

A New Crossroad? Sinicization of Christianity in China

1 May – 2 May

1 May Cultural excursion

- 10:30 Departure from Hotel Alexandra
11:30 Guided tour of **Roskilde Cathedral**
13:45 Lunch
18:30 Welcome dinner for all participants at **La Rocca**
Vendersgade 23, 1363 København

2 May Conference day: presentations and panel discussions

Time: 9:00-16:30

Venue: Room 4A.0.56, University of Copenhagen Southern Campus, Njalsgade 76,
2300 København S

09:00-09:15 Welcome by the organizers

9:15-12:00 Presentations

Moderator: Jørgen Delman, Professor, Dept. of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies,
University of Copenhagen

"How Chinese is "Sinicization"? Perspectives of the Adaptation of Christianity in
Contemporary China"

*By Fredrik Fällman, Senior lecturer & Deputy Head, Dept. of Languages and Literatures,
University of Gothenburg*

"The Chinese Catholic Church: Between Rome and Beijing and Sinicization from Above and
Below"

*By Richard Madsen, Professor, Department of Sociology, UCSD; Director of Fudan-UC Center
on Contemporary China, US*

"The Historical Necessity, Practical Need and Future Prospect of Sinicization of Religion in China"

By Liu Jinguang, President of China Religion Magazine

"One Building two Belief Systems. A Case of Sinicization of Christianity in Southern Jiangxi"

By Fan Lizhu, Professor, School of Social Development and Public Policy, Fudan University

"Rethinking of Sinicization of Christianity in China"

By Zhuo Xinping, Professor, Institute of World Religions, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

Questions and comments

12:00-13:00 **Lunch**

13:00-15:30 **Presentations continued**

Moderator: Hanne Petersen, Professor, Faculty of Law, University of Copenhagen

"Localization: The Generative Logic and Realizing Path of Christianity in the Ethnic Minority Areas of China in the Late 19th Century and the Early 20th Century"

By Zheng Xiaoyun, Professor, Institute of World Religions, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

"The Nee Yucheng Family and the Influence of Western Christian Missionary Schools in Fuzhou (1847-1925)"

By Christopher Wilde, Vice President, ARC

"Multiple Identities and Religious Conversion. The Case of the Jingpo Ethnic Group in Yunnan, China"

By Chen Na, Research Fellow, Center for Social Development, Fudan University

"The Denial Statement and the Rebuttal in Chinese and English"

By Abraham Ho, ARC

"Almighty god: An indigenous cult in the name of Christianity"

By Yan Kejia, Director & Research Professor, Institute of Religious Studies, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences

Questions and comments

15:30-15:45 **Brief coffee break**

15:45-16:30 **Panel discussion: "Religiosity in China: Secularization vs Religious Issues"**

Moderator: Chunrong Liu, Executive Vice Director, Fudan-European Centre for China Studies

The Nee Yucheng Family and the Influence of Western Christian Missionary Schools in Fuzhou (1847-1925)

Abraham Ho¹
Director of Education
Asia Research Center, USA

A paper presented at a conference on “Christianity and Education in Modern China”
hosted by Center for Study of Religion and Chinese Society, Shanghai University
October 29-30, 2016

Abstract:

Three Western missions (the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the American Methodist Episcopal Mission, and the Anglican Church Missionary Society) were influential in the education of three generations of the Nee family in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The educational history of the Nee family demonstrates the influence of Western missions on the education of Chinese Christians in that era. While the aim of these missions was to preach the gospel and to cultivate and produce Christian churches and ministers for their respective denominations, they also cultivated Chinese Christian leaders, of whom Watchman Nee was typical. Although Watchman Nee was prepared by his Western education, due to his diligent study of the Bible he began a Christian church movement in China entirely different from that of Western Christianity.

Key words: Christianity, Mission education, Watchman Nee, Fuzhou

¹ <http://www.asiaresearchcenter.org/>. The original paper was in Chinese; this is an English translation.

After the First Opium War (1840-1842), the Qing government signed the Treaty of Nanjing (formerly known as Nanking) (南京条约) with the British government to open five treaty ports for foreign trade. Making use of this treaty, merchants, journalists, diplomats, adventurers, and missionaries from various countries came into China. Missionaries of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) arrived in Fuzhou in 1847, followed by those of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church (North) (BFMMEC) and of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) respectively.² After 1850, the three missionary societies established their missionary centres in Fuzhou, beginning their own mission education developments and thus significantly influencing modern China. This article aims to study the influence of Western Christian missionary education in modern China, taking the Nee Yu-Cheng family and the education work of the ABCFM, the AMEM, and the CMS in Fuzhou as a case study.

I. Eastward Dissemination of Western Learning (西学东渐): The Enlightenment of Faith among First-generation Chinese Believers

Fuzhou (formerly known as Foochow) (福州) is situated on the southeast coast of Fujian (formerly Fukien) (福建) province, China. On account of its geographical advantages, since the early and mid-Qing dynasty, Fuzhou has been a significant maritime trade area and a starting port of the Maritime Silk Road (海上丝绸之路). After the signing of the Treaty of Nanjing, Fuzhou became one of the five earliest ports opened for foreign trade with Western countries. Stephen Johnson (杨顺, 1803-1886)³, the first missionary sent by ABCFM, was the Western missionary to arrive earliest in Fuzhou. After having arrived in Fuzhou in January, 1847, Johnson regarded Fuzhou full of potential as a missionary centre. Thus, he wrote a letter asking the ABCFM to send more missionaries to Fuzhou. In his letter, Johnson praised the landscape of Fuzhou. The beauty of the Min River (闽江) resembled that of the Hudson River in New York, even surpassing it. This praise showed Johnson's fondness for Fuzhou.⁴ After their arrival in Fuzhou, Western missionaries encountered a number of challenges, primarily the challenge of accommodation. At that time, since Fuzhou residents had had very little experience with

¹ Dunch, Ryan. *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China 1857-1927*, New Haven: Yale University, 2001, pp. 3-4.

² Carlson, Ellsworth C., *The Foochow Missionaries 1847-1880*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1974, pp. 1-2

⁴ Ibid., pp.1-2.

Westerners, most of them were hostile towards these outsiders and unwilling to rent houses to the foreigners. Even though some might want to rent out their houses for financial reasons, they faced opposition from their neighbours and even from the local officials, who feared that the Westerners would make trouble in their localities. Twenty-seven missionaries arrived in Fuzhou around 1850, yet only 15 stayed after 1853. The rest either went back to their home countries due to illness or died in Fuzhou because of the lack of medical care.⁵

Most of the missionaries were well educated. After their arrival in Fuzhou, their first task was to learn Mandarin and Fuzhou dialects.⁶ Their next step was to spread Christianity through establishing schools. Natives were employed to teach Chinese and the Fuzhou dialect so that they could preach the gospel directly to the local people. Once the missionaries found accommodations to settle down, they made use of their houses as classrooms, chapels, or clinics through which to make contact with the Chinese people. By 1850, missionaries from these three mission societies were running their own schools. Initially, they ran day schools, which were simple in operation.⁷ This type of school normally employed only one native Chinese teacher while the missionaries took charge of recruiting students. Students came from all kinds of backgrounds, but mostly from underprivileged families. Students would spend four to six years to study and all their basic necessities were covered by the school. If a student's academic results were not satisfactory, he could be dismissed by the school; if the parents wanted to withdraw their child from the school, they were required to reimburse all the expenses incurred, including clothing, room and board. The school also provided students with free stationery, and occasionally an outstanding student would be rewarded with a small scholarship and even free meals.⁸ The curriculum arrangement was that for the first half of the day a Chinese teacher would give Chinese lessons in a traditional Chinese teaching method, where the teacher would sit there reading a text aloud and students would repeat after him until they were able to recite the passage. Of course the Chinese teachers were not Christians. Given that the missionaries aimed to evangelize, the second half of every day was devoted to spiritual lessons, teaching the students about the Christian religion and the Scripture as well as some knowledge about Western

⁵ Ibid., p.11.

⁶ Ibid., p.8.

⁷ Ibid., p.50.

⁸ Ibid., p.51.

culture. Students were required to memorize a set portion of New Testament verses⁹ and were taught the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, some hymns, and biblical stories every week.

Over time the day schools could no longer meet the increasing need, so missionaries began to establish boarding schools around 1854. At the beginning, the schools accepted only boys¹⁰ from age 12 to 18. As far as preaching to the students was concerned, it was much more effective in boarding schools than in day schools. As a missionary put it, "All the children (who were in boarding schools) were entirely under our influence for a term of years."¹¹ As early as 1847, the ABCFM established a free private school (义塾) in Zhongzhou (中洲), a main traffic route outside of Fuzhou City. According to the statistics reported by Justus Doolittle (卢公明) of the ABCFM on January 5, 1852, four free private schools were run by the ABCFM in Fuzhou, which included 54 boys and 33 girls, 87 students in total. The total expenditure of the schools was US\$ 524.89. There were 216 books in the mission libraries and four school buildings, etc."¹² In 2016 this author visited Trinity College in Ireland searching for any related material. I came across a meeting minutes of the Anglican Church in 1899,¹³ which may help us understand more how the early missionaries trained Chinese preachers or pastors. According to this record, the purpose of setting up such schools in early days was to train Chinese males to be preachers, so as to assist the work of the Western missionaries locally. Though at various school levels, namely, day schools, boarding schools, colleges, or seminaries, the Chinese students were to receive rigorous training in biblical studies, in preaching, and in the exposition of Christian classics as required by the British educational standard. Those burdened to become a preacher was required to complete all necessary coursework and pass both Chinese and English language examinations, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing, before being hired by the mission societies. The salary of a local preacher in the first year was three dollars in the local currency. After a one-year probationary period, the preachers might need to train for another year or longer. They must comply with all regulations during the training and only those who met all requirements would be employed as preachers. Boarding schools differed from day schools in that they aimed not

⁹ Ibid., p.50.

¹⁰ Ibid., p.52.

¹¹ Ibid., p.53.

¹² Jian Lin (林健), "Exploring the History of Theological Education by the Anglican-Episcopal Church (近代福州圣公会神学教育史初探) in *The History of Fukien and Sino-Western Cultural Exchange* (《福建与中西文化交流史论》), Jinshui Lin (林金水) ed., (Beijing: Ocean, 2015), p.142

¹³ Church Missionary Society. *Rules of Fukien Conference*, Foochow Printing Press, March 1899, DUFEM 43

only to convert Chinese students to Christianity but also to cultivate them as Christian workers who could coordinate with Western missionaries in the preaching ministry and even be able to work independently in the countryside.

Through setting up schools, the missionaries were able to make contact with local Fuzhou people more easily, thus gaining the first group of Chinese converts. In 1856, at Baofushan (保福山), the ABCFM baptized by sprinkling a teacher who was teaching at the free private school established by Justus Doolittle (see Mr. Ting in Table 1). This teacher became the first Chinese believer (in Fuzhou). Next year, four more Chinese believers were added to the ABCFM. However, due to the unfriendly attitudes of the Chinese toward Christianity at that time, these believers did not remain firm in their faith. For example, one of the early local members of the ABCFM, Wang Bincheng (王炳臣), left the church later, and two local believers of the Anglican Church in Fuzhou, Paul Zheng and Xie Shoulian (谢守廉), were excommunicated due to their breaking of the commandments (see Table 1).

Table 1. Baptism of the First Group of Believers by Christian Missions in Fuzhou

Mission society	Date of first baptism	Believers' Names	Believers' Background	Form of Baptism / Location	Pastor who performed the baptism
ABCFM	April 1856	Mr. Ting (丁)	A teacher of Doolittle's free private school	By Sprinkling in a house at Baofushan	Justus Doolittle (卢公明)
	Oct 1857	Shen Shouzhen (沈守真), Nee Yucheng (Grandfather of Watchman Nee), Liu Mengshi (刘孟湜), Wang Bingchen (王炳臣)	Students of Doolittle's School, "Gospel Home" (福音精舍)	By Sprinkling in Church of the Saviour (救主堂) in Puqianding.	
AMEM	June 14, 1857	Chen An (given name: Yonggao 永高) and his wife and children, 5 people in total.	A 47-year-old man who was the owner of Tiantai Dye House (天泰染坊) in Hujie Road (虎节路), Fuzhou (福州), his hometown is Changle (长乐)	By Sprinkling in Church of Heavenly Peace (天安堂)	Robert Samuel Maclay (麦利和)
CMS	March 31, 1861	Lin Shouqian (林守谦), Lin Jiuru (林九如)		By Sprinkling at the preaching site under the courier station bridge (驿前桥) in Fuzhou City.	George Smith (密会长)
	July 4, 1861	Zheng Baoling (郑保灵), Xie Shoulian (谢守廉)	Zheng was a farmer from Xibian Township (西边乡), Mingho County (閩侯县)		

Sources: Jian Lin (林健), *The Origins and Development of Anglican Theological Education in Modern Fuzhou* 《近代福州圣公会神学教育事工的创始和发展》

Because of the conservative culture of Fujian people, there were very few Christians. Nee Yucheng, who was born in 1840, became the first in the Nee family that converted to Christianity. Possibly owing to the poverty of his family, Nee Yucheng attended Doolittle's church school.¹⁴ According to extant historical sources, though lacking definite record, Nee might have enrolled in an ABCFM school in or around 1853 when he was 13. He probably attended one of the four day schools then transferred to a boarding school to continue his study because of good academic performance. In the ABCFM's evaluation, Nee, along with three other students, were considered as "having both good knowledge and morals and committing themselves to preaching after being baptized by sprinkling out of a strong faith. Except for Wang Bingchen who left the work halfway, these three were faithful in the Lord's work. They did not fear hardships or resistance, willingly bearing the Lord's cross."¹⁵ Nee Yucheng was also the first Chinese pastor ordained by the ABCFM.¹⁶ According to the study of Ryan Dunch (唐日安), though the ABCFM began its missionary work in Fuzhou very early, its progress was slowest.¹⁷ The ABCFM focused more on translation of gospel materials and gospel-related books. As early as 1881, the ABCFM ordained its first pastor. From 1881 to 1891, the ABCFM ordained six pastors in total.¹⁸ Hence, Nee Yucheng was likely to be ordained in 1881, when he was at least 41 and had a family with children.

After the end of the first Opium War, a significant number of Christian denominations sent missionaries into Fujian. The local converts, nevertheless, were few in number. Most of the first-generation converts were from the lower class, people on the margins of society. The ABCFM had hoped to find spouses among the locals for their first-generation believers, building up a good example of Christian marriages. When it was not successful, they were "forced to find virtuous women (贤德学女) from other areas (异地借材, 秦晋联婚)" such as Ningbo (宁波)

¹⁴ *The Chinese Recorder*, Shanghai, 1881, Vol. 12, p. 62.

¹⁵ Huai-Yo Wong (翁怀友), "The Missionary History of the Congregational Church in Fuzhou" (福州公理会传道史), *Nanjing Theological Review- Special Articles A* (《金陵神学誌特号甲篇》), 1924, p. 191.

¹⁶ *The Chinese Recorder*, Shanghai, 1881, Vol. 12, p. 62.

¹⁷ Dunch, Ryan. *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China 1857-1927*, New Haven: Yale University, 2001, p. 17.

¹⁸ Ibid., p.18.

and Guangdong (广东).¹⁹ Eventually, Nee Yucheng married a Christian woman from Guangdong, formed a Christian family, and bore nine children, one of whom was Nee Wenxiu (倪文修).²⁰ Prior to his death in 1890, Nee Yucheng had served as a preacher for thirty years at the Church of the Saviour with a congregation of more than 150 members. Such a long service must have helped elevate the social and economic status of the Nee family.²¹ Perhaps partly owing to his own childhood experience and partly due to the trend of the times, Nee Yucheng put great emphasis on providing an education for his children, expecting that they would become civil officers via the imperial examinations.

II. Simultaneously Chinese and Western (中西之间): Cultural Characteristics of Second-Generation Chinese Believers

The BFMMEC, which was the most successful mission in Fuzhou, sent its first missionary, Robert Samuel Maclay (麦利和, 1824-1907), [from America] to Fuzhou in 1848.²² Maclay diligently studied Fuzhou dialect and together with Caleb Cook Baldwin (摩嘉立, 1820-1911) edited and put out two books: *the Alphabetic Dictionary of Foochow Dialect* 《福州方言拼音字典》(1870) and *Manual of the Foochow Dialect* 《榕腔初学撮要》(1871).²³ Regarding the running of schools, the BFMMEC began later than the ABCFM; nevertheless, the scale and quality of the BFMMEC schools exceeded those of the schools run by the ABCFM. In 1891, the BFMMEC already had 81 schools with 1,271 students, whereas the ABCFM only had 31 schools with 452 students during the same period. All the BFMMEC schools offered classes on religion, English, arithmetic, natural sciences, and arts. Their Chinese classes were taught by local tutors (塾师) in Foochow dialect using texts such as Beginners' Chinese, the *Three Character Classics* (三字经), and the *Thousand Character Classics* (千字文). Most of other classes were taught by

¹⁹ Huai-Yo Wong (翁怀友), "The Missionary History of the Congregational Church in Fuzhou" (福州公理会传道史), *Nanjing Theological Review*- special articles A (《金陵神學誌特号甲篇》), 1924, p. 192.

