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From the Editor

This twenty-fourth issue of *Chinese Theological Review* begins with an appreciation of the life and work of Bishop K.H. Ting (1915-2012), remembering especially his support of and contributions to this journal. Bishop Ting was the initiator of the *Chinese Theological Review* (CTR). More than a translation of the Nanjing seminary journal, the CTR aimed “to be a link between the Christian community in China and those abroad through the more widely current medium of the English language, providing to those outside China a vivid picture of Chinese Protestant thinking as it has been evolving...” (*Chinese Theological Review* 1985, “Editor’s Note”). This effort was an important concern for Bishop Ting throughout his life. He had a talent for and interest in language, both Chinese and English, and a concern for the careful crafting of ideas in written form.

Other essays in this volume discuss the history of theological education in China, provide an overview of ongoing efforts in Theological Reconstruction, and address the challenges facing the Chinese Church.

In “Challenges and Opportunities Chinese Christians Face in the Global Economic Crisis,” Chen Yongtao seeks to describe a Christian response to the global financial crisis. He discusses the prosperity gospel, the gospel of retribution and the 19th century Inner Mission Movement, rejecting the first two, but drawing on the latter as a model of how Christians may help to shape society. China is in a “post-scarcity” situation but is still a developing country in which considerable poverty still exists, he notes, and

Christians should therefore witness to Christ through love and service. In his conclusion, Chen writes: “Through their own actions of love for their neighbors, through engagement in society and aid for those in need, Christians should bear better witness to Christ and to God’s love in the midst of the economic crisis and make the biblical teaching of love thy neighbor a reality, serving others and serving society as a servant would.”

Wang Peng offers a historical survey of theological education for Protestant churches in China, moving from a review of the earliest academies and foreign missionary led institutions to a narrative of Nanjing Union Theological Seminary (NJUTS) from its formation through the mid-1990s. She charts the shift from a missionary-led and mission board funded institution to one led and shaped by Chinese faculty. By focusing on NJUTS as the national seminary, she follows the gradual and ongoing maturation of Chinese theological education that began with the resumption of classes following the Cultural Revolution.

A number of Chinese scholars in university departments have researched the growth of Christianity in the midst of a rapidly urbanizing society in recent years. For example, there have been academic studies of the evolving situation of Christianity in large urban areas such as Wenzhou (Zhejiang) and Shanghai. In this issue, Zhang Zhongcheng of the Zhejiang TSPM, describes and analyzes the findings of a survey questionnaire polling responses from 1,321 validated questionnaires returned within the greater Hangzhou area. These give a vivid picture of a Christian community experiencing rapid growth in the context of the rapid urbanization taking place around it. Statistics presented in the first part of the study cover mainly the years 2000-2009. According to Table 1 in Part 1 of the survey, during these years over one thousand baptisms per year took place in the “old city” for a total of

9,716. The “old city” includes Sicheng Church, Tianshui Church, Gulou Church, Chengbei Church, Jianqiao Church and Chongyi Church as well as their attendant meeting points.

Zhang focuses on both the strengths of and challenges to a vibrant but often institutionally weak church as well as the complex picture arising from a patchwork of both registered and unregistered churches, privately run meeting points and a variety of fellowship groups, some new and others with a longer denominational background and traditions. Unregistered churches and meeting points in Hangzhou are strong and well established; some have more or less regularized relationships with local churches.

This is the first such sociological survey of urban Christianity to have appeared in these pages. *Chinese Theological Review* 19 carried a study of Christianity among minority groups in Yunnan: “Christianity in a Culture of Ethnic Pluralism: Report on Christianity among the Minorities of Yunnan” by You Bin, Wang Aiguo and Gong Yukuan.

In his essay on the difficulties of meeting the need for worship space, Li Dong uses the situation in Chengdu, Sichuan to illuminate a similar situation. In their frank recognition of the existence of unregistered as well as registered churches and meeting points, the reasons for their existence and the need for a solution in which all can co-exist in compliance with national laws and regulations, these various studies represent a more open conversation and awareness, of beginning, as their authors often say, with the actual situation of Christians today.

For a dozen years, Theological Reconstruction has been a watchword for efforts by the CCC/TSPM to engender theological renewal in the life of the churches and in theological education. Rev. Gao Feng, President of the China Christian Council, takes it as the theme of his

talk to a seminar for leaders of provincial, municipal and regional Christian Councils and TSPMs. He reviews the background and history of Theological Reconstruction since its inception in 1998, discusses the thinking behind the necessity for such an undertaking and provides a detailed timeline of its development.

Speaking at an alumni retreat in 2010, Professor Chen Zemin takes a similar retrospective approach in considering the sixty year history of Nanjing Union Theological Seminary, giving what he calls an “account of our days,” in the hope that it may aid in making all those associated with the seminary “wise of heart.”

In a personal reminiscence, Rev. Dr. Cao Shengjie illuminates the transitional years of the 1950s and the shifting situation for theological students at Central Seminary (Anglican) in Shanghai. In addition to providing a vivid glimpse of the tenor and strains of those times, she highlights the central role and contribution of the Seminary’s graduates in the Protestant churches and all levels of church organization in her lifetime and how their theological education shaped them to play important roles. “With a total number of graduates at about forty, eleven having held leadership positions in the church at the national and provincial level is impressive.” She notes that in spite of its brief history, Central Seminary’s ability to produce so many leaders for Chinese Christianity on its Three-Self path is due to two aspects of its educational vision: the relatively open-minded theology of the Sheng Kung Hui (Anglican) and “an emphasis on profound spiritual quest and a heart to make a contribution to the church.”

Contents of the Nanjing Theological Review for 2010 and 2011 round out this issue.

I am grateful to the authors of these essays for sharing their work. Any errors in presentation or translation are

entirely my own. In this issue, we have included Chinese characters for personal names, article names and some individual terms. I hope our readers will find these helpful and apologize for any lacunae in this first attempt.

The *Chinese Theological Review* is a publication of the Foundation for Theological Education in South East Asia. As always, I am grateful to the Foundation and to Dr. H.S. Wilson, executive director, for their ongoing encouragement and support.

The *Chinese Theological Review* welcomes readers' feedback. Please feel free to contact the editor: cteditor@gmail.com. We are especially interested to know whether you have found the journal useful in your work or study.

Janice Wickeri
Hong Kong

Bishop K.H. Ting 丁光训主教

(b. September 20, 1915; d. Nanjing November 22, 2012)

A Personal Appreciation

Much will be written about Bishop K.H. Ting in his prominent role as one of the most important church leaders of his time. In producing the *Chinese Theological Review* since 1985, I have had



the opportunity to work closely with him at times, in a different capacity, not only on the CTR since its inception in 1985, but in editing the first collection of his writings, *Love Never Ends* (Nanjing: Yilin Press, 2000). In this work I came into contact with a side of K.H. Ting that may not be very well known. From our first meeting in 1979, I realized that English was as powerful and beautiful a means of expression for him as for those of us who are native speakers. As a graduate of St. John's University in Shanghai where much of the teaching was in the English medium, he had a deep understanding and a precise and elegant command of the language. It is in this role, as the moving force behind CTR, an inspiring and valued mentor and a strong supporter of this journal that I would like to remember Bishop Ting these few pages.

The idea for the *Chinese Theological Review* began with a request from the China Christian Council to the Foundation for Theological Education in South East Asia to facilitate and fund an English-language version

of the Nanjing Union Theological Seminary journal, the *Nanjing Theological Review*. To broaden the conversation and make the CTR more relevant to its readers, rather than translate the Seminary journal, essays from the four issues published each year, as well as church statements and reports, sermons, and essays from other journals and church publications were selected for inclusion. The aim of the CTR was and is to present Chinese voices directly, providing a forum in which the CCC/TSPM speaks from within its own context and in its own voice to the wider Christian community. The “Editor’s Note” in the first issue (1985) made this clear: “This is not a collection of essays and documents about the Chinese Protestant Church. That Church speaks here for itself, in its many different voices, out of its many different experiences, from veteran evangelists to professors of theology to a recent seminary graduate.”

It is this type of communication, interpreting one group or community or culture to another, that formed one strand supporting much of the work that K.H. Ting undertook in his long career in the Church, at home and internationally. He combined a strong international outlook with an even stronger sense of national identification. He was able to interpret the Chinese socialist context and Christianity’s role in that context to international Christian circles. At home, his presence in the forums of national government garnered respect for his views and for the community he represented.

The 1998 publication of a Chinese volume of K.H. Ting’s writings by a commercial publisher in Nanjing was a milestone, public as well as personal. Its readership would be overwhelmingly non-Christian, offering a new awareness of the achievements of the church since 1949 to intellectual circles in China. Its publication was marked with a symposium in Beijing attended by representatives

of the Chinese Peoples Political Consultative Conference, church leaders and senior government officials, an unprecedented event for a work of theology or religion. The book was also an attempt from the Christian side to fulfill the need for an intellectual expression of Christianity among Chinese intellectuals. It was followed in 2000 by an English version titled *Love Never Ends: Papers by K.H. Ting* (see above) and a Korean version (edited by Rev. Kim Jong Goo).

In addition to his education at St John's, and later at Union Theological Seminary in New York, he was shaped for this role by varied experiences. During the Japanese occupation, he became pastor of Shanghai's Community Church, ministering to an expatriate congregation and visiting prisoners from Allied countries who had been interned. (In occupied Shanghai, he also worked with Chinese Christian students in more subtle ways.) Later, his international encounters led him through the World Student Christian Foundation to the ecumenical movement. In 1946 he and his wife Siu-May Kuo went to North America where he had been appointed mission secretary for the Canadian Student Christian Movement. Some of his early writings in English were produced for their newsletter (for example, "The Dilemma of the Sincere Student," included in *A Chinese Contribution to Ecumenical Theology: Selected Writings of Bishop K.H. Ting*, Janice and Philip Wickeri, eds. (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2002)). As he taught a new generation of students about the role of Christian churches in the world, he traveled widely in Canada, speaking in universities. He also worked as secretary for the World Student Christian Federation in Geneva from 1948-1951. Through study and experience overseas he became an ecumenical theologian, continuing to stress the contribution the church in China must make to the church worldwide.

During the late Cultural Revolution era (1966-1976), he and other Seminary faculty became very practically involved in translation, rendering United Nations documents into Chinese and compiling a Chinese-English dictionary.

In the course of my own translation work, I have learned much from his revisions of my translations of his Chinese writings. He wrote extensively in English as well, moving easily between the two languages. He often spoke or preached in English during his foreign travels. When he writes in English he has a deft hand and a sure ear, expressing his ideas in a language that points to and beyond what can be captured in words. He has a fine sense of the way in which the ambiguity and mystery of language enhances meaning.

In closing, I would like to quote what I wrote in volume 10 (1995) of this Review. The volume celebrated Bishop Ting's eightieth birthday with personal reflections from those who knew and worked with him in ecumenical and Chinese church circles over the years.

Through his writings, his public life, and his government posts, K.H. Ting has consistently promoted a conversation with the world beyond the church. Despite the criticism, which has come from some conservative church circles, Ting's contribution to the re-emergence of church life and the opening of the church to the outside world in the 1980s and 1990s is widely recognized. He guided Protestant Christianity in China from a patriotic Christian movement to a church in formation.

This is an important part of his legacy to the Church and to the world.

Janice Wickeri

Challenges and Opportunities Chinese Christians Face in the Global Economic Crisis

CHEN YONGTAO

Introduction

The widespread impact of the global financial crisis brought on by the subprime mortgage crisis in the U.S. and the extent of the damage caused were unprecedented. The financial turmoil sweeping the globe continues to spread and develop. Up to the present, no one has been able to predict with any clarity when this nightmare will come to its end. Not only has the financial turmoil attacked the economy of every nation, evolving into a global economic crisis, it has had a serious impact on the everyday lives of ordinary people and has brought on a social crisis that cannot be ignored. The financial and economic crises are social crises; not only a crisis of credit, but a crisis of confidence—and a crisis of faith.

There is no getting around it; the economic crisis has brought both challenges and opportunities for Christianity, including Christianity in China. Though China's economy is relatively stable, the economic crisis can clearly be seen here. The financial and economic crises have not only had a negative psychological impact on many people, but its negative impact extends to the whole society and is not conducive to the building of a harmonious society. This essay attempts to explore the challenges and opportunities the financial crisis has brought to Chinese Christianity.

This essay is not a rigorous research paper, but rather represents the author's reflections as a Chinese Christian. I hope my modest attempt here will encourage others to

join the conversation. The first part of this paper is a brief discussion of the social and economic context Chinese Christians find themselves in today; the second part will reflect my understanding of the various challenges the current economic crisis holds for Chinese Christians; and the third part will discuss what opportunities it may bring them and how Chinese Christians should grasp those opportunities, followed by the conclusion.

The Social and Economic Context of Chinese Christianity at Present

In the essay, “Studies on the Contextualization of Christianity during a Time of Social Transformation in Mainland China” 基督教在大陆社会转型期的处境化研究, Ye Qin叶勤of the Ethics Institute at Nanjing Teachers University pointed out that the context faced by Christianity during the time of social transformation in China is one of “social fragmentation,” “cultural secularization,” and “audience marginalization.” As Christianity faces the challenges and opportunities of the economic crisis, I think Ye Qin’s concepts of social fragmentation and audience marginalization best describe the contexts with which Christianity must grapple.

Social fragmentation: the primary social context of Christianity in China

According to Ye Qin’s research, social fragmentation is a product of social transformation. The market economy “has changed the pattern of the distribution of benefits and changed the relationship between the fundamental rights and obligations of the members of society, thereby affecting the basic content of social culture, shaping the personal values and behavior of

individual members of society.”¹ On the one hand social fragmentation is expressed in that society itself has gradually become a relatively independent provider of resources and opportunities, parallel to the state: civil society organizations have been strengthened and various civil society organizations can play a positive role in social construction and in aid and rescue efforts for victims in the event of natural disasters. On the other hand, the implementation of the Policy of Reform and Opening Up brought in its wake differentiation of interests, a widening income gap, and the emergence of the newly rich, producing at the same time a large stratum of poverty. Farmers in backward border areas, laid-off workers in the cities, the unemployed and the floating population coalesced in the lower rungs of urban society and formed a socially marginalized group.²

Marginalization

There are primarily two factors that have created this. One is the social marginalization of believers, which can be further divided into two types: passive marginalization and active marginalization. Taking passive first, whether or not it is still possible to subsume the structure of the Christian population under the rubric of the “four more’s” [i.e. farmers, the illiterate, the elderly, and women—ed.], it cannot be denied that the overwhelming majority of the Christian population in China is still composed of those groups that are marginalized in society. Even though

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- 1 Quoted in Gao Zhaoming 高兆明: 制度公正論 [A Theory of Institutional Justice] (Shanghai: Shanghai wenyi chubanshe, 2011), 10. Accessed online.
 - 2 Ibid. See 2004年海峽兩岸宗教與社會學術研討會論文集 [2004 Papers from Cross-Straits Conference on “Religion and Society”]: 289.

there are more and more Christian bosses, Christian intellectuals, Christian artists, etc., the absolute majority of Christians are neither rich nor well educated. In terms of active marginalization, for a variety of factors, there are a considerable number of Chinese Christians who are quite theologically conservative. They completely separate the church from society, the spiritual from the worldly. They believe Christians should distance themselves from the world and not let themselves be influenced by the secular. They should devote themselves to spiritual things and not engage with society. Thus, they are willingly marginalized by that society. Because the Chinese Christian population is only about 2% of China's total population, this second type is an absolute minority. But no matter what the case, it has already been thirty years since China's churches reopened their doors and in these thirty years, the number of believers has risen steadily and now stands in excess of 20 million.³ The church has gained ever-greater space within society to exist and develop as well. Even though the church is still on the margins of society, its influence is growing and it has become a positive force in social construction.

Chinese society has entered a "post-scarcity" era, and this is also part of the economic context Chinese Christians must face at present

It cannot be denied that the sustained development of the Chinese economy has brought opportunities and

3 There are many and varying estimates of the number of Chinese Christians. The CCC/TSPM holds that the number of Chinese Protestant Christians is around 20 million. Some researchers put the number at 40 or 50 million and some as high as 80 million or more. This writer is of the opinion that the number may be slightly higher than the CCC/TSPM figure.

affluence to many Chinese. But another aspect of this is that there are still many Chinese living in poverty. Even though China has already made huge achievements in economic development; still, we cannot deny that China remains a developing nation. Currently, China can probably be termed a “post-scarcity” society.

There are 64 hexagrams in the *Yijing* 易经 (Book of Changes). The last two are *jiji* 既济 and *weiji* 未济. The second Chinese character in each term, *ji*, means “to cross the river.” *Jiji* means “having crossed the river”, while *weiji* means “not to cross the river yet”. By extension, the two terms can be understood to mean “having accomplished, yet not completed”, “having succeeded, yet not arrived”, or “having attained, yet not fulfilled”. The interesting thing is that *jiji* is not the final hexagram; right after *jiji* comes *weiji*. This might possibly illustrate that history, nature, society and human life are an upwardly spiraling process—social development, economic development: neither is a direct line, but neither is a circle without beginning or end, either. Anyone can see that China has already made great strides in economic development, but there is a long way to go before Chinese society will become a truly affluent society. Applying the words of the last two *Yijing* hexagrams, it is *jiji* and also *weiji*. And it is exactly in this sense that I think Chinese society is a post-scarcity society. It is absolutely true that China has made great change and achievement yet. But it still has a long way to go for affluence. It is *jiji* in one sense, and *weiji* in another sense, “having accomplished”, “having succeeded”, “having attained” in one sense and “yet not completed”, “yet not arrived”, “yet not fulfilled” in another sense. Therefore, it is appropriate to define China as a post-scarcity society.

I am using here Anthony Giddens’ idea of a post-scarcity society, but investing it with a different meaning.

In his *Affluence, Poverty, and the Idea of a Post-Scarcity Society*,⁴ he points out that even though to a certain extent it is a global phenomenon, the post-scarcity society is particularly to be found in industrialized nations. In Giddens' opinion, the idea of a scarcity society has a long history. It can even be traced back to Karl Marx. In Marx's early writings, scarcity suggests a universal affluence. According to Giddens' research, Marx at least hinted at this possibility: industrialized societies could create so much wealth such that every person might have sufficient wealth to satisfy every necessity. In this way, scarcity would more or less disappear.⁵ I am using the term to mean something quite different: merely to indicate the fact that compared to the past, China today is undoubtedly more affluent, but that to a considerable extent, poverty still exists. Additionally, the widening of the gap between wealth and poverty has brought a measure of instability to society. In such an economic context, faced with an economic crisis, what sort of challenges does a Chinese Christian face? What action can they take? What should one do?

The Challenges Chinese Christians face in the economic crisis

There is no getting around it, in a global economic crisis such as this, Chinese Christians face all sorts of challenges.

1. Economic challenges. Statistics show that in 2008, around 100,000 small and medium enterprises in China

4 Anthony Giddens, *Affluence, Poverty, and the Idea of a Post-Scarcity Society* (Geneva: UN Research Institute for Social Development, 1995). This title is also accessible online.

5 *Ibid.*, 7-8.

went bankrupt. Many people lost their jobs as a result and in order to cope with the crisis, many enterprises had no choice but to implement wage cuts. Whether due to unemployment or wage cuts, many people personally experienced a reduction of income or a decline in living standards. The biggest impact on us was the decline in our material standard of living. Moreover, since up to now we have seen no signs of the end of the economic crisis, many people have begun to feel uncertain about the future of our social development and thus lack a sense of security. The loss of a sense of security about our survival has produced psychological confusion in many people.

Under the impact of the economic crisis, Christians suffer unemployment and wage cuts like anyone else. And it may be that due to the economic crisis they will meet with speculative losses. Thus, Christians, too, can hardly avoid feeling perplexed and confused, or suffer anxiety about the future.

Another aspect of wage cuts for Christians is that there will be a corresponding cut in Sunday donations. The Chinese Church is not wealthy; Chinese churches' self-support depends primarily on Sunday donations. A reduction in these donations will cause difficulties in the self-support of the church, and will to a certain extent impact the church's social ministry.

2. Theological challenges. In general, the current mainstream of Chinese Christian theology is able to focus on its own context and is promoting a positive response of "theology of love" and "theology of service." However, there are still some outdated theological ideas in the Chinese Church. I believe that the global economic crisis is a challenge to such ideas. In speaking of a theological challenge, I am here primarily concerned with two rather extreme theologies that have a certain degree of influence

in the Chinese Church. One is prosperity theology 成功神学 and the other is retribution theology 刑罚神学. Some believe that prosperity theology bears an undeniable responsibility for the economic crisis and recession in the United States. Prosperity theology has already taken deep root in the hearts of many North American Christians. Some promoters of prosperity theology in North America claim that if a person has sufficient faith, they will “strike it rich.” If one believes and has genuine confidence, the very real payout, what he gets in return, is that God will give him money and earthly wealth without conditions. The favorite Bible verse of those who promote prosperity theology is Matthew 19:29. There are also some passages in the Old Testament that link pious faith in God with material rewards.

The problem is that prosperity theology cannot pass the test of common sense. If the promise of prosperity theology is real and observable, then those who advocate it or Christians who accept it should be richer than ordinary people. The richest people in the world should be those with the most pious faith. But this is not the case. According to research by the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, the average income of Christians is lower than that of persons of other faiths. So the promise of prosperity theology would seem to be nothing more than pie in the sky. Prosperity theology’s teaching on money pushes the idea that the Kingdom of God is founded on principles of money and material encouragements. Obviously, the present disastrous worldwide financial and economic crisis shows that this teaching is quite dangerous: on the one hand those who accept prosperity theology see the stock and property bubbles as a kind of blessing; on the other hand prosperity theology leads to the weakening and loss of Christian stewardship.

In this global economic crisis, the prosperity theology mentality is harmful indeed. And the influence of prosperity theology in the Chinese Church is difficult to ignore. We often hear people who urge others to become Christian say something like: Believe in the Lord. Believe in the Lord and God will bless you, your business will prosper, good jobs will come your way. You'll be well off in life. Believe in God and your illnesses will be cured, your troubles will be over, etc. etc. In the Chinese Church, too, prosperity theology harbors a kind of dualism between believers and unbelievers. In fact, the economic crisis is blind. Just because you are a Christian you are not immune from its impact. Very clearly, it is not only non-Christians who are impacted and harmed by this crisis; many Christians have been seriously hurt by it. The economic crisis makes it plain that prosperity theology is outdated.

Another extreme theology that has had considerable influence on Chinese Christians is retribution theology. Retribution theology has a long history in the Chinese Church and has had a rather broad impact among grassroots believers. Every time there is a natural disaster or social calamity, a voice will arise in the church that believes the disaster is God's retribution or punishment on nonbelievers. Following the appearance of the global financial and economic crises, there were Christians who believed that this was God's punishment for nonbelievers. Retribution theology, like prosperity theology, causes the God Christianity professes to be seen as an extremely narrow-minded God. Those who believe in him are rewarded with material blessings; those who do not, he punishes. Such a God is clearly not the God of the Bible; not the God who "so loved the world he gave his only begotten son."

3. Conceptual challenges. In spite of the fact that in general Chinese Christians increasingly emphasize their witness in society, and are increasingly open-minded, closed-mindedness continues to exist, whether explicitly or implicitly. Due to the influence of history or certain outdated theological concepts, in the depths of the thinking of many Christians there is still a kind of deeply ingrained “siege mentality.” This mentality frequently, whether consciously or not, causes Christians and the church to distance themselves from society.

Such a siege mentality can, to a certain extent, be seen reflected in the architecture of Chinese Church buildings. Churches with some history, or those newly built, mostly have a high encircling wall to separate them from the outside world. Even though in some cities walls around churches have been taken down in order to widen the street, the churches have replaced these with an iron fence that functions as a barrier.

I have visited churches in the U.S. and Europe and have yet to find one with a wall around it. I’ve always thought it was strange that western church architecture doesn’t build these encircling walls, while in China when the missionaries built churches, they inevitably put walls around them. Was it something required for indigenization? An expression of their own closed-mindedness? Whatever the initial reason, I think that to a certain extent Chinese Church architecture does reflect a self-enclosed mindset among Chinese Christians, whether conscious or not, perceptible or imperceptible.

These two rather biased theologies that I have been discussing are in fact themselves a reflection of “siege mentality,” but from either extreme. This kind of siege mentality is in reality a reflection of the sort of theological concept that sets the Church in opposition to society, Christians in opposition to the world, and the other world

to this world. The economic crisis is a challenge to this mentality. The crisis allows us to see that the impact of an economic crisis penetrates to every level of society and into every corner. A higher wall will not protect the church from its impact or harm.

4. The challenge to understanding. We cannot deny that in the Chinese Church, there is a considerable number of Christians who have a rather jaundiced view of money. Besides the above-mentioned prosperity theology, there are also Christians who believe that being a Christian implies living a life of poverty. The poorer one is materially, the richer one is spiritually. And there are many Christians who are unwilling to discuss anything having to do with money, regarding it as an expression of worldliness. There are also those who have fallen into a worship of money; money has become their only pursuit. Well then, are Christians allowed to talk about money? How do Christians look at money? How can Christians have an appropriate understanding of money? The global financial crisis has indeed brought Christians a challenge to understanding on this issue.

“You can find these questions addressed in the Bible. Indeed, the Bible speaks eloquently and at some length on these topics. You might know there are 66 books in the Bible. Thirty-two of them mention money and wealth.”⁶ “Here are a couple of examples. There’s a book in the Old Testament called *Ecclesiastes*. Some people think it was written by Solomon the Wise; others don’t, but it’s part of the ‘wisdom literature’ as it’s described and there are things in there that ring true. Try this: ‘Those who love money never have money enough’ (*Ecclesiastes*

6 See Ian Harper, “The GFC: A Crisis of Credit and Faith,” The Smith Lecture 2009, 15.

5:10). Chasing after money is like chasing after the wind, ultimately a futile exercise. In the New Testament, where the life and teachings of Jesus Christ are recorded, Jesus talks about money more than just about any other topic.

“He tells a very poignant story of a man who works overtime to fill his barns to overflowing so that he can sit back in security and enjoy his retirement. (That sounds like me!) And then comes the stinger: ‘Fool!’ he says ‘This very night your life will be demanded of you’ (Luke 12:20). Jesus warns his followers to beware of all types of greed. He famously says that, ‘A person’s life is more than the sum of their possessions’ (Luke 12:15). Later in the New Testament, the Apostle Paul points out that, ‘we bring nothing into this world, and we take nothing out of it’ and expresses a sentiment you may well recognize when he says, ‘The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil’ (1Timothy 6: 7 and 10).

“The Bible points to the need for our lives to serve a higher purpose than self-gratification through money, power, or fame. It does so because self-gratification is ultimately futile—in fact, it’s no gratification at all.”⁷

5. Practical Challenges. Some believe that “A lack of faith led to the financial crisis” and that therefore the financial crisis is the result of a lack of faith. A lot of religious faith today has degraded into superstition and lost the force of true faith. It has also lost the self-sacrificial, truth-seeking spirit of the prophets. There are even some religions that violate the principle of political neutrality: they have become tools of political struggle, sources of war and terror. All this is the desolate situation that comes when religion has lost its truth-seeking attitude, lost the light truth brings. We are pleased to see that in their crisis

7 Ibid., 16.

and confusion more people are reflecting on the origins of the crisis and seeking a common human faith—one that is truly able to unite human hearts, inspire human wisdom, a faith that can bring humankind harmony, tranquility and peace, for only in establishing such a faith can we have a bright future.”⁸ The financial crisis is not simply a crisis of credit. Behind the economic crisis, many people have seen a crisis of faith, a crisis of spirit, and have proposed a restoration of faith. How then can Chinese Christians take part in society’s restoration of faith? How can Chinese Christians more effectively take part in the restoration of Chinese society?

