in Shanghai, the moral and spiritual element in teaching and course content is missing. Jiang (2014) found that although the Chinese government realized the importance of moral education and incorporated political, economic, and social elements into the curriculum, the outcome is not satisfying and there is still a decline of moral responsibility and moral reasoning ability in the public. According to his findings, moral reasoning courses take a very small proportion, only 1%, of the total courses in the three universities in Shanghai. The moral education courses focus on harmony ideology and teaching of political leaders, but miss the traditional values such as filial piety, social justice, honesty, and responsibility (2014). It is
argued by Zhao (2015) that, due to more than a century’s destruction of the cultural traditions in China, education has lost its foundation in person-making and what is a meaningful articulation of a Chinese person or citizen has become vague.

Against this backdrop, there is a revival of debates and critical thoughts about what is underlying China’s education. What can China bring to the world out of its own heritage? Scholars with provocative ideas reflected on Chinese education making “the case that modern Chinese education has been built upon superficial and instrumental embrace of Western modernity and a fragmented appropriation of the Chinese cultural heritage” (Zhao & Deng, 2016, p. xiii). In Confucianism, person-making had been the core value. This concept becomes vague with the adaptation of a Western school system for modernization (Zhao & Deng, 2016). Ke (2016) argued that the notion of person-making and citizen-making has deep roots in Confucianism and proposed that it should be used to strengthen the moral teaching nowadays by regarding Confucianism as an open and dynamic system open to continuous reinterpretation. If applied to today’s practice and teaching, the person-making concept will be beneficial in cultivating rational, autonomous and responsible graduates. From a view of East-West dialogue, Zhao (2016) examined the resonance and convergence of human subjectivity in Western post-humanist philosophy with Chinese tradition. In order to realize the goals of education in China today, that is, to cultivate “a new Chinese person for the flourishing of human beings and for a vibrant society” (p. 180), Zhao argued that a few points relating to cultivating human autonomy should be emphasized in education: respect and responsibility for other human beings and capacity for reason, which could be found in such traditional Confucian values as personal responsibility for self-cultivation, a natural tendency for good and kindness, and a spiritual connection with the beyond.
Chapter 3
Theoretical Framework and Research Methodology

This chapter discusses the conceptual framework and methodology of this thesis. The conceptual framework lies in the understanding of the central mission of education and the intrinsic value of liberal arts education. In this thesis, I utilize a qualitative approach to explore the lessons and insights from the analysis of curriculum documents in four selected Christian universities during three specific periods. The information on educational objectives, curriculum design, and course contents was collected and analyzed for the purpose of understanding the liberal arts education offered by these universities.

1 Theoretical framework

This part explores the core value of education from both historical classics and current research findings. The great ideas from philosophers and educators are examined and discussed. Postmodern theory is also employed to examine educational development and trends. Through these theories and perspectives, I explore what might be the best fit for a version of liberal arts education in China.

1.1 The central mission of education

The central mission of education has been discussed and explored by scholars and educators over generations. Great minds such as Plato, Martin Luther, Erasmus, and Newman provided us with enduring classics about goals of education. Philosophers and educators in ancient China had also left us with a rich legacy of culture and tradition.

There is indeed common ground for the universal values and social ethics in every society, that is, the quest for truth and virtue and the cultivation of a responsible, wise, and virtuous citizen, which is the ultimate goal and mission of education. The educational goal and pedagogy expressed in the classical works bear a considerable similarity and are in conformity through history. The values and standards expressed are all about the training and cultivation of a good citizen for the purpose of a harmonious society. As Plato proposed in Republic, the cultivation of a responsible, wise, and virtuous citizen is the ultimate goal and mission of education (Cahn, 2011). What children hear at the very beginning of their life should be stories “adopted in the most perfect manner to the promotion of virtue” (Cahn, 2011, p. 50). Martin Luther also pointed
out that the purpose of education should be “for the maintenance of civil order and the proper regulation of the household” by cultivating “well-trained men and women” (Painter, 1889, p. 196), which is acquired through study of the Bible and the learning of other classics, as well as science and arts. Erasmus (1936) emphasized the cultivation of noble character, including wisdom, a sense of justice, foresight, and concern for the public well-being. He viewed these as essential qualities for a Christian prince, which could also be applied to the education of ordinary people.

In the 19th century, Newman (1992) argued about the ideal education in a university. He maintained education for knowledge’s sake, and that religion should be an integral part of knowledge. Liberal knowledge makes the “Gentleman” (a civilized citizen in today’s term). According to Newman, a university should be a place for teaching universal knowledge through liberal learning rather than vocational or professional instruction. The purpose of university education is to cultivate the outlook, creative mind, way of thinking, and social and civic interaction capacity. He emphasized the importance of theology for moral training and regarded it as a science of sciences, which should be an integral part of university education (Newman, 1992).

In the classic Harvard report, it is stated that the mission of American education is to cultivate a democratic citizen for the society. It reiterated that “the goal of education is not in conflict with but largely includes the goals of religious education, education in the Western tradition, and education in modern democracy” (Harvard Committee, 1946, p. 46). The purpose of education is not only to impart knowledge but also for the training of the mind with certain aptitudes and attitudes. These abilities include thinking effectively, communicating thought, making relevant judgments, and discriminating among values. The importance of vocational skills is emphasized in this report, which is different from the idea of Newman. It is stated that “the aim of education should be to prepare an individual to become an expert both in some particular vocation or art and in the general art of the free man (person) and the citizen” (Harvard Committee, 1945, p. 65). The general education should be accessible to all social classes in a democratic society. This is the essence of the Harvard report.

Contemporary scholars and researchers are also examining the aim goals of education. Brighouse, Ladd, Loeb, and Swift (2016) summarized the goals of education in six aspects. The
six educational goods are economic productivity, autonomy, democratic competence, healthy personal relationships, treating others as equals, and personal fulfillment. This is agreed by Paul T. Begley (2008) who classified the purposes of education into three aspects: aesthetic purposes, economic purposes, and ideological purposes or socialization functions. From the points of view of these scholars, education serves as a way of cultivating a whole person who will flourish in a democratic society. Besides the training of minds and attitudes with moral standards, creativity, and social democratic competency, education also has the function of fostering economic productivity. This refers to the mastery of skills for a specific profession, which could help a person to maintain economic independence and make a living in a modern democratic society.

From the discussion on education from ancient times to the present, we can find that the core value or central mission of education has been kept and passed down, that is, the cultivation of a whole person or personal flourishing. In ancient times, education was more focused on the cultivation of minds for the ruling class in a slaving-owning society where there were freemen, the ruling class, and slaves, the oppressed. Education in the classics were designed for the ruling class. The goal of education was to cultivate a ruler or leader. The professional or vocational skills were not important, or necessary for the free person, but were specially designed for the slaves. However, in a democratic society, everybody is supposed to work and cooperate with others. The professional skills have become an unavoidable part of education for everybody. The liberal education and vocational education should be combined to cultivate a whole person in contemporary society. A citizen is supposed to work with specific skills, exhibit creative thinking for addressing complicated problems, and have a sense of social responsibility and high moral standards. Therefore, an educated person could make contributions to the society and serve others in need. In this sense, economic productivity, democratic competence, moral reasoning, and social responsibility are inseparable parts in the purpose of education in a modern society.

1.2 The intrinsic value of liberal arts education

Liberal arts education, originated from Greco-Roman society, has evolved and developed in different societies. The liberal arts curriculum has changed greatly. In the beginning, it was focused on the trivium and quadrivium. Classics and Christian ethics were later added, and the arts, humanities, sciences, and social sciences have formed its core curriculum since the 20th
century. Despite the changes in curriculum, the intrinsic value of training the mind has been kept and remains important. The subjects and courses are offered for the purpose of cultivating the mind and for character formation, not for obtaining knowledge itself.

Liberal arts education in the classical Greek model is focused on the trivium and the quadrivium. It places importance on seeking freedom of a person’s mind. The main aim of liberal arts education is the formation of morality and civilization (Jiang, 2014). In 13th century Europe, the tradition of trivium and quadrivium was kept as a foundation for education in universities. Students would then proceed with more advanced learning in medicine, law, philosophy, and theology. The liberal arts education at that time focused on seven arts, classics, religious studies, and moral education. These would contribute to the cultivation of English “gentlemen” – educated persons or citizens in today’s term (Jiang, 2014).

In 17th century American society, the central purpose of college and university education was to train Christian citizens. To reach this purpose, the curriculum of liberal arts education in these colleges and universities included mathematics, logic, classic, rhetoric, and Christian ethics (Harvard Committee, 1946). In the 1828 Yale report it is argued that besides the liberal arts and sciences, the knowledge of ancient of Greek and Latin was the foundation for a liberal education to cultivate the proper character of an educated person (Yale Report, 1828). Coming to the 19th century, the German research model posed a challenge for the tradition of liberal arts education with the founding of John Hopkins University and the University of Chicago. The emphasis was placed on natural and applied science. However, some traditional universities, such as Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, still kept the tradition of liberal arts education with courses focusing on classical languages, philosophy, ethics, and other humanitarian studies. A strong Christian spirit was at the core of the education purpose in the early American universities (Jiang, 2014). As discussed above, Newman’s primary goal of education is for the cultivation of mind, not for the acquisition of useful information or applied skills for a particular occupation in life. He reiterated the importance of religious education as the base of general knowledge, which provides the ethos and the fundamental framework for education (Newman, 1992).

In the 20th century, there were reforms and changes in liberal arts education in the United States. The University of Chicago issued a new curriculum consisting of 14 year-long comprehensive courses, each integrating a basic field: the physical, biological, and social sciences and the
humanities to encourage a wide breadth of knowledge (Jiang, 2014). In 1945, the Harvard Report – *General Education for a Free Society* came out and has been regarded as the classic work of liberal arts education or general education since then. The report was a collective work of scholars in Harvard who studied the educational trend and made plans for general education in American society. It recommended the core curriculum for general education, consisting of the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences, for the purpose of cultivating the abilities of thinking effectively, communicating thought, making relevant judgments, and discriminating among values (Harvard Committee, 1946).

In today’s society, the central tenet of liberal arts education is to prepare graduates with creative minds and innovation ability to address complex problems and issues in this world of diversity and changes. It aimed at cultivating the capabilities of creative thinking, problem-solving, analysis, communication, global citizenship, and a sense of social responsibility (Jiang, 2014). From the education development and change, we could find that liberal arts education has been focusing on training the mind and the formation of character since its very beginning. With the development of society, different versions of classics, humanities, or arts are adopted to reach this goal. In its core, liberal arts education has a strong religious background as well. Christian education was for the purpose of moral training. Liberal arts education is indispensable for preparing a flourishing life in a democratic society, and the purpose of a university is to bring about a moral, intellectual, and spiritual transformation. Therefore, cultivating global citizens with an inclusive mindset, innovation, and problem-solving skills, and social responsibility are the requirements for a modern version liberal arts education. From this perspective, I will examine the liberal arts education offered in China’s Christian universities. I will analyze what has been lost in the current education reform and thus bring suggestions for the current situation in China. Therefore, I will justify the statement that liberal arts education has been keeping its essence and intrinsic value since the very beginning while allowing changes to its curriculum.

1.3 The value of education in Chinese tradition

As is discussed in the literature review, the values in tradition and philosophy in ancient China are focusing on Confucianism with the mission of person-making, or self-exploration and cultivation. A well-educated person is called a *Junzi* (君子). His social responsibility was to help the emperor to rule and manage the country. This resonates with the ancient liberal art education
mission of a civilized person (Jiang, 2014). The value of Confucian classics for today’s education has been examined by scholars such as De Bary and Tu Wei-ming.