²⁰ James Shih-Chieh Cha (查时杰), *Concise Biographies of Important Chinese Christians*, vol. 2 (《中国基督教人物小传》下卷) (Taipei: China Evangelical Seminary, 1983), p. 307.

²¹ Huai-Yo Wong (翁怀友), "The Missionary History of the Congregational Church in Fuzhou" (福州公理会传道史), *Nanjing Theological Review*- Special Articles A (《金陵神學誌特号甲篇》), 1924, p. 192.

²² Carlson, Ellsworth C., *The Foochow Missionaries 1847-1880*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1974, p. 10

²³ *The Alphabetic Dictionary of Foochow Dialect* (1870), *Manual of the Foochow Dialect* (1871). See Shan-Shan Wu (吴姗姗), "The Study of the Mandarin Phonetic Symbols and Tone System on the Alphabetic Dictionary of Foochow Dialect" (《福州方言拼音字典》注音系统及声韵调系统研究), *Journal of Inner Mongolia Agricultural University* (《内蒙古农业大学学报》), 2011, Issue 6.

American teachers using English textbooks from America.²⁴ By 1900, the BFMMEC had as many as 275 schools and an enrollment of 6,296 students.²⁵ Through the effort of missionaries over forty years, this kind of mission schools have spread all over Fuzhou and the surrounding towns and villages. Chinese believers gradually participated in managing the churches and had certain influence on the decision making in the churches. They requested that the schools expand the curriculum in English and sciences and called for an increased influence of the church in Chinese society.²⁶ These notions reflected the expectation of the Chinese parents for their children at the time. The parents enrolled their children in church schools with a view to receive a Western education in science and culture with which their children could seek positions in the government and obtain a high social status. Given such expectation, the church schools were forced to make adjustments by expanding their operation; in addition to elementary-level schools, middle and high schools were added. In this way the church schools met the need of both evangelism and producing Christian elites in Chinese society so that Christianity could extend its influence from the middle-lower class to the upper social class. For this purpose, the BFMMEC established Heling Anglo-Chinese College (鹤龄英华书院) in 1881.²⁷

Heling Anglo-Chinese College was the most well-known church school at the time. It had an eight-year middle-school program and two four-year programs, in Chinese and English respectively. The College aimed to produce graduates that were not only Christians but Christians well versed in both Chinese and Western cultures to become future leaders and managers in China. To meet the need of the Chinese people on one hand and to recruit more students on the other, in 1903 the College set forth a *Charter Rules and Regulations of the Heling Anglo-Chinese College* (《鹤龄英华书院肄业章程并学舍规定》), requiring that all new students have basic knowledge of classic Chinese as well as of books such as the *Classic of Poetry* and the *Five Classics*. The *Charter Rules* even declared that "Since Mandarin Chinese is the indispensable common dialect in China, to equip our students for future official functions, we employ a genuine native Mandarin speaker to provide an hour-long tutorial each day for our

²⁴ Jie-Gang Xie (谢皆刚), *Simultaneously Chinese and Western: A Second-Generation Christian Wenxiu Nee* (《中西之间：第二代基督徒倪文修》), not yet published (The Chinese Christianity Research Center of Fujian Normal University), p.2.

²⁵ Dunch, Ryan. *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China 1857-1927*, New Haven: Yale University, 2001, pp. 19-20.

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 22, 39

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 38-39

classes.²⁸ Due to the deep-rooted influence of the imperial examinations, many potential students wanted to complete the church school program as soon as possible and then take the imperial examinations. In order to attract more students, according to the "Questions and Answers on the Examinations of Heling Anglo-Chinese College"(《考问英华书院报单》) posted in the *Fujian Province Report* (《闽省会报》) in 1887, Heling Anglo-Chinese College, which had an enrollment of about 60 students, placed an emphasis on "poetry."²⁹ Thus, though Heling Anglo-Chinese College was a church school, it provided courses on Confucian Classics and teaching them in the traditional Chinese way, so that its graduates would be able to compete with others in the imperial examinations.³⁰ Moreover, almost all the students did not convert to Christianity. As far as the Chinese students were concerned, the most important reason to attend a church school was that Western education was very practical. In addition to classes on religion, English, arithmetic, natural sciences, and the arts, "Chinese classes are taught by local tutors in Fuzhou dialect, using texts such as *Beginners' Chinese*, *Three Characters Classics*, and *A Thousand Characters Classics*." Furthermore, the church schools reformed their system after the American high-school model by establishing a Chinese department (College level) and a Western language department (English class). "The English classes were mainly taught by American teachers with English textbooks from America, while the Chinese classes were taught by well-known scholars and guest speakers." "Students were rather proficient in English, and some, before they even graduated, were already qualified to work in Western companies or government agencies such as the post office and the customs office, with a good salary and a steady job." Although the students in church schools were enthusiastic about learning English, they did not give up taking Chinese classes and getting ahead through the imperial examinations. At this time, instead of providing free education to lower-class families as their predecessors did, the church schools targeted students from middle and upper-class families and charged high tuition fees.³¹

²⁸The Light of Fujian: Records of the Affiliated Middle School of Fujian Normal University (《八闽之光：福州师范大学附属中学校志》) (Fujian: The Affiliated Middle School Of Fujian Normal University, 2001); See Jie-Gang Xie, *Simultaneously Chinese and Western*, p.2.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Hong Shen (沈弘) ed. & trans., *The Lost History of China in the West* (《遗失在西方的中国史》) (Beijing: Modern Chinese Press, 2014), p.36, quoted in Jie-Gang Xie, *Simultaneously Chinese and Western*, p. 2.

³¹Ibid.

The church schools originally set up a Western curriculum with an aim to provide education to lower-class people and to spread religion. However, Fuzhou, the capital city of Fujian province, was known as the “cultural city by the sea,” a place where Confucianism was prevalent and where people honored Confucian education and were keen in obtaining government positions via the imperial examinations. There was a family in Fuzhou that was admired by all because the father and three of his sons obtained the rank of "Jinshi" (进士) and all six sons obtained the rank of "Kejia" (科甲) in the imperial examinations. On the other hand, in the church schools in Fujian, particularly Heling Anglo-Chinese College and Foochow College (founded by the ABCFM missionary Justus Doolittle), the Chinese students who received authentic American education became open to the new ideas of democratic revolution. As early as in the 1880s, some students formed new organizations such as YMCA (青年会) to propagate the new ideas. In 1905, the Anti-American movement in protest against Chinese people being excluded in America was initiated mainly by the Chinese students educated in the Western education system. The students in Heling Anglo-Chinese College and Foochow College were said to be "full of indignation and went on strike"³² in protest of the Chinese being excluded in American society. Generally speaking, though the second-generation Chinese Christians received Western education from a young age, due to the environment and their own background, they did not put aside traditional values and ways; their concept and their conduct were a kind of hybrid, possessing both Chinese and Western ways simultaneously. This was a typical characteristic of the Chinese Christians during the late period of the Qing dynasty and the early Republic era.

Nee Wenxiu (1877–1941), the fourth son of Nee Yucheng, was born in 1877. In view of his own experience and the trend of the age, Nee Yucheng hired traditional Chinese tutors of renown to teach Nee Wenxiu, setting him on the path of obtaining a government position via the imperial examinations. Nee Wenxiu was later sent to Heling Anglo-Chinese College to receive a Western education as well.³³ Under this arrangement, Nee Wenxiu received a Western education and also took the imperial examinations. Before graduating from the middle school, he passed

³² Ibid., p.3.

³³ There was no record of the exact date when Nee Wenxiu was admitted to the Heling Anglo-Chinese College. However, according to the College's rules and regulations, to be admitted to the College, a child must be “above 13 years of age, from a family with good repute, kind-hearted, and with a good knowledge of Chinese.” The first class of graduates of Heling Anglo-Chinese College in 1890 did not include Nee Wenxiu’s name. Hence, it is surmised that he attended the eight-year middle-school program. See Jie-Gang Xie, *Simultaneously Chinese and Western*.

the local level of imperial examinations in Fuzhou (福州府院试) and achieved the rank of "Xiucai" (秀才), which qualified him to be a serving officer. Two imperial examinations were held in Fuzhou (福州府院试) in the 1890s, one in 1892 and the other in 1895. Nee Wenxiu most likely took the exam in 1895 and earned the rank of Xiucai. On account of his results from the exam and his proficiency in English, he received an offer to work at the customs office in Swatow (汕头, now Shantou), also known as Chao City (潮), which he began in March 1896.³⁴ In the modern Chinese government, the Maritime Customs Service was rather unique in that though one of the Chinese government agencies, it was actually controlled by foreign officers with English being the language at work. Most Chinese officers in the customs office were ranked lower than their foreign counterparts.

Nee Wenxiu began his work at the customs office as a probationary back-office clerk (后班) with a monthly salary of 35 Tael (海关两). With his job secured in 1899 he married Lin Heping. As early as in 1895 when Nee Wenxiu obtained the rank of Xiucai his parents had begun to prepare for his marriage. In the eyes of local genteel people, Nee Wenxiu's background was rather odd. He was neither a descendant from a noble family nor a brilliant student rising from a humble family. Instead, he grew up in a religious family, studied in a church school, and eventually worked in a foreign office. His somewhat awkward background caused a number of marriage proposals from his parents on his behalf to be turned down. Lin Heping was the adopted daughter of a rich business man who worked for a foreign company in Nantai (南台), southern Fuzhou. In 1886, Lin's father became seriously ill. His boss, Zhang Heling (Hok-ling Diong, 张鹤龄),³⁵ chief patron of Heling Anglo-Chinese College, proposed to invite a pastor to pray for Lin's father. Afterward, Lin Heping attended Yuying Girls' School (毓英女塾) founded by an American Methodist, Erastus Wentworth, in Jinjiang (晋江), Fujian, and received a Western education. In 1898, after several failures in match-making for Nee Wenxiu, his parents proposed a marriage to Heping with the Lin family. Heping's father, having been persuaded by his wife, asked Heping to give up her study and return to Fuzhou to get married. On October 19, 1899, Nee Wenxiu and Lin Heping were married and they moved south to Shantou shortly after.

³⁴ Report of Chao customs office submitted to the Secretary of Taxation (《潮海关呈总税务司文》) (No. 101), in Guangdong Archives Hall, quoted in Jie-Gang Xie, *Simultaneously Chinese and Western*, pp. 3-4.

³⁵ Dunch, Ryan. *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China 1857-1927*, New Haven: Yale University, 2001, p. 22

In 1906, Nee Wenxiu was promoted to grade 4 front-office clerk (四段前班) and his monthly salary was increased to 50 Tael, and subsequently to 60 Tael by the end of the year.³⁶ In Shantou, Lin Heping also ran a successful business selling embroidery products with the help of her father. At the end of 1908, Nee Wenxiu was transferred to the customs office in Suzhou (苏州), so Lin Heping gave up her business in Shantou and the whole family moved to Suzhou. In 1909, Nee Wenxiu's mother asked him to return to Fuzhou to take care of elderly relatives.³⁷ Out of filial piety Nee Wenxiu took leave from work and moved back to Fuzhou. After settling in Fuzhou, Nee Wenxiu recruited a Xiucai, though the imperial exams had already stopped, to teach his children the Chinese classics such as calligraphy, *Three Characters Classics, Family Names* (百家姓), and *the Four Books*. He also provided his children with Western education such as piano and bible classes, the latter of which was taught by Lin Heping herself and other teachers on Sundays.

In 1909, Huang Naishang (黄乃裳, 1849–1924) was elected as a member of the parliament in Fujian Province (福建咨议局) and stayed in Fuzhou. Huang was a good friend of the Nee family. It is believed that Nee Wenxiu joined the Chinese Revolutionary Alliance (同盟会) through the recommendation of Huang. On April 1, 1911, Nee Wenxiu was appointed as a committee member of the Fuzhou Maritime Customs Office (海关委员) by General Pu Shou (朴寿, 1856–1911) in Fuzhou. The committee members of the Fujian Maritime Customs Office were representatives assigned by the Fuzhou general and charged to take care of taxation and opium Likin taxation (鸦片厘金) affairs. Before March of 1908, the committee members of the Fuzhou and Xiamen (aka Amoy 厦门) Maritime Customs Offices had always been Manchurian [note: descendants of Qing dynasty]. From 1911 onward, the Han people began to be assigned as officers and Nee Wenxiu was one of the four Han officers in Fuzhou Maritime Customs Office. On October 10, 1911, Wuchang Uprising (武昌起义) broke out and spread over southern China. Nee Wenxiu became actively involved in the uprising and his wife was also full of sympathies for the revolution. After the success of the uprising, Lin Heping was even awarded a second-

³⁶ Zhong-Ping Yan, ed., Series of References of Economic History of Modern China (中国近代经济史参考资料丛刊) vol. 9: Imperialism and Chinese Customs: Chinese Customs and Xinhai Revolution (《帝国主义与中国海关资料丛编之九：中国海关与辛亥革命》) (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Co., 1964).

³⁷ He-Ping Lin, *Autobiography of He-Ping Lin* (《恩爱标本》) (Shanghai: Zhenru Press (真茹出版社), 1943), p.7.

class medal (二等勋章) by the Peking government through the recommendation of the Fujian military governor, Sun Daoren (孙道仁, 1867-1932). On October 15, 1911, Nee Wenxiu assumed the office of Fuzhou and Xiamen Maritime Customs Office under the new government; he held the post until May 4, 1914. When the Japanese army occupied Fuzhou on April 21, 1941, he fled to Hong Kong where he passed away at the end of the year.³⁸

In the above brief history of Nee Wenxiu, we have a glimpse of the life of second-generation Chinese Christians who grew up in an environment where both the Chinese imperial education and the Western education were taught, where Chinese values and cultures were mixed with the Western ones, and where the old met the new. Though these second-generation Chinese Christians exhibited both Chinese and Western cultural characteristics simultaneously, perhaps their core was still Chinese, which could be detected by their patriotic stance against any prejudice from overseas. A phrase that was popular during that time may well describe the kind of attitude a Chinese Christian held towards their unique educational background: 中学为体西学为用, loosely translated: Take Chinese education as fundamental principles with Western education for practical use. As we shall see, this Sino-Western form of education was further developed and even changed by the third-generation Chinese Christians and brought a deep influence to modern Chinese society.

III. Breaking through the Old and Establishing the New (大破大立): The Practice of Indigenization among Third-generation Chinese Believers

Before the twentieth century, students in Christian schools outnumbered those in public schools. Along with the establishment of the new educational systems in China in 1902 (壬寅学制) and 1904 (癸卯学制) respectively, and with the abolition of the imperial examinations (科举制度), education system in modern China underwent a rapid development and the number of students in the public system gradually outgrew that in the Christian schools. In 1906, there were 3.4 times as many students in public schools as those in church schools. By 1915, the number reached 4,294,251, which was 24 times the number of students in Christian schools.³⁹ This exerted great pressure on Christian organizations that operated schools. During China's

³⁸ Jie-Gang Xie, *Simultaneously Chinese and Western*, pp. 4-5.

³⁹ Bo Zhang (章博), *Social Changes in Modern China and the Development of Christian Colleges: a Case Study of Central China University* (《近代中国社会变迁与基督教学大学的发展—以华中大学为中心的研究》), Wuhan, China: Central China Normal University Press (华中师范大学出版社), 2010, pp. 39-40.

Centenary Christian Missionary Conference (中国基督教传教百周年会议) held in Shanghai in 1907, missionaries proposed to centralize Christian schools and improve the quality of education in order to compete with the public schools. Since then, Christian schools have shifted its focus from evangelism to education by gradually increasing the hours in English and science lessons, and even adding physical education classes such as basketball and gymnastics to the curriculum.⁴⁰ This reform had a significant effect on producing third-generation Christians, such as Watchman Nee, with an excellent spoken and written English proficiency.