In facing the economic crisis, how can Chinese Christians better live out the principle of love for God and neighbor? This is one of the challenges. We Chinese Christians are always very good at the “love God” part, but we easily separate that from “love neighbor” and do poorly at that part. Many Christians feel that loving God means we must evangelize so that more people will become Christians. Christianity is undeniably a missionary religion. In the “Great Commission” (Matthew 28: 19-20), Jesus Christ gives his disciples the mission to spread the gospel. But in the Gospel Books, we can also read that the disciples who became Christians did not do so through verbal profession, but because of the actions of self-sacrifice and following Jesus. Jesus did not care whether people became his disciples in name, but whether they genuinely “followed” him, whether they led lives of love and practiced love. For Chinese Christians, expressing the commandment to “love God” through actions of “love for neighbor” is indeed a challenge as well as an opportunity.

8 See Pan shiyi’s 潘石屹blog.

Opportunities offered to Chinese Christians by the economic crisis

The economic crisis is both a danger and an opportunity. As a western theologian has said, “The present situation is a Kairos, a decisive moment, for humanity to turn from death to life.”⁹ At this decisive moment of crisis, the church can take action. Due to its location in a fragmented society, the Chinese Church is a social force and in the process of responding to the economic crisis, it has the opportunity to play its own positive role. Some Christians feel that the economic crisis gives Christians the opportunity to evangelize, that people faced with the economic crisis are even more in need of the gospel. I do not deny the importance of preaching the gospel. As a Christian, preaching the gospel widely is my mission and responsibility. But due to the reality of the “social marginalization” of the Chinese Church and Chinese society’s post-scarcity character, if the Chinese Church and Chinese Christians want to grasp this opportunity the substance of the issue does not lie in how many people they can get to call themselves Christians, but rather in how to better serve society and others, how to make the commandment to “love thy neighbor” a reality, to make a beautiful witness to Christ. Action and sacrificial service will be much more effective than the simple language and enthusiasm of spreading the gospel and will be more able to bring people to Christ.

9 Ulrich Duchrow, “The Financial Crisis in Biblical and Theological Perspective,” <http://www.docstoc.com/docs/30731440/The-Financial-Crisis-in-Biblical-and-Theological-Perspective-By#>.

Action and sacrificial service

1. Through social engagement and strengthening Christians' awareness of their social responsibility. The economic crisis has brought all sorts of social problems and Chinese Christians can carry forward the spirit of Christ by being involved in social ministry. As society is facing all sorts of crises, the space for the church and for Christians to serve society and to serve others expands. The Church's mission is not only an outward one; it is also an inner one. Through this inner mission, we can raise the quality of the church, strengthen the church's social responsibility and better practice the commandment to "love your neighbor."

The nineteenth-century German "Inner Mission Movement" is one example. The (first) Industrial Revolution of the eighteenth century brought vast changes to European society and brought its churches challenges and opportunities. Advances in industrial technology undoubtedly gave the European economy a big developmental boost, but at the same time the gap between rich and poor widened and all sorts of social problems arose. The nineteenth century confessional awakening in the German Lutheran Church was born against this social background. The confessional awakening movement was centered in Erlangen University. In this movement, an exemplary church was that of Rev. Wilhelm Löhe (1808-1872) in Neuendettelsau. In mission work, in addition to focusing on missionary activities in North and South America and Australia, he gave great importance to the social service activities of his church in German society. He organized a service organization in Neuendettelsau and its residential areas, hospitals and educational institutions. As a new Lutheran minister, he joined the ecumenical substance of the Lutheran confessions to a call for

evangelization at home and abroad. For him, “missionary work [was] but a movement within the body of the one church of God.” Under the impact of the confessional awakening, and especially with continuing concern for the practice of Christianity, the Inner Mission Movement was born in Germany. This movement also had considerable impact in the Scandinavian countries. Issues of concern to this movement were German and Scandinavian issues and so some called it “the domestic missionary movement.” Its mission differed from the concern of overseas missionary movements to bring non-Christians to Christ; the inner mission movement was mainly concerned with how to realize in the church the biblical call to love one’s neighbor and how the church could better serve others. Though within the movement, the emphasis for each person differed, there was one point of similarity—stressing the church’s function of service, its service to society and to others. For example, the Rev. John F. Oberlin (1740-1826) of Waldbach, Alsace, was especially concerned with the issue of social justice. He founded schools, banks and rural communities. Rev. John Falk (1768-1828) devoted himself to love and care and help for families and children. Rev. Theodor Fliedner (1800-1864) put his energies into anti-poverty projects with special concern for the position of women in an emerging industrial society. Most successful in giving expression to the Inner Mission Movement was the work of Rev. John H. Wichern (1808-1881). Because of his concern for the Hamburg social context in which he lived, he began to shelter starving children and in 1833 founded an education center specifically for young ruffians. Those who graduated became “brothers” and when they went out on the streets they helped other children escape degeneracy and poverty. After 1881, Rev. Frederick Bodelschwingh (1831-1910) became an important figure in the Inner Mission Movement. In 1877,

he founded the Bethel Institution to help the homeless and in 1882, began many “work camps” near Welhelmsdorf to help those abandoned by society or the mentally ill to gain healing through work. His motto was “Replace relief with work.”¹⁰

2. Chinese Christians must witness to Christ through love and service. In the economic crisis, people are even more in need of Christ’s love and care. The church must realize its mission to “be the church.” Theology does not need and indeed cannot provide the answers to all practical problems, but theology can help the church to better care for the needs of others and stand together with the whole society.

The Christian theology of social life should be a theology of love and a theology of service. St. Augustine placed special emphasis on the importance of love in human life; for him, the phenomenon of “love” was a more basic element of the human reality than the phenomenon of “knowledge.” Love is a strong force in life, humans cannot see through or control it. Love shapes human reality more deeply than anything else. Augustine proposed that: Man is what he loves; man is the things he loves and not the things he knows and these determine his goodness or evil...the appropriate ordering of love is the foundation of the correct ordering of everything in life, and its opposite: when this order is overthrown, it is the source of all evils in human life. A happy life can only come through love and not through knowledge; the proper order of love is first to love God humbly, to make God to be our highest good; and this love of God is the foundation of all other forms

10 See Eric W. Gritsch, *A History of Lutheranism* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), 180-186.

of love.¹¹ For Augustine, “to love God and love one’s neighbor in God is the constitution of the harmony and peace of the order of nature among rational beings. Such a harmony shall be a reality in the heavenly peace... ‘for this peace is the perfectly ordered and completely harmonious fellowship in the enjoyment of God, and of each other in God.’”¹²

The value orientation of Christianity is an orientation filled with love, a personally exercised orientation. It is not purely personal cultivation or solitary goodness. Guided by this value orientation, Christians should be persons who express God’s love through their own actions, those who make the spirit of service of Jesus Christ a reality. When crisis comes, the strength of this love should be even more obviously displayed. Faced with the current crisis, Christians must exhibit this kind of strength and spirit of love. In their lives and in their work, Christ’s love should be the starting point from which they give of their loving hearts to those around them. Mr. Xie Fuya 謝扶雅 (N.Z. Zia) once proposed that John 1: 1, which has been translated in Chinese as, “In the beginning was the *Dao*,” should be rendered, “In the beginning was action,” or “In the beginning was the cross.” This is true, for God’s Way/*Dao* was not only speech, God’s *Dao* was also action. God’s *Dao* put into practice found fulfillment in Christ’s sacrifice and serving spirit.

3. Chinese Christians should perform a priestly role. Jesus Christ has a threefold office as king, priest and prophet. In the same way, the church as the body of Christ also has this threefold office. But in different contexts

11 See Miikka Ruokanen, *Theology of Social Life in Augustine’s De civitate Dei*, Trans. by Zhang Xiaomei, Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2008, 56.

12 Ibid, 61.

the focus of this three-fold office should be different. I highly commend the view of the Director of the Institute of World Religions at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), Prof. Zhuo Xinping 卓新平. He believes that due to historical reasons and the context of Chinese Christianity, if the Chinese Church chooses to highlight its prophetic spirit and critique society in terms of religious belief, its actions will have the opposite effect. Not only will it not garner a positive response from society, its actions will lead to antagonism and tension with society. He says: “At present, the Chinese Church approaches society in the spirit of “not to be served but to serve and to give [its] life as a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:28), coming as a servant to serve and adapt to modern society, and thus to reflect its faith in the value of human life and the meaning of present existence.”¹³

Compared to the prophetic spirit, priestly service is more constructive in terms of society. In the present Chinese context, priestly prayers of intercession certainly have a more positive meaning than prophetic denunciation and destruction. The economic crisis has caused a great deal of trauma in our society; the Chinese Church, through its loving service, can heal society’s traumas as a priest would.

4 “Gather up all things together in [Christ]” and respond to the economic crisis together with non-Christians. Ephesians 1:10 says “as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.” This suggests a kind of relationship. This relationship is not woven of certain religious beliefs, but relies on the love of Christ to maintain it. In Christ

13 Zhuo Xinping 卓新平, 金融危机下的信仰重建 [Reestablishing Faith in the Present Economic Crisis], 《绿叶》杂志 [Green Leaf Magazine], see http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_4bbb81fb0100cf15.html.

humanity can enter into a new kind of relationship. Chinese Christian theology should cast off its narrow, absolutist and exclusivist theology and promote a relational theology. In this relational theology the whole of humanity enjoys in God and in Christ a “becoming one” relationship, and mutually “in Christ” has a proper relationship. Thus all our calls to love God and love thy neighbor are reflected through an appropriate interpersonal relationship. When these relationships go wrong, mutual service in love must become nothing but empty talk.

The faith of the Bible is an invitation, inviting us to enter into a contractual relationship. This is a contractual relationship that links each individual with our sacred, reliable God and, furthermore with our neighbors—those who live with us in the same economic body, or social community. The Bible’s reality and concern is a contractual infrastructure in which people live because of the grace of God and in which through their obedience to God’s will and goal, people respond to God’s grace. In Deuteronomy 15:1-18, we see that the Law of Moses stipulates that it shall be common practice to forgive the debts of the poor. The object of this command is to make money a secondary matter and neighbors much more important. The biblical faith is an invitation, inviting us to move from greed to the practice of generosity toward our neighbor. Those with insatiable greed fall easily into seeing others as threats and harmful competitors. But if our frame of reference is a contract based on God’s abundance, we will see others as brothers and sisters, others with whom we live together in a community of solidarity, sharing the resources God has bestowed on us, so that we may improve our existence. The Pentateuch is especially concerned with society’s care for its most vulnerable—widows and orphans, sojourners and the poor (see Deuteronomy 24: 19-22). Biblical ethics affirm that every member of society is a legitimate recipient who should receive sufficient means to live, and

thus should be respected and live in security. Thus, the Bible believes that the righteous are those who aid the poor (see Psalm 112:9). In the economic crisis, Chinese Christians should break through the boundaries of belief vs. non-belief, and deal with the crisis together with non-Christians. Christians and non-Christians should form a common consciousness of good and foster awareness of mutual sharing and support.

Conclusion

Undeniably, the global economic crisis has challenged Chinese Christians and it has brought them opportunities as well. Faced with these challenges, Chinese Christians should grasp the opportunity to model Christ and follow Christ's example of love. Through their own actions of love for their neighbors, through engagement in society and aid for those in need, Christians should bear better witness to Christ and to God's love in the midst of the economic crisis and make the biblical teaching of love thy neighbor a reality, serving others and serving society as a servant would.

The Church cannot leave society and survive on its own. Only in society can the church become light and salt. Nor can Christians survive outside society. Only in society can Christians better practice the love of God in Jesus Christ and better spread the gospel of Christ. Thus, Chinese Christians should open up their social consciousness, and have a strong sense of social responsibility. The Church should enter into society and make its proper voice heard there, doing those things a church should do, and through the tireless striving of each Christian, gradually lead to "God's will be done on earth as it is in Heaven."

Protestant Theological Education in China — A retrospective focusing on Nanjing Union Theological Seminary

WANG PENG

Emile Durkheim once said: "... it is only by carefully studying the past that we can come to anticipate the future and to understand the present."¹ To understand the future direction of development of theological education in the Chinese Church, we too must look at its prospects through a study of its entire background and historical development. On the one hand, its historical development and locus has moved forward with that of the development and changes in society itself, therefore, the study, description and explanation of history will help us to understand and deal with today's context; on the other hand, if we are seeking a pedagogical concept and pedagogical goals suitable to the church's historical development, then worthwhile views that have either come down to us or appeared for a short time in the past will frequently be sources of inspiration for us.

On the basis of documents that have so far come to light, Lilang Academy 利朗书院, established in Guangdong in 1864, comes closest in terms of curriculum and system to the standards for theological education

1 Quoted in Tu Ergan 涂尔干, *教育思想的演讲* [Evolution of thinking on education], translated by Li Kang 李康。 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2006), 14.

in the Chinese Church.² In the first twenty years of the twentieth century, in order to speed up the training of church evangelists, denominational mission boards began to establish their own seminaries and bible schools. According to a 1917 survey by P. Frank Price (1864-1950), there were 64 seminaries and Bible schools in China, of which 48 were for men and 16 for women. There were a total of 361 faculty and 1861 students. Seven of the thirteen Christian universities had theology departments.³ Though there were many theological education institutions established by the mission boards, they were all small-scale and the students were of varying quality. Most of the seminaries were only comparable to training centers. Because expenses were underwritten by the mission boards, faculty was dispersed and students' foundation poor. As a result there were growing calls for a pooling of resources and joint undertaking of educational projects. One institution worthy of note was Nanking (Jinling) Theological Seminary 金陵神学院 in Nanjing, a union seminary: "of the church schools begun in China by foreign mission boards to train religious personnel and set up churches, [this] is the largest, had the most resources and has the longest history."⁴ Taking Nanking Theological Seminary as the precursor of Nanjing Union Theological Seminary (NJUTS) 南京协和神学院 and its beginnings—September 13, 1911—as the founding of NJUTS, then this widely reputed and influential seminary

2 See Xiao Kexie 萧克谐, 中国神学教育简史 [Brief history of theological education in China]. (Hong Kong: Daosheng, 2006), 3.

3 Ibid., 40.

4 See 我所知道的金陵神学院 [The Nanjing Seminary I knew], an oral piece by Cheng Zhiyi 诚质怡, from notes by Chen Zemin 陈泽民. In 求索与见证 [Seeking and witnessing]. (Shanghai: CCC/TSPM, 2007), 182.

is about to celebrate its hundredth anniversary.⁵ If we take the establishment of Nanjing Union Theological Seminary (NJUTS) on November 1, 1952 as the beginning of a new historical period, then the seminary is moving toward its sixtieth birthday.⁶ This essay will take NJUTS as an example in miniature for a consideration of the last hundred years of theological education in China, especially for developments in theological education at NJUTS since the 1980s.

Theological Education in China: the embryonic period (1911-1951)

The history of Nanjing Union Theological Seminary (NJUTS) can be traced back to “the old Jinling” (Nanking Theological Seminary; Jinling is a historical name for Nanjing). It had its origins in three schools: (1) Shengdao guan 圣道馆, established by the Methodist Episcopal Church. Methodist Episcopal missionary C.H. Fowler first established Huaiwen Academy 汇文书院 (The Nanking University; predecessor to Nanjing University) at Ganheyan in Nanjing (where the Nanjing Middle School now stands). The school offered a liberal arts and a divinity course, called respectively the Bowu guan 博物馆 and the

5 There are two views on the founding date of Jinling Seminary: one says, with Frank W. Price, that it is September 13, 1911 (see his *History of Nanking Theological Seminary: 1911-1961, A Tentative Draft* (New York: Board of Founders of Nanking Theological Seminary, 1961); and Xu Yihua 徐以驊, 双峰对峙—燕京大学宗教学院与金陵神学院之比较 [A comparison of the Yanjing University Department of Religion and Nanking Theological Seminary], in *Fudan Journal*, 2(2000). The second view puts the date as 1910. Prof. Chen Zemin (see note 3) espouses this view. For the purposes of this essay, 1911 will be used.

6 NJUTS held celebrations for its fortieth anniversary in 1992 and for its fiftieth in 2002.

Shengdao guan (The Fowler School of Theology). Later the site of the present Nanjing Middle School became the middle school department and the university department (liberal arts and divinity) was moved to Nanjing University. (2) Shengdao Academy 圣道书院 (Presbyterian Union Theological Seminary of Central China), established in 1904 by the Northern Presbyterian Church in Ningbo and the Itinerant Training Class 流动培训班 (predecessor to the North China Seminary 华北神学) established by the Southern Presbyterian Church that merged with the Shengdao guan. (3) Disciples Bible College and Training School 圣经学校/培训班 opened in 1909. To meet the needs of church development and personnel training, these three schools were merged into one, located at the original site of the Shengdao Academy,⁷ thus laying the foundation for joint administration of the future NJUTS.

In 1910, Dr. W.W. White, President of the Bible Teachers Training School of New York, arrived in China to publicize his school's experience in the spirit of union in theological education, founding the Nanking Bible Training School/United Theological College on September 13, 1911 with Nanjing's Shengdao Academy (Presbyterian Union Theological Seminary of Central China) as the foundation, later renaming it Nanking Theological Seminary.⁸ We can say that the founding of Nanking Theological Seminary received a boost from Dr. White's experience in joint administration of schools and

7 The jointly administered Nanking Seminary campus was located at 140 Hanzhong Rd. in Nanjing, in what is today the campus of the Nanjing Medical University. The site is now the administration building of that institution. (See <http://www.jllib.cn/njmgjz.cn/jyzj/>); In 1951, it merged with Ginling College and moved to their site, which was the former campus of NJUTS at No. 17 Dajianyin Lane off Shanghai Rd. in Nanjing.

8 See Frank W. Price, *History*, 1.

the Seminary's memorandum of organization proclaims, "interdenominational in character, thorough in intellectual processes, evangelical in doctrine, reverent in spirit, and practical in aim."⁹ From the very beginning, this joint administration, with an orientation both for church and higher studies, became the special characteristic of Nanking Theological Seminary. According to the *Nanking Seminary Review*, the years from 1921-1922 saw the largest enrollment at Nanking Theological Seminary, with 168 students from 14 provinces. Numbers fell later because of the disruption of fighting and civil war. A rural education department was established in 1928, and a field work area set up in the town of Chunhua (Shunwachen) in Jiangning County.¹⁰ In addition to courses in theology, there were courses in agricultural knowledge, the rural church, and so on. A ceremonial couplet for the Chunhua Rural Training Center of Nanking Theological Seminary, completed in 1933 sums up its aim: "Guiding our rural compatriots in carrying out Jesus' instructions to build a new heaven and a new earth, together in the land of our fathers, following the example of Jesus to improve and enlighten the people." The goal was "to train a team of rural pastors and evangelists possessed of scientific minds, farmer's hands, the loving heart of Christ; who truly understand the minds of the people, who are willing to sacrifice themselves so that the people may be more blessed; who can be faithful servants of rural society, and who can, in their lives and words show forth Christ and his gospel; building a new type of rural church to transform society, to be light and salt and the fountainhead of China's

9 Price, 5.

10 For details on the Rural Education Dept. and the Chunhua Field Station, see Liu Jiafeng 刘家峰, *中国基督教乡村建设运动* (Rural construction movement in Chinese Christianity), (Tianjin: Tianjin renmin chubanshe, 2008).

new life...”¹¹

In 1931, Li Handuo 李汉鐸 (Handel Lee) was elected president of the Seminary, the first Chinese president in the institution's history.¹² He returned from studies overseas in 1933 to take up the position. In June, 1932, thanks to a grant from the Wendell-Swope bequest¹³ in the U.S. a Board of Trustees was set up at Nanking Theological Seminary, responsible for finances and personnel policy, initiating a short period of excellent vision and planning. At the 25th anniversary of the seminary in 1936, President Li Handuo commented with great feeling: “Speaking of Protestant education in China, Nanjing Theological Seminary has become a great mountain, naturally it has a bright future that we cannot as yet measure, filled with possibilities, one we look to with great enthusiasm...”¹⁴ During the war with Japan, Nanjing Theological Seminary moved first to Shanghai and then to Sichuan, returning to Nanjing in 1946. In 1950, Yanjing School of Religion

11 Yu Muren 余牧人, “本院淳化镇实习处落成志盛,” (*Nanking Seminary Review*, No. 2 (1933): 15).

12 According to 金陵神学院院长李汉鐸博士史略 [Brief biography of Dr. Li Handuo], Dr. Li Handuo was from Jiangning County, a 1912 graduate of the Humanities Dept. of Nanjing University, a 1915 graduate of Nanking Theological Seminary, who was ordained in the Methodist Episcopal Wuhu area in 1919, and later went to the U.S. to study. In 1922, he graduated from the Theology Dept. of Boston University and returned to serve in China. He went for further study in the U.S. in 1932, receiving his Ph.D. from the University of Boston in theology in 1933, returning that same year to serve as President of Nanking Theological Seminary. (This information is based on the “Brief History” provided by his granddaughter, Li Guangming, chair of the Mochou Road Church Church Council in Nanjing. Price’s history states that his Ph.D. was from Drew University).

13 This bequest was received in 1930. See the website of the Foundation for Theological Education in South East Asia www.ftesea.org/history.htm for details on the Wendell Bequest.

14 See note 10.

Professor of New Testament, Cheng Zhiyi 诚质怡, came to Nanjing to serve as President of the Seminary.

We can identify the following characteristics of theological education during this period:

First, Nanjing's position as the national center of theological education began to take shape. It offered the climate and conditions for the gathering of Christian talent and faculty; 2) the union model of theological education began to emerge. When the old Nanking Seminary was first established, it aggregated resources for theological education from all the major denominations and in theology, it provided an enlightened and tolerant foundation and soil; 3) it began with a high standard of pedagogy and continued to experiment with new thinking in forms of academic systems and management, such as keeping abreast of the times with the establishment of the Village Education Department and its related courses. The Board of Trustees' planning and execution of a publications ministry, such as the translation and publication of the *Collection of Famous Christian Works through the Ages* 基督教历代名著集, a project of great significance for the literature project of the Chinese churches and one which still plays an important part in theological education and research today.¹⁵

But in terms of pedagogy and administration, including training of local faculty and administrators, bias and a lack of trust toward Chinese colleagues persisted.

15 A project initiated by Francis Price Jones in 1941 with the aim of translating significant works from two thousand years of Christian history into Chinese. The Board of Trustees was responsible for the project, of which 32 volumes were produced by the 1960s. The entire project lasted over two decades (the last volume, 基督教早期文选集 [Early Christian Writings] was published in 1975. The collection initiated the Chinese language translation of classics of Christian Thought.

In day-to-day management, especially in finance and personnel, everything was controlled by the western missionaries; all expenditure was controlled by the mission boards. The fact that after the 1930s there was a Chinese seminary president was simply due to the exigencies of the times; it was frequently the case that the title was greater than the reality. Seldom did a Chinese colleague have any part in the decision-making process on major issues.¹⁶ The sole exception was in the literature ministry. The *Jinling (Nanking) Theological Review* 金陵神学志, whose inaugural issue was published in February 1914, began with a Chinese editor-in-chief (Nanking Theological Seminary's first Chinese teacher, Chen Jinyong 陈金镛) and has continued with a Chinese editor throughout its history.¹⁷

2 Period of Reform in Theological Education (1952-1957)

Due to political changes in the early 1950s, new patterns emerged in the scope, pedagogical concept, faculty and structure of theological education.

“After the Christian Three-Self Reform (Patriotic) Movement was launched in 1950, Chinese Christianity began to follow the path of independence, autonomy and self-management. At the time, due to the withdrawal of foreign missionaries, foreign allowances were cut

16 See note 4.

17 According to Yu Muren's editorial on resuming publication, 金陵神学志复刊辞 (金陵神学志复刊号, nos. 1&2, vol. 23, December 1947), the editors (to that time) were: Chen Jinyong 陈金镛, Zhu Xianwen 朱显文, Chen Xiuzi 陈修兹, Zhu Baohui 朱宝惠, Dong Xiaoyuan 董小园, Wang Zhixin 王治心, Chen Weibin 陈维屏, Wan Guotong 万国同, Li Lude 李路德, Shi Yufang 施煜方, Zou Bingyi 邹秉彝, Cheng Boqun 程伯群, Cheng Zhiyi 诚质怡, Xie Shouling 谢受灵 and Yu Muren 余牧人.

off and the Chinese churches and every seminary faced all sorts of hardship. In August 1952, the “East China Theological Education Forum” was held in Shanghai. Following much discussion, the forum came up with a joint plan.”¹⁸ The 12 East China region seminaries that merged in Nanjing were: Jinling (Nanking) Theological Seminary (including Jinling Women’s Theological College; the Anglican Central Theological Seminary, Shanghai; China Baptist Theological Seminary; Hangzhou Chinese Theological Seminary; Wuxi Huadong/East China Theological Seminary; Cheeloo (Jilu) Theological Seminary; Fujian (Minnan) Theological Seminary; Fuzhou Union Theological Seminary; Ningpo Trinity Theological Seminary; Jiangsu Baptist Bible Seminary; and Jinan Mingdao Bible Seminary. In November 1952, Mochou Road Church (Hanzhong Church) hosted the Founding Assembly of the Nanjing Union Theological Seminary, with “over 100 students and over 50 faculty from the 12 East China theological seminaries taking part in the ceremony. Mr. Wu Yaozong 吴耀宗 (Y.T. Wu) officiated. In 1961, Yenching (Yanjing) Union Theological Seminary merged with “Jinling,” and a dozen faculty and several dozen students all joined this big family.”¹⁹ On December 10, 1952 the first Board of Trustees convened in Shanghai and elected Wu Yaozong chair of the Board of Trustees, K.H. Ting 丁光训 as seminary president, Cheng Zhiyi and Ding Yuzhang 丁玉章 as vice-presidents. In addition to these three, other faculty at NJUTS at the time included Bishop Shen Zigao 沈子高, Rev. Chen Zemin 陈泽民,

18 Cao Shengjie, “Speech at the Opening Ceremony of the Fiftieth Anniversary of Nanjing Union Theological Seminary,” in *Jinling Theological Review* (4/2002): 15.

19 Chen Zemin, “Speech at the graduation ceremony on the fortieth anniversary of Nanjing Union Theological Seminary,” *Seeking and Witness* 求索与见证, 196.

Xu Rulei徐如雷, Rev. Sun Hanshu孙汉书, Rev. Han Bide韩彼得, and Rev. Zang Antang臧安堂, along with the Yanjing faculty who joined later, Old Testament expert Xu Dingxin许鼎新, New Testament expert Luo Zhenfang骆振芳, as well as Wang Zizhong王梓仲, Mo Ruxi and others. The overall features of this period of theological education were as follows:

First, a jointly run institution that crossed denominational lines. Churches and theological institutions at the time were cut off in financial terms from their former mission boards and denominational ties and this brought about structural and personnel integration and a realignment of school expenditure, faculty and students. The integration of faculty and resources created conditions for the fostering of theological students.