De Bary (2013) examined the Confucian value of an educated person in his book *The Great Civilized Conversation*. He found that there was a strong sense of self-fulfillment in Neo-Confucianism. According to the educational thought of Zhu Xi, the aim of education is for the sake of one’s self, or learning to be oneself, not for pleasing others. Zhu Xi placed a high value on self-understanding and self-fulfillment (p. 109). De Bary (2013) also observed the concept of personalism in Neo-Confucianism which involves the autonomy of mind, self-consciousness, critical awareness, creative thought, and independent judgment. Besides the person-making element, the sense of broad learning or broad inquiry could also be found in Zhu Xi’s thought. The approach to higher learning is liberal, and broad inquiry or tolerance should be the starting place of learning (De Bary, 2013).

Tu Wei-ming (1998) discussed the importance of Confucianism in current society for counteracting the influences of materialism and utilitarianism. He proposed that Chinese universities have the responsibility to bring Confucian humanism to the global community. Confucian thought aims at cultivating the whole person and developing human nature, with the final goal of moral perfection (Jiang, 2014). This heritage is very important for the current education reform towards culture quality education or general education in China.

These discussions provide us an angle to probe into the education in different societies and cultures. The central mission of education and intrinsic value of liberal arts education are kept consistent in their focus on the cultivation of a civilized person with high moral standards and social responsibility, that is, the whole person. For today’s society, what we need is a person cultivated in an all-round way. He or she must attain basic values and adapt to the complicated demands of this global community with social responsibility. The educational values in China's Confucian classics have much in common with Western educational ideology. These provoke our deep thinking and further exploration about the essence of education and should be kept as the standard and criteria for today’s education reform when educators and policymakers make changes to educational policy and curriculum design.
1.4 Postmodernism in education

Postmodern theory argues that the truth or reality is not fixed but contingent and Western ideology is not the universal truth. The understanding of culture, ways of knowing, and modernization should not be confined within Western epistemology. Gu Mingyuan (2001) argued that there might be an alternative way of realizing modernization for China with its distinctive tradition and history. With the same stance, Neville (2000) proposed that Confucianism should be used for the world community, not as an East Asian philosophy, based on the idea that Plato and Aristotle’s thought was not confined in Greek culture. Rust (1991) argued against the totalitarian nature of metanarratives by claiming that “legitimate narratives ought to open the world to individuals and society, providing forms of analysis that express and articulate differences and that encourage critical thinking … for constructive action” (p. 616). The criteria of knowledge and varied ways of knowing are also the focus of debate and argument among modernists. Masemann (1990) strongly contended that the legitimacy of varied ways of knowing should be supported. In the case of liberal arts education, the Western ideology of autonomy and citizenship in a democratic society have become the metanarratives. Student-centered pedagogy and American liberal arts curriculum are widely recognized as the legitimated way of knowing to realize the goal of whole person education. To better understand the essence of liberal arts education, the metanarratives and dominance of the West in ways of knowing need to be challenged.

In this section, I draw on postmodern theory to examine the role and identity of liberal arts education in the 21st century. Liberal arts education, with its roots in Western culture and an ideology of autonomy and democracy, should not necessarily lead to homogeneity in every culture in the age of globalization when cultural diversity and multi-models are encouraged and advocated. In education, the Western model is neither more applicable nor more advanced than those of other cultures and traditions. Hence, it is not appropriate to copy and reproduce it in another culture without any adaptation and localization process. Actually, the way of exact copy or borrowing is contradictory to the spirit of liberal arts education which advocates creativity and autonomy. Liberal arts education has experienced the adaptation and changing process of removing classics, adding new elements, and reducing the emphasis on theology and religious education from its beginning in the American context. Its maturation is signified by its adaptability while keeping its essence. As is proposed by Shi and Lu (2016), the key advice for
exploring a new model of liberal arts education might be “to avoid conformism, to encourage innovation, and maintain diversity” (p. 39). Therefore, in different cultures, liberal arts education could integrate local and traditional values to reach its goal of whole person education, with its essence of interdisciplinary mode, a broad range of knowledge, creative thinking, and moral cultivation retained, for a global society.

Based on the understanding of postmodernism, liberal arts education experimentation in some countries has been confronted with local culture and tradition, because the elements of Western democracy and autonomy might not be compatible with local ethical standards. Hong Kong established its liberal arts education model based its own special context and historical experience, which is very different from that of mainland China. In the Chinese context, the cultivation of a noble person and the idea of harmony from the Confucian tradition may be kept and carried on as a cultural heritage into the new curriculum of liberal arts education. Modrowski (2016) argued that in the case of Indian institutions, students are faced with a critical examination of their home culture; hence, it is suggested that international faculty and Indian faculty with degrees from abroad be hired to enhance the cross-cultural dialogue. I would argue that in this case, the Westernization of curriculum and pedagogy is not a guarantee for the fulfillment of liberal arts education. Adhering to the mission and essence of liberal arts education and not conforming to the external form, a new version of liberal arts education might be realized in India with the recognition and inclusion of local culture. Researchers from Japan contended that in most non-Western (non-Protestant) cultures the core element of autonomy is not highly valued (Etzrodt, Hrebenar, Lacktorin, & Nilson, 2016). In Japanese society, graduates with their autonomous mind and critical thinking might cause severe ethical problems and be regarded as troublemakers in the society. In this sense, the liberal education, which is supposed to cultivate a free person, actually hinders the autonomy and free communication in Japanese society in which authority and seniority are respected. The liberal education transported from America could not offer “free” education to cultivate a responsible citizen in Japan. Involving local culture and traditional elements is imperative in the adaptation of liberal arts education in other contexts. Therefore, justifying liberal arts education in a non-Western culture “based on the claim of universalism appears to be ethnocentric” (Etzrodt, Hrebenar, Lacktorin, & Nilson, 2016, p. 81). Adaptability and portability should be the real strength of liberal arts education. As Logan and Curry (2015) claimed that “the strength of the American liberal arts tradition has been a
capacity for adaptability, flexibility, and diversity in form that remains subject to institutional mission” (p.70), I argue that the strength of a 21st century liberal arts education lies in keeping its essence of cultivating a civilized global citizen through its inclusivity and diversity in forms to embrace indigenous culture and traditional values around the globe.

With the above mentioned educational goals and aims as the essence of liberal arts education and the perspective and angle we took towards it, I will analyze the liberal arts education curriculum in Christian universities and discuss what might be a good version of liberal arts education for the current time to reach this goal and mission.

2 Research methodology and methods

In this section, research methodology and methods are discussed. Frist, the approach chosen for the study and the justification are discussed. Then the steps of this research are stated. This section then ends with the evaluation of the strength and weakness of the methodology.

2.1 Qualitative document analysis and secondary literature

Qualitative Document Analysis

In terms of document analysis, this research focused on analyzing the archival documents of the former Christian universities, which are preserved in the Yale Divinity School Library. I collected the documents focusing on academics, which includes the information on the educational goals, history, curriculum design, and course content. I am fortunate to be able to get access to these documents online due to the digitalized form. The study and analysis of these documents could bring us a picture about the historical facts of education in these Christian universities in China, as is stated in the website of the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia:

The early leaders of Christian colleges and universities in Asia demonstrated their commitment to education that was both intellectually rich and of service to society. A visit to the United Board archives, either virtually or in person, is a reminder that their vision found expression in the day-to-day business of managing an institution in changing times, a lesson as relevant today as it was 90 years ago. (The United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia, n.d.).

However, due to the limited resources preserved and the scope of this thesis, I have chosen four sample universities as representatives with selected years to analyze in depth. To analyze the
curriculum information and have a complete overview of the liberal arts education offered nearly a century ago, I use first-hand data and secondary literature. Secondary literature is used to provide information about the background and history. The method of sample selection is purposive sampling. I chose four representatives from the 13 Protestant universities, based on their location and features. Three years for each university are purposively selected based on the review of literature that showed there were three important periods in their development.

Below is a map of the geography of China in 1945 on which I marked the location of the four sample universities. The location of Ginling Women’s College is marked as 1, and Yenching University 2, Lingnan University 3, West China Union University 4, respectively.

![Map of China 1945 with university locations](http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USMC/V/maps/USMC-V-32.jpg)

*Figure 1. The geographic location of the four sample universities. Adapted from The Public's Library and Digital Archive, n.d., Retrieved April 7, 2018, from http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USMC/V/maps/USMC-V-32.jpg. Adapted with permission.*
The four sample universities selected are one women’s college – Ginling Women’s College, two comprehensive universities – Yenching University in the north and Lingnan University in the south, and a comprehensive university with a strong medical college – West China Union University in the hinterland. The four universities had their own distinctive features both in terms of geographical location and the special focus of their academic programs and disciplines. I selected three years from each sample to analyze. It is discussed in the literature review that the development of the Christian universities can be classified into three stages: the primary period before secularization, the secularization process with the influence of the student movement and government registration, and the development after the Sino-Japanese war with the impact of after-war planning. The selected years include one year around 1920, one year in the 1930s, and one year after 1945 for all the four universities.

The details of the selected years are as follows: Ginling Women’s College, 1919, 1933, and 1946; Yenching University, 1920, 1938, and 1947; Lingnan University, 1919, 1937, and 1946; West China Union University, 1919, 1935, and 1945.

By analyzing the curriculum and teaching objectives of the selected years of the sample universities, I intend to find out the special characteristics of the courses offered in different times according to the analysis in the literature review section. I also want to find out the liberal arts education elements from the curriculum of these universities in the first half of the 20th century. These would provide material and information for further discussion under the theoretical framework and through the lens of postmodern theory, which will serve for the research purpose of finding some insights for today’s revival of liberal arts education or whole person education in China’s elite universities in the time of globalization under the influences of neoliberalism and utilitarianism.

2.2 Rationale for the methodology and method used

Based on the questions I want to explore and discuss, it is a good fit that qualitative study of interviews or document analysis can provide adequate answers. I want to know what the curriculum and courses are, and how they are different from the American liberal arts education. I want to further explore what we can learn from this adaptation process for today’s whole person education or general education reform. Therefore, I want to find out the curriculum and course information to do analysis and exploration. Considering the fact that these universities
were closed down in mainland China nearly 70 years ago, it is very difficult to find the graduates from these universities to do interviews. The last group of graduates who graduated in the late 1940s are in their advanced years, over 90, if they are still alive today. It would also be difficult to find enough participants to do a survey. Therefore, I decided to search for historical documents that are preserved. In order to keep the research manageable and doable, I have chosen a purposive sample for study and analysis instead of analyzing the whole data set of 13 universities.

2.3 Strength and weakness

The strength of the approach is that the data are from real documents and present genuine information about the universities near a century ago. The faithfulness and validity are guaranteed. The weakness is that this was only the mission and curriculum design as written in the historical documents. Without feedback or evaluation from the society, the alumni, and educational administrators, it is hard to measure exactly how the mission and goals were implemented in practical teaching and how they impacted the students on their character formation and professional development at that time. If surveys and interviews could be used to corroborate the findings from document analysis, the validity of this research could be enhanced. Another weakness of this research lies in the scope and the selection of the samples. A specific year in their history could not fully demonstrate the holistic situation of their development and change. However, despite the weakness, it is still useful and meaningful to do this research, because, this research provides us a glimpse of the education offered in specific periods of history, which will help us to understand their contribution and learn some lessons from this historical experience.
Chapter 4 
Data Analysis and Key Findings

This chapter discusses the data of the four chosen sample universities from the aspects of their history and development, mission and goal, and curriculum and course contents in three different periods. The detailed curriculum design and course information are collected and examined. The four universities were founded by different denominational societies, but with the same goal and mission of promoting Christianity and cultivating graduates with a spirit of service for China’s social development. The curriculum in these universities was developed over time. At the beginning, it was focused on Christianity and was similar to that of the small denominational colleges in the United States. With the government registration and anti-Christian movement in the 1920s, the curriculum expanded with practical and professional courses added. During the Japanese war, 1937 to 1945, the teaching and normal activities on campus were greatly influenced. Three of the four universities were relocated to the hinterland and remote provinces which the war had not affected. Students joined into other universities to take classes and study. Normal teaching resumed on their former campus when the war ended and faculty and students moved back.