Of the three mission societies in Fuzhou the Anglican Church Missionary Society (CMS) emphasized more on evangelism, the increase of church members in numbers, and establishing churches. In 1862, CMS missionary John Richard Wolfe (胡约翰 1832—1915) was sent to Fuzhou. He put much effort into preaching and establishing churches but was lackadaisical about setting up schools. By 1880, the development of the CMS surpassed the other two missions with 113 mission stations, 3,556 converts, and 93 catechists.⁴¹ In 1876, a CMS missionary, Robert Warren Stewart (史萃伯), arrived in Fujian. He valued education and started to systematically plan out CMS's educational work in Fujian. Stewart observed that Chinese people had a respect for learning and a high regard for scholars; it would be more efficacious if resources be devoted to educating Chinese students and turning them into Christian preachers. From his point of view, evangelic work in China should be carried out by the Chinese themselves after all.⁴² He began to improve literacy by setting up day schools in Fu-Ning (福宁府), which is today's Puxia County (霞浦县) in east Fujian (闽东), and nearby villages. In ten years' time he had set up 82 day schools. His plan was to select some academically outstanding students from the village schools and send them to the middle school in Fu-Ning and finally to high school and the theological college in Fuzhou for further education.⁴³ The Chinese preachers produced in this way proved to be very effective among the Chinese people. Twenty years after the implementation of Robert Stewart's plan, in 1905 the CMS had more than 200 schools in eastern and northern Fujian, such

⁴⁰ Gwynn, R.M., Norton, E.M., Simpson, B.W. Compiled for the Mission's Jubilee. *T.C.D. in China: a History of the Dublin University Fukien Mission 1885-1935*. Dublin: Hodges, Figgis & Co., Ltd., 1911, p. 61. Courtesy of Trinity College Library Catalog PB 285-662 [herewith abbreviated as *T.C.D. in China*]

⁴¹ Dunch, Ryan. *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China 1857-1927*, New Haven: Yale University, 2001, p.19

⁴² *T.C.D. in China*, p. 16.

⁴³ *T.C.D. in China*, pp. 17-19.

as Minho (闽侯), Fuqing (福清), Putian (莆田), and Xianyou (仙游), with 3,192 students.⁴⁴ The aforementioned John Richard Wolfe, who had been rather reserved in his attitude toward setting up schools, changed his mind and said, "I am persuaded that the time has now come when we as a Mission should no longer hold back from doing all we can to take part in this work of giving the young men of this city and province an English education. They will have it from whatever quarter they can, and it is most desirable that they shall have it through the medium of Christianity rather than through that of atheism, infidelity or pure heathenism. I have not, I candidly confess, always taken this view of the question. I have been much opposed to missionaries employing their time in teaching English or Western science to the Chinese; but circumstances alter cases, and I feel quite justified in strongly advocating what I once strongly opposed."⁴⁵

In the meantime, the Trinity College in Ireland responded to Stewart's advocacy to take part in evangelism in the Far East by setting up the Far East Mission, Dublin University Fukien Mission, DUFM, or the Anglican Foochow Mission (远东传道会和福建传道会) in 1886. In 1906, the person-in-charge of the Far East Mission, Horace MacCartie Eyre Price (贝嘉德), went to Fuzhou to inspect the status of their Christian schools. He decided to move the education center of the Anglican Church from Fu-Ning to Fuzhou and assigned W.S. Pakenham-Walsh (万拨文) to be in charge. At that time, the day schools run by the Anglican Church were scattered across the province and the selected rural boys from different villages were sent to the boarding schools in Fuzhou. W.S. Pakenham-Walsh, who had had experiences running schools in other places, saw new opportunities for work afforded by the change in society at the time: the imperial examinations were recently abolished (announced in 1905 and implemented in 1906), and new scientific grading system, modern textbooks, and advanced instruments all began to feed into the enormous national education system.⁴⁶ In the past, Christian schools were primarily for training church workers, preachers, or missionaries, but they could no longer meet the need arising in the new environment. Many Chinese believers within the Anglican Church also requested the mission society to set up English schools so that their children could receive an

⁴⁴ Yu-Cang Liu (刘玉苍), *Selections of Cultural and Historical Data* (《文史资料选编》): vol. 5: Protestant and Catholic churches (基督教天主教篇) (Fujian, China: Fujian People's Publishing House, 2003), pp. 424-445.

⁴⁵ T.C.D. in China, p. 39.

⁴⁶ T.C.D. in China, p. 42.

English education similar to the one offered by the American Methodist's (BFMMEC) Heling Anglo-Chinese College.⁴⁷ Seizing this opportunity, in 1907 Pakenham-Walsh started St. Mark's College (圣马可书院) in Shipu (施埔), Cangshan County (苍山), southern Fuzhou. The college aimed to provide a high quality of English education for all Christian and non-Christian boys whose families could afford the fees, and this in turn enabled the college to become self-sufficient financially so that it would not be a burden to the mission society.⁴⁸ There were only 10 students in the first class, but the number increased rapidly as the reputation of the college spread. Thirty-three students were enrolled in the second class, and they were divided into four levels to complete an eight-year program.⁴⁹ In 1909, the college received 150 applications but accepted only 100 students because of its limited capacity.⁵⁰ In the same year, the Anglican Church commissioned DUFM to take charge of the management of St. Mark's College⁵¹ while the Anglican mission would provide funds and teachers.⁵²

In 1908, the CMS agreed to grant £5,000 to purchase a building that used to be a Russian consulate office,⁵³ four more houses, and a farmland nearby to build a new campus for the Trinity College in Fuzhou. Two schools, Foochow Boys' School (广学书院) and CMS Qiao-Nan Primary School (桥南两等小学校), all established before St. Mark's College, were consolidated with St. Mark's College and moved to the new site. In 1912, the new school was officially named Trinity College Foochow.⁵⁴ St. Mark's College was renamed as Anglo-Chinese

⁴⁷ T.C.D. in China, p. 50.

⁴⁸ T.C.D. in China, pp. 45-46.

⁴⁹ There is a discrepancy between the record in Chinese (see Yu-Cang Liu in note 43 and others) and T.C.D.'s record. According to T.C.D. in China, the college accepted 75 students in the school year of 1908 and 100 applicants were turned away due to limited capacity (p. 45).

⁵⁰ Yu-Cang Liu, *Selection of Cultural and Historical Data*: Vol. 5: Protestant and Catholic churches, pp. 424-445.

⁵¹ T.C.D. in China, p. 47.

⁵² W. S. Pakenham-Walsh (万拔文) was constantly worried about the shortage of teachers. This author obtained a copy of a letter by Pakenham-Walsh written on September 14, 1908, mentioning both the progress on the building of college facilities and the need for teachers, and asking for help from the Anglican Church. On December 22 of the same year, the Anglican Church replied apologetically that they could not offer any help. See Appendices 1 and 2.

⁵³ T.C.D. in China, p. 47. See Appendix 3. The Anglican Church notified the Anglican Foochow Mission that the Board of Directors of the Anglican Church had approved of a grant of £5,000 for the work in Fujian and listed the following approved usage: expanding St. Mark's College, the middle School, the chapel of the elementary school, the gymnasium, and the dormitories, and constructing apartments for single and married Western missionaries and four Chinese teachers. There was also £300 allotted for a girls' school (note: should be the CMS Girls' School).

⁵⁴ T.C.D. in China, p. 51. Liu recalled three reasons for the naming of "Trinity College Foochow": First, there was a close connection between the new college and DUFM, and all the core members of DUFM were from Trinity College in Dublin; second, the new college was formed by integrating three schools; third, "trinity" is a fundamental doctrine of Christianity and God is Triune. By naming the school as such it characterized the new college as a Christian college. See Yu-Cang Liu, *Selection of Cultural and Historical Data*: Vol. 5: Protestant and Catholic churches, pp. 424-445.

School of Trinity College Foochow (汉英英华书院). To differentiate this school from Heling Anglo-Chinese College established by the Methodist mission BFMME, for the rest of this paper we will use “Anglo-Chinese Trinity School” to refer to the CMS school that was formerly St. Mark’s College. To our knowledge, there was another school that was established by Western missionaries during the 1800s and used the same designation “Anglo-Chinese.” This college is still in existence.⁵⁵

The Anglo-Chinese Trinity School had an eight-year program in four levels; both English and Chinese were used as the medium of instruction but English was the primary one. Most of the students came from well-off non-Christian families that could afford the high tuition and were expected to obtain well-paid jobs after graduation. The Foochow Boys’ School was renamed “the Middle School” (中学), where Chinese was the medium of instruction and included a six-year program with an additional one-year teacher training course. Most of the students in the Middle School were selected from the CMS-run day schools among the farming villages. These students were trained to be teachers and preachers for the church. The CMS Qiao-Nan Primary School retained its original name; it had a six-year program consisting of a three-year junior elementary and a three-year senior elementary courses (see Table 2).⁵⁶

Table 2: A List of Anglican Theological and General Education Institutes in Modern Fuzhou

School Name	Year Founded	Founder	Address	Feature	Program	Chapel	Mission
CMS Girls’ School	1863	Mrs. George Smith (密太太)	Initially established in Wushishan (烏石山), later moved to Aotou Peak (鳌头峰) in Cangshan (苍山). (Today it is the music department of Fujian Normal University (福州师范大学))	first named Wushishan Girls' Private School, later changed to Girls' Middle School in the Republic era.		St. Paul Church (圣保罗堂)	CMS
Qiao-Nan Primary School	1863	John Richard Wolfe	Initially established in Wushishan, later moved to Park Road (公园路) in Cangshan (苍山).	Initially named as Wushishan Boys' Private School, later	Six-year program, including senior and junior		CMS

⁵⁵ Robert Morrison, the first Protestant missionary to China, established an Anglo-Chinese College (英华书院 Ying Wa College) in Malacca in 1818. Ying Wa College is now located in Hong Kong. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ying_Wa_College, accessed on November 9, 2017.

⁵⁶ T.C.D. in China, pp. 51-52.

			(Today's Fuzhou Foreign Language School (福州外国语学校))	turned into a boarding school	elementary, each three year.		
Foochow Boys' School	1867	John Richard Wolfe	Initially established in Wushishan, later moved to Park Road (公园路) in Cangshan (苍山). (Today's Fuzhou Foreign Language School (福州外国语学校))	Boys' middle school	Six-year program, one additional year for teacher training		CMS
St. Marks' College (later called Anglo-Chinese School)	1907	W.S. Pakenham-Walsh	Park Road (公园路) in Canshan (苍山). (Today's Fuzhou Foreign Language School (福州外国语学校))	English-Chinese university preparatory course	Eight-year program		DUFM
Trinity College Foochow	1913	W.S. Pakenham-Walsh	Park Road (公园路) in Cangshan. (Today's Fuzhou Foreign Language School (福州外国语学校))	Boys' school including elementary, middle, and matriculation curriculum	Initially an Eight-year program, later changed to a six-year program after 1927	Trinity Chapel (三一堂), bishop's residence in Fujian parish before 1927.	DUFM
Theological College (真学书院)	1877	Robert Warren Stewart	Initially established in Wushishan, later moved to Shipu in Cangshan (苍山)	Theological college			CMS
Sing Ding Girls' School (寻珍女校) or Girls' School, Foochow (CEZMS)	1894	Miss Lee (李师姑)	on Dui Hu Road (對湖路) in Cangshan (苍山) next to the Foochow Mission Cemetery (洋墓亭) (Today's Music department of Fujian Normal University (福州师范大学))	Girls' elementary and middle school			CEZMS
Bible-Women's Training School (妇女学校)	1875	Miss Houston (豪士顿师姑)	Initially established in Wushishan, later with branches in ShiPu and Bei Men (北门), Cangshan County (苍山)	Bible training for adult women	Two-year program		CMS

Anglo-Chinese Trinity School, whose teaching staff was composed of missionaries from Dublin University (都柏林大学) in Ireland, emphasized very much English education. From

year one to four, the subjects taught in English included speaking, sentence composition, writing, dictation, phonetics, translation, reading, and literature. From year five to eight, English became the medium of instruction for all subjects, including geometry, algebra, trigonometry, astronomy, physical hygiene, chemistry, physics, botany and zoology, history, geography, bookkeeping, and Bible. These subjects were also taught with English textbooks. Even the instructions in morning exercises were in English.⁵⁷ The college worked hard to cultivate in their students the manners of an English gentleman with a rather rigorous curriculum in a high standard of English language. According to the account of Watchman Nee, Trinity College Foochow put much emphasis on English, especially in writing and speaking, and the textbooks of the main subjects were in English. For instance, most subjects were taught for one to two years and then students went on to learn other subjects, but English writing and speaking was a subject that continued every year for all eight years. Not only was it taught the longest, it also took up more lesson time per week. For example, while mathematics lessons were given twice per week, three times at the most, there were five English speaking lessons per week for all eight years.⁵⁸ In addition, the school's standard was rather high and this was demonstrated in the number of graduates it put out. In 1918, only three students out of a class of 40 obtained the certificate of graduation, and in 1921, six students out of a class of 40 graduated, which was considered "the largest group of graduates since the establishment of the school."⁵⁹ The Anglo-Chinese Trinity School's alumni were held with high esteem in society. Some of them went directly to St. John's University in Shanghai (上海圣约翰大学) while others obtained well-paid jobs at Postal Bureau, Customs office, Salt Administration, and the Telegraph Bureau.

⁵⁷ Zhong-Mei Jiang (江中美), "A Few Things in My Study in Trinity College" (《我在三一学校读书时的几件事》), Jin-Shui Lin (林金水) edited, *Selection of Cultural and Historical Data: Vol. 5: Catholic Church* (《政协文史资料选编基督教天主教编》) (Fujian, China: Fujian People's Publishing House, 2003), p. 462.

⁵⁸ The Young Watchman Nee- "The Unknown aspects of Watchman Nee" (4) (少年倪柝声—《你所不知道的倪柝声》之四). http://www.360doc.com/content/16/0830/10/29603632_586963736.shtml. Accessed on May 12, 2017.

⁵⁹ Zhong-Mei Jiang, "A Few Things in My Study in Trinity College," pp. 462-463.

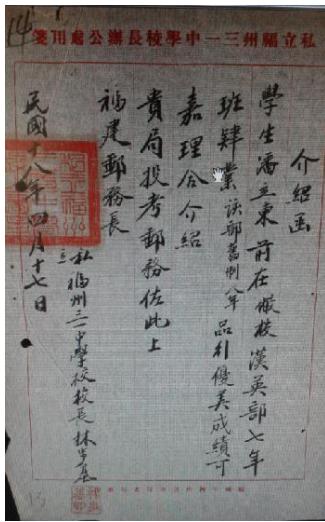


Figure 1. The recommendation letter for an Anglo-Chinese Trinity School graduate to the chief officer of the Postal Bureau from the principal of Trinity College Foochow, Pu-Chi Lin (林步基). Source: Fujian Archives Hall (福建省档案馆)

Anglo-Chinese Trinity School excelled at the quality of teachers and facilities; it also excelled in its tuition fees. As an example, when the School was first established, a student had to pay 16 yuan per semester which included tuition and fees, with an extra 10 yuan for new enrollment. Ten years later in 1922 the tuition was increased to 20 yuan per semester. A typical teacher's salary, in the meanwhile, was about 20 yuan per month. By charging high tuition fees, Anglo-Chinese Trinity School was able to cover its teachers' salaries with a considerable surplus (see Table 3 below).⁶⁰ In 1919, when Pakenham-Walsh left the post as the first principal of Trinity College Foochow, the school named a bell tower in his honor at the center of the campus (“思万楼” *lit.* Remembering Pakenham-Walsh) to acknowledge his achievement in education.⁶¹

Table 3: Income-Expenditure table of Anglo-Chinese Trinity School 1918 - 1925 (unit: yuan)

School Year	Income (Tuition Fees)	Expenditure (Salaries)
1918–1919	4882.20	2799.22
1919–1920	5306.78	3377.00
1920–1921	4932.50	4917.00
1921–1922	5832.50	3485.16
1922–1923	6188.50	3503.00
1923–1924	6888.00	n/a

⁶⁰ Yu-Cang Liu (刘玉苍), *Selection of Cultural and Historical Data* (《文史资料选编》): vol. 5: Protestant and Catholic churches (基督教天主教篇) (Fujian, China: Fujian People's Publishing House, 2003), pp. 436-437.

⁶¹ T.C.D. in China, p. 57.

1924–1925	4553.89	4093.00
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Source: Yu-Cang Liu, "Trinity College in the Early Period," Jin-Shui Lin edited, *Selection of Cultural and Historical Data: Vol. 5: Protestant and Catholic churches* (《政协文史资料选编基督教天主教编》) (Fujian, China: Fujian People's Publishing House, 2003), pp. 437.

