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EDITORIAL

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This third issue of the **Australian Journal of Mission Studies** is a special issue on missions in China apart from the concluding part of Michael Raiter's "No Other Name", the first part of which appeared in the December 2007 issue.

China has always provided a crucial case-study for missiologists. It was the first large-scale literate highly-organized civilization hitherto untouched by Christian ideas to be encountered by Christian missionaries in the seventh century, then again in the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries. Approaches that worked in the Americas, India and the Pacific islands, failed disastrously. It became a testing ground for new missionary methods and new theologies of accommodation and inculturation.

Some time ago there was consternation over comments on Islam taken out of context in an academic address in September 2006 by Pope Benedict XVI. What remained comparatively un-commented were some further remarks by Pope Benedict defending his "thesis that the critically purified Greek heritage forms an integral part of Christian faith" and a full-on attack by him on the "dehellenization" of theology.

Leaving aside questions about how "hellenic" our biblical heritage is, and how Greek was the early Christian church, the existence of a Chinese Christian church with distinctively un-hellenic features for some thirteen or more centuries may give us pause. And the value of Chinese spiritual disciplines of meditation and contemplation, moderate asceticism and harmony with nature are much needed in our allegedly "Greek" culture.

The four major articles on China in this issue throw some light on this question. Tony Wong, a Chinese Christian pastor from Hong Kong, discusses the developing Chinese theology of an early seventeenth century Christian convert, Wang Zheng. Wang found many echoes in his own Confucian tradition of the Christian God, the Lord of Heaven (*Tianzhu*) as his Jesuit teachers called him. Especially he found an appropriate name for this God in the Chinese term *Da Fumu*, Great Father and Mother, and in the programme for moral development and social concern that it inspired.

Larry Nemer's article which revisits an academic thesis of his earlier days on the French protectorate of the Catholic missions in China in the late nineteenth/early twentieth century China, reminds us of the political and economic context in which missionaries perforce operated. A bitterly anti-clerical French government nevertheless claimed the right to "protect" all Catholic missions in China by military force on occasions. It took a long struggle on the part of Chinese Catholics and some of their European pastors to free the Chinese Catholic Church from this unwanted interference which goes far to explain later Chinese resentments and sensibilities.

The longest piece on China is an exception to the usual practice of *AJMS* in that it is a historical document rather than a missiological reflection. But we thought it too good not to grasp the opportunity when it came our way. It is a classic missionary narrative of trials endured in the name of Christ, of missionary interpretation of a rather sordid episode of kidnapping for ransom in a time of disorder, and of the human side of missionary experience. Thanks to the now 85 year old "little Audrey" for this marvellous yarn.

And finally we have an example of the mission of the Chinese churches in the difficult circumstance of the contemporary People's Republic of China attempting to use their spiritual heritage to meet a deep crisis in their society, the quest for appropriate ethical principles. Roderick O'Brien, priest-lawyer from Adelaide with many years of experience in China as teacher and traveller, gives us his reflections on Chinese ethics today.

Our four book reviews round out the picture: a general history of China's Christians, a history of the Eastern Churches in China, a major document of early modern Chinese Catholicism and a traveller's tale of women missionaries in the Gobi.

Wang Zheng's Inculturated Concept of God

Kai-tai Tony Wong

Kai Tai Tony Wong was born and had his general and theological education in Hong Kong. Before he began his doctoral studies at La Trobe University on Chinese church history and inculturation in the late Ming and early Qing, he was a senior pastor of a Chinese church in Melbourne.

The Jesuit missionaries, after entering China in the sixteenth century, had worked tirelessly among the literati, the elite class in the Chinese society. Their efforts were rewarded with considerable success among these educated people. They had converted quite a number of Confucianists, including *jinshi* ('presented scholars' or doctoral degree holders) and *juren* ('recommended man' or master degree holders), and befriended many government officials.¹ Although the Jesuit missionaries had strongly affirmed the commensurability of Confucianism and Christianity, to plant Christianity firmly in Chinese hearts was still a difficult task to accomplish. Similar to the Church Fathers in Hellenistic culture of the Roman Empire, these first generation Chinese Christians bravely took up the challenge of inculturating this new religion in the Confucian culture of the Chinese Empire.

This article seeks to demonstrate, through the concept of God articulated by one of these Confucian scholars, Wang Zheng, the inculturation achieved in this period. Firstly, I will identify how Wang Zheng understood the Christian God in a Chinese sense. Secondly, I will illustrate how Wang Zheng applied his understanding of Christian God in concrete situations through incidents documented in *Lianglilue*, a memoir of his days as Prefectural Judge in Guangping and Yangzhou. Finally, I will briefly underscore the significance of his concept of God from an inculturation perspective.

Wang Zheng and his concept of God

The evaluations on the inculturation conducted by Wang Zheng are diverse. While Standaert, Fang Hao and Sun Shangyang hold positive views on his attempt, Gernet and Zürcher criticise his inculturation as syncretic.² The centre of these diverse perceptions lies mainly with his concept of God.³

¹ See Nicolas Standaert, *Handbook of Christianity in China*, vol. 1, Leiden, Brill, 2001, pp.399-403. See also Huang Yi-long, *Liang tou she: Ming mo Qing chu de di yi dai Tian zhu jiao tu* (Two headed snakes: The first generation Catholics in Late Ming and Early Qing), Xinzhu Shi, Guo li Qinghua daxue chubanshe, 2005, pp.98-127.

² See Nicolas Standaert, 'Wang Zheng's Ultimate Discussion of the Awe of Heaven and the Care of Human Beings', *Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica*, vol.29 (1998), pp.163-188; Fang Ho, 'Wang Zheng zhi shiji ji qi shuru xiyang xueshu zhi gongxian', in *Fang Hao liushu zhidangao*, vol. 1, Taipei, Taiwan Xuesheng shuju, 1970, pp.319-378; Sun Shangyang, 'Integration of Confucianism and Christianity in Wang Zheng's understanding of Agape', *Logos and Pneuma Chinese Theological Journal*, 19 (Fall, 2003), pp.191-210; Jacques Gernet, *China and the Christian Impact: A Conflict of Cultures*, Janet Lloyd (transl.), Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1985; Eric Zürcher, 'Christian social action in late Ming times: Wang Zheng and his "Humanitarian Society"', in Jan A.M. de Meyer & Peter M. Englefriet, (eds.),

Wang Zheng (1571-1644) was a native of Luqiaozhen in Jingyang county of Shaanxi province. Although he remained a Confucianist throughout his life, his spiritual journey was colourful. Before his conversion to Christianity in 1616, he had believed in Daoism and Buddhism.⁴ His conversion to Christianity was ethical in nature.⁵ After reading the *Qike* (The Seven Victories) of the Jesuit missionary, Diego de Pantoja, he considered he had received an assurance of a basis for moral living, which neither the two religions he had once believed in nor Neo-Confucianism could provide.⁶ Although he was not listed among the 'three pillars' of the Chinese church in Ming dynasty,⁷ today he is deemed the fourth principal Christian in this period.⁸

After achieving *jinshi* status, Wang was assigned the post of Prefectural Judge in Guangping in 1622. Due to the passing away of his stepmother, Wang's tenure was interrupted by the compulsory mourning period. In 1627, he was again appointed as Prefectural Judge in Yangzhou. Later, upon the recommendation of Sun Yuanhau (1581-1633) in 1637, Wang was promoted to Assistant Surveillance Commissioner in charge of the Liaohai armies. Due to failure in preventing an army rebellion, he was dismissed from government office in disgrace.

After returning to his native town, he established a benevolent society, *Renhui* (Humanitarian Society) to promote relief works among local people in Jingyang county in 1636. In 1644, shortly before the fall of the Ming dynasty to the Manchus, Wang Zheng starved himself to death to protest the collapse of the Ming government. Wang Zheng wrote, compiled or translated at least fifty-one works. The most famous among these are the three works that form his trilogy on religious and philosophical thought: *Xueyong shujie* ('Expositions on *Daxue* and *Zhongyong*'), *Weitian airen jilun* ('The Ultimate Discussion of the Awe of Heaven and the Care of Human Beings') and *Renhuiyue* ('Compact of the Humanitarian Society').⁹ Our discussion on his inculturated concept of God will be based mainly on *WTARJL* since it contains the major part of Wang's discussions about God.

Tianzhu and zaowu yuanzhu

To begin with, I will refer to an incident documented in *Lianglilue*,¹⁰ which is among the five incidents that might have earned Wang Zheng the name of a syncretist. This incident was cited in an entry called 'Water management at Feicheng'.¹¹ Wang recalled that after learning the River Jiang had recently flooded, he decided to find solutions to this problem. Before making up his mind on which solution to take, Wang

Linked Faiths: Essays on Chinese religions and traditional culture in honour of Kristofer Schipper, (Sinica Leidensia 46), Leiden, Brill, 1999, pp.269-286.

³ For example, Zürcher describes the Christianity that Wang Zheng had created as a kind of Confucian monotheism, in which Christ had a minor role. See Zürcher, 'Christian social action in late Ming times: Wang Zheng and his "Humanitarian Society"', p.274. However, Zürcher's criticism overlooked the facts that his major religious work, the *Weitian airen jilun* (henceforth *WTARJL*) was catechetical in nature and Wang Zheng had clearly mentioned the redemptive work of Jesus in his *Renhuiyue*.

⁴ Among the works Wang Zheng had written or compiled before his conversion, some referred to Daoism and Buddhism and reflect Wang's deep involvement in these two religions.

⁵ Standaert, *Handbook of Christianity in China*, p.410.

⁶ Wang Zheng, *Weitian airen jilun*, Bibliotheque Nationale de France, Fonds Chinois 6868, 4, 5a.

⁷ The 'three pillars' are Xu Guangqi (1562-1633), Li Zhizao (1565-1630) and Yang Tingyun (1562-1627).

⁸ Standaert, *Handbook of Christianity in China*, pp.404-405.

⁹ Wang himself did not explicitly call these three works, which were written in 1624, 1628 and 1634 respectively, a trilogy. Grouping them as a trilogy is a reconstruction based on my interpretation of Wang's religious thought. Henceforth the central work in this trilogy, the *Weitian airen jilun* will be referred to as *WTARJL*.

¹⁰ *Lianglilue* consists of four volumes. Volume one and three are memoir type documents about the works and deeds Wang Zheng had performed when he was Prefectural judge in Guangping and Yangzhou. Volume two and four are extracts of official records of the duties carried out in his offices.

¹¹ Wang Zheng, 'Water Management at Feicheng', in *Lianglilue*, vol.1, Li Zhiqin (ed.), *Wang Zheng yizhu* (Collected Works of Wang Zheng), Xi'an, Shaanxi remin chubanshe, 1987, pp.30-31.

wondered if the river god (He Bo) existed and would listen to his plan.¹² It further revealed that after the flood stopped, Wang considered it an answer from He Bo.¹³ Yet, it is not clear whether he truly believed in the existence of He Bo or just used the term to refer to Heaven (*Tian*) since he later commented that this result was certainly a blessing from *Tian*, a name that Confucian Christians in Ming dynasty considered equivalent to the Christian God, rewarding the morally superior persons in that area.¹⁴

He Bo is a river god in Chinese folk religions. One of the earliest records that we can trace is the story of 'He Bo taking a bride' in the Historical Record (*Shiji*) of Sima Qian in the Han dynasty.¹⁵ According to Chinese folk cults, He Bo was originally a monster living in the Yellow River who caused flooding. In order to settle flooding, human or animal sacrifices must be offered and this practice continued until late Han.¹⁶ Whether He Bo was an apotheosised creature and how he became a deity remaining debatable. Yet commoners in ancient China firmly believed in He Bo.¹⁷ Did Wang genuinely believe in the existence of a river god called He Bo or was it a rhetorical way of acknowledging the sovereignty of God? To solve this, we will explore the concept of God in which Wang Zheng believed.

In *WTARJL*, we find that Wang employed idiosyncratic translations to name the Christian God. He came across *Dousi* (from the Portuguese *Deus*) as the name of the Christian God in his conversation with de Pantoja. However, as de Pantoja pointed out that *Dousi* was foreign to Chinese, Wang then utilised *Tianzhu* (Master of Heaven) to name God. Through de Pantoja, he said:

It may be difficult for the people to understand the meaning of *Deus* so [we are] obliged to borrow the term 'master of heaven and earth, of humankind' [to name *Deus*], which is to highlight His supremacy, even though it is only an approximation.¹⁸

Obviously, Wang Zheng considered *Tianzhu* a better translation of the Christian 'God' because while it avoided any confusion with *tian* (the physical heaven) it explicitly implied God as the master of creation whose sovereignty was above all else.¹⁹ *Shangdi* (the Supreme King) was another name for the Christian God that Wang had considered. However, due to the confusion it might cause with apotheosised persons in folk religions, Wang decided to drop this name.²⁰

Tianzhu, according to Wang Zheng, was the Creator of heaven and earth, angels, animals and humankind.²¹ In recognising His creativity, Wang had once called God the *zaowu yuanzhu* (the Creator). *Yuanzhu* [The Creator] by his will created the heaven and earth out of nothing. In six days, everything was prepared and so the creation was completed. [*Yuanzhu*] is omnipotent and nothing created is sufficient to name him. Between heaven and earth there is nothing that can compare with him. The heaven is as wide and vast as thousands of miles; [we] find no wheels moving it, [yet] it has been moving for millions of years. The earth is so heavy and thick, its limits cannot be fathomed by walks. Who has been upholding it so that it stays in the centre [of the universe]? Only mentioning these two biggest [objects], who has the wisdom to explain them? How can those who are called the cleverest among creatures, living within the heaven and earth, not give thanks to *Yuanzhu* [Creator] for his grace²²

¹² Ibid, p.31.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Whalen Lai, 'Looking for Mr. Ho Po: Unmasking the River God of Ancient China', *History of Religions*, vol.29, no. 4 (May, 1990), p.335.

¹⁶ Ibid, p.337. However, Lai also argues that the incident of 'Ho Po taking a bride' was not 'a description of a single-victim sacrifice followed by a wake' but 'rather an oriental Maypole festival'. See Ibid, p.338.

¹⁷ See discussion of Whalen Lai in 'Looking for Mr. Ho Po'.

¹⁸ *WTARJL*, 7b, 6 - 9.

¹⁹ *WTARJL*, 7b, 9 - 8a, 5.

²⁰ *WTARJL*, 8a, 5 - 8b, 5. However, *Shangdi* and *Di* were used in prayers documented in *Lianglilue*. See discussion below.

²¹ *WTARJL*, 6a, 7 - 7a, 3.

²² Wang Zheng, 'Elaiqiya youzaozhuqi tushuo baci' ('A Postscript to the Pictorial Books on Automatic Machines'), in Li Zhiqin, *Wang Zheng yizhu*, p.235.

Obviously, Wang Zheng portrayed God as the Master who possessed sovereignty over His creation and the power to sustain it. This concept of God aligns with the traditional teaching of Christianity. For example, the first article of the Apostles' Creed also describes God as the 'maker of heaven and earth', which implies His creativity and sovereignty. According to Wang Zheng, *Tianzhu* was not only sovereign and mighty, but also the only God.

