

wife, 1921) and *Zhui wang lao zhu* (The web-mending toiling spider, 1925); their heroines, Xiguan and Shangjie, respectively, are portrayed as embodiments of mercy, faithfulness, and perseverance. Meanwhile, the institutional forms of churches and Western models of Christian theology were satirized by writers like Xiao Qian (1910–1999), whose novel *Guiyi* (Conversion, 1935) condemns the Salvation\* Army and takes Christianity as a synonym for cultural imperialism.

JOHN TSZ PANG LAI

**Chinese Rites Controversy.** In the encounter between the gospel and the Chinese people, the most explosive controversy surrounded the ancestor\* veneration rites, traditionally associated with Confucius\* and his teaching on filiality. Matteo Ricci\* (1552–1610) and the Jesuits viewed these rites as purely honorary and ceremonial, thus gaining many converts among the Confucian literati. When Dominican missionary Juan Bautista Morales complained that these rites were superstitious\*, controversy erupted and continued until Benedict XIV prohibited these rites in the bull *Ex Quo Singulari* (1742). The Roman Catholic Church reversed its prohibition through two instructions, *Pluries Instanterque* (1936) and *Plane Compertum Est* (1939). **See also** CHINA.

JONATHAN Y. TAN

**Chinese Women and Christianity.** Early converts among Chinese women came mostly from the lower classes. The Christian Church offered them new religious perspectives on the world and themselves. Some converted because of tangible benefits and rewards, such as attending mission schools, employment, and protection. In the early 1920s, female Christians made up about 37% percent of the Protestants in China.

Church activities for women included Sunday worship, Bible studies, prayer meetings, and catechism classes. “Bible women” were hired to teach illiterate women to read the Bible and visit parishioners. Female leaders in local congregations were often active community organizers, teachers, and arbiters of disputes in their communities. In the Catholic Church, women could become members of religious orders, and some joined the group of Christian Virgins, dedicating themselves to a life of celibacy and contemplation.

In addition to evangelistic work, Christian missions provided education\* for girls and women and introduced Western medicine to China. In 1844 the first mission school for Chinese girls was opened in Ningbo, and North

China Union College for Women and Ginling Women’s College were founded in the early 20<sup>th</sup> c. Some of the graduates of these colleges became teachers, writers, and social reformers. Christian women initiated various social reforms, such as the anti-foot-binding movement, temperance unions, and health\* campaigns. Shi Meiyu and Kang Cheng were Western-trained medical doctors involved in welfare reforms for women and children. The YWCA\* provided social services, organized anti-opium campaigns, and offered literary classes for female workers.

Social participation and heightened awareness of the political changes in China called for deeper religious reflection. Christian women discussed the social implications of Christianity and challenged patriarchal\* practices of the Church. The churches were closed down during the Cultural Revolution (1966–76), but since they reopened in the late 1970s, women have been the most active members, and many were ordained to serve Christian congregations.

KWOK PUI-LAN

**Chi-Rho.** The two Greek letters that begin the title “Christ,” combined in a monogram by Constantine. **See also** IHS; INRI; *NOMINA SACRA*.

**Choir** (Lat *chorus*), the group of singers in worship; the area in which they sing in the chancel\* (though they also sing in a gallery).

**Chrism**, olive oil mixed with diverse substances (depending on the church), used for anointing\* in the Greek and Latin churches in the sacraments of baptism\*, chrismation\*, confirmation\*, and orders\* (a different oil is used in anointing the sick).

**Chrismation**, the second sacrament of the Eastern Orthodox\* Church, is conferred on the newly baptized (adult or infant) by the priest immediately after baptism\* to impart the gift of the Holy\* Spirit and signify the Spirit’s indwelling presence. The chrism – a mixture of olive oil, wine, and prescribed aromatic substances symbolizing the diverse gifts of the Holy Spirit – is prepared and consecrated periodically on Holy Thursday by the ecumenical\* patriarch or the heads of autocephalous\* churches and distributed to the parishes. Chrismation is also used to consecrate churches and to receive baptized converts from certain other churches.

ALKIVIADIS CALIVAS

**Christ** (Gk *Christos*, like the Heb *Messiah\**; literally translated as “the anointed one”). In the OT,