In 1921, religion still made up a significant proportion of the curriculum in Trinity College Foochow, but the proportion of other subjects were increasing steadily and gradually exceeding that of religion until the College's curriculum was similar to that in the public schools. This indicated a change of direction by the Anglican Church in the running of schools, from evangelism to providing elite education for society. On the other hand, as the religious atmosphere was diminishing rapidly, the baptismal rate of their students also dropped sharply. In 1921, seventy-five percent of the students in the Middle School was baptized whereas the rate in Anglo-Chinese Trinity School was only 40.8%. The new direction of providing elite education had greatly reduced the religious element in its curriculum. Meanwhile, Foochow College (格致中学), which was founded by another mission, ABCFM, had transformed itself even more dramatically. It offered a two-credit compulsory course on political party dogma every semester while religion was excluded from the compulsory curriculum and became an elective. This reflected the religious influence to be gradually diminishing and the emphasis in education gradually increasing in the church-run schools. (See Table 4-5).

Table 4: The Class Schedule of the Chinese Anglican Church Boys' and Girls' Schools in 1921

	Religious Dogma	Song	Morality	History	Chinese	Geography	Arithmetic	Science	Gymnastics	Embroidery (girls' schools)
Semester 1	Memorizing: the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, Psalms 122, Mark 13:13-16, John 3:16; Oral narrative: OT and NT stories	National anthem, songs of patriotism 4 English hymns	The New Law Vol.1-2			Astronomy, physiographies , humanities	A. 1-100; B. Digits; C. Addition and subtraction		Calisthenics, various games	
Semester 2	Reading: Benedictus; Memorizing Psalms 24, 103, Matt 5:11-12, John 10:7-8; Oral narrative: Joseph, Moses, Israelites, Jesus's narratives, and the Acts	Ibid.	The New Law Vol.3-4			Introduction to Geography Vol.1-2, Picture Book of Classroom	A. Mental arithmetic	Science Vol.1	Ibid.	
Semester 3	Reading: Magnificat; Memorizing: Psalm 19, 103, Matt 16:5-8, 7:7-12, 24-29;			Brief History, Vol.1		Brief Geography Vol.1, Geography of the Province,		Science Vol.2	Ibid.	

	Oral narrative: Samuel, Saul, David, Gospels, Acts				Geography of the 18 Provinces				
Semester 4	Reading: Prayer for Rulers, Thanksgiving to the Father; Memorizing: The Apostles' Creed, 1 Cor. 13, Psalms 61, 97; Oral narrative: Elijah, Elisha, Mark			Brief History. Vol.2			Introduction to Hygiene	Ibid.	

Based on the 1921 class schedule of the Chinese Anglican Church Boys and Girls Schools in Fujian

Table 5: The Required Coursework (in hours) of Foochow College High School Division

		Year 1		Year 2		Year 3	
		Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
Party Dogma		2	2	2	2	2	2
Chinese		5(4)	5(4)	5(4)	5(4)	5(4)	5(4)
Foreign Languages		6(5)	6(5)	5(4)	5(4)	5(4)	5(4)
Mathematics	Algebra	4	2				
	Geometry		2	4			
	Trigonometry				3		
	Cartesian geometry				1	4	
Physics		5(4)	5(4)				
Chemistry							
History	Chinese History	2	2	2			
	Foreign History				2	2	2
Geography	Chinese Geography	1	1	1			
	Foreign Geography				1	1	1
Biology		5(4)	5(4)	1			
Gymnastics		3(1)	3(1)	3(1)	3(1)	3(1)	3(1)
Military Training					3(1.5)	3(1.5)	3(1.5)
Compulsory Courses Total Hours		33	33	30	30	25	21
Compulsory Courses Total Credits		27	27	23.5	23.5	19.5	15.5
Total Required Credits		29	29	28.5	28.5	25.5	25.5

Source: Rui-Rong Zheng (郑瑞荣) edited, *The Brief History of Foochow College (1848-1952)* (《福州榕城格致书院—福州私立格致中学简史 (1848-1952)》) (2000 edition), p. 73.

Nee Wenxiu had a rather big family of nine children, but the family was comparatively well-off since both the husband and the wife either worked or did business. In 1903, Watchman Nee was born and baptized into the American Methodist by his parents. In 1910, the Nees moved back to Fuzhou and settled there. At that time though imperial examinations had been abolished, Nee Wenxiu felt strongly that his children should receive a traditional Chinese education, so he hired a number of former Qing scholars as family tutors to teach them Chinese classics such as

Four Books and *Five Classics*, and Chinese Poetry. Watchman Nee said that "I was home-schooled in the first four years and the teachers were all old-fashioned scholars."⁶² Such a home-school education not only laid a solid foundation for Watchman Nee in Chinese culture and tradition but it also equipped him to be able to develop an indigenous view toward Christianity in later years. Additionally, Lin Heping insisted that her children grow up in a religious atmosphere by studying the Bible and attending Sunday school every week. Such was the early education that contributed to a good cultural and religious foundation for Watchman Nee and his siblings.

⁶² The Young Watchman Nee—"The Unknown aspects of Watchman Nee" (4) (少年倪柝声—《你所不知道的倪柝声》之四). http://www.360doc.com/content/16/0830/10/29603632_586963736.shtml. Accessed on May 12, 2017.

IV. The Theology of Watchman Nee, a Seer of the Divine Revelation

In 1916, at the age of 13 Watchman Nee enrolled in Trinity College Foochow run by the Anglican missionary society.⁶³ According to Nee's own words, "Brother Weigh Kwang-hsi (魏光禧)...can testify concerning what an ill-behaved student I was, as well as what a wonderful student I was in school. On the evil side, I often violated the school rules. On the good side, I was always first in every examination, because God had bestowed intelligence on me. My essays were frequently posted on the bulletin board for exhibition."⁶⁴ Trinity College Foochow was connected closely to St. John's University in Shanghai (上海圣约翰大学). Graduates of Trinity College Foochow were accepted directly into St. John's University as a third-year student. Being a student of distinction, Nee could very well continue his study at St. John's University should he choose to do so.⁶⁵ Nevertheless, despite the fact that Nee studied at a Christian school, the Christian beliefs preached by the missionaries had not yet entered into his heart. He once mentioned in his testimony that he had a negative impression concerning pastors.⁶⁶ His mother, Lin Heping (林和平), also testified that before getting saved, she herself was a nominal Christian, showing great interest in social affairs but caring very little about spiritual things.⁶⁷

Watchman Nee's parents, Nee Wenxiu and Lin Heping, were social elites in Fuzhou at that time. They even joined the "Chinese Revolutionary Alliance" (中国革命同盟会) under the influence of some Christian patriots. They took part in revolutionary activities to overthrow the corrupted Qing government and revitalize China, showing strong national spirit. During the early Republic period, Nee Wenxiu filed three lawsuits against three Westerners. He won all three cases which was very rare. He said he would let go of a case against a Chinese person but not when it involved a Westerner. Another story told of Lin Heping who once attended a banquet held by Westerners and was rudely called a "waitress," so she left in great displeasure. She said

⁶³ This author visited Trinity College in Dublin twice in the hope of finding some school records of the Trinity College in Fuzhou. Regrettably, it was not successful. We cannot ascertain whether Watchman Nee was enrolled in Anglo-Chinese Trinity School or its Middle School division. But we are sure that Nee graduated in 1923, eight years after he began his schooling in the Trinity College Foochow. See James Shih-Chieh Cha, *Concise Biographies of Important Chinese Christians*, vol. 2. (Taipei: China Evangelical Seminary, 1983), p. 309.

⁶⁴ Watchman Nee, "The First Testimony" in *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 26 (Anaheim, CA: Living Stream Ministry, 1993, 3rd edition), p. 453.

⁶⁵ T.C.D. in *China*, pp. 54.

⁶⁶ Watchman Nee, "The First Testimony" in *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 26 (Anaheim, CA: Living Stream Ministry, 1993, 3rd edition), p. 453.

⁶⁷ Heping Lin, *Autobiography of Heping Lin*, p.7.

Westerners should never disrespect Chinese people.⁶⁸ In 1919, after the outbreak of the May Fourth Movement (五四运动), Watchman Nee participated actively in the students' anti-imperialism movement at Trinity College Foochow and was elected by his fellow schoolmates as the vice-chairperson of the student body. He gathered the students at the lecture theatre of the Anglo-Chinese Trinity School to listen to a report given by Fuzhou City student representatives on an incident involving Guo Qinguang (郭钦光, 1896~1919), who was killed by a warlord's soldiers during a demonstration in Beijing. Later, Watchman Nee helped organize China Youth Corps (CYC, 救国团), that were involved in a number of activities, such as changing the words of a hymn usually sung before meals into a "national humiliation song" (国耻歌), printing pamphlets and distributing them outside the school, calling on the public to buy local goods and resist Japanese goods, forming student-prefect teams to search for Japanese goods, and requesting the school to suspend classes so that they could conduct these activities.⁶⁹ Nee said, "I believe I had a strong national consciousness. In our school I was the one who was against W.P.W. Williams (來必翰) the most⁷⁰ as well as the other Westerners.⁷¹ Being one of the leaders of the May Fourth Movement at Trinity College Foochow, Nee was suspended from the school for a year.⁷²

In February 1920, as a 17-year-old high school student, Watchman Nee witnessed the radical change of his mother after she attended Dora Yu's revival meeting at the Church of Heavenly Peace of the Methodist denomination. He was touched and thus attended the meeting himself the next day. Surprisingly, he was saved during the meeting. The salvation had a double meaning to him. Not only was he converted, receiving the Lord Jesus as his Savior, but he also consecrated himself to serve the Lord for his lifetime.⁷³ Later he adopted the English name "Watchman" and changed his Chinese name from "Shuzu" (述祖) to "Tuosheng" (柝声), which means "the sound of a watchman's rattle" because he considered himself to be a watchman

⁶⁸ "The Young Watchman Nee – The Unknown Aspects of Watchman Nee Part 4"
http://www.360doc.com/content/16/0830/10/29603632_586963736.shtml. Accessed on May 12, 2017.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ W.P.W. Williams succeeded W. S. Pakenham-Walsh (万拔文) as the president of the Trinity College. See *T.C.D. in China*, p. 57.

⁷¹ "The Young Watchman Nee – The Unknown Aspects of Watchman Nee Part 4"
http://www.360doc.com/content/16/0830/10/29603632_586963736.shtml. Accessed on May 12, 2017.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Witness Lee, *Watchman Nee—A Seer of the Divine Revelation in the Present Age* (Anaheim, CA: Living Stream Ministry, 1997, 3rd edition), pp. 12-14.

raised up to sound out a warning call in the dark night in that age.⁷⁴ After his conversion to Christ, Watchman Nee was enthusiastic in preaching the gospel to his classmates. He wrote their names in a notebook and prayed for them daily, which earned him a nickname derisively, "Mr. Preacher," but he was not bothered. Eventually, at the time of his graduation, nearly the entire class was converted to Christianity.⁷⁵ From being the organizer of a prefect team searching for Japanese goods to a man nicknamed "Mr. Preacher" his transformation was surely great.

After his conversion, Nee lost interest in all worldly things and started to read the Bible diligently. As he was seeking after the Lord, he came into contact with a British missionary, Miss Margaret E. Barber, and received much edification and perfecting from her. Miss Barber was a missionary sent to China by the Anglican Church originally, but later she resigned from the mission and became an independent preacher who lived by faith. At that time over 60 young people received help from Miss Barber. Being deep in the Lord and exceedingly strict, Miss Barber frequently rebuked the young people concerning many things, and as a result most of these young people stopped going to her. In 1950 in Hong Kong Nee himself testified that only 4 remained after a considerable period of time.⁷⁶ Nee was not only an excellent student of the Bible but also a studious reader of spiritual books. With his exceptional intellectual capacity, the excellent English language training he received at Anglo-Chinese Trinity School, and the edification from Miss Barber, he received much spiritual light and life from the spiritual publications of the West extensively and gained a profound understanding of church history as well.⁷⁷ Over time he was able to recover items of the truth in the Bible one by one. Each item of truth was recovered with great courage as Watchman Nee had to hold fast to the words in the Scriptures on one hand, and on the other hand to withstand great pressure from Chinese Christian churches that had been deeply influenced by Western missions. Every item of truth recovered caused a great impact during that time.⁷⁸ Here we will only give examples regarding three items of the truth that Watchman Nee recovered: concerning baptism, the breaking of bread, and

⁷⁴ James Shih-Chieh Cha, *Concise Biographies of Important Chinese Christians*, vol. 2. (Taipei: China Evangelical Seminary, 1983), p. 307.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p.312.

⁷⁶ Witness Lee, *Watchman Nee*, pp. 17-18.

⁷⁷ Ibid., pp. 20-23.

⁷⁸ See Moses Yu (于力工),"A Talk about Watchman Nee" (漫谈倪柝声), *Steering Monthly*(导向月刊), Issue 161 (1999) and Shao-Tang Yang (杨绍唐), Preface of *Church and Workers* (《教会与工人》) (Hong Kong: Gospel Bookroom,1973).

leaving the denominations⁷⁹ and building up local churches instead of churches belonging to a missionary society or a denomination.⁸⁰

Young Watchman Nee was with a group of Christians who shared the same vision concerning the gospel, including Leland Wang (王载1898-1975) and Lianjun Wang (王连俊). They preached the gospel on campus and held gospel march on the streets, singing hymns with drums and distributing gospel tracts. They also travelled to nearby villages to preach the gospel during holidays. Within a couple of years many people were saved, resulting in a large revival in Fuzhou.⁸¹

Regarding the practice of baptism, Watchman Nee said, "In March 1921, the Lord showed me the truth of baptism. I saw that baptism by sprinkling as practiced by the denominations was not scriptural. As I studied the Bible in those weeks, I found that when the Lord was baptized in the Jordan River, He came up out of the water. In the denomination, however, when a person was baptized, a small bowl was used to contain the water. How then could one come up out of the water? ... Fortunately I was later saved and my life was changed. My mother had arranged for me to be sprinkled before I had believed in the Lord. About a year after I was saved, I realized that the baptism I had received was wrong and that according to the Scriptures baptism should be by immersion."⁸²

Regarding the practice of bread breaking in the churches at the time, in her thesis Grace Y. May (梅恩英) commented about the Holy Communion at Trinity College in this way:

A white linen cloth covered the communion table, and a priest most likely stood at the north end of the Table. The priest administered the ritual of Holy Communion quarterly...The liturgy followed the Book of Common Prayer of 1662. The Order for the Administration of the Lord's Supper asked the priest to hold public confessions. Whether anyone adhered to such practices at Trinity is uncertain. Even absent the loss of face that would accompany a public confession in the Chinese context, the Anglican service contained language that must have seemed ominous and foreboding to Nee and his peers.

⁷⁹ Watchman Nee, "Narration of the Past" in *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 18 (Anaheim, CA: Living Stream Ministry, 1993, 3rd edition), pp. 304-312.

⁸⁰ See chapters 7—8, *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 30 (Anaheim, CA: Living Stream Ministry, 1993).

⁸¹ Watchman Nee, "Narration of the Past" in *Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 18 (Anaheim, CA: Living Stream Ministry, 1993), pp. 313-315.

⁸² Ibid., pp. 304-305.

The Prayer Book required priests to give ‘warning’ a week prior to any communion service and solemnly commanded communicants to ponder ‘the great peril of the unworthy receiving of the mystery.’ The liturgy tended to be wordy, and the prayer for the crown of England likely antagonized patriotic Chinese students...[The] bread and wine in communion [were] both Western imports...The foreign nature of the [communion] elements made the meaning of the ritual strange and difficult to appropriate.⁸³

Through prayer and the study of the Bible, and with confirmation from another brother, Watchman Nee concluded that the breaking of bread should not be held only four times a year and should not necessarily be presided over by those who had received the rite of ordination.⁸⁴ Hence, sometime in the first half of 1922 while he was still a student, Watchman Nee began to break bread with Leland Wang and Wang’s wife at Wang’s home.⁸⁵

Regarding leaving the denomination, another matter that Watchman Nee came across while reading the Bible, he pondered about it long and hard as to what he should do; he also discussed it with his mother and with Miss Barber. Finally, on behalf of the whole family his father wrote out a letter according to his draft to the Methodist denomination, to which they belonged, expressing their desire for their names to be removed.⁸⁶

From practicing baptism by immersion according to the Bible, to understanding the principles behind the breaking of bread on the Lord’s Day as described in the Scriptures, and then to leaving the denomination, Watchman Nee followed the teachings of the Bible faithfully. Since he upheld this principle steadfastly, the two periodicals he put out later, *The Present Testimony* (《復興報》) and *The Christian* (《基督徒報》), were full of impact among Chinese Christians during that time, because in the first half of 1900s China had experienced several great revivals,⁸⁷ and there were many newly saved Christians hungry for spiritual nourishment. Nee’s

⁸³ May, Grace Y. *Breaking the Bread. the Missiological and Spiritual Force that Contribute to an Indigenous Chinese Ecclesiology*, Ph.D. Thesis, Boston University, 2000, pp. 46-48.

