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LOTTIE MOON: SOUTHERN BAPTIST FEMINIST

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LOTTIE MOON: SOUTHERN BAPTIST FEMINIST

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Abstract

Charlotte Diggs "Lottie" Moon is widely acknowledged by Southern Baptists as a key contributor to the mass expansion of Southern Baptist missions during the 19th century. Though the missionary is celebrated for her fierce commitment to the mission field of China, the strides Moon made for Southern Baptist women in over 300 letters to the *Foreign Mission Journal* have yet to be recognized for their feminist qualities. This study aims to elevate this writer whose work has been undervalued for its contributions to Southern Baptist women. To do so, it examines the ways in which Moon was able to usurp the patriarchal authority of the Southern Baptist Convention while maintaining a good enough standing to remain the idolized figure she is today. Reclaiming the voice of a woman writer who is undervalued by the patriarchal system she existed in is imperative to the continuation of exploring and elevating marginalized voices in religious contexts.

Lottie Moon: Southern Baptist Feminist

Historians remark that the most common opposition faced by Baptist women came from Baptist men. Fathers, husbands, brothers, and fellow male church members held fast to the entrenched patriarchal structure that was condoned by their interpretation of the Bible (Blevins 52). Persuasive pastors preached from the pulpit on the dangers of allowing women to vote in the church and condemned women from speaking at all, for, as the apostle Paul told the church of Corinth, "Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says. And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church," (1 Corinthians 14:33-35 NKJV) and further, in his first letter to Timothy, "And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence" (1 Timothy 2:12 NKJV). Such scriptures informed the Southern Baptist Convention's (SBC) interpretation of female gender roles in the 1800s and continue to bar women from pastoral roles to this day.

At the cusp of the 19th century, the Southern Baptist missions organization, called the "Foreign Mission Board," strictly barred women from being missionaries, the vocation of spreading the Christian faith through missions to unreached people groups. The wives of male missionaries were viewed as unavoidable baggage that accompanied their male counterparts, and unmarried women were primarily denied access on such endeavors or limited to participation as mere assistants (Allen).

However, this male-dominated profession was soon penetrated by women missionaries who opted to resist the social suppression that prohibited them from speaking about their

religious convictions. The rigid constraints of the 19th century Southern Baptist mission field produced some of the most idolized women in their history, such as Charlotte Hazen Altee White; the first unmarried Baptist appointee, Eleanor Macomber; the first unmarried woman church planter in 1836, Henriette Hall Shuck; the first American woman and educator of women in China, Martha Harriet Baker; the first unmarried woman appointed by Southern Baptists in 1849, and finally, Lottie Moon; the first professional woman missionary appointed in 1873 (Allen).

Of the limited opportunities these women had, the vocation of mission work proved to be a segue for gender equality that many Southern Baptist women utilized successfully. The qualities of being a missionary closely aligned with the historical gender ideology of Protestant women. Women in this position, researcher Barbara Welters contends, "[were] trained in submission, service, and love, all objects of the mission cause. Like women's work, the work of the conversion of nations was never done, until the last day" (626). She appeals to the historical gender ideology at work as influenced by 19th century novels, which romanticized the ability of a woman to love, thus "her search for a fitting love object [which] was the theme of …many lives" (626). Of the limited objects women could apply this affection to, such as teaching and motherhood, many Protestant women devoted themselves to missions (627). The avenue of missions became a field so dominated by women missionaries over the 19th century that Baptist historians refer to women being "the backbone of the missions movement" (Blevins 54). This was largely due to "women's work," a term used by historians in reference to women's missions. Countless missions organizations founded by women thrived at the beginning of the 19th century, such as Mary Webb's Boston Female Society for Missionary Purposes, which had amassed so much financial success it had officially been recognized in name as a Baptist organization in

1829 despite having women employed as missionaries. Blevins contends that women such as Mary Webb contributed to the mass multiplication of women mission organizations: “Mission societies sprang up all over the country. Women began to pray for the heathen, then give to the heathen, and eventually even go to the heathen” (54).

Miraculously, these women expanded the Southern Baptist notion of a woman and her capabilities all while maintaining good standing with their patriarchal religious structure. The beginnings of the 20th century, in contrast to the 19th, boasted of the triumphs of Southern Baptist women on the mission field. At the Tennessee Baptist Convention of 1903, their men stated: “There are no croakers now regarding women’s work” (53). In 1918, the men in leadership at First Baptist Church of Nashville proclaimed, “Our women, God bless them, will carry on their work grandly whether we smile or frown at them” (53). Finally, in 1929, Mrs. W. J. Cox took the stage as the first woman in history to give the Woman’s Missionary Union (WMU) report to the Southern Baptist Convention (53).

This drastic shift from women being prohibited from the field of missions to it being considered “women’s work” in Southern Baptist history can be attributed to various factors, both inside and outside of the denomination. This article, however, aims to focus on the role 19th century Southern Baptist women played in this transference, specifically, missionary Charlotte Diggs “Lottie” Moon. While historical studies such as Blevins’ *Women in Baptist History* commend the historical efforts of Southern Baptist women during this time, few have come to recognize the specific written works of Lottie Moon as feminist writings, both in the Southern Baptist world itself and in academic studies. This article seeks to explore the ways in which Lottie Moon implicitly resists Southern Baptist gender roles in her letters while maintaining a

good standing with the patriarchal system she occupied, ultimately recognizing her work as a feminist author.

Lottie Moon: Missionary

Scholars discuss the topic of female protestant missionaries for their historical significance as well as their rhetorical effects. Barbara Welter's *She Hath Done What She Could* offers an account for the spike in female missionaries in the 19th century, attributing it to the readjustment of gender roles inside and out of Protestant society. Roberta Wollen's *Traveling for God and Adventure* discusses the historical significance of female missionaries in the late 19th century. Studies range from investigating the colonial effect of female missionaries on their Chinese converts, such as Carol C. Chin's *Beneficent Imperialists* to the effect on their return to America in Dana L. Robert's *The Influence of American Missionary Women on the World Back Home*. Many of these studies offer a selection of several female missionaries, such as Lottie Moon, who had rhetorical effects on Protestantism and its converts. While these studies explore the rhetorical impact had by missionary women such as Moon, there exists a gap in the examination of Moon's letters through a feminist literary analysis in the context of the 19th century Southern Baptist Convention. This article reveals that doing so further illuminates *how* these rhetorical effects were achieved.