***Tianzhu* is the only God**

Together with He Bo, the building of a memorial shrine for an ex-official in Yangzhou area is another controversial incident related to Wang's attempt of inculturation. In 'Building a Shrine in Praising the Sages', Wang intended to erect a tablet in the shrine for *Shangdi* (i.e. *Tianzhu*) and beneath this tablet, erected a total number of eleven wooden tablets representing the sages in Yangzhou area.²³ Wang also planned to encourage local people to offer incense to these tablets to remember and endorse their moral behaviour.²⁴ This shrine was named Jingtiange (Reverence Heaven Shrine), which recalled the renowned saying of Zhou Dunyi, the Sung Confucianist: 'For literati look up to the sages, the sages look up to the saints and the saints look up to *Tian*'.²⁵ Although building shrines in remembrance of local sages was deemed neutral in nature, erecting their tablets and encouraging people to offer incense to them might be considered an act of idolatry.²⁶ Gernet implicitly criticises Wang as a syncretist who simply put the Christian God as the master of the court in Heaven with minor gods surrounding Him.²⁷ By quoting Longobardo, Gernet between the lines, tries to impress his readers that Wang's inculturation attempt in *WTARJL* failed and had instead created a syncretism of Christianity and Confucianism. Although Gernet's comment is general and does not refer to any particular incident, building a shrine for local sages is the most probable source for Gernet's criticism. Yet, comparing Gernet's criticism with what actually happened in this incident, his comment seems exaggerated.

Firstly, Wang considered the shrine was for memorial purpose in reminding and encouraging people to follow the example of the sages.²⁸ In other words, building a shrine for sages and offering incense to them were not intended to involve either idol worship or apotheosising local sages. It was only an act of remembrance for promoting moral living. In fact, Li Jiugong, a Confucian Christian in Fujian area who was contemporary to Wang also claimed that building shrines for local sages had two purposes: to remember their contributions and to take them as a model, which did not involve idol worship.²⁹

Giulio Aleni's teachings may provide us with a fuller picture on this matter. In his discussion with a retired Grand Secretary of the Ming government, Aleni once stated that the Catholic Church permitted hanging pictures of sages and saints on church walls to encourage others to follow their steps.³⁰ Yet, they should not become the objects of worship or prayer. In practice, believers could ask these consecrated saints to refer their prayers to *Tianzhu*, which should not be considered as idol worship.³¹ The local sages in the Jingtiange were not saints consecrated in a Catholic sense. Yet this practice provided Wang with legitimate cause for erecting tablets of local sages for memorial and modelling purposes. Besides, it is

²³ Wang Zheng, 'Building a Shrine in Praising the Sages', in *Lianglilue*, vol.2, p.72.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid, p.73. *Jingtian* literally means to honour the *Tian* and *Tian* in Chinese classics was considered the same as the Christian God among many Jesuit missionaries and Chinese Christians in the Late Ming.

²⁶ Whether Chinese Christians were permitted to offer incense or to bow to the tablets of ancestor, in later years, became the centre of dispute in the Rites Controversy. It is plausible that this action of Wang would have attracted criticism from missionaries if it happened a few decades later.

²⁷ Jacques Gernet, *China and the Christian Impact: A Conflict of Cultures*, p.76.

²⁸ Wang Zheng, 'Qing bai chang jian Wen Gongyi gong xian cheng ci bai ji', in Li Zhiqin (ed.), *Wang Zheng yizhu*, p.252.

²⁹ Li Jiugong, *Wenda huichao*, in Standaert and Dudink (ed.), *Chinese Christian Texts from the Roman Archives of the Society of Jesus*, vol.8, Taipei, Taipei Ricci Institute, 2002, p.542.

³⁰ Giulio Aleni, *Kouduo richao*, VIII, 4b, 7-5a, 1, in Standaert and Dudink (ed.), *The Chinese Christian Texts from the Roman Archives of the Society of Jesus*, vol.7. See also VII, 5b, 3.

³¹ Ibid, VIII, 5a, 2 - 4

worthy highlighting that Wang had not just installed tablets of local sages, but a constellation of tablets with the tablet of *Shangdi* on the top. As the name of the shrine reveals, Wang seemed to believe the saints and sages were admirable as followers of *Tian*. Furthermore, paying tribute to ancient sages and saints was part of moral education in ancient China. In other words, Wang was not promoting idolatry but encouraging commoners to worship *Tianzhu* through the recognition of local sages.

Secondly, Wang clearly stated that the teaching of philosophical Daoism was untrue. He considered the belief in *qi* (vital force) as the cause of universe was mistaken simply because *qi* was material in nature so could not be the first cause or unmovable mover.³² He also criticised religious Daoism's belief in fate as incorrect because it did not recognise the existence of *Tianming* (Mandate of *Tianzhu*), which governed the history of humankind.³³ Finally, he rejected the Buddhist's teaching exalting Buddha as the supreme deity.³⁴

Thus, it is difficult to imagine that Wang believed in the existence of He Bo and apotheosised local sages by offering incense to them, when he rejected both the naturalistic and religious teachings of Daoism and criticised Buddhism for deifying Buddha. Perhaps, it is more natural to say that the reference to He Bo was simply rhetorical, hoping to underscore the sovereignty of *Tianzhu*. Instead, the building of the shrine and offering of incense to local sages was a subtle way to promote Christianity among commoners.

The Righteous Judge

In recognising God's sovereignty, Wang had depicted *Tianzhu* as a judge. To be able to judge and carry out punishments and rewards, *Tianzhu* must be all-powerful and all knowing. Wang in *WTARJL* argued that *Tianzhu* was the righteous judge because of His omniscience and omnipotence.³⁵ Unlike judges in this world, no wrongdoings could escape His eyes. Similarly, good deeds would not be unrecognised. Therefore, on Judgement Day, *Tianzhu* would judge according to our behaviour in this life. The wicked men would be punished with suffering in hell and the virtuous men would be rewarded with blessings in heaven.³⁶ Besides, Wang had once called *Tianzhu* the supreme king of all.³⁷ A king with authority to judge was not new to the Chinese since they recognised the authority of a local judge came from the king. Therefore, it was plausible that Wang, when depicting *Tianzhu* as the righteous judge, may also have had this understanding in mind.

If we compare Wang's images of God as judge and king with folk religion reflected in *gonguoge* (ledgers of merit and demerit), a popular genre of *shanshu* (morality books) in the Late Ming, we find a significant difference between them. The cult of *Siming xinyang* (The Overseers of Destiny), reflected in the *gonguoge*, held some deities responsible for reporting our deeds to the court in heaven, which would judge us accordingly.³⁸ Folk religion taught a constellation of deities controlling the fate of humankind. Yet, Wang had clearly indicated that *Tianzhu* alone had the authority and right to judge.³⁹

King and judge are two images of God depicted in both Old and New Testaments. While the Yahweh God in the Old Testament is not only the King of Israel but also the King of the nations,⁴⁰ we also find that the

³² *WTARJL*, 10b, 7 – 9; 11a, 7 – 11b, 5.

³³ *Ibid*, 10b 9 – 11a, 6.

³⁴ *Ibid*, 14a, 3 – 14b, 5.

³⁵ *Ibid*, 33b, 2 - 34a, 7.

³⁶ *Ibid*, 21b, 3 – 22a, 5,

³⁷ *Ibid*, 16b, 8 – 9.

³⁸ *Taishang ganying pian*, quoted in Cynthia Brokaw, 'Yuan Huang (1533-1606) and the Ledgers of Merit and Demerit', p.145. See also Zhang Zhiming, Zheng Zhiming, *Zhongguo shanshu yu zongjiao (Morality Books and Religions in China)*, Taipei, Taiwan Xuesheng shuju, 1988, pp.42-43. It is also noteworthy to point out that the *Siming xinyang* has its origin in religious Daoism.

³⁹ *WATRJL*, 22b, 2 – 5.

⁴⁰ Psalm 93; Jer. 10:7.

Kingdom of God established by Jesus is understood as the reign of God over the whole creation.⁴¹ Besides, the King described was also the Judge of the whole earth. He not only carried out justice in Israel but also judged the wickedness of the nations. In carrying out His reign and justice, He either destroyed or raised a nation according to His will.⁴² Similarly, in the New Testament, God is depicted as the King sitting on His throne in the heavenly courtroom judging the whole earth through the Lamb who was slain.⁴³ Seeing God as the righteous judge and supreme king seems compatible with Christian orthodoxy.

Dafumu (the Great Father-Mother or the Great Parent)

In acknowledging God's particular relationship to humankind, Wang once followed de Pantoja in calling God *Badele* (Pater, father).⁴⁴ This terminology appeared four times in *WTARJL*.⁴⁵ However, this Chinese transliteration of *Pater* was unintelligible to Chinese so Wang later replaced it with *Dafumu* in depicting *Tianzhu*.⁴⁶ *Dafumu* in Chinese means the Great Father-Mother or the Great Parent. This image of God as the Great Father-Mother is particularly interesting because of its Chinese origin.⁴⁷ *Dafumu* was widely accepted by Jesuit missionaries and Chinese Christians and its influence was carried beyond the Late Ming and Early Qing.⁴⁸

Fumu (parents or father-mother) as a morpheme sometimes carries the meaning of both father and mother together (i.e. parents). However, it can also be used to address a single person. When used in this way, it is considered gender neutral. For instance, Chinese in addressing an ideal sovereign called him '*min zhi fumu*' (the father-mother of people) and called a local magistrate the '*fumuguan*' (father-mother official).⁴⁹ In other words, naming God as *Dafumu* does not necessarily imply that God has gender. It seems that Wang was not promoting a gendered notion of God. Calling God the Great Father-Mother or *Dafumu* was to acknowledge God as the life-giver and in Christian terms, the Creator. Although we find a

⁴¹ The Book of Revelation has the theme, the Kingdom of God and of his Christ will prevail the earthly kingdoms after the power of Satan is defeated, run through the whole book.

⁴² Psalms 76:8-9; 2 Sam. 2:10.

⁴³ *Revelation* 4 to 6.

⁴⁴ *Pater* was used in the theology of the First Person of the Trinity. See Nicolas Standaert, 'Wang Zheng's Ultimate Discussion of the Awe of Heaven and Care of Human Beings', p.175.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* See *WTARJL*, 6a, 9; 6b, 1-2, 6.

⁴⁶ After the discussion with de Pantoja in the early part of *WTARJL*, *Badele* was never used again in Wang's trilogy. *Dafumu* was then used afterwards.

⁴⁷ It seems unlikely that Wang Zheng had articulate this idea directly from the Bible since the earliest available full translation of Catholic bible in Chinese was printed in 1953 and the Jesuit missionaries in the late Ming had never started translating. See Nicolas Standaert, 'The Bible in Early Seventeenth-Century China', in Irene Eber, Sze-kar Wan and Knut Walf (ed.), *Bible in Modern China: The Literary and Intellectual Impact*, Monumenta Serica, 1999, p.36. Besides, using the image of mother in discussion of God seems to be a recent development.

⁴⁸ Ricci and Aleni were among the Jesuit missionaries who utilised *Dafumu* in depicting God. See Matteo Ricci, *Tianzhu shiyi*, I, 22b, 7, in Li Zhizao (ed.), *Tianxue chuhan*, Vol.1, Taipei, Taiwan Xuesheng shuju, 1965. Giulio Aleni, *Kouduo richao*, VI, 21a, 5-6. For Chinese Christians, Yang Tingyun was another example. See Nicolas Standaert, *Yang Tingyun, Confucian and Christian in late Ming China: His Life and Thought*, Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1988, p.116. See also 'Shaanxi xunfu Don Jiaozeng wei baona chuaxi Tianzhujiao Zhang Duode dengfan shenni qingxing zouzhe' in 'Historical materials on prohibiting Westerner to do missionary work' *Historical Archives*, vol. 1 (2004), p. 24. We find in this document the Chinese church in the Qing dynasty followed their predecessors in using *Dafumu* or the Great Parents to describe God.

⁴⁹ For historical examples of such usage, see Ban Gu, *Han shu*, vol.27a, p.7 and vol. 81, p.11; Huang Zhen, *Huang shi ri chao*, vol.80, p.11 in *Siku Quanshu (Wenyuange Edition)*, Hong Kong, Digital Publishing Limited at www.sikuquanshu.com. See also Standaert, *Yang Tingyun, Confucian and Christian in Late Ming China: His life and Thought*, p.116.

similar concept recognising the creativity of God in the Western Church, calling God *fumu* has special implications in Chinese culture.

Wu lun, the five human or social relations,⁵⁰ was one of the core concepts that governed the social and moral life of Chinese people in the Ming dynasty. Mencius seemed to be the first person to mention all five relations,⁵¹ while only the first two of these five relations appeared in the *Analects* of Confucius.⁵² Through the modification of Han Confucianists, it developed into a cosmologically implicated social and moral concept.⁵³ It further developed into an eternal principle governing the Chinese in all aspects of life in the Sung dynasty.⁵⁴ Among these five relations, the father and son (parents and children) relationship was foundational to the other four.⁵⁵ The moral principle, *xiao* (filial piety or filial submission)⁵⁶, which governed this relationship, was also 'the foundation of all moral goods'.⁵⁷ The parent-child relationship and its moral principle not only affected the Chinese in their social life, but also became a yardstick for Chinese culture, especially Confucianism, to measure foreign religions. The Confucianists rejected Buddhism mainly because its doctrinal teachings and practices were at odds with *wu lun*. For instance, Zhang Zai (1020-1077) rejected

Buddhism because its teaching might caused the Chinese to disregard 'human

relations'.⁵⁸ When Christianity met with Confucianism in late Ming, it was also tested by the same standard. Therefore, the cultural theme 'parent-child relation' was utilised by some Confucian Christians as a conceptual tool to inculturate Christianity in China. It is believed that Wang Zheng deliberately selected *Dafumu* in portraying God so that opposition would be avoided.

Wang, on another occasion, called God the *Dagong zhifu* (Father of all). He said: Should there not be an altar to worship Him? He is the Father of all who gives birth to all creatures in this world and the Master above all who sustains and provides for all. [However] mankind neither adores nor serves him. This causes the abandonment of father and king, even unto the downfall of filial piety (*xiao*) and loyalty. If loyalty and filial piety cease, no virtue would ever survive!⁵⁹

There are several points worth noting. Firstly, Wang Zheng calls God the Father of all. This clarifies that Wang's concept was basically the Father instead of the Father and Mother. Secondly, calling God the Father of all put the emphasis on God as the Creator of all. Thirdly, God as the Creator was also the

⁵⁰ The five human or social relationship included in *wu lun* are sovereign and subjects, father and son, husband and wife, brothers, and friends.

⁵¹ Hsu Dau-lin, 'The myth of the "five human relations" of Confucius', *Monumenta Serica*, vol. 29 (1970-71), pp.27-28. It seems Mencius listed these five concepts without elaboration.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp.30-31.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p.35.

⁵⁵ Although we use 'father-son relation' in this article, the relationship referred to is not confined only to father and son but to parents and children. While it is true to say that father enjoyed a predominant status in Ming and Qing period, it is equally true that the status of mother was also considered prestigious. To be inclusive, we, therefore, use 'parents-children relation' in our discussion thereafter.

⁵⁶ *Xiao* is commonly translated as filial piety. However, Hamilton argues that the concept of filial piety in Western society may have a different understanding from that in Chinese society. He suggests the translation of *xiao* as filial submission; see Gary G. Hamilton, 'Patriarchy, patrimonialism, and filial piety: a comparison of China and Western Europe', *The British Journal of Sociology*, vol. 41, no. 1 (1 March, 1990), p.84.

⁵⁷ Fung Yu-lan, 'The philosophy at the basis of traditional Chinese society', in F.S.C. Northrop (ed.), *Ideological differences and world order*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1949, p.19.

