

The experience of American and Chinese Christian women affiliated with the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) in China indicates the Chinese women's path to independence during China's sociopolitical upheaval between 1927 and 1957. The study investigates how and why these women successfully adapted to the upheaval of the era. As an American Christian woman, Marion Dudley had an evolving perception of Chinese women when she was a missionary in China (1927-47). Influenced by wars, peers, and cultural background, her journey from embracing paternalistic views to recognizing the autonomy of Chinese women indicates the process of Chinese women achieving and showing their independence to American women. Meanwhile, a Chinese Christian woman, Zheng Ruquan, strategically aligned with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and adapted her Christian faith to communism (1936-57). Driven by the desire for Chinese independence and other factors, she actively engaged with the communist regime. Accordingly, the YWCA's Chinese Christian women contributed to and were shaped by the sociopolitical upheaval of 20th-century China through their efforts to achieve independence, simultaneously shaping American Christian women's perspective. Their experience echoed the era of intense nationalistic fervor in China, revealing the existence of cross-cultural interaction and ideological adaptation.