Because of the complexity of SBC politics regarding women, categorizing Lottie Moon's work as "feminist" has yet to transpire. Robert's description of Moon's identity in the context of the convention serves as a poignant explanation:

> For Southern Baptist women, the memory of Lottie Moon is an affirmation of their own spiritual power and leadership ability in a male-dominated denomination. For the male power brokers of the Southern Baptist Convention, however, controlling the symbol of Lottie Moon represents their control over the entire denomination—including the women in it. (65)

In other words, the symbol of Lottie Moon is evaluated and maintained by the men of the SBC, which echoes their evaluation and maintenance of women in the SBC. In turn, this controlled interpretation celebrates Lottie Moon for a select few aspects of what her many letters achieved. The SBC applauds her passion for missions without consideration of her achievements for Southern Baptist women ("About Lottie Moon"). She is praised for her use of agency regarding missions; however, most Baptists would reject the notion of her being "feminist" in any way, shape, or form due to their aversion to contemporary feminism ("On the Legacy and Responsibility of Women"). By examining Moon's work through a feminist lens, we can further illuminate feminist rhetorical practices in patriarchal religious contexts and the voices that have not yet been acknowledged in them.

This article is devoted to examining the work of the first professional female Southern Baptist missionary through a feminist lens in order to reclaim the writings of an author whose work has yet to be acknowledged for its feminist contributions in the context of the SBC. It is rooted in this question: *How did Lottie Moon resist Southern Baptist gender roles in her entries while maintaining good standing with the patriarchal system she occupied?* In exploring Moon's tactical resistance and submission to the SBC, this study hopes to expand the understanding of effective feminist rhetoric under patriarchal religious regimes as well as hypothesize ways in which this approach can be used in similar contexts today.

This study begins by framing the surrounding context of the Southern Baptist Convention during the 19th century and Lottie Moon's life. It then addresses the designated feminist methodology as well as the selection process for which of Moon's letters are used in this analysis. These letters, separated into two categories, are subsequently analyzed and followed by

a discussion of their significance and implications. To conclude, this study looks forward and addresses the ways in which acknowledging Lottie Moon's work as feminist can continue the process of reclamation necessary in patriarchal religious contexts such as the current SBC.

A Brief Southern Baptist History

The Southern Baptist Convention, a denomination within Protestantism, was established in 1845 due to the growing disagreement from Northern Baptists over the question of slavery (Shaw 7). When Baptists in Georgia appointed a male slave owner as a missionary, the Northern Baptists dissented: "one thing is certain; we can never be a party to any arrangement which would imply approbation of slavery" (Shaw 7). In response, the SBC was formed on May 8, 1845, with 4,126 churches and 351,951 members. Before the schism, the Northern and Southern Baptists cooperated with funding mission work through the Home Mission Society. After, the SBC conducted missions primarily through the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, which supported Lottie Moon's mission in China (Harper 3).

Before beginning her missionary work in Dengzhou, China, Moon attended the Virginia Female Seminary and the Albemarle Female Institute where she received her Master of Arts degree in 1861. She converted to Christianity in 1858. She enjoyed life as a teacher in Kentucky and Georgia until 1873 when she began her mission in China, where she resided until her death on the return home to the United States on December 24, 1912 (Harper 3). While abroad, Lottie Moon wrote over 300 letters to her superiors and to the Foreign Mission Board's *Foreign Mission Journal*. The letters document missionary life in China and vocalize Moon's discrepancies with the SBC for their lack of support for missionaries.

Many Southern Baptists consider these letters to have thoroughly changed the SBC's perception of mission work ("About Lottie Moon"). Moon is considered a direct contributor to

the formation of the Women's Missionary Union (WMU) in 1888, an organization devoted raising funds for Baptist international missions (“About WMU”). These missions are fully funded by donations from members of the Convention, referred to as “offerings.” WMU has two major offerings that have led Southern Baptist churches across the nation to give over 6 million dollars– the Lottie Moon and Annie Armstrong offerings. They are named after two women who had a vital part of building up WMU in the 19th and 20th century. Keith Harper, author of *Send the Light*, a collection of Moon’s writings, describes Moon as an essential component of Southern Baptist identity. Her story is recounted regularly throughout thousands of Southern Baptist churches, especially during the annual Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. While her letters successfully secured funding and acknowledgement from the SBC for the validity of missions, they also encouraged the SBC to take missions, and women, more seriously.

A Feminist Methodology

This article investigates several entries by Lottie Moon in the *Foreign Mission Journal* that describe her experience on mission as well as direct appeals to Southern Baptists. It is important to note, however, that these entries are not the extent of Moon's resistance to Southern Baptist patriarchal control. Moon's direct letters to her superiors display evidence of her usurping patriarchal authority as well. The Tupper Letters detail her mission between 1873 and 1893 to her superior Henry Allen Tupper, Corresponding Secretary of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board (3). The Willingham Letters appeal to the following Corresponding Secretary, Robert Josiah Willingham, from 1893 to 1912. While these letters display resistance to Baptist gender roles, her audience is limited to a specific individual.

Her entries in the *Foreign Mission Journal* (1874-1960), a four-page newspaper published by the Foreign Mission Board of the SBC, are laden with similar rejections of gender roles but geared towards a wider audience (Southern Baptist Historical Library & Archives). Her letters had to be approved by the male-led SBC and Foreign Mission Board in order to be published, which meant Moon had to consider not only her fellow Southern Baptists but their patriarchal leadership as well. This most often occurred through her appropriation of the SBC's patriarchal discourse in order to speak to this audience in a way that resisted Southern Baptist gender norms while maintaining their positive regard.

Given this, this study will employ Katherine Fredlund's *Antinarcissistic Rhetoric: Reinforcing Social Inequities through Gender Performance* in order to have a fuller understanding of the feminist rhetorical moves Moon makes. Antinarcissistic rhetoric refers to the ways in which "women rhetors appropriate patriarchal discourses in order to create an ethos

with their audience" (21). Katherine Fredlund theorizes this rhetoric appears in three ways: through dual gender performance, the use of *psogos*, and the dismissal of the corporeal body.

Drawing on the work of Judith Butler, Fredlund situates her theory within the understanding of 19th century research that affirms a female rhetor's ability to speak hinging upon her performance of her gender. In order to enter into the sphere of patriarchal discourse, a woman had to speak the language of the oppressor and perform the role of the oppressed (23). Fredlund explains that her rhetorical theory exists in this tension as the female rhetor performs both the feminine and the masculine (24). This informs her notion of dual-gender performance, which is attentive to the ways in which the female rhetor speaks in the masculine while performing the feminine through mimicry, as defined by Luce Irigaray's *The Sex Which is Not One*. Masculine mimicry looks like speaking, evidencing strength, and making demands. Female mimicry is performed when the rhetor is submissive, weak, and apologetic (25). Fredlund argues that in order to be heard, the female rhetor must mimic the masculine and disavow the feminine, adhering to gendered stereotypes (26). In Lottie Moon's case, this looks like her mimicking the masculine through the authoritative, instructional voice she takes in her letters that demand support from the SBC. Moon mimics the feminine in her submissiveness to certain elements of Southern Baptist gender ideology and her strong emotional reactions to the injustice of the choices made by the Foreign Mission Board.

