

MASTER'S THESIS

Between unity and diversity: the role of William Milne in the development of the Ultra-Ganges missions

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**Between Unity and Diversity:
The Role of William Milne in the Development of the Ultra-Ganges Missions**

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Abstract

In the early nineteenth century, William Milne came to China with his wife and children. Under pressure from the Chinese officials and Roman Catholic priests, he had no choice but to move to Malacca in order to cultivate a new mission base. In the ensuing years, the interpersonal struggles which would occur between missionaries did not slow down his work. His work remained influential for a century.

Although Milne participated in the Chinese mission for only nine years, his contribution to Chinese evangelism was very influential. He translated parts of the Old Testament into Chinese, and joined Robert Morrison to establish the Anglo-Chinese College. He designed and published the first Chinese magazine and wrote several Chinese Christian tracts which were distributed in China. The most popular one is the *Changyuan liangyou xianglun* (長遠兩友相論 The Two Friends), which was widely distributed in China until the beginning of the twentieth century.

There are a lot of blanks in the history of the functioning of the Anglo-Chinese College and the Ultra-Ganges Missions, and the relationship between William Milne and the later missionaries in Malacca. The purpose of this thesis is to reassess the importance of William Milne. As one of the pioneers of Protestant missions in modern China, the contribution of Milne was so influential that a study of Milne will not only enrich our understanding of the life of a significant man, but also demonstrate how he implemented his ideas in a foreign land.

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