Second, it established the principle of “Mutual respect in matters of faith,” a principle adhered to for decades in the Chinese Church and became the foundation upon which the Church moved toward a post-denominational era and unity. This principle was first proposed at NJUTS, in accord with the spirit of “union.” The spirit of union in mutual respect in matters of faith, as mutual respect in theological understanding and worship practice, was also embodied in the guiding pedagogy of theological education, including concrete course content, such as Bible course placement and teaching approach, etc. Mutual respect in matters of faith strove to realize to the greatest extent “seeking the common ground while reserving differences” on a foundation of the unchanging principle of the body of Christ and varying denominational backgrounds, giving everyone the opportunity to learn from each other’s strengths.

Third, a group of outstanding talents was trained for the church. The group of theological students that was trained during this period later became scholars

and leaders of the church. They included Rev. Wang Weifan 汪维藩 and Rev. Zhao Zhi'en 赵志恩 who became professors at the seminary; leaders of the national and local CCC/TSPM such as Revs. Cao Shengjie 曹圣洁, Shen Cheng'en 沈承恩, Ji Jianhong 季剑虹, Deng Fucun 邓福村, and Sun Xipei 孙锡培; Yao Minquan 姚民权 who became a historian of the church; and Rev. Shi Qigui 史奇珪, who became an expert in church music.

Fourth, the attempt at theological contextualization. The social upheaval of the 1950s and 1960s caused the church to reflect anew on many matters related to faith and society. The theological discussions bore the imprint of the times: ordinary believers, clergy, and seminary professors all took part together. "Authors included professional theologians and professors Cheng Zhiyi, Huang Peixin 黄培新, and Luo Zhenfang, as well as well-known pastors from various denominations such as Jia Yuming 贾玉铭, Yang Shaotang 杨绍唐, Tang Matai 唐马太, Wan Fulin 万福临, and Yang Jingqiu 杨镜秋, and also denominational leaders of whom little else is known today but their names: Cao Fangtao 曹芳涛, Shi Ying 石英, Hua Qiguang 华启光, and others. ... That broad discussion went on for over a year and did indeed serve to invigorate the church's theology."²⁰ Though against the background of those times, this theological discussion had some bias in terms of methods or modes of thinking," still it was precisely this Theological Mass Movement that opened up many "intractable knots" that lurked deep in Christians' thinking.²¹

20 Yao Minquan, 我国神学思想建设再刍议 [A further opinion on Theological Reconstruction], *Nanjing Theological Review* (4/2001).

21 Wang Weifan, 有自传研究的几点思考—神学群众运动之反思 [A few thoughts on the study of self-propagation—reflections on the theological mass movement], *Nanjing Theological Review* (1/1998).

Fifth, it preserved the vigor of the faculty. The best faculty in theological education in the Chinese Church in that era were gathered in Jinling; during the difficult days of the Cultural Revolution, they had come through the valley of death and they became the first cohort of faculty and researchers following Reform and Opening Up. They contributed to the teaching, publishing and personnel training that followed.

3 Stagnation in Theological Education (1958-1978)

For a number of years prior to the Cultural Revolution, under the growing influence of ultra-leftist thinking, the normal work of teaching at NJUTS was disrupted; for example, the *Nanjing Theological Review* stopped publication in 1957 and after that theological research and publication was basically non-existent.

In 1958, classes were suspended for three years due to the “Anti-rightist Campaign.” Students and faculty were all labeled “rightists”; it was soul destroying. Some faculty was sent to the farm at Xixia shan to undergo reform through labor, where they labored together with clergy from other religions in the city. Adherents of different religions got to know each other through working and living together, exchanging views, and caring for one another. These were extraordinary times, and these extraordinary times engendered a “religious dialogue.”

In 1961 classes were resumed, but for the next five to six years, a limited number of students were admitted, and the courses available were highly irregular. The vicissitudes of the political climate gave people the sense that a storm was approaching.

The Cultural Revolution began in 1966 and the seminary again shut down and did not reopen until 1981, a period of fifteen years. Early on in the chaos, the library

holdings were nearly all burned; the losses were huge. During this time, the teachers were either forced to take part in organized study, to “turn over a new leaf,” getting rid of your own reactionary thinking and that of others, and accepting “re-education.” The professors were in the prime of their lives—precious years for highly educated people with lively minds who were buried like this during these years when truth and falsehood changed places.

Recalling this period, Prof. Luo Zhenfang said: “For the ten years of turmoil that began in 1958, we experienced successive, violent political movements. I could do nothing but give in under such extreme pressure. I said at the time: ‘I will no longer work to propagate religion.’ Later, reading the passage of the Risen Lord revealing himself to the disciples on the beach of the sea of Tiberias, I would often feel deep remorse. The Lord cared not about the disciples’ desertion, why would he care about mine? During the decade of turmoil [the Cultural Revolution] I confessed the Lord and I don’t know how many tears I cried each time I read of the Lord’s thrice-posed question to Peter about his love (for the Lord) and where he gave him his sheep to care for. The Risen Lord came himself to find me and once again gave me the responsibility to care for his sheep.”²² This “second call” was a spiritual experience common to those shepherds who walked through the valley of the shadow of death.

Though education and research were suspended during this period, just as Chen Zemin said, reflection had not come to a halt. “The testing and suffering we experienced continued to influence our faith, to influence

22 Luo Zhenfang, 自言。行过幽谷 “Author’s Preface” in *Through the Valley of the Shadow of Death*, (Jiangsu Christian Council, 1995), 2.

our spiritual feelings,” such that this period of silence and speechlessness became the preparation for the next stage.²³

4 Period of Comprehensive Development in Theological Education (1979-1997)

On April 8, 1979, the Centennial Church in Ningbo became the first Protestant church to reopen on the Chinese mainland following the Cultural Revolution. The reopening of churches and meeting points across the country followed, and the risen Chinese Church was in urgent need of a great number of evangelists and the training of a new generation of theological students became urgent as well.

The establishment of the Institute of Religion at Nanjing University in 1979 was the prelude to the resumption of classes at the seminary; former senior faculty of NJUTS made up the Institute staff, which was set up prior to the reopening of the seminary. The founders were seminary principal K.H.Ting and the president of Nanjing University Kuang Yaming 匡亚明. In a reminiscence about President Kuang, Bishop Ting said that after the Cultural Revolution, experts from the Institute of World Religions at the Chinese Academy of Sciences came to Nanjing to ask President Kuang ‘s views on having the entire faculty of NJUTS form the Institute. Kuang had always been interested in religion and was happy to agree.²⁴ The Nanjing University Institute of Religion trained the first group of scholars of religion

23 Chen Zemin, “有关中国教会的神学建设的问题—1992年在金陵协和神学院40周年校庆上的讲话,”求索与见证 [On issues related to Theological Reconstruction in the Chinese Church—talk at the 40th anniversary of NJUTS], in *Seeking and Witnessing* (Shanghai: CCC/TSPM, 2007), 21.

24 See K.H. Ting, 怀念匡校长 [Remembering Kuang Yaming] in *Writings of K.H. Ting* (Nanjing: Yilin Press, 1998), 50.

following the Cultural Revolution. Later, because of the needs of the church, the reopening of NJUTS caused its former faculty to turn their strengths back to theological education, and the role of the Institute in Nanjing gradually lessened, though its journal, *Religion* (*zongjiao* 宗教) continues.²⁵ When the Department of Religion was established at Nanjing University, both the Institute and the journal were returned to it. During its two decades as a separate institution, especially in the early years, the Institute trained a group of M.A. students who were largely secular scholars of religion; later it relied on the journal as a platform for exploring issues such as changing views of religion and the state of religion in China and so on. It has been useful in changing long-term set views of religion such as “religion as opiate” and “leftist” attitudes.

To meet the needs of church pastors in this period for sermon materials, several NJUTS faculty launched the bimonthly publication *Jiaocai* 教材 (study materials), which began formal publication in late 1980, with Han Bide and Wang Weifan sharing the task of editor. The seminary had not yet resumed classes at the time nor had printing of Bibles begun. The timely publication of *Jiaocai*, “made the most basic spare time theological training available to tens of thousands of leaders among believers across the country. Most were lay leaders of home churches or other meeting points. *Jiaocai*’s aim was to improve the content of worship and meetings, respond

25 *Zongjiao* began publication in the fall of 1979, with Prof. Xu Rulei as editor. The editorial staff were all faculty from NJUTS. In late 2002, publication of the journal was shifted to the Religion Department of Nanjing University. The journal focuses on research into religion in China. Its readers are mainly cadres involved in work with religion, staff of the United Front Department, or theorists in the subject, faculty and students of institutions of higher education and those in religious circles.

to theological issues and questions of church knowledge that arose, and to enable the Church of Christ to grow strong in accordance with biblical truth and not be led into heterodoxy.”²⁶ At a time when there was a widespread lack of Bibles and Bible commentaries, *Jiaocai* was a tremendous help to the many lay volunteers all around the country who had as yet no access to systematic theological training in seminaries. This was an extraordinary mode of theological education for an extraordinary time.

The resumption of classes at NJUTS signaled the start of a new era. The task to adapt to the needs of reopened churches and to train evangelists for the church grew daily more urgent. In 1980, NJUTS began to prepare to resume classes.²⁷ The B.Th. (本科) course formally reopened in 1981, four years later than other tertiary schools which reopened their entrance exams in 1977. As the first seminary to reopen following the implementation of the policy of Reform and Opening Up, this signaled that theological education in the Chinese Church had entered a new stage of comprehensive development. “Beginning in the mid-1980s, NJUTS graduates began to shoulder important responsibilities in Christian Councils, TSPMs and churches nationwide and the faculty at reopened and new seminaries and bible schools that successively opened were mostly from the graduate course at NJUTS.”²⁸ Up until June 2009 the total number of students who had graduated from Nanjing Seminary was around 1,829. Of those, graduates since the reopening in 1981 were in

26 K.H. Ting, 关于我国的神学教育 [On theological education in China] *Nanjing Theological Review* (9/1984).

27 As Prof. Wang Weifan recalls, Rev. Lin Yixuan 林依莹 (assistant office manager at the time) was instrumental in the process.

28 Philip L. Wickeri, *Reconstructing Christianity in China: K.H. Ting and the Chinese Church* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007), 232.

the majority, about 1,480. From 1989 to 2002, 900 had completed the Correspondence Course (函授班).

In 1983, the *Nanjing Theological Review* (金陵神学志) resumed publication. The journal had been launched in 1914. In the course of its long publication history, it had halted publication a number of times for various reasons, but once the situation stabilized, it always returned. In 1947, then editor Yu Muren wrote in the resumed publication, “It is the fondest hope of this journal from now on to use its articles to make a contribution to colleagues and fellow Christians in the churches and theological education.”²⁹ On resuming publication in 1983,³⁰ the journal continued to adhere to this tradition and the publication’s tradition and became a platform for important scholarly research in “self-propagation” in the Chinese Church in this new stage. Following the relaunch of the publication, the editors were Professors Chen Zemin and Wang Weifan. The aim of the publication was given as “affirm the authority of the Bible; uphold the orthodoxy of the faith; embody the spirit of unity, based on the realities of China; and look to the worldwide church. The reappearance of the Seminary journal was a sign that after a twenty-year hiatus, theological research had been restored.

The Commission on Theological Education of the CCC/TSPM was set up, establishing institutional guarantees for the development of the ministry of theological education. Following resumption of classes

29 See note 18.

30 The Foundation for Theological Education in South East Asia funded the publication of an overseas edition in traditional Chinese characters as well as an annual selection in English, the *Chinese Theological Review* (1985-), edited by Janice Wickeri.

at NJUTS, a number of regional seminaries³¹ followed suit and provincial seminaries and Bible schools either reopened or were established. By the late 1980s, the number of seminaries in China had increased from the single institution—NJUTS—to thirteen institutions around the country. By 1996, there were seventeen, and by 1998, eighteen. To coordinate communication within the theological education ministry, in February 1987, the CCC/TSPM established the Theological Education Commission for the purpose of facilitating discussion, sharing and coordination of theological education and lay training.

One of the tasks of the theological education commission is to set out a clear pedagogical policy for theological education. In a theological forum in August 1985, such a policy for all levels of theological education was proposed and following the establishment of the Commission, this policy was further clarified and affirmed: our theological education would foster persons of talent who politically, uphold the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, have a strong patriotism for their socialist nation, maintain the three-self orientation of the Chinese Church; spiritually and theologically, have relatively high accomplishments, good moral character, health in mind and body, who can provide spiritual

31 NJUTS is the sole national seminary, accepting and training theological students at a national level. Regional seminaries accept and train students from their region (which may cover several provinces/municipalities/autonomous regions). These include Yanjing Theological Seminary, Huadong (East China) Theological Seminary, Dongbei Theological Seminary, Zhongnan Theological Seminary and Sichuan Theological Seminary; and provincial seminaries responsible for the theological education on a provincial level: Zhejiang Seminary, Anhui Seminary, Shandong Seminary, Guangdong Seminary, Fujian Seminary, Henan Seminary, Hunan Seminary, Shaanxi Seminary, Jiangxi Seminary, Yunnan Seminary, Jiangsu Bible School and Heilongjiang Bible School, as well as Inner Mongolia (now a seminary).

nourishment to believers and who can unite believers under the banner of three-self. “We must strive to train up evangelists whose development is well-rounded, including “spiritually, morally, intellectually, physically and socially,” suitable to the Lord’s use in this new era in our country.”³²

This educational orientation can be summarized as follows:

1. Faith requirements: having a clear call; willing to dedicate oneself to the Lord; loyal to the faith; of service to the church; on a deep spiritual journey; with a fairly high level of theological attainment;

2. Civic duties: encourage Christians to be good citizens, not just in terms of being generally law-abiding, but to be light and salt in society; with a sense of responsibility to the society and the world; to be good stewards;

3. Character requirements: train an all-round, healthy character, well balanced in all areas; with understanding of the value and dignity of (human) character, learn tolerance, understanding and mutual respect; fostering unity of words and deeds, cultivating internal and external character and habits and transparency.³³

Since the reopening of NJUTS, thirteen other seminaries with two-year or above programs have reopened or been established nationwide. There are

32 See “中国基督教神学教育委员会工作报告 [Work report of the Chinese Christian Commission on theological education], in *Album of the Fifth National Conference of the Chinese Protestant Church (CCC/TSPM, 1992)*, 171-176.

33 See Wang Aiming 王艾明, “论中国教会神学教育学研究之主题与思路” [On the main pedagogical themes and ideas in research on theological education in the Chinese Church], in *Nanjing Theological Review* (4/2001): 14.

also one-year lay training courses. In order to define the course requirements for theological seminaries and bible schools of all program lengths, and to facilitate links and coordination among all our educational institutions, the Commission designated a team that in August 1987 drew up a plan for a two-year theology junior college-level degree (神学专科) (draft) and a Plan for a four-year seminary degree (神学本科) (draft); in March 1988 a plan for a post-graduate research course was added, as well as a plan for a one-year training course in theology.³⁴ In 1996 at the Sixth National Chinese Christian Conference, a pedagogical outline for lay training courses (draft for comment) was drawn up³⁵ to guide seminaries, bible schools and training course centers in arranging courses according to the plan.

The successive openings of seminaries and bible schools encouraged the birth of theological course materials publishing. The Theological Education Commission under the direction of General Secretary Shen Yifan 沈以藩 and Prof. Chen Zemin in July 1987 separately invited some seminary and bible school colleagues to write the first group of 15 materials for professional curricula (later increased to 17). In the summer of 1988, some of these authors went to Lushan for two weeks to devote themselves to writing these theological curricula. That same year in July at the second meeting of the Theological Education Commission these materials were given the name “Chinese Christian Theological Education Series.” By the end of the 1990s, these programs were basically complete and the published materials included *Introduction to the New Testament*, *A Brief History of the Hebrew*

34 See note 15, 171-172.

35 See “*Work Report of the Chinese Christian Theological Education Commission (1996)*,” 278.

People, A Brief History of Christianity, etc.³⁶ For many years, these books have been welcomed by seminaries and bible schools at every level and by faculty and students and have been influential among pastoral workers, lay volunteers and ordinary believers as well.

The remit of the Theological Education Commission also included the promotion of theological academic discussion and sharing of teaching experience, planning of teacher training, equipping of seminary and bible school libraries and so on. In 1995, the Theological Education Commission passed the “Guidelines for constructing standardized Chinese Christian theological education,” “Regulations on the Employment of teachers in Chinese Christian seminaries and bible schools,” “Provisions on academic degrees in Chinese Christian seminaries and bible schools,” “Certain provisions on the work of theological education,” and “Teaching plans for every subject (draft),” which signaled that construction of Chinese theological education had entered a new stage. In 1995, NJUTS awarded degrees for the first time. That year 33 students received the B.Th. (神学学士) and 4 were awarded the M.Div. (神学硕士).³⁷

In the two decades since its founding, the Theological Education Commission played a definite role in promoting the standardization of theological education and raising the overall standard of theological education in the Chinese Church, and especially in its first five years, during the initial stages when theological education had just been revived, and everything was in a state of disarray, the members of the Commission threw themselves into the project with great enthusiasm achieving outstanding

36 Colleagues in the Publications Office at NJUTS did a tremendous amount of editing and publications work for the series.

37 Ibid.

results in those first years. In the last few years, because the Commission, like other similar committees, is by nature an advisory body, the CCC/TSPM Training Department took on the important task that previously belonged to the Commission. In the long run, its coordinating function should be continued and the spirit of its vision and pragmatism should be revived. It should help seminaries and bible schools around the nation resolve many longstanding issues, such as curriculum and teaching materials innovation, accreditation, positioning of academic structure and standards, and financing of development funds for theological education, etc.

5 Period of consolidation and improvement in theological education (1998-2009)

At the turn of the new century, Chinese theological education had already entered upon a new historical transition. With regard to issues faced by the church due to globalization and diversification, the challenges were greater than the opportunities. If we say that in the preceding twenty years the Chinese Church and theological education were in a period of comprehensive revival and construction, with the bulk of its energy going into the restoration and new construction of schools, then from the decade beginning with the Jinan Meeting and the subsequent initiation of Theological Reconstruction, there has been an active period of theological research and a transitional period in theological education. Theological Reconstruction was initiated at NJUTS and through the juxtaposition of and reflection on every sort of theological view, teachers' and students' interest in theological reflection was stimulated through organizing and participating in every kind of forum and theological sharing, and their capacity for theological reflection and

powers of judgment were improved. In this process, seminary faculty and students not only invigorated theological thinking, they undertook unprecedented and profound reflection, improving their scholarship and moreover, their enthusiasm for spiritual invigoration and a committed church, as well as a sense of responsibility toward country and church.

The Shift from Quantity to Quality in Theological Education

Since the 1980s, the thrust of development in most church ministries, including theological education, lay in a period of rapid increase. In less than ten years, the number of seminaries and bible schools of a certain size had grown from one to thirteen. It was even more difficult to keep track of the number of every kind of lay training, some of which, though enthusiastic, was not up to standard. The result of rapid expansion was that the quality of the curriculum was uneven, faculty standards in particular. This alarmed some church leaders to whose care theological education had been entrusted. The task of Theological Reconstruction was to get to the root of the problem and strive to enable theological education to cast off its past mindset of pursuit of quantity and quick success, and beginning rigorously from the academic model of theological education and the norms of education science, encourage theology to break out of its petrified model to train people for the church who innovative in thinking and reflective in spirit. Focusing on NJUTS, in recent years its post-graduate course has produced some outstanding graduates, some of whom have become teaching and administrative staff of seminaries and bible schools.

Inviting Visiting Professors from Overseas

Some highly respected professors have retired, and the needs of some programs, such as the MA program, cannot be met while a new generation of faculty are still pursuing their studies overseas or are still too inexperienced. Due to Bishop Ting's concern for the situation and in response to his call, the plan to invite professors of theology from overseas became a reality. Though the practice was widespread in other Chinese institutions of learning [such as universities], because in the church some aspects of the principle of "self-support" had not been updated, such overseas professors as were invited to teach in seminaries had been limited to non-Chinese speakers or short-term lecturers, such as Ms. Faye Pearson, Professor Philip L. Wickeri, and so on. The "first into the water," so to speak, to be formally invited as regular professors were two Americans who were invited in 2001, Prof. Anne Wire, professor of New Testament, and Prof. Carolyn Higgibotham, professor of Old Testament. Prof. Wire's father had been a missionary in China and she had been born in Jiangxi province. Prof. Higgibotham's maternal grandfather had taught at the "old Jinling (Nanking Seminary)," so both had a deep affection for the seminary. They brought with them new ideas and methods from the ecumenical church in biblical research and teaching and expanded the horizons and research interests of the students. Through arranging younger teachers to work with them, the seminary's younger faculty had an opportunity to be further trained as well. Over nine years, a dozen professors from overseas have served as visiting professors at NJUTS—from the U.S., Canada, Finland, the Philippines, Singapore and Germany, as well as from

Hong Kong.³⁸ Subjects taught by visiting professors have included theology, church history, pastoral care, church music and so on.

Of course, language is an obstacle in inviting visiting professors. This lack of Chinese language ability is problematic for guiding M.A. students' research and thesis writing, since these professors generally have no to read the theses or review original research. Thus, training a corps of faculty familiar with local culture and church context remains a major task for theological education in China.

Updating Academic Structure to suit the needs of Church Development

NJUTS began formally granting a three-year M.Div. degree and a four-year B.Th. in 1995. Previously there had been a period in which a one-year lay training diploma was granted.³⁹ Later when short-term training classes in local churches became more standardized, NJUTS no longer held such classes or granted certificates. At the same time and for the same reasons, the correspondence course in

38 They have included Samuel Pearson (U.S.), Raymond and Rhea Whitehead (Canada), Miikka Ruokanen (Finland), Feliciano V. Carino (Philippines), Al Dueck (U.S.), Doreen and Michael Macfaren (Canada), Sigurd Kaiser, (Germany) and Judith Sutterlin (U.S.), among others.

39 According to Prof. Wang Weifan, this was mainly in 1998-1990, 1991, when the seminary undertook to train a small number of lay people who came mainly from large provinces with an especially large Christian population such as Hunan and Shandong, to help alleviate the pressing need in those provinces for preaching and pastoral care. Sister Jiang Peifen's 蒋佩芬 contribution to this work was outstanding.

the Bible was closed.⁴⁰ The new larger campus of NJUTS would have more available space and an expanded faculty, so such training courses would be a possibility, as long as they followed the seminary's standards in form and method and were adapted to suit the present realities of the churches.

M.Div. Degree 神学硕士. The degree is aimed mainly at graduates of NJUTS, East China (Huadong) Theological Seminary, Yanjing Theological Seminary (Beijing), Dongbei Seminary (Shenyang), Zhongnan Theological Seminary (Wuhan), Sichuan Theological Seminary and Christian graduates of other tertiary institutions. Following completion of the three-year training, these students become teachers at other seminaries and lay training centers or serve urban churches with well-educated congregations.

B.Th. Degree 神学学士. This degree is for senior middle school graduates, and graduates of (other than regional) seminaries and bible schools: Henan Seminary, Shaanxi Seminary, Hunan Bible School, Harbin Bible School, Heilongjiang Bible School, Yunnan Seminary, Guizhou Bible School, etc., as well as graduates of colleges and universities. An annual placement test is held for eligible graduates of three-year seminaries, such as Shandong Seminary, Anhui Seminary, Guangdong Union Theological Seminary, Fujian Seminary, Jiangsu Bible School, etc. Since 2008, graduates of colleges and universities could also register for the placement test. B.Th. graduates serve in local churches.

40 The course was opened in 1989 to improve the standard of lay volunteers in grass roots churches, with the goal of serving the churches. It was a three-year curricula based on a combination of self-study and tutoring through correspondence, with 18 courses of study on topics related to the Bible and church work.

Post-Graduate Course in Pastoral Care. Recently, to provide the opportunity for continuing education to pastoral staff in churches. NJUTS, under the direction of the CCC/TSPM, has set up a post-graduate course in pastoral care that began admitting students in 2000. The course is open to leaders in the churches, employs the intensive method and has trained over 120 students. The course is an extension course. Following several years of exploration and practice, the church has recognized the concept and the training method. The special features of its curriculum are as follows:

- 1) Theological depth: Emphasis on contextualization and rethinking of theological traditions, stressing concepts of guidance and renewal;
- 2) Breadth of mind: improving the scope of pastoral workers' knowledge to keep pace with the rising level of education of church members;
- 3) Breadth of practice: using seminars, sharing, special lectures, and surveys to supplement its intensive classes and spur students in every aspect of their work in the church and its management toward mutual inspiration and learning from each other, closer relationships among local churches, and act as links to strengthen contact between CCC/TSPM and local churches.

Preparatory work for the Ph.D. With Bishop K.H. Ting's advocacy and support, in 2004 NJUTS began the preparatory work for starting a doctoral degree program. In 2005 official approval was received and NJUTS became the sole national-level institution among all the five religions in China approved to grant the doctoral degree. This is an affirmation of Chinese Christian theological education and expectations for our successful work in theological education in our new stage. This project

remains in the preparatory stages at present and we hope that when conditions are ripe we will be able to move forward with it. At a preparatory meeting for students interested in the program, then seminary president K.H. Ting asked everyone to employ strict quality control in the matter of admitting students—few but the best—and at the same time emphasize in the future process of training, not to seek an undeserved reputation but to look for genuine talent, for we must definitely produce high quality persons to serve the Chinese Church.⁴¹

Applying strict quality control in recruiting students has been the principle NJUTS has applied for many years in its basic and post-graduate courses and even though other tertiary institutions have expanded recruitment, we have not lowered our standards.

6 Outlook: “5 Standards and 4 Balances” (五育四平衡) in Education

The names of theological educators that stand out in the long course of the history of theological education at NJUTS are many. Leaving aside the western scholars of the early days, and mentioning only the Chinese educators, Li Handuo, Cheng Zhiyi, Shen Zigao, Jia Yuming, K.H. Ting, Chen Zemin, Wang Weifan, and others. The precious riches they stored up in exploring the changes in theological ideas and practice in the church in Chinese society in varying historical contexts is worth uncovering and organizing. It will provide precious experience for us to draw on in clarifying our present task and future goals. A series of monographs reflecting research into the senior generation’s thinking on theological education would be

41 Zhou Jiakai周加才, 爱无止境—我所尊敬的丁光训主教 [My respected friend, Bishop K.H. Ting], (Nanjing: Yilin Press, 2009), 149.

truly worthwhile.

The principle of “5 standards” or *wuyu* in the curriculum plans put forward by the Theological Education Commission in 1987 today remains the direction and principal for fostering students at NJUTS. At the same time, the contemporary educator Guo Bingwen’s 郭秉文 concept of “balance in four areas”; that is, between generalist and specialist; knowledge and character; faculty (teachers) and facilities (equipment); local and global has been adopted.⁴² We could say that the goal of theological education at NJUTS is developing in the direction of “5 Standards and 4 Balances.”

The “5 standards” are: spiritual, moral, intellectual, physical, and community life.⁴³ “Spiritual” education here means spiritual formation, which includes the personal spiritual practice as well as mutual service and growing together within the seminary; “moral” education means ethical cultivation as well as character formation; “intellectual” education means enriching knowledge and reflection and the ability to innovate; “physical” education means health of mind and body; and “community” education means adapting to the environment, serving together with coworkers, and “excellent interpersonal

42 Guo Bingwen 郭秉文, “略论四个平衡的办学方针” [On four balances in education policy]. Guo Bingwen (1880-1969) was a Jiangsu native who obtained his Ph.D. from the Columbia University School of Education in 1914 and returned to be closely involved in the Nanjing Higher Normal and National Central University (forerunner of Nanjing University).