⁵⁸ Zhang Zai, 'Western Inscription', in *Zhang Zai ji* (A Collection Works of *Zhang Zai*), Beijing, Zhongguo shu ju, 1979, p.64. See also Siu-chi Huang, 'The moral point of view of Chang Tsai', *Philosophy East and West*, vol. 21, no. 2 (April, 1971), p.141.

⁵⁹ *WTARJL*, 16b, 6 - 17a, 1.

provider and protector of his creation, including the human race. The grace of life giving, protection and providence represented the affection of God as Father to humankind, which resembled the affection of a father to his children in Confucianism. God the Father, then, deserved loyalty and service from men. This loyalty and *xiao* paid to God was compared to the filial piety one owed to one's parents or the king in the Chinese context. Finally, *Tianzhu* was also known as the Master of all because he is the Creator.

Apart from calling God the *Dafumu* or *Dagong zhifu*, Wang also called God the *Bensheng fumu* (the Original Father-Mother)⁶⁰ and *Yuanchu zhenfumu* (the True Original Father-Mother) in *Renhuiyue*.⁶¹ Both of these two titles: *Bensheng fumu* and *Yuanchu zhenfumu*, underscored the fact that God gave us our lives, which was similar to parents giving lives to their children. By using these two images, Wang intended to argue that if we served and obeyed our parents on earth, it is mandatory for us to serve and obey the God who gave life to the humankind.

Seeing God as the *Dafumu* illuminates understanding of another three incidents cited in *Lianglilue*. Wang Zheng integrated the images of the Creator and supreme king with the image of the *Dafumu* in these three incidents. While he was Prefectural Judge of Yangzhou, Wang offered three prayers to *Tianzhu*. The first one he composed was a petition to *Tianzhu* seeking strength from above to conduct his duty at the beginning of his term of office.⁶² The other two represented a petition and a thanksgiving given to *Tianzhu* for stopping the rain and the return of sunny days.⁶³ Similar to the unsent petition composed shortly before Wang passed his *jinshi* examination in 1622,⁶⁴ Wang mentioned in 'A Petition to God' following the will of God. He claimed that he had followed the motto, *weitian airen* (fear God and love others), in conducting his behaviour⁶⁵ and prayed that the will of *Tian* (*Tianxin*) might be changed and through His providence, Wang's subjects would be able to meet their tributes and fulfil their duties to the central government.⁶⁶ Furthermore, Wang stated that he understood the importance of justice in ruling as a judge. Therefore, he asked for the discerning power from the spirit of God so that he would not offend his subjects, the court and God, who was gracious to His people.⁶⁷ He also considered it a blessing from God through the angels if he could avoid these offences.⁶⁸

In this petition, Wang used *Shangdi*, a name that he abandoned in *WTARJL*, in addressing God.⁶⁹ Choosing *Shangdi* was plausibly because it was an official petition. Therefore, using terminology familiar to the general public was mandatory. The names *Shangdi* and *Di* appeared also in the other two prayers.⁷⁰ While both *Shangdi* and *Di* carried the meaning of a supreme king, the aspects of love and care similar to a father were underscored. Wang seemed to depict God as a fatherly king who cared and loved His subjects simply because the king in ancient China had been recognised as the *min zhi fumu*.

In these two prayers, Wang recalled that God answered his prayer in changing His will by providing the local people with what they needed, relieved them from their heavy duties, and blessed them with two good harvests.⁷¹ Unfortunately, the local county had recently experienced heavy rainfall causing the dams

⁶⁰ *WTARJL*, 49a, 3 - 49b, 4.

⁶¹ Wang Zheng, *Renhuiyue*, in Song Baoyin (ed.), *Ming Jingyang Wang Zheng xiansheng nianpu* (A Chronicle of Mr. Wang Zheng), Xi'an, Shaanxi Shifan Daxue chubanshe, 1990, pp.280-281.

⁶² Wang Zheng, 'A Petition to God', in *Lianglilue*, vol.4, Li Zhiqin (ed.), *Wang Zheng yizhu*, p.108.

⁶³ Wang Zheng, 'A Petition for Sunny Days', in *Lianglilue*, vol.4, Li Zhiqin (ed.), *Wang Zheng yizhu*, pp.109-110; 'Thanksgiving to God', in *Lianglilue*, vol.4, Li Zhiqin (ed.), *Wang Zheng yizhu*, p.110.

⁶⁴ Wang Zheng, 'Jingchen qitian quben jianyao sanshi jietie', Song Boyin (ed.), *Ming Jingyang Wang Zheng xiansheng nianpu*, Xi'an, Shaanxi Shifan Daxue chubanshe, 1990, pp.177-182. See also *Wang Zheng yi zhu*, pp.143-146.

⁶⁵ Wang Zheng, 'A Petition to God', p.108.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p.109.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p.109.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p.109.

⁶⁹ See f.n. 19.

⁷⁰ Wang used *Di* in 'A Petition for Sunny Days' and *Shangdi* in 'Thanksgiving to God'.

⁷¹ Wang Zheng, 'A Petition for Sunny Days', p.109.

to collapse and flooding to occur. He asked God to overlook his wrong doings but to continue to honour His previous blessing by stopping the rain and providing for them the sunny days they needed.⁷² Obviously, in this prayer Wang considered God as the father who cared for His people in giving them the rain and sunshine they desperately needed.

The last account, 'Thanksgiving to God', was written to acknowledge his prayer had been answered. In this thanksgiving prayer, Wang recognised rain and floods as the wrath of God and sunshine as the grace of God.⁷³ Here, God was depicted as the immediate deliverer and ultimate provider for His children, which also resembled the image of a father.

God as *Dafumu* clearly indicated that God was a personal God who was different from the impersonal *li* (Principle) of Neo-Confucianism. Without hesitation, Wang, therefore, rejected the Neo-Confucian identification of *li* with *Tian*. He argued that it was a misinterpretation of Confucius and asserted that Confucius believed in a personal God, whose mandate was majestic and fearful.⁷⁴ He further claimed: If we discuss *tian* (Heaven) in conversation, we may call it principle, the way or even the physical heaven. However, when it is used with *ming* (mandate), it implies that laws and commands are given; that there exists a master who ordains them.⁷⁵

Although *Tian*, later in the development of Confucianism, was transformed into non-personal *li*, Wang was correct in insisting that *Tian* in Pre-Qin Confucianism was recognised as a deity with personhood. This difference certainly reminds us that it is incorrect to consider the inculturation of Wang as a syncretism of contemporary Confucianism and Christianity.

An Appreciation From an Inculturation Perspective

Inculturation is used here in the sense of a 'an ongoing dialogue between faith and culture or cultures'.⁷⁶ It is distinguished from acculturation, as Nicolas Standaert points out, by the different roles the foreign and local cultures assume and the results the process intend to achieve.⁷⁷ In cases of acculturation, 'the foreign culture dominates and a cultural change with alienating effects occurs in the local culture.'⁷⁸ In this dialogue, inculturation seeks to bring about a 'new creation', namely, a culture transformed by the gospel, which is native in its expression of the local culture. In return, this 'new creation' will influence Christianity with her new expression of faith articulated in this process.

We find Wang's inculturated concept of God illuminating if we apply this understanding of inculturation to his efforts. Firstly, Wang identified a cultural theme in carrying out inculturation: the relationship between parents and children and the code of behaviour, *xiao* (filial piety), in response to the need to observe the *wu lun* orthodoxy.⁷⁹ Secondly, the image of God as the righteous judge coincided with the sovereign and local magistrate relation, with which the Chinese could easily associate. Although Wang allowed for the local culture taking a dominant role in this process of contextualisation, he maintained Christian orthodoxy by rejecting any possibility of accepting other deities.

⁷² Ibid, p.110.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ *WTARJL*, 9a, 3 – 10a, 8.

⁷⁵ Ibid, 10a, 8 – 10b, 2.

⁷⁶ Aylward Shorter, *Toward a theology of inculturation*, Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1988, p.59.

⁷⁷ Nicolas Standaert, 'Inculturation and Chinese-Christian contacts in the Late Ming and early Early Qing', *Cheng Feng*, 34:4 (December, 1991), pp. 217-218.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ According to Schreier, identification of cultural themes is the first step in constructing a local theology (Robert J. Schreier, *Constructing Local Theologies*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis, Books, 1985, pp.29-30). Since this paper focuses on the concept of God articulated by Wang Zheng, his discussion on the response of humankind to God through carrying out his filial duties is not reviewed.

Thirdly, *Tianzhu*, the name that Wang had selected for the Christian God carried a powerful criticism of Neo-Confucianism. *Tianzhu* was not an impersonal principle but a personal God, who was, at the least, resemblant of the personal *Tian* reflected in some Pre-Qin classics. It is widely held that Chinese culture had experienced a shift from a belief in a transcendental deity, *Tian*, to an immanent mandate of Heaven (*Tianming*) conferred on humans through their nature or *xing*, which was deemed in nature equivalent to the personal *Tian*.⁸⁰ Yu Ying-shi calls this a shift in the quest for an absolute source of value and meaningfulness from outward transcendence, which characterises the pursuit in the West, to inward transcendence, which characterises the pursuit in China.⁸¹ Unlike its counter-part in the West, Chinese culture therefore, generally presupposed *Tian* as the absolute source of value and truth sought truth and moral absolutes within human nature.⁸² This shift enabled Chinese culture to overcome the gap between the noumenal and phenomenal worlds. However, it also hindered the development of natural science⁸³ and in its extreme form, was considered to have caused a collapse of morality in the late Ming.⁸⁴ Therefore, the introduction of the personal God, *Tianzhu*, was an effort of Wang to reverse the downward trend of morality in his era by reinstating the quest for an absolute ground through the path of outward transcendence. *WTARJL* and its 'sequel', *Renhuiyue* clearly demonstrate this intention of Wang Zheng. Whether this reintroduction was acceptable to Wang's contemporaries is another question.

Finally, the image of God as parent was of great significance. As stated above, Chinese parents enjoyed special status in Chinese culture and society. Calling *Tianzhu* the parent of humankind might not be completely new to Chinese. Chinese believed that *qian* (heaven) and *kun* (earth) were the parents of humankind. It is through the perpetual integration and disintegration of *qi* (vital force) that the *qian* and *kun* gave birth to all creatures including humankind.⁸⁵ Therefore, calling the Christian Creator God the *Dafumu*, would make Christianity more comprehensible to Chinese. Although Wang seemed to employ the *qian* and *kun* concept in depicting the parenthood of God to humankind, he had carefully avoided crossing over the boundary between Creator and creatures by subscribing his inculturation to the traditional Biblical story of creation.⁸⁶ Maintaining this boundary is important in this context since God is portrayed in the Old Testament as parent to Israel not in a begetting but covenantal sense.⁸⁷ It is noteworthy that the covenant between God and Israel was based on a social analogy, which carried a political sense more than a familial one, showing that God was 'conceived in terms of the Eastern great

⁸⁰ See Xu Fuguan's argument in Chapter 1 and 2 in *Zhongguo ren xing lun shi: Xian Qin pian*, Taipei, Taiwan Shangwu yinshuguan, 1969.

⁸¹ Yu Ying-shi, *Cong jia zhi xi tong kan Zhongguo wen hua de xian dai yi yi: Zhongguo wen hua yu xian dai sheng huo zong lun*, Taipei, Shi bao wen hua chubanshe, 1984, p.33.

⁸² Ibid, pp.32-33.

⁸³ Ibid, pp.67-68.

⁸⁴ The Taizhou School, a branch of Wang Yang-ming tradition, was considered as this extreme form. The Taizhou School put much emphasise on the access of the Way or Dao through self awareness without studying the Six Classics. See Ian McMorran, 'Late Ming Criticism of Wang Yang-ming: The Case of Wang Fu-chih', *Philosophy East and West*, vol.23, no.1/2, Proceedings of East-West Philosophers' Conference o Wang Yang-ming (Jan.-Apr., 1973), p.91. See also Xu Lin, 'The Social Intercourse of the Maniac Intellectuals and the Prevailing Custom among the Intellectuals in Jiannan Region during the Mid and Late Ming Period', *The Northern Forum*, vol.2, (2004), p.71. For the criticism of the Taizhou School, see Huang Zongxi, *Ming ru xue an*, vol 32, p.1, and Sun Chungze, *Chun ming meng yu lu*, vol.40, pp.1-2, in *Siku Quanshu*.

⁸⁵ See Zhang Zai, 'Qiancheng bian (*Western Inscription*)', pp.62-63. There are several English translations available and I follow the translation offered by Siu-chi Huang, *Essentials of Neo-Confucianism: eight major philosophers of the Song and Ming periods*, pp. 69-70.

⁸⁶ Wang had clearly refuted the identification of *qi* with God. See n.31. He also rejected the idea of seeing *Tian* (God) as *li* in Neo-Confucianism. While it is plausible that Wang Zheng might have borrowed the idea from Zhang Zai, he had not followed to the end Zhang's teaching of the process of humankind coming into existence. See his account of creation story in *WTARJL*, 6a, 7 – 7a, 9.

⁸⁷ Gottfried Quell, 'The father concept in the Old Testament', in Gerhard Kittel & Gerhard Friedrich (ed.), *The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Geoffrey W. Bromiley (trans. & ed.), repr., Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1977, vol. 5, p.971.

king, not a father.⁸⁸ Furthermore, when Jesus addressed God as the Father in Heaven, he merely indicated that God was a ruler in transcendence who was intimately close to his subjects.⁸⁹ When he taught his disciples to pray to the Father, he simply meant that his disciples were God's adopted children through Him. In short, the fatherly image of God in both the Old and New Testament carries a sense of father-ruler,⁹⁰ which also finds similar analogy in the Imperial China.

Discussion above reveals that the image of God as the *Dafumu* in Wang's thought was confined to the father image. However, the image of God as the *Dafumu*, particularly the image of God as mother can be further developed into a cultural and theological theme, which may enhance dialogue between Chinese culture and Christian feminist theology. It is true that female status in Imperial China was not as prestigious as the male. Yet, the status of a mother was highly recognised.⁹¹ Hsiung Ping-chen, by drawing from examples of biographical accounts of literati and government officials, concludes that mothers in the late Imperial China played a significant role in the lives of their sons.⁹² These mothers not only took care of the well-being of their children in material terms but also in education. Besides, the children, especially the sons, were so influenced by their mothers that many of them considered their success the result of actualising the aspirations of their mothers.

Similar to fatherhood, there were prescribed ways of being good mothers, which were called *mudao* (the ways of the mother). According to Birdwhistell, mothers in Imperial China influenced their children in three patterns: *shi cheng* (beginning and completion), *jiao hua* (teaching and transforming), and *jing quan* (the standard and the adaptive).⁹³ Bray also points out that mothers in the late Ming and early Qing played a complementary role in assisting their husbands within and without the families.⁹⁴ The mothers were expected to take up the responsibilities in caring for the household by managing weaving, which was used to fulfil tax duty to the government,⁹⁵ and educating the children in the families.⁹⁶ This emphasis of the mother's role as educator, nurturer and aspirant may echo with the motherly image of God portrayed in the Scripture.

Genesis 1 and 2 clearly depict the image of God as male and female. Accordingly, metaphors such as father, king, warriors, husband, mother, wife, pregnant women, midwife and mistress, are utilised to describe this image of God.⁹⁷ No matter how diverse and partial each of these images are, they together provide us with a comprehensive portrait of God. Among these metaphors, father and mother, especially the latter is significant to our discussion here. God, in some passages in the Old Testament, is described as a compassionate mother. For example, Isaiah portrayed the Yahweh God as a compassionate

⁸⁸ Robert Bellah, *Beyond Belief: Essays on Religion in Post-Traditional World*, New York, Harper & Row, 1970, p.82.