⁸⁴ Watchman Nee, “Narration of the Past” in *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 18 (Anaheim, CA: Living Stream Ministry, 1993, 3rd edition), pp. 306-307.

⁸⁵ Watchman Nee, “Narration of the Past” in *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 18 (Anaheim, CA: Living Stream Ministry, 1993, 3rd edition), pp. 308-309.

⁸⁶ Watchman Nee, “Narration of the Past” in *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 18 (Anaheim, CA: Living Stream Ministry, 1993, 3rd edition), pp. 309-312.

⁸⁷ Bays, Daniel H. *Christianity in China 1900-1950: The History that Shaped the Present*, April 22, 2008. See <http://www.globalchinacenter.org/analysis/christianity-in-china/christianity-in-china-19001950-the-history-thatshaped-the-present.php>

publications, especially a series of messages on the book of Revelation chapters 1–3, fully exposed the sectarian system.⁸⁸ As a result of reading his magazines, many Chinese Christians left their denominations; this aroused the opposition of Western missionaries who were sent by mission societies.⁸⁹

From a young age Watchman Nee has had associations with Western missionaries and friends through his family; he also received a complete Western education at Trinity College Foochow. Nevertheless, he did not take advantage of his privileged educational background to pursue a career in business or politics at a time when China was going through a great change. On the other hand, after becoming a Christian, he did not pattern himself after the Western-style missions or missionaries though he admitted that he had received much help from spiritual giants from the West.⁹⁰ When Watchman Nee talked about spiritual experiences, Miss Barber and the other Western missionaries were often mentioned as examples, so obviously he did not deny them.⁹¹ However, when it came to the matter of the church and the Christian work, he was motivated to study the Bible thoroughly in order to learn from the patterns of the early churches, the work, and the workers in the Bible, and he was willing to pay the price to follow them because of his early personal experience concerning baptism, bread-breaking, and denominations. The *Normal Christian Church Life* (《工作的再思》)⁹² clearly states his views on the church, the work, and the workers. Here are two quotes from the book for illustration:

Regarding missions and missionary work:

[The apostles] always sought to found or build up churches in the locality of their labors with the fruit of such labors. They never used such fruit to form branches of the companies in which they worked; otherwise, the Church of God would have been rent by numerous factions from its very inception...If we are all out to establish local churches, then there is every possibility of cooperation. It is permissible to establish an 'X' Mission, but it is not scriptural to establish an 'X' Church.... If we come to a place to found a

⁸⁸ Witness Lee, *Watchman Nee*, pp. 229-238.

⁸⁹ See many correspondences in "Collection of Newsletters (1)" Watchman Nee, *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 25 (Anaheim, CA: Living Stream Ministry, 1993, 3rd edition).

⁹⁰ See Watchman Nee, *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 9, (Anaheim, CA: Living Stream Ministry, 1993, 3rd edition), pp. 241-246.

⁹¹ As an example, see Watchman Nee, *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 57 (Anaheim, CA: Living Stream Ministry, 1993, 3rd edition), pp. 9-10, 123, and vol. 18, pp. 338-339.

⁹² Watchman Nee, *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 30 (Anaheim, CA: Living Stream Ministry, 1993, 3rd edition).

church, then it must be local, intensely local, without anything extraneous to rob it in the slightest of its local character. If you come to T— with the establishing of the church in T— as your one aim, and I come to T— with the establishing of the church in T— as my one aim, then cooperation will be no problem. Even if a hundred and one missionaries, representing a hundred and one missions, all come to T— with this as their one aim, to establish the church in T—, then there will be no possibility of sectarianism, and cooperation will be a matter of course.⁹³

Regarding workers and their works:

Paul came from Antioch to Corinth and there he preached the gospel. People believed and were saved, and soon there was a group of saints in Corinth. Into what kind of church did Paul form them? Into the church in Corinth. Paul did not establish an Anitochian church in Corinth. He did not form a branch-church of Antioch in Corinth, but simply established a church in Corinth. Thereafter Peter came to Corinth and preached the gospel, with the result that another group of people believed. Did Peter say, "Paul came from Antioch, but I am come from Jerusalem, so I must set up another church: I will establish a Jerusalemic church in Corinth, or, I will form a branch-church of Jerusalem here in Corinth"? No, he contributed all those he led to the Lord to the already existing local church in Corinth. After a while Apollos came along. Again people were saved, and again all the saved ones were added to the local church. So in Corinth there was only one church of God; there were no schismatic denominations.⁹⁴

Nee's views concerning the church, the work, and the workers as demonstrated in *The Normal Christian Church Life* were timeless, insightful, and persuasive; they explained the reason that Nee was often called the origin of the Chinese indigenous church movement. It was small wonder that the local churches which Nee started developed rapidly right from the beginning; from Fuzhou they spread to major cities such as Shanghai, Nanjing, Beijing, Qingdao, and Jinan. By 1952 there were approximately 400 local churches in China.⁹⁵ James Shih-Chieh Cha (查时杰) commented that the local churches, while not being influenced by the

⁹³ Watchman Nee, *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 30 (Anaheim, CA: Living Stream Ministry, 1993, 3rd edition), pp. 136-137.

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 132.

⁹⁵ Witness Lee, *Watchman Nee*, p. 277.

Western churches too much, bore Chinese indigenous flavors and were self-governing, self-propagating, and self-supporting independent churches. To Cha, the local churches are “a Chinese independent church in China with the largest membership in the twentieth-century.”⁹⁶ Ryan Dunch, in observing the trend of the Chinese churches since 1920, found that Protestant mission-planted churches in Fuzhou had turned to pursuing individual piety after the participation in the development of the new Republic in hope of the Christianization of China met with its demise. The emergent indigenous Christian churches “eschewed political and social involvement altogether in favor of personal spiritual experience. One of the most important of these, the Local Assembly or 'Little Flock' movement, actually began in Fuzhou, and its example well illustrates the changes in Chinese Christianity following the 1920s.”⁹⁷ He depicted the movement led by Nee as “anti-mission, anti-clerical, anti-institutional, explicitly non-political, and theologically conservative, refusing to acknowledge or work with the denominational churches.”⁹⁸ According to Watchman Nee, the local churches he set up are not denominational or sectarian but assemblies of all the Christians in that locality.

Conclusion

As demonstrated by the history of the three generations of the Nee family, all three missions in this study accomplished their purposes to a large degree. But for the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Nee Yucheng, Watchman Nee’s grandfather, would not have been able to receive an education, to earn a living as a preacher, even becoming the first Chinese preacher in Fuzhou. Nee Yucheng’s educational experience paved the way for his sending his son Nee Wenxiu to a Christian school run by the American Methodists. Nee Wenxiu stood in a place historically that embraced both the traditional Chinese thoughts and the new Western ideas, having earned the rank of Xiucai in the imperial examinations and received an English education in Heling Anglo-Chinese College, both of which qualified him to work in a customs office. The educational backgrounds of Nee Wenxiu and his wife set the course of the kind of education his children would later receive. The Nee family, and many other Chinese

⁹⁶ James Shih-Chieh Cha, *Concise Biographies of Important Chinese Christians*, vol.2. (Taipei: China Evangelical Seminary, 1983), p. 306.

⁹⁷ Dunch, Ryan. *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China 1857-1927*, New Haven: Yale University, 2001, p. 195.

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 195.

families with similar experiences, were beneficiaries of the education provided through the Western Christian missionary schools as well as of the resultant development and opportunities afforded to them because of the education received through the schools. Watchman Nee was a product of the educational endeavor of Western missionaries, even though it was not the intention of the Christian schools to produce someone who would later depart from their spiritual practices and even spearhead a large indigenous church movement in China, a movement that is altogether different from that in Western Christianity. Perhaps it had something to do with the nature of Western education which encourages people to think independently instead of learning by rote that was common among the traditional way of Chinese instruction. To sum up, Christian schools established by Western mission societies in China in the 19th and early 20th centuries indeed have had a tremendous impact on contemporary Chinese education. The purpose of these Christian schools was three-fold: to evangelize China, improve the quality of the Chinese people through education, and ultimately cultivate a group of professional preachers for their respective churches.

This paper will conclude with an anecdote recorded in *Trinity College Dublin in China* which this author came across in Dublin in 2016. The anecdote may well illustrate the mixed feeling of admiration, disappointment, and helplessness that was typical of a Western mission school toward the situation:

Several senior boys, who had been communicants of the C.H.S.K.H., joined a group of 'Christians' and were re-baptized by immersion. The inevitable breach with the Anglican Communion was very unfortunate, but at all events it is gratifying to note that, while these T.C.F. boys have taken a leading part in the spreading of the tenets of this irregular group of Christians, their sincerity and zeal is beyond question, and they have all along remained on terms of affection and friendliness towards their former teachers.⁹⁹

The school admitted that despite this "unusual" practice, they were pleased about the "sincerity and enthusiasm" of the Chinese students who were still "friendly and respectful to teachers." On the other hand, from the school's perspective, the practice of these people were apparently different from the tradition of the Anglican Church and that was "unfortunate." Lastly it is

⁹⁹ *T.C.D. in China*, p. 60.

worthwhile to note that in 2009 Watchman Nee was recognized in the United States Congress by Congressman Christopher H. Smith as the pioneer of Chinese Christianity. Mr. Smith also mentioned that Watchman Nee was listed among the 100 most influential Christians in the twentieth-century by the Christian magazine *Christianity Today*.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ *The United States Congressional Record*, vol. 155, No. 117, 2009.

Appendix 1 (page 1): A letter written by Pakenham-Walsh on 14th September, 1908, reporting the progress in running schools and the lack of teachers. He sought help from the CMS concerning the shortage of teachers.

acknowledged &
23rd + 5th

Sept 14th 1908 A.D.

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St. Mark's College

Foochow

To the Secretary of the D.U.F.N.

Dear Sir

In compliance with the enclosed resolution of the C.M.S. Fakkien Sept. Conference, I am writing a few words. The English work spoken of in the resolution of March 1907 A.D. is the same as the St. Mark's Anglo-Chinese college referred to in Sept 1908 A.D. The work has developed rapidly & seems to have a very special opportunity at the present time in China. It is I think unanimously felt by the missionaries here both C.M.S & D.U.F.N. that if T.C.S could supply the men, it would open out to the D.U.F.N. a great field for reaching the upper classes in China. If Stanley could be left with me and one more man added the work could be carried on at least for two years, when probably a full staff of four men would be needed. Conference has omitted all mention of building in the second resolution, as there seems good hope that the Pan-Anglican grant may suffice for this. The school is already self supporting, & i.e. paying all

St. Mark's College

Foochow

the Chinese masters & expenses, except the missionaries' salaries, and as the school increases, some of the latter expense could also be met. Last term I had to refuse about 100 students & this term I am again refusing numbers owing to lack of teachers & accommodation, while the school within the first year 1907-8 rose from nine to ninety students. I mention these facts only to give some idea of the opening & opportunity, and I cannot but think that an appeal based on such facts & for such a special field of work might not only call forth the extra men required, but also the money for their support.

I have no doubt that Bishop Price will have an opportunity of meeting the A.U.C.M. committee &c. I need I think not add more. Trusting that in this & all other matters God's guidance may be constantly given.

Believe me

Yours very sincerely

H. J. Pakenham Welsh

I forgot to add that St. Mark's and
under the S.M.C. is the same
as far as teaching.
Gathering

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St Mark's College,

Foochow.

Sept. 14th, 1908, A.D.

To the Secretary of the D. U. F. M.

Dear Sir,

In compliance with the enclosed resolution of the C. M. S., Fuh-Kien Sept. Conference, I am writing a few words. The English work spoken of in the resolution of March 1907, A.D. is the same as the St Mark's Anglo-Chinese College referred to in Sept. 1908 A.D. The work has developed rapidly and seems to have a very special opportunity at the present time in China. It is I think unanimously felt by the Missionaries here, both C. M. S. and D. U. F. M. that if T. C. D. could supply the men, it would open out to the D. U. F. M. a great field for reaching the upper classes in China. If Stanley could be left with me and one more man added the work could be carried on at least for two years, when probably a full staff of four men would be needed. Conference has omitted all mention of building in the second resolution, as there seems good hope that the Pan-Anglican grant may suffice for this. The school is already self-supporting, i. e. paying all the Chinese masters and expenses, except the missionaries' salaries, and as the school increases some of the latter expense could also be met. Last term I had to refuse about 100 Students, and this term I am again refusing numbers owing to lack of teachers and accommodation, while the school within the first year 1907-8 rose from nine to ninety students. I mention these facts only to give some idea of the opening and opportunity, and I cannot but think that an appeal based on such facts and for such a special field

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of work might not only call forth the extra men required, but also the money for their support.

I have no doubt that Bishop Price will have an opportunity of meeting the D.U.F.M. Committee, and so I need, I think, not add more. Trusting that in this and all other matters God's guidance may be constantly given.

Believe me,

Yours very sincerely,

W. S. Pakenham Walsh.

I forgot to add that St Mark's would be under the D. U. F. M. in the same way as Fuhning.

Appendix 2: A reply letter from the CMS on 22nd December, 1908, expressing their regret for not being able to help solve the problem of teacher shortage.

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St Mark's College,

Foochow.

Sept. 14th, 1908, A.D.

To the Secretary of the D. U. F. M.

Dear Sir,

In compliance with the enclosed resolution of the C. M. S., Fuh-Kien Sept. Conference, I am writing a few words. The English work spoken of in the resolution of March 1907, A.D. is the same as the St Mark's Anglo-Chinese College referred to in Sept. 1908 A.D. The work has developed rapidly and seems to have a very special opportunity at the present time in China. It is I think unanimously felt by the Missionaries here, both C. M. S. and D. U. F. M. that if T. C. D. could supply the men, it would open out to the D. U. F. M. a great field for reaching the upper classes in China. If Stanley could be left with me and one more man added the work could be carried on at least for two years, when probably a full staff of four men would be needed. Conference has omitted all mention of building in the second resolution, as there seems good hope that the Pan-Anglican grant may suffice for this. The school is already self-supporting, i. e. paying all the Chinese masters and expenses, except the missionaries' salaries, and as the school increases some of the latter expense could also be met. Last term I had to refuse about 100 Students, and this term I am again refusing numbers owing to lack of teachers and accommodation, while the school within the first year 1907-8 rose from nine to ninety students. I mention these facts only to give some idea of the opening and opportunity, and I cannot but think that an appeal based on such facts and for such a special field

Appendix 3 (page 1): The CMS informed Trinity College, Anglican Foochow Mission the £5000 grant for the work in Fujian province had been approved.

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Telegraphic Address "TESTIMONY, LONDON"
Telegraphic Code "VIA EASTERN".

Church Missionary Society
Salisbury Square
London. E.C.

Dear Mr. Muller,

We have received extracts from the Minutes of the Pan-Anglican Fund Trustees, dealing with the Pan-Anglican grant of £6,000, viz. £5,000 towards a group of institutions comprising the Anglo-Chinese College, High School, Normal Glass School, with Chapel, gymnasium, houses for two married Missionaries, accommodation for two unmarried Missionaries, and four Chinese masters, together with an additional grant of £300 towards a Normal School for women. We have also received the resolutions of the Building Committee of August 20th, offering £1,400 to the Society for the site and buildings known as the 'Divinity School compound', and also the resolutions of Conference of August 24 &c. recommending the acceptance of this offer. These documents have been accompanied by a very full and helpful letter addressed to the Committee by your Bishop.

The matter has been very carefully gone into by our Committee, and it is with much satisfaction that we have now to inform you that the following recommendations of your Conference of August 24 &c. have been approved, viz. -

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Telegraphic Address "TESTIMONY, LONDON"
Telegraphic Code "VIA EASTERN".

Church Missionary Society,
Salisbury Square,
London, E.C.

2)

" (a) That the offer of the Pan-Anglican Fund Trustees of £1,400 for the present Divinity School Compound and buildings, be accepted.

" (b) That £550 out of the above purchase money be set aside for site and building of a Junior Boys' Boarding School in the vicinity of the Pan-Anglican Grant buildings.

" (c) That £100 out of the same be set aside for the erection of a new Mission Godown.