According to the findings of Lutz (1971), at the beginning period, before 1910, the curriculum of these universities was essentially “a combination of literary Chinese, English, mathematics and the sciences, religion, and a little history and philosophy” (p. 174). With the development in scale, after 1915, most schools offered curriculum with a system of majors, minors, and electives. The most commonly provided majors were sciences, social sciences, Western languages and literature, and religion. The degrees conferred were Bachelor of Science degree and Bachelor of Arts degree. Some of the colleges were offering professional and vocational education (Lutz, 1971). However, this was not the focus of their mission and goal, because the Christian schools and colleges were funded by the missionary societies, with the aim of promoting the growth of Protestantism in China. They would not be willing to spend mission money to cultivate engineers, agriculturalists, lawyers, and the like (Lutz, 1971). Therefore, the vocational education was not a focus at the beginning in most of the Christian universities but was developed after the 1930s with the process of sinification and secularization.
The curriculum in these universities mostly followed the Western curriculum. English, Chinese, and Religion were among the core courses of all the four universities. The other common courses offered were Philosophy, History, Physics, and Chemistry. Lutz (1971) also argued that the overcrowding of the curriculum was a problem. At that time the standard number of semester hours in most American higher institutions was 120 hours. In Christian colleges in China, this number ranged from 128 to 163 in the year of 1926. Over half of them required more than 150 hours for graduation. This is due to the fact that a large number of class hours were spent on a foreign language, English (Lutz, 1971).

1 Ginling Women’s College

1.1 History and development

The establishing of Ginling Women’s College was promoted by the leaders for women’s education in China, with the thought that there was a need for higher education for women in the Yangtze Valley area (The Board of Control of Ginling College, 1919). With this initiation, five Mission Boards approved the plan and supported with funding which covered the equipment, teachers’ salaries, and other expenses. With the first president appointed in November 1913, the College opened on September 17, 1915 (The Board of Control of Ginling College, 1919). There were eight students and six teachers at the opening ceremony (Thurston & Chester, 1956). The first class of five graduated in June 1919 (The Board of Control of Ginling College, 1919).

In the following years, the college developed gradually. In 1921, there were altogether sixteen faculty members, including eleven American teachers and five Chinese teachers. The American teachers took the responsibility of administrative work and offering courses in the departments of biology, education, English, history, mathematics, modern languages, physics, psychology, and religion. The Chinese teachers taught the courses in Chinese, music, and physical education (Thurston & Chester, 1956). In 1925, the Normal School of Physical Education in Shanghai, under the governing of the YMCA, merged with Ginling Women’s College, which brought in sixteen students and four faculty members (one British and three Chinese). The physical education in Ginling Women’s College expanded and made progress (The Board of Directors of Ginling College, 1933).
In 1928, Ginling Women’s College welcomed its first Chinese President, Dr. Wu Yi-fang, who was one of the first graduates in 1919 and then furthered education in the United States and completed her doctoral degree there. This was not only a special and significant event for Ginling but for the whole of China with its symbolic importance for women’s education. In 1930, Ginling completed the government registration following other Christian universities, such as, Nanking University, the University of Shanghai, Soochow University, Yenching University, and Huachung Christian University (Thurston & Chester, 1956). After that, the department of religion was closed down.

Entering the 1930s, the College was expanded with new dormitory space built. In 1936, the student number reached 259. At this time, there were twelve departments, including biology, chemistry, Chinese, economics, English, history, music, philosophy, physical education, physics and mathematics, and political science and sociology. The minors were offered in such subjects as education, eugenics, geography, hygiene, and psychology (Thurston & Chester, 1956).

The Japanese war which started in 1937 devastated the city of Nanjing. The students of Ginling Women’s College had to relocate to Shanghai, Wuchang, and Chengdu. In the three places, the students joined other Christian universities as guest students. For example, a large number of students were in Shanghai, joining St. John’s University and the University of Shanghai. Another group joined Huachung Christian University in Wuchang (part of the city Wuhan). A small number of students joined the West China Union University in Chengdu. The campus of Ginling Women’s College in Nanjing became a refugee center (Thurston & Chester, 1956). After the war, in September of 1946, the school reopened in Nanjing on its former campus (The Board of Directors of Ginling College, 1947).

In 1949, after the Communist government took power, large-scale curriculum changes were made. The students and faculty in universities in Nanking were required to attend intensive study of the History of Social Development under the ideology of the Communist party. After that, the whole country was influenced by the anti-American propaganda of the new government. In the national reorganization of higher education institutions, Ginling was required to merge with the University of Nanking, to form the new National Jinling University. After the amalgamation, the faculty continued to work in the new institution, which influenced the new institution and students with the spirit and ideals of Ginling Women's College. (Thurston & Chester, 1956)
1.2 Mission and goal

The establishment of Ginling Women’s College was for the purpose of cultivating Christian women leaders for China by offering all-round education strengthening their character, deepening purpose, and inspiring to the fuller consecration of life (Thurston & Chester, 1956). The graduates were expected to work and serve as leaders in every aspect of life, such as social, economic, educational, and religious fields. The purpose of education was clearly stated in its mission statement:

> For the furtherance of the cause of Christ in China; for the advance in education necessary to provide trained leadership; for the education of Christian women for Christian service; and for the promotion of higher education under Christian influence this college is founded. (The Board of Control of Ginling College, 1919, p. 9)

With the emphasis on character formation in its goal, the college guided its classroom instruction and out-of-class activities in accordance with this focus. The model of liberal arts education for women was claimed in its mission statement. This mission was implemented through its curriculum. Its objective was not to give a narrowly specialized training, but a broad and liberal education. This was formed through a balanced understanding of the many fields of human knowledge and thought. As a college for women, Ginling also paid attention to certain fields and profession in which women could make a special contribution and needed special training, such as home economics. This goal determined its curriculum design.

After the government registration, which was required for secular education purposes as stated in Chapter Two, its mission was stated as follows:

> (Ginling) shall conform to the highest standards of educational efficiency, promote social welfare and high ideals of citizenship, and develop the highest type of character, in accordance with the original purpose of the five Christian Boards which were its founders. (The Board of Control of Ginling College, 1933, p. 3)

In the next three parts, I present the detailed information on its courses and try to find out how the curriculum design reflected its mission and goal of liberal arts education.

1.3 Curriculum in 1919

In the school year 1919-1920, all the subjects were taught in the English language except Chinese courses. There students were studying the courses titled Chinese, English Literature and Rhetoric, Religion, Life of Christ, Hygiene, and Drawing. There were two major groups at this
time, a scientific group with special courses in chemistry and mathematics, and a philosophical group with courses in psychology and English history (Thurston & Chester, 1956). This year, seventeen new students were matriculated.

Table 1

*The credit requirement for the school year of 1919-1920 at Ginling Women’s College*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Philosophical Group</th>
<th>Scientific Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Courses</td>
<td>Credits (points)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* Adapted from *Bulletin of Ginling College Nanking, China, 1919*, by The Board of Control of Ginling College, 1919. Divinity Library Yale University.

In Table 1 one point equals one semester hour. From the common course requirement for students of the first two years, we can find that a heavy percentage of credits was placed on the common core courses, Chinese, English, and Religion, which took over half of the total credits (46 out of 75). The weight of Chinese was heavier than English, with credits of 20 and 16 respectively. The elective courses, which added up to eight points, had to be chosen from the opposite group, that is, the philosophical group had to choose elective courses from the scientific group, and vice versa. At this time, religious courses were required for all students, which was mainly on Christian education.
I examined the Chinese course contents they offered. The Chinese courses including the following:

Table 2

*Chinese Courses offered in Ginling Women's College*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Contents</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Chinese Language</td>
<td>A study of the sources, development, and structure of the written language. Phonetics and Study of Words.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese History</td>
<td>A study of history from the standpoint of the political, social, economic, and cultural changes in the life of the Chinese as a nation and emphasizing the causal relation between the events as well as their moral significance.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Classics</td>
<td>a. The Four Books. A study of the ideas of the Confucian system and of their influence on the family, the state, and society at large.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. The Five Classics. A study of the manners, customs, and beliefs of pre-Confucian society.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History and Chinese Literature</td>
<td>A study of the development of prose and poetry in relation to their cultural history.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Philosophy</td>
<td>A general study of Chinese scientific and ethical thought.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composition in Modern Style</td>
<td>Subjects related to the studies of the college course, and to matters of practical importance in every day life will be assigned, with the aim of training the student in the expression of ideas in good modern style and contributing to the modern</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Spoken Chinese  | Regular class exercises in speaking on assigned or selected subjects with the aim of training students in the use of good Mandarin and in public speaking. |
---|---|---|---|

*Note:* Adapted from *Bulletin of Ginling College Nanking, China, 1919*, by The Board of Control of Ginling College, 1919. Divinity Library Yale University.

From Table 2, we can find that in the Chinese courses, the objective was not only focused on language training, i.e. teaching how to write in Chinese. It also added the contents of Chinese classics, including the Four Books and the Five Classics, Chinese Philosophy, Poetry and Ancient Literature, etc. These courses were aimed at training students to have a broad and profound knowledge about the Chinese tradition and culture, which prepared them well for the society where they lived. These traditional values in Confucianism also had the influence or function of character training and cultivating a good person, who would offer service to society, according to what I discussed in the literature review section.

The courses in religion were based on Christianity. They included the Life of Christ, the Growth of Christianity, the Preparation of Christianity, the Social and Ethical Teaching of Jesus, etc. It is also explicitly stated in the course objectives that religion was taught not as pure knowledge but for the cultivation of character.

The Bible is the only textbook used in the department. One of the aims in each course is to help the student to obtain a clear, accurate first-hand knowledge of its contents. Collateral reading is required in order that the message and spirit of the Biblical writers may be better understood and appreciated and serve as a basis for future study or service. Study in this department will be pursued on the assumption that God has supplied no substitute for intellectual application, but also that the imparting of knowledge is valueless unless it leads to the development of character. (The Board of Control of Ginling College, 1919, p. 28)

From the statement above, we can find that much importance is attached to the study of Chinese, English, and religious courses. From the course objective, we find that moral training, the learning of social ethics, and the formation of character are the key elements in the common core courses.
This was the information on curriculum and course content in the beginning years of Ginling. Although many courses were listed as an option, the opening of a course was up to the availability of faculty and the number of students who chose this course (The Board of Control of Ginling College, 1919). We can find that at this time basic courses were Chinese, English, and Religion. Students were classified into two groups, the philosophical group and the scientific group. Although each group had their own focus of study, they were also supposed to have elective courses chosen from the other side to ensure the students had a broad range of knowledge.

1.4 Curriculum in 1933

The college was registered with the Nationalist government in December 1930, which influenced its curriculum design by a secular turn. The enrollment for the school year 1931-1932 was the highest in the history of the college, 192. The two groups, philosophical group and scientific group, were changed into two majors, Arts / Social Science and Science. The degree conferred was Bachelor of Arts for all students.

Table 3

Courses for the first two years in Ginling Women’s College in 1933

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Majoring in Arts or Social Science</th>
<th>Majoring in Science</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Courses</td>
<td>Credits (points)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hygiene</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses</td>
<td>Credits (points)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hygiene</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 1.5 Curriculum in 1947

After the Japanese war, the teaching in Ginling Women’s College resumed in September of 1946 on its former campus. In 1947, it kept on developing and reconstituting itself. At this time, there were the following nine departments: Chinese Department, English Department, History Department, Music Department, Sociology Department, Biology Department, Chemistry Department, Home Economics Department, and Geography Department.