⁸⁹ Ibid, p.986.

⁹⁰ Discussion on the metaphor of father-ruler, see Aida Besanaon Spencer, 'Father-Ruler: The Meaning of the Metaphor "Father" for God in the Bible', *JETS*, 39:3 (Sept., 1996), pp.441-442.

⁹¹ In many biographical accounts of famous people, we find records of the influence on them from their mothers.

⁹² Hsiung Ping-chen, 'Constructed Emotions: The Bond Between Mothers and Sons in Late Imperial China', *Late Imperial China*, vol.15, no.1 (June, 1994), pp.87-117.

⁹³ Anne D. Birdwhistell, 'Cultural Patterns and the Way of Mother and Son: An Early Qing Case', *Philosophy East and West*, vol.42, no.3 (July, 1992), p.503. (pp.503-516).

⁹⁴ Francesca Bray, *Technology and Gender: Fabrics of Power in Late Imperial China*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1997, p.6.

⁹⁵ Ibid, p.184.

⁹⁶ Ibid, pp.347-349.

⁹⁷ Phyllis Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, Philadelphia, Fortress Press, 1978, p.22.

mother.⁹⁸ This compassionate Mother did not only give life to her children but also nurtured and protected them.⁹⁹

In the New Testament, Jesus had once expressed His love to Israel by comparing Himself to a hen with great desire to protect her brood.¹⁰⁰ This picture vividly reflects the compassion of God towards His people. We also find this compassionate feeling of mothers towards their children in the image of mother in the late Ming and early Qing dynasty. God as the Great Father-Mother, particularly the image of God as the mother softens the masculine, distant and strict impression of God as the Master of Heaven, righteous judge, supreme king and father. The devotional love of a mother reminds us how close and compassionate this Christian God is. The motherly sacrificial love of God also encourages us to model after God to love others as a way of living out the aspiration of God as mother.

Conclusion

It may be true that the concept of God in the religious thought of Wang Zheng was not comprehensive and mature in comparison to systematic or dogmatic theology. Wang had promisingly inculturated Christianity in Chinese through his trilogy despite, like other first generation Chinese Christian having only limited terminologies, conceptual tools and understanding of Christianity. This is a fact we must bear in mind to correctly appreciate the inculturation achieved by Wang Zheng and other first generation Chinese Christians in the late Ming. Perhaps, among the name and images that Wang Zheng had suggested, the richness of the mother image in the concept of God as the *Dafumu* may enhance discussion on the motherly love of God in present days.

⁹⁸ Isa. 49: 15 (RSV). See also discussion of this passage in Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric Sexuality*, pp.50-51.

⁹⁹ Isa. 46:3-4 (RSV). Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, p.38. See also Deut. 32:11. In this passage, God is depicted as a mother eagle carrying the young in flight.

¹⁰⁰ Matt. 23:36 (RSV) and Luke 13:34.

Ethics and Mission in the People's Republic of China

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In the People's Republic of China, the official teaching of the Party and government gives pride of place to socialist ethics. As we will see below, this status was unique. Socialist Ethics still remains the official doctrine. For Australian readers, who may not be familiar with the developments in China, we can give an extended survey of some of the key changes in socialist ethics. Thus this article will be in three parts: the establishment of socialist ethics (sections 1-2), the crisis of socialist ethics (sections 3-4), and the window of opportunity for Catholic ethics (sections 5-7).¹

1. Socialist Ethics

The victory of the Communist Party in 1949 initiated a new era in moral thought, though it was not entirely new, as it drew on critiques which had been circulating in the period of transition from traditional rule. This new era was not lacking in moral codes or standards. The *Common Programme* was adopted as a quasi-constitution for the new China. The *Common Programme*, in article 42, defined social morality for this new era. "Loving the country, loving the people, loving work, loving science, and loving public property (the five loves) are advocated as the social morality for the citizens of the People's Republic of China".² The new moral codes had their basis, not in religion or tradition, but in politics.

In 1957, Mao Zedong provided a short moral code, by which people could judge political activities as right and wrong:

- (1) Words and deeds should help to unite, and not divide, the people of all our nationalities.
 - (2) They should be beneficial, and not harmful, to socialist transformation and socialist construction.
 - (3) They should help to consolidate, and not undermine or weaken, the people's democratic dictatorship.
 - (4) They should help to consolidate, and not undermine or weaken, democratic centralism.
 - (5) They should help to strengthen, and not shake off or weaken, the leadership of the Communist Party.
 - (6) They should be beneficial, and not harmful, to international socialist unity and the unity of the peace-loving people of the world.
- Of these six criteria, the most important are the two about the socialist path and the leadership of the Party.³

Mao Zedong unceasingly called for a morality appropriate to the proletariat and revolutionary cadres. Although these criteria for discerning right and wrong are expressed to apply to political activities, they may be taken as the criteria for other activities in the revolutionary period, which was highly politicised. The end of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in 1976 brought the end of the revolutionary period, yet some of the principles expressed in Mao's code are crucial – especially the leadership of the Party. Mao had little directly to say about communist ethics, but his writings, and especially his slogan "Serve the People", have formed as the basis for developing an ethic of service.⁴

A recent book on the history of the construction of the Chinese Communist Party's ethical thought proclaims the glorious achievements of the Party in the field of ethics⁵, but the text loses some credibility because it skips entirely the period of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution – it dismisses the period May 1966 to October 1976 in a single paragraph. Yet in some ways the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was an intensely *moral* period in China's recent history.⁶ The key slogan "to rebel is justified" is ultimately about moral choice.

2. Re-founding Socialist Ethics After Mao

The ethics promoted in the Maoist period was based in a particular political vision or ideology. When that ideology failed, the ethics collapsed with it.⁷ One response to the vacuum created by the failure of the utopian Maoist project was the attempt to build a “Socialist Spiritual Civilization”. The term was first mentioned by Deng Xiaoping in December 1980, but had been used earlier.⁸ From an initial suggestion, the attempt to build a socialist spiritual civilization developed later as a campaign. In 1982, Hu Yaobang, in a speech to the Twelfth National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, sought to categorise what was meant by “socialism with Chinese characteristics”. The seventh characteristic was “socialist ethics cultivated under the guidance of Marxism”.⁹

Although the term “socialist spiritual civilization” has an undefined content, it included, and continues to include, ethical issues. (The content has at various times included elements such as nationalism, decency, love of work or profession, patriotism, being law-abiding, and of course, love of the Party.) Resolution Four in the “Guiding Principles for Building a Socialist Society with an Advanced Culture and Ideology” (1986) states: “Socialist ethics means essentially love of the motherland, the people, labour, science, and Socialism. ... Socialist morality rejects both the idea and the practice of pursuing personal interests at the expense of others. ... As a higher stage in human moral progress, socialist ethics naturally incorporate all the best elements in the various ethical systems and traditions developed throughout history and reject all decadent ideology and ethics.”¹⁰

While the modernization of China’s economy may attract the most attention of observers, building a socialist spiritual civilization is intended to run simultaneously with economic construction. The two are frequently linked in the phrase ‘building a socialist material and spiritual civilization’. Hu Yaobang said in 1982: “From the time that the Party shifted the focus of its work to the modernization of China’s economy, the Central Committee has proclaimed on many occasions that while working for a high level of material civilization, we must strive to build a high level of socialist spiritual civilization. This is a strategic principle for building socialism. The history of socialism and the present situation in China both tell us that the success or failure of socialism depends on whether or not we adhere to this principle.”¹¹ It should not be forgotten that the socialist spiritual civilization is meant to be *socialist*. Hu Yaobang said:

The socialist character of our spiritual civilization is determined by ideological education. This consists mainly of the following: the working-class world outlook and scientific theory of Marxism; communist ideals, beliefs and moral values; the outlook of being masters of the country and collectivism which correspond with the system of socialist public ownership; a concept of rights and duties and a sense of organization and discipline which correspond with the socialist political system; devoted service to the people and a communist attitude towards work; and socialist patriotism and internationalism. In essence, it consists of, above all, revolutionary ideals, morality and discipline.¹²

The campaign for a socialist spiritual civilization has coincided with the “opening and developing” policy, but it should not be seen primarily as a defence against the intrusion of foreign religions, customs, and values. Certainly this is a part of the campaign. But it also represents an attempt to develop authentic ethics within modern China itself.¹³ The campaign was implemented in various ways, including a “Socialist Ethics and Courtesy Month”.

The term “socialist spiritual civilization” has found its way into a variety of legislative enactments, usually in the first clause explaining the policy of the new law. Thus it is included in article 1 of the Education Law 1995, and article 1 of the Copyright Law 1990. In the Decision of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress Regarding the Safeguarding of Internet Security (2000), there is a reference to building a socialist spiritual civilization in article VII.

At the Sixteenth Party Congress in 2003, Party Secretary-General Jiang Zemin spoke of the ethical objectives of the programme:

Promote ideological and ethical progress. Ruling the country by law and ruling the country by virtue complement each other. It is necessary to establish a socialist ideological and ethical system compatible with the socialist market economy and the socialist legal standard and consistent with the traditional virtues of the Chinese nation. We must carry out intensive publicity and education in the Party’s basic theory, line and program and in the important thought of Three

Represents, and guide people in fostering a common ideal for socialism with Chinese characteristics, correct world outlook, views on life and values. We must carry out the Program for Improving Civic Morality, promote patriotism and, with serving the people at the core, collectivism as the principle and honesty as a priority, intensify education in social and professional ethics and family virtues and especially intensify the ideological and ethical improvement among youth so as to guide people in their pursuit of higher ideological and ethical standards on the basis of observing the basic code of conduct. We must strengthen and improve ideological and political work and encourage popular participation in building spiritual civilization.

A variety of media are used to promote the campaign to build a socialist spiritual civilization. Besides traditional media such as print media and posters, electronic media are also used. China Central Television, on CCTV channel 12, as part of its law programme, offers a segment called *Daode Guan* (Ethical Review). The programme includes popularization of the Citizen's Ethics Campaign, discussed below, and case studies of unethical conduct.¹⁴ The campaign also has its own website.¹⁵

Although there have been subsequent campaigns, such as the Citizens' Ethics Campaign (described in the next section) and the campaign to build a harmonious society, (described in the subsequent section), the campaign to build a socialist spiritual civilization continues. It would be appropriate to see the later campaigns as expressions of the main campaign.

There has been an important change in Party language since 1996. Now the socialist spiritual civilization is to be "consistent with the traditional virtues of the Chinese nation." Although not explicit, the change seems intended to allow for the traditional Confucian virtues¹⁶ and perhaps also religious virtues to find their place in the building of a socialist spiritual civilization.¹⁷

3. Concerns about Ethical Standards in Society, and the Response

In recent years, there has been considerable concern in Party and government about falling ethical standards¹⁸. Readers would be familiar with the re-emergence of blatant corruption and abuse of power, the re-emergence of social ills such as prostitution and drug abuse, rise in the divorce rate and breakdown of family structures, exploitation of workers, and many other problems. One academic from Shanghai University has called this a moral "landslide".¹⁹

In September 2001, a new campaign was introduced to promote citizens' ethics, or civic morality. The campaign was launched by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, and the key document included the following sections:

1. The major characteristics of building citizens' ethics.
2. The guiding ideology and guiding principles for building citizens' ethics.
3. The main content of building citizens' ethics.
4. Vigorously strengthen grassroots education for citizens' ethics.
5. Thoroughly develop mass-style citizens' ethical practical activities.
6. Actively construct a favourable atmosphere in society regarding building citizens' ethics.
7. Make great efforts to supply legal support and policy guarantees for building citizens' ethics.
8. Conscientiously strengthen leadership for building citizens' ethics.²⁰

Interestingly, the opening clause linked the building of socialist ethics with the building of a socialist legal system.

Building a socialist ethic is a major content of a developed and advanced culture. In the new century, to construct in all aspects a relatively well-off society, to speed up opening and reform, and modernize the stages of construction to smoothly realise the strategic objectives, we must, at the same time, in strengthening the construction of a socialist legal system and governing the country according to law, practically strengthen the building of socialist ethics, and govern the country according to virtue.

Unceasingly deepening and expanding the adoption of building citizens' ethics, and step by step forming and developing the socialist market economy, for a mutually appropriate socialist ethical system, is closely integrated with and completes building a legal system and building ethics, and governing the country according to law and ethics.

Usually Party documents are circumspect in giving a negative picture of the state of ethics, but this document included a frank admission of some of the difficulties:

But, in aspects of the building of China's citizens' ethics, there still exist not a few problems. In some domains of society and in some places ethics are defective: the boundaries between right and wrong, good and evil, beauty and ugliness are obscured. Dominance by mammonism, hedonism, and extreme individualism has grown to some extent. Behaviour of forgetting what is right at the sight of profit, and seeking private gain at public expense, occur from time to time. Untrustworthy speech, and deceit and swindling, have become social pollution. Seeking personal gain by abusing one's position and authority, and degenerate and decadent phenomena seriously exist. If a solution to these problems cannot be reached and in a timely way made effective, it is inevitable that there will be damage to the regular economic and social order. This will damage the overall situation of stability of reform and development, and thus the whole party and the whole society should attach a high degree of importance to this.

The Party recognises that ethical problems, in particular corruption and more generally lack of trust, are a threat to social stability. For a regime that is fearful of its own position, instability is a key problem. The link with the legal system is recognised in the importance of preventing unethical activities which cause damage to publicly owned property.

One aspect of the campaign has been the establishment of a specialised campaign directed at children. This is the "Little Citizen Morality Construction Project".²¹

The Chinese Communist Party sometimes uses slightly different language, preferring to speak of three aspects rather than two: building a socialist material civilization, a socialist spiritual civilization, and a socialist political civilization (summarized as "the three civilizations")²². The Party's 2002 Constitution's General Programme used this phrasing:

The Communist Party of China leads the people in their efforts to build spiritual civilization as well as material and political civilizations and to combine ruling the country by law and ruling the country by virtue. Socialist spiritual civilization provides a powerful ideological driving force and intellectual support and helps create a good social climate for economic development, reform and opening up. It is essential to press ahead with education, science and culture, respect learning and talented people, raise the ideological, moral, scientific and educational levels of the entire nation, develop the fine national traditional culture, and develop a thriving socialist culture. It is essential to inspire the Party members and the people with the Party's basic line, patriotism, community spirit and socialist ideology, enhance their sense of national dignity, self-confidence and self-reliance, imbue the Party members with lofty ideals of communism, resist corrosion by capitalist and feudal decadent ideas and wipe out all social evils so that our people will have lofty ideals, moral integrity, a good education and a strong sense of discipline.²³

4. The Campaign for Social Harmony

In March 2005, at the 15th meeting of the National People's Congress, the Party Secretary-General, Hu Jintao, launched the new concept of creating a harmonious society. The concept of harmony runs deep in both Confucian and Daoist traditions, and this connection has been accepted by Chinese commentators. In two explanatory articles published by the Institute of Law of the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, the authors referred to classical writings before placing the new movement in the context of development of socialism in China.²⁴ But it should also be recalled that harmony is also an important element of the Buddhist tradition, which is still strong in China.²⁵

In April 2006, Hu Jintao addressed the National People's Congress and summed up the current ethical teaching in the "Eight Glories and Eight Disgraces":

Love the motherland. Do not harm it.
Serve the people. Don't disserve them.
Uphold science. Don't be ignorant.
Work hard. Don't be lazy.
Be united and help each other. Don't gain benefits at the expense of others.