Fredlund also articulates that the female rhetor's performance in antinarcissistic rhetoric is contingent on the dismissal of her corporeal body. Fredlund situates this in the traditional differentiation between mind and body, the masculine being the mind, and the feminine being the body as explored by Elizabeth Grosz in *Volatile Bodies*. In antinarcissistic rhetoric, the female rhetor must dismiss the body, since it cannot be ignored. This looks like the separation of the

mind and body, acknowledging the lesser role of the body despite the fact that as a woman, that is what she is identified with. This disidentification results in the female rhetor considering her body, and by association, herself, as secondary (33). Throughout her *Foreign Mission Journal* entries, Moon rarely speaks about the condition of her corporeal body, speaking only from her "mind." One of the only times she references the body at all in her public entries is in the discussion of missionaries being like soldiers in a time of war. Even then, she never identifies with her body, speaking strictly from the third person.

The final aspect of antinarcissistic rhetoric that one sees Lottie Moon utilizing the most in her entries is *psogos*, or the rhetoric of blame. Fredlund notes that female rhetors have historically used this by attributing her need to speak not from herself, but from an outside force (30). This is done so through disparaging another woman, claiming the right to speak because a man told her so, or claiming God as the reason for her speech (30). In other words, the responsibility for the speech is directed away from the speaker and can earn the woman the right to speak in a space where this act might be otherwise unattainable. While this privileges the speaker, this aspect of antinarcissistic rhetoric often does so at the expense of another group's privilege. While Moon blames her religious convictions and the injustice of the SBC for her need to speak in some cases, in others, her use of *psogos* privileges herself and Baptist women at the expense of Chinese people and their cultural practices.

It is imperative to address the colonial language Moon uses throughout her letters, as is evident throughout missionary discourse. In *Beneficent Imperialists*, Carol C. Chin describes the detrimental effects of the colonial influence on missions on 19th century China:

> Many Americans held simultaneous and contradictory images of the Chinese as uncivilized heathens and eager pupils, a duality arising from the paradox in Americans' own national identity as both an exceptional and an exportable civilization. (331)

Moon's interpretation of the Chinese people she encountered was heavily influenced by the colonial culture she hailed from, as evident in the language used in her letters. However, as a woman, Moon's rhetoric diverts from that of a male missionary. Chin claims:

> Female missionaries, however, tended to judge the Chinese people according to culture more than power or even, sometimes, race. They considered their Chinese converts to belong to the category of 'Christian' first and that of 'the Chinese race' second. (331)

Though Lottie Moon's colonial interpretation of the Chinese is undeniable, she, like other female missionaries, departs from traditional colonial rhetoric that defines individuals by race or power first and instead opts to consider Chinese people as Christians first. Chin remarks that such a rhetorical move proved to contribute to a shift in the conception of Chinese people:

> Chinese could transcend the putative limitations of race and be regarded as almost American. This resulted in the missionaries' stress on education for Chinese women and girls, which produced Chinese Christians with a hybrid cultural identities. (331)

Thus, Chin opts to consider 19th century female missionaries in China as "beneficent imperialists" in an attempt to consider the contradictions of the vocation riddled with colonial influence.

This article, in turn, grapples with that same contradiction. Though Moon's letters elevate the station of Chinese people in some ways, they are plagued by colonial language that further necessitates an analysis using antinarcissistic rhetoric. Evaluating Moon's letters with attention to the use of *psogos*, which often surfaces in her colonial language used to describe the Chinese people, clearly emphasizes how she establishes the right to speak at the expense of the colonized. It also emphasizes how Moon's use of *psogos* when she blames God instead of the Chinese people establishes her right to speak without it being to the detriment of the people she aims to convert. These contradictory results are best mediated through an antinarcissistic rhetoric, which

aims to draw attention to the wide range of effects that Lottie Moon's letters had on missionary women, Chinese people, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

The majority of Moon's *Foreign Mission Journal* entries fall into one of two categories: They either describe her missionary experiences in China, or they petition Southern Baptists for aid to continue the spread of Christianity. The letters selected from the first category for this study are those which specifically reference Moon's interpretation of Chinese culture. In these letters, this study examines the ways in which Moon portrays Chinese women and the power dynamic between men, especially in comparison to Christian culture.

The latter entries are selected based on Moon's direct approach to her audience of Southern Baptist readers. The application of antinarcissistic rhetoric analyzes the ways in which Moon establishes authority to speak to the SBC and its male leaders in an instructional and stern manner. The application of this theory explores how Moon was able to effectively resist the patriarchal system in which she existed while maintaining good standing with the SBC itself to the point of not only being published in the *Foreign Mission Journal,* but remaining a celebrated Baptist figure centuries later.

Though there are more than two genders, this study, like *Antinarcissistic Rhetoric*, will rely on the masculine/feminine gender dichotomy, as this differentiation enables not only the use of an antinarcissistic rhetoric but also informs the way the SBC has and does consider people assigned female or male at birth.

A Portrait of a Woman and Her Country

"The Chinese mode of living is patriarchal…"

As Moon chronicles Chinese women in these entries, the common thread that binds them together is the belief that the Christian faith is a force that liberates women in patriarchal environments. According to Moon, the opposing force that stands between a Chinese woman and a life devoted to Christ is the culture she is entrenched in. Moon clearly frames 19th century Chinese culture as the antagonist to Chinese women, whose husbands and families treat them like "property" and force them to participate in "heathen" religious practices such as "grave worshiping." The following excerpts examine how Lottie Moon depicts Chinese gender dynamics as an oppressive force against women who seek her out to hear more about the Christian faith. She then, in contrast, proposes the ways in which Christianity liberates these women in ways that their culture cannot.

The August 1877 edition of the *Foreign Mission Journal* includes Lottie Moon's entry "Sunday in China," which emphasizes the stark contrast of her vision of Chinese culture to that of Christianity. Sunday, the "Sabbath" day reserved for the reverence of the Christian God, is the day Moon feels this cultural difference the most in this foreign land. She describes how the busy market street has her wishing its citizens were on the way to worship her God instead of partaking in their business: "How you long to see this thoughtless, careless, busy multitude, wending its way to the house of God!" (184). She notes specifically the actions of men, who gossip, tend their wares, or discuss business, contributing to the chaos as children play in the streets. In contrast, Moon imagines the walls of the local church, "the brighter side to the picture," which presents a "quiet, orderly, well-dressed congregation assembled to worship the true God" (184). Moon invites her readers to consider the ways in which she conceives of

Chinese culture as a godless culture where "Satan reigns" and Christianity as a safehold in the "heathen land" (184).