" (d) That £500 out of the same be reserved for the purchase and adaptation of a house in Foochow City as a residence for a Missionary.

" (e) That the remaining £250 be added to the Pan-Anglican grant for the Women's Normal School.

" (f) That the transfer of the present Divinity School and residence to the upper compound, be approved.

" (g) That, in view of the conditions required by the Pan-Anglican Grant Scheme, the D.U.F.M. be requested to include the Normal Class and High School, in addition to the Anglo-Chinese College, among the Institutions to be 'worked exclusively by D.U.F.M. Missionaries.'

" (h) The Committee place on record their thankfulness that such a complete and satisfactory readjustment of the educational institutions in Foochow has been rendered possible, in consequence of the grant from the Pan-Anglican Thankoffering Fund to the Fuh-Kien Diocese, and they trust that the scheme thus inaugurated may, under the Divine Blessing, conduce largely to the consolidation and extension of Missionary work throughout the Diocese."

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Telegraphic Address "TESTIMONY, LONDON"
Telegraphic Code "VIA EASTERN"

Church Missionary Society.
Salisbury Square.
London, E.C.

3)

The Committee have noted that in the event of the D.U.F.M. becoming responsible for the Normal Class and High School, in addition to the Anglo-Chinese College at Foochow, the Rev. J.Hind has definitely offered to rejoin the D.U.F.M. staff working in the Fuh-Kien Province, as a C.M.S. Missionary, and the Estimates Committee have been asked to make the necessary financial provision to meet this case, but Mr. Hind's offer is, of course, to come in the ordinary way before the Candidates Committee, and has not yet been dealt with.

We remain, dear Mr. Muller,

Yours very faithfully and affectionately,

Secs. C.M.S.

W. Muller, Esq.

October 18, 2017

Background

The Church of Almighty God (CAG), also known as Eastern Lightning (EL), is one of the religious groups most severely persecuted by the Chinese Communist government. Chinese Communist Party (CCP) itself does not deny the severity of the persecution of CAG, but maintains that it is justified by CAG's criminal activities, including a horrific case of homicide. But these are completely false accusations and mere slanders.

CCP's propaganda has been massive, and successful in persuading even some respected Western media that CAG killed a customer in a McDonald's diner in Zhaoyuan, Shandong Province in 2014. The Zhaoyuan murder did indeed happen, but the crime, which we unreservedly condemn, was perpetrated by a different religious group and had no connection with our Church at all. This is also the conclusion all Western scholars who studied CAG came to, after examining documents and reports published not by CAG but by CCP-related Chinese official sources. Please refer to our press release on the incident:

<https://www.holyspiritspeaks.org/truth-emerges/>

Since 2017, CCP has tried to mobilize influential voices of American and Western experts, scholars, journalists, and patriotic emigrant leaders to generate favorable media comments overseas. Within this context, it has utilized an old rumor about a kidnapping incident that was created by China Gospel Fellowship (CGF) early in 2002, in order to influence Westerners and justify its persecution of CAG. As for the kidnapping of CGF leaders and co-workers in 2002, those with discernment and knowledge of the actual state of religion in China would easily be able to see that the story is full of contradictions, and reach the conclusion that the incident is completely fabricated.

CGF's Story

Readers ignoring the Chinese context and background may perhaps be impressed by the fact that reports about the alleged kidnapping appeared on the Websites of CGF and other groups connected with CGF while it was reportedly taking place, and they were later novelized in books, such as the ghost-written Kidnapped by a Cult. Moreover, some of the CGF leaders, i.e. the very persons who had a vested interest in inventing the kidnapping story, asked to be interviewed by Western journalists and others and repeated their fabricated version. All these circumstances would easily cause some to believe this one-sided story. However, just by paying a little more attention, they would be able to conclude that the reports are contradictory and inconsistent and their falsity is obvious.

Summing up, the kidnapping story invented by CGF reads as such:

1. On April 30, 2001, introduced by two CGF sisters who were later said by CGF to be CAG's double agents, Brother Yang, a CGF preacher, met a Mr. Lian, and learned that he was the general secretary of Singapore's Haggai Leadership Institute. Yang was told that Haggai was willing to help the House Churches in China train their leaders and co-workers. Since Haggai

¹ <https://www.holyspiritspeaks.org/statement/>

was an institution they respected, CGF leaders were very happy to work with it. In June 2001, Yang and Brother Shen, who was a primary leader of CGF, met Mr. Lian again to further discuss their cooperation on the training plan, and submitted the resumes of CGF leaders and co-workers who would participate in the training. The resumes included their offices in the church, family condition, church status, phone numbers, pictures, and photocopies of their ID cards.

2. In March 2002, the person they knew as Mr. Lian of Haggai called Yang again and asked to meet and talk about the training in detail. They met again, together with two CGF leaders both named Shen, and Mr. Yu, who was introduced to them as the vice-president of Haggai, indicated the attendants and the way to carry out the training plan. On April 13, 2002, the two Shens and Zhang, all top leaders of CGF, confirmed the final training plan with Mr. Yu, Mr. Lian, and a lady who said to be from the finance department of Haggai.

3. On April 16, 2002, the 34 primary CGF leaders and co-workers traveled to six places in different provinces according to their final plan. Accounts vary, but agree on the fact that they (and presumably their friends and relatives at home) did have the telephone numbers of the locations. Although they were not told about the addresses, at least in some instances they figured them out.

4. Training started on April 17. The CGF leaders were told to surrender their cell phones for security reasons. After a few days, they realized that the training was not led by Haggai, but by CAG. They were not allowed to leave the premises, where they were submitted to intense indoctrination and different forms of pressure.

5. Although they were prevented from leaving the places where they were held, at least two CGF leaders were able to escape (and found out the exact address of the home where they had been confined). Although initially reluctant to involve the police, because CGF was itself a group condemned by CCP as an “evil cult” and persecuted in China, they finally overcame their fears and went to Beijing to report to the police. After that, police pressure induced CAG to release 34 kidnapped leaders and co-workers in succession within about two months, except one who had converted to CAG.

Why CGF Story Cannot Be True

1. CCP’s persecution of CAG started in 1991. Hundreds of thousands of its leaders and members were mercilessly hunted, arrested, placed in jails, tortured, and not a few of them died or “disappeared” while in custody. Monitors were installed in the streets in every city and province, and every residential and village committee was used by CCP to strictly monitor outsiders. Significant rewards were offered and paid to those who denounced CAG members to the police. We could only carry out some limited underground religious activity in China in order to avoid being captured and sent to jail, or worse. That, operating under this condition, CAG was able to imprison and detain leaders and co-workers of CGF for about two months is utterly unbelievable.

2. A key point readers of the more or less novelized accounts and cliffhangers produced by CGF and other Christian groups may miss is that in 2002 CGF was itself regarded as an “evil cult” by Chinese authorities and persecuted. Indeed, when caught, some CGF members were tortured to death (see e.g. <http://www.hrichina.org/chs/content/2988>, and <http://www.epochtimes.com/gb/1/3/18/n59604.htm>). We acknowledge that CGF was and is a large religious group, who was able to successfully train its members to withstand CCP’s brutal

persecution. A key part of this training was impressing on CGF members that under no conditions the names and whereabouts of CGF leaders and co-workers should be disclosed to strangers. CGF leaders stayed out of jail only because CGF had been successful in keeping their inside information secret, and thus CCP did not know who and where they were. We are asked to believe that, in this situation, when a Mr. Lian, unknown to them, asked CGF to supply names, offices in the church, family condition, church status, phone numbers, pictures, and the photocopies of their ID cards of the top CGF leaders and co-workers in China, they immediately gave the information to him incautiously, without any in-depth check of Mr. Lian's identity or background. It was unthinkable. Moreover, this breach of all rules CGF operated under, and suicidal mistake, should have been made not by a common member but by the top leaders with high safety awareness and knowledge of the identity and whereabouts of primary leaders and co-workers of the group in China. Who would believe such a story?

3. CGF maintains that they trusted Mr. Lian because he mentioned the name of the Haggai Leadership Institute, and they knew and respected Haggai. Again, this may impress Western readers unfamiliar with the religious situation prevailing in China in 2002. There, it was well known by most Christians that Haggai was cooperating and working with China State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA) as well as with the Three Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM) and China Christian Council (CCC) (see e.g.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20171008125624/ziyouxing.772077.com/index.php/Mobile/category/article/id/19.html>). SARA, TSPM, and CCC have been known to most Chinese Christians as CCP's instruments to control Christianity in China and persecute unrecognized "House Churches" such as CGF. Accordingly, the last organization CGF would have trusted would have been Haggai, who had been in long-term cooperation with the CCP, and certainly no CGF leader would have supplied Haggai with details of the CGF hierarchy in different provinces. This would have been tantamount to giving the names and addresses of CGF leaders and co-worker to the Chinese Communist police.

4. It is hardly believable that CGF, being itself a religious group persecuted by the CCP, would have visited the police and disclosed to it the names of their 34 top leaders and co-workers, that they had successfully kept secret for several years. But, assuming for a moment this really happened, that the Chinese police reacted as described in CGF's story is simply impossible. It is argued that CGF had the phone numbers and the addresses at least of some locations where its leaders were being held. CCP was engaged from ten years by 2002 in a ruthless persecution of CAG, and it is well-known that Chinese authorities just love show trials, where the groups they condemned as "cults" will be defamed before both domestic and international audiences, so that people will be frightened away from the "cults." Had they been informed that CGF leaders had been kidnapped and were imprisoned by CAG, the Chinese police would have quickly realized that they had in their hands the best story, the mother of all weapons in their propaganda war against CAG. They would have immediately stormed the premises where CGF leaders were detained, arrested the CAG members involved, probably arrested the CGF leaders and elders as an added bonus as well (after all, they were leaders of a "cult" condemned as such by the CCP, too), dismantled both CGF and CAG with a single operation, and quickly celebrated a huge show trial inviting as many Chinese and international media as possible for vigorous promotion. That's what the CCP normally desires to do. But nothing of this happened.

We are simply told in CGF accounts of the so-called kidnapping incident that the higher authority in Beijing accepted this case, and the police “put pressure” on CAG, and then CAG quietly released the CGF leaders unharmed in succession, except the one who voluntarily remained with CAG. To get such a result, how the police “put pressure” on CAG? Why were there no details? As a very successful case of the police rescuing the victims, why did the government not publicize and report it at that time? If the fact were like what CGF said, the case, according to the Administrative Procedure Law, should have been transferred to the relevant Procuratorate for verification and prosecution after the public security organ had filed and investigated the case, and finally the People’s Court would have heard the case and tried the defendants. However, there were no police raids, no arrests, no trials. Could anybody be convinced by such a story?

5. While the arguments 1 to 4 above should settle the issue, we would like to add three reasons why the alleged kidnapping of CGF leaders would not make sense according to CAG theology and practice. First, it has been stipulated distinctly in CAG’s administrative decrees that “God’s household is not short of members, and there is no need to make up its numbers with people who have no use. All those who do not believe gladly must not be led into the church.” These are the words of Almighty God we must seriously abide by. That’s why our Church has strict requirements for admission. Only those who have true belief in Almighty God and attend Church meetings willingly can be admitted, after their applications are approved by Church leaders and deacons. Second, any sensible person should realize that kidnapping and holding people against their will is not exactly the best missionary strategy to persuade and convert them and gain the true heart of other believers. Third, according to our Church’s Principles for Expelling and Purging People, so far we have expelled from 300,000 to 500,000 members from CAG. We had no reasons to resort to extreme and bizarre maneuvers to gain some 30 more.

Why the Story Was Invented by CGF

Interestingly, for the past ten years, the 2002 kidnapping incident of the CGF has not been one of the main tools of the CCP’s propaganda against CAG in China. The good reason for this is that the above inconsistencies would be immediately apparent to a Chinese audience and no one would take the fabrication for real. However, the story was told by CGF and was believed by some Western Christians, journalists, and others, based on the fact that CGF leaders belong to a large denomination, and that CGF itself was persecuted by CCP. This does not make the inconsistencies less striking, but raises the question why CGF invented and spread the story in the first place.

The answer is not difficult. Before 2002, there had been many believers of CGF joining CAG. The leaders of CGF were aware that they would lose their positions and salaries if too many of their members accepted Almighty God and converted to CAG. In order to deceive their members and keep them away from CAG, they had fabricated many rumors to slander and defame CAG. But they failed, as many co-workers and members of CGF kept joining CAG, including some nationally well-known leaders, such as Xie Qiang, who had been the leader of one of CGF missions (see e.g. <https://www.holyspiritspeaks.org/19-i-have-received-almighty-gods-great-salvation>). The massive outburst of conversions from CGF to CAG determined an unprecedented crisis within CGF, and the top leaders realized they had no way to stop losing their members. Even their regional leaders and elders were leaving CGF to join CAG, an organization they had been condemning and attacking. Rather than admitting their failures,

seeking the reasons why they lost their believers, and revising their hostility to CAG, CGF leaders disregarded Jesus' teaching, "do not bear false witness" (Mark 10:19), and invented the horrific kidnapping incident. The fundamental reason was that they wanted to deceive and frighten their members away from CAG, and at the same time to achieve their aim to discredit CAG and explain to their devotees and outsiders why so many of their members and leaders were leaving the CGF to join CAG.

After the so-called kidnapping reported by CGF in April 2002, a lot more believers and primary leaders of CGF joined the CAG (see more details at <https://www.kingdomsalvation.org/tiezheng-048.html>). This shows that even CGF's own members did not believe that the kidnapping really happened, which further proves that the incident was simply invented. Christians should remember that, as stated in the Ten Commandments, "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor" (Exodus 20:16). Responsible media should refrain from repeating CGF's kidnapping story uncritically, without examining the gross inconsistencies that expose it as patently false.

Concerning CAG's Denial of the “416 Kidnapping Incident”

—a Rebuttal

Asia Research Center, USA¹

The official statement² published by the Church of Almighty God (CAG) on October 18, 2017 emphatically denies the kidnapping of 34 China Gospel Fellowship (CGF) pastors (note: China Gospel Fellowship referred to it as the “416 Kidnapping Incident³” since the kidnapping event occurred on April 16, 2002. We will use the same reference throughout the article). There are four parts in this rebuttal. Part one is an extract from the book by Shen Xiaoming titled, *Kidnapped by A Cult*⁴, which contains the details of his experience of the whole incident. Part two is an abridged version of our interview on July 24, 2018 in Beijing with Pastor Zhang who was one of the 34 pastors kidnapped. This is his own account. Part three is a record from Beijing’s Public Security Bureau concerning this incident, when one of the victims escaped and China Gospel Fellowship went to file a report concerning the kidnapping. Part four is my rebuttal in response to CAG’s statement based on Shen’s book and Pastor Zhang’s account.

Part One: the “416 Kidnapping Incident” according to Shen Xiaoming in his own words (an extract⁵)

In April 2001, about one year before I found myself in the strange Shanghai apartment handing over my mobile phone to a complete stranger, I learned about a sister from the Henan village in Pingdingshan named Ai Yanling who knew about a famous leadership school in Singapore called the Haggai Institute. The Haggai Institute is a Christian training institute that provides training based on the Bible to pastors, theologians, missionaries, business leaders, and even ambassadors and presidents. Their prestigious program is widely recognized and respected (p. 21).

Sister Ai was able to bring a Singaporean businessman by the name of Mr. Lian to Henan to meet with brother Yang, who is one of the leaders in our house church network. By the end of the conversation, Mr. Lian had agreed to sponsor Brother Yang to attend the Haggai Institute, provided that Brother Yang would submit his personal [information] (p.22). This Mr. Lian, we all thought, might be the link that we had been looking for to help provide grounded biblical teaching that would reinforce the foundation of the underground house church movement. We

¹ www.asiaresearchcenter.org

² See <https://www.holyspiritspeaks.org/statement/>

³ See both http://chinaforjesus.com/cgf/070702/CGF_july_7_2002_ch.htm and <http://chinaforjesus.com/cgf/070702/index.htm>

⁴ *Kidnapped by A Cult: A Pastor’s Stand against a Murderous Sect* (2017), Shen Xiaoming, with Eugene Bach, New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House.

⁵ Ibid. All material in Part One are from the book unless noted otherwise. Exercise was taken not to take any quotes out of context but also to provide a brief and clear storyline of the kidnapping incident. Shen also wrote a short report in Chinese concerning the kidnapping. It is titled “Kidnapping—Before and After” and posted on http://chinaforjesus.com/cgf/CGF_shen_july_2002_ch.htm.

were all excited for Brother Yang and wanted to know if more of us could join him. The word came back from Brother Yang's contact that the leadership of the Institute would like to meet together with all of us who were interested. We all arranged the paperwork and submitted it, not knowing what would happen next. An entire year went by and we heard nothing back from Mr. Lian (p. 23).