Be honest and trustworthy. Don't profiteer at the expense of your values.
Be disciplined and law-abiding. Don't be chaotic and lawless.
Know plain living and hard struggle. Do not wallow in luxuries and pleasures.²⁶

5. The Door Opens to non-Socialist Ethical Teaching

Interestingly, the call by Jiang Zemin in the late 1990s to build a socialist spiritual civilization was extended to religious groups. The first intimations came from Li Ruihan, the Party's United Front leader, in 1998. He said: "The content of the doctrines of the great religions of our country, for example in the requirements of ethics and morals, are consistent with the trend of developments in modern society and with the growth of a spiritual civilization."²⁷

Then in December 2001 the Party Central and the State Council held a Conference relating to religious work. The conference, as reported in an article in the official *People's Daily* newspaper, called for working with believing masses.²⁸ The desire of the Party and state is that religious believers will work alongside the Party and state in implementing official policies.

Religious groups may be willing to do this in ways which are consistent with their doctrine. Reading the "signs of the times" can call them to work with the Party on common issues, especially social questions. This can encourage active social participation by believers, and discourage quietist withdrawal from society.²⁹ But religious groups will be unwilling to make doctrinal changes, for example in approaches to the Party's firmly enforced one-child policy.

Invitations of this kind evoked a cautious response in religious groups, who have had experience of persecution and marginalisation. The officially-approved religions responded to Jiang's call by offering their own contribution to moral development. For example, the China Christian Council, the officially-approved organ of the Protestant church, saw the opportunity to widen the focus of its members (which had been narrowly on issues of salvation) and at the same time dialogue with the wider society by using the same ethical issues.³⁰ The Catholic response was indicated in a study booklet published by the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association and the Chinese Catholic Bishops' Conference.³¹ The origin and style of this booklet as teaching materials for Church leaders point to its concordance with Party and government desires. After citing the remarks of the Party leaders, the section on ethics then summarizes Catholic ethical teaching as a non-negotiable part of being a Catholic. Believers are called upon to help build up society according to Catholic traditions.

There is no evidence that religious groups were able to contribute to, or influence, Party formulation of ethical policy. Nevertheless, academic commentators did see the usefulness of convergence between religious ethics and socialist ethics – though of course in China the latter occupied the superior position.³²

6. Catholic Contributions: Catholics in Dialogue

When Catholics seek to make a contribution to ethics in China, they move out from a purely Catholic environment to a public environment where there are other – possibly competing – contributors. While Catholics are aware that they can make a specific contribution, they also choose to dialogue with others. In February 2005, Fr John Baptist Zhang of the Faith Institute for Cultural Studies (Hebei Faith Press) organised a conference across religious boundaries, to give participants an opportunity to share ethical beliefs.³³ Besides religious-based leaders, there were about 40 Chinese scholars present, as well as officials from the government's Religious Affairs Bureau and the Party's United Front Work Department (which includes responsibility for Party work with believers). In December 2005, Fr Peter Zhao of the Beijing Catholicism and Culture Research Centre organised a conference on China and Catholic Social Teaching.³⁴ In both of these conferences, some of the emphasis was on the practical social work activities of the Catholic Church.

The contributions by Catholic writers show three main themes: first, the link between faith and ethics; second, the relationship between Catholic ethical teaching and other ethical traditions in China; and third,

the application of Catholic ethical and social teaching in the practical welfare activities of the Church. We can examine each of these in turn.

One author, Li Lei, points for the need for a belief system to underpin any ethical system. Religious beliefs provide bases for ethical systems that can contribute to China needs, although these systems will not be socialist. The author briefly compares Christian, Islamic, and Buddhist belief, each providing a basis for ethical teaching. Quoting popular sayings, the author points to the present state of ethics in China: "Concerning China's present ethical predicament, people often use images such as "moral landslide" and "moral ruin". Faced with this situation, religious ethics are a possibility, a principal resource, for rebuilding ethics.³⁵

Writing in the annual published by the Shaanxi Seminary in 2005, Fr Yang Xiaoting spoke of the possibilities for fusion within China's ethical tradition. The author surveys Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism, and socialist ethics before turning to attempts at fusion in the early part of the 20th century. Finally the author moves to the possibility of modern fusion. Fr Yang makes three points. First, any culture or belief from outside China has to be explained and understood in terms of China's basic culture before it can be imported and fused. The ethical values and structures must be explained in Chinese terms. Second, in studying how western thought has taken shape, we have to attach importance not only to science, but we must also especially study the internal form of Christian ethics. Third, in borrowing from the riches foreign culture or belief, we must localise these in the ethics and morality of China's folk, especially in a modern fusion of Chinese culture.³⁶ Wang Xiaochao of Tsinghua University looks for points of convergence between Christianity and Confucianism through reinterpretations of the traditions and social practice. Using the concept of "big tradition" and "small tradition", Wang points to the possibility of convergence in practice, especially in the countryside and in daily life.³⁷ In an on-line article, Fr Peter Zhao links the place of China's ethical tradition and values with the contribution that Catholic ethical teaching can make to the construction of public ethics in China. Fr Zhao refers to linking or combining, rather than fusion.³⁸ Looking beyond the confines of China's experience, another author sees two key turning points in Catholic ethical teaching. The first turning point is in the social teaching of the Second Vatican Council, and the second turning point is in the search for a global ethic – a search which has included Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism.³⁹

Catholics in China have a small but growing institutional involvement in welfare works⁴⁰, and this fits with the government's cautious policy of outsourcing welfare to non-government organisations, and of seeking non-government funding⁴¹. Some of the meetings and writings mentioned above have seen welfare works as applications of Catholic social teaching.

China's scholars are examining Catholic ethical belief and practice. One scholar compared Catholic Ethics and the economic underdevelopment of Latin America with the application of Protestant Ethics in the development of the USA.⁴² Another scholar, then an economist with the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission caused a small commotion with his essay: "Market Economies with Churches, and Market Economies without Churches".⁴³ The author contended that churches could play a positive role in Chinese society, particularly in bringing values to the market economy. The article was serialized in the Catholic *Faith* newspaper published from Shijiazhuang.

7. Ethics and Mission

While outsiders may have a useful and even necessary support role, the primary evangelisers in the Chinese context are the Chinese Christians themselves. We observe that Chinese Catholics are including ethics in their evangelisation processes. In Ningbo, parish priest Father Xu Wenzhou has been offering a 'Faith Salon' as a window for non-Christians, with the hope of attracting them to the Church. The Salon operates on Saturday evenings, and includes conscience and ethics among the topics offered each three to four months. Fr Xu hopes to draw participants in the Salon into the parish's catechumenate programme, and feels that this has been successful. Since 2001, when the Salon was founded, 850 people have been baptized, and the number of newly baptized is increasing each year. This model is being followed in other parishes.⁴⁴

How do you young people in China come to belief? To find out, in 2005 Wang Kang of the Social Sciences Section of the Hangzhou Teachers' College surveyed more than 700 Hangzhou tertiary students⁴⁵. Professor Wang drew five conclusions from the data. (1) The first is the importance of the family. Not only do a number of students specifically report that their belief was nourished in their families, but a larger number report that there are believers among their family members. (2) The second is the decline in the importance of communist beliefs. Since the reform and opening, communist propaganda is shallow and less effective, and it is much easier for students to opt for religious belief, outlook on life, and values. (3) The third is the psychological situation of the students, who are subjected to great pressure of competition, studies, economics, finding employment, and emotions. Under this pressure, some turn to religion. (4) Fourthly, religious culture has a unique fascination. History, philosophy, literature and art can all inspire religious feelings. Even tourist sites now open "religious natural resources". (5) Finally, the students are drawn by the example of the ethical life of individual believers, who become mentors and models. Following these models, the young people are drawn along the same religious roads.

In our context, it is the last of these points made by Professor Wang which is important: while the family may be the first evangelisers, other evangelisers are individuals of high ethical standards, who serve as models for young people.

Ethics education in schools is a priority for policy-makers in China. But in the mainland of China, although recently privately-run schools have again been permitted, all religious groups are specifically excluded from operating these schools.⁴⁶ This opportunity for evangelism is not open.

Conclusion:

Socialist ethics has, at least officially, pride of place in the development of ethics in China. Nevertheless, in the last decade there has been some opening of the field: first to traditional Chinese ethics, and then to religious ethics. Socialist officials and scholars are alert to the popular disenchantment with socialist ethics, and the many public instances of poor moral behaviour, even by high Party members. Respect for the Party is diminishing.⁴⁷ This creates an opening for religious believers to evangelise through their individual ethical lives, and through their use of Christian ethics in pre-evangelization. Catholic believers have sought to use this opportunity for dialogue with other religions, with academic circles, and even with the government and Party. At present, there seems no way of measuring the effectiveness of these kinds of activity. But certainly they bring the Catholic Church into a new relationship with Chinese society: the Church is more outward looking towards social issues, confident that it can draw on sophisticated Catholic social teaching, and confident that non-believers are looking for effective moral teaching to apply in complex times.

We can conclude with the words of scholar You Xilin: "Christianity has become one of the well-alive propositions for the construction of ethical communities as needed by modernising China."⁴⁸

THE FRENCH RELIGIOUS PROTECTORATE IN CHINA AND THE CATHOLIC/MODERATE PRESS

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The French Religious Protectorate in China lasted from 1846 until 1906, a period of six decades. During the first three decades it was administered by the Second Republic, the Third Empire and the Third Republic (for five years). Throughout this time there was support for the protectorate both on the part of the governments and the people. It was seen to be a good thing by all – the French governments, the French missionaries, missionaries of other nationalities, and even the Chinese Christians. The Chinese Government itself which at first resisted the interference of the French Ministers came to accept the fact that there was a basis for their interference in the treaties that had been signed. However, during the last three decades of its existence France was governed by anti-clerical radicals who worked to control the church and the religious and then gradually moved towards suppressing the religious and separating church and state. During this time the government continued to protect the missionaries in China even as it persecuted the church at home.

In this article, after first presenting a short history of the protectorate I would like to look at the reaction of the Catholic community to this almost schizophrenic approach to the protectorate that the government was taking by looking at the response of the Catholic and Moderate press to the various crises that happened between 1885 and 1906.

During the time of the Third Republic (1870-1905), there are two phases to the government's attitude towards the religious protectorate in China. Until 1888 the protectorate was considered of great importance to the Foreign Office and a definite part of its policy.¹⁰¹ However, in 1888 France came to an agreement with Germany and Italy whereby she recognized the right of these powers to protect the missionaries of their own nation.¹⁰² After this there was a decline of interest on the part of the Foreign Office in the protectorate. Instead, the primary concern was the role France could play in China through her sphere of influence, as all the powers in the 1890's felt that China was on the point of being divided up among them.¹⁰³

The Nature & Historical Development of the Religious Protectorate in China

¹⁰¹ This was evident in the correspondence between the French Foreign Minister, Freycinet, and the Ambassador to Rome, Lefebvre de Behaine, at the time when the Pope was thinking of sending a nuncio to China. *Documents Diplomatiques Francaises, 1871-1914* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale; 1929...) 1re Serie, Tome VI, pp.222; 287-288; 310-311.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 1re Serie, Tome VII, pp.282-283; 293.

¹⁰³ H. M. Cole, "Origin of the French Protectorate over the Catholic Missions in China", *American Journal of International Law* 1940 (Vol.34) pp.490-491.

The religious protectorate in China, which had its remote origins in the seventeenth century¹⁰⁴, and its more proximate origins in the Treaty of Whampoa (1844), had as its background the centuries-long tradition of the religious protectorate in the Levant. France's religious protectorate consisted in her acceptance of the responsibility to guard and care for religious persons and places, according to the terms of various treaties, and to enforce her claims by arms if necessary. In practice, France often sought to interfere in China's domestic and foreign policy; but this was not a legitimate consequence of the protectorate.

The religious protectorate in China, as such, contained two elements. First, there was the claimed and recognized exclusive right as well as duty of France to defend the Catholic Church in the whole of the Celestial Empire. The juridical basis for this right and duty as belonging exclusively to France was not positively formulated in any convention. Rather it simply resulted from historical events. Since France signed the treaties (1844 & 1858) and the conventions (1860 & 1865) with China and demanded various edicts of toleration (1845, 1846, 1862), by which missionaries and Christians received certain rights and privileges within China, the French government was naturally called upon to be their advocate; she alone could guarantee their religious liberty.¹⁰⁵ Thus, while there is a juridical basis for religious liberty (required of China by France in a legal way to various extents according to the various treaties), yet France's role as the exclusive guarantor of this religious liberty is not clearly formulated.

The second element was the matter of certain honorific prerogatives that accompanied the protectorate. These honours and privileges were carefully spelled out in various documents signed by the Holy See and France in reference to the Levant; no such written agreement existed concerning the Protectorate in China. Special honours were bestowed on the Ministers of France in China, both in religious ceremonies and in the solemn civil acts taking place on the mission (e.g. graduations). But there was no legal basis for this practice. The Holy See looked benignly on these practices in China, recognizing in France the protector of all the missions there.

By reason of the treaties and of precedent, then, it was clear that France was willing to hold herself responsible for the Catholic missions, and that China was willing to deal with France on any problems that arose in this area; but did France have any authorization from Rome to represent all missions and missionaries? This seems to be the weakest point in France's claim; for while there are signed agreements between France and the Holy See for the protectorate in the Levant, there are no such agreements as regards China. However, while there was no signed agreement, Rome did seek French protection for Catholic interests even when it could easily have rejected the notion of a "protectorate".

The first of the treaties into which France and China entered in the 19th century, which made reference to religious matters, was the Treaty of Whampoa, signed in 1844. This came as a climax to the Opium War. The representative of the French government on this occasion was Theodose de Lagrene. Through the treaty he was able to arrange for religious liberty within the five ports where commerce took place.¹⁰⁶ Also, and this was of greater importance, the treaty stipulated that any missionaries who wandered into the interior of China, should not be subject to the previous anti-Christian laws; they were to be led back to the coastal areas and put under the jurisdiction of the French administrators. In this way they were given a solemn safeguard and preserved from the death penalty.

¹⁰⁴ When Louis XIV sent five French Jesuit missionaries to China. Cf. Vi Kyuin Wellington Koo, *The status of Aliens in China* (N.Y.: Columbia University Press; 1912) p.297.

¹⁰⁵ A more detailed study of this foundation is found in Henri Cordier's *Histoire des Relations de la Chine avec les Puissances Occidentales, 1860-1902* (Paris: F. Alcan; 1902) III, p.469-472.

¹⁰⁶ For a full treatment on the opening of the five ports and its religious import, cf. Dr. Louis Wei-Tsing-Sing, *La politique missionnaire de la France en Chine, 1841-1856: L'ouverture des cinq ports Chinois au commerce étranger et la liberté religieuse* (Paris: Nouvelles Editions Latins; 1960). Pp.168-180. The five ports were: Canton, Foochow, Amoy, Ningpo, and Shanghai.