The College reopened in 1946 during a difficult time. No printed versions of curriculum documents for the year 1947 were available; however, there existed some hand-written course tables for some majors in this semester. These tables give a sense of the courses taught in that year. Therefore, I collected the curriculum information for the major of Home Economics from the course tables to analyze. As is stated in the documents, the home economics department was

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Science Survey</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Science Survey</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Adapted from *Bulletin of Ginling College Nanking, China, 1933-1935*, by The Board of Directors of Ginling College, 1933. Divinity Library Yale University.*

During this time, we can find that the courses offered were broader in disciplines with the development of faculties and departments, and it was also because of the secularization process. Besides Chinese and English, more common cores courses were offered for both groups, such as Fine Arts, Hygiene, Psychology, and Physical Education. Chinese and English were still on the list of the common core courses, but there are also some changes and modifications. The weight on Chinese courses had been reduced from 20 points to 12 points. The weight on English courses stayed the same. Religious courses were removed from the required common core courses.
established in the fall of 1940 and very soon became one of the most popular departments (Thurston & Chester, 1956).


Although the religious courses were removed from the curriculum. I find ethics was a required course for freshman student at this time, which was used to cultivate moral reasoning and character formation.

2 Yenching University

2.1 History and development

In 1919, Yenching University was founded with the collaboration of a group of Christian educational institutions located in Beijing and the vicinity. This group of missionary institutions included: the Peking University of the Methodist Mission with its affiliated Departments of Theology and Medicine, the North China Union College (for men) at Tongzhou, the North China Union Women’s College at Beijing, the North China Union Theological College at Beijing, the North China Union Medical College at Beijing, and the North China Union Women’s Medical College at Beijing. In 1911, with the collapse of the Qing dynasty, Christian leaders tried to find opportunities to collaborate in promoting higher education and enhance the unification of mission institutions. At last Yenching University was founded on the basis of collaboration and amalgamation of various missionary institutions (Edwards, 1959).

The history of Christian institutions can be traced back to the 19th century. In 1888, the Methodist Mission decided to build a university with the English name of Peking University and in Chinese as Hwei-Wen Shu-Yuan – Confluence of Culture College. In 1892 a Bachelor of Arts degree was conferred on the first five men graduates from the Arts College. Girls’ schools started in the late 19th century when modern education was being offered by missionaries in Beijing. In
1905, North China Union Women’s College was organized on an interdenominational basis and the first class graduated in 1909 (Edward, 1959).

In 1916 the new Peking University had a faculty number of 29, of which 16 were of professional rank and 13 of teaching track. The total student enrollment was 178 that year. In 1919, the University was united after the reorganization with several institutions. Its Chinese name was decided as Yenching University (Peking University, 1920). Dr. J. Leighton Stuart became the first and only longstanding President of this university. The university was managed under the leadership of Dr. Stuart with his dream university mission implemented on the basis of the following factors: its Christian purpose, its academic standards and vocational courses, its relation to the Chinese environment and contribution to international understanding and good will, its financial resources and physical equipment (Edward, 1959). Early in the year of 1920, the North China Union Women’s College became an integral part of the University as its College of Arts and Science for Women, which propelled the further development of Yenching University (Peking University, 1920).

In 1925, the English name of the University was changed from Peking University to Yenching University, conforming to its Chinese name. In 1926 the new campus outside the city was put into use, and the faculty and equipment moved in. The new campus was built with traditional Chinese style architecture, which was in sharp contrast with Western style buildings for government sectors and public universities at that time. By adopting the Chinese style, Yenching was dedicated to fulfilling its mission of preserving the best in Chinese culture even if the buildings cost more (Edward, 1959). Although there were many handicaps throughout this turbulent time, the University generally expanded with more faculty and course offerings across new departments. In the spring of 1930, to meet the new regulations of the Ministry of Education, the undergraduate division was separated into three colleges: the College of Arts and Letters, the College of Natural Sciences, and the College of Public Affairs.

During the Japanese war from 1937 to 1945, the teaching at Yenching University was affected. It was safe from the war and remained an oasis of academic freedom in a desert of military control during the first period of the war from 1937 to 1941. The Japanese army did not take over the campus because of its connections with the U.S. and British missionaries. In 1942, Yenching was reopened in Chongqing because of the war influence in Beijing. After the ending of Japanese war
in 1945, Yenching resumed teaching in its former campus, with reduced student number (Edwards, 1959).

In 1946 a fundamental change took place in Yenching’s leadership when Dr. Stuart left to take up the role of ambassador of the United States in China. In the early 1950s, Yenching was closed down and divided in the national reorganization of higher institutions. Its campus was taken by the new Peking University (Edward, 1959).

2.2 Mission and goal

Because of its background and funding, Yenching was a university with a Christian background. Funded by Christian Churches of the West, the University aimed at offering the best quality of intellectual and religious leadership for China. It also aimed at cultivating graduates who would make a contribution to the building of a new China. In this sense, a focus on service and social responsibility informed its mission. It is stated in the mission and goal in the following way:

```
    Peking University aims to inculcate Christian truth and to lead its students to an intelligent wholehearted acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. The aim of Peking University is to train Men and Women of the spirit and quality that can create a new China. (Peking University, 1920, p.15)
```

2.3 Curriculum in 1920

In 1920, the newly organized Yenching University included five groups of study, with many departments under each group.

Table 4

Groups of study and departments in Yenching University in 1920

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups of Study</th>
<th>Departments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language and literature group</td>
<td>Department of Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sub-department of Japanese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Department of English (Men’s College, Women’s College)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Department of European Languages and Literature (German, French)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural and physical science group</td>
<td>Department of Biology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Department of Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Department of Geography and Geology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Department of Mathematics and Astronomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Department of Physics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social science group</td>
<td>Department of Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Department of Education (Junior College Course Kindergarten, Training in the Women’ College, Senior College Course)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Department of History and Political Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Department of Hygiene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Department of Philosophy and Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Department of Sociology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Department of Religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine and applied arts group</td>
<td>Department of Art</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From Table 4, we can find that Yenching university was a comprehensive university of comparatively large scale after the amalgamation of several colleges. The study programs it offered were in a wide range of subjects and disciplines.

At this time, the University had a two-year junior college and a four-year senior college to accommodate students from two different types of middle schools (the four-year middle school and the six-year middle school). The junior college was organized to admit students who completed a four-year middle school and to prepare them for further university study in the senior college. The senior college would admit students who completed a six-year middle school or junior college. The documents in 1923 showed that the junior college and senior college merged into a combined system when the so-called “6-6-4 plan” (six years of primary school, six years of middle school, and four years of university study) was adopted by the schools in China in the 1920s. In 1923 the University still kept a sub-freshman year temporarily for students from four-year middle schools during the transitional period (Peking University, 1923). In 1920 some vocational elective courses were available in the Freshman or Sophomore year in junior college, but the majority of vocational courses would start until the Junior or Senior year in senior college.

In 1921, the university planned to open one course of Teacher Training in connection with the Department of Education and another course in Mechanical Engineering. Other vocational courses in planning were Journalism, Leather Manufacture, Animal Husbandry, etc. Social service was a course planned to train students for a profession. The University planned to offer vocational guidance for students with vocational and professional training from two aspects: applied psychology and industrial service bureau. Applied psychology refers to the guidance and advice from faculty and staff to students regarding their interest, aptitude, or deficiencies. This

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School of theology</th>
<th>Department of Theology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Note: Adapted from *Peking University Bulletin No. 3. Announcement of the College of Arts and Sciences for Women, College of Arts and Sciences for Men, School of Theology*, by Peking University, 1920. Divinity Library Yale University.
aimed at helping students to find work and career matching well with their own interest and characteristics. Industrial service bureau was organized to make investigation about the economic and industrial situation of the county and collect information about China’s raw material, industrial enterprises, trade openings, and economic needs; therefore, it could bring suggestions on university course design for faculty and course selection for students (Peking University, 1920). From this detailed explanation, we can find that Yenching University made great endeavors to help students transition into the labor force and contribute to the society.

Table 5

*Junior College Courses in Yenching University in 1920*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literary Course</th>
<th>Scientific Course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1st year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bible</td>
<td>Bible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective</td>
<td>Elective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Choices for elective: French, German, Sociology and Psychology, Mathematics, Natural Science, Political Economy and Political Science

Choices for elective:

1st year: Chinese, French, German
2nd year: Chinese, History

*Note: Adapted from Peking University Bulletin No. 3. Announcement of the College of Arts and Sciences for Women, College of Arts and Sciences for Men, School of Theology, by Peking University, 1920. Divinity Library Yale University.*
From Table 5, we can find that the Bible and English were the required courses for both groups. For the literary group, History and Chinese were offered as required courses, while for the scientific group, mathematics, biology, chemistry, and physics were among the required courses.

For the senior college group, the requirement was 148 credits for graduation, with 56 credits taken in prescribed courses.

Table 6

*Senior College required courses in Yenching University in 1920*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Science</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Science</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy or Ethics</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Adapted from Peking University Bulletin No. 3. Announcement of the College of Arts and Sciences for Women, College of Arts and Sciences for Men, School of Theology, by Peking University, 1920. Divinity Library Yale University.*

The required courses were comprehensive and in a broad range of subjects and disciplines. Besides Chinese, English, and Religion, there are also history, natural sciences, social science and philosophy or ethics in the required courses. Chinese and English took a large portion, with 12 and 16 credits respectively, out of the total number of 56 credits. Besides the religion course, ethics was noticeable. According to the description in course contents, the course was focused on the reading of Dewey and Tuits’ ethics. Through the reading of these texts, students were
expected to understand the basis for moral standards of modern Chinese life (Peking University, 1920).

In junior college, the Chinese courses offered were mainly focused on language enhancing, such as, Composition, the Science of Chinese Characters, Chinese Grammar, and Chinese Language. These courses were offered for the first two years, with one-hour teaching for each week (Peking University, 1920).

Table 7

**Chinese courses for senior college in Yenching University in 1920**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Contents</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Composition</td>
<td>Required in 1st year. Topic from ethics will be given.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composition</td>
<td>Required in 2nd year. Biographic style of writing to train students in writing stories based on fact as well as fiction.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composition</td>
<td>Required in 3rd year. Different styles of composition; selections from famous writers will be presented and discussed in class so as to practice student in example of good style.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composition</td>
<td>Formal style of letter writing for official correspondence and business communications. Also composition in the common spoken language. Topics chosen from important questions of the day and current event.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Literature</td>
<td>Required of all 1st year students. Selections from authors beginning with those of the T’ang and Sung Dynasties and ending with modern times. The diction and style of different periods will be discussed and examined.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Literature</td>
<td>Elective for 2nd year. Masterpiece of different periods will be selected and discussed to acquaint students with the best styles of literary work.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Classics</td>
<td>Open to 3rd year students. Selections from Hsun-tzu, Yang-tzu, Chuang-tzu, and others with discussion of their philosophic thought.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of Chinese Literature</td>
<td>A general outline of the development of Chinese literature. Open to students of 4th year.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Language</td>
<td>Study of ancient and modern methods in phonetics with due emphasis on a single spoken language for the nation and the necessity of a phonetic system of writing.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Science of Chinese Characters</td>
<td>Required in 1st year.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Grammar</td>
<td>Required in 1st year. Elective for 2nd year.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Adapted from Peking University Bulletin No. 3. Announcement of the College of Arts and Sciences for Women, College of Arts and Sciences for Men, School of Theology, by Peking University, 1920. Divinity Library Yale University.*

Examining the contents of Chinese courses offered in Yenching University, we can find that the Chinese courses at Yenching focused on giving students a comprehensive knowledge of Chinese. For example, in the syllabus of Chinese composition, the elements of ethics were added. In the Chinese courses, an important part was focused on Chinese classics, involving the Confucian elements and books of the great philosophers in history, such as Hsun-tzu (孙子) and Chuang-tzu (庄子). The Five Classics were also delivered as one course with three points. Besides the focus on moral training and character formation through classic study, the Chinese courses also focused on practical use of the modern language, which prepared students for practical work positions.
2.4 Curriculum in 1938

The average number of graduates in Yenching University ranged from 120 to 150 in the 1930s. Yenching University was cultivating a big body of alumni who were making a constant contribution to China’s welfare. As is discussed above, in 1930, the undergraduate division was separated into three colleges in order to meet the requirement from the Ministry of Education.

