

HOSTED BY



Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

## International Journal of Nursing Sciences

journal homepage: <http://www.elsevier.com/journals/international-journal-of-nursing-sciences/2352-0132>

## Shaping modern nursing development in China before 1949

Jiang Yuhong\*

School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Peking Union Medical College, China

## ARTICLE INFO

## Article history:

Received 28 October 2016

Accepted 20 December 2016

Available online xxx

## Keywords:

China

Education

Nursing

Missionary hospitals

Modern nursing

## ABSTRACT

Nursing becoming a respectable, decent profession for educated Chinese women was a challenging undertaking. The early advancement of nursing in China was a collective effort of the missionary medicine, the private foundations, and the endurance, dedication and hardworking of the Chinese as well as foreign nurses. Western missionary introduced modern nursing in China and laid the preliminary foundation for its development, while the upgrading of nursing education from training to higher learning was a contribution by the School of Nursing Peking Union Medical College (PUMC), envisioned and supported by the China Medical Board. Its state-of-the-art and visionary education model, the high standard and the initiatives in public health nursing, and the heroic and patriotic military nursing created by the PUMC's outstanding graduates produced a cohort of leaders in nursing education and profession in China before 1949. All these efforts acting together shaped the modern nursing in China, leaving a great heritage to nursing education and practice to New China.

© 2016 Chinese Nursing Association. Production and hosting by Elsevier B.V. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

Since Florence Nightingale started an epochal era in modern nursing in mid 19th Century, the western missionary nurses brought this new profession to China. With the popularity of missionary hospitals in China in the early years of the 20th century, a number of nursing training schools emerged, so did the Nurses' Association of China. As a result, nursing gradually became visible in the medical world in China. The most recent study on nursing in China was done by Canadian scholar Sonya Grypma and Chinese scholar Cheng Zhen who coauthored the paper "the Development of Modern Nursing in China," (see Bridie Andrews and Mary Brown Bullock, *Medical Transitions in Twentieth-Century China*, ed., Indiana University Press; 2014, p.297–316). The two authors systematically reviewed the history of nursing development in China in the 20th century, discussing its adaptation and evolution. Based on the previous researches including the outstanding one mentioned above, this paper focused on the shaping of the modern nursing advancement before 1949 - from low level hospital based training by the missionaries, to a noble, respected profession with high standard collegiate education programs, which produced a number of outstanding Chinese nursing leaders who made great contributions to the nursing development as well as the well-being of the Chinese people and country.

### 1. Emerging: missionary nurses, training schools, and the NAC

Nurse, as a profession in China, emerged much late than physicians. Western medicine was introduced into China by "the Jesuits in the sixteenth century and Protestant missionaries in the nineteenth century ..." [1] Missionaries brought modern western medicine to China as well as the facilities in which to practice medicine - mainly the hospitals. Peter Parker - "the first Protestant medical missionary, established his ophthalmology clinic in Canton in 1835. Western medicine has been practiced on these grounds continuously ever since ..." [1] Since there was no such equivalence to hospitals in premodern period in China, the hospital - a foreign product that was novel to the Chinese culture, provided an arena for the practice of medicine and the care of the sick outside the family. The facilities - hospitals and clinics had tremendous impact on the emerging and evolution of the nurses and the profession in China.

On March 24, 1884, Elizabeth Mckechnie of the United States began to practice the Florence Nightingale systems of nursing at the West Gate Red House Hospital in Shanghai (later as Margaret Williamson Hospital 西门妇婴医院), which marked the beginning of modern nursing in China [2]. Evelyn Lin (林斯馨) regarded the period from 1884 to 1904 to be the first period of nursing in China. In this infant period, many western missionary nurses played the predominant role in promoting the profession in China. Ella Johnson from Britain established the first training school for nurses in

\* # 9 Dong Dan San Tiao, Beijing, 100730, China. Tel.: +86 13601269106.

E-mail address: [yuhongjiang08@163.com](mailto:yuhongjiang08@163.com).

Peer review under responsibility of Chinese Nursing Association.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnss.2016.12.009>

2352-0132/© 2016 Chinese Nursing Association. Production and hosting by Elsevier B.V. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

connection with Liang Au Hospital Fukien in 1888, with two nurses in the first class [2]. Added to list of early contributors were Nina Gage, Cora E. Simpson, Alice Powell, Mary Hood, Jennie Magnet Logan, and etc. Missionary nurses from western countries were very dedicated to their nursing practice and in religious service; however, they were very small in number.

Therefore, in this first period, in order to obtain better service, missionary hospitals began to train poor Chinese to help the caring of the sick – usually the poor with limited education or even the illiterate, which made up of the majority of missionary doctors' clientele at their hospitals. A number of missionary hospitals developed affiliated training programs. In 1884, William Lockhart opened probably the first nursing training program at the Chinese Hospital in Shanghai. H.W. Bonne, director of the medical department at St. John's University in Shanghai, established another training program for nurses in 1887, with only two students in the first class, and one was a male student. At the turn of the 19th century, several other programs were established - in Shanghai in 1901, and in Canton, Hankow, and Chungking in 1902 respectively. The Union School of Nurses, which opened with a three-year training program in October 1906 as part of the Union Medical College (UMC) Peking - the predecessor of PUMC, enrolled only male students, till July 1, 1915 when the China Medical Board (CMB) took over UMC.