43 Zhang Shiyun 张士允 proposed 5 “standards”: body, mind, virtue, beauty, spiritual, as well as the educational philosophy of “taking faith as basic and the education of the whole person as the final stage; knowledge as the start, morality as the end; wisdom as the essence 体, life as the application 用. See 教育理念与基督教教育观 [Educational concepts and Christian education philosophy], Zhang Shiyun et al, (Christian Communications (Canada), 2005), 245, 271.

relationships” both in and outside the fellowship.⁴⁴

The “four balances” strive to foster individuals who are balanced in four areas: theology and pastoral care; knowledge and character; faculty and facilities; local and global.

Theology/pastoral care. Due to the demands of a rapidly growing church, seminaries at all levels have made it their primary task to train pastoral individuals, but a homogenous training model is not good for the future development of theological education. Since the 1980s, church development has amassed a great many questions and a great deal of experience; these need to be studied and faced and this is another goal of Theological Reconstruction. T.C. Chao once said that “in China today, it is not enough to simply hear God’s call; to this we must add profound study, a mastery of learning and extensive contacts.”⁴⁵ In the information age, the overall quality of theological students and church members is rising and this demands that theological education take an entirely new angle on “profound study” to respond to the demands of church development.

Knowledge/ character. While emphasizing the training of theological students in theological knowledge, we must train them as human beings, emphasizing the fostering of character and life growth. “If theology is no more than pure knowledge, if it is no more than language to help us discuss and discourse on God and questions related to God, then it is not knowledge with

44 Chen Yilu陈逸鲁, “谈谈中国教会神学教育的几个理念” [On a few concepts in theological education in the Chinese Church], *Nanjing Theological Review* (4/2002): 26.

45 T.C. Chao赵紫宸, “我对中国高等神学教育的梦想,” [My dreams for Chinese higher theological education], in 赵紫宸文集 [Writings of T.C. Chao], vol.3 (Beijing: Commercial Press, 2007), 578.

any significance for Chinese culture. If theology contains within it nothing of morality or religiosity, if it offers no help in conducting ourselves in society or in human life, then it is not knowledge with any significance for Chinese culture.”⁴⁶ We might understand the characteristics of Chinese theology Prof. Wang Weifan mentions here as the characteristics of the “the Jinling person 金陵人”⁴⁷ : Chinese who have a Chinese self-cultivation and character, a sense of Chinese history and mission, who bear responsibility for and carry the quandaries, difficulties and hardships of the Chinese Church, society and people. When they come before God’s seat of mercy and hear God’s voice, they bring the comfort, tolerance, reproach, and guidance they receive there back to their church and their people.”⁴⁸

Faculty/facilities. NJUTS recently moved to its new campus in “university city” in Jiangning County, a large campus with all new buildings. Of course, as an educational institution, we are not only reliant on a long history and handsome buildings. Our true worth is embodied in the standard of our faculty and administration. In recent years, we have been following our plan to send young and middle aged faculty to seminaries overseas to further their training; some have already returned. Faculty must certainly be models of holistic growth. The relationship between faculty and colleagues must also

46 Wang Weifan, “让神学成为一门中国学问” [Let theology become a Chinese field of knowledge], *Nanjing Theological Review* (3/1997): 3.

47 Prof. Mo Ruxi (莫如喜) has often, at graduation ceremonies or during other activities, urged us to be heirs to our forbears’ tradition, to be proud of being “Jinling ren” 金陵人. [the flavor of the term is akin to Jinling-er or Jinling-ite—ed.]

48 Wang Weifan, 神学的贫困。 [Poverty of Theology], in 十年踽踽 [A decade travelled] (Hong Kong: Centre for Research in Christianity and Chinese Culture, 2009), 524.

be a witness to fellowship and unity. In addition, “the modernization of our facilities is an important matter for theological education in our church today.”⁴⁹ The library of today is no longer simply a place where books are kept; the addition of online information and computer databases has made it an information resource center. In the computer age, our educational model, and the way we reference and mark work, have all changed and it is necessary that we invest in, renew and maintain our facilities to keep abreast of these changes.

Local/ global. “Our church is one situated in the post-denominational era, one with Chinese characteristics, for it reflects the characteristics of traditional Chinese culture, what it stresses is harmony and not division. But at the same time, we are an organic part of the ecumenical and global church, and the spiritual experience of the Chinese Church is an indivisible part of the spiritual experience of the ecumenical church.”⁵⁰ The students we train should willingly and gladly serve our churches, have a deep understanding of their own country’s culture and history; at the same time they should have an ecumenical heart and vision. They should be both based in the real needs of the church and good at discovering and solving the church’s problems, thus becoming a force for renewing the church.

T.C. Chao, in speaking of theological education and the direction for the development of research, said the first need was for a Godly and obedient faith, as well as deep research, that those who had a spiritual quest should be allowed to devote themselves to study, should

49 Chen Yilu, “Concepts in Theological Education,” 27.

50 Kan Baoping 阚保平, “中国的神学教育与教会发展,” [Chinese theological education and the development of the church] in 中国基督教教会发展——原因与路向 [Church development in Chinese Christianity: Reasons and Direction] Lin Dehao 林德皓, ed. (Hong Kong: Lutheran World Federation, 2001), 155.

have opportunities to continue their studies, a place set apart to think and study, and a place of calm to create. Improvement in the level of academic research is also needed, as well as the combination of scholarship and life. Faculty and students should be encouraged to be bold in reflection and innovation, to have a close relationship with the church and in the midst of difficulties keep the flame of thought alive.⁵¹ This goal still has great relevance for our theological education today.

Conclusion

In March 2003, NJUTS made the formal move to its new campus in the “university city” of Jiangning County in the environs of Nanjing, and a new page was turned in the institution’s history. The original Nanking Seminary, located on Hanzhong Road in the Gulou district of Nanjing, once enjoyed a reputation as one of the Four Diamonds among Christian universities and church education, along with Jinling Women’s University, Jinling (Nanking) University, and Jinling Women’s Theological College. Due to its outstanding union structure and ample endowment, it once sought to be the national leader in theological education. But its true golden era was its mature period, the period that began in the 1980s. Today the NJUTS alumni serving in churches and various levels of seminaries and training centers spread across the country are the best witness to this. They dedicate their lives, enthusiasm and perseverance, engaging in the rapid development and renewal of the Chinese Church that has spanned the last thirty years. The majority of the leaders

51 See “今后四十年中中国基督教教义神学可能的发展” [Possible developments in Chinese Christian dogmatic theology in the next forty years], *Nanjing Theological Review* (Nos. 1&2/1950): 26.

in the national CCC/ TSPM and in the CC/TSPMs at the provincial, municipal, and autonomous region levels are graduates of NJUTS from the 1980s onward.

The new campus is in a much quieter environment conducive to spiritual formation and study; its hardware and software are much more modern. In addition to spreading the Gospel of the Lord in this new environment in the midst of university city that God has provided for us, shouldn't we also develop space for sharing and forums with the other institutions within the academic community of university city?⁵² In fact, the seminary choir has already become part of the university city community, using the power of music in the service of the church. The new campus is not far from the historical site of the Chunhua Town field station, and perhaps this is a reminder: a seminary should not be confined behind its walls, but should direct its eyes more to society and give society a definite place in theological education. The Chunhua field station also reminds us to give greater attention to the rural churches and its evangelists across our vast land.

Of course we should not underestimate the difficulties we face, especially that of sources of funding, the norms and supervision involved in management, the problems in lay training against a background of urbanization, producing teaching materials for various levels of lay training, etc. All these must be faced and taken up in common by all faculty and students, alumni and all those who care about Chinese theological education.

At the dedication ceremony for the new campus in 2005, a balloon bearing a huge banner with the school motto first proposed by Prof. Chen Zemin at the school

52 In the forum held in conjunction with the cornerstone laying for the new campus in 2005, Bishop and Seminary President K.H. Ting and Prof. Chen Zemin both independently mentioned this idea.

anniversary in 2002—“love, true knowledge, justice, tolerance, service”(仁爱，真知，公义，谦让，服侍) floated above the proceedings. This motto is both the goal of formation at NJUTS and a distillation of its pedagogy. It also represents the spiritual experience and outlook of the “Jinling ren.” At the most recent school forum, Prof. Chen Zemin formally proposed the term “Jinling School.”⁵³ He feels this term sums up and encompasses a century of NJUTS education history. This is a love-country, love-church community of theological scholars who care for the world, are concerned for society; a forward-looking community willing to be loyal to Christ and honest in scholarship, willing to explore, to seek truth, and witness to the truth that is in them. Actually, the thinking of this “school” long ago took shape in the hearts of Chen Zemin and others of the elder generation, but because of their modesty and caution, it went unexpressed. But looking back at history, whether at the early Jinling filled with youth and passion, or that of the 1980s when it bore the might and vitality of the Risen Lord, the characteristics of the “Jinling School” were already faintly visible in the long waters of history. That is the Jinling spirit we need to inherit from our forbears.⁵⁴

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53 Chen Zemin, “我还有话要说” [I still have something to say], outline from remarks for a campus forum held January 6, 2010.

54 A draft of this paper was presented at the April 2009 “Cross-Straits Forum on the Development of Theological Education,” held by the Taiwan Baptist Theological Seminary. It was revised to its final form in January 2010. I would like to express my thanks here for comments and suggestions given by Prof. Chen Zemin and Prof. Wang Weifan during the revision process.

A Survey of Christianity in Hangzhou

ZHANG ZHONGCHENG

[Abstract]

There are about 300,000 Christians in the Hangzhou area (which includes the 8 districts of Shangcheng, Xiacheng, Jianggan, Gongshu, Xihu, Binjiang, Xiaoshan and Yuhang, the 3 county-level cities of Jiande, Fuyang and Lin'an, and the 2 counties of Tonglu and Chun'an. There are 200 villages and towns (districts), including 31 villages, 99 towns and 70 sub-districts, with a total area of 16,596 square kilometers, including the urban area of 3,068 square kilometers.) In the last few years, population growth and development have remained rapid. Every year the number of Christians has trended upward, moreover there has also been a shift in the makeup of Christian believers; i.e., they are becoming increasingly younger and better educated and due to the increased pace of urbanization. A floating population from other places has continued to pour into the city and there is a sharply rising trend in the number of Christians from outside Hangzhou among them. A large number of Hangzhou Christians also have considerable economic clout and enhanced ideas about involvement in various social welfare undertakings; moreover many actually participate in various ways in such activities. New issues arising from this situation—the contradictions brought about by the inadequate numbers of Christian worship venues and the need for rational distribution of such venues—need to be considered. Other issues await exploration as well: management within Christian churches and organizations, the need for

ongoing improvement in the quality of believers [i.e., their education and maturity in the faith], as well as the overall quality of those in charge in Christian groups, relationships among those of different denominational backgrounds and treatment of privately run meeting points. This survey is aimed at research and analysis of Christianity in the eight urban districts of Hangzhou in the hope of providing an overall picture of its development, future trends in that development and exploring responses to ongoing Christian work.

Basic trends in the development of Christianity in Hangzhou are shown in the results of research and analysis presented in this report. Though these are trends, they may change due to changes in the times. What follows is based on analysis presented in the first part of this report and some of these trends may have shifted due to various changes.

Development Trends in Protestant Christianity in Hangzhou

1. The number of Christian believers continues to grow rapidly

Growth in the number of Hangzhou Christians can be seen in baptism statistics over the years. Though the growth is not consistent every year, we can see¹ that in the older area of the city, following the 2003 Seventh Hangzhou Christian Conference, at which a younger leadership team was installed in the Hangzhou Christian Council and TSPM, the main leaders of the city CC/TSPM

1 Table 1 in Survey Part 1. All statistics quoted in this article are set out in statistical tables with accompanying explanation in Part 1 of the survey, published in *Nanjing Theological Review* 2 (2010): 111-134.

were all young and middle-aged professional clergy. Following the Eighth Conference, June 17-18 2008, a gradual shift took place toward placing younger persons as senior pastors in all large churches in urban Hangzhou. By the end of 2008, younger clergy were to be found in all large churches. Following the dedication ceremony and initiation of formal worship in the new Chongyi Church (completed in 2005) in particular, there was a distinct rise in the number of Christians in the urban area. The intention in building the new Chongyi Church had been to alleviate the crowded conditions at other churches in that area (especially the longstanding pressures of crowding at Sicheng Church), but in fact when worship began at Chongyi Church, every church remained full on Sunday. In 2004 there were 1,050 baptized Christians in the urban area; in 2005, the number rose to 1,052, a rise of 0.19%; in 2006, there were 1,193, an increase from the previous year of 13.40%; 2007 saw a 0.59% rise to 1,200; in 2008, the total stood at 1,570, a rise of 30.83%; and in 2009, a total of 1,633 baptized Christians was recorded, a rise over 2008 of 4.12%. These figures illustrate the gradual growth in the number of Christians in Hangzhou.

From questionnaires given to Christians (including 225 evangelists) in the eight Hangzhou districts, we see that the number one reason for and path to becoming a Christian is “family.” This is a very noteworthy phenomenon. It demonstrates clear family influence on an individual’s conversion to Christian faith; the spread of Christianity in Hangzhou is typically “family-driven.” Sociologically, the family is the smallest basic social unit. The family plays all sorts of social functions and roles: socialization, an economic function, ethnic continuity, etc., but its primary function is that of cultural transmission. This is social education. Children who grow up in a home where both parents are Christians are generally

Christians as well. There are two types of situations here: 1) both parents are believers and frequently lead their children to Christianity as well. Here the children have no opportunity to exercise their own choice in whether or not to become Christians. This is what we mean when we say “family- driven.” This phenomenon is more evident among Christians in Xiaoshan district and less so among Christians in the downtown area and is subtly linked to the diversity of urban life and lifestyle.

2. *An increasing number of persons with middle and senior middle school education are becoming Christian: a clear change in the composition of believers*

Prior to the 1980s and continuing into this century, there was a decline in the number of uneducated believers and of those with only a primary school education. At the same time the number of those with junior high school education remained basically the same while those who had finished senior middle school rose slightly; the number of believers with college and undergraduate education and above was also on the rise. From the period prior to 1980 to the present, Christians with college level education grew 106.06%, while undergraduates increased 173.33%. There was also some growth in the number of post-graduates and above in the church; at the very least, this fact can be seen in the educational background of the professional clergy. Scholars of the sociology of religion have found that in religious circles in China at present a special group has emerged—an “intellectual elite.” For example, Prof. Chen Cunfu 陈村富 of Zhejiang University has written that the emergence of such an elite has been seen in major cities—Beijing, Shanghai, Hangzhou, Guangzhou and Nanjing. Though such an intellectual elite among Christians is not large at present, and comprises mainly those at universities,

hospitals, research institutes and joint Chinese-foreign enterprises, some are also found in schools.² Observational study shows that this group not only exists but that the trend is toward quiet growth. Part of this group of Christians goes to registered and recognized church (es)³ to take part in worship and other activities; another fairly large part, who feel unable to get the help they need from the established churches, have their own independent and self-organized Christian meetings. Specific statistical data and analysis of this trend awaits specialized research.

3. *The number of financially strong Christians among believers is gradually increasing*

There is a view current in academic circles that in

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- 2 Chen Cunfu, 转型期中的中国基督教—浙江基督教 (Chinese Christianity in Transition—Zhejiang Case Studies) (Dongfang chubanshe, 2005), 51-52. Dr. Chen presented a paper in English on his research on Catholic Churches in Wenzhou, Zhejiang at a meeting of the US Catholic China Bureau. The paper discusses boss Christians and other trends and can be accessed online at <http://www.usccb.net/conference/conference20/ChristianCommunitiesChen.pdf>. He describes “boss Christians” as “young, well-educated, with a wide field of vision, capable of managing things and rich.” *Constructing China’s Jerusalem: Christians, Power, and Place in Contemporary Wenzhou* by the anthropologist Nanlai Cao focuses on similar trends in Wenzhou as well (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011). A number of reviews can be found online, such as <http://chinaperspectives.revues.org/5911> and <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/publications/constructing-chinas-jerusalem-christians-power-and-place-contemporary-wenzhou>. [—ed. note]
- 3 The author uses the terms *jianzhi jiaohui* 建制教会 and *fei jianzhi jiaohui* 非建制教会 to distinguish these two types of places of worship. The first, *jianzhi jiaohui*, literally institutional church, refers to registered and recognized churches, while the second *fei jianzhi jiaohui*, or non-institutional churches, refers to unregistered places of worship. This translation uses registered and unregistered to avoid confusion in English--ed.

some medium and large Chinese cities, especially those in coastal provinces, two groups of Christian believers are quietly on the rise: the previously mentioned intellectual elite and the “boss Christians” (what Western scholarship calls “city Christians”), indicating that the number of Christians with economic clout is rising. Though it is very difficult to gather statistics on this for Hangzhou Christianity, the indicators can be seen in several circumstances. One is that in downtown Hangzhou, large churches have been experiencing a rise in income for the calendar year. This is especially noticeable in the monthly donation statements for these churches. As long as they do not embark on any really major undertakings, these churches’ finances are not only sufficient to cover regular expenditure, but are healthy enough to show a surplus. The second is that in recent years, investment in “hardware,” that is, facilities and equipment, has been very visible in Hangzhou Christianity. Chengbei Church has undertaken reconstruction of its surrounding property, Chongyi Church has been completed, the renovations at Gulou (Drum Tower) Church have been finished, major repairs have been done at Tianshui Church and the second phase of construction at the Hangzhou Christian Nursing Home has begun, etc. All these are projects that required major funding for completion. Boss Christians have given considerable financial support to such “hardware” projects, especially in the construction of Chongyi Church. The Christians in this group generally have greater financial strength. They are a very important force in construction of hardware in Hangzhou Christianity, as well as for the development of its charitable enterprises. Finally, Hangzhou Christians have formed some “fellowships for business people.” These Christian business people use business-style methods to gather and discuss how to play a greater role in economic and social construction. There

are also some churches that had formed special meetings for Christian business people and Christian entrepreneurs,⁴ for training and sharing activities around Christian attitudes toward finances. In 2008, the Hangzhou CC / TSPM held its Sixth Forum on Theological Reconstruction on the theme “Strive to bring into play Christians’ role in economic and social construction and development.” A number of Christian entrepreneurs participated and also spoke to the theme of the forum. All this fully illustrates that Hangzhou Christianity today is already reflecting on a number of cutting-edge global topics. Of course there are prerequisites for such discussion. Moreover, the intellectual elite and the boss Christians generally have wider knowledge and experience, are more open-minded, have a broader capacity for action, and broader social contacts. These special characteristics play an important role in the construction and development of Hangzhou Christianity today.

4. *Christians continue to increase in the area around Hangzhou*

Increased numbers of rural people emigrating to the cities and the rapid pace of urbanization inevitably results not only in increased participation of people from elsewhere who now work in other professions and industries in Hangzhou, but makes itself felt in the course of development in Hangzhou’s Protestant churches as well. Of the 1,321 valid questionnaires returned, 273, or 20.67% indicated residence outside the city; moreover, along with the development of economic construction, the level of openness in the entire society is increasingly

4 For example, such meetings were organized by Chongyi Church during the global economic crisis with very good results.

greater and the number of “outsiders” among Hangzhou Christians is gradually increasing as well. This group of believers consists primarily of new arrivals in Hangzhou who have settled there for work; a young and middle-aged group who came to Hangzhou for education and settled there after graduation; people from outside who now reside in Hangzhou and have joined churches there, making up the core of those at youth meetings at some churches, and a large number of those who participate in the various ministries of Hangzhou Christianity (a large number of core lay volunteers). There is also quite a large number of parents who have joined the Christians there when their children venture to Hangzhou. Such Christians can be found in all the large churches. Also included are those who come to start businesses and migrant workers, who are usually to be found on the fringes of the urban area. Some churches and meeting points in Hangzhou have already shown concern for and launched pastoral work among believers who have moved to Hangzhou from elsewhere. For example on traditional holidays like Spring Festival and Mid-Autumn Festival, Sicheng Church and Gongcheng Church have special meetings, enabling these Christians from outside Hangzhou not to feel anxious or left out during holidays. They bring them the warmth of home. At the same time, believers with special skills to offer are encouraged to take part in caring for these special groups; for example, one Hangzhou Christian started a “Chongyi Clinic” just to serve migrant workers. The response was very good. Some other Christian entrepreneurs opened a school for migrants, or gave special condolence payments to migrant workers in difficulty, and so on.

There is an upward trend in private meeting points and unregistered churches.⁵

It is impossible to find in-depth information regarding the circumstances of unregistered churches in Hangzhou. The Hangzhou CC/TSPM has not done any investigation or study in this area, and in fact any attempt to study it meets with a great deal of difficulty. On the one hand, how can the Hangzhou CC/TSPM truly make contact with the unregistered churches? There are not enough opportunities or platforms to initiate sharing and dialogue at present. On the other hand, it may be that the unregistered churches retain some unusual ideas that block such an undertaking. Add to this the fact that the Hangzhou CC/TSPM currently lacks sufficient personnel and energy for the task and there is simply no way to undertake such a study.

5 In Part 1 of the survey, the author provides definitions of several terms used in his analysis: 1)“non-institutional church” 非建制教会 refers to those that have not registered with government authorities and do not have a government issued registration certificate as a religious worship venue. Frequently they have no set place to gather, with the church relocating according to the believers’ needs. They can set up a church anywhere and their work is not subject to government ministries’ referrals or filings. 2)“house church” 家庭聚会 is a traditional term. Today most scholars and the CCC/TSPM do not use the term, preferring “unregistered church” instead, meaning one that has not been approved or registered. 3)“privately run or established meeting points” 私设聚会点 refers to a situation in which a considerable number of believers with a convenor 主持人, hold a collective religious gathering at a set time in a place that has not been registered. Most people involved in such meeting points refer to them as “house churches.” Actually, the essential characteristic of such private meeting points is that they are unregistered, not that they are “house” churches. These privately run meeting points are often associated with self-styled preachers. These preachers’ antecedents, training, political background, education, religious attainments and personal qualities tend to vary widely.

As to understanding and analysis of private meeting points and unregistered churches, in this essay appropriate reflections can only be based on consideration of ideas and conditions, or on consulting the findings of others. For example, drawing on the analysis of conditions in unregistered meeting points in Shanghai by Shanghai scholar Zhang Hua 张化, we can make conjectures about conditions of unregistered meeting points in Hangzhou.⁶ Since Hangzhou and Shanghai are geographically close and there is frequent interaction between the two, Shanghai's situation can serve as a reference for that of Hangzhou. We may then appropriately undertake some simple analysis. For a more in-depth study, we would have to respect principles of academic norms and not make blind assertions. The rather rapid development of unregistered churches, including the distribution of Protestant meeting points, differs greatly from the traditional model.

Looking at the nation as a whole, the indications are that private meeting points or house churches and unregistered churches will continue to spread. In some areas, the number of people involved has already surpassed the number of Christians in churches with links to area CCC/TSPMs. This of course is not true in Hangzhou; furthermore, there are a considerable number of people who take part in meetings in both the registered and unregistered churches.

Analysis shows a variety of reasons why these private meeting points and unregistered churches are developing. The large numbers of people who follow where urban expansion leads and those who relocate to large-scale residential developments naturally includes Christians. They find it inconvenient to go to the downtown churches for services, so they form their own meeting points. Others

6 See www.pacilution.com/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=1972.

feel that they do not get “spiritual sustenance” in the big churches; they want “to be filled with spiritual food.” Still others feel they cannot be satisfied in the registered churches: the activities there are rather dull and provide very few opportunities to interact with others. Another complaint is that the quality of the professional clergy is too low; they cannot meet the daily-lengthening list of believers’ demands. At times dissatisfaction may be due to differing views, or the influence of past denominational association. There are cases with foreign background involved. The number of such people may not necessarily be large, but their influence on the church, their impact or even threat to it, is not small. Most of these are in the city center area, especially around university campuses, or near office buildings with a preponderance of young white-collar workers, or among foreign-funded enterprises.

The social contribution and positive function of Hangzhou Christianity cannot be ignored. There are a great many outstanding Hangzhou Protestants, including intellectuals, entrepreneurs and business people spread throughout society in businesses and industries, who already play a positive role. For example, during the aftermath of the May 12, 2008 earthquake in Wenchuan, Sichuan, the Hangzhou CC/TSPM immediately mobilized every church and meeting point to hold prayers and collect donations for the disaster victims. City churches contributed 5,000,000 RMB. Adding individual and Christian entrepreneurs’ donations would bring the total to over 10,000,000 RMB.

Analysis of the results of our questionnaires illustrates why this is the case. Question 25 asks: “Do you think the church should participate in social service?” In the 225 questionnaires received from evangelists, 211 respondents or 93.7%, answered yes. And in the forums held on survey

results,⁷ many Christians who spoke mentioned that the church should actively participate in projects to care for society. The fifth forum question was: “How can we bring into play and integrate all of the resources of Hangzhou Christianity to make a greater contribution to the whole society and to economic construction?” Some discussants said that we should actively mobilize the outstanding aspects of Christian ethics, thus witnessing to harmony for the whole society. Others said the most outstanding thing about Christianity was contained in the word “love”; with “love” the whole society would be stable, a necessity for social development. The whole society today—every sector—needs love, and the church has an enormous ability to contribute love to society. The church has an invisible effect and contribution in all aspects and a very important

7 In addition to the statistical analysis based on the survey, fourteen forums were held in Hangzhou churches to discuss the findings. Each church hosted two forums: one composed of lay believers and one composed of clergy and other church leaders. Each group of about ten persons included a team leader, a recorder and a discussion facilitator. The lay believers discussed the following questions: 1) What have been your experiences and feelings since becoming a Christian? 2) What are your suggestions and comments with regard to the management of the church/meeting point? 3) What do you think are the pressing issues at present in the development of Christianity in Hangzhou? Questions posed to the teams of clergy and leaders were 1) What have been your experiences and feelings since becoming a Christian? 2) What are your suggestions and comments with regard to the management of the church/meeting point? 3) What pastoral care management strategy should the church pursue in the midst of rapid urbanization? 4) What do you think are the pressing issues at present in the development of Christianity in Hangzhou? 5) How can the resources of Hangzhou Christianity be mobilized and integrated to make a greater contribution to social and economic construction? 6) How can the relationship among denominations be coordinated? 7) How can we improve our work with regard to the “unregistered” (house church, privately run meeting points and university student fellowships)? Or, what is our responsibility to the “unregistered” church? [—ed. note]

stabilizing effect on society. Some discussants felt that although from one angle it appeared that Christianity had not directly produced great economic benefit, in bringing into play its outstanding positive ethics, especially in the process of urbanization and building a harmonious society, it had much to offer. Even government and government offices that approve land for church buildings are indirectly making a contribution to social harmony. Some people felt that the history of Christianity showed its huge role in the economic development of an entire society, something that is especially clear in ideas about economic development and reasonable finances. In changing or adapting people's views of economics, in guiding people toward proper views of wealth, Christianity had made huge contributions; for example, in the Puritans' view of money,⁸ which continues even now to make an essential contribution to economic development and construction.

During the forum there was an extremely clear and strong call by some believers and leaders for engaging in the social welfare enterprise. This marks a change in awareness: previously many Christians held that faith was only a personal matter, but now an increasing number of people have come to realize that although personal existence and personal faith are private matters, they also have an important social aspect in interaction with others in society.