Table 8

*Colleges and departments in Yenching University in 1938*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colleges</th>
<th>College of Arts and Letters</th>
<th>College of Natural Sciences</th>
<th>College of Public Affairs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Departments</td>
<td>Chinese,</td>
<td>Mathematics,</td>
<td>Political Science,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Western Languages,</td>
<td>Physics,</td>
<td>Economics,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>History,</td>
<td>Biology,</td>
<td>Sociology and Social Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Philosophy,</td>
<td>Chemistry,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Psychology,</td>
<td>Home Economics,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Music,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Journalism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* Adapted from *Yenching University Bulletin Announcement of Courses 1938-1939 Volume XXIII-Number 10*, by Yenching University, 1938. Divinity Library Yale University.

As the university developed the departments and colleges were organized to better meet the needs for teaching and to facilitate students. It is noticeable that the Department of Religion was removed because of the anti-Christian movement and the requirement of government registration.
Table 9

Colleges and general regulations in Yenching University in 1938

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colleges</th>
<th>College of Arts and Letters</th>
<th>College of Natural Sciences</th>
<th>College of Public Affairs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Common core courses</td>
<td>Chinese, English, Physical Education</td>
<td>Chinese, English, Physical Education</td>
<td>Chinese, English, Physical Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 courses from these groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Philosophy, Psychology</td>
<td>b. Philosophy, Psychology</td>
<td>b. Mathematics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Political Science, Economics, Sociology, Education, History</td>
<td>c. Social Sciences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Elective</td>
<td>d. Elective</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Adapted from *Yenching University Bulletin Announcement of Courses 1938-1939 Volume XXIII-Number 10*, by Yenching University, 1938. Divinity Library Yale University.

In the three colleges, the common core courses during this period were Chinese, English, and Physical Education. The Bible courses or religious courses were not among the courses listed.
Besides the three core courses, many courses of science and social sciences were on the list of common courses. In addition, women students in all colleges were required to take one credit in hygiene (Yenching University, 1938).

2.5 Curriculum in 1947

In 1947, the teaching resumed in the campus in Beijing after the war. The colleges were the same as those in 1938. Detailed information about the requirement for the bachelor degree can be found.

Table 10

*Colleges requirements for the Bachelor’s degree (total credits: 142)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colleges</th>
<th>Arts and Letters</th>
<th>Natural Sciences</th>
<th>Public Affairs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Courses and Credits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses</td>
<td>Chinese (6)</td>
<td>Chinese (6)</td>
<td>Chinese (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and</td>
<td>English (8)</td>
<td>English (8)</td>
<td>English (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credits</td>
<td>Physical Education (6)</td>
<td>Physical Education (6)</td>
<td>Physical Education (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Mathematics (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy or Psychology</td>
<td></td>
<td>Philosophy or Psychology</td>
<td>Physics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History (6)</td>
<td></td>
<td>History (6)</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics, Chemistry, or Biology (6)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Physics, Chemistry, or Biology (6)</td>
<td>Biology (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Science, Economics, or Sociology (6)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Political Science, Economics, or Sociology (6)</td>
<td>History, Philosophy, Psychology, Education (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major (68)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Major (68)</td>
<td>Political Science, Economics, Sociology (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Major (50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor or correlated subjects (24)</td>
<td>Minor or correlated subjects (24)</td>
<td>Minor or correlated subjects (24)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives and department requirements (6)</td>
<td>Electives and department requirements (6)</td>
<td>Special requirements and electives (9)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Adapted from *Yenching University Bulletin Announcement of Courses 1947-1948 Volume XXVII-Number 10*, by Yenching University, 1947. Divinity Library Yale University.

After the war, normal teaching was resumed on its former campus. Under the three colleges, there was not much difference in the courses offered between different majors. However, from Table 10, we can find that there are more explicit requirements for course selection of the three colleges. The common courses were still Chinese, English, and Physical Education. Students from the College of Arts and Letters and those from the College of Public Affairs shared the same curriculum. For students from the College of Natural Sciences, courses such as Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, and Biology were offered. In addition, according to the curriculum information, students majoring in Physics or Chemistry were eligible to elect a five-year course, including one year of practical work in factories, in addition to three summers of fieldwork (*Yenching University, 1947*). The courses were designed to have both a broad range of knowledge and special training in an area with practice and fieldwork.

It is also worth mentioning that home economics was a famous major offered by Yenching University. This major aimed at training women as social workers for various fields with special knowledge both in family and related professions. It is described in the data document as follows:

The aims of the department are: to offer education for home-making as a part of a general university education for women; to offer training for teaching home economics in middle schools; to provide fundamental courses for those who are interested in hospital dietetics or nutrition research; to provide a sequence of courses for those who are interested in rural or urban social work. (*Yenching University, 1947*)
3 Lingnan University

3.1 History and development

The origin of Lingnan University can be traced back to the Christian schools in the late 19th century. The idea of building a Christian college in China to serve the whole nation had been in the mind of Rev. Andrew P Happer, as early as 1879. In 1888, Dr. Happer founded an institution which was first known simply as Christian College in China. In 1903, the Board of Trustees changed its name to Canton Christian College in order to make application to the regents. Among mission schools, the Lingnan enterprise had two distinctive feature: its non-denominational character and its welcoming of Chinese cooperation with the aim of eventual Chinese control (Corbett, 1963).

In 1916, efforts were made to build a complete Collegiate Department. After that, the College grew steadily. The Dean of the college wrote to several leading universities in North America to inquire about their attitude toward receiving graduates of Canton Christian College for postgraduate studies and received positive feedback (Corbett, 1963).

1927 was a notable year in its development when the commission transferred the University from American to Chinese control. After that, the university developed fast with the expansion of departments and majors. In 1929, the College of Engineering was planned to open according to the arrangement from the Ministry of Railways, for the purpose of training civil engineers for government service. In 1936, a new Medical College was added (Lingnan University, 1937).

During the Japanese war, Lingnan University was also heavily impacted. The campus was occupied by the Japanese army. It was relocated at Taitsuen (in Guangdong province) and with Soochow University (another Christian university located in Suzhou, Jiangsu province) joining it in 1941 for a few months. Some faculties moved to Hong Kong. In the spring of 1944, the idyllic life at Taitsuen was disrupted by the threat of military invasion. The departments and faculty spread over different areas near Guangdong, with the Union Theological College in Linhsien, about seventy-five miles west of Kukong and the Agriculture Group in the Five Mountain District between Guangdong and Hunan province (Corbett, 1963).

With the ending of the war in 1945, Lingnan resumed teaching in October of that year. It continued to be a private institution before the national higher education reorganization in 1951.
According to the plan of the government, Lingnan University was taken by the government and merged into Sun Yet-sen University as the College of Arts (Corbett, 1963).

3.2 Mission and goal

Lingnan University, based on its funding and relation with missionary societies, focused on promoting Christian higher education in China and made an endeavor to cultivate graduates with higher quality to serve the society. This is clearly stated in its mission statement:

The purpose of the Trustees of Canton Christian College (Lingnan University) is to establish in Canton and adjacent territory in China, an institution of the highest standards of educational efficiency, under Christian influences. (Canton Christian College, 1919, p. 5)

3.3 Curriculum in 1919

The title of the institution was Canton Christian College in 1919. This year, 18 new students were matriculated. It was open to both male and female students. The undergraduate study included five years: Sub-freshman, Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, and Senior. The students were classified into four groups according to their major of study: general arts group, natural science group, social science group, and agriculture group.

Table 1

*Prescribed subjects of study in Lingnan University (Canton Christian College) in 1919*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Majors</th>
<th>General Arts Group</th>
<th>Natural Science Group</th>
<th>Social Science Group</th>
<th>Agriculture Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Courses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Physics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>Biology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Agricultural courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composition in</td>
<td>Composition in</td>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Science</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>Composition in Chinese History, Government, Economics, Business, or Sociology</td>
<td>Composition in Chinese Religion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government, Sociology, History or Economics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Adapted from *Canton Christian College Catalogue of the College of Arts and Sciences for the Academic Year 1919-1920*, by Canton Christian College, 1919. Divinity Library Yale University.*

The required common courses for the four groups were Religion and Composition in Chinese. It is the same with other Christian universities at this time that religion was among required courses for all students. What is special about Lingnan is that the Chinese courses only focused on written language training: composition in Chinese. English was also the required courses for the groups except the agricultural group. Economics was the required as common courses for three groups except the science group.

The objective of Composition in Chinese was to train students with a good mastery of idiomatic modern Chinese so that they could translate English work into Chinese. The pedagogy of this course was similar to that of a translation course. Although this course did not include the contents of Chinese classics and literature, the college did offer elective courses in Chinese classics (the Analects and Mengzi) and Chinese philosophy which helped student familiarize themselves with different types of ancient and recent philosophical and ethical concepts. The study of these courses were aiming at aiding students to have a better understanding of the rules of conduct and ideals of life in China (Canton Christian College, 1919).

### 3.4 Curriculum in 1937

In 1937, the College expanded to a private Christian University and was named Lingnan University. There were four colleges at this time: College of Arts and Science, College of Agriculture, College of Engineering, and College of Medicine.
Table 12

*Fields of work to specialize in Lingnan University in 1937*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colleges</th>
<th>Arts and Sciences</th>
<th>Agriculture</th>
<th>Engineering</th>
<th>Medicine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fields</strong></td>
<td>General Arts</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>Civil Engineering</td>
<td>Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* Adapted from *Lingnan University the Colleges, Bulletin No. 61, Catalogue with Announcements for 1937-1938*, by Lingnan University, 1937. Divinity Library Yale University.

In 1936, when the Medical College joined in, the University had four colleges altogether. According to the academic requirement, a student was supposed to focus on the common core courses in the first three years, and should choose a major in the Sophomore year and a minor in the Junior year. Most of the fields could be chosen both as major and as a minor, for example, biology, business administration, chemistry, Chinese literature, economics, government, history, physics. Some of the fields could only be chosen as a minor, such as, education, home economics, and religion.

Table 13

*Courses of freshman and sophomore years of Lingnan University in 1937*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Majors</th>
<th>Major in Business Administration</th>
<th>Major in Economics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Freshman year</strong></td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore year</td>
<td>Business administration</td>
<td>Business administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Science Survey</td>
<td>History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical education</td>
<td>Science Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Electives</td>
<td>Physical education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Electives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Adapted from Lingnan University the Colleges, Bulletin No. 61, Catalogue with Announcements for 1937-1938, by Lingnan University, 1937. Divinity Library Yale University.

Due to the government registration and curriculum reform, Religion was not a required course for all students, but it was still kept as a choice for a minor. Chinese, English, and Physical Education were the common core courses. The difference in the Chinese course between 1919 and 1937 was the focus on Chinese literature rather than composition in Chinese. According to the description of the course content, this course was aiming at familiarizing students with the main genres of Chinese literature and preparing them for further study in Chinese courses.

It is also noticeable that the study design for students in Lingnan at this time was more specified, with some major courses added. For example, the course of economics was offered for Freshman. This was different from other universities such as Ginling and Yenching, which started to offer professional or vocational courses mainly from the third year.
3.5 Curriculum in 1946

In 1946, Lingnan University resumed its normal teaching in its former campus after the war (Lingnan University, 1946). Information on common core courses and curriculum design could not be found in archival documents; therefore, I chose the curriculum for the major of Chinese Literature and English to examine and make a comparison, which will bring us some basic information about the curriculum at that time.