Thanks to the vision and dedication from the foreign nurses and some leading medical figures in China, nursing kept moving steadily forward from 1904 to 1924, which Evelyn Lin regarded it as the second period in nursing development [2]. The programs during this period included such important ones as a three-year curriculum program at the Red Cross Hospital in Shanghai by Henry S. Houghton (later the director of PUMC in 1920) in 1914; a four-year program in Hsiang-ya (Yale -China) in 1911 by Edward H. Hume (胡美), as well as Sleeper Davis Hospital in Peking (北平美以美会妇婴医院).

The milestone in the advancement in this period was the establishment of the Nurses' Association of China (NAC, 中华护士会, the predecessor of Chinese Nursing Association) in 1909. Its establishment was of vital significance in scaling up the profession and standardizing the practice and education, as well as opening up the possibilities for Chinese women to become nurses. Cora E. Simpson (信宝珠), superintendent at the Union Hospital of Christian University in Foochow (福州基督教协和医院) with great passion and devotion to nursing, was a key contributor to modern nursing in China, particularly to the establishment of NAC. In the first 20 years of NAC, the presidents of NAC were all foreign missionary nurses, including Nina Gage (盖仪贞), the director from Hsiang-ya Nursing School (雅礼护病学校) who served as the president of NAC from 1912 to 1914 and president of the International Council of Nurses in 1925.

Before modern nursing practice was introduced, the care of the sick in China was the responsibilities of the family members or servants. Traditionally, it was not acceptable for females taking care of the male patients, because of the convention of no physical contact between men and women, women were not supposed to touch a man's body other than their husbands'. This is one of the reasons why few nursing training schools of the first period recruited female nurses. In the fourth meeting of NAC held in Foochow in 1918, the issue that women could not care male patients were particularly discussed, and it was resolved that a foreign female nurse accompanied a Chinese women nurse to practice nursing in the male wards. This was a revolutionary historical breakthrough in modern nursing profession in China.

As the only national professional society for nurses, the functions of NAC included registration of nurses and nursing schools; organizing national examinations to nurses; compiling, translating,

and revising textbooks for schools of nursing in China, and etc. In 1915, it gave the first examinations for nurses, developed curriculum standard and regulations of national examinations, and granted the first NAC diplomas to three students - two men and one woman who had passed the NAC examinations. Five years later, by 1920, 150 Chinese nurses had passed the examinations and received the diploma issued by NAC, and 183 foreign and Chinese nurses registered in 1920 [3]. In the same year, NAC supported the publication of the quarterly English and Chinese bilingual journal - *Nursing Journal of China* (《护士季报》).

## 2. Upgrading: the role of the Rockefeller Foundation and PUMC

The training schools for nurses in both periods were impossible to aim high at admission requirements, partly because nursing was too new for the Chinese at that time; partly because nursing was not considered a respectable job. It was very difficult to attract educated women from good families to become nurses. An article entitled "*Living in Union Nursing School*" published in 1944 [4] stated that the work of nurses was "cheap and is the servant work, and that a lively young woman should not bury her promising prospect in this kind of job." Another article published on New Chongqing in 1948 claimed that "Few of us Chinese know the importance of nurses' work, parents don't want their children to study nursing, so every year nurses are produced, but only a couple are qualified." [5].

The social background in China in the 1920s was not in favor of making nursing a respectable profession. In spite of the concurrent dramatic intellectual and social changes, as well as the efforts by the NAC and foreign nurses, the cultural norms, customs, women's inferior social status, and the Chinese deep-rooted gender expectations for women narrowly confined their activities to the domestic lives and women had little chance to access to education. Therefore, it posed great challenges to the Rockefeller Foundation (RF) and its affiliate - the China Medical Board (CMB), which aimed at advancing modern medicine in China and making nursing a profession for educated women from good families.

In 1914, the Rockefeller Foundation sent the First China Medical Commission to investigate medical practice and education in China. Three distinguished commissioners - Francis W. Peabody from Harvard University and Harry P. Judson - President of the University of Chicago and Roger S. Greene - Consul-General of the US at Hankow (汉口) wrote a report on medicine in China after they came back to the US. It included the following advice on nursing: first, providing dormitories in connection with schools for nurses; second, establishing scholarships for selected Chinese women to receive nurses' training in the US who are "highly trained" and "become teachers of nursing and superintendents of hospitals"; third, translating textbooks on nursing into Chinese [6]. This report served as guideline and the roadmap to the Rockefeller Foundation's medical philanthropic undertaking in China, which led to the establishment of the CMB which was specifically responsible for the establishment, funding and operation of PUMC including its nursing school.

Comparatively speaking, up till 1916, modern nursing had existed in China only for three decades, but the landscape of nursing had been formed which was not so far behind. According to John Bower, "The first preparatory course in the United States was developed at the Johns Hopkins Hospital School of Nursing in 1901. The first school of nursing in a university was established at Minnesota in 1909 with a three-year basic program. It was not until 1916, however, that a five-year degree program was introduced that placed equal emphasis on general and nursing education." [7] Thanks to the Rockefeller Foundation's vision and support, just

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/5568367>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/5568367>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)