Hangzhou Christianity is constantly encouraging its believers to make their contribution to economic and social construction. Projects in which believers are already engaged include: organizing repeated visits by well-known doctors from large city hospitals to rural areas to give medical advice and hold clinics; organizing funds to

8 Most clearly expressed in John Wesley's famous three rules about money: Earn all you can; save all you can; give all you can.

build roads of “love” in minority townships; organizing several hundred believers from the city to take part in The Caring Foundation as messengers of love; joining with the Hangzhou YW/YMCA to hold “youth cares service centers” to develop activities to serve the people. Care extends to senior citizens as well: 130 senior citizens have already moved into the Hangzhou Christian Nursing Home (Phase 1) in Beicheng Village, Dingqiao Town, where they are receiving excellent care. The nursing home has been widely praised by the residents and their families, all sectors of society and government departments. To increase facilities at the nursing home, construction was begun on Phase 2 on March 30, 2009, with a plan to add 310 superior beds to increase capacity. The Hangzhou Christian Nursing Home makes a powerful contribution to the care of the elderly in Hangzhou.

In recent years, a number of books on Theological Reconstruction have come out of forums on the subject held by the Hangzhou CC/TSPM. Beijing Religious Culture Publisher has produced *A Life of Love* and *Witness to Love*, both of which contribute to a growing awareness of engagement in social and economic construction among Hangzhou Christians. These publications serve as beautiful witnesses. The Hangzhou city CC/TSPM (including district, city and county CC/TSPM), all exhort Christians to actively contribute to society. During the global and domestic financial crisis, Hangzhou Christianity became actively engaged, willingly bearing that hardship in common with society. This behavior fully reflects the modern demeanor of Hangzhou Christianity and is a phenomenon that should not be overlooked by the wider society.

Issues in Hangzhou Christianity

Though Hangzhou Christianity is enjoying smooth and natural development overall, the rather rapid pace of that development has naturally led to some problems. Moreover, these problems naturally become both opportunities and challenges for Protestant Christianity.

1. Sites for religious activity cannot meet ongoing demand

Though in recent years Christian circles in Hangzhou have constructed numerous new churches and renovated other sites, with the annual increase in baptisms each year throughout the churches and demands for even more venues brought about by continuing initiation of new work, the number of venues falls far short of ongoing need. That is to say, since the 1990s, the number of venues for meeting points has not kept pace with the growth in the number of Christians. Conditions in some districts are more egregious; for example the statistical figures provided by the Xiaoshan District Christian Council show 140,000 Christians, yet there has been no improvement to date in the longstanding situation regarding meeting point venues. As far as the eight districts of Hangzhou are concerned, there are 210,594 Christians, with at present 203 venues for worship and other activities. If these were evenly distributed, each meeting point would have to accommodate 1,037 Christians. However, the number of venues in the Hangzhou area that can accommodate over 1,000 Christians is miniscule. Overall, Christian venues are not as yet able to keep up with the growth in Christian numbers or with growth in existing activities. This problem was raised at some of the forums held in conjunction with this survey. Local Christians are numerous and meeting point venues always insufficient. Among the large churches

in the Hangzhou urban area there have been improvements in recent years. But Christians need to hold all sorts of activities, including worship every Sunday. Though most churches hold three services of worship on Sunday, they are always overcrowded. Many Christian activities cannot be held due to the limitations of venues or space.

Property rights for many Christian venues are unclear or not specifically defined and rights of use are uncertain. Protestant Christianity began to grow during the era of Reform and Opening Up, but without external funding the process of establishing a venue was generally subject to temporary lease or fixed lease, leased land or purchase of land (access to land) on which a simple structure was built, followed by construction of a regular church. When urban renewal brought large-scale construction projects, a thorny and inescapable crisis arose for these venues. As the integration of Hangzhou's urban and rural areas speeded up and population density and industry in suburban and urban areas underwent huge changes, the time came when Christian venues had to relocate. Though many meeting points had certificates of registration as religious venues, they did not know what to do when faced with demolition. Government departments in charge of religion and the Hangzhou CC/TSPM frequently racked their brains over this. There was no reasonable solution. Because property rights were unclear and obtaining an indemnification difficult, social contradictions were produced or exacerbated during the relocation process that affected Christian interests. Many churches for whom the process of obtaining the necessary three certificates (proof of building ownership certificate; proof of land use right certificate; title deed) had been reasonably near completion, were faced with a new difficulty and for a variety of reasons could not complete the process in a timely way. As a result, in Hangzhou, both in the urban

area and other city districts, only a tiny minority of venues were in possession of a complete set of proof of land use rights, proof of building ownership, and title deeds. If the prospect of relocation arises again in the future, Christian legal interests will once more face the possibility of inability to procure guarantees and Christianity's development needs will be stymied.

2. *The lack of trained Christian clergy and the nonstop growth of Christianity*

Looking at the overall development of Christianity in Hangzhou, it is clear that there is still a shortage of all sorts of trained personnel. Beginning with an analysis of the numbers, the eight Hangzhou districts have a total of 210,594 Christians and a total of 205 evangelists 传道人 (pastors 牧师, Teachers 教师, elders 长老,⁹ evangelists 传道人),¹⁰ making the ratio of evangelists to believers 1:1027. If we calculate on the basis of greater Hangzhou, with its 279,733 Christians, the certified number of evangelists in the first half of last year was 355; a ratio of one evangelist to every 788 believers. But whether we look at the figure for the eight urban districts or for greater Hangzhou, the burden of work and the pressures on evangelists are enormous in both. A heavy work burden easily leads to pressure and spiritual exhaustion. One very important reason for this is that there truly is a shortage of pastoral workers. Moreover full-time pastoral workers are unevenly distributed. Some churches and meeting points have a fairly large number of clergy and pastoral workers,

9 In some Chinese Christian traditions that do not have an ordained ministry, the position of Elder is comparable to that of pastor-ed.

10 This figure is that issued in the first half of 2008 by the Hangzhou CC/TSPM, its first certified figure. There were some evangelists who were not yet counted in this total of 205.

while some have not a single full-time clergy. The shortage of personnel is still a problem for Christian circles and a concern for the relevant government departments. Though since the 2003 Seventh Hangzhou Christian Conference, the transition to younger staff and the shift to a new generation of leadership has basically been completed, Hangzhou Christianity is still experiencing a shortage of young and middle-aged personnel.

It is not only numbers of personnel but the quality of personnel that is far from adequate. Quite a few seminary candidates have passed the university entrance exam and some see “pastor” as simply a kind of profession. We can expect them to mature quite rapidly with several years of seminary training and years of service in the church. But in terms of their shouldering responsibility, they still need to improve in the two areas of love for country and love for church, in social and cultural knowledge, in specialized Christian knowledge and even in their capacity to reflect on Theological Reconstruction. They need improvement in all these areas, the more so because the demands the churches themselves place on evangelists continue to rise. Evangelists’ responses to questions 23-30 reflect the fact that there are still inadequacies; for example: seven respondents to question 24 still feel that there is no need for administrative management; 19 respondents to question 26, 8.44% of 225 evangelists, still feel that the church need not consider diversifying its methods of evangelism; 6 respondents to question 28 still feel there is no need to undertake Theological Reconstruction. To some extent these responses also illustrate that Christian evangelists in Hangzhou need to continue to improve their quality in all areas.

Additionally, in all areas, the issue of evangelists’ lack of knowledge and experience needs to be addressed. The reasons for this situation lie in the fact that generally speaking most of the people Christian evangelists come

in contact with are also Christians; such encounters offer no occasion to learn something new. There is an urgent need for training and improvement in areas such as work procedures and norms and the ability to take action.

3. *There are also management issues within Christianity itself that need to be resolved*

There are also issues of management in Hangzhou Christianity that need strengthening and improvement. First, the traditional Christian view and phenomenon that Christianity itself does not require administrative management needs to change. The current survey reveals that of the 225 evangelists surveyed, 196 or 87.11%, felt that administrative management of Christianity was necessary; 7 respondents or 3.11% felt that it was not necessary; while 6 respondents or 2.67% did not know whether it was or not; 5 respondents or 2.22% felt that it did not matter; and 11 respondents or 4.89% left the question blank. From the records of the survey forum it can be seen that there were also a few who felt that administrative management within Christianity was unnecessary. Their concept of what this meant was quite shallow, their reasoning being that the manager of Christianity should be God. This view was especially prevalent among Christians from the Xiaoshan district. There were also some people who felt that changes in the management team and other sorts of procedures were unnecessary within the management of churches and meeting points, since Christians serve God their whole lives. Precisely because of this view it is widely true that the age of those in management is quite elevated in many churches and meeting points. In fact, management is a necessity in any profession and management within Christianity is no exception.

Second, there are no standard management procedures in Hangzhou Christianity: procedures for getting things done do not exist or are not known. Some places are still dominated by a single voice; some meetings in Christianity are useless, or meetings are held but decisions are not executed; thus there are the outward appurtenances of a meeting but no substance; in some places no one knows how to call a meeting. There are churches and meeting points where general meetings have been held, but nothing has been carried out according to the intention of the meeting, including having no way to implement procedures such as changes in legal persons or delaying until change is impossible.

Again, a rather thorny issue is the chaos in financial management. On the one hand, this is the result of having no sound financial system in place, such that management is carried out on the basis of finance-related laws and regulations; things like IOUs and multiple signatures for reimbursement are serious phenomena. On the other hand, many churches have not maintained a practice of doing audits for a long time; in fact, because financial management is in chaos, the books are not standardized and thus it is fundamentally very difficult to undertake an audit. The prevalence of erroneous views of financial management is fairly serious. Many leaders and important persons in churches feel that basically finances do not need to be audited. This is in fact one of the causes of the financial chaos within Christianity. In addition, many churches and meeting points do not have bank accounts: donations received are kept in someone's individual account. In terms of financial management, this is a huge no-no (and in fact is a violation of the law). There are too many loopholes and occasions for abuse. Actually such an approach to financial management is terribly insecure. Further, there are some churches and meeting points where

the level of those who take part in financial management is quite limited: they have no qualifications in financial management and have no idea of standard practices. There are even financial managers who have not grasped the most basic skills of financial management—writing checks, issuing receipts, etc.—and they do a great deal of damage.

4. *Different denominational traditions must find a path to coexistence*

Beginning in 1958, Chinese Christianity, including in Hangzhou, put into practice a united form of worship. Following the institution of united worship, the majority of Christian believers no longer insisted on features special to their original denominational affiliation, were no longer self-contained organizationally, did not carry on activities under the name of their former denominations, nor publish materials reflecting their denominational background. Furthermore, once the Hangzhou Gulou (Drumtower) Church reopened for worship in 1979, mutual respect in faith matters and the principle of seeking unity while reserving differences was maintained, in order to consolidate church unity and solidarity and appropriately satisfy different faith practices. Even today Seventh Day Adventists gather on Saturdays at Sicheng Church for their Rite of Humility. Seventh Day Adventists also ordain pastors, teachers and elders who hold to Seventh Day Adventist beliefs; the Seventh Day Adventist Wenxin Meeting Point also selects young believers to attend Zhejiang Seminary to pursue advanced studies and serve as back up for their clergy and pastoral workers. Out of respect for their special faith characteristics, Sabbath services are also arranged at the Gongchen Church for Hangzhou believers who formerly belonged to the True

Jesus Church; ways are found to arrange baptisms in the river. The Chengxiang Church in Xiaoshan district also arranges special meetings for Christians with different faith characteristics. These collective Christian activities for those from different denominational backgrounds are managed by the district Christian Council or by the Hangzhou City CC/TSPM. These groups manage their finances independently. When the Hangzhou Christian Conference meets, appropriate arrangements are made for participation by those leaders of different denominational backgrounds: some serve as committee members, others as members of the Standing Committee.

Overall, taking the situation in Hangzhou as a whole into account, it should be possible to resolve the issue of denominational traditions and coexistence among denominations fairly harmoniously. However, each of these denominations with different faith backgrounds has its own development needs, and over time, their demands increase. Another dimension of this that differences in dogma and teachings do exist among believers of different faith backgrounds, and these differences are to some extent fundamental to their nature. When these different believers gather in the same church, meeting point or venue it is impossible to avoid some unfortunate situations: denominations try to “steal” those of other denominational backgrounds, or unfriendly “debates” might arise. Because both sides want to emphasize their own faith characteristics and their “spiritualness,” and because they have tentative plans to buy land and build a church, or others have already privately opened meeting points elsewhere, gradual alienation from the CC/TSPM may result. We may add to the mix the Xiaoshan “guilds” and meeting places and other such churches of different backgrounds among which contradictions may

at times arise.¹¹ How to deal with the issue of Christians of different backgrounds in the church is a difficult issue facing the church today and one the Hangzhou CC/TSPM finds particularly hard. Government departments dealing with religion must pay attention to this issue.

Other issues which no one in Christian circles has yet touched on or devised ways to deal with include the unregistered churches, private meeting points and some rather diffuse Christian student fellowships. Specialized research remains to be done on these.

Hangzhou Christian Development Strategy

1. Continued improvement in hardware; reasonable distribution of Christian worship venues

Due to the rapid growth in the Christian population in Hangzhou, and because Christians are not equally distributed in districts and counties (municipalities), thought must be given to the need for appropriate additions to the number of venues for Christian worship. The rapid pace of urbanization makes this especially urgent. As needed additions are made to the number of worship venues, consideration should also be given to rational distribution of such venues and to increasing their size. Many churches want to initiate needed work but do not have sufficient space or venues. In addition to building up software, churches also need hardware facilities to carry

11 At present there are three groups among Christians in the Xiaoshan district: 1) *gonghui* 公会 or guild Christians. This refers to churches formed by Christians who had a distinct mission board background at the time united worship was instituted in 1958; this is their name for themselves, a special term particular to Xiaoshan district; 2) church Christians with a meeting point background; and 3) Seventh Day Adventists.

out their work, including worship space and office space. Without such a base, it will be very difficult to keep up with the increasing work. This is a major reason for the growth of private meeting points or unregistered churches. When increasing the number of venues, consideration should be given to factors such as achieving balanced distribution in the districts as well as the concentration of Christians in a particular place.

Hangzhou Christianity is also facing the need to resolve the three types of certification for buildings and property of some existing worship venues. This requires special care on the part of relevant government departments in taking into account the actual situation of Christianity in addressing their worries.

In this thorny issue of appropriate increase in the number of venues based on the current situation of Christianity, some conceptual adjustments must first take place among in-charge departments and relevant government departments. Although from one point of view, the development of Christianity and the increase in its venues does not seem to have directly produced huge economic benefits, by bringing into play its fine ethics and morals, Christianity can play its positive role, and indirectly make a great contribution to society. This includes in particular its stabilizing role. It thus has a great deal to contribute in creating a harmonious society during the process of urbanization. Even the government and government departments dealing with religion indirectly contribute to social harmony in approving land for Christian church construction.

To sum up, there is a need for specialized study and analysis before it is possible to consider the overall situation with regard to increasing the number of Christian worship venues in order to implement policy.

2. *The training of Christian personnel must be intensified to enable Christian work to proceed normally*

There is a dearth of full-time Christian evangelists in Hangzhou, and at the same time the quality of these evangelists stands in urgent need of improvement. Not only do some large churches need adequately trained people, even meeting points must consider attracting full-time Christian clergy to participate in management and church ministries.

To this end, the Hangzhou CC/TSPM should encourage each church and meeting points to train and attract personnel on the basis of their actual situations. The Hangzhou CC/TSPM should help these bodies to update their thinking in regard to the hiring of personnel in an appropriate and timely manner. Some churches and meeting points are not willing to train and hire people. They feel their church or meeting point has no need of full-time evangelists for church management or pastoral care. Of course the reasons for this are rather complicated. It may be that some lay volunteers (including lay persons in charge or lay leaders) are afraid that once these full-time clergy and pastoral workers are in, they will threaten these lay leaders' own position. Or it may be that they are not willing to pay these full-time evangelists' salaries, or that they are afraid the church cannot afford it, and so on. The Hangzhou CC/TSPM can assist churches and meeting points in these concerns by ensuring standards in training and hiring and in ensuring candidates' quality, availability and relatively long-term service to the church.

Religious affairs departments can consider setting up platforms and requirements for Christian training and hiring of personnel. For example, in introducing personnel from elsewhere in the country, assistance would be needed in change of residence procedures and so on.

There is also a need for increased management in hiring and using personnel; for example, when necessary this should be linked to the preacher/evangelist's attendance and performance. Otherwise, continued growth in full-time staff could create the common problem of "eating from the same big pot." Or the church might become unable to pay the living expenses of its full-time staff or fulfill their necessary social benefits. These are improvements that Hangzhou CC/TSPM and all Hangzhou district, county (municipal) CC/TSPMs should conscientiously consider and boldly undertake. They are also complex and important matters Christianity should reflect on in the course of its own institutional reforms.

In this day and age, the notion of a personnel shortage is much different from what it was twenty or thirty years ago. Then it was purely a matter of numbers. Today we have growth in numbers but still need all sorts of outstanding talent, individuals with specialized talents (for example, ministers of music and of literature, ministers engaged in Christian literature work, individuals with language talents—ability in English or other languages—clerical administration and logistical matters, etc., who are professional and versatile. Church personnel must raise their standards in a timely manner, for today's Christianity requires both all-round ability and professionalism.

The mere fact that talented persons are trained and on board does not mean all will be smooth sailing from hereon in. There is the matter of follow-up training and further study and improvement in order to improve quality in all areas. Only in this way can we adapt to the times and the needs of development. Christianity today needs high-quality individuals (quality Christian professionals with political quality, education, etc.) to be involved in management, church affairs and ministries who are able to meet the developmental needs of Christianity itself.

Only in this way can the church attract and unite Christian believers to work for harmony in both society and the church.

The Hangzhou CC/TSPM began establishing Christian training centers in 2003 and these have played an important role in training lay volunteers and lay leaders. This work must be maintained and strengthened and the quality of teaching improved to enable it to deliver more lay workers of a high quality to Hangzhou Christianity. This work must continue over the long-term, for it can to a certain extent offset the shortcomings of full-time evangelists.

Looking at this matter of training and hiring of personnel within the process of urbanization, we can also consider bringing in a considerable number of persons from other areas and provinces to take part in local Christian work and in this way we can attend to the needs of the floating population.

3. Management in the churches needs to be strengthened and standardized

The work of managing Christianity is a long-term work. At whatever level of government, the government department in charge and the Hangzhou CC/TSPM must give management more attention and create more platforms for guidance and training.

First of all, the work of managing Christianity must make timely conceptual adjustments. From the forum we learned that some Christians, even including a minority of full-time evangelists, still feel that Christianity does not require management. One can find this concretely reflected in the survey statistics. Every profession and sector in society needs administrative management. Christianity is part of the whole society and so naturally also requires this

type of management. The Hangzhou CC/TSPM should pay attention to improving the level and skill of church management, internally as well as throughout the churches.

At present the management of Christianity in downtown Hangzhou and the management work of the Hangzhou CC/TSPM is relatively more standardized, but in each district and county (city) management is relatively weaker. This is due to a shortage of office space, as well as a relatively small number of permanent staff. Office procedures are also relatively weak. Therefore, the task of managing Hangzhou Christianity in a situation where the number of Christians continues to rise is increasingly important.

In addition to improving its own overall quality, those involved in internal Christian management should study advanced management experience and knowledge in the broader society, including with regard to institutional construction, oversight mechanisms and so on. At the same time, the management of Christianity is not only a system question; making management humane must also be considered. Christianity should have a real pioneering and progressive spirit in management.

Standardization of procedures should be urged in managing Christian churches and meeting points. In financial management especially, national financial regulations should be put into operation. We must consider that Christianity is a part of society and thus its financial management needs to be standardized; it cannot use its special nature as a religious organization as an excuse not to implement necessary management and standards. At the same time the fact that Christianity is a religion must be considered: as a non-profit, a self-supporting body, it rates appropriate concern, and should get tax breaks and tax-free preferential treatment.

4. *Uniting and guiding groups with different denominational traditions and unregistered churches must be addressed*

Different denominational traditions and unregistered churches in Hangzhou require study and discussion by the Hangzhou CC/TSPM with the religious affairs administrative department to act as intermediary. Along with the deepening of political institutional reform in China, the government should transform its functions, primarily in accordance with public law and regulations, to carry out its management function; limits on government administrative action must be standardized. Moreover, it is necessary to continually improve democracy and transparency in these areas. The management of religious affairs is no exception. What religious management departments manage according to law are religious affairs that involve national interests and social public interests. Religious management departments and religious bodies are not in a subordinate administrative relationship; these departments cannot be involved in concrete affairs of Christian churches, but should allow religious bodies to carry out institutional management according to their charters.

A minority of meeting points of different denominational backgrounds have a certification of registration as a venue for religious worship on record with the religious affairs departments (such as the Seventh Day Adventists' Wenxin Meeting Point), while others have no such certificate on record (such as the Seventh Day Adventist group that meets on Saturday afternoons in the Sicheng Church and the True Jesus Church Christian Meeting Point that meets on Saturday afternoon in the Gongchen Church in Gongshu district, neither of which has its own recorded certificate of registration). First of

all, lack of a registration certificate gives the members of these meeting points the feeling that they are doing something slightly disreputable, that their name does not ring true. Such issues today should be appropriately discussed and studied: is there after all some kind of relatively rational management method that can be applied? Is it possible for the religious management departments to consider broadening their thinking on this issue of groups with different denominational traditions, so that there might be independent meeting sites based on need and denominational characteristics? Religious affairs departments need to research and strive for this. At the same time, prior to this step being taken, it is necessary for the CCC/TSPM to expand its inclusivity, further enhance its functions of organization, coordination, service, guidance, etc., in order to gradually strengthen its legitimate representativeness. Having different denominations meeting in one church is not necessarily in and of itself united worship. We should carefully consider that although different denominational traditions share the same faith, differences do after all exist in terms of tradition and certain dogmas and that adhering to these traditions and dogmas is often a matter of preserving the fundamentals of a denomination—otherwise it would cease to exist. In dealing with the different Christian denominations then, the departments in charge of religious work should begin with the reality and consider whether there should be independent meeting sites. This stance would be more conducive to coordination and respect among denominational traditions and to their common development. At the same time it would be a contribution to harmony in society.

The issue of unregistered churches or privately established meeting points is increasingly showing itself to be important and urgent. In recent years, the issue has

become a hot topic in academic circles in the sociology of religion. But until now it has been limited to calling for changes in awareness and including it as part of management; at present no good policy that can be put into operation has emerged. For a long time the existence of unregistered churches or privately run meeting points has been a fact, but there has not been any sort of oversight. This can never be a good way to manage things. The various levels of Christian Councils and TSPMs have hardly had any contact with the issue and it seems they do not dare to and cannot decide what on earth should be done. Management of these two, the unregistered churches and the privately run meeting points, would require a change in the management methods of religious affairs departments. Just who would manage this “vacancy” is a question that needs to be explored. Those “meeting points” that are willing to be included into the CCC/TSPM system could establish contact with the local churches, adopting the “church with attached meeting point” model. But it should be admitted that there are a considerable number of persons in privately run meeting points or unregistered churches who are unwilling to come under the “CCC/TSPM” system. There has to be another way for them.

For these unregistered churches and privately run meeting points, analysis and treatment can proceed on the basis of their concrete situations. Approval and registration can be considered for meeting points where conditions have matured, and they can be brought into the normal scope of management. It is also necessary for relevant government departments to strengthen everyone’s awareness of the laws and regulations. At the same time, thought must be given to this question: What in these meeting points requires management? The scope of management should include education for those in charge of the meeting point in laws, regulations

and policies and regulation of their behavior. The bottom line is compliance with the law. From the angle of maintaining social order, (religious) activities that obstruct social, production or everyday order must be prevented. Religions must be required to maintain good relations with those around them; when necessary administrative measures can be taken to stop obstructive behavior. With regard to social safety, political safety, fire safety, church safety, it is necessary to ensure the safety of the meeting points' buildings, along with fire and health precautions. The leader in charge must be responsible to prevent any incident that would endanger public safety. In matters of finance, a long perspective must be taken, undertaking guidance and reminders to manage and follow financial regulations and take preventive measures.

Conclusion

From the planning stages to research work, this survey and analysis of Christianity in Hangzhou was carried out very conscientiously. The study of the current situation of Christianity in Hangzhou, with its developmental trends and policies has an obvious special significance against the larger background of a period of social transition in the whole of China's political economy. The greatest effort went into this survey, from the questionnaire design, setting the forum questions and the training of survey staff, distribution and retrieval of the questionnaire, statistical summary and follow-up research work.

We hope this research truthfully reflects the real situation of Christianity in Hangzhou, that the future trends of development in Hangzhou Christianity can be seen in it, and that we were able to point out appropriate possible strategies. We also hope that it will be helpful to relevant

government departments and Hangzhou City Christian circles in their own research, both in prompting religious management departments and other social researchers to undertake special research in Christianity, and prompting Hangzhou City CC/TSPM to play a positive role in Christianity's own development. Hangzhou Christianity should actively reflect internally on how to improve their own work in these constantly changing times, including such questions as how to undertake pastoral care for the rapidly rising floating population formed during the urbanization process. Every leader in Hangzhou Christian circles has the responsibility and the obligation to vigorously promote the positive factors in Christian culture and encourage believers to work hard to study and grasp modern scientific cultural knowledge in order to make their proper contribution to raising the whole people's quality in these areas, developing the socialist cultural enterprise and building a harmonious society.

Due to specific difficulties and inadequacies in this study, and existing limitations on research into Christianity, separate research projects are needed on the study of issues concerning different denominations and specialized study of privately run meeting points and unregistered churches. We hope to attract others to the field through this survey and draw the attention of more scholars to the work of Hangzhou Christianity, including religious affairs departments, academic circles and Christian Councils and TSPMs at all levels, as well as all sectors of society.

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Establishing Christian Meeting Places: Facing the difficult issues

LI DONG

Since the implementation of the policy of Reform and Opening Up, the number of Christian meeting places has steadily increased. In addition to formal churches and worship sites established in accordance with national policies and laws, a large number of “privately established meeting places” have emerged. The term “privately established meeting places” refers to those believers establish privately to meet their own religious needs, without recourse to official registration.

To live a religious life, believers need to gather together to worship; thus the need for meeting places. The problem arises because according to the Regulations on Religious Affairs, the gathering of believers at places not legally registered and approved violates the provisions of the existing laws of the state. Such gathering places are illegitimate. Some say the easy solution would be for believers to go to approved churches. But the problem is not so simple. Continued use of privately established meeting places despite the repeated ban on such places indicates the complexity of the problem.

The situation in Chengdu, the provincial capital city of Sichuan province, and in other cities and counties, shows that “privately established meeting places” are widespread and that their existence has become a thorny issue for the government. Meanwhile, religious organizations also face problems in leading believers to act in a patriotic and law-abiding manner in this regard. Solving this problem in a manner that will facilitate social stability and harmony is a problem to which government

authorities, religious organizations and believers must give serious consideration.

1. Face up to existing problems

In Christian theological terms, “the church” is by nature “spiritual.” The word “church” does not necessarily refer to a physical entity or a building. The basic meaning of the Greek word for “church” is “a group of people called out.” The church also recognizes that a place where two or more believers gather constitutes a “church.” As to what name should be used—house gathering, house church, non-mainstream church—this is not the essence of the problem. The formerly used “underground churches” is derogatory. Because unlike legitimate churches, these meetings have no plaque on the door and their gatherings are not “open,” but are held in a relatively “secret” manner, they inevitably give rise to much speculation. But their existence is a basic fact. Once the state issued the “Regulations on Religious Affairs,” all unapproved gatherings are illegal, which implies that they should be shut down.