Table 14

Courses of freshman and sophomore years of Lingnan University in 1946

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Majors</th>
<th>Major in Chinese Literature</th>
<th>Major in English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freshman year</td>
<td><strong>Political principles of Dr Sun (Sun Yet-sen)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Political principles of Dr Sun Sun (Sun Yet-sen)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Freshman Chinese</em></td>
<td><em>Freshman Chinese</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Freshman English</em></td>
<td><em>Freshman English</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Outline of Chinese history</strong></td>
<td><strong>Outline of Chinese history</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>General Mathematics</strong></td>
<td><strong>General Mathematics</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>General Physics</strong></td>
<td><strong>General Physics</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>General Chemistry</strong></td>
<td><strong>General Chemistry</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>General Biology</strong></td>
<td><strong>General Biology</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>General Geology</strong></td>
<td><strong>General Geology</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>General Geography</strong></td>
<td><strong>General Geography</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Chinese Reading</strong></td>
<td><strong>Introduction to Poetry</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Physical Education</strong></td>
<td><strong>Phonetics</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore year</td>
<td>Western History</td>
<td>Ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>Logic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Logic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principles of Government, or Economics, or Sociology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elements of law</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chinese Etymology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>History of Chinese Literature</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sophomore English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>Logic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Western History</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sophomore English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>History of English Literature</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principles of Government, or Economics, or Sociology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>History of Chinese Literature</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Adapted from *Lingnan University Information and Curriculum 1946-1948*, by Lingnan University, 1946. Divinity Library Yale University.

From the table above, we can find that for the freshman year, the courses offered for the major of Chinese Literature and English covered a wide range. Political principles of Dr. Sun Yat-sen (孙中山), the first president of Nationalist government, was assigned as a required course. It might be due to the fact that Guangdong province was the hometown of Dr. Sun, and his ideals and teachings were influential among the people there. This course was not offered either in Gingling or Yenching.

Ethics was an interesting course that needs to be noticed. The course focused on the origin and development of morality, typical ethical theories, and modern ethical problems. Although there were no religious courses offered at this time, the ethics took the place of religion in the formation of moral standards and the character of students.
4 West China Union University

4.1 History and development

The West China Union University was founded in 1910 by several participating denominations from different countries, including the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, the Friends Foreign Mission Association (Great Britain and Ireland), the General Board of Mission of the Methodist Church (Canada), and the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church (U.S.A.) (Minden, 1994). In the beginning, there were only three courses offered, general arts course, a course in science, and a course in pedagogy. Although religion was not an independent course, religious knowledge was required in all courses. The Medical Faculty was formed during 1914, and the Faculty of Religion was established in 1915. The Department of Dentistry was organized in 1917 and became a college in 1919. In 1929, the faculties of Medicine and Dentistry united and formed the College of Medicine and Dentistry. With the expansion of departments and faculties, the number of students and faculty increased dramatically (Taylor, 1936). Below is a table of the detailed number of students and faculty calculated over five-year periods.

Table 15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Because of its location in the city of Chengdu in Sichuan province in the hinterland, West China Union University was lucky to escape the destruction of the Japanese war. It had offered accommodation to other universities which moved to Chengdu to escape the war. It hosted Cheeloo Medical School, Peking Union Medical College, and National Central University Medical College during the war. Despite the disruption of the war, the college continued to develop and made its efforts in pursuing academic excellence (Taylor, 1936).

The development of West China Union University can be summarized into three periods. Before 1927 it was mainly focused on evangelical goals. After the government registration, its goal was more professional and less evangelistic. From 1938 to 1951, it experienced fast development with a focus on medicine and became an elite medical institution. It was transformed into the medical and dental college. In the early 1950s, West China Union University was divided and reorganized according to the national plan of higher education reform. In 1952, the medical college was renamed as Sichuan Medical College (Minden, 1994).

4.2 Mission and goal

Similar to other Christian universities, the main goal of West China Union University was for the promotion of Christianity and Christian higher education. It was stated in the archival documents as follows:

The aim of the founders, as stated in the constitution, is the extension of the Kingdom of God by means of education in West China. A) by providing such facilities for the education of Chinese or others, connected with the various Missions in West China, as shall enable them to take their places among the educated classes of the day; B) by affording means for the education of other youth of all classes. (Taylor, 1936, p. 16)

The ethos of the university was the combination of scientific and moral education. The university had a code of conduct which was summarized into an eight-character inscription. It was similar to the Confucian virtues of classical Chinese education, that is, benevolence, knowledge, loyalty, courage, honesty, prudence, diligence, and harmony (Taylor, 1936). With this goal and purpose, the university cultivated students both professionally and morally.
4.3 Curriculum in 1919

In 1919, there were five faculties, the Faculty of Arts, the Faculty of Science, the Faculty of Education, the Faculty of Religion, and the Faculty of Medicine. Religious instruction and Chinese were required courses for all students.

Table 16

Outline of courses of junior division in West China Union University in 1919

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st year</th>
<th>2nd year</th>
<th>3rd year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Religious Instruction (Introduction to the Bible);</td>
<td>Religious Instruction (Person and Principles of Jesus);</td>
<td>Religious Instruction (History of the Christian Church up to and including the Reformation);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Economics and Sociology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Education (a general introduction course)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Western History</td>
<td>Chemistry, Physics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General Science course</td>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>Astronomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General Lecture course</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>General Lecture course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Adapted from West China Union University Annual Announcement 1919-1920, by West China Union University, 1919. Divinity Library Yale University.

From Table 16, we can find that West China Union University offered courses in a broad range of subjects. Chinese, English, and Religion Instruction were among the common core courses. For the students of Faculty of Medicine, the courses are largely taken in the Arts and Science Faculties for the two years, which helped students to have a good foundation in general knowledge and training before they moved on for professional training. The Chinese course was
mainly focused on Chinese language and literature. According to the description, it guided students to study the literature of different periods and to discuss the literature styles.

4.4 Curriculum in 1935

As is mentioned above, in 1929, the Faculties Medicine and Dentistry were united as the College of Medicine and Dentistry of the West China Union University. I chose the curriculum from the College of Medicine and Dentistry to examine.

Table 17

Courses for the medical students in West China Union University in 1935

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects required for entrance to premedical course</th>
<th>Premedical year</th>
<th>Common freshman year (College of Arts)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>Scientific English</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion or Ethics</td>
<td>Religion or Ethics</td>
<td>General Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological Principles</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inorganic Chemistry</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Logic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>Botany</td>
<td>Ethics or Introduction to Philosophy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical English</td>
<td>Zoology</td>
<td>Sociology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organic Chemistry</td>
<td>Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>How to Use Your Mind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Technical English</td>
<td>Biology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Practical Mathematics

* Required of dental student only

Note: Adapted from West China Union University Annual Catalogue and Bulletin of General Information 1935-1936, by West China Union University, 1935. Divinity Library Yale University.

The common core courses were offered in a wide range of disciplines for medical students. Chinese, English, Religion or Ethics were required for the first two or three years. The Ethics courses were to train students with knowledge in general ethics, Christian ethics, ethical system, and philosophy of life. This was for cultivating moral standards and the formation of character.

4.5 Curriculum in 1945

Education in the science and art of dentistry had a relatively short history in China. The importance of education in dentistry experienced very slow development and lacked recognition from the public. The study of dentistry was composed of seven years: freshman year, 1st year, 2nd year, 3rd year, 4th year, 5th year, and 6th year. Below is the curriculum of School of Dentistry for 1945-1946 school year (West China Union University, 1945).

Table 18

Courses for the first three years of dentistry in West China Union University in 1945

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Freshman year</th>
<th>1st year</th>
<th>2nd year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>Physical Chemistry</td>
<td>Biochemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inorganic Chemistry</td>
<td>Organic Chemistry</td>
<td>Anatomy (gross)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Comparative Anatomy</td>
<td>Osteology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Vertebrate Zoology</td>
<td>Histology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Grammar</td>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>Embryology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Reader</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>Technical English</td>
<td>Technical English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party Principles</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Neuro-anatomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Technical Drawing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mental Hygiene</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Adapted from *West China Union University School of Dentistry for 1945-1946*, by West China Union University, 1945. Divinity Library Yale University.*

The courses for dentistry major were a little bit different from other majors. They focused on professional major courses from the beginning. In the first few years, general courses were also required, such as Chinese, English, Ethics, Physical Education, and Mathematics. Professional courses, such as Anatomy, Osteology, and Embryology started from the third year.
Chapter 5
Analysis and Discussion

This chapter provides an examination and discussion of key findings of the liberal arts curriculum in the four selected Christian universities. The analysis and discussion are to realize the purpose of finding insights for today’s reform as stated in the objectives and the comment on the significance of this thesis. The curriculum contents are discussed according to the core values of liberal arts education and central mission of education under the framework discussed in Chapter Three. Under the theoretical framework of core values of liberal arts education, the courses contributing to creative thinking and moral and spiritual formation were examined. Through the lens of postmodern theory, I argue that liberal arts education could take different forms in its curriculum design and contents as was historically reflected in different countries. While keeping its core values, liberal arts education could be contingent and include local and traditional values to train a free citizen in their own society through the formation of character and spirituality and the cultivation of a whole person.

The curriculum of the four Christian universities had similarities both in their course offerings and in course contents. Courses in a broad range of disciplines were offered for students of all majors in the first two years. The last two years of the undergraduate study, namely, junior year and senior year, were focused on professional courses. The culmination of a thesis stood for the completion of undergraduate study and met the requirements for a Bachelor’s degree. The four universities had their distinctive features. For example, Yenching University was a comprehensive university with a relatively large number of students and faculty, and its Chinese courses were focused on Classics and Confucian thought; Ginling Women’s College was specifically oriented to women’s education; West China Union University had a strong medical college offering education in medicine and dentistry; and Lingnan University was famous for its agriculture and engineering study. In the aspect of inculcating moral standards and character formation, the courses in religion, Chinese classics, and ethics were helpful for the cultivation of a whole person for the Chinese society at that time. The liberal arts curriculum in these universities did not contradict the social values and tradition in China in any way. Rather, the Confucian tradition and historical ethics were valued through the inclusion of the courses of Chinese and ethics, especially in Ginling Women’s College and Yenching University. The
courses offered in these universities covered a broad range of disciplines for the purpose of training a person with a creative mind and problem-solving competence.

The character formation and the broad range of knowledge are the elements missing in today’s higher education in China. Jiang (2014) investigated the moral reasoning and spirituality in liberal arts education reform in three universities in Shanghai and found that these aspects were not given enough attention either in curriculum or in the mission of education. As Newman (1992) argued, religious education is not for human redemption but for the cultivation of a whole person. I argue that Confucianism or traditional values, or ethics and philosophy study should be the integral elements for liberal arts education or general education, because it has the function of cultivating the whole person, which echoes with the essence of liberal arts education in the West. Currently, scholars such as De Bary and Tu Wei-ming advocate for Confucianism in current education reform as it focuses on person-making and self-exploration with the final goal of cultivating a Junzi (君子) whose aim is to contribute to society and country. Neville (2000) argued that Confucianism should be a universal philosophy. Based on the analysis of historical curriculum and the findings of contemporary scholars, I would propose that Confucianism and traditional values should be an integral part of the current curriculum reform for culture quality education or general education in China.

While there are good examples in term of the curriculum design in these Christian universities, we can also learn from certain shortcomings. Due to a heavy focus on the English language, the semester hours in the Christian universities were exceeding the standard semester hours in American colleges at that time, which added a heavy burden to students (Lutz, 1971). There are similar problems today as Shi and Lu (2016) discussed. To broaden students’ knowledge and promote general education, there is now a mixture of elective lessons from different departments in many universities, which actually add an extra burden to students (Shi & Lu, 2016). The suggestion for the curriculum design for today might be that the curriculum should be adequately designed with a focus on classics and character formation, on the basis of humanities, arts, science, and social sciences.