One day in March 2002, Mr. Lian called, "There are new developments regarding your enrollment process. The principal, Mr. Yu, and an assistant would like to visit Pingdingshan to understand the situation better" (p. 27). It was not long after our meeting together that the final decision was made. Mr. Lian called with the exciting news: the school in Singapore had approved us for enrollment—*all* of us. Their approval was contingent on our completion of an introductory training program to learn more about the Institute, which would be conducted in China. I was elated that we were approved. But on the other hand, the logistics looked impossible. First of all, none of us had passports. We were all convicts and had served time in prison. Second, we had no way to pay for it and we still had the matter of timing. There was simply no way all the leaders could up and leave for training in Singapore for six months to a year. It would be impossible (p. 29).

Mr. Lian recommended that we first attend the three-month training in China, and then our path forward would be clearer. The three-month training would not require passports, visas, and would give us a great idea of what was being offered. After considering their offer, we accepted on the condition that they reduce the training from three months to three weeks. They agreed (p. 30).

[In April 2002, thirty-four coworkers of CGF reported to six different locations from various regions. Shen's team of six members travelled to Shanghai. The day when Shen's team arrived at the Shanghai apartment, every team member was asked to surrender his cell phone sim card as well as the handset for security reasons. Shen's team of six was later split into smaller groups.]

I didn't know it then, but all of the leadership in our network was being split up into smaller groups for the exact same reason—security. Thirty-four of us were sent alone or in pairs to locations in 17 different cities. We drove for about an hour across the city of Shanghai and [arrived at] a two-story house (p. 39). [The house has] a large and spacious living area. The main room was like a meeting hall and had been set up for studying. They must have set up the study space very quickly because it was only an hour before that we had learned our security had been compromised and we were moving to "Plan B." There were enough room for all of the students. The ten new students all knew each other, Old Shen and I were the only outsiders. The other students were from another network, the majority from the head-covering sect (p. 40).

The instructors at the school taught all morning long and into the afternoon. There were a couple of things I heard that seemed a bit confusing for me. They began to teach about concepts like there being an Age of Law in the Old Testament, an Age of Grace during the days of Jesus, and an Age of Wisdom for today's church. I said to the instructor, Mr. Chen, "Sorry, but what you are talking about sounds a lot like some of the cults that are operating in China." "Well, maybe that is because there are cults in China that use the Bible for the base of their teachings." Even

though Chen's words made sense, there was something that did not feel right about the teaching. But since these guys were with the Haggai Institute, I suppressed my anxiety (p. 50).

I thought of my own classmates. They seemed to really be enjoying the training and were obviously looking for something different from the training than I was. They also seemed to agree with everything that the teacher said during instruction (p. 69).

"We need you to write a letter to your church members who are attending the course," the principal said to me one day. "What is the problem?" I asked. He said, "Nothing is wrong. We just need a letter from you instructing your church members to be respectful of our teachers and to faithfully learn what we are teaching them." (p. 68)

"We need you to write another letter to your church members. Routine, nothing more." The principal said [four or five days later]. In an effort to be agreeable, I began writing another note. I basically said the same thing as I had written before. I asked them to try not to move around or leave the training rooms without permission as it could draw too much attention and risk security. I knew that this is something that all of them knew, but I wrote it anyway to please the teachers (p. 77).

One of the ladies who was attending the classes with us, Sister Lian, had been following me around. When I needed assistance with my crutches or to carry my food at breakfast, she was always there to help. She even offered to massage my head when I had a headache, but I told her I did not need a massage. [She had told me that her husband in Singapore left her for another woman and that she was lonely in China. On that day after I finished writing the letter as requested, she came to my room, sat in the chair next to me, and tried to lean in toward me. [After I told her not to give up on her husband,] she paused, quickly became angry, and stormed out of the room. I needed [my coworker] Old Shen's help. If I could get him to stay close to me, I knew that together we would be able to protect one another from ever being accused of engaging in an inappropriate relationship (p. 78).

[One day my coworker Old Shen offered me his view about the situation with the training.] He said, "Do you notice how all of the students agree with everything that they say? They do not have real questions." Old Shen went on, "They have been whispering to each other and when I approach them, they quickly change the topic. Do you know what I mean?" He added more, "And do you notice how there are two ladies here that follow you and me everywhere we go? One goes with you everywhere you go and one goes with me everywhere I go. They are so eager to stay close to us, share their most intimate stories, and even give us massages." I knew exactly what he was talking about (p. 87). "I believe they are trying to seduce us." (p. 88) "I am afraid that these instructors are all from the Eastern Lightning cult and the students are helping them." (p. 89)

On the twentieth day in the flat, I [thought] it was my last day. I was anxious to pack up and get out. We had some final classes to be taught. The instructor started to speak again about the different ages. The teacher looked directly at me and asked, "Who is greater? God or the Bible? God is a living God. He cannot be boxed up in a mere book. God is greater than the Bible." (p. 117) Just then Old Shen jumped up in a fit of rage, "You are the Eastern Lightning cult!" He did

not show an ounce of fear. "Yes, we are," the teacher responded back, "and you must accept the truth or be damned." (p. 118)

Old Shen and I had argued back and forth with the teachers for hours. We did not want to hear anything else that they had to say, but we did not have a choice. When we demanded that they let us go, they simply refused. The doors were locked, the windows were barred, and there was no clear way to escape. We could not overpower them because we were obviously outnumbered (p. 124). At about nine o'clock that night, Old Shen was taken away. When Old Shen left, my earthly chances of making out alive left with him (p. 128).

I decided to fast and pray (p. 135). The instructors wanted me to join their training sessions but I refused. Suddenly a strategy came bursting forth which helped to guide me through the persecution. "I will not listen. I will not watch. I will not think. I will not debate. I will not believe." I realized that these five things would help me survive their persecution. Even if they killed me, I would die with my faith in Jesus Christ (p. 136).

[I was moved to another house not too long after, even though I was told that they would release me. But it was only the beginning of another wave of attack.] One day a woman I never met before walked into my room. She came toward me, with one hand on my chest, she pushed me back as she mounted on top of me, and with her other hand she grabbed my collar and began kissing me. I yelled stop. She just continued whispering sexually suggestive words. The Lord completely removed the desire from me and I was able to resist (p. 185).

Some of the leaders who were kidnapped at the same time as I was had much more difficulty dealing with the women than I did, even though I was handicapped. Several of them had sexual stimulants, in pill form, slipped into their drinks. Once the pills kicked in, the women moved in for the kill and began to try to seduce them, though they were all unsuccessful (p. 186).

Some of the brothers reportedly saw several teachers going into empty bedrooms with women and sleeping with them. Several of the male teachers treated the girls that were used to tempt the brothers in our group like playthings. Those poor young ladies were mere pawns whose purity was being thrown away for the lies of the enemy (p. 187).

Every day was a fight. Every evening was a battle. The teachers continued to teach during the day and loud speakers played throughout the night. They knew that they were wearing me down. They knew that it would only be a matter of time before they broke me (p. 215). I started to play with the idea of accepting the teachings and agreeing with them just so that I could go home. I was about to do something that I knew I would regret later, but I couldn't help it (p. 218).

[Finally after 40 days,] a group of men came bursting into the room. They told me that we were leaving. They lifted me up to my feet and rushed me out to a van and threw me inside (p. 231). Six men and one woman got into the van with me and sat all around me like a large barrier to keep me from banging on the window or jumping out the door (p. 232). When the van finally came to a stop, I could see the signs for the Shanghai railway station. One of the guys in the front seat got out, came around, and helped me out of the van. He handed me my phone and a train

ticket. He got back in the van, slammed the door shut, and the van screeched its wheels as it departed. I stood there in the middle of a busy sidewalk, and I was all alone (p. 233).

Part Two: Pastor Zhang's Account of the “416 Kidnapping Incident” (in his own voice⁶)

The most senior leader in China Gospel Fellowship (CGF) is Feng**. He studied in a missionary school in Tanghe before 1949. Later he became an elder in a church locally. During the Cultural Revolution he was arrested and put into prison for 5 or 7 years. He was released before 1978 right when the reform era began. Besides Feng** there are several others, such as [Old] Shen** who just passed away, Shen**, Wei**, Luo** who is now in California, and Jing**, Lian**, Xing**, myself, and Wang**. Altogether there are ten of us who began CGF.

Before 1983, each of us was preaching the gospel and establishing churches in our own hometown in Tanghe County. We came together in 1983 because of persecution. There was a major crackdown on the Shouters in 1983. So we joined ourselves together and from there we began to spread outward to other areas.

In 1988, we sent forth five teams to preach the gospel and spread the church. Five teams went out in five different directions but all under the banner of CGF.

In 1996, four of us (Feng, Lou, Xing, and myself) were arrested and put in prison. Since Feng was our leader at the time, after his arrest, [Old] Shen**, one of the main co-workers, assumed the position of the head among us. The arrest in 1996 was like a total ransack on our headquarters. After that the Public Security Bureau classified us as a xiejiao.

I was released in 1998, after 2 years. Most others served a sentence of 3 years but mine was reduced due to my poor health. By the time we were all released, the gospel work has been expanded to 25 to 26 teams. In other words, during our imprisonment, the work actually increased.

Old Shen** resigned at the end of 2001 when his term was up, and Shen** [note: no direct relation to Old Shen] became the head of CGF. The EL incident happened shortly after Shen** became our leader. When he began to assume the responsibility, he was still learning many things, and perhaps he was too bold and hence made decisions that led to this incident. I am referring to the decision to cooperate with Haggai Institute. People from the self-proclaimed Haggai Institute first made contact with Old Shen, but EL took advantage of our leadership transition to make further arrangements. Concerning the 416 Kidnapping Incident, I put out a book (in Chinese) about it in 2003 after my release; Shen** also described it in his book published in English in 2017.

⁶ All the narratives in Part Two are taken from an interview with Pastor Zhang in Beijing on July 24, 2018.

I also wrote a report titled “The Truth Concerning 416 Kidnapping Incident by Eastern Lightning” which provides a detailed timeline and truthful accounts of the kidnap. This report is posted online in both English and Chinese.

Shen** had contact with a Mr. Yu who claimed to be the vice president of Haggai Institute. Mr. Yu told us that even though the original plan was for us to attend the training in Singapore where the Institute was located, in view of the situation in China where many of us could not obtain a passport to travel overseas, the Institute has decided to send a team of teachers to China instead to give us the training. As it turned out, this so-called vice president was an imposter. One time the real vice president Yu came through Beijing and I went to meet him. They were two different men. However, I felt the fake vice president might have participated in the training provided by Haggai previously, because he was very familiar with how Haggai operates.

We are aware that Haggai Institute does not normally have dealings with house churches in China. But this man said that they were willing to accommodate us because of our longing to be trained. The communication was through a middle man at the time. The man from Haggai said they would send teachers over to China to give classes to us. For safety concern, he said that instead of having all 34 of us together in one class we should have small classes of no more than 6 persons in each class. He also said that for each class they would assign 6 believers from the Christian Assembly group to join us. As the Christian Assembly people were more conservative, implying that they were less mature than us, we were told to look after them. So it transpired that 34 of us were divided into 6 groups to have the training at 6 different locations. My group, for instance, consisted of 6 of our own people with me taking the lead. We first met in Beijing before setting off. I was living in Beijing at the time and the other 5 came from other places. We rode the train together to Shenyang, the capital of Liaoning in the Northeast, and then 3 cars came to pick us up, two in each car, and brought us to a big property in Panjin, which was our training location. The property seemed to belong to a wealthy family because there were many houses and rooms. That first night we felt a little strange about the arrangement but we put aside the uneasy feeling.

So we began to have classes. During the first class, a teacher in my location used traditional Chinese font when he wrote on the blackboard, to show that he was from Haggai in Singapore. [The Chinese people in China used simplified font in our writing.] Actually he was not very good at it. It was more for show. Generally you can detect where a person comes from by the accent with which he speaks Mandarin. In my location, some were from the Northeast (i.e. they are local) while others were from the south.

[In any one place where the training classes were given, in addition to those of us from CGF, there were usually teachers, guards, a cook, and several believers from Christian Assembly. As the outside situation became tense, unbeknownst to us, we were moved and separated into even smaller groups of twos, and later completely alone, to avoid attention and detection.]

In the beginning, I remember 4 or 5 teachers took turns to come to my location to give us lessons. The cook was the same one throughout. As to the guards, there was one during the day

and two during the night. Besides these ones, there was also a person who seemed to be in charge of that location. He would come daily to look over things.

We were completely restricted in our movement. The guard at the door was a big fellow who had a big metal pipe within his reach. The door was always locked and the guard sat outside. Sometimes when the debate became fierce, he would come in and bang the metal pipe against the floor making a loud clanging noise as a means to frighten us into submission. It was not possible to flee through the windows because they were covered with wires. Neither did I attempt to yell for help because I did not want to anger the guard. I felt threatened the whole time even though I was never hurt by any of the guards.

[At one point in time when there were just two of us from CGF,] we were put in a three-bedroom apartment on the 6th floor. Two of us from CGF stayed in one room and the two from Christian Assembly stayed in another room. I remember that after another two or three days, they separated us again and I was all by myself.

The lessons went like this: on the first day the teacher spent time criticizing the churches, the leaders, and the Pharisees, the kind of things that Pharisees would do during Jesus' time. As he was criticizing, actually some among us already discerned that he might be from Eastern Lightning (EL), because this has been their way of defrauding people. Many of us taking the lead in CGF have not engaged in actual battle with EL. We all knew that EL was heretical but we have not had actual contact with them. Nevertheless, a few among us who did in the past were able to detect that these ones were teaching EL's beliefs. As soon as the situation was exposed, we also realized that both our cell phones and our identification cards were confiscated. We were stuck.

My group of six for instance, from the second day of confinement we suspected something was not right. We then shared our suspicion with those from Christian Assembly. Once we told them our suspicion, the next day we were broken apart into groups of two. That was why we knew that perhaps the ones from Christian Assembly were spies planted by EL.

After they broke us into smaller groups, there was more restriction on our movements. We did not have phones nor our ID cards, and our shoes were also taken away. By the third day, they abandoned all pretense and began to speak to us directly, lecturing us concerning the three ages and the age of the kingdom. Of course once they began to talk about the age of the kingdom, their true identity was completely exposed. And they even showed us their book, *The Word Appears in the Flesh*. Not only so, they played their music all the time and we began to debate every day around that book. I don't remember how many days after that, but as the debate continued, they parted the other brother and me again, totally isolating us. So I was all alone in a place. They did this in three steps.

At first I was debating with them, but as the time went on, I stopped debating. Do you know why? It was because they were not following the reason. If you got involved with them in debates, over time you would also become unprincipled and unreasonable. Hence, I decided not to debate with them. I began to read their books. I am a sensible person and I tend to be clear-

headed. I decided to study their “bible”, *The Word Appears in the Flesh*. I wanted to understand what their beliefs were about.

They put drugs in our food. Later I learned that at some places our people experienced incessant diarrhea after eating the food. Also at some places, they put drugs that stimulated your sexual urges into the food. After you ate the food, you felt differently. How I coped was to only eat steam buns and not touched other dishes. So basically I felt more or less the same. Nevertheless, sometimes I still felt different after I ate. In that kind of situations where you were constantly in fear, how could you possibly have sexual desires? That was how I knew the food was drugged. It was obvious to me.

The last place where I was confined there were two people from Christian Assembly, one of whom was a young man tall and strong and the other was a young woman in her late 20s. The two followed me wherever I went. We spent the day time together, sitting in a room studying, and at night the brother and I shared a room. I believe these ones were genuine believers from Christian Assembly but they have been converted by EL.

[I learned later that] they arranged different people to be with us in each location depending on who we are. Usually a young man would be with us to watch us and a young woman would also be with us to look after us, such as washing our clothes, bringing water to wash our feet, and even offering to massage our feet. But I believe none of us let the women massage our feet. The woman would also try to shower attention on us, and when there was no one around, she would discuss things of sexual nature with you. She would say that according to *The Word Appears in the Flesh*, every follower of EL should leave home and join the EL faith. Examples in the Bible were also brought up to support their teaching, such as Judah having relations with his daughter-in-law and Lot having relations with his daughters. They considered these examples correct. I scolded the young woman who conversed with me.