Lagrene was asked to give a short summary of the Catholic Faith to the emperor. When this received imperial approval Lagrene asked that a circular be sent to all the provinces, announcing toleration for Christians. This circular contained three imperial edicts which: a) permitted all Chinese to embrace the Christian religion; b) gave as a distinctive mark of Christianity the cult of cross and images; and c) prescribed the restitution of old churches. While these edicts of toleration granted much more than was assured by the treaty, yet it was the guarantees of the treaty that had a more lasting effect. For one thing, the edicts were seen specifically as the act of a defeated nation, and therefore the governors would not take such a decree seriously. Secondly, these were acts of toleration only; the anti-Christian laws remained in the Code. Also, because they were not a part of the treaty, they could be unilaterally revoked, as they were in fact after the death of Emperor Tao-kouang (1850).

The real legal foundation for the religious protectorate, however, is generally located in the Treaty of Tientsin, signed in 1858, and the Convention of Peking, concluded in 1860. The Treaty of Tientsin was the conclusion of the "Arrow War", a war in which France joined England because of the recent murder of one of her missionaries, Father Auguste Chapedelaine.¹⁰⁷ The protectorate is specifically located in Article XIII, which reads:

*The Christian religion, having for its essential object the bringing of men to virtue, the members of all Christian communities enjoy entire security for their persons, properties and free exercise of their religious practices; and an efficacious protection will be given to those missionaries who proceed peacefully into the interior of the country, fortified with the regular passports which are spoken of in Article VIII. No limitation will be put by the authorities of China on the right which is recognized for each individual of China to embrace, if he wants, Christianity and to follow its practices without being liable to any punishment inflicted for this fact. Everything which has previously been written, proclaimed or published in China, by order of the government against the Christian cult, is completely abrogated and remains without value in all the provinces of the Empire.*¹⁰⁸

In virtue of this article, France claimed the right to protect throughout the Chinese Empire not only Catholic persons and institutions, but also persons and institutions of any Christian community and of any nationality, even the Chinese, also within the interior. It was under the protection of French passports that all the missionaries who entered the interior had to have. Not until 1888 did China recognize the consular passports of Germany and Italy for their national missionaries travelling into the interior. The article also confirmed the liberty of Christian cult, the right of missionaries to reside in the interior of China, proclaims the abrogation of all the Chinese laws legislated against Christians, and permits the subjects of the emperor to embrace Christianity. Even Rome recognized the unique position accorded to France by reason of this treaty.

As regards the Convention of Peking, this was dictated by Baron Gros while the troops of General Cousin-Montauban were still camped beneath the walls of Peking. The Convention requires a re-activation of the Edict of 1846, namely that the old confiscated religious establishments should be handed over to the missions. The French and Chinese texts do not agree on this stipulation. The French text talks just of the property to be handed back; the Chinese text adds that missionaries can purchase new land and build on it. Certainly by 1865 both the French and the Chinese presumed that purchase of land

¹⁰⁷ Born in the Huguenot stronghold of La Rochelle, he was the ninth child of a farmer. Taking his seminary course at Coutances, he became a curate at Boucey. But in 1851 he went to the seminary for the Foreign Missionaries of Paris, and the following year he was on his way to China. Within three years he was betrayed by one of his own neophytes in Kwangsi. Fortunately the local magistrate simply paroled him. But the next governor imprisoned him and then tortured him. He received 300 strokes of the bastinado, he was suspended in a cage, and finally on 29 February 1856 he was beheaded outside the city. Actually according to the treaty he should have been led to a port-city.

¹⁰⁸The translation is the author's own. The full text can be found in Henri Cordier's *L'expédition de Chine en 1857-1858: Histoire diplomatique, notes et documents* (Paris: F. Alcan; 1905) pp.440-455.

in the interior was possible. There was also added a demand of a war indemnity from the government in order to rebuild the Petang.¹⁰⁹

Another edict of toleration was sought in 1862 by Alphonse Bourboulon who had succeeded Gros as legate because he thought the previous edict was not being properly obeyed. This edict granted missionaries the right to be treated with the same respect as mandarins, that the edicts against the Christian religious should be removed from the collection of laws, and that Christians would not have to pay taxes supporting the pagan cults.

Finally Jules Berthermy negotiated another Convention with China in 1865. This presumed the right of the missionaries to purchase land in the interior. However the Convention provides that where property was to be sold to Catholic missionaries, the title deed was to state the name of the seller or person executing the transfer, and it was to state that the property was to be held in common by the members of the local Catholic Church; specific mention was not to be made of any missionary or convert, so as to leave no doubt that the land still remained Chinese soil.

These were the basic documents on which the protectorate was based. In the early 1880s the Italian Ministry wanted to put all Italian Missionaries under their protection. However, Leo XIII, who was struggling yet with the newly formed Italian government, in *Asperum rerum* in 1888 insisted on missionaries applying to the French consul; and a private letter to Bishop John Raimondi of Hong Kong in 1890 reminded the Italian missionaries that the French protectorate was still in full vigour.¹¹⁰

In 1897-1898 the German Government, without any consultation with France, simply claimed to have protection over the German missionaries after two Divine Word Missionaries (Fathers Francis Nies and Richard Henle) were killed in the Boxer Rebellion. The German leader of the mission, Bishop John Baptist Anzer, on hearing the news of the death of the two missionaries immediately applied to William II for protection. The Emperor needed no urging. As soon as he heard of the murder, he asserted his rights to protect his nationals in a note to the Foreign Office and ordered immediate action. On November 14, just eight days after he had learned of the murders, a German squadron steamed into Kiaochow Bay and landed a force of sailors and marines at the town of Tsingtao. Six days later the German minister at Peking, Baron von Heyking, informed the Chinese Foreign Embassy that the German forces would not evacuate Kiaochow until their demands were met: the cashiering of the governor, indemnities, the port of Kiaochow adjoining Tsing-tao, and the sole railway and mining rights in the province of Shantung. There was little the French could do.

However, the Protectorate received unexpected support from the Chinese Imperial Government itself. On March 15, 1899, it published a decree granting certain privileges to the hierarchy, enabling it to deal directly with the governors of the various provinces. In Article IV the decree recognized the fact of the protectorate and urged the governors in case of misunderstanding to apply to the consul of that country to which the Holy Father has entrusted the protectorate of the missions.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Peking had had four Catholic sanctuaries, named after the four points of the compass. In 1860, only the Nantang, the Southern Cathedral, was still standing; and it was in the hands of the Russian Orthodox. But the cathedral with the most distinguished history was the Cathedral of the North, Petang. The land for this cathedral had been given to the Jesuits by the Emperor King-Hi in return for their many services. The land bordered on the Imperial City and therefore was under the direct protection of the Emperor. By 1860 there were only ruins. And so it was that Baron Gros demanded a war indemnity of a million francs, to be dedicated to the rebuilding of the old sanctuary and its annexes.

¹¹⁰ L. Wei-Tsing-Sing, "Le Saint-Siege, la France et la Chine sous le pontificat de Leon XIII", in *Neue Zeitschrift fuer Missionswissenschaft* 1965 (Vol.21) p.87.

¹¹¹ Henri Cordier, *Histoire des Relations de la Chine avec les Puissances Occidentales, 1860-1902* (Paris: F. Alcan; 1902) III, p.471.

But the persecution of the Church in France at the end of the 19th century and the separation of Church and State early in the 20th century brought about the end of the protectorate. In 1904 in an interview the French President Emile Combes said that any country that wanted the protectorate could have it. Finally in 1906 the French Minister in Peking relinquished the protectorate over nationals other than French.¹¹² The final abolition came with the establishment of an Apostolic Delegation in China in 1922 by Pope Pius XI.

The Moderate and Catholic Press and the French Religious Protectorate

Some general remarks should be made before studying in detail the press's reporting and comments on the religious protectorate. First of all, it should be noted that the religious protectorate in China was by no means a constant topic in the press. Paging through *La Croix* (the first French Catholic Daily which was founded in 1883 and was run by the Assumptionist Order; it had a chequered history) and the *Journal des Debats* (a moderate secular paper that began during the French Revolution and throughout its history maintained a high authority for its interpretation of facts) one is impressed by the frequency with which the political protectorate of Tonkin is discussed, while the religious protectorate in China is discussed only at times of crisis in its history. Thus major discussion of the latter occurred: in 1885-1886, when there was danger that the Pope might set up a nunciature; in 1897-1898, when the Germans publicly set up their own religious protectorate; in 1901, when the discussion on the Law of Associations forced people to think of its consequence: a loss of French influence in the Levant and Far East; in 1904, when President Emile Combes in an interview made an offer of the religious protectorate to Austria; and finally in 1905-1906 on the occasion of the separation of Church and state in France and the publication of the Vatican's *White Book* on this subject, especially with its Appendix on the religious protectorate in the Near and Far East. It is not possible to report comprehensively on the reactions of the press to each of these crises, but some representative examples will be given so that a sketch of the popular reaction to these crises and to the religious protectorate itself can be given. Their reaction is significant because their subscribers represented the majority of the French population.

Crisis of 1885-1886

The fact that a crisis existed for the French religious protectorate in 1885-1886 is evident both in the daily press and the editorial comment of the magazines at the time, as well as in the re-evaluation that took place as a result of the crisis. Renaud de Moustier, writing in *Le Correspondant* 25 June 1886 (Vol.143, pp.957-976) described the crisis by saying that France was on the verge of losing the religious protectorate either by letting Rome set up a nunciature or transfer the Protectorate to another nation.

The idea of a nunciature had been bruited since 1879, but Leo XIII was not in favour of it at that time. However in 1885 he commissioned John George Dunn, an Irish Catholic and a British subject, to do what he could towards bringing about the establishment of a nunciature in Peking. He came to Rome in 1886 to further negotiations, and a nuncio was appointed. However France brought so much pressure on the Vatican that his departure was delayed indefinitely and the nunciature was never set up.

Concerning the negotiations between Dunn and the Vatican, little was leaked to the press. As a result, there is very little press coverage of the actual negotiations and even less editorial comment. However, as negotiations led towards a conclusion in the summer of 1886, both the Catholic and the secular press reacted. The *Journal des Debats* saw in the action of the Holy See an act that undermined France's influence in the Far East. The Catholic press, *La Croix* and *Le Correspondant* (a Catholic liberal journal), on the other hand, found on this occasion the chance to reproach the Republican government for its anti-catholic policy and the lack of logic in attempting to defend abroad what one attacks at home.

¹¹² (12. Columba Cary-Elwes, *China and the Cross: A Survey of Missionary History* (New York: P.J. Kenedy; 1957) p.233).

Jules Dietz, writing a lengthy editorial in the *Journal des Debats*, pointed out that, because of the Protectorate, France had given her passports to missionaries of all nationalities and had treated with Peking on all questions affecting the Christian Communities. He could not see how the Vatican could take this over. They might claim that China initiated this action, but it was not done out of love for the Christians. They would have been anxious to reduce France's influence and weaken the position of the Christians. The Vatican might claim that France's position would not be weakened, but the fact is that it would be. In an interesting observation he concluded that the French moderate press was the only one that could speak with impartiality on this delicate matter. The religious press would not have entire freedom in treating of questions dealing with the Holy See; also its hostility to the Republic would tend to make it put all blame there.

While the moderate press opposed Leo on the grounds that the appointment of a nuncio would weaken France's influence and the position of the missionaries, the Catholic press, generally sympathetic to Rome's decision, was taking advantage of the debate to attack the Republic for her anti-Catholic policy. *La Croix*, in at least four separate editorials, came back repeatedly to the religious issue when discussing the possibility of a nunciature. On May 18, 1886, the editor pointed out an anomaly in the fact that a free-thinking government could protect Catholic interests in China. In fact, he claimed that it was because of France's anti-religious policy that Rome considered it more prudent to undertake these interests herself through an Apostolic Delegate. He observed that Freycinet had opposed the move vigorously; he judged that this action has been brought on by the mistakes of the French government (sic). In three other editorials (June 27-28, 1886; August 14, 1886; August 28-29, 1887) reference was made to the remarkable fact that Ernest Constans, the very man who effected the anti-religious decrees for Ferry, had been appointed the Minister in Peking and therefore was responsible for protecting Catholic interests there.

In another Catholic journal, *Le Correspondant*, ("Chronique Politique: August 25, 1886), August Boucher, after stating many of the same positions that *La Croix* took, expressed the hope that Leo can distinguish between this passing anti-religious policy and France's traditional policy. France, he says, has done much to attain this protectorate; she will not easily give it up. Among the five hundred missionaries in China, three hundred and seventy are French. The French name is synonymous with missionary. The missions, Churches, schools, and protection of missionaries is due to the French protectorate; he felt sure that Leo would keep this in mind. He also trusted that Leo would "see through" the Chinese thinking in requesting a nuncio.

Due to this crisis, the value of the protectorate was re-examined by the Catholic and moderate Press. The authors concluded that it had to be kept both for the sake of the missions and for the sake of France. Georges Cogordan, writing a long article in the secular *La Revue des Deux Mondes* (15 December 1886, Vol. 78, pp.769-798), argued that the protectorate was needed for the development of the missions. He stated that in the more than twenty-five years that had passed between the founding of the protectorate and the crisis of 1886 the preaching of the Gospel had spread throughout the Empire. By 1885 China had almost forty vicariates with as many heads and almost seven hundred European missionaries. Of these, over five hundred, i.e. almost three-fourths, were French. He pointed out that more rapid progress could have been made if the missionaries had been able to convert the mandarins. But to do this, he said, one had to have *savoir-faire*, intelligence, tact – qualities that were not always present. He thought the Jesuits pointed the way when they established their school at Siu-kia-wei near Shanghai. The West's scientific knowledge, he said, the Chinese respect, but not much else. Therefore he suggested that this was the way the West must enter. He argued that for the sake of the Chinese Christians the Protectorate must be kept.

He also argued that the protectorate must be kept for the sake of France. It was pointed out that the protectorate of the missions was the principal means of action available to a European power like France in the Far East. Commerce was limited to the ports, while missionaries penetrated to the interior and there represented European civilization. He pointed out that between 1860 and 1880 most of the commerce was in the hands of middlemen. So without the constant interventions of the French minister on behalf of the missionaries the victory of 1860 would have been forgotten and France would have

fallen, in the eyes of the Chinese, to a power of second rank. Also the protectorate assured the spread of European civilization through the missionaries' preaching.

Crisis of 1897-1898

When in November of 1897, on the occasion of the murder of Fathers Francis Nies, SVD, and Richard Henle, SVD, William II claimed the religious protectorate over the German mission, there was not the violent reaction in the French press that might have been expected. The secular press, i.e. the *Journal des Debats* and *La Revue des Deux Mondes*, concerned itself only with the political implications of Germany's establishment of a sphere of influence in China. This was not a cause for worry for the French government since the German claim was far to the north and would not interfere with France's sphere of influence in the south. Even the Catholic *Le Correspondant* simply noted the fact that France's exclusive right of protection no longer existed.

However, *La Croix* saw this seizure of the protectorate on the part of Germany as a terrible loss, a mistake, another spiritual failure.¹¹³ France was disappointed with Germany's action, it stated, but when had a Republican President acted with equal vigour (*La Croix-Supplement*, December 29, 1897)? The authors of several articles recognized that the protectorate was at times onerous, but it had the great compensation of spreading the French name and influence through the Far East.

The jealousy of Germany's action is evident again in the editorials of *La Croix* at the time of the Boxer Rebellion. Commenting on William's address to his troops about to leave for China, in which he reminded them of their duty to defend their religion, *La Croix* observes that nothing similar is heard in France these days; her past tradition is dead (July 5, 1900). France's loss of leadership in the Far East was especially seen in the fact that the command of the combined European forces to march against the Boxers was given to a German commander (Waldersee). All of this, it was said, was due to the fact that the Masonic government of France would not recognize the secular value of the religious protectorate (October 6, 1900).