1 Adaptation of liberal arts education to the Chinese context

By examining the courses offered in the four sample universities, it is noticeable that Chinese was given great importance in the curriculum. It remained in the list of core courses through the
three periods in all the four universities. It was placed in the first place in some of them and occupied a large proportion of the total semester hours. For example, in 1919, Chinese took up as much as 20 points in Ginling Women’s College. It was reduced to 12 points later in 1933. The same importance was attached in Yenching University, Lingnan University, and West China Union University. According to the historical document, Chinese was the only course delivered in the Chinese language (The Board of Control of Ginling College, 1919). The Chinese courses included Chinese literature, Chinese history, and Confucian classics. For example, in Ginling and Yenching, the Chinese courses were mostly focused on Chinese literature and Confucian classics. In the Chinese studies, the classics such as the Four Books, the Five Classics, and Chinese ethics and philosophy were included. For example, the courses in Ginling were Chinese Classics, Chinese History, History and Chinese Literature, and Chinese Philosophy. The Chinese courses in Yenching were also very famous at that time. They touched upon the Classics and Confucian studies. The classics were offered for the purpose of passing down traditional Chinese values.

These universities did not consider this as something controversial in terms of Western liberal arts education, but rather as something important to cultivate an all-round person, who could adapt to the local society. They held the points of view that for student future career development, the education offered in the homeland was more appropriate and constructive than that from a foreign land because students could stay in their homeland and keep close contact with the community and social development. While studying abroad, Chinese students lost touch with their homeland, and in particular the social norms. Upon returning to China, they experienced difficulties reintegrating into their social environment. This was a key factor that they considered, i.e., the localization process. Ethics courses and philosophy courses also touched upon the traditional ethics and social conduct codes, which helped students to know and conform to the cultural and social norms of the country. In West China Union University, the university code of conduct reflected Confucian virtues from the Classics with the eight words: benevolence, knowledge, loyalty, courage, honesty, prudence, diligence, and harmony (Taylor, 1936).

The above-mentioned points constituted a way of adaptation into the Chinese context in the curriculum design of these Christian universities. Although nearly all subjects could be taught in English and follow the American curriculum design, the faculty who graduated from American
universities chose to make changes that ensured a liberal arts education suited to the Chinese context. They selected the classics and Chinese for local students, which makes the Christian education in China something localized. From this perspective, they valued and respected the local and traditional culture and social ethics, not aiming at cultivating students who would be foreigners to Chinese society. This could bring insights for the localization process of liberal arts education or general education reform in contemporary China with the backdrop that China is aiming at building world-class universities by copying and following Western models. The traditional culture and Confucianism which focused on person-making and cultivating an all-round person conforming to the social norms should be an inseparable part of liberal arts education in China. The traditional values and Confucianism have also been recognized worldwide. Scholars, such as De Bary (2013), advocates for the whole person education elements in Neo-Confucianism such as the autonomy of mind, self-consciousness, critical awareness, creative thought, and independent judgement. It is undeniable that this tradition can complement or substitute for some classics in a Western liberal arts curriculum and could be adopted for the liberal arts education curriculum in China, with the same function of cultivation a whole person to make a contribution to society.

2 Religious studies in the curriculum and education goal

An examination of the curriculum in the four universities in three different periods shows that religion courses or Christianity studies were among their core courses but were removed after the anti-Christian movement and government registration. Based on their foundation and background in relation to missionary societies, the Christian universities had Christianity studies in their common courses and Christian education was also declared in their mission statement. Ginling aimed at educating Christian women leaders for China, and Yenching strived for Christian higher education. The mission statement of Lingnan was less explicit. It aimed at offering the same higher standard education as that in the United States. Since at that time much American higher education was oriented to cultivating Christian citizens, Lingnan’s mission of Christian education was the same. West China Union University aimed at the promotion of the kingdom of God. These goals were deeply instilled into their curriculum and the organization of teaching and study. In the beginning, students were mostly Christian. The religious courses were established on the basis of Christianity, including the Life of Jesus, the Growth of Christianity, and the Social and Ethical Teaching of Jesus (The Board of Control of Ginling College, 1919).
To enhance the religious education, Christian worship and Sunday school were organized after class. The Christian education and religious courses were not solely aiming at training missionaries and priests in China, but also for cultivating Christian citizens with a broad range of knowledge and dedication of service to the development of China. It is emphasized in the mission statement of Yenching that the education is for cultivating talents for the development of a new China (Peking University, 1920). This echoes the liberal arts education in the United States at that time, which is stated in the Harvard Report, that before the 20th century American higher education was mostly focused on cultivating Christian citizens for American society. The comparison reflected that the liberal arts education was passed down from history in the American context and carried on to China in the 20th century with the same goal and mission.

The religious courses were to cultivate Christians with high moral standard and behavior. These courses were not for the sake of knowledge but for person-making, the formation of character, and the spiritual development of each person. It means that educating a person is not only a matter of imparting skills, but also of cultivating and nurturing the spirit, body, and mind (Peking University, 1920). According to Newman (1992), religion is a science of sciences and is recommended as a core area of study in the education of an ideal university. The purpose of religious education is not for human redemption but for the cultivation of moral standards. In this sense, religion is an inalienable part of moral education which belongs to liberal arts education and serves for the function of whole person cultivation.

The government registration and anti-Christian movement greatly influenced the development of Christian universities and their curriculum design. The Nationalist government stipulated that religious courses should not be among the required courses and religious activities on campus were not encouraged. The 1930s was a period of sinification and secularization for these Christian universities. The religious courses were removed, with ethics added. The ethics courses were intended to contribute to the formation of moral standards and whole person cultivation. The contents of the ethics course included philosophy and the ideas of Dewey (Peking University, 1920). This shows that in liberal arts education, the cultivation of moral standards is very important. The Christian universities paid much attention to this while currently moral reasoning is not emphasized in university education. Nowadays, there is criticism about the moral decline among graduates from universities in China. According to Jiang (2014), both moral reasoning and spirituality in the three universities he studied in Shanghai were neglected.
and needed to be given attention. The lesson for today’s reform is that, to cultivate an all-round person, specialized knowledge is far from enough. Moral training, the inner spiritual life, and social ethics should be cultivated so that the person can grow fully into a talent with the spirit of service and social responsibility, making a contribution to the global economy as a global citizen.

3 Comparison with American liberal arts curriculum

The liberal arts education in these universities aimed at providing the same high level of education to Chinese students as was available to students in America according to the mission statement of Lingnan University (Canton Christian College, 1919). Therefore, their curriculum design largely followed the American curriculum. English was the language of instruction in all the courses except the Chinese courses. The courses in these Christian universities had some similarities with the American liberal arts curriculum. They were offered in a broad range of disciplines, including, humanities, arts, science, and social sciences. The courses included philosophy, psychology, history, physics, chemistry, biology, and economics, among others. The credit system and requirements for graduation were similar to the American style, with the completion of a certain number of semester hours and a thesis in the last year.

The difference lies in the fact that the curriculum in American universities included Western classics, while in China’s Christian universities, Chinese courses (Chinese Classics, Chinese philosophy, Chinese history, or Chinese literature) took their place, with the same goal and function expected. The importance of classics has always been emphasized in the history of liberal arts education despite the changes in curriculum design in different societies. In the liberal arts curriculum in the West, classics is crucial for the training of the mind (Harvard Committee, 1946). For example, the Yale report reiterated the importance of classics for this reason. In the 1930s, the reform in Chicago university emphasized the value of classics and issued a list of classics for undergraduate study (Jiang, 2014). In comparison, the Christian universities in China focused on Chinese classics rather than the courses of Latin or Greek and Western classics. The English courses were not only aiming at language training but also included English classics chosen for reading and study. For example, Ginling Women’s College offered courses such as An Outline History of English Literature, Elizabethan Literature, and English Poetry (The Board of Control of Ginling College, 1919). The reading of classics, no matter in what culture and
tradition, served as a way of cultivating the formation of the mind, which is important for the development of the whole person.

The Harvard Report proposed that a broad discipline of courses in the arts, humanities, and sciences should be offered to reach the purpose of general education. The liberal or general education courses should include four areas: arts, humanities, sciences, and social sciences (Harvard Committee, 1946). We can find the curriculum from the four chosen Christian universities were mainly focused on these four fields. For example, the common core courses in the 1940s in Ginling were Chinese, English, Philosophy, social sciences, and sciences. Arts were also given great importance in Ginling. For example, there was one year when a faculty member in music was on leave, and the College was making great efforts to search for someone to make up for that (The Board of Directors of Ginling College, 1933). The courses were offered for the cultivation of an all-round person. Apart from the courses in their own major or home department, students were also required to choose elective courses from other departments or subject groupings to complement to their major knowledge area.

Currently, the curriculum in China’s universities is mainly focused on majors or specific disciplines. In some elite universities, there are elective courses for students to broaden their mind and knowledge. But the elective courses are usually not very well designed and add an extra burden to students. This lack of success in developing attractive elective courses may be due to missing the target in terms of the intrinsic value of liberal arts education. To train students with a wide breadth of knowledge is not for the sole purpose of knowledge alone, but for the training of the mind and for fostering creativity and problem-solving capacity. The courses should be carefully designed to meet the standards of liberal arts education and conform to the central mission of cultivating the whole person.

4 Professional courses in the curriculum

Apart from the common core courses, the four universities in this study had professional courses for students and required a major and a minor concentration. Professional education was also given much importance. The professional courses mainly started from the third year. The orientation of vocational education in Yenching was emphasized. West China Union University had a strong medical college to cultivate doctors and nurses. Lingnan University offered excellent professional study in Agriculture and Horticulture.
With their different focuses, the four universities had their own features, but with the same purpose of cultivating talents for the social development of China. Ginling emphasized the promotion of women's education and cultivating women leaders, as well as education for teachers. Home economics was a famous major designed for women. Yenching pointed out in its mission statement that professional and vocational training was an integral part of their education. Vocational education in Yenching was of practical value in cultivating people for making a new China. The cooperation with plants and factories provided students with internship opportunities. Besides, the University also provided openings for students in two specific areas: applied psychology and industrial service. Lingnan, with its mission of providing high-quality education for the development of China, was influenced by Guangdong’s geographic features. The local focus on engineering and agriculture were famous, which enhanced the teaching and study in these majors. The agriculture and horticulture majors were well developed thanks to Guangdong’s geographic advantages. West China Union University was a comprehensive university with a strong medical college, focusing on cultivating medical professionals. The first two years offered courses mainly from the college of arts and science. From the third or the fourth year, there were systematic medical courses offered for medical students, among others. The professional courses lasted till the seventh year. The completion of the medical program also included clinical practice and experimentation. The education in West China Union University made a great contribution to China’s medical and dentistry development.

5 Liberal arts education from the lens of postmodernism

China's Christian universities had a mission that was centered around the essence of liberal arts education. The four universities all claimed that they offered American liberal arts education. They all focused on cultivating the whole person through a wide breadth of knowledge and a commitment to character formation. They cultivated graduates to serve the society and make a contribution to the development of the nation. This was in accordance with the intrinsic value of a liberal arts education which had always been seen as fostering free citizens with social responsibility.