Perhaps it is because I was older and more sensible; when I was in that predicament, I asked the young man to stay in the same room with me. The original arrangement was that each of us would have our own room. I did not agree with the arrangement. I was afraid that at night if I had fallen asleep and the young woman would come into my room, I would not be able to defend myself. Furthermore, what if one of the guards came into the bedroom and took pictures of us sharing a bed, no amount of words could explain my innocence. That was why I insisted that the young man share a room with me. There was only one large bed in each room. Once I knew that they were EL, I had to take precaution against their methods.

Such was the situation during my confinement. Daily I lived in fear, because in the village where my wife came from, there was a case of an older sister in her 70s (in Chinese culture she is addressed as an aunt even if there was no direct family connection) whom the EL set a trap for and broke her legs. This older aunt’s house was designated by the church for hospitality (receiving out-of-town visitors). One evening a brother came to her on a bicycle saying that his mother was ill and asked the aunt to visit her and pray for her healing. So the aunt went with him, both on bicycles. As they were on their way, a young fellow appeared with a metal rod and began beating her. The young man who was with her assisted by pinning her on the ground.

They broke both of her legs and left her by the road. This took place around 1997 when I was still in prison.

On that same night in another village, an older brother in his 60s was also beaten and his legs broken; one of his ears was also cut off. This brother is still alive and about 90 years old now. These attacks were well known among the churches. You can also find their records online. Later when the Public Security people arrested the culprits because of other cases, they admitted to committing these crimes. It is a well-known fact among the villagers that these ones are EL members. We all know them. During those years from 1996 to 1998, EL members were very active and very bold. They openly and aggressively recruited believers in the churches with persuasive speech. So the churches endeavored to refute them and expose them. Because of this, EL targeted the leaders in the churches with their attacks.

Those from the Christian Assembly were indeed members, but they were converted to EL before they came, not while we were having our lessons. One of the things EL instructed their believers is that after conversion each one should go and convert another one.

I was confined for more than 20 days. I believe the longest confinement was 40 days.

Eventually we were released. I believe the reason is that a sister in my original group of six escaped successfully on the 2nd day. That sister surnamed Zhao is from Shenyang, which means she is local and knew where to go after she took the first opportunity to escape.

So our confinement became known and those outside began to discuss what to do. Eventually they decided to go to the authorities in Beijing as this kidnapping took place in several locations. As the authorities began to take actions, we who were inside could also sense the pressure even though we did not know what was going on.

After sister Zhao escaped, we were guarded more closely. The doors were always locked and we moved from place to place every week. If I remember correctly, I was moved three times.

One day they took me to the train station, returned my cell phone and ID card to me, and said, "You see, we did not harm you or mistreat you. Please contact us in the future." Then I was set free.

I was dropped off at the Panjin station. I bought a ticket with my own money. I still had the money I brought with me in the beginning. They took my phone and my ID but not my money.

A few days before they released me, one day out of nowhere I was given my phone and instructed to call my wife and inform her that I was safe. I was told that as Christians my wife should not have gone to the central police headquarters to report my disappearance. Because of this phone call, when I was set free and returned home, the brothers and sisters in our Fellowship were concerned that I have been brainwashed by EL people. They quarantined me. In fact all of us were quarantined for 3 to 4 days, until they were assured that we had not been corrupted.

Out of the 34 who were subject to involuntary confinement, two did not return to the fellowship after they were released. We realized these two must have been affected by EL during the confinement because after we were all released, they did not come in contact with any of us.

Either they succumbed to the sexual temptation or something else happened; otherwise, why would they not return to meet with us? One is from Shangqiu, Henan, and the other is from Xinjiang. Both joined EL, but the one from Xinjiang left EL at a later time. He did not return to our fellowship even after he left EL. We have not heard from the other one.

This kidnapping case is rather big because it involved the public security offices in six provinces. When the Beijing office sent directions down to the provincial levels, which took a while, EL also got wind of it. Hence, they set us free and went into hiding. By the time the public security office at the local level went to the various locations to find them, they have cleared out and moved away.

EL had a statement denying that this kidnapping ever happened. One of the reasons was that CGF was also listed as a xiejiao. We were one of the xiejiao groups in 1995, but by in 1999 our name was removed from the list of 14. When I was in prison between 1996 and 1998, Beijing Public Security office investigated me and our group. At the end they said we are a civilian religious group and not xiejiao. That was why our name was removed from the list in 1999.

Before my wife and the wife of Shen** went to the Beijing authorities, they were faced with a dilemma. They ran the risk of falling into either the hand of the government authorities or that of EL. They decided that it was better to put themselves into the hand of the authorities because EL has no qualm at killing people whereas the authorities may simply detain you for a couple of years at most. So they went to Beijing and reported the kidnapping to the authorities. The official in charge of the case actually thanked them for coming forward since our group has suffered much persecution by the government over the years.

We were identified as a xiejiao group in 1996, but in 1999 our group was removed from the list. On the list of 14 xiejiao groups in 1999, CGF was not there. They investigated us when I was imprisoned in Henan and concluded that we are a civilian religious group and not a xiejiao.

As to the reason the government seemed to be passive with regard to the kidnapping, this is my understanding. First, no one was injured or dead among us, even though there was involuntary confinement, sexual temptations, and fraud, and involving many people. Second, this case involved not only EL but also CGF, which is an unregistered organization. In spite of the fact that the government official accepted our report, it put the authorities in a quandary as to how to enter our name as an organization. Nevertheless, one can never say that this kidnapping did not take place simply because there was no record in the official document, because there were 34, at least 32, witnesses. One of the 34 just passed away, but the rest is still all alive and could testify to this experience personally.

[Note: at the time of the interview with Pastor Zhang, neither Zhang nor we were aware that a “record” of sorts of the 416 Incident does exist and is in possession by the Beijing Public Security office. See below.]

Part Three: the Record from Beijing's Public Security Bureau

The Situation Concerning the Illegal Confinement of “China Gospel Fellowship” by “Eastern Lightning”

On April 27, 2002, Luo Y., [wife of] Zhang F., and [wife of] Shen X. came to Beijing to report a situation of illegal confinement of 34 believers.

1. According to Luo's report, they were illegally confined by "Eastern Lightning."

In April of 2001, Yang D., a believer from Lushan County, Henan province, became acquainted with Li S. through another woman named Ai Y. Yang also came to know a person surnamed Lian who claimed to be from Singapore. Lian claimed that he had established a Haggai Seminary in Singapore and asked Yang D. to contact responsible ones from the house churches and invite them to participate in free trainings offered by Haggai Seminary. Yang D. relayed this message to Luo Y. In April 2002, according to Lian's arrangement, Lu informed Zhang F., Shen X., Lian C., etc to head toward Qingdao, Shanghai, Jinzhou, Xian, Zhongxiang in Hubei, and Renqiu in Hebei, to participate in the trainings. Luo Y. himself did not participate due to an illness.

On April 15 at 7 pm, Shen X. called his wife, saying, "I am in Shanghai right now and have been kidnapped by Eastern Lightning." On April 19, Luo Y. received a phone call from Zhao X., a believer residing in Tiefa City, Liaoning Province, informing him that she together with Zhang F. were kidnapped by Eastern Lightning while participating in the training in Panjin City, Liaoning Province, but she has now escaped.

2. According to Yang D's report, they were illegally confined by Eastern Lightning.

In the afternoon of April 16, Yang arrived at the Long-distance Bus Depot in Renqiu, Hebei province, according to Shen Y's arrangement. A man who called himself Wang C. received Yang D. to his home. Wang C. is slightly chubby, about 172 cm in height, and speaks with a local accent. Present at the bus station was a man surnamed Ho from Zheng County, Henan, who was said to be a training participant, together with Wang C's "mother" and "aunt." In the evening of the same day, a total of 12 training participants were taken by three teachers said to be from Haggai Seminary to three different locations for the training. Before they set forth, they were asked to hand over their money and means of communication. Yang D. and Jing, another brother from Inner Mongolia, were taken to Hejian City, Hebei province, to a two-bedroom place (said to be Wang C's aunt's home). From April 17 to 25, lessons were given by Liu J., a teacher said to be from Haggai Seminary. (Liu J. is medium build, about 175 cm in height, speaks Mandarin, and wears gold-rimmed glasses.) The content of the lessons was mainly on the "change of the ages" according to the Bible with some messages from Eastern Lightning mixed in. From April 26 onward, Liu J. openly preached that "the age of the kingdom has arrived, and the female Christ has been incarnated to judge the people in the world," and that they are to "overturn the ruling of the great red dragon." Moreover, he also claimed that "during the 2008 Olympic Games, all sort of foreign organizations will enter China to turn China upside down and China will be disintegrated just as the former Soviet Union was." Yang D. realized that this teaching was from Eastern Lightning and proceeded to debate with Liu. While they were arguing back and forth, Yang discovered that the other four participants (two male and two female) were also members of EL. All these ones banded together to attack Yang and they even used sex to try to seduce him. Yang rejected all

their attacks. In the afternoon of April 27, after engaged in a series of struggles with EL, Yang and brother Jing escaped.

List of those that were illegally confined (main members):

Xing J., Lian C., Wei J., Shen Y., Niu W., Wang J., Jing R., Hu C., Yang D., Zhang F., Shen X.

Part Four: My Rebuttal and Conclusion

The CAG statement, which contains five points, totally denies the kidnapping incident. Interestingly, this statement is only available in English and not in Chinese. Our suspicion is that as many CAG members are applying for refugee asylum in various Western and Asian countries this statement will help support and strengthen their cases. Another possible intention for the absence of a statement in Chinese is to hide this incident from the attention of the Chinese media as well as the government agencies and even the organization that suffered most severely from this incident, China Gospel Fellowship, itself.

CAG's response is rather far-fetched; it does not make sense and it contradicts itself.

First, CAG claims that the Chinese Communist Party began to persecute CAG in 1991. "Under this condition, that CAG was able to imprison and detain leaders and co-workers of CGF for about two months is utterly unbelievable." We feel that the 416 Kidnapping Incident has nothing to do with CAG being persecuted. Instead, CAG is actually very aggressive in recruiting church leaders, even with improper means and with violence.

In June of 2016, we had opportunities to visit and interview three house church Christian pastors in Henan, Pastor Wang, Pastor Shi, and Pastor Liu. All three pastors testified that they were led by different CAG members to believe that some Christian believers were in urgent need of spiritual help, and while walking or riding a bicycle on their way to visit the said Christian believers they were subsequently ambushed and beaten with iron bars and other instruments. The three pastors also testified that they were targeted because they stood up to warn Christian believers not to be persuaded and influenced by the distorted and evil teaching of CAG members. One of the three pastors still kept his hospital medical record which showed that he suffered broken legs and facial trauma from that encounter. Furthermore, during our interview with Pastor Shi, the wife of Shi kept trying to stop Shi from talking about the incident involving CAG for fear that other CAG members might hear us. We can remember vividly her frightened face and the psychological scar Pastor Shi's incident has left on her. Mrs. Shi was fearful that their talking with us would draw retaliation from local CAG members.

Through our visits for two years to China with CAG victims it is obvious that in the late 1990s CAG employed tactics of beating and torture to punish or silence Christian pastors. As the tactics of threat and violence proved to be effective, it is not difficult to understand that CAG became emboldened to use kidnapping and illegal confinement to further their cause.

Second, CAG claims that CGF leaders have been successful in keeping their information secret (from the government); hence, it is highly unlikely for CGF to supply names and locations of their leaders and even photographs of their IDs to two strangers, Lian and Yu.

According to our interview with Pastor Zhang, four CGF leaders were put into prison in 1996 for two to three years during which time the leadership of CGF went through a transition and new leadership was established. The fact that Lian and Yu initiated the contacts with CGF and that the contact was made while the leadership was rather new partly explain the strong desire of CGF members to be trained and such a desire to be trained motivated them to surrender their information to Lian and Yu.

Shen Y. was the head of CGF until the end of 2001. He left the post when his term ended at which time Shen X. took over. The alleged personnel from Haggai Institute, Lian and Yu, first made contact with Shen Y. while he was still the head. A whole year had elapsed before the second contact was made, and this time it was with the new head, Shen X. It is likely that during this one-year period Mr. Yu, the alleged president of Haggai, has familiarized himself with the structure of Haggai's curriculum sufficiently to know how to present it convincingly.

Furthermore, it is also likely that this time was spent seeing to the logistics of having the "training" in six different cities in China. The fact that six cities with multiple places in each city were used in this incident indicates that a large amount of planning and forethought were involved.

Third, CAG also states that Haggai Institute was known to Christians in China to work with Chinese government agencies, such as TSPM and SARA; hence, for an unrecognized organization such as CGF to supply Haggai with their information is unthinkable.

Pastor Zhang, in our interview with him, commented that it was actually Haggai Institute who said that they have never worked with CGF before and had nothing to do with arranging for this "training." CAG took Haggai Institute's statement and made it their own. Pastor Zhang testified that in their meeting with Mr. Yu, the alleged president of Haggai, Mr. Yu also said the same thing, which is that Haggai does not work with underground Christian groups in China. However, Mr. Yu said, seeing as CGF was longing to be trained, Haggai was willing to accommodate CGF and provide the training. Yu's statement helped alleviate the uncomfortable feeling CGF had toward Haggai's past history with the Chinese government.

Fourth, CGF is a religious group under persecution. CAG asked: Why would CGF take the risk of going to the police and surrender the names of their leaders? If the kidnapping incident did happen, why did the government not publicize and report it at that time? If the fact were like what CGF said, the case should have been transferred to the relevant Procuratorate for verification and prosecution. However, there were no police raids, no arrests, and no trials.

In response to the fourth point, we have in our possession an official document which says that three persons (Luo, wife of Zhang, and wife of Shen) went to Beijing to report a situation of illegal confinement on April 27, 2002. The document used a particular expression, *fanying* (反应 loosely translated "a response report"), to describe it, which indicates that it is not an official case (which will require investigation), just a report on file. Perhaps it is due to the fact that this

incident involves not random individuals but members of an organization not recognized by the government. The Beijing Public Security chose to file it as a *fanying qingkuang* (反应情况 lit. a response report of a situation), not as an actual case, to avoid having to investigate activities involving two unregistered groups.

This document proves that the 416 Kidnapping Incident was brought to the government's attention. Pastor Zhang's wife informed us that she and Shen X's wife were both involved in going to Beijing to report the incident. Sister Zhao who was the first person to escape from the confinement was later called to Beijing for questioning.

The fact that both groups, CAG and CGF, are unregistered churches presented a dilemma to the Chinese government. The Chinese government typically does not pay attention or take active response to things involving unregistered groups. This is especially true when no one involved in the incident was injured or killed at the end. It is not the practice of the Chinese government to protect unregistered church members. As mentioned early in 1998 when scores of Christian believers in Henan suffered surprised attacks under false claims and had their legs broken or ears severed, the government took action and tracked down the perpetrators, even though the actions were somewhat half-hearted and the perpetrators were located because of their involvement in other unrelated cases. In general the government does not actively pursue cases involving unacknowledged parties unless lives were lost or severe injuries were involved, and it was usually conducted case by case.

From the interviews with Pastor Zhang, right after the kidnapping was reported, some volunteers went to the location where Zhang was kept and found that the entire building was vacant. No arrest could be made.

Lastly, CAG asserted that “our Church has strict requirements for admission. Only those who have true belief in Almighty God and attend Church meetings willingly can be admitted, after their applications are approved by the Church leaders and deacons,” and “according to our Church’s Principles for Expelling and Purging People, so far we have expelled from 300,000 to 500,000 members from CAG.”

This last argument from CAG is the most far-fetched and ridiculous ever heard from any so-called religious organization. On one hand CAG “has strict requirements for admission” but on the other hand in recent modern history, we have never heard an organization to expel such a large number of members. If this were true, it only shows that CAG is composed of criminals that can later be expelled by itself. Which religious organization in modern society ever reported that it expelled three hundred thousand to five hundred thousand members? All indications put doubts to the fact that CAG is a Christian organization as suggested by some sociologists.

CAG’s statement also mentioned that a number of CGF members have converted to CAG; the testimony of one person, Xie Qiang, was given in the statement as an example. If one reads Xie Qiang’s testimony (available in both English⁷ and Chinese⁸), one can easily identify that he was

⁷ <https://www.holyspiritspeaks.org/19-i-have-received-almighty-gods-great-salvation> (English)

⁸ <https://www.kingdomsalvation.org/tiezheng-018.html> (Chinese)

one of those involved in the April 2002 incident. According to Pastor Zhang, two of the 34 who were involuntarily confined ceased to remain in fellowship with CGF after they were released. Perhaps these two were the ones negatively affected by their experience. As far as Pastor Zhang knows, both became CAG members but after a period of time one left CAG again.