Crisis of 1905-1906

Even before the separation of Church and State in France in 1905 there were several occasions when the Catholic and Moderate Press addressed the issue of the Protectorate. In the discussion that took place between 1900 and 1903 on the Law of Associations, which brought about the dissolution of many religious orders, the religious protectorate was considered indirectly. Several articles in *La Croix* pointed out the contribution that the missions by reason of the protectorate had made to the spread of French influence and the French language. They had gained not only friends for France, it was said, but they had also helped her diplomats. But the Law of Associations, it was seen, was bound to decrease the number of missionaries, and therefore was bound to decrease France's influence.

It was the action of the government again in 1904 that brought the protectorate before public opinion once more. In an interview for the *Neue Freie Presse* of Vienna, President Emile Combes, among other things, offered the protectorate to any country that wanted it, even making an indirect offer of it to Austria, on the grounds that the protectorate brought a country no advantages but only troubles. This sparked off a series of articles in *La Croix*, *Le Correspondant*, and the *Journal des Debats*. *La Croix* pointed out that Combes was so willing to give away what the Gambetta's, Ferry's, and Paul Bert's governments found indispensable for French influence. Could it be, it asked, that the protectorate was that embarrassing for the Combes government? (August 17, 1904) The *Journal des Debats* published an article in three instalments that presented arguments for the value for France of the protectorate.

¹¹³This was expressed in an article entitled "Les Compensations", *La Croix*, December 24, 1897.

The final discussion of the protectorate in the press took place in 1905 and early in 1906, on the occasion of the separation of the Church and State in France and the Vatican's publication of the *White Paper* concerning the separation. Once more it was pointed out that the loss of the protectorate would weaken France's influence in China. Moreover it was stated that the protectorate in the Far East was not based on international treaties but on the good will of the Vatican. The *White Book* of the Vatican makes it clear that treaties can only grant the right to protect one's own nationals; the Holy See alone grants the right to protect Christians of other national groups. Even China, it was pointed out, recognized this (*La Croix*, January 3, 1906).

Conclusions

When one considers the writings in the moderate and Catholic press concerning the protectorate, a press, as was said earlier, that would have reflected the opinion of the majority of French people at this time, there are several conclusions that can be drawn.

The first is that in the mind of most people the religious protectorate was a good thing and therefore should be maintained. Even when the religious press presented arguments why the Holy See might reasonably send a representative independent of France to China, it is clear that its motive was to turn Republican France away from her anti-religious policy and not to encourage the Republic to give up the protectorate.

The second conclusion would be that the press saw the protectorate as something good for the missions and missionaries. Before the protectorate missionaries were killed with impunity; after the protectorate was established, reprisals were demanded for such murders. The protectorate also enabled the missionaries to move freely through China. The extra-territoriality gained even for Chinese Christians encouraged converts. Under the protectorate mission work flourished. This concern for the missionaries was seen as the traditional role of France, one that began with the crusades. And only arms, it was said, could effectively protect the missionaries in China. The Chinese were considered to be a people who only understood force. Toleration came about through cannon. No other power had a sufficient number of missionaries in China to make an effective force present worthwhile; the French, however, did. And because force was necessary for effectiveness, a papal representative in Peking would be useless for protecting missionaries, regardless of the moral power of the papacy in the West.

A third conclusion is that the protectorate must be considered something good for France also, and this on several counts. 1) The protectorate gave France a certain amount of prestige with China, a direct influence in her life. China had to respect Russia because of her proximity, England because of her commerce, and France because of her concern for religious matters. By her constant intervention due to religious difficulties, France continually gained in influence in China's life; for influence of this type only grew with use. 2) The protectorate also gave France the standing of a power of first rank in Europe even after the Battle of Sedan (where France was defeated by Prussia). Other national missionaries going from Europe to China had to recognize their dependence on France, even using her passport. Also it was recognized that China would have to enter the "concert of European nations"; the influence that France had in China at that moment would also be felt in Europe. 3) The protectorate could be a preparation for France's increase in trade. The missionary made of every convert a friend of France. This would make it easier to establish profitable trade partners. Finally, 4) the protectorate made the spread of the French name and French culture possible. This is commonly quoted as an important reason for maintaining the protectorate. To appreciate the force of this argument one should see it against the background of the theory of assimilation in French colonial policy. It was considered a great thing to have other peoples speaking the French tongue and living in a French manner.

Thus it is clear from the press reaction at times of crises that the majority of people, aware of the schizophrenic nature of the Third Republic Government continuing to hold on to the religious protectorate even while persecuting the Catholic Church at home, did not favour the government giving up the religious protectorate.

Introduction By Paul Rule

This report written by a Church Missionary Society missionary in Sichuan province in September 1925 has been kindly sent to us by Professor Audrey Donnithorne, the two-year-old 'little Audrey' of her father's account.

Professor Donnithorne has spent a lifetime researching and writing about the Chinese economy in London, Canberra and Hong Kong, and is a great friend of China especially of Chinese Christians whom she has assisted in many ways. She was foundation head of the Contemporary China Centre of the Australian National University.

She writes of her father: Vyvyan Henry Donnithorne (1886 - 1968) was one of the earliest students to read for the Tripos in Chinese at Cambridge University (1911 -1914). In 1920 he and his wife went to Sichuan as missionaries of the Church Missionary Society, serving first at Anxian and later at Guanghan. For some years he was Archdeacon of the Anglican Diocese of West Sichuan. At the Sanxingdui Museum at Guanghan he is honored as one who helped the recognition and preservation of the first discoveries at that famous excavation site which has thrown new light on the early history of Shu and of Chinese civilization.

This story is a reminder of an older perhaps more strenuous missionary tradition than that of today. Also of interest may be that amongst the party was the future Anglican Archbishop of Sydney, Howard Mowll, then assistant-bishop of West China. We publish it with minimal editing as befits an historical document.

Sichuan (Szechwan) province is in the west of China, an extremely fertile area (the name means "the four valleys" after the four great rivers that traverse it). The time when this incident occurred was a particularly fraught one for all missionaries and particularly the British. There had been a breakdown of central authority after the 1911 revolution got rid of the Chinese monarchy. Provincial military governors, correctly labelled 'warlords' by Europeans contended with each other for usually temporary control of Peking with the foreign powers recognizing the holder of the capital as the President of China. They and their subordinates fought for regions and cities in order to get as much in the way of taxes and loot as possible. There was a thin or non-existent line between their armies and 'bandits'; anarchy and disorder prevailed. The Communists had already begun their anti-Christian campaign but the Chinese Communist Party was as yet small and isolated and the nationalists were only beginning their northward march to reunite China.

In May 1925 the British police in Shanghai killed and wounded striking and demonstrating workers and British citizens became a particular target for patriotic and nationalist Chinese and an excuse for attacking or kidnapping British missionaries. In Sichuan with its strong traditions of rebellious secret societies and sects nationalist fervor added to sectarian zeal and unemployment swelled the ranks of groups such as the Red Lanterns.

The *li* used for distances here is a somewhat inexact measure but usually a little under 600 metres.

IN THE STRONGHOLD OF SZECHUAN BRIGANDS

Vyvian Henry Donnithorne

With its natural endowment the province of Szechuan is one of the fairest portions of the surface of the earth; under conditions of good government it would speedily become a veritable garden of Eden. The vast central plain, the so called Red Basin of Chengtu, carries a population of seventeen hundred to the square mile. In the beauty of the spring and autumn crops it is all that the eye could wish, but under the burning summer sun it becomes a steam-bath, the hot and heavy air being saturated with vapour from the innumerable flooded rice fields. At that time all the foreign community who can do so take refuge on the hill tops or in the cool wooded valleys of the mountains which rise on the western edge of the plain, and stretch away in ever and ever grander ranges, into far off Tibet. On the eastern edge of this mountain barrier several summer resorts have been established by the foreigners, mostly missionaries working in Chengtu or on the plain. There are the colonies of bungalows on the sacred mountain of Omei-shan, and on Peh-lu-din mountain two days from Chengtu; there are also three temples high up on the hills of Kuanhsien which are exclusively occupied by foreigners in the summer months; and lastly there is the delightful well-wooded mountain glen recently acquired by the C.M.S. missionaries and christened Silverdale; its Chinese name being Yin Chang Keo, or silver-mine valley.

In the good old Manchu days — days never referred to now by peace-loving Chinese without a sigh of regret as for a long-lost golden age — it was possible for missionaries to travel without let or hindrance in any part of the plains or mountains. But with the ever increasing decay of all governing authority, and relaxing of the restraints of law and order, there has come a deplorable change over Szechuan, as over the rest of the Chinese provinces.

Now the only prosperous trade is that of brigandage, and a new and exceedingly lucrative industry has made its appearance, and is being organised on a huge scale all over the province. This industry which has almost eclipsed most other occupations in importance, is that of kidnapping men and women and holding them captive until ransomed; or in the expressive Chinese colloquial, "taking fat pigs". This industry, as I said, is thoroughly organised, and many thousands of persons, both professed brigands and reputable citizens are engaged in it to their great profit. The guiding heads of the business, the big "to-pa-tsi" or "oar handles" (i.e. steersmen) as they are called, in other words brigand chiefs, often live openly in the big market towns, occupying imposing houses and being treated with the deference which their power and wealth inspires. These big men, of course, never themselves appear in the open; and punishment, if and when it is incurred, falls only upon the "small brigands" whom they employ to do their nefarious business. They believe in "direct action" and their methods are simple. A sudden attack is made at night on some market or hamlet with the accompaniment of much yelling and firing of rifles; any who offer resistance are at once killed; each house is entered and robbed of anything which will fetch money; the pots and kettles and breakable articles are all smashed, for these men believe above all in terrorism; and after a short time the robbers retire taking with them as captives any persons whom they think will be worth a ransom. The robber societies have spies everywhere, whose business it is to compile a list of those people in their district who are worth taking as "fat pigs", with the amount of ransom which might be demanded. The relatives next receive a note of the amount of ransom which will be accepted and the place and time at which it must be paid over. If the family are not sufficiently punctual in the payment the robbers have well-understood methods of hastening the matter; a joint of a finger is sent with promise of further consignments at regular intervals until the matter is settled; or the captive is treated with other methods of barbarity. The ransoms demanded are exorbitant, and often some thousands of dollars are demanded from and paid by quite poor people, who sell up all they have in order to do so.

One well-to-do gentleman, in the writer's knowledge, was visited by the brigand chief, after his capture, who remarked: "I have found a purchaser for your estate", and thereupon presented him with a complete catalogue of his property and all live-stock and features thereon, also with a legally drawn-up deed of sale, made out to an imaginary buyer, which the unfortunate man was compelled to sign then and there. After a day or two the robber re-appeared and said that as he had so successfully completed the sale he would be glad to receive the usual percentage paid to the middle man. and the prisoner had to liquidate what little he had left and pay this fee before he could regain his liberty. The kidnappers' net is

spread wide enough to catch not only the wealthy but the very poor as well. Recently a Christian I know well was taken from a neighbouring market in which we have an out-station. He was a very poor man but his captors demanded one hundred and eighty dollars by a certain date. His wife was quite unable to raise this amount but by selling what she had and borrowing the rest she managed to raise a hundred and twenty dollars which she offered with explanations. The robbers refused to accept this and killed the prisoner, after which she had to pay them sixty dollars to get back the body for burial.

Hitherto, in the province, the bandits have held the foreigner in some fear and respect, and have seldom attempted to lay violent hands upon him, and have never before, as far as the writer has heard, held a foreigner captive to ransom in Szechuan. The writer, in the ordinary course of his itinerations, has several times had to pass through bands of these men, but after inquiries they have allowed him to pass on unharmed. But it seems that this period of immunity from personal outrage is passing and that the missionary in Szechuan must be content as part of the cost of his work to bear this cross of perpetual insecurity.

Szechuan is the chief home of secret societies in China and the province is honeycombed with these subterranean associations, some of which may be political groups with legitimate objects, but many are organizations of robbers. Such is the Teng Chiao, or Red Lantern Sect, otherwise called Ta Tao Hwei of Big Knife Society, which after being quiet for a number of years has suddenly aggressively reasserted itself. Some nine years ago it became notorious by its anti-Christian character, and at that time some of the church out-stations in the district in which the writer is now working were attacked and burned, and some Christians killed and others wounded. Strong action by the local officials at that time caused its speedy suppression. Two years ago it reappeared but with a changed objective. This time its antagonism was directed against the military, who as the personal troops of the big military barons, are mistreating and despoiling the country. At that time massacres, sometimes of the soldiery by the Red Lanterns, and sometimes of the Red Lanterns by the soldiery, were the order of the day. The Red Lanterns are devout idolaters, and before attempting any piece of business, always seek the aid of the idols. They are also adepts at occult arts of which mesmerism is the chief. Their leaders will produce trays of water, over which mesmeric passes are then made, after which a little is drunk by each member of the gang; and then in the words of one witness "they know nothing only know to kill men". On the occasion of the attacks on the Christians nine years ago, referred to above, two of our missionaries called to see the arrested Red Lanterns in prison, three days after their capture, and found them even then in a dazed and semi-mesmerized state, unable to understand questions put to them. But in these recent years we have not heard anything of these mesmeric methods being practised. On the other hand the reliance on the powers of the idols and on the efficacy of magical charms is more pronounced than ever. These charms are simply meaningless scrawls written by priests on pieces of yellow paper, which are then eaten by the devotee, or burnt to ashes and then mixed with water and drunk. It is the firm belief of the Red Lanterns themselves and also of the soldiery and populace, that after eating such a charm the man cannot be injured by ordinary weapons especially not by any sort of firearms. Before any engagement with the military, they used the following incantations, shouted out at the top of their voice:

Heaven send its warriors blessing!
Bullets all fall harmless to the ground!
Amida Buddha! Amida Buddha!
Nothing can wound us! Nothing can wound us!

After saying this they only need to stroke their clothes and the bullets fall out and drop to the ground. This phrase "Ta puh chin ch'u" (nothing can wound, or bullets cannot enter) is one constantly heard when the Red Lanterns are out, and is widely believed by all classes.

At that time, in the city of Anhsien where the writer is stationed the soldiers were terrified and considering that firearms were useless against such spirit-defended enemies, discarded their rifles and took to primitive pikes instead, which were considered to be more efficacious against such. For many weeks all the blacksmiths in the district were busy turning out these pikeheads. One thing only could counter the efficaciousness of the magic incantations, and that was water. If rain fell and wetted the clothes of the Red Lamp devotee, all his supernatural protection melted away. On one occasion recently

when a large number of Red Lanterns were rounded up in an open skirmish by the soldiery of Mienchuh, the latter withheld their fire until they had driven the brigands into an open irrigation canal when reckoning that the water would dissolve the charm, they opened fire and a great massacre occurred.

As with most such popular movements in China, the Red Lantern movement began with a plausible objective of resistance to the militarist tyranny, but it speedily degenerated into a mere society of murderous brigands who from their stronghold swoop down at intervals and terrorize whole districts. It is a life which has many attractions for the more daring and enterprising of the young men, for as they say, "these days you must either oppress others or yourself be content to be oppressed". And therefore those who have courage and spirit and no morals get hold of a gun and join up with a band, and call themselves "Red Lanterns", and adopt the methods and teachings of the sect, appointing regular instructors called "Laosi", or "Old Scholars", who are in reality nothing more than common bandits.