Moon's critiques specifically targeted Chinese men in the September 1884 *Foreign Mission Journal* entry "Lung San Tien." She notes the increasing interest of Chinese women on the matters of Christianity whenever Chinese men were absent, describing instances where women sought her out for more information until caught by their husbands. One afternoon, when Moon was teaching on the Christian faith to a room full of women, "some men came in and the women scattered. The men were evidently hostile, though maintaining a show of outward politeness, and I immediately withdrew" (206). She went on to another house to answer a young woman's questions, whose husband returned "looking like a small thunder cloud" (206). Moon emphasizes the skewed power dynamic between Chinese men and their wives, who must seek out the knowledge of Christianity in secret lest they be reprimanded by their angry husbands. Moon elicits pity from the Christian reader, who not only wishes these Chinese women to be converted, but to be set free from the oppressive force of Chinese men who stand as an obstacle to Christian conversions.

This theme of marking Chinese culture as the antagonist to Christianity is continued in Moon's descriptions of Chinese women in the May 1886 edition of the *Foreign Mission Journal*. "Polygamy" narrates Moon's visit with a mandarin in P'ingtu, China. She arrives earlier than expected, accidentally encountering the mandarin's wife. The missionary reveals, "A scene met my astonished and pitying gaze, such as I have never noticed in the hovels of boggetry" (211). Moon, to her surprise, finds the mandarin's wife covered in soot, clothed in a "disgustingly filthy dress," and crowned with a nest of matted hair. She attempted to converse with the woman in her "very cold room," but was prohibited by two male servants, who urged her to follow them to the

mandarin's room, "the comfort of which was in painful contrast to the squalor and wretchedness of the [woman's]" (211). In this scene, the male servants control Moon's movements, directing her away from the pitiable woman she seeks to engage with. She contrasts the harsh living conditions of the mandarin's wife to the mandarin's, whose room is layered with opulent rugs and kept warm by a stove topped with a kettle of brewing tea.

The disparity between the state of the two rooms, however, is only the half of Moon's concerns. Upon her arrival to the mandarin's quarters, she is greeted by a young woman introduced as the lady of the house. It is in this moment Moon has her first interaction with the practice of polygamy:

> The wife of the man's youth, whose crime was that her male children had all died, was cast off and reduced to a state of abject squalor and wretchedness, while another woman was brought in to take her place, and here, right before her eyes, was living in luxury, with servants to anticipate her every want. (212)

Moon laments the injustice of the practice of polygamy, criticizing the cruel treatment of the mandarin's original wife, whose punishment was due to a tragedy outside of her control. "O, the cruelty of this horrible system of polygamy!" (212) she grieves, emphasizing the wretchedness of the Chinese tradition, a stark contrast to the monogamous Christian marriage.

Though Moon implies the other wife is a source of pain for the first wife, she is clear the mantle of responsibility is for the mandarin and Chinese tradition to bear. Moon describes the other wife as having a "pleasant face, but evidently in poor health" (212). She later attributes this to her apparent opium addiction, another cultural practice which causes Moon to pity her. The missionary leaves, confessing "I was disgusted with the whole scene" (213). Though Moon criticizes the mandarin's newer wife for her opium addiction and the role she plays in the

original wife's misery, she attributes responsibility to the mandarin himself. This is evident in her proposal of what she would do in order to rectify the situation:

> Should this man apply for membership in our church, could the decision be left to me, I should say to him: "Put away the woman who has supplanted your lawful wife and restore the latter to her rightful place in your house, and so give proof of your sincerity of your repentance. After that we will talk about admitting you as a candidate for baptism" (213).

Moon makes it clear that she would go directly to the mandarin in order to redeem this situation for his wives– he is the one with the power to rectify this. Further, this section emphasizes the contrast to the Christian belief system, which regards polygamy as an act that demands "repentance," the admission of sin and turn to righteousness. Moon implies that it is through the application of Christian values that "this miserable creature" can be returned to the "happy wife and mother, living in comfort, with servants to wait on her" that she once was (213).

It cannot be ignored that in this section Moon adopts the responsibilities limited to that of the male pastor in her church. She imagines, "could the decision be left to me," the pastoral choices *she* would make in order to redeem the lives of those entrapped in this situation. Moon is able to speak from a place of authority otherwise prohibited to her by proposing a hypothetical using the words "could" and "should," clearly acknowledging her own lack of authority in this role. This is made possible by the establishment of the severity of such an offense as polygamy in accordance with the Christian faith. Her proposal that the man would repent of his ways and return to his original wife would most likely be considered a biblical approach by the Southern Baptist community, making her adoption of authority righteous despite the limitations of her gender.

"Polygamy" introduces Christian readers to a firsthand account of the severity of the sin of polygamy rampant in China as well as its "wretched" effects. Moon contrasts the patriarchal

Chinese traditions that oppress women and children to the Christian faith, which she alleges would remedy the unjust situation. In this, she paints Christianity as a liberating force against patriarchal control while resisting the patriarchal systems evident in her denomination by inserting her own plan of action if she were a pastor, a role reserved exclusively for men.

Many of Moon's entries praising Chinese women do so for their willingness to suffer for the sake of Jesus Christ. This surfaced most often when women refused Chinese tradition and their husband's wishes to "worship at the graves," a Buddhist practice Moon describes as integral to the Chinese marriage ceremony. In "Letters from the Missions," she informs her audience of the conditions Chinese women are forced to submit to in "heathen," or, non-Christian, families:

> The position of a Christian daughter-in-law in a heathen family is one of great difficulty. She is regarded as the property of the family to which she has been given to by her own parents. Especially trying is her condition when a death occurs among her husband's relatives. She must then give up Christianity or come to direct issue with the family (247).

In these entries, Moon celebrates Chinese women as "heroines" for their ability to "resolutely refuse" their husbands wishes (252-3). Though such accounts condone the refusal to submit to the authority of one's husband, the Southern Baptist community would have most likely received them exactly as Moon framed them: Moments of suffering for the sake of one's belief in Jesus Christ.

This is especially apparent in the February 1890 *Foreign Mission Journal*'s "A Visit to Saling," where Moon praises a young newlywed Chinese woman who stood firm in her Christian convictions despite the resistance from her husband and mother-in-law. Moon describes the bride's refusal to submit to her husband's authority as an act of "suffer[ing] for the Lord" (242),

not a failure of the biblical virtue of submission to one's husband. The young woman not only rejected her husband's wishes to partake in the Chinese marriage custom of worshiping at ancestral graves; she boldly proclaimed her pity on him that he did.