Following years of discussing the basic reasons for the existence of the so-called “privately established meeting places,” our findings can be summed up as follows:

- (1) The number of formally approved existing churches (meeting points) is insufficient to meet the needs of religious believers. In Chengdu, for example, there are only two churches in the urban area. According to statistics, there are about four million baptized believers in the urban area of Chengdu, but space for weekly worship is available for only about five or six thousand people. To accommodate believers’ needs

and avoid overcrowding, three services are scheduled each weekend. Urban life is increasingly spread out, and though some believers live in urban areas, many others live in the suburbs. In order to cut down on commuting time, these believers hope to establish churches (meeting points) relatively close to their homes.

- (2) Sectarian factors. There have been many sects throughout the history of the Church, with special emphasis on their own forms of worship. After the churches in China implemented united worship, they based their liturgy on that of the mainstream Protestant denominations. This made it difficult to satisfy believers from some sects with highly individual characteristics (such as the Seventh Day Adventists, the True Jesus Church, and the Christian Assembly [Little Flock]) and to integrate them into the liturgy of the mainstream churches. They have continued to fight for separate gatherings.
- (3) Dissatisfaction with sermons. As the saying goes, to each his own. In addition to the different “tastes” in liturgy resulting from denominational backgrounds, as believers’ educational level rises so do their expectations for the preacher’s message from the pulpit. If their expectations are not met, they would rather gather for mutual sharing on their own to meet their spiritual needs.
- (4) The preachers at legitimate churches (meeting points) are often of low quality, both in their beliefs and in their educational backgrounds. It may be that they do not run the church according to biblical teachings, so cliques and power struggles result and the preacher fails to take an exemplary role. The church’s failure to show the love it should has hurt some believers, such that they are unwilling to be involved in the legitimate church or participate in worship there.

- (5) Theological bias and even political hostility. Some people think that the Church should have no association at all with government or politics since the head of the Church is Jesus Christ. Only God's "approval" is needed to establish churches or meeting points, not the government's. The church should be separated from politics. Some people regard churches run according to the Three-Self principles as the "government-run" or "official" church. They allege that the "Three-Self Church" is not spiritual in nature and that those who worship in the "Three-Self Church" are not saved. Of course, we do not rule out the possibility that some of these critics establish so-called "house churches" for the purpose of opposing the government and the principle of "an independently run church."

Thanks to the increasingly relaxed social environment and the implementation of the party's policy of religious freedom since the beginning of the era of Reform and Opening Up, people now enjoy more freedom to choose their beliefs, including religious beliefs. The Regulations on Religious Affairs promulgated in 2005 contain the principle provisions guaranteeing citizens' religious freedom and maintaining religious harmony and social harmony.¹ These regulations have enhanced people's confidence in their freedom to make religious choices in today's socialist China. Believers are optimistic about their

1 Provisions in the Regulations on Religious Affairs: (I) Citizens enjoy freedom of religious belief. No organization or individual may compel citizens to believe or not to believe in religion; (II) Religious citizens, non-religious citizens, and citizens believing in different religions should respect each other and live in harmony, not discriminate each other, and not take any action of violating each other's dignity and interests.

future. But not all believers are in agreement about how their religious beliefs and sentiments should be expressed, nor about whether such matters should be bound by the laws of the state. Moreover, the establishment of China's legal system has been an ongoing, long-term process; likewise, people's legal awareness has also been evolving slowly. During this process, any number of things may interfere with the implementation of existing laws.

In the 1950s, Chinese Christians began to implement "united worship" within the context of their own national ethos and the denominationalism of the past was to some extent overcome. Moreover the years of Theological Reconstruction and experience of united worship has strengthened awareness. However, we have to realize that the Protestant tradition has always been one of sectarianism and the proliferation of denominations. We can see this in the independent practices of churches overseas. After the Reform and Opening Up, contact between Chinese churches and overseas churches increased and denominationalism re-emerged, seriously affecting efforts at unified worship. Considering all this, we know that there is still a long way to go to complete unification under the banner of "One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, One God." The key lies in the way in which we face with this situation and the measures with which we resolve the problem properly under the guidance of the principles of law.

2. *New Concept; New Perspective*

The Regulations on Religious Affairs were officially promulgated and implemented. Both churches and government departments were pleased with the introduction of the Regulations. For many years, the church too has been pondering how to run the church

better within our given national situation, and how, through increased engagement in social services, in serving the overall national development goals, and contributing to the building of “two civilizations,” more people may come to understand and accept the Protestant Church.

The article “Socialist Religious Theory” published in the journal *Seeking Truth* 求是 in 2003 stated that, “Comrade Jiang Zemin has pointed out that ‘There are more than one hundred million believers of various religions in China. They are also a positive force in building socialism with Chinese characteristics. Proper handling of religious affairs helps to improve the close ties between the Party and the masses.’”² Jiang’s remarks can be described as a “new perspective.” Identifying with this “positive force” and an approach based on “close ties” may guide us in the way we treat believers outside the legitimate church and deal with the issue of “privately established meeting places.” From a practical point of view, making simple judgments or taking arbitrary measures can only exacerbate the contradictions rather than facilitate unity among religious believers, the implementation of the party’s policy of religious freedom, or the building of a harmonious society. We should maximize unity with all those willing to join with us and bring them into present efforts in support of national development. This is a formidable task facing both government departments and religious organizations in handling the issue of “privately established gathering places.”

We should be policy-sensitive when handling religious issues and dealing with religious believers. Dealing properly with religious issues also means dealing properly with the mass of believers. When observing and dealing

2 Qiu Shi秋石, 社会主义的宗教论 [The Socialist Theory of Religion], 求是 9 (2003): 20-21.

with religious issues, proletarian revolutionary leaders put great emphasis on making right policies to ally with religious believers. Mao Zedong 毛泽东 said, “There are so many believers in the masses. As we are working on affairs relevant to the masses, we should not fail to understand the religions.”³ When dealing with the believers gathering at privately established churches or sites, we should be very careful in taking proper methods and measures. Religious harmony is relevant to social harmony. Therefore, we have much to do.

We know that many believers gathering at “privately established gatherings” hope that their gathering sites will become aboveground ones with legal standing. We are all aware that the Regulations enable us to run the church in a rule-based and law-abiding manner. Meanwhile, the Regulations empower the church to protect its own legal rights and interests. Many meeting places that have not been approved are eager to get governmental approval in order to lead a normal religious life with “legitimate” standing. We need to consider how to guide them from an “underground” position to an “aboveground” one and thus turn “negative” forces to “positive” forces.

For churches with legal standing, caring for “privately established gathering places” and the religious life of believers who gather there is very natural; is, indeed, necessary. Generally, we regard believers outside the legitimate church as our brothers and sisters. If our brothers and sisters are in trouble, our hearts will be troubled. A church has its own religious doctrines. Is the situation at “privately established gathering places” in line with the religious doctrines? Is what is preached there in compliance with biblical truth? These are considerations that relate to the Church’s reputation.

3 Ibid.

Religious organizations have a bounden duty to maintain the reputation of the Church.

Under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, our people's standard of living improves daily. Religious believers are aware of this and enjoy the improvement. Our hopes for our country and for better, happier lives are inseparable from our support of the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party. The majority of believers and clergy believe that "Faith differences between religious and non-religious people are minor when compared with the consistency of their fundamental political and economic interests under the historical conditions of China's socialism."⁴ We do not see ourselves as "special citizens." Over the years, educational efforts at adapting religions to the context of socialist society have enabled believers to come to an in-depth understanding of the Christian concepts of glorifying God, serving as light and salt, and being active contributors to socialist economic construction. We believe that there is a close relationship between the prosperity of the country and the prosperity of the Church. We are conscious of supporting the leadership of the Communist Party of China and socialist society.

At the same time, in casting off the shackles of the old theology, we eliminated the influence of political disagreement due to different beliefs caused by the old theology. We are closer to the contemporary era and society. Consciously integrated into society, we adapt ourselves to socialism and make the church socially acceptable. We should maximize our unity with all like-minded groups and together engage in the core efforts of current national development. When handling the issue of "privately established gathering places," both government

4 Qiu Shi, "Socialist Religious Theory."

departments and religious organizations should follow these guidelines.

3. *Make a common effort to standardize management in accordance with the Regulations*

According to the provisions of the Regulations, a religious site should be application ready before applying for legal status.

“A religious body may begin the preparatory work for establishing a site for religious activities only after the application for such establishment is approved.”

Article 14 A site for religious activities to be established shall meet the following conditions:

- (1) “Religious organizations, sites for religious activities and religious citizens shall abide by the Constitution, laws and regulations and safeguard national unity, ethnic unity and social stability.” This provision emphasizes and highlights the supremacy of national interests. It is a rigid, directional and fundamental provision. Words and deeds of religious believers, as well as establishment of churches and sites, should not deviate from this fundamental.
- (2) Local religious citizens have a need to frequently carry out collective religious activities; this is a consideration of the actual needs of believers. At present, most privately established gathering sites are located within or near the areas where believers live. The availability of gathering sites will be conducive to the normalization of their religious life.
- (3) There are religious personnel or other persons who are qualified under the prescriptions of the religion concerned to preside over the religious activities. This is a consideration of site organization and regulation.

- Religious organizations should be more concerned about this issue. In our view, religious personnel qualified to officiate at religious activities should have at least received a formal theological education. It is reported that a mixture of qualified and unqualified people officiates at religious activities at “privately established gathering places.” This damages the image of the church.
- (4) “There are the necessary funds.” This touches on basic material conditions for maintaining a site. The decision as to what the “necessary funds” are is flexible. We have discussed other qualifications listed in the application, including a church’s grade, size and availability of funds. But we failed to come to an agreement. However, this provision indicates that the party and the government have fully considered the material conditions necessary to sustain a religious place. Churches and sites without legitimate status may be unable to open a bank account. The lack of a legitimate status may cause problems in regulatory management, at least in management of finances. In this case, the Financial Supervision and Management Measures for Sites for Religious Activities (Trial version)⁵ issued by the State Administration for Religious Affairs in 2010 is not executable.
- (5) It is rationally located without interfering with the normal production and livelihood of the neighboring units and residents. This relates to social harmony and stability, which is a hope of the churches. A church without harmonious relations with its neighbors, fails to witness everywhere to the glory of God, and cares only for its own interests rather sharing love with others. Such a church would not be regarded as a good church.

5 See 中国宗教 (Chinese Religions) 1(2010): 11-14.

Following the Regulations on Religious Affairs promulgated by the State Administration for Religious Affairs (March 1 2005), the Decision on Amending the Regulations on Religious Affairs Management in Sichuan⁶ was promulgated by the Bureau of Religious Affairs of Sichuan Province in November 2006. Based on the Regulations on Religious Affairs Management in Sichuan issued in May 2000, it is a targeted policy-oriented legal document more relevant to the actual situation of Sichuan Province. The Regulations should be used as the yardstick to standardize management. To standardize means to play by the rules.

In Chengdu, the capital city of Sichuan province, there are 27 formal gathering sites for religious occasions. These sites currently exist under the name “contact points.” We regard these as “meeting points led by churches,” which clarifies their relationship with the Protestant Christian Three-Self Patriotic Movement Committee of Chengdu City. In cities and counties of Sichuan province, the pattern of “worship gatherings attached to churches” is adopted largely to reflect the guidance to subordinate gatherings given by the formal legitimate churches (mostly located in the cities or county seats), ensuring that these gatherings will stay on track, confirm the direction for running churches, fulfill religious doctrine, preach the pure gospel, and implement standardized management.

More importantly, we should take the initiative to empower qualified meeting places with legal status. We should also be concerned with unqualified places, guiding them to become qualified for legal status.

6 宗教工作相关的法律法规及政策读本 [Reader on the laws, regulations and policies regarding religious work], Religious Affairs Bureau of the Sichuan People’s Government, Policy and Regulations Office, June, 2008, 63-71.

When facing the problem squarely, we may take the following measures: positive guidance, active persuasion, and strengthened management. We should make more research efforts, sum up experiences, make detailed analyses, and progress gradually. We should not let matters slide or turn a blind eye to the situation. Religious organizations should also take the initiative to participate. Bad past practices die hard and will pose a dilemma for governance. We should avoid this situation.

On July 1, 2004, the Administrative Licensing Law of the People's Republic of China was officially implemented. This law brought both opportunities and challenges to the two players in the religious sector.⁷ The law requires that we should apply for an administrative license under existing laws and regulations. The implementation of administrative licensing aims to protect the legitimate rights and interests of citizens, legal persons and other organizations, safeguard public interests and social order, and ensure effective implementation of administrative management. The establishment of a new church should be approved according to applicable legal provisions, namely, the Regulations. The government should follow the Regulations to decide if an administrative license is applicable to a church or site and the two players should contribute their efforts as well.

4. *Being people-oriented*

Laws currently in effect, including the Regulations on Religious Affairs and the Administrative Licensing Law, are fully people-oriented. Governing for the people,

7 《许可法》带给宗教工作的挑战与机遇 [Challenges and opportunities for religious work posed by the Administrative Licensing Law], 中国宗教 [Chinese Religions] 6 (2004):18.

mobilizing all positive factors that can be mobilized, and turning negative factors into positive ones will guide the masses of the people toward the common goal set by the Party.

“Management is a process of interaction and coordination between the administrators and the administrated.”⁸ “In the process of implementing the Regulations, we should properly integrate the so-called rigidity of laws and flexibility of policies. Religious issues feature a special complexity. Some should be handled by legal means or policy means while the others should be handled by both legal and policy means.”⁹

Sometimes it's difficult to find a solution that balances law, emotion and reason. That is to say, illegal things may sometimes be emotionally reasonable. In such a situation, we should use patience, love and care in finding a legally and emotionally reasonable solution according to applicable policies, laws and regulations. In some areas in Chengdu, some sites have not been formally recognized due to certain reasons. Considering the fact that these orderly gatherings of believers exist, the local authority takes an acquiescence attitude. It is a people-oriented approach. However, acquiescence does not make a permanent solution. On the one hand, we see the faith needs of local religious believers. On the other hand the establishment of new churches and sites should be in compliance with the existing laws of the state. We need a positive and viable solution.

To solve these problems, we should first squarely face the issues; see the contradictions in a positive manner

8 Zhou Ping 周平，贯彻《行政许可》，树立管理新观念，中国宗教 [Chinese Religions] 6 (2004): 22.

9 Chen Zongrong 陈宗荣，一个新的挑战和考验 [New Challenge and Test], 中国宗教 [Chinese Religions] 1 (2005): 20.

rather than avoiding problems and contradictions. Then, following analysis, we may find the solution. This is the right way to proceed.

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On the Reconstruction of Theological Thinking¹

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The reconstruction of theological thinking has been, for more than a decade, is now, and will continue to be a ministry of the utmost importance for the Chinese Church. It is a systematic project. It is not something that a single person can clarify, or explain satisfactorily. The subject warrants teamwork, warrants our thinking together. Therefore, an important issue for this workshop will be investigating together how the Chinese Church can go further in promoting this important ministry, now and in the future.

The Formal Proposal of Theological Reconstruction at the “Jinan Conference”

1. Background to the “Jinan Conference”

The Shandong CC/TSPM held a general meeting September 6-8 1998 to elect a younger leadership team for the two organizations. At the time the Rev. Su Deci 蘇德慈 was serving concurrently as vice-president of the national CCC and secretary-general, and attended the Shandong general meeting as representative of the two national organizations. For the past ten years, the Chinese Church and its CC/TSPMs were involved in a change of leadership from an older generation to the new. At that meeting, the Shandong CC/TSPM was the first to take the step of changing to a more youthful leadership. Therefore,

1 Talk at a seminar for leaders at the provincial, municipal and regional levels of CCC/TSPM.

the national CCC/TSPM decided to hold the Second Meeting of the Sixth Joint Standing Committee in the city of Jinan in Shandong province, from November 19-23 1998. Bishop K.H. Ting gave an important speech on the theme of “the gradual nature of revelation.” The full title of his talk was “God’s revelation in the Bible happens, not all at once, but gradually; our knowledge of God’s revelation is also gradual, increasing step by step.” (“God’s Self-Revelation in the Bible and Our Slowness in Grasping It.” *Chinese Theological Review*:14). It was at this meeting that the Resolution on Strengthening the Reconstruction of Chinese Theological Thinking was passed, signaling the formal commencement of Theological Reconstruction.

2 *Background of the Proposal for Theological Reconstruction*

The 1998 “Jinan Conference” marked the formal proposal and inauguration of Theological Reconstruction, which had been advocated by Bishop Ting and actively endorsed and supported by pastoral workers. Actually, prior to 1998, Bishop Ting had already raised the idea of Theological Reconstruction and had already been pondering the matter. In 1988, in his remarks at the installation service for Bishops Sun Yanli 孙彦理 and Shen Yifan 沈以藩, Bishop Ting said he hoped the new bishops would be able to serve well in four areas. The first was “Theological Reconstruction.”

In March 1994, the Ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) held a workshop in Hainan on the subject of “the Mutual Adaptation between Religion and Socialism,” at which Bishop Ting gave a very important speech, the revised title of which was “How does Christianity need to improve itself?” In this speech, Bishop

Ting spoke to three aspects, the first of which was (and this was the longest and weightiest portion of his speech) on fine-tuning Theological Reconstruction.

In the 1950s, the Chinese Church saw the “Theological Mass Movement” or “theological reflection by the masses.” Following the establishment of new China in 1949, the Chinese Church, through the Three-Self Patriotic Movement, became an independent, self-run church in 1950. Faced with a new state authority, a new context, and a new era, many pastoral coworkers in the church began to undertake a new reflection and discussion on issues such as whether the material world was evil; what the Christian attitude to the world should be, what relationship Christians should have with secular people (i.e. the relationship between believers and nonbelievers), and so on. Unfortunately, after 1957, “leftist” thinking rose across the country, followed by the Cultural Revolution, and this theological reflection and discussion was cut short.

After the Cultural Revolution, in the 1980s, the entire Chinese Church was occupied with recovery and rebuilding, and could not attend to theological reflection. But by the 1990s, with the State proposal to “guide the mutual adaptation of religion and socialism,” renewed reflection on theological thinking was on the agenda for Chinese Christianity.

In 1991, the Party Central Committee and the State Council formulated and issued the “Notice on some issues in moving a step forward in handling religious work well” (Central communiqué number 6, 1991). The document proposed: “Mobilize the whole Party, every level of government and all sectors of society to move a step forward in stressing, being concerned about, and doing religious work well, to enable the mutual adaptation of religion and socialist society.” In 1993, at the national work conference of the United Front, Comrade Jiang

Zemin江泽民, then Party and State leader, made his three famous statements on religious work: 1) Thoroughly implement the Party's policy of freedom of religious belief; 2) Strengthen management of religious affairs in accordance with law; and 3) Actively guide the mutual adaptation of religion and socialist society. And he said, "thorough implementation of the Party's policy of religious freedom and strengthening the management of religion in accordance with law, both have as their goal to guide the mutual adaptation of religion and socialist society."

From "religion as opium" to "adaptation" and on to "playing a positive role" (Work Report of the 17th Party Congress)—the understanding of religion on the part of academia, including the Party and government, has undergone a continual process of development.

Why Propose the Reconstruction (Adjustment) of Theological Thinking?

In the Chinese Church, particularly in the bulk of churches at the grassroots, there do indeed exist quite a number of theological ideas that have not adjusted to the times or to society and that are also not in line with biblical teaching.

Incorrect faith ideas and theological viewpoints take Christians and churches onto the path of error. The goal of Theological Reconstruction is to adjust these incorrect views and establish correct theological thinking and thus guide Christians' practice of their faith and lead the development of the church according to correct theological theory.

As Bishop K.H. Ting said, "The reconstruction of theological thinking (adjustment)" is not a discovery of the Chinese Church." With the premise that basic faith does not change, Christian theological thinking is always

continually developing along with changing times and always adjusting to the changes that take place in the context where the church is situated. For two thousand years, the history of the church's development has been the history of the ongoing adjustment of the church to its context. Thus Engels once called Christianity a religion that “adapts to its times,” and this “religious adaptability” includes its ongoing and unceasing development and changes in religious thinking.

Theological Reconstruction accords with biblical teaching and the historical tradition of the development of theological thinking

When Theological Reconstruction was first initiated, and even today, there are some who do not entirely understand this ministry, who even misunderstand it, and who see it as yet another “[political] movement” within the church, one that does not accord with biblical teaching, nor with the historical tradition of theological development. Today there is a team of young co-workers who promote Theological Reconstruction. Theological Reconstruction is in accord with biblical teaching and is in line with the historical tradition of theological development. Bishop Ting also spoke of these issues when Theological Reconstruction was initiated.

In being bold enough to adjust and change former incorrect theological ideas, traditions, even commandments, our Lord Jesus left us an excellent example. He often said things like: “You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times..., But I say to you...” (Matthew 5 :21-22). “... said to those of ancient times” includes Jewish tradition, Old Testament law, etc. According to the Law of Moses, to Old Testament tradition, when Jesus and his disciples did all kinds of

things they were not supposed to do on the Sabbath, they should have stood accused of being unlawful, but Jesus said, “The Sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the Sabbath” (Mark 2:27).

The essence of Theological Reconstruction is the indigenization of the church and the contextualization of theology. To better spread the gospel, so that people may more willingly and more easily understand and accept the gospel, we must take our present environment into account. Paul said, “I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some” (1Corinthians 9:19). When Paul had been called to spread the gospel and establish the church among the Gentiles, he paid careful attention to this point. For example, when he met Jews among the Gentiles, he began by speaking of Jewish history, belief traditions, and the predictions of Old Testament prophets; when he met Gentiles in Athens who were familiar with Greek philosophy, he would begin with the Greek philosophical ideas they knew best, even quoting their own poets to them (Acts 17: 16-31).

Acts 15 records an important meeting that took place in Jerusalem in 49 CE—the Council at Jerusalem—this has come to be called the first Council of the Church. The Council discussed an important matter: whether Gentiles who accepted the gospel and became Christians had to be circumcised. According to the Law of Moses and Old Testament traditions, circumcision was an extremely important matter for those who wished to be part of God’s chosen. But in the end the Council decided that Gentiles who converted to Christianity need not be circumcised, a highly significant decision. For many people at the time, including some disciples, circumcision was an extremely important matter of principle, how could it not be observed? We say there are some principles that are decided as the situation dictates; when faced with a new

situation, faced with a proper need, some principles should be adjusted and revised. Otherwise, we fall into the errors of a rigid, narrow legalism like the Pharisees did, and this will affect our ministry and our development.

In order to target certain issues and circumstances that existed in the church at the time, especially issues touching on Jewish tradition and the law of Moses, Paul advocated the importance of “faith,” as described in Romans and in Galatians. Human salvation relies on the grace of God through acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. We know, from the Bible, that this is an important revision to former ideas about faith.

In the sixteenth century, reformation slogans were directed against some incorrect theological and faith views in the Church (Roman Catholic), such as the selling of indulgences (“As soon as the coin in the coffer rings, the soul from purgatory springs”), and so on, Martin Luther advocated justification by faith and the priesthood of all believers (“We are all priests as long as we are Christians”).

Over the past two thousand years, a correct view of Christian theology and Christian faith was continuously developing out of a struggle with and revision of incorrect theological views and incorrect ideas of faith. When some concepts of faith or theological views were found to be in error and not conducive to the effective spreading of the gospel, or to the normal, healthy development of the church, these concepts had to be adjusted and corrected.

It is the same in the Chinese Church. In the past, even today, issues exist within some theological views and some concepts in the church, such as: how to view the material world, how to view suffering, the relationship between belief and unbelief, the relationship between the church and the state and society, that some people stress a verbal claim of faith but do not consider the

practice of or witness to faith, etc. If these issues are not resolved, then faith, in the context of China today, cannot be well proselytized, and the Church in these times will not develop well. Our discussion thus far shows us that Theological Reconstruction does not transgress biblical teaching or the historical traditions of the development of theological thinking, but rather reveals to us the necessity and importance of Theological Reconstruction.

The Goal of Theological Reconstruction

The goal of Theological Reconstruction is to adjust and correct incorrect faith concepts and incorrect theological views. In the context of China, explaining the basic faith of Christianity and promoting the Christian ethical and moral code using language accessible to people today in a manner that is easily understood and accepted benefits us in better preaching the gospel, in guiding Christians to lead active healthy faith lives, and in enabling Christianity to adapt better to socialist society according to the three-self principles, and in doing a better job of building up the Chinese Church.

Principles for undertaking Theological Reconstruction

When Theological Reconstruction was first initiated, we already knew that there were some principles to be aware of.

1. Distinguish basic Christian faith from theological views or thinking

At the time, as soon as some coworkers heard that Theological Reconstruction was to be strengthened, that adjustment of theological thinking would be undertaken,

they were worried that this would affect or change our basic faith. So first of all, we must make it clear that there is a difference between our basic faith and theological thinking and theological views. What is codified in the Apostle's Creed and the Nicene Creed is our basic Christian faith—the Trinity, the Incarnation, Christ's death for all on the cross, Christ's resurrection from the dead on the third day, etc., constitute our basic faith and cannot be changed. Theological thinking and theological views, however, undergo continuous change, adjustment, and renewal along with changing times. As Bishop Ting said, "We Christians should regularly and unceasingly undertake theological reflection. When we do, we are not reflecting in a vacuum; we are thinking while bumping up against the reality of our context. Experiencing these "collisions" with our reality, our theological views are being continually challenged, and thus are continually being corrected, improved, and renewed" ("On Theological Reconstruction").

Bishop Ting also said, "The purpose of Theological Reconstruction is to protect basic Christian faith; it is in no way to attack or change basic faith. Through Theological Reconstruction, our basic faith gains a more reasoned explanation, which enables believers to have a better understanding and confidence in their own basic faith, and enables friends outside the church to be more open to hearing the gospel message. Thus, first of all we must not fear Theological Reconstruction, rather we should heartily welcome it as a great good thing" ("On Theological Reconstruction").

2. *Theological Reconstruction begins and ends with guiding the mutual adaptation of Christianity and socialist society*

Bishop Ting : “Theological Reconstruction is not simply the mutual adaptation between theological thinking and socialist society.” The then Director of the Central United Front Department Wang Zhaoguo 王兆国, speaking at the 50th anniversary celebration of the Three-Self Patriotic Association, said, “Strengthening Christian Theological Reconstruction, actively guiding the mutual adaptation of Christianity and socialist society is both a demand of the times and a requisite for the self-development of Chinese Christianity” (*zhuanji* 专辑, 7).

Ye Xiaowen 叶小文, Director of the Religious Affairs Bureau (now SARA) also said, “Whether it is able to promote the mutual adaptation of Christianity and socialist society, is one standard of measurement of Theological Reconstruction.” (*zhuanji* 专辑, 49).

Theological Reconstruction must base itself upon the Bible, absorb the essence of church tradition, integrate these with Chinese culture, and thus undertake reasoned reflection on the experience of the Chinese Church following the three-self path, explaining Christian faith and norms in language modern people can understand, leading people to an accurate knowledge of God, and a positive attitude towards life. Only in this way can the Three-Self Patriotic Association be enabled to achieve consolidation, development, and depth, only then enable Chinese Christianity to better adapt to socialist society.

3. *There must be mutual respect without meaningless arguments*

In undertaking Theological Reconstruction, we must mobilize all positive factors and encourage more people to be involved. The purpose of Theological Reconstruction is to enliven theological thinking, and this requires a more relaxed and open environment and atmosphere. In

order to achieve mutual respect, we must not toss around unfounded allegations, or stoop to meaningless arguments. We cannot make argument our focus now, we must not provide opportunities to hostile forces outside, and we must focus on internal church unity.