In July and August 1925 the political conditions were exceptionally favourable for the operations of these gangs of brigands. The new provincial governor General Yang Sen, an energetic reformer and brigand exterminator, was fighting with his back to the wall, surrounded by a ring of his enemies, and all the military forces in the province were called away to take part in the fighting on one side or the other. This left the city of Mienchuh destitute of soldiers, and it was speedily attacked by hordes of robbers who wandered round the outskirts looting the smaller markets and hamlets and several times succeeded in effecting entrance into the city itself, each time getting away with considerable plunder. When this started there were a company of C.M.S. missionaries spending the hot weather at Silverdale, where two bungalows had been erected the previous spring. When the attacks began on Mienchuh ten miles away, communication with the city was of course, cut off, and we were unable to retire even if we had wished, but we assumed that in our quiet retreat we were safer than our friends in the hospital outside the south gate of the city who indeed were being exposed to continual alarms.

All this time the whole province, and indeed the whole of China, was wildly agitated over the "Shanghai affair", and the students were everywhere advocating the extremest measures against the British; but here among the friendly country folk we experienced nothing but kindness and courtesy, and they showed by many signs that they were pleased by our presence amongst them. The days were pleasantly spent, half in quiet study and half in exploration of the lovely valley in which we found ourselves and of which many acres had now legally become our own. The beautiful clear mountain stream with its myriad pools and waterfalls was excellent for bathing and paddling; and the steep mountains on either side were covered with primeval jungle through which ran in all directions fascinating little paths made by woodcutters.

The only cloud on our horizon was the news, which reached us from time to time of the gathering force of the anti-foreign movement and the sad plight of Mienchuh and the markets beneath us, continually suffering from the assaults of robber bands. Some missionaries of other societies, we learned, were already vacating their stations to go down river at the Consul's request, but we had received his letter to say that the situation showed signs of improving and those foreigners who were spending the summer in the hills should remain quietly where they were as the safest place.

It was at day break on the morning of August 6 that we were aroused from our beds by an outburst of rifle firing under our windows, accompanied by wild yelling and shouts of "Ta! Ta!" (Strike! Strike!) and almost simultaneously we heard the doors burst open and a rush of shouting men inside and up the stairs. Almost before we had time to thrust our feet into our slippers they had burst into our room, still shouting "Ta! Ta!" and flourishing swords and pikes, revolvers and rifles. The air was so filled with the sound of the rifle explosions, for they were firing even inside the house, and the yelling that it was hard even to hear or say a word. They kept on pushing us and shouting to us at the top of their voices to go with them at once, but I could see that they were much more excited and frightened than we were; for the Lord's power at that moment kept us quiet and collected.

My wife bent over the cot where little Audrey, aged two and a half, was lying in half awakened amazement, and picked her up saying quietly "Don't be afraid little girl; we are going out for a walk now". Instantly the little one's fears were allayed and she remained quiet in her mother's arms. Meanwhile

some of the robbers were engaged pushing our clothes and blankets and all moveable objects into our boxes, and others were busying themselves with Major Iles and myself, forcing our hands behind our backs and tying our thumbs together. The noise and confusion of the scene is indescribable. When they had hurried us downstairs they produced a long rope and proceeded to rope us all together with a halter round our necks; my wife persuaded her brigand to allow her to go free long enough to get half a dozen tins of condensed milk which we hastily pushed into our pockets for the child, and a sun-hat for myself.

I noticed that our Chinese servants had plunged into the bush and made good their escape. On the verandah while waiting for our captors to complete the robbery of the contents of the house, we saw another little procession approaching us from the other house. They consisted of Bishop and Mrs. Mowll and their two lady guests, the Bishop like ourselves with his thumbs tied behind his back, and like ourselves all were in pyjamas and nightclothes. We all made such a ridiculous figure that we could not help laughing heartily at our appearance.

Prodded on by our guards we then started out on our journey across the stream and up the mountain road to an unknown destination, we shuffling along in Indian file with our necks in a halter and our feet in bedroom slippers on our feet, and the little girl carried pick-a-back by an old mason who had been doing our building and whom the robbers had now impressed to carry our goods. Behind us came our two cows with their calves and a dozen coolies carrying the loads of loot. As we left we noticed that a black and white flag had been stuck in the ground between the two houses. The time was about six o'clock.

The path now became steeper and as it became apparent that we could not proceed tied up as we were, they released our neck ropes and untied our thumbs. After about half an hour they allowed us to sit down on the hillside while they, who were evidently strangers to the district, reconnoitered the route. Here as the coolies with the bundles of clothes passed us the ladies managed to seize a few garments, with which and a discreet use of opportunity they were able to array themselves in costumes more suitable to an enforced march over mountain paths. My wife, perhaps more fortunate than others, was thus able to exchange her night attire for a two piece bathing suit made of Chinese blue cloth, but the men of the party had to remain in their sleeping attire for the whole of that day's journey.

We could now look around and take some stock of our captors. There appeared to be twenty to thirty men in the gang, one half of whom were armed with rifles, and one half with long pikes consisting of a broad blade some two feet long and six inches wide mounted on the end of a long staff. The chief was an evil-looking man of some thirty-five years, naked to the waist and armed with two automatic pistols. The men seemed to hold him in awe and addressed him as Ch'en Lao Si, "Old Scholar Ch'en". During that day I had several conversations with him in which he informed me that the ransom they wanted was two hundred automatic pistols. He let me examine those he had while he kept a grip of them in his hand. I noticed that one was a Mauser, which he said cost three hundred dollars in the province, and the other was a Colt. I told him that missionaries did not carry arms and had no method of procuring them as such action was forbidden by the governments of foreign countries. He seemed rather disappointed at this, for undoubtedly these men's first desire was to use us to procure arms, which are as dear to them as to an Afghan raider. Some of the ordinary robbers also allowed me to inspect their guns and I saw that though some were of modern make, made at the Chengtu arsenal on the model of the short Lee-Enfield, the majority were very ancient, some being of German make with the date '88 and a bore of about half an inch.

The brigands were all young men, many of whom might be taken for simple peasant boys, while other had the marks of cruelty and villainy unmistakably stamped upon their faces. One of these, a young boy of about twenty, came to me as we sat down to rest and showed me one of those charms on yellow paper written with an incantation in red. "Look at his", he said, "Ta puh chin ch'u! Bullets and knives cannot hurt us! The idols will protect us". I laughed in his face. "Do you not believe it?" he said. "Of course not, there are Red Lanterns being killed every day on the plain, though they all carry these charms. We fear the one true God who protects us and you cannot hurt us unless He allows."

We have often wondered since how we made that day's journey, and at the extraordinary way in which we were sustained during it. We were led up and down precipitous steeps by woodcutters' paths through the dense jungle, over a mountain range and down the other side. We were on our feet fourteen hours, not having broken our fast since the night before, and our only food was a few fancy biscuits and a drink of water every now and then when we came across a little stream. The day was burning hot, so the insufficiency of our clothing was not such a trial as it might have been. Bishop Mowll was far from well when taken and had indeed been confined to his room for many days, and of the rest of the party five were ladies and one was a little child. For her, poor wee mite, it was especially difficult awaked out of her sleep by the sudden terrifying inrush of armed men, hurried out of the house and on to the road undressed and without her breakfast, kept all day without food except a biscuit or two, deprived of her midday sleep, carried in all sorts of uncomfortable positions on the backs of all kinds of people, all her routine of life hopelessly broken up. We feared her usual happy disposition would desert her under the strain, and yet, from that morning to the last of the twenty-four days we spent in these evil men's hands, little Audrey was the one who set the best example for us all. All days she was bright and full of smiles, singing happily to herself even at the end of the day, as she clung, with her arms around his neck, on the back of some unwashed coolie.

At length, as the sun was setting and we were descending from the top of a high mountain range, we saw far below us, yet still on the top of a high hill, what looked like an impregnable castle of medieval Italy. It was a huge "chai-tsi" or fortress perched on the top of an inaccessible rock and approachable from below only by a single narrow zigzag path. We were told that this was our objective, and our hearts sank within as we looked at the forbidding mass, for we thought that once in there all idea of relief would be impossible. A more fitting aspect for a brigand stronghold could not be found in any book of romance. However it was still many li away, and the sun went down and the darkness and the rain fell together before we came up to its entrance.

Here we found a number of men waiting with baskets such as they use to carry loads on their backs, and the brigands curtly told us that we still had several miles to go and that the ladies would get into the baskets and be carried down. Here was predicament! The night was come and the road ahead looked an impossibly steep descent, we had been the whole day on our feet without food, we were utterly exhausted and the ladies and the bishop could obviously go no further. Moreover the ladies one and all refused on any account to get into the baskets! We struck! We said we could not possibly go one step further, we would go into the fortress and spend the night there. The place we had so feared as one we could not get out of, was now the one we were insisting on remaining in. After a little consultation our captors concurred and allowed us to spend the night there.

When we stepped inside we found found a very large courtyard surrounded by buildings in a semi-ruined condition. The robbers had made a huge bonfire with some of the woodwork that remained, and were seated around it stewing lumps of pork in an iron pot. At the further end we found a place where the roof was sufficiently sound to enable us to spread our bedding under it, and before long our loads of clothes and bedding arrived and were dumped down in the middle of this space in a higgeldy-piggledy mess. It was not a big room and the nine of us had to sleep in it as best we could. A big cupboard stood at the end so we pulled it down and laid it face to the ground and four of the ladies and the little girl laid down their bedding on the top and passed the night there. The rest of us lay as best as we could on the dirty mud floor.

I went across to the robbers and procured some of the water in which their salt pork had been boiled, but this soup was so salt that as water was very scarce, none of the others dared drink it. After a bit one of the robbers came over and gave us a small piece of the pork on the end of his bayonet and some cakes made out of coarse maize meal, such as coolies eat sometimes on the road when they cannot get rice. This with a little hot water was all the food we had that day, except a couple of biscuits each, and unpalatable as the maize cake was we all did justice to it! That night was the first of many like it! When we look back at our time with the brigands it is the nights that always bring the worst recollections. A cloud of mosquitos swooped joyfully on the prey, and from the mud floor an army of insects rose up to the spoil and worn though we were from the fatigue of the day few or none of us slept that night.

The next part of the story had best be told by leading extracts from my diary:

Friday August 7: Ho Si, the bishop's boy was forced to accompany us yesterday, and in the night he went back by a short way to Silverdale and returned this morning with some flour and tinned foods, accompanied by Chang-li Kwei, our cook, who had volunteered to come back with him and help to look after us: a piece of self-sacrifice we must remember when we get back. Today we made another forced march of 20 li descending the mountain to the plain of Ta Ho. On the road we passed within view of two beautiful "ribbon" waterfalls; the larger and most majestic must have been between 300-400 feet high. At last we reached a larger ancestral hall or temple by the riverside called Chang Chia Si, seven or eight li from the markets of Hong Pan Er Ch'ang. Today we were better treated in the way of food as we had our servants with us, and they had brought some eggs with them: but we were very glad on the road to be able to grasp some handfuls of the dry rice which the robbers were eating.

Saturday, August 8. All day in the Chang ancestral temple. We have two small rooms separated by an open lattice from the courtyard where our guards live. Those guards were now reduced to eight men, and spend all the day lying on their beds and gambling. As soon as we got in last night, and our bedding was brought in and thrown on the floor, Major Iles and I went round the place and took down all the doors we could find, lifting the wooden pivots out of the sockets in which they turn. These doors lay on stones or beams of wood form our beds. After that we made a further tour of exploration and found a number of bales of dried bamboo leaves which the Chinese call "lao yeh tsi" (old leaves) and use for making the huge rain hats worn by coolies. This we joyfully seized on and bore off to lay on the beds, where it did much to relieve the hardness of the bare boards.

We spent this morning trying to sort out the bundles of clothing, which the coolies had dumped on the floor. This kept us busy most of the morning. Every now and then one heard a gleeful remark from one of the ladies: "See! I have found some hairpins". "A piece of soap!" "Here's a hair-brush!" "And here's a comb, too!" And best of all we found a pocket New Testament with Psalms. For the next fortnight, after which a few more reached us, this one was much in demand, and handed from one to the other with a time ration allowed to each. During that day we all needed the comfort, which reached us from this little copy of the word of God.

We were quite in ignorance as to what the brigands intended to do with us. The temple itself was isolated in the middle of woods and had a most forbidding appearance. The anti-foreign and especially the anti-British wave, which was sweeping over China was clearly not without its effect on these evil men. The day before Ch'en Lao Si had spoken to me sullenly about the shooting of Chinese in Shanghai by the English. According to his version of it hundreds had been killed and the British had landed troops to invade China.

The robbers spent the morning sharpening their swords and pikes on the stone balustrade outside our door. We were witnesses during that morning of an example of their discipline, which would have made an excellent and dramatic scene for the films, and was indeed very probably staged, for our benefit. There was suddenly a great outburst of shouting by our chief Ch'en, and one of the younger robbers was dragged in front of him: we heard the chief shout "So you will go away for the night and act doctor, will you? Take him and sling him up by the thumbs". This is an allusion to a form of torture practised very commonly by the robbers. On this the wretched man fell on his knees before the chief, and remained protesting and whining until dragged off by three others down the steps and out the front door. However, he re-appeared not very long after seemingly none the worse, which made us suspect that the whole affair was stage-managed for our benefit.

Several times during the day (as subsequently) we gathered together while one read out of God's Word, after which we led by turns in prayer. How fresh and strengthening were the words of the Psalms on that day! The Psalms of David need to be read in the presence of imminent danger to give their real flavour. Then like David we were able to encourage ourselves in the Lord our God. Shall we ever forget to connect Psalm 37 with the memory of this day? It all seemed to be written for our own comfort and encouragement: "Fret not thyself because of evil-doers – Trust in the Lord – Wait on the Lord for the Lord forsaketh not His saints".

It has rained all day and so we have been able to get washing water by catching the drip from the eaves. Littler Audrey's spirits are unconquerable. She has again had a very disturbed night, for though we have now got our mosquito nets hung up, the fleas are still innumerable. But today she has recovered all her brightness, thinks it great fun to eat maize gruel out of the saucepan, and to catch the rain drops for washing. The place is full of short lengths of bamboo, the material left over by former "fat pigs" who have been used during their captivity to make a little profit for their captors by cutting incense sticks. The little girl finds these capital material for building houses and bridges; and her trustful innocence as she runs in and out among the robbers, fetching this material, and prattling away in Chinese in answer to their questions, is having its effect even on these hard men. Several of them are obviously already attached to her, and treat us better in consequence. "Chinese children are never as good as that", remarked one of them to us, "and she is as big as a four year old of ours".

Sunday, August 9. Hard rain all night and the roof leaks badly. Basin on our beds to catch the drips. I made a tent for my head by supporting a mackintosh on bamboo sticks, by which I was nearly smothered. "They" have a habit of coming in and taking everything of ours that they have a fancy to, I therefore sleep across the door at night, which makes things a bit better.

Today Ho Si was allowed to go to Mienchuh to bring food for us. We took the opportunity to give him any little valuables, which we have been able to secrete, and by that means saved a few things. I have concealed my wife's wedding ring in the lining of my coat. The chief Ch'en also went off today and left us in charge of the second, Chang Lao Si.

Monday. August 10. Early this morning our captors came into our room, shouting: "Walk! Walk! Walk! Get your things together. Walk!" Everything had to be caught up and thrown hurriedly into the