Ordinarily, the rejection of male authority, especially from one's husband, would be considered the rejection of the gender roles in Southern Baptist culture at this time. Lottie Moon, however, celebrates the "beautiful" and "modest" woman who suffered for the sake of her beliefs. She highlights the feminine attributes of the woman in her praise of her anti-patriarchal act. The bride's desire to be faithful to the Christian doctrine not only contended with the Christian value of submission, but brought about the missionary's respect. Moon revels over the woman's "gentle tact and unwavering firmness" (242) that emboldened her to refuse the wishes of her husband as well as his mother.

At the end of "A Visit to Saling," the young woman's appeals are granted, and "no sinful conformity was demanded of her" (242) to go and worship at the ancestral graves. Moon declares this a victory for Christians because "She had given herself up to suffer for her Lord, and lo! His mighty hand had made all things smooth before her," (243). Here, Moon communicates that because of the woman's denial of her husband's wishes, labeled suffering for the Lord, God cleared a path for her. In essence, what transpired was God's will. This appeal to the will of God negates resistance for those who might draw into question the young woman's methods. Moon shows an adept understanding of Southern Baptist values, knowing the privilege of the value of suffering for Christ over submitting to the authority of one's husband.

In "Healthy Growth in Pingtu Neighborhood," Moon boasts of another Chinese woman supplanting the patriarchal forces imposed upon her for the sake of Christianity. When a local

woman in P'ingtu hesitated to be baptized because of the social implications from her family, Moon uses the experience of a Chinese woman who dared "suffer much for the faith" (245) regardless of the threats of being betrothed to an older man by her father. Moon informs her readers that according to Chinese law, this woman had no choice but to submit to her family's wishes and marry. However, the liberating power of Christianity empowered this "handsome, attractive, and very clever" (245) young woman to successfully convince her husband to allow her to be baptized. Moon commends this woman for utilizing her physical appearance to achieve her wishes, considering it an act of brave suffering for the sake of following the Christian faith. This account is noteworthy not only in its resistance to Southern Baptist gender roles of resisting the leadership of one's husband, but its direct glorification of the female body being utilized as a weapon. Moon consistently rejects her own corporal body throughout her letters but doesn't hesitate to describe the physical appearance of this young Chinese woman. She considers the use of her attractiveness in order to usurp her husband's authority as a strength, not a sin. Here, the missionary resists prescribed gender roles and pushes to redefine the treatment of feminine characteristics such as attractiveness.

Implications

Throughout Lottie Moon's entries that illustrate her interactions with women and Chinese culture, one sees her treat the Christian faith as a force that liberates these women. While Chinese culture hinders women from their ability to freely pursue Christ; Christianity, Moon asserts, frees women and breaks their chains of "heathen" practices such as "grave worshiping" and polygamy. In colonial fashion, Moon attributes *psogos*, or blame, onto Chinese culture. In privileging Christianity at the expense of Chinese culture, Moon invites readers to consider Christianity as a religion that breaks patriarchal systems and frees women in bondage. Though Jesus enacts justice and frees women in bondage throughout the Bible, Moon opts to remind her Southern Baptist readers entrenched in the patriarchal system of the SBC of this. This pointed acknowledgment of Christianity breaking the chains of patriarchal power strengthens Moon's approach to advocating on the behalf of women within Southern Baptist culture.

Further, these letters reveal Lottie Moon's resistance to the conscripted gender roles of Southern Baptist culture through the glorification of usurping the authority of one's husband for the sake of following Jesus. In Ephesians 5:22-24, the apostle Paul tells the church of Ephesus:

> Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. (NKJV)

This verse has served as vital instruction for gender roles within many Christian communities since the establishment of the first churches, especially in the SBC (*On the Dignity and Worth of Women*). Lottie Moon's entries on women in China, however, usurp this tradition, not only in encouraging Chinese women to resist their husband's will, but celebrating it as an act of martyrdom. Capitalizing on the *psogos* of Chinese patriarchal culture, she paints such an act as a

necessary step the Chinese woman must take in order to submit her life to Christ. This reveals Moon's astute understanding of the hierarchy of values of the Christian faith, which first and foremost value the spread of the religion. Jesus' last words to his disciples, coined "The Great Commission" of Christianity, are: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you..." (Matthew 28:19 NKJV). Moon paints the primary goal of Christianity as something that cannot be achieved in China without a wife's resistance to her husband, who would prohibit her from baptism and force her into "heathen" practices. She is able to celebrate the direct opposition to Paul's command to the church of Ephesus because a direct command from Jesus Christ ultimately trumps that of the gender roles established by an apostle. These entries thus normalize the rejection of patriarchal authority under specific circumstances, illustrating their insignificance in light of the salvation of a woman's soul.

This rhetorical approach is a mirror image of antinarcissistic rhetoric's rhetoric of blame. Though we see Moon's appropriation of patriarchal discourses in order to create ethos with the SBC, Fredlund acknowledges the limitations of such a rhetoric:

> This rhetorical move, however, is effective not because it blames someone else but because it takes the blame away from the speaker. In taking away the woman rhetor's agency and giving someone else the responsibility for her gender-norm-breaking actions, the antinarcissistic use of psogos subsumes blame into something else entirely. (32)

In Lottie Moon's case, she casts the blame on Chinese culture not only for her own actions but the actions of Christian Chinese women. In doing so, she makes a caricature of Chinese culture to her readers, blaming them for the patriarchal society these women find themselves in while excluding Southern Baptist culture from any and all criticism. Fredlund articulates that such a rhetorical approach "reinforces hegemonic ideologies in order to create privilege for the

marginalized individual at the expense of the marginalized group" (36). While Lottie Moon achieves privilege for herself and Southern Baptist women, it is at the expense of the Chinese individuals she comes into contact with and their culture as a whole, which is interpreted and relayed from a point of view entrenched in nationalism, racism, and colonialism. The same writings that achieved visibility for Southern Baptist women would also have contributed to the racist ideologies prominent in 19th century America.

A Direct Appeal to Southern Baptists

"The needs of these people press upon my soul, and I cannot be silent."

Though Paul declares in 1 Timothy 2:12, "I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence" (NKJV), Lottie Moon declares, "The needs of these people press upon my soul, and I cannot be silent" (225). The missionary makes it apparent that the chastisement of her sisters and brothers in Christ alike is not from a place of a desire for power, rather, she is compelled to as she contemplates how "it is grievous to think of these human souls going down to death without even one opportunity of hearing the name of Jesus" (225). The weight of whether a person will enter into the kingdom of heaven or an eternity of conscious suffering necessitates her breach of Southern Baptist gender expectations. Moon utilizes the rhetoric of blame on that of God, whose word compels her to speak with His authority to the SBC.