Viewed through the lens of postmodern theory, the liberal arts education in these Christian universities had their own features and local characteristics and had been adapted to the Chinese context. The curriculum they offered was not exactly the same as the Western liberal arts.
education curriculum. Greek, or Latin, or Western classics were not taught, nor was there a focus on democratic ideology. Instead, these universities offered the classics and Confucian thought and social ethics, which was pertinent to the social norms and traditional values in China. It is noticeable that Lingnan University and West China Union University also included political ideology, for example, the principles of Dr. Sun Zhongshan in the required courses for the first two years. This course helped students to learn about the political and social ideology of Republican China and graduates could learn how to function as democratic citizens within Chinese society. These Chinese courses were the counterpart to the Western democratic ideals and classical studies in the American liberal arts curriculum. They helped students adapt to the local society. Viewed from this perspective, liberal arts education in these Christian universities valued the tradition and culture of Chinese society. The movements of the late 1920s also helped accelerate the process of localization. With the courses in Chinese classics, Chinese ethics, ancient philosophy, and Chinese literature, the education offered in these universities was to cultivate an all-round person who could adapt well to Chinese society.

The liberal arts education in the four Christian universities kept the intrinsic value of cultivating a whole person with high moral standards and social responsibility through a curriculum that had a broad range of subjects as well as religion or ethics education. Christian or religious courses were not the sole ones to reach this purpose. Alternative courses such as ethics and philosophy were also helpful in reaching the goal of cultivating an all-round person with high moral standards. Although the Christian religion or ethics were an important part of American liberal arts education, an Asian form of liberal arts education, which included the Confucian classics, social ethics, and Chinese philosophy also emerged.

Liberal arts education focuses on the cultivation of creativity, problem-solving skills, moral reasoning, and social responsibility. While maintaining these values and mission goals, it could take different forms in different countries according to the specific social contexts. For example, in the US, it had Western classics, along with Greek, and Latin. While the ancient languages were gradually removed from the required courses, the purpose of training the mind was kept as the essence. Christian studies were added in the Protestant colleges and schools for the training of moral reasoning. In the four universities in China, Christian studies were gradually replaced by ethics and Chinese philosophy, which played the same role of cultivating high moral standards. For today’s Chinese society, liberal arts education or general education should keep
the intrinsic value of cultivating a whole person, but there could be alternative ways of doing this in its curriculum. To reach this purpose, China's current higher education needs to recognize the importance of moral training and character formation, which could be provided through courses in Chinese classics, Confucianism, Chinese ethics, and philosophy.

6 Relevance for today

Currently, there is a revival of interest in liberal arts education. Policymakers in China have been promoting culture quality education since the 1990s. There have been curriculum reforms relating to general education or liberal arts education in elite universities in China, such as Peking, Tsinghua, and Fudan. There are successes and failures in the experimentation that is going on. According to Shi and Lu (2016), there are some shortcomings in these efforts, such as the lack of a clear mission or goal and too many elective courses without a focus. This would only add an extra burden to students while the essence of the reform is missing. Another lesson for today’s education reform in China is to avoid the exact copy of others and learn to adapt the policy or practice to Chinese society as the Christian universities did long ago. Jiang (2014) found that moral reasoning and spiritual cultivation were not given enough attention in the three universities he studied in Shanghai, which suggests that the intrinsic value of liberal arts education needs to be highlighted in today’s reform.

Learning from the historical experience of the Christian universities, we can find that keeping the essence and adapting to the local context are crucial lessons for today’s liberal arts education experimentation. The core value of a liberal arts education has been passed down from history and kept in American universities. This includes the cultivation of creative thinking, problem-solving skills, innovation, and social responsibility. As is stated in the Harvard report, it is the cultivation of the abilities of thinking effectively, communicating thought, making relevant judgments, and discriminating among values (Harvard Committee, 1946). These core values were maintained in China's Christian universities through the adaptation process to the Chinese context. They offered courses in a broad range of disciplines, focused on moral formation through Chinese classics and ethics, and trained students in professional skills with a major that started in their third or junior year. In today’s higher education curriculum in China, traditional values should be given greater attention, because they have been passed down over a long history and are a crucial part in the formation of the character of the nation and people. The Christian
universities all paid attention to Chinese classics. Learning from this experience, we could add traditional values and Confucianism into the core curriculum of general education to cultivate Chinese citizens with moral standards and social responsibility. De Bary (2013) presented the personal development potential of Neo-Confucianism, focusing on the elements of person-making and self-exploration. Tu Wei-ming (1998) maintained that Confucian philosophy could be promoted to the global community. These insightful findings on the value of Confucianism could be taking into consideration for today’s higher education reform towards the whole person cultivation.

Elective courses from a broad range of disciplines are important in higher education. These courses should be focusing on arts, humanities, sciences, and social sciences. The elective courses need to be carefully selected for the purpose of training the mind. They are supposed to be offered in the first two years, and the professional courses can then be scheduled later, starting from the third year. The curriculum should be designed for the purpose of cultivating the whole person, which includes the formation of character and spirituality.

Nowadays, the decline of moral standards among university graduates is a problem in Chinese society. This is because of a lack of moral training in education. Jiang (2014) found that there was only one percent of courses focusing on moral reasoning among the curriculum in the three universities he studied in Shanghai and these courses just focused on the concept of harmony and the teaching of political leaders. This is far from enough to meet the requirements for cultivating a whole person. From the analysis of the liberal arts education in the four sample universities, we can find that they all attached great importance to moral training and the formation of character by offering Chinese courses on Confucian classics and philosophy, and religious courses or ethics courses. Although religious courses or Christian studies are no longer in the curriculum of most universities around the globe, I still recommend that religious courses could be among electives for the cultivation of character and moral reasoning, based on the argument of Newman (1992) that religion is the science of sciences, which provides the ethos and the fundamental framework for education.

In conclusion, liberal arts education is not simply a compilation of courses from all disciplines, or the revival of ancient classics in the curriculum, which may add an extra burden for students. In consideration of globalization diversity, courses related to local culture and traditional values
could be included in the liberal arts education curriculum to cultivate responsible citizens within most societies. Broad learning is a must for today’s society because the global economy requires graduates with creative minds and innovative thinking to address complex problems and issues in this world of diversity and change. Liberal arts education and Neo-Confucianism both focused on the cultivation of a whole person with broad learning, which could be a good fit for today’s education reform. The moral and ethical courses, or religion courses, or classics focusing on traditional values are inseparable from training a whole person because all of these contribute to the formation of character and moral standards. These are the lessons we could learn from the experience of the Christian universities.
Chapter 6
Conclusion

1 Summary and implications

In the 21st century, with globalization posing requirements for versatile talent with global competency, there is a revival in liberal arts education or general education around the globe. Chinese universities, especially the elite ones, are also adopting reforms towards general education. Under the current situation, despite the practical obstacles, there has been some trial experimentation in some elite universities, such as Tsinghua and Fudan. Shi & Lu (2016) argued that an elective course system might be an option to consider, but there are some shortcomings in practice, such as the tendency for these to add an extra burden to students and the lack of a focus on a central mission. Therefore, the final question is as follows: what might be an appropriate version of liberal arts education or general education for 21st century Chinese students? Liberal arts education is not new to China. It was the model in Christian universities seventy years ago before they were closed down. The United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia which supported these universities is still supporting and developing whole person education in different countries in Asia. Currently, the United Board collaborating to promote whole person education with some universities in mainland China such as Soochow University, Shandong University, and Zhongshan University. In this time of higher education reform, it is interesting to look back on the historical experience and learn some insightful lessons. With this purpose, in this thesis, I looked into the historical documents of the Christian universities and examined their curriculum, objectives, and courses offered.

The study took four examples from the 13 Christian universities founded by North American missionaries at the beginning of the 20th century in China. The four chosen universities had their own special characteristics and could serve as representatives for the whole group in some way. The four universities include two comprehensive universities, Yenching University in the north and Lingnan University in the south, a specialized women’s college, Ginling Women’s College in the center of the country, and one comprehensive university with a strong medical faculty, West China Union University, in the hinterland. The curriculum information for three periods was chosen to analyze the change and development based on the historical background. The curriculum was similar to the American liberal arts education curriculum, but changes and alterations were made in accordance with the Chinese context. In their mission statements, they
all claimed they were promoting a liberal arts education. They introduced Christian higher education with the aim of cultivating graduates to serve the social and economic development of China. They followed the liberal arts education curriculum from North America, focusing on a broad range of knowledge, offering common core courses, and aiming at cultivating a whole person for the society. Based on their religious background, they focused on cultivating Christian leaders for China. Religion courses and ethics were important in their curriculum. They also developed professional courses according to their mission and local contexts, such as home economics, agriculture, and dentistry. Their main difference from liberal arts education in America at that time was that the Christian universities in China included Chinese classics. Chinese was an important part of the teaching in these four universities. In Chinese studies, classics, Confucianism, and traditional values were emphasized. They acknowledged the importance of localization and indigenous culture and made adaptations to the local context. This flexibility in liberal arts education could be suggestive for today.

Today, China is aiming at building world-class universities. While matching the benchmarks of research universities, Chinese universities might also need to focus on the cultivation of a whole person, which is the ultimate purpose and goal of a university. The early American universities and colleges held fast to the essence of liberal arts education – training the mind. Developing world-class universities requires a good understanding of the essence of education and the intrinsic value of liberal arts education, that is, to cultivate a person with curiosity, problem-solving skills, lifelong learning competence, high moral standards and dedication to serve society. To reach this goal, we cannot neglect the core values of liberal arts education while introducing curriculum from other countries. From the experience of Christian universities, we can find that the Chinese classics are an important part of education for a citizen in Chinese society. Scholars such as Neville (2000) argued the importance of Confucianism as a world culture and emphasized the values of Confucianism and its relevance for today’s whole person education. Another important element of liberal arts education is the focus on the formation of character and moral education. Although religion is not a required course in most of the universities around the globe, its importance for the moral reasoning and the development of spirituality could not be neglected. Courses in religion or ethics, with the objective of moral formation, could be suggested for today’s liberal arts education curriculum. In addition, the elective courses for broadening knowledge need to be carefully chosen and specifically designed,
without adding an extra burden to students. The reform toward liberal arts education or whole person education in the time of globalization could be innovative and flexible, avoiding conformism and welcoming inclusivity and diversity.

2 Limitations of the study

Due to the scope of the study and availability of documents and materials, the study only focuses on four sample universities, with three years from each examined. The scope of curriculum analysis is limited. In the four representative cases, data are not available for all the departments and majors. Even for the same major, the data could not be obtained for every school year since its foundation. Therefore, it is impossible to make a chronological comparison. The analysis is based on the availability of documents.

Secondly, despite collecting significant archival data, the curriculum documents may not reflect the actual reality of the times. It would have been interesting to do interviews or a survey among teachers and students for their opinions on how the curriculum was implemented. Their feedback would have opened up new angles to look into this historical period. However, due to the passage of time and the fact that few graduates are still alive, let alone faculty members and administrators, this was not possible.

3 Suggestions for future study

I started this thesis with the purpose of finding insights from the historical documents about the liberal arts education in these Christian universities. The curriculum has been examined through a selection of sample universities. I discussed the intrinsic values of liberal arts education and its adaptation to the Chinese context, which could bring insights and suggestions for today’s reform of liberal arts education or general education. Further study might focus on this topic by searching for liberal arts education traditions in several specific universities which took over the campuses of the former Christian universities both in their curriculum design and campus environment. It would be interesting to examine whether there is a continuation of the ethos or spirit of the Christian universities. The United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia, the funding organization which supported the Christian universities is a good topic to study: How has it managed to keep the whole person education tradition till today? What are the lessons from the Christian universities and what related work for whole person education are they doing? For
the liberal arts education in the former Christian universities, future research might also be conducted with some interviews or exploration of documentary files of alumni, to make the findings more valid with firsthand data.

A comparative study of liberal arts education may ask the following questions: 1) How does it develop today? 2) What are the differences between liberal arts education models in different contexts? 3) What is the best or most appropriate practice for each of these places? 4) What are the local values and traditions that could be integrated within the liberal arts curriculum today? All these questions might be valuable directions for further study.
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### Appendix: List of Archival Documents

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