We must conscientiously listen to differing views. As long as these are helpful for adapting to socialist society, to building the church, all should be conscientiously considered and discussed. Only in this way, can the process be beneficial to Chinese Christian Theological Reconstruction.

4 *Theological Reconstruction is a long-term task, thus there must be planning and step by step progress*

Theological Reconstruction is both urgent and long-term. Considering the long-term, there must be planning. Concrete steps should be part of this overall planning. Moreover, the purpose of concrete steps is to reflect and ultimately to achieve the overall plan. How to combine urgency and the long-term in an organic way to advance Theological Reconstruction through planning and concrete steps requires further reflection and discussion on our part.

5 *Theological Reconstruction must combine both the theoretical and the practical*

Theological Reconstruction must have a high level of the theoretical but cannot distance itself from the practical. This is what we refer to as eyes lifted but hands engaged. Theology is both theoretical and practical; otherwise theology becomes a kind of empty, bookish, increasingly mysterious project. Like the Middle Ages research and debate over how many angels could dance on the head of a pin, nothing could come of it, and even if it had, it would

have had no practical significance.

Theological Reconstruction in the Chinese Church must, with a grasp of the correct orientation as its foundation, begin with the practical issues that involve and concern and are facing the majority of believers in the grassroots churches and the majority of clergy and pastoral workers. From this starting point, it must undertake theological reflection, raise it to the level of theory and then turn it about to better guide church practice, enabling the Chinese Church to better build itself up in wisdom and stature.

A brief retrospective of a dozen years of Theological Reconstruction

(based in part on Rev. Chen Zemin's "Theological Reconstruction: Retrospect and Prospect" (*Nanjing Theological Review*, 4 (2008): 4-10).

1. At the Sixth National Chinese Christian Conference in Beijing in late 1996, Bishop K.H. Ting stepped down as president of the China Christian Council and as chair of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement Committee. He also gave a speech, in which he mentioned a hope he had—that there would be new developments in Christian thinking. The "Work Report" for this meeting had put forward the following: "In order to run the church well, theological education and theological reconstruction must be strengthened."
2. September 1998. Publication of *The Writings of K.H. Ting*, was highly significant for the promotion of Theological Reconstruction.
3. November 10-12 1998. A meeting was held in the Xinde Building in Nanjing to prepare for the Second

Meeting of the Sixth Joint Standing Committees. November 19-23 1998. The Second Meeting was held in Jinan, Shandong province, afterwards referred to as the “Jinan Meeting.” At this meeting the “Resolution on Strengthening Chinese Christian Theological Reconstruction” was passed. This served as the formal beginning of Theological Reconstruction.

4. November 25 1998. Book launch for *The Writings of K.H. Ting* held in the auditorium of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) in Beijing. Zhao Puchu 赵朴初 of the Buddhist Association, and other scholars from academic and religious circles attended. At this book launch, Chinese Christian Theological Reconstruction was also introduced, thus garnering the attention of the leaders and scholars in attendance. But at the time, it had not yet attracted wide attention in the church itself.
5. July 26-31 1999. Qingpu Meeting, Shanghai. (note: “Seminar on *The Writings of K.H. Ting* and *Theology*”), hosted by Nanjing Union Theological Seminary (NJUTS). Coworkers from churches and theological schools around the country attended by invitation.
6. October 20-24 1999. Huangshan Meeting: “Forum on Self-strengthening of the National CCC/TSPM.” Attended by over forty clergy and pastoral workers, discussing *The Writings of K.H. Ting* and Chinese Christian Theological Reconstruction, in preparation for initiating Theological Reconstruction.
7. December 6-12 1999. “CCC/TSPM General Conference” held in the Guangda Hotel (the Guangda Meeting), at which a “theological reconstruction promotion group” with direct responsibility and leadership was set up with Bishop Ting as group

- head. The group's first meeting was held in Nanjing in January 2000.
8. August 7-12 2000. Seminar on how to view the Bible held in Qingdao, Shandong province. Including Bishop Ting, thirty-four church leaders spoke at the seminar. The theme was well chosen and it was a very good beginning. The first book of papers on Theological Reconstruction was published following this seminar. But as we know, issues around how to view the Bible, how to read and interpret it correctly, cannot be entirely resolved through a single seminar. The seminar reminded us of the importance of this theological issue.
 9. September 23 2000. Celebration for the 50th anniversary of the TSPM held in Beijing. The "Summing Up of Fifty Years of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement" noted: "TSPM is an important initiative in the mutual adaptation of Chinese Christianity and new China. In order to truly achieve this mutual adaptation, we must launch Theological Reconstruction." It added, "Theological Reconstruction must be fully promoted."
 10. June 6-7 2001. The first "Shanghai-Jiangsu Forum on Theological Reconstruction," held in Shanghai (the first such jointly sponsored), with over 150 participants. The aim was mutual exchange and sharing, exploration and mutual promotion.
 11. October 9 2001. Chinese Christian Forum to promote Theological Reconstruction held in Nanjing at the Xinde Building. The meeting raised the point that doing Theological Reconstruction differed from western theological reflection. It had to be combined with Chinese cultural essence and the realities of the Chinese Church. It must be helpful in three areas: (1) In laying a theoretical theological foundation for

- the mutual adaptation of Christianity and socialist society; (2) In consolidating and developing the fruits of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement; (3) In running the church well according to Three-Self principles.
12. May 2002. The Work Report of the Seventh National Chinese Christian Conference raised the point that the “Jinan Meeting” Resolution must be energetically implemented, Theological Reconstruction resolutely and unswervingly promoted, and moreover, raised that “Theological Reconstruction is a priority in running the church well according to Three-Self principles.”
 13. Following this, the majority of provincial (municipality and regional) Christian Councils and Three-Self Patriotic Movements all integrated their actual individual situations, and organized all sorts of forums and seminars on relevant themes, publishing resulting papers. Some provincial (municipality and regional) Christian Councils and Three-Self Patriotic Movements (those in Eastern and Northern China, for example) joined to hold forums and seminars to facilitate mutual exchanges. The national CCC/TSPM set up a writing group that published the Christian Theological Reconstruction series. In order to speed up the process of making the fruits of Theological Reconstruction available in a form useful for preaching, the CCC/TSPM published a set of sermon collections under the title *Streams of Living Water*. In 2003, faced with the SARS epidemic the CCC/TSPM organized a reflection for pastoral workers on how to deal with disasters and published the book *Thoughts on how Christians should deal with disaster*.
 14. January 2008. The Work Report of the Seventh National Chinese Christian Conference point out the need to “intensify promotion of Theological Reconstruction.” And further that promotion of

Theological Reconstruction must be grasped with both hands: theoretical research on the one hand in efforts to deepen the approach, and on the other grappling with making the fruits of research accessible by putting effort into popularizing.

15. September 23-25 2011. With CCC/TSPM as host and NJUTS organizing, a forum on Theological Education and Theological Reconstruction was held in Nanjing. Afterwards, a forum on the theme of Theological Reconstruction and the Sermon was also held.
16. November 11-13 2008. A Commemorative Meeting on the 10th Anniversary of Theological Reconstruction was held in Nanjing. The report from the meeting looked back on and summarized the decade of this ministry, considering the following the main fruits of this stage of Theological Reconstruction:
 1. Achieving consensus on the importance of promoting Theological Reconstruction;
 2. Enlivening theological reflection in the church;
 3. Deepening believers' understanding of the faith;
 4. Enriching sermons preached in the churches;
 5. Promoting Christian ethics;
 6. Strengthening Christians' sense of social responsibility and awareness of service.

The report also summarized the experience of promoting Theological Reconstruction over the decade:

1. Establishing the fact that the Bible is the foundation for promoting Theological Reconstruction;
2. Maintaining the Three-Self principles as the premise on which promotion of Theological Reconstruction is based;

3. A healthy CCC/TSPM as the organizational guarantee of Theological Reconstruction;
4. Responding to reality as the basic content of Theological Reconstruction.

Of course, we also realize that inadequacies remain in the process of promoting Theological Reconstruction, such as: the methods and forms of promotion are rather monotonous; we are not yet able to fully mobilize the potential of the majority of clergy and pastoral workers for Theological Reconstruction; the role of seminaries and Bible schools as bases of Theological Reconstruction has not yet been sufficiently brought into play; theoretical research into theological issues has not gone very deep; investigation and research into some propositions for discussion raised by Theological Reconstruction lack depth, which has at some times resulted in disconnection with the realities of the church; a minority of Christian Councils and Three-Self Movements have clearly not yet given enough attention to Theological Reconstruction, resulting in a very unbalanced progress rate in Theological Reconstruction; efforts to put the fruits of Theological Reconstruction into accessible form have been stagnating, and have not been implemented into the practice of running the church well in a timely manner; and so on. Therefore, from now on, we must address these deficiencies; take positive and effective measures to effectively do a better job in promoting Theological Reconstruction and moving it forward.

Theological Reconstruction is a systematic process; it cannot be accomplished in a single go. As we look to the future, let us raise the following directions for our efforts:

Further promotion of Theological Reconstruction must:

1. Keep in mind running the church well according

- to the Three-Self principles;
2. Rely on the Christian Councils and Three-Self Movements in each locale;
 3. Use seminaries and Bible schools as the base;
 4. Have as its focal point making its fruits accessible for use in the pulpit;
 5. Be done in the fertile soil of China's outstanding culture;
 6. Make the practice of faith its priority.

Mr. Wang Zuo'an 王作安, Director of SARA, made three suggestions in his speech at the Anniversary celebration:

1. Theological Reconstruction must be closely related to the reality of the Chinese Church;
2. Theological Reconstruction must have its finger on the pulse of social developments;
3. Theological Reconstruction must lead in the Sinification of Christianity.

17 September 27-29 2010. Sixtieth anniversary celebration of TSPM held in Beijing.

The Summary Report from this celebration pointed out that based on the Bible, and on reality, Theological Reconstruction is the deepening and development of the TSPM, the most important theoretical theological foundation for running the church well. In terms of the direction of our efforts from now on, it pointed out that we have a long way to go, that we must persist in our theoretical research and sermon messages to further promote Theological Reconstruction. Currently, Theological Reconstruction has entered a critical stage. We must begin from the point of view building a harmonious,

healthily developed church. Such a church will perform be a church “growing in wisdom and stature.” To this end, we must solidly implement the most basic tasks of Theological Reconstruction.

Du Qinglin 杜青林, vice-chair of the Chinese Peoples Political Consultative Conference and director of the Central United Front Work Department, pointed out in a speech that we must make great efforts to promote Christian Theological Reconstruction. The initiation of Theological Reconstruction is a deepening and development of TSPM, and a requirement for the mutual adaptation of Christianity and socialist society. It is to be hoped that Chinese Christian circles will continue to develop Theological Reconstruction, as a foundational work for the Sinification of Christianity, and as an important initiative in promoting national religious harmony. The task must be earnestly grasped. We must focus on promoting and practicing a core socialist system of values and elucidate Christian rules and doctrines in line with the needs of the spirit of the times and social development and better bring into play the positive role of Christianity in the building of China’s particular brand of socialism. We must make great efforts to strengthen research into the theory of theology, focus our efforts on making the fruits of theological thinking accessible and strive to construct a systematic Chinese Christian theology to further the laying of a foundation of thought for the mutual adaptation of Christianity and socialist society.

How to further advance Chinese Christian Theological Reconstruction

A dozen years have passed since the Jinan Meeting of 1998, and in the past decade Theological Reconstruction has remained an extremely important ministry of the Chinese Church. During that period the national CCC/

TSPM, the Christian Councils and Three-Self Movements at provincial (municipal and regional) levels and even the more grass roots forms of the two organizations, have held a variety of seminars and other activities; have published collections of papers and book series, etc.; beginnings have been made in reflecting on some theological issues, and the initial fruits of these reflections have been made accessible as sermon content, have been embodied in seminary and Bible school classroom materials and in church sermons; and some sermon collections which draw on this content have been published.

In these past years, though our theological reflections are still fairly superficial and shallow, they have touched on numerous topics. These topics have included:

1. How to correctly know and interpret the Bible and have a correct view of the Bible;
2. What kind of God do we believe in? God's attributes, involving our view of God;
3. The "Cosmic Christ", which involves our Christology;
4. Faith and reason;
5. What is a Christian view of the world;
6. Belief vs. nonbelief; the relationship of Christians and society, of church and society;
7. "Semi-finished products"; creation and redemption, involving our theory of creation and of atonement;
8. Human value; involving our theory of humanity;
9. Our understanding of faith and righteousness: we cannot because of faith err by discarding works or think morality worthless or ethics vanity;
10. How do Christians face up to suffering and disasters, involving theological questions of sin, punishment, and grace?

Through Theological Reconstruction, we will indeed enliven theological reflection in the Chinese Church and enrich the message preached in the churches. Many more clergy and pastoral staff and believers will have a greater understanding and awareness of the necessity and importance of Theological Reconstruction for Chinese Christianity, and will take an active part in this important ministry. Theological Reconstruction is now playing an active role in the development of the Chinese Church. Some overseas church organizations and friends have expressed their care for and interest in our Theological Reconstruction, and there have been some responses. The Finnish Lutheran Church has translated some of the documents and articles regarding Theological Reconstruction from these past years into Finnish and published a book of them.

For over a decade, through everyone's common efforts, Theological Reconstruction has achieved definite results. But at the same time, we should realize that Theological Reconstruction is a systematic process and cannot be accomplished all at once. Since it is a systematic process, we must have a plan, move forward step by step through long-term and steady effort and accretion. In the midst of Theological Reconstruction, we have already touched upon some theological topics, such as the view of the Bible, our view of God, of Christology, etc. But if we rely only upon some preliminary seminars and a few speeches and articles, we cannot say that we have established a fairly complete and mature Chinese Church theology with a conception of God, of the Bible and so on. What we have is far from enough; we have only begun. I have already spoken of some theological topics that require ongoing reflection and professional research that is truly significant theologically.

The Work Report of the Eighth National Chinese

Christian Conference in January 2008, and the Summary Report of the Meeting to Commemorate the Sixtieth Anniversary of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement just last year both mentioned the idea of “grasping the task with two hands”—theoretical research in one hand, working to deepen our study; and transforming the fruits of our task into useful resources in the other—working to popularize it. There is an order here, one hand first, then the other. We should integrate the reality of the Church into our task, select some theological topics and undertake theoretical research first. When we have some definite research results, then we should transform these results into useful resources—transforming academic theological language into everyday, easily understood messages from the pulpit, thereby guiding the church’s and Christians’ faith practice. Without theoretical research, without profound reflection upon theological issues, the transformation of our results is an exercise in making bricks without straw or making a meal without rice.

We have dealt with some of these theological topics before, but we must continue to study them. In undertaking Theological Reconstruction in the Chinese Church there are some fundamental theological issues that cannot be avoided, that must be conscientiously reflected on and studied in theological terms. These fundamental theological topics include:

1. Concept of God. There are many theological and ecclesiological elucidations of this in church tradition, including those of churches of every denomination. The Chinese Church and Chinese Christians should, based on the Bible and church tradition, integrate its own experience with its contextual understanding in illuminating what kind of God it is we believe in.

2. Christology. The second person of the trinity. Who is the one we call Christ?
3. Theory of the Holy Spirit. A lot of ridiculous and confused phenomena in the rural churches in China are related to erroneous understandings of the Holy Spirit.
4. View of the Bible. The Bible has special connotations for the Chinese Church and Chinese believers. The Chinese Church requires a full and complete view of the Bible.
5. Ecclesiology. The Summary Report from the sixtieth anniversary celebrations of the TSPM points out that the intent of the TSPM in its new era is to establish a “harmonious, healthily developed church. Such a church must take as its task to be well governed, well supported and well propagated. It must possess the special characteristics of its era and be an internally harmonious church. It must be a church rooted in the soil of Chinese culture and with its own unique theology; it must be courageous in taking up its social responsibility; a church which practices a morality of love; it must be a church which lifts high Christ and preserves unity. It must be a church with its own regulations; a church with cohesive strength; one filled with the aroma of Christ and one which witnesses to Life through its own life.” The church’s relationship with society and with the state (including registration, social responsibility, etc.), the indigenization of the church, church unity, the church’s mission to propagate the gospel, church management and self-construction, worship and liturgy, the foreign relations of the church and the two church organizations, etc. are all related

to this issue. When ecclesiology is settled, many issues currently facing the church will also be settled.

6. Concept of humanity. There is still much that is wrong in our understanding of the nature of human beings, and this leads to a number of problems.
7. Christians' view of the world, Christians' worldview, and how to view all the truth, goodness, and beauty in the world.
8. The issue of belief and nonbelief.
9. Spirituality and secularism; faith and reason; faith and works.
10. Creation and redemption.
11. Suffering, sin, and punishment; grace, etc.

It is not my intention to set out all the issues Theological Reconstruction should research here, but just to list some examples, none of which can be avoided or ignored. To construct a Chinese Church systematic theology, we must resolve certain problems that currently exist in the Chinese Church, and all these topics require profound reflection and study.

How shall we proceed in undertaking our study of these theological topics? The content involved in constructing a systematic Chinese Christian theology is vast, as are the problems requiring solution that face the church at present. We cannot possibly solve all these problems within a short period. We must have a plan and move forward step by step. Therefore, should we continue with our previously articulated outline plan for Theological Reconstruction? How shall the CCC/TSPM fulfill their role? How shall the seminaries and Bible schools function as bases? How can we strengthen and organize the building of a body of theological researchers that includes

the faculty of our seminaries and Bible schools? And once we have the results of this theoretical study, how can we transform them into accessible resources in a timely manner? And so on.

How to continue promoting Theological Reconstruction is an important topic of discussion for our present seminar. I hope everyone will conscientiously reflect on and express their views in a spirit of teamwork, contributing their individual knowledge and strength to our common effort of Theological Reconstruction to run the church well.

Rev. Gao Feng 高峰 is President of the China Christian Council and President of Nanjing Union Theological Seminary.

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Retrospect and Prospect:

October 2010 Alumni Retreat Address for the Reunion gathering of classes entering 1981-86

CHEN ZEMIN

Scripture:

Psalm 90:12 “Teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart.”

Luke 9:33 “Master, it is well that we are here!”

Luke 24:28 “Jesus walked ahead as if he were going on.”

Gathering today, here at our alma mater, are the classes of 1985 through 1990 (those entering from the years 1981 through 1986). What a blessed day it is! The topic I have chosen to speak about today is once again “Retrospect and Prospect.” Two years ago (in 2008) during morning prayer on the first day of fall semester, at the September 24th “Tenth Anniversary of Theological Reconstruction Celebration Service,” my main topic was also “Retrospect and Prospect.” The scripture I chose was “I press on toward the goal” (Phil 3:14). On December 31st of the same year, at our final morning prayer of the semester (also the last morning prayer before our school relocated away from this old campus), our selected topics were the aforementioned verses from Luke: “It is well that we are here!” and we are “going on!” (Luke 9:33; 24:28). And indeed, this is also the meaning of “Retrospect and Prospect.”

The over one hundred alumni gathered here today have

each spent between one and seven years on this beautiful campus, and all recall their time here with a certain nostalgia. Just as the “Letter to Alumni” you received stated, “It has already been twenty or more years since you left our alma mater. In these twenty-plus years, you have achieved great things, and your success has been dazzling. The Chinese Church, because of your faithfulness and devotion, has been greatly blessed by God ...the past is like the tides...the years are like a song...”, and these years are worthy of careful review.

Last year, in myriad ways, people everywhere celebrated the 60th anniversary of the founding of our country. Activities were held to commemorate and recall the progress of the last sixty years: “Our Song Has Been Sung for Sixty Years.” Fifty-nine years have passed since the founding of Nanjing Union Theological Seminary in 1952, and next year we will celebrate our 60th anniversary. (If counting from the founding of the old Nanjing Seminary, next year would mark 100 years; but counting from 1952, next year is our 60th.) These sixty years have been synchronous with the founding of our nation. The alumni gathered here today all spent time on this beloved former campus during the ten-year period between 1981 and 1990. But I’m afraid most of us are not familiar with the first thirty years of this sixty-year history. I will offer a brief review of the sixty-year history of our school in the hopes of enhancing our understanding of this history, as well as the ways God has been leading us step by step to where we are today.

Speaking simply, these sixty years can be divided into four phases:

- (1) Phase One: November 1, 1952 (our founding) to September 1957.

In the autumn of 1952 twelve seminaries in eastern China joined to form Nanjing Union Theological Seminary. The seminary remained open for five years. Graduates from this period served in churches all over China, performing very important functions in their respective communities. Most of these graduates have since retired.

In September 1957 the country launched the “Anti-Rightist Campaign.” The seminary suspended classes, and a portion of teachers and figures in other religious circles were sent to Qixia shan for approximately three years’ labor.

In December 1959, the Second Christian National Conference was held in Shanghai. It was determined that classes would resume at Nanjing Union Theological Seminary, and eager preparations began.

(2) Phase Two

In 1960, seminary classes began for the second time. Beijing’s Yanjing Union Seminary merged with Nanjing, expanding the ranks of qualified teachers. Initially, a one-year training course was implemented for pastors and offered for two consecutive years. From 1961-1966 undergraduate programs (twenty students) and graduate programs (two students) were implemented and were offered for four consecutive years. In 1966 the Cultural Revolution began, and on September 28th of that year, Red Guards entered the seminary. The seminary closed its doors for the second time. Some personnel were sent to Jiangning Qinglong shan farm for six years of reform through labor. In 1972 they returned, and in this very courtyard participated in “Provincial United Front Personnel Re-education Courses.” Over the next several years, some worked in translation, compiling and

publishing English-Chinese dictionaries or training others in short-term foreign language study. (This work is likely unknown to most alumni and has received little attention.) This phase altogether lasted approximately twenty years.

In December of 1978 the Chinese Communist Party held the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee, marking the beginning of the policy of Reform and Opening Up. But as compared with the rest of society, it took religious circles two to three years longer to resume normal functions.

(3) Phase Three

This phase begins in 1979 with the participation of Nanjing University and the founding of its Institute of Religious Studies. At this time Bishop K.H. Ting was one of the deans of Nanjing University. Some seminary professors also began offering classes and lectures at Nanjing University; they recruited graduate students and published the journal *Religion* 宗教 (*zongjiao*). At the same time, these professors were preparing for the day classes would resume at the seminary.

In March 1981, Nanjing Union Theological Seminary opened its doors once more. The first semester was devoted to “catching-up.” (Because churches suspended activities for approximately fifteen years during the Cultural Revolution, many young people were unfamiliar with religion.) In September proper classes resumed. And for the next twenty-nine years, courses were held at this campus. In March 2009 the school would relocate to its new campus.

Among the three phases delineated above, the first can be said to comprise the first ten years: from the merger of men’s and women’s schools in 1951 to the founding of “Union Theological Seminary” in 1952; through the Anti-

Rightist Campaign of 1957 and the cessation of classes for three years; to the resumption of classes in 1959; comprises a period of exactly ten years. Phase two would consist of: the re-opening in 1960, lasting for five years until the Cultural Revolution in 1966; the suspension of classes for the next fifteen years; to the opening of Nanjing University's Institute of Religious Studies in 1979, and the reopening of the seminary for the second time in 1981: altogether comprising twenty years. Phase three would span from 1981 until the end of 2008, a twenty-eight-year period of uninterrupted work on the old campus. In early 2009 the school relocated to its new campus. The third phase, including the first semester on the new campus—prior to the seminary's change in leadership on March 1st of this year—totals some thirty years.

Generally speaking then, our past consists of phases of ten years, twenty years, and thirty years—or sixty years in all. As for the first thirty years, namely phases one and two, we have no first-hand impression and therefore no way of reviewing them together. The one hundred-plus alumni gathered today all came to our seminary during the first ten years of its last thirty-year period (between 1981 and 1990), and this is the period fresh in our minds. In what follows I will offer a simple review of the last thirty years, which can also be divided into three ten-year segments (or one segment of ten years and one of twenty years).

The First Ten Years, 1981 to 1991:

During these ten years following the implementation of the policy of Reform and Opening Up, theological education entered a new phase in its development. Those present here today are first-hand witnesses of this period. Particularly worthy of review are the following:

In August of 1985, at the symposium on theological education in Mogan shan, Zhejiang, seminary president K.H. Ting proposed five guiding principles—students should be educated “spiritually, morally, intellectually, physically and in community.” He also stated that “Studying and formation/cultivation are essential, but studying is our priority.” “We are neither a retreat center nor a religious studies center, but a seminary.” (“不是灵修院，也不是宗教学院，而是神学院”). These principles guided our work in theological education for thirty years. From 1987 to 1988 we began sending groups of graduates abroad for advanced studies. Three groups were sent totaling twelve students in all, of which eight returned to China eventually to play important roles in theological education in the Chinese church.

With respect to theological instruction, aside from courses in Bible, theology, history, pastoral care, English, and Biblical sources, emphasis was also placed on church music and art, and with great success. The Nanjing Seminary Choir became rather famous. In February of 1992 the group placed second at the Nanjing Choral Festival. Likewise, Professor He Qi 何琦 trained and encouraged many students who went on to enjoy success in the fine arts. With respect to academics, we published the *Selected Essays in Theology from Nanjing Union Theological Seminary (1952-1992)* 金陵神学文选 (1952-1992), comprising over thirty works by our faculty, with a foreword by President Ting, all certainly worthy of our reflection. In addition to these achievements there were many other accomplishments and events which I will not list in detail, as all of you are witnesses to this historic period.

On November 1, 1992 our alma mater celebrated its 40th anniversary. Over 300 alumni from more than 20 provinces and cities gathered in Nanjing to represent the

more than 1000 alumni who had passed through these doors during the school's first 40 years. At that time Professor Wang Weifan 汪维藩 and I had just returned from an academic conference in America, and he was in the midst of composing a poem to commemorate our 40th anniversary:

At the foot of Zhongshan Mountain
 By the Yangzi River
 God's grace is vast
 For forty years
 We were weak
 But God never abandoned us
 We returned
 To be in God's grace again
 Water flows
 The grass is green
 God's grace never fades
 A new generation appears
 At the foot of Zhongshan Mountain
 By the Yangzi River
 God's grace is vast
 And passes from generation to generation

钟山之麓	大江之滨	主恩浩淼	四十秋春
我虽软弱	主何曾弃	我今归来	再沐新恩
灵泉汨汨	芳草茵茵	主恩永驻	辈出新人
钟山之麓	大江之滨	主恩浩淼	代代相承

(Taken from Chen Zemin, *Seeking and Witnessing* 求索与见证, page 199, "Closing ceremony address upon the 40th anniversary of the founding of our school.")

The Second Ten Years, 1992-2002, and the Third Ten Years, 2001-2010 can be treated together. Most important during this interval are:

In 1995, with approval from the State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA), we began awarding Master's 神学硕士 (graduate) and Bachelor's 神学学士 (four-year undergraduate) degrees in theology. We continue to award these degrees.

From late 1998 to July of 1999, we implemented several "trial evaluations" and made some personnel adjustments based on our findings. Much else took place during these ten years, but we cannot go into extensive detail here.

Also of great importance was the development of Theological Reconstruction: the 1999 Shanghai-Qingdao Conference; the Jinan Conference in November of that same year; the Biblical Conference in Qingdao in August 2000; as well as further conferences held in Nanjing, Shanghai, and other cities. Nanjing Union Theological Seminary has been a base for Theological Reconstruction. Meanwhile, during this period the National People's Congress and various provinces published special materials on the subject.