The following entries are pointed appeals to the *Foreign Mission Journal* to send more missionaries and volunteers to China. Lottie Moon reprimands her religious authorities and contemporaries in the SBC on how they ought to reconcile the state of their mission field with an authoritative voice culturally limited to men at that time. In order to speak with authority to the men-only leadership of the SBC and its churches, Moon writes as if compelled by the damnation of unreached souls and angered by the stark contrast between the Southern Baptist mission effort and those of the Methodists and Presbyterians. Through this, one sees Moon perform the masculine and feminine at strategic moments in order to elicit more support for the vocation of missions, and, by association, Baptist women.

The February 1888 entry "From Miss Lottie Moon" is a critical analysis of the current state of the Foreign Mission Board with an appeal for more support. Moon constructs her plea based on the following verse: "Then saith he unto his disciples, the harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few. Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that He send forth laborers into His harvest" (228). In this selection of Matthew 9, Jesus reveals that the labor of spreading the gospel to unreached people is not his alone, but for those who follow him (Keener 196). "The [laborers] Jesus wished to send into the harvest were his own disciples" (197). By quoting this scripture, Moon borrows the authority of Jesus Christ to instruct her readers to labor in the mission field. She describes her station in Shandong as "utterly inadequate," chastising Southern Baptists, who were the first missionaries to enter the field of China but the weakest in numbers at that point (227). She challenges the actions of the Foreign Mission Board by listing what their involvement in China "should" look like: paying more attention to the interior and establishing more thoroughly-manned stations so "there shall be no more disastrous failures" (227). Moon, compelled by the calling of Christ to gather more laborers, instructs the men of the Foreign Mission Board on how to follow Jesus' command.

In "A Trip to the Country," Lottie Moon demands that no Christian man has a valid excuse to not join in the missionary work happening in China. She praises her mission leader, Mr. Crawford, for his relentless devotion to missions atop his roles as a pastor and professor. "It is not right for the brethren at home to leave [Mr. Crawford] to toil on year after year unaided, and, when this noble soldier of the cross has 'fallen asleep,' who will fill his place?" (176). Moon asks the men in her Baptist audience who among them would fill Mr. Crawford's role once he passed away. In commending Mr. Crawford's commitment to missions along with his

other vocations as *noble*, she emphasizes to her Christian brothers this same nobility can be awarded to them upon their pursuit of missions.

Moon highlights the need for women missionaries as well, describing their vital role in Chinese evangelism for their ability to enter into spaces where Christian men would be unable to access. Moon attests that because Chinese men do not allow foreign men into their homes, "the only way for [Chinese men] to hear the good news of salvation is from the lips of foreign women" (176). Moon implies that it is only through Baptist women that the gospel will spread throughout China. Here, she communicates the necessity of elevating Baptist women in order to complete the will of God. She concludes this entry quoting Isaiah 6:8: "Are there not some, yea many, who find it in their hearts to say, 'Here am I; send me?" (176). Moon appeals to the Holy Bible to emphasize the call of the Christian: to deliver the good news of the Christian faith to all of the nations.

In the May 1889 edition of the *Foreign Mission Journal*, Moon makes a pointed appeal to Baptist men, using their own commitment to their interpretation of Biblical gender roles against them. She details being approached by Chinese men who longed for more of God's instruction. They asked if Moon would read and explain one of Jesus' parables to a mixed audience of men and women. Moon humbly replied, "It is not the custom of the Ancient church that women preach to men" (239). In this moment, Moon adheres to the Baptist approach to gender roles and details the consequences. Allowed only to pray, Moon confesses: "it was hard to keep back the tears of those sheep without a shepherd… Men asking to be taught and no one to teach them" (239). Moon contrasts this stumbling block to the gospel with Jesus, who showed his compassion on the sheep without a shepherd by "teach[ing] them many things" (239). Moon illustrates the

hindrance of Baptist gender roles, which could be solved by changing them, or by sending more male missionaries. Moon opts for the latter, begging more men to step up. She offers "a lesson for Southern Baptists to ponder" (240): There are more than double the amount of American men pining for gold in the mines of Shantung than the amount of men representing Southern Baptists. This "lesson" illustrates the skewed mode of thinking American men have, valuing monetary gain over the gain of souls for Christ.

While the previous entry intertwines stories from the mission field with an appeal to Southern Baptists for more missionaries, "Facts for Southern Baptist to Ponder," is wholly devoted to convincing readers to support missions. This brief entry details that Southern Baptists have only two missionaries in Africa and a complete lack of missionaries in Japan, Burmah, Siam, India, and "the isles of the ocean" (184). China's population of 400 million at that time was split between eight missionaries, which, Moon notes, "gives one missionary for fifty million people" (184). "Yet, we call ourselves Missionary Baptists," she laments. The missionary uses the language of the patriarchal system against itself, reminding Baptists of their commitment to missions in comparison to the statistics which reveal quite the opposite. Again, Moon concludes by quoting the Bible: "Our Lord says, 'Go ye into all the world & preach the gospel to every creature,'"(184) reminding the Baptist of the direct admonition from God. She leaves her audience to ponder their faithfulness to uphold this instruction: "Are we obeying this command?" (184). The statistics Moon presented would most likely cause the reader to answer, "No, we are not."

Another common trope palpable in Lottie Moon's appeal to the SBC is the comparison of their missions organization to those of other Christian denominations. In the May 1887 entry

"An Earnest Plea for Helpers," Moon makes known the significant impact that Methodist women have had on their missions field. She notes that when the Methodists have a fellow missionary fall at their post, their response is prompt, giving "freely and cheerfully" unlike the Southern Baptists (215). Moon wonders,

> What is the matter, that we Baptists give so little? Whose is the fault? Is it the fact that our women are lacking in the enthusiasm, the organizing power, and the executive ability that so conspicuously distinguishes our Methodist sisters? (215)

Moon points out the differences between the denominations in power and ability that Methodist sisters have over Baptists as a more progressive denomination. Instead of directly attributing this difference in mission work to the allotted power and ability of Southern Baptist women, Moon says, "The lack is not of women who would come, but of money to send and sustain them" (215). In this claim, she shows a deep awareness of her audience insofar as her conclusion that Southern Baptist tithing is to blame rather than the patriarchal structure that limits women's power. She mimics the feminine submission to the patriarchal system of the SBC while supplanting it in the next moment. In doing this, Moon maintains good standing with the Southern Baptist beliefs on women's roles while calling them out for their lack of donations to missions.

Moon's September 1888 entry "Workers for Shantung" puts Southern Baptists to shame in the light of the victories of the Presbyterian Foreign Mission Board. She informs her readers that the Presbyterians have amassed 36 missionaries, yet, pine for 30 more (235). The Southern Baptists, in contrast, have six missionaries, and have settled with a goal of the same amount. In light of this, reading Southern Baptist papers that "blow the trumpets" for four or five missionaries for China makes Moon "heartsick" (236). "We ought to have four men properly to

man *one station*! Yet we are bidden to exult over four men as if they were four hundred!" Moon exclaims, critiquing the Foreign Mission Board. In one fell swoop, Moon critiques her readers, the SBC, Baptist churches, and Baptist papers with the sharp sting of the weight of the souls unreached by the gospel:

> Souls are perishing for the lack of knowledge, missionaries who need rest are wearing themselves out with overwork, and are heartsick at this apathy of the home churches, and over the water is wafted to their ears, with a loud sound of rejoicing "four possibly five, men for China!" (237)

Moon does not hesitate to deliver this blow as she speaks not from her own authority, but from the authority of scripture and the eternal fate of millions of Chinese people she believes are headed straight for damnation. This admonition to the Foreign Mission Board that would normally be inaccessible for a woman to make is possible for Moon, who is compelled by the perishing souls of those in China who have not been reached by missionaries with the gospel. "Oh Lord, how long? When will our people wake up to the needs of China's perishing millions?" (236) she asks.

In the December 1887 entry, "From Miss Lottie Moon," the missionary continues her comparison of Southern Baptists to other denominations with a more pointed approach to Baptist women. After reading the minutes of the ninth annual Woman's Board of Missions, M.E., which revealed the Methodist organization raised over 66,000 dollars in six months, Moon asks, "Doesn't this put us Baptist women to shame? I, for one, confess I am heartily ashamed" (223). Moon calls up her women readers to more than work at the home, but work in the foreign fields (224). This stirring of her audience is not without a disclaimer to appease any hesitant men who might read the former conviction as a grab for power:

In seeking organization we do not need to adopt plans or methods to the views, or repugnant to the tastes of our brethren. What we want is not power, but simply combination of in order to elicit the largest possible giving. Power of appointment and of disbursing funds should be left, as heretofore, in the hands of the Foreign Mission Board. Separate organization is undesirable, and would do harm; but organization is subordination to the Board is the imperative need of the hour. (224)

Rather than fully adopt the Methodist practice of the organization of a women's board, Moon cites their success as women in the field of raising funds for missions as a contributing factor to why Southern Baptists should create their own women's "combination" fully in submission to the Board. In other words, Moon campaigns for distinction, not separation. She is careful in her appeal to dispel any hesitations that her male readers might have, specifically noting that their plan does not need them to adopt methods "unsuitable" or "repugnant" to their male companions. She performs feminine submission to the SBC, affirming the power of funds should be left to the male-led Foreign Mission Board so that this distinction of women would still be in accordance with the Southern Baptist value of women in submission to men.

In "The Breaking Down of Missionaries," one sees how Lottie Moon approaches the delicate manner of speaking to men with authority while elevating the position of women at the same time. She does this through a metaphor comparing missionaries to soldiers. While men labor in vain to contribute to death and destruction on the battlefield, Moon reminds readers that being in the army of the Lord is not only more honorable, but more dangerous:

It is no mere idle boast to say that foreign missionaries constitute the van. Theirs is the post of honor; it is they who are obeying in person the last command of their risen Lord. Theirs is the post of danger. (219)

She describes the pitiless Eastern sun blazing down the missionary's back for 15 hours a day, the constant crowd of hostile inquisitors that wear down their patience, foreign diseases and illnesses

that plague them throughout their journey, and the ever-present loathing from the people they have come all this way to save (219). In this entry, Moon dismisses her own corporal body, speaking exclusively from the third person and aligning the physical experience with that of soldiers, a vocation limited to men only. Moon confesses she revealed the hardships of missionary life in order to elicit empathy for their work, caution in sending in weaker individuals, and awareness of the need for more soldiers: “When the sick and wounded are borne to the rear there is all the more pressing need for reinforcements to be sent speedily to the front” (219). Though this entry compels the reader to consider the need for more missionaries, it also appeals to a male audience, who would be familiar with the role and hardships of a soldier. Moon speaks to the masculine values of honor and hard work, establishing that missionary work is equal, if not more important, than defending one’s country. This also raises the station of women missionaries such as herself, who are active soldiers on that battlefront.

Further Implications

Throughout these *Foreign Mission Journal* entries, one sees Lottie Moon utilize all three of the components of an antinarcissistic rhetoric. She executes a dual-gender performance, submitting to Southern Baptist authority on issues of women preaching and women's mission organizations while overtly calling out that same authority with a masculine, instructional approach, fueled by her righteous anger at the state of their mission field. Such an appeal illustrates Moon's awareness of the intricacies of Southern Baptist gender roles, which she conforms to in specific instances in order to establish ethos as a respectable Baptist woman and also to expose the consequences of them, as evidenced in the Chinese men who could not hear more about the gospel from her because she was not permitted to share as a woman.

Moon's awareness of gender roles not only aids her strategic appeals to her male audience, they increase the standings of Baptist women in a delicate manner that doesn't rock the patriarchal Southern Baptist boat. She compares women to soldiers, encouraging them to leave the home and join the fight. She celebrates the victories of other denominations and illustrates to the Foreign Mission Board how Southern Baptists can achieve the same level of success as the Methodists without compromising their own gender ethic. In doing so, Moon begins to push Southern Baptist women forward in visibility for their abilities and possible roles while maintaining congruence with the SBC's idea of biblical womanhood.

Lottie Moon shows an attunement to dismissing her physical body which is totally ignored as she describes the grueling existence of a missionary in comparison to that of a soldier. In this third-person account, she shows an awareness of masculine values, comparing missions to a vocation that is associated with honor, strength, sacrifice, and most importantly, limited only to

men. Such an appeal would entice a male audience to join, while at the same time, subliminally earning their respect for those who have already taken up the mantle (such as Lottie Moon and other women). Rather than complain about the physical trials she endures as a missionary, she utilizes her harsh experience as an admonition to earn respect for Southern Baptist women and gain more soldiers for the cause.

The common denominator in each of these entries remains Moon's appeal to the authority of God through scripture rather than relying on her own authority. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 states, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (NKJV). Moon is able to emulate the authority reserved only for a Christian man in the critique of her audience because she speaks not from her own authority, but from the authority of the Bible; the ultimate authority for all Christians. It is by the scriptures that Moon often grounds her moments of reproof, correction, and instruction of righteousness to the men and women in her audience. This often appears in the way she frames missions, not as a mere occupation, but as the "King's business" (221). Throughout her letters, she reminds her audience of the vitality of their work as being the work of God, proven through her use of excerpts from scripture that demand the spread of the gospel to the nations.