On November 1-3, 2002 the seminary held its 50th anniversary celebration and invited distinguished guests from both China and abroad. At this time we had just published a translation of Justo Gonzalez's *A History of Christian Thought* (three volumes in one) and presented a souvenir copy to each guest and alumnus.

On January 16-18, 2005 a ceremony at the Nanjing Lakeside Hotel marked the laying of the foundation for the new seminary, and some 100 guests from China and abroad attended. Then SARA Director Ye Xiaowen 叶小文 penned a report entitled "New Campus, New Look, New Aspirations." This was a distinguished gathering in the seminary's sixty-year history, and it prefigures the special convocation we hold here today.

On November 1-3, 2006, a symposium was convened

at the Xinde Building entitled, “Return to Nanjing, Return to Your Alma Mater.” Many among you were present for that.

In September 2008, two research conferences took place in Nanjing to summarize theological construction over the previous ten years, and two special collections were published.

2009 concludes the previous three phases of this fifty-nine-year history, and marks the move to the new campus, seven times larger than the old.

What I have stated above is an “account of our days,” and I hope it may aid in making us “wise of heart.”

All of these events took place at our old school, and we cannot help but exclaim, “Master (or Teacher), it is well that we are here!” [N.B.: It is important that we fully understand this statement. It was spoken to the Teacher. (“Master,” in the original text “Epistata,” is rendered by many texts as “Teacher.”) And the subject is “we are here,” not simply “here.” It is an historical assertion, not a geographical one. The English translation reads, “It is well that we are here.”]

(4) Phase Four

On March 1st of this year (2010), under the leadership of the National People’s Congress and the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Congress, the seminary board of directors underwent a change in leadership, marking a new phase in the seminary’s history. As this fourth phase has only just begun, I cannot speak about it. Future articles will be written under the leadership of the current president and vice-presidents, through the work of the entire staff and more than two hundred current students (308 in November, 2012), and including all future staff and students. For now I’d like to return to the third scripture

reference from today (Luke 24:28), which takes place after Jesus' resurrection, as two of his disciples are walking along the road to a village called Emmaus. Jesus appears and begins walking alongside them. The text reads, "As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on" (24:28). The original Greek text uses three words to express the phrase "as if he were going on," giving us much food for thought. I consulted several Chinese and English translations, and they all render this phrase differently. In terms of grammar and rhetorical style, since it indicates a future event, the subjunctive mood is employed, and the phrase connotes a kind of directive or encouragement. In short, this fourth phase means that "we must go on."

This year in the sixth issue of *Tian Feng* 天风, under the pseudonym "Dao Sheng" 道声 a writer published his notes from an interview with the new Executive Vice-President Dr. Chen Yilu 陈逸鲁. The title of his article reads, "May the trees of Nanjing bear even more fruit!" Today I want to cite his words: "With new leadership we enkindle three new flames." The three flames Vice-President Chen Yilu hopes to enkindle are: "The Fire of the Spirit," "The Fire of Hope," and "The Fire of Blessing." The author writes, "Nanjing has trained a great many graduates who have gone on to excellent work in both the church and society. However, in the past the seminary has lacked emphasis on maintaining contact with its alumni, and alumni are not familiar with the needs of their alma mater. Today, we want to recognize the great work of our alumni, that all may continue to burn bright the flame of our alma mater." I'd like to recall a favorite phrase from Professor Mo Ruxi 莫如喜—"We are all Nanjing Seminary"—and add to it the words of Vice-President Chen Yilu at yesterday's opening service, to serve as today's final thoughts:

“Nanjing graduates, rise up, shine your light for Nanjing Seminary!”

“We must go on!”

May the Lord guide us, may the Lord bless us!
Amen!

Blessing: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with all of you, now and forever. Amen (2 Corinthians 13:14).

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Translated by Brian O’Keefe.

My Time at Central Seminary and St John's University in the Early 1950s

CAO SHENGJIE

In the early 1950s, on the beautiful campus of St John's University in Shanghai, you would sometimes see young men wearing long black Chinese-style gowns. The fashionable students called them "black crows." They were actually theological students from the Chung Hua Sheng Kung Hui 中华圣公会 (Anglican) Central Seminary 中央神学院.

Christianity was then divided into many denominations. At the time of the sixteenth-century Reformation, the English reformation returned authority in the church to the English king, without making many changes in the liturgy, to form the Anglican Church. The Anglican Church in China belonged to separate English, American and Canadian mission boards. The American Church sent missionaries to Shanghai in 1845 and opened the Peiya (Baird Hall) and Guang'en (Duane Hall) Schools. In 1879, these developed into St. John's Academy and in 1905 the Academy became St. John's University. In their educational work, foreign mission boards first undertook the training of persons the church had direct need for. St. John's Academy had a medical and a theological department. St John's University's theology department later came to be called its seminary. Except for Chinese language classes, all other classes were taught in English, in which all the students were proficient. The early graduates in theology were open-minded and versed in Chinese and Western knowledge. Bishop Shen Zigao

沈子高(T.K.Shen), for example, principal of Central Seminary, had done in-depth research in liturgy and Christian art and he did a great deal toward the sinification of church music and architecture. Bishop K.H. Ting 丁光训, honorary chair of TSPM and honorary president of CCC, formerly a deputy chair of the CPPCC, was also active in this regard.

After 1922, the Sheng Kung Hui established another Central Theological School in Nanjing, with education primarily in Chinese, to train clergy and pastoral workers for its dioceses. After the Sino-Japanese War, St. John's University registered with the government and seminary and university separated. In 1946 the Chung Hua Sheng Kung Hui founded the Central Theological Seminary, absorbing St John's University seminary, the former Central Theological School 中央神学校 and the Bo'en Theological School 博恩神学校, a seminary established following the war that admitted female students exclusively. The Central Theological Seminary was located at No. 48, St. John's University.

I entered Central Theological Seminary in the second half of 1949, when I was just eighteen. A year later, the Seminary said the church had some scholarship funds that I could use to study in university, following which I could return to do the post-graduate course at the Seminary. So I reviewed my senior middle school coursework and in the autumn of 1950, passed the entrance exam for the university. Due to a changing situation, I returned to the Seminary after a year in the Education Department. While taking classes in St. John's, the Seminary had allowed me to continue to live in the women's dorm there and to take classes at the Seminary between classes at St. John's. Thus I had the experience of life in both places, St. John's and the Seminary.

An Overview of Central Theological Seminary

Central Theological Seminary was located in the eastern part of St. John's University, across the bridge over Soochow Creek (now there is a cement bridge in a slightly different spot). At that time, the St. John's Science Building (physics, chemistry and biology) was in the eastern campus as well, as was the sports ground. The Seminary had its own courtyard and signboard. There was a lawn and a four-story classroom building (which also housed the library and the male dorm). The building was called the *Sijin zhai* 四尽斋 from Luke 10:27: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." (*Jin* means "to the utmost", or as here: four all's). The most striking thing on campus was an exquisite little chapel, the St. Francis Chapel, in honor of the thirteenth-century saint who espoused poverty and loved nature. In those days the altar was generally right up against the wall and the minister conducted the Holy Communion service with his back to the congregation. Shen Zigao proposed that the minister should face the congregation while conducting the service and so the altar was placed at the front and was accessible from all sides. This is common in most Roman Catholic and Anglican churches today. The altar was wood, specially made, with a carving of the sun rising through the waves (the dawn of morning; see Luke 1:78). These fine designs were all the work of Shen Zigao. This altar was later moved to Nanjing Union Theological Seminary and it continued to be used when Anglican students held a liturgical communion according to the *Prayerbook*. There were two Western-style houses on campus: one was the residence of the Seminary President and an American minister named Foster lived in the other. There was also a row of faculty houses.

The scale of the seminary was not large. Between 1949 and 1952, the peak number of students was never more than thirty-odd. They came from all over the country: there was no limit on age and they were divided into the post-graduate section (university graduates, who were taught in English) and the regular section (senior middle school graduates, who were not placed in different classes). There were only ever four students in the post-graduate section, all of them male students, and there were only about a dozen female students overall. Since there was no female student dorm on the seminary campus, we lived with the single women missionaries (seminary teachers Grieves and Wyatt and St. John's teacher Falk) in the white house at No.21, St John's campus and took our meals on the seminary campus. Thus, every morning we had to cross the Suzhou Creek Bridge. In the winter the winds were bitter; my memory of them is as vivid as ever.

The Seminary had only three to five full-time teachers. Besides the seminary president, prior to 1952 these were foreign missionaries. Foster had been a missionary in Nanjing for many years. During the Anti-Japanese War, he had been part of the International Committee of the Nanjing Safety Zone, protecting refugees in Nanjing. Widdess was a graduate of Cambridge University. Because he had poor Chinese, he taught only the graduate students. He always wore a black cassock to class and to worship, so he cut an unusual figure—like an English don! The seminary also engaged university professors who were Anglican priests: Xu Huaiqi徐怀启 (a St. John's professor who taught Western philosophy), Hong Deying洪德应(a Datong University professor who for a time was the principal of St. Mary's Girls Middle School and taught church history), and so on.

The main courses at Central Seminary were biblical research (introduction and specific books); dogmatic

theology, church history; Chinese language; and English. Besides the set curriculum, great importance was attached to a variety of lectures and visits. I remember that Donald Roberts, a St. John's professor from the Politics Department, came to lecture on Western democracy (he spoke of Marxism as a Christian "heresy"). St. John's professor Chen Renbing 陈仁炳 (a member of the Democratic League) was invited to speak on New Democracy as well. Following the launch of the Three-Self Reform Movement, Zheng Jianye 郑建业 (an Anglican who was one of the forty signers of the Chinese Christian Three-self Manifesto) and Chen Chonggui 陈崇桂 (an Evangelical signer of the Manifesto) came to speak on the current situation. In Comparative Religion, visits were organized to services in a Jewish synagogue, an Orthodox church and a mosque and leaders of other religions, such as Buddhism, were invited to lecture and introduce their religious beliefs and practices. Students were sent to the various Anglican churches in Shanghai for fieldwork. They were also encouraged to attend services in various denominations and lay leaders were invited to speak to express lay people's demands to the clergy; all with a view to opening students' eyes to a wider experience.

In another aspect, the seminary stressed the importance of students' own personal spirituality, suggesting they should follow a kind of monastic tradition in a sense. Students had to wear either blue or black clothing, attend daily community morning and evening prayer and Holy Day Eucharists. There was a "silent retreat day" each semester, with silent prayer and meditation the whole day. No one was to speak unless absolutely necessary, and there would be spiritual readings during community meals. Bishop Shen Zigao stressed that he was neither "high church" nor "low church" but "profound church," meaning that one must have a profound spiritual

experience. The school disciplined students rather strictly, but there was no “Code of Student Conduct”; rather a “between you and me” correspondence, asking students to regulate their own behavior. Students engaged in physical exercise. In order to ensure food satisfaction, every morning students took it in turn to accompany the cook on a three-kilometer walk to the Sanguantang Bridge market to buy food—first to ensure meal fees were well used and second to provide some choice. There was a feeling that we were all one big family.

Religious Life in St. John's University

The curriculum at St. John's did not change a great deal after Liberation. Except for the English course (A, B and C classes), all others were conducted in Chinese. One that left an especially deep impression on me was Prof. Xu Huaiqi's “Introduction to Philosophy,”—he never referred to notes of any kind, but everything was very clear and well illustrated. He knew his material and one could see he was very well versed in it. I also took Prof. Yang Jiaren's 杨嘉仁 music course, which included Chinese and foreign folk songs. The lectures were very witty, a deep subject put into layman's terms, and in this lively atmosphere students' level of music appreciation was naturally improved.

St. John's was a church school, but it had never stressed evangelization among the students. There were some fellowships that were religious in nature (all voluntary) that students were free to attend. Following Liberation, religion and education were separated and there was even less of a religious atmosphere about the campus. There was a large gothic church beside the lawn, called St. John's Pro-Cathedral, which was under the Bishop of the Anglican diocese of Jiangsu. The outer walls of this church were covered in vines. The inside fixtures were solemn

and imposing; it could seat several hundred. There was a medium size pipe organ that had to be manually operated. Foster, who lived in the seminary, served as the pastor. There was a 20-minute break in classes every morning around 10 am, and the church bell would ring throughout the campus, reminding us to go to prayers. Morning prayer was a short service in the chapel, 15 minutes at most. When I was at school, only a few dozen students and faculty would attend and the numbers gradually dwindled, but it was still held. There were services Sunday morning and evening, mostly attended by faculty and staff and their families, students and some neighbors. With the 1982 adjustments, St. John's became the Huadong (East China) University of Politics and Law and the church was later torn down, a very regrettable thing, even in terms of historic building preservation.

In 1950, on the campus of St. John's, there was an organization called the St. John's Christian Fellowship or SJCF, made up of Christian faculty and students from the Anglican Church and other mainline denominations, that liaised with the YM/YWCA. The university chaplain, Foster (later Xu Huaiqi held this position), served as advisor. There was an activity room at No. 16, next door to the church, where activities such as classical music appreciation were held; posters welcomed student participation. The group had an excellent choir made up of church music enthusiasts among faculty and students. Morning prayers at St. John's consisted of a sermon by the chaplain or music by this choir. Occasionally they held a concert. I remember a music worship at Christmas in 1950, when we sang the "Messiah." Dai Yunlong戴云龙, a teacher from the St. John's middle school, conducted and I played the piano accompaniment.

Additionally, there was another Christian gathering among St. John's committed Christian students, led by

young leaders of the Christian Assembly of Shanghai (Little Flock, a local church), who passed out individual invitations to participate. The gathering was held in the SJCF activity room. I attended several times. The religious atmosphere was intense, but the guiding thought was rather conservative. At the time, The History of Social Development was a required course for university students. But in this gathering, the leader, who was from the medical school, repeatedly stressed that Christians could never accept the idea that “man comes from apes,” because evolution was against the Bible. (Actually, there are many Christian theologians who, under the premise that God created the world, are not against the theory of evolution.)

After Liberation, the famous Christian leader T.C. Chao 赵紫宸 proposed, “Building up Fellowship in Love.” Seminary student (later Bishop) Shen Yifan 沈以藩 began a small fellowship among young faculty and students of St. John’s and Central Theological Seminary in 1950 focused on the spiritual quest, called in Latin, Santa Scala (Holy Stairs), it met in the early morning once or twice a week on the stone steps of the St. John’s Cathedral for brief spiritual cultivation to deepen faith. In case of rain it was moved to the SJCF activity room. There were only about a dozen members, including myself. I found that we shared a common language and deep feelings. Later one of the members (who was also a leader in the SJCF) was found to have a problematic background and in the political climate of the time, the fellowship decided to cease activities.

The Political Atmosphere at Seminary and University

1950 was the year that Chinese Christianity decided upon its course with the establishment of new China. Within the seminary one could sense a clear ideological struggle.

In the summer of 1949, I took the entrance exam for Central Seminary. The essay question was “Religion is the opiate of the people. Discuss.” To tell the truth, at the time I didn’t know anything about this dictum of Marx, but the seminary was keen to ask its students to face the challenges.

Shen Zigao, President of Central Seminary, was formerly bishop of the Chung Hua Sheng Kung Hui Shaanxi Missionary Area (Xi’an). During the War Against Japan, Shen had some contact with Communist Party leaders in Yen-an through Pu Huaren 浦化人 (former Sheng Kung Hui priest; later Communist Party member and classmate of Bp. Shen’s at St. John’s). He had held a meeting of foreign missionaries in China in his home at which Zhou Enlai 周恩来 came to press the Communists’ proposal for defeating the Japanese. This was the path by which these proposals came to be known overseas. His home became the jumping off point for overseas friends and patriotic young people travelling to Yen-an. Clearly he had some understanding of the Communist policies toward religion. But Liberation of the whole country came about so quickly and news of restrictions on religious activities spread quickly during those early days of Liberation, which led him to take a pessimistic view of the future of the church. For a time in the classroom he stressed that we were “citizens of Heaven” (Philippians 3:20) and should withdraw from the world. He mentioned that during the English reformation, the author of the *Book of Common Prayer*, Archbishop Cramer, had been “martyred” and so on.

In response to the situation following Liberation that evangelists in rural villages might need skills to support themselves, the seminary taught students first aid and small scale farming; male students learned to give haircuts by practicing on each other. The Korean War broke out

in the latter half of 1950, followed closely by the US announcement of a freeze on foreign assets. Seminary finances were completely reliant on the foreign mission boards and one can imagine what the impact of having with this source of funding cut off would be. I remember Bishop Shen breaking into tears more than once during morning and evening prayers at the seminary in those days.

In July 1950, Wu Yaozong 吴耀宗 (Y.T. Wu) and others launched the Chinese Christian Three-Self Reform Movement 中国基督教三自革新运动 (in 1954 its name changed to Three-Self Patriotic Movement 中国基督教三自爱国运动). Its Manifesto pointed out that Christianity had in the past been manipulated by imperialism to perpetrate aggression against China, a thesis that the upper echelon of Christian leaders found hard to accept for a time. Shen Zigao was then still the Secretary of the CHSKH House of Bishops, which had drafted a pastoral letter expressing agreement that the church should carry out “Three-Self,” along with a general condemnation of imperialism, but did not mention the issue of imperialist manipulation of the Chinese Church[es] (later the CHSKH leadership quickly changed tack and expressed their support for the Three-Self Movement). A signature campaign for the Three-Self Manifesto 三自宣言 was also carried out within the seminary, but I have no particular memory of it. Following the wave of accusations of imperialist crimes of aggression against China by church-run universities, the Three-Self Reform Movement also engaged in the accusation drive against imperialist manipulation of Chinese Christianity in 1951. Shen Zigao spoke at the CHSKH accusation rally, and most of what he said was in the nature of a self-criticism. Within the seminary we had a vague sense of the pressures of the situation and his frustration.

With the successive retreat of the foreign missionaries, the corps of full-time faculty was supplemented with two Chinese teachers, Wei Xiben 魏希本 and You Zhenzhong 尤振中, both of whom were attacked under the prevailing situation. Wei was the former editor of the *CHSKH Report* 中华圣公会报 and pastor of All Saints Church in Shanghai. He was implicated because a member of his congregation was involved in a spy case. You was the son of the founder of the Chinese Independent Church 中国基督教自立会, You Shuxun 尤树勳. He had returned from studying in the U.S., and was accused in the Nanjing Church.

There were students entering the seminary during this period who had been marginalized by the situation, female students such as Wang Erying 王尔英 and Chen Derong 陈德容, who had been principals in church-run primary schools in Jiangxi and Fujian respectively. With those schools now under the government, they entered seminary for further study. The most prominent of such students was a well-dressed lady named Wang Mengying 王孟英, a member of the Church of Our Saviour, who had her own apartment in Shanghai. We all found her very mysterious. We later learned that she was the adopted daughter of a high KMT official, Zhu Jiahua 朱家桦. Prior to the merger of the seminaries, she entered a Roman Catholic convent. She had been wrongly imprisoned for more than twenty years. Following this miscarriage of justice, she was rehabilitated, and prior to her death she was a member of the Shanghai Research Institute of Culture and History. All of which goes to show that at the time, the seminary objectively functioned as a political “safe haven.”

When I entered St. John’s, the environment was entirely different. In October 1950, the Chinese volunteer

army sent troops to Korea. The campus was bustling with activity. Revolutionary propaganda posters, blackboard “newspapers” and big character posters were everywhere. In November, U.S. Secretary of State Dean Acheson addressed the U.N. Security Council, listing America’s largesse toward China, using the running of schools as an example and arousing strong revulsion among students and faculty in China at church-run universities. St. John’s held an accusation assembly and sent a telegram denouncing his speech. In December, students took part in an anti-America demonstration of all university students in Shanghai. As a student from the seminary, though my thinking was not quite there, I had no excuse not to take part. During the demonstration, I gained a greater understanding of the power of the developing situation.

Within St. John’s, I took part in a citywide 10,000-person rally to suppress counterrevolutionaries. When the counterrevolutionary crimes of Chen Xiaomao 陈小毛 and others were exposed, the entire gathering broke into calls for their blood. As one raised in traditional Christian education to believe “Thou shall not kill,” I felt extremely uncomfortable, but in the face of such evil deeds, can it be that Christians should not feel a sense that justice must be done? The situation had an impact on my thinking and I could not help but reflect on it.

In the spring of 1952, the university mobilized the students to join the revolution as cadres, suspend their studies and go south to take part in the revolution. As [other] students struck gongs and beat drums to send off their fellow students, I saw the sisters Deng Xiumei 邓修梅 and Deng Xiuzhu 邓修竹 (I heard that later Deng Xiumei worked in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs). We were all members of St. Peter’s Church, their father Deng Fayan 邓法言 was Head of Dentistry at Hongren

(Elizabeth) Hospital and a leading SKH lay person. Dr. Deng was there in tears to send them off, and this really shook me. It showed that [important] church people also supported our new political authorities in their anti-American struggle, that we were not all pro-American.

Being in St. John's made me closer to society than the students of the seminary. In the summer of 1951, there was a saying that after graduation, university students would have to accept jobs assigned them by the government. Though at the time I had already applied for and received a scholarship from government, and so could continue with my studies at St. John's, in order to keep my vow to dedicate my life to the service of the church, I decided to abandon my studies and return to the seminary. Since from the autumn of 1951 to the spring of 1951, the seminary was clearly embarked on the Three-Self path, and the government supported religious organizations by exempting them from property taxes to alleviate their financial situation. The student association and staff of the Three-Self Reform organization opened contacts, encouraging the students to have more contact with the wider world and encouraged the seminary administration in this direction as well. Students had lingering concerns over the future of the church, and about their own futures as well and this emotional instability had some effect on their studies. From the first half of 1952, eleven seminaries in east China, under the direction of the national Three-Self Preparatory committee, discussed the merger of seminaries. The chair of the Central Seminary Student Association, Deng Fucun 邓福村, also took part in the deliberations. In the summer of 1952, Central Seminary formally joined the Jinling (Nanjing) Union Theological Seminary 金陵协和神学院 in Nanjing, bringing to an end its six-year history on the St. John's University campus.

Training Leaders Who Love Country and Love Church

In the autumn of 1952, I and some other former students of Central Seminary travelled together to Nanjing to continue our studies. Nanjing Union Theological Seminary operated directly under the leadership of the Three-Self Reform Movement Preparatory Committee. K.H. Ting was its president. The seminary stressed a situational approach to education, following the church on its distinctive path under the Three-Self banner. Students came to better understand that it was by love of country and love of church and by striving to adapt to society that the church still had a future. The students' warmed to the new school and any past discouragement experienced at Central Seminary was swept away. We [Central Seminary students] graduated from NJUTS successively between 1953 and 1954 and left to embark on our posts in the church.

Central Seminary teachers continued to teach at NJUTS. In the 1950s Bishop Shen Zigao wrote a famous theological treatise, *Reason and Spirituality* 理智与灵命, a detailed exposition on the fact that Christian faith could not take the path against reason, which served a corrective function for the church's theological direction.

Thinking back on my time at Central Seminary, although teachers and students suffered some ideological confusion due to the rapidly changing situation, overall the seminary led the students to keep to the faith while opening up their thinking and keeping up with the times.

According to my limited memory, of the graduates of Central Seminary, including those who went to NJUTS and later graduated from that institution, those who served in leadership positions in the CCC/TSPM include: Shen Yifan (vice-president of the Second and Third CCC session and concurrently general secretary of the Third);

Deng Fucun (vice-chair of the TSPM from the Fifth to the Seventh session and concurrently secretary general of the Sixth); Sun Xipei 孙锡培 (vice-president of the Fourth and Fifth CCC session); Xiang Jianhua 项建华 (vice-president of the Fourth and Fifth CCC session); and Cao Shengjie (associate general secretary of the First and Second CCC session, vice-president of the Third and Fourth CCC; and president of the Fifth CCC). At the provincial and directly-administered municipality level CC/TSPMs, those who served in leadership positions include Heliang Zhaoxuan 赫连召选 (chair of the Henan CC and president of Henan TSPM); Du Guangyan 杜光炎 (chair of the Guizhou TSPM); Cheng Zhuping 程竹坪 (vice-chair of the Shanghai Christian Affairs Commission); He Fengde 何风德 (vice-chair of the Tianjin Christian Affairs Commission); Chen Bentao 陈本涛 (vice-chair of the Jiangxi TSPM); and Yu Mingjian 俞明俭 (deputy secretary general of the Shanghai Three-Self). Following Reform and Opening Up, those still working in the church or serving in local positions include Li Wencai 李文彩 (Shanghai); Yu Yishou 虞益寿 (Shanghai); Chen Nengbiao 陈能标 (Zhejiang); Jiang Jusheng 江菊生 (Zhejiang); Ling Huimin 凌惠民 (Jiangsu); Huang Yongsheng 黄永生 (Jiangsu); Chen Jinluan 陈金銮 (Fujian); Chen Zhaoguang 陈朝光 (Fujian); Zhou Fengwu 周凤悟 (Hunan); and in addition, Helian Zhaoxuan, Shen Yifan, Deng Fucun and Sun Xipei have been members of the CPPCC and Cao Shengjie has served as a standing committee member of the CPPCC. With a total number of graduates at about forty, eleven having held leadership positions in the church at the national and provincial level is impressive.

Central Seminary's history is not a long one. As a seminary it was not large. I think the fact that it was able to produce so many leaders for Chinese Christianity on

its Three-Self path is due to two aspects of its educational vision.

The first is the SKH's relatively open-minded theology and how well it functioned. The SKH adopts comprehensiveness; it does not impose uniformity in scholarship. On a foundation of recognizing the basic tenets of faith set in the Apostles Creed and the Nicene Creed, there is flexibility in the interpretation of the Bible, which can be both rather fundamentalist, as well as accepting the "higher criticism" approach. Under the premise of an emphasis on liturgy, both "high church" and "low church" approaches can co-exist in mutual respect. In England, the Anglican Church is the established Church; doctrinally it is accepted that patriotism is right and proper; where independence is concerned, an archbishop of Canterbury spoke of the Chinese Church's Three-Self Movement as analogous to England's rejection of the Pope and a general principle of the world church. Central Seminary's more enlightened approach to theology meant that students were less likely to fall prey to extreme tendencies and were not likely to be led down dead-end passages. Rather they were brave enough to face reality, respect objective fact, accept new things. Thus they were able to step onto the broad path of patriotism and adapting to socialist development more smoothly.

The second factor is an emphasis on profound spiritual quest and a heart to make a contribution to the church. SKH has sometimes been criticized by other Christians as "unspiritual" for its emphasis on liturgy and on reasoned reflection that make it appear rather unemotional. Yet, it is this kind of focus on its historical heritage and on an attitude both rational and spiritual such that faith does not rely solely on impulse, but has a basis in reason, that has given Anglicanism a more profound understanding of dedication that is not easily shaken. The

call at Central Seminary for a monastic spirit, though at the time suspected of being a withdrawal from the world, left a deep impression on students' hearts. Having gone through the Cultural Revolution and other vicissitudes of history, those who had left the church returned to work in the church. Those still living today and whose health permits, though over eighty years old, are still active in the church and in society.

The historical experience of Central Seminary tells us that if we wish to train dependable successors for the church we must keep to the love country-love church direction and have a tolerant theology. Only in this way will we be able to establish the Chinese Christian (Protestant) Church and be able to make our contribution to socialist society.

(Special thanks to my fellow alumni Deng Fucun, Xiang Jianhua, Hong Luming 洪侶明, Huang Yongsheng 黃永生, and Hu Xiuling 胡秀玲 who shared their own recollections for this piece.)

Rev. Dr. Cao Shengjie 曹圣洁 is a former president of the China Christian Council, now retired.

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