Her use of *psogos* in these letters privilege herself through the authority of God rather than blaming Chinese culture as in the former letters. While this use of the rhetoric of blame does not *directly* condemn Chinese people and culture for the sake of her own privilege, they are still implicated nonetheless. The presupposition that undergirds the entirety of Moon's entries is her conviction that Christianity is superior to Buddhism. Within the Christian belief system, Jesus is

the only way to heaven (John 14:6). In this worldview, the conviction that Christianity is superior to Buddhism is due to Jesus saying he is the *only* path to peace with God. No other religions allow access to God other than Christianity alone. For Christians, this is not the permission to assume supremacy, rather, it is the Truth that compels them to spread Jesus' message to the nations.

This belief has been manipulated to permit murder, genocide, and racism in ways that directly contradict the Bible, from the Crusades all the way to aspects of Christian nationalism prominent today. The biblical response within the Christian worldview to the concept that Jesus is the only way to heaven is not one to be used for power or genocide, but one that fills the Christian with compassion for those who do not know Jesus Christ. Though Moon maintains the supremacy of Christianity, which is required of the faith, in these letters she does so in a way that rouses compassion, fiercely advocating for the unreached people groups she comes into contact with. This does not mean her approach is without flaws, and her application of *psogos* to the Chinese people does nothing but privilege Baptist women at the expense of a marginalized group and should not be emulated. Her application of *psogos* to God, however, privileges herself and Baptist women in order to speak to the perceived spiritual needs she sees the people of China having without appropriate mission support.

Concluding Sentiments

"Baptist women have been courageous and seemingly nontraditional, and may have broken new Baptist ground, but they have broken no biblical traditions" (Blevins 52). In applying a feminist lens to the works of Lottie Moon, her ability to oppose the SBC in "nontraditional" ways become all the more pertinent in consideration of her ability to do so without breaking "biblical traditions." In applying antinarcissistic rhetoric, one sees Lottie Moon capitalize on the patriarchal system she existed in to effectively contribute to the increase of female missionaries and mission funding that is celebrated by Southern Baptists to this day. In acknowledging Lottie Moon's works for their feminist contributions to the SBC, we do the necessary work of rediscovering an alternative voice that has been socially suppressed and minimalized.

While Moon contributed much on behalf of Southern Baptist women, it is important to note that much was at the expense of marginalized people, as is common in the use of antinarcissistic rhetoric. In many of her letters, her entries achieve privilege for herself and other women, but minimize and miscategorize the complexities and richness of Chinese culture and the individuals who contribute to it. This approach to achieving the right to speak is never justified, nor is it biblical for the religion whose ambassador preached incessantly on having compassion for others (Matthew 14:14-21).

When applying the rhetoric of blame on God to ensure her right to speak, contrarily, Moon privileges herself and Baptist women *on behalf* of the Chinese people she believes are "perishing." Though applying *psogos* to God in her appeals still assumes the belief that Christianity supersedes Buddhism, an idea which has been used to justify all kinds of evil

throughout history, Moon does so for the sake of saving souls and lifting up the marginalized. In the Christian worldview, which widely accepts that those who do not submit their lives to Christ are destined for hell, the act of gathering resources so that this can be avoided is one of the greatest acts of compassion a person can have. In applying *psogos* onto God instead of Chinese people, Moon shows Christians a way to show compassion for others and elevate marginalized voices instead of using them for personal gain. In spite of her blatant misconceptions and assertions about Chinese culture, she spends a great deal of her letters communicating her compassion and love for the people she aims to convert. It is because of this compassion and love for a people she sees as not having equal access and opportunity to the gospel that she writes so urgently and fiercely.

To the world of academia, Lottie Moon's work shows a woman's ability to use her available means to resist the patriarchal power she existed under without suffering the consequences of rejection from that context. To Christians, Lottie Moon's work shows a woman's ability to use her available means as a female missionary to resist the flawed patriarchal force she existed in without compromising the core tenants of her faith. She shows Christians it is possible to advocate as or on behalf of a marginalized person in a way that is effective to the patriarchal regimes (like the current SBC) while still operating within them.

Much like the 19th century, the most common opposition faced by Baptist women today comes from Baptist men. Throughout the SBC's history, the struggle for women to receive ordination, or, to be recognized by the convention as able to be a pastor, has endured. In 1964, Addie Davis was the first woman to be ordained by a church in the Convention, Watt Street Baptist Church. Though some Baptists opposed this move, the SBC did not take up the issue at

their annual meeting. By the 1970s, more and more women became ordained and eventually formed the group Women in Ministry, SBC in 1983 in order to "provide support for the women whose call from God defines her vocation as that of minister … and to encourage and affirm her call to be a servant of God," (Shaw). However, by this time, the power began to shift in the SBC from moderate voices to the more fundamentalist Southern Baptists. In 1984, the increasingly fundamental SBC amended their constitution to clarify the role of women in ministry, excluding women from pastoral ministry "to preserve a submission God requires because man was first in creation and woman was first in the Edenic fall," (Resolution On Ordination). This amendment sparked a giant controversy in the SBC, as many local Southern Baptist churches continued to ordain women, nearly 500 by 1987. By the 1990's, however, the tides began to turn towards a more fundamentalist point of view as Southern Baptists who affirmed the ordination of women began leaving the Convention in droves, forming the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and Alliance of Baptists. Such organizations affirm women in pastoral roles and continue to ordain them to this day. The Southern Baptist Convention itself, however, is still maintained by the fundamentalists (Shaw).

Most recently, in 2023, the Southern Baptist affiliated Saddleback Church was dismissed from the Convention for having a woman on staff with the word "pastor" in her title. That year, an amended motion was proposed to add a sixth point to Article III of the Constitution of the SBC. This would amend the Composition section, which details what churches qualify as "cooperating" with the Convention, to include a sixth clause: "affirms, appoints, or employs only men as any kind of pastor or elder," (Camp). This clause will be finalized in the 2024 meeting, and voted on by Southern Baptist pastors of churches affiliated with the SBC. It is imperative to

reiterate that to be a Southern Baptist pastor, and thus, be allowed to vote on this amendment, one must be a man.

To those who, like Lottie Moon, exist in the patriarchal structure of the Southern Baptist Convention where they are barred from engaging on certain fronts yet yearn for more equality, visibility, and compassion for marginalized people groups– there is hope. Lottie Moon reminds us that change within this system is possible, and can be done without being at the expense of other marginalized genders, ethnicities, nationalities, races, and classes. Progress can be made through the appeal to the authority of God, who compels the Christian to have compassion on the marginalized. Though this approach may be interpreted as idealistic, it is an approach that has proven to be effective in the past, and so it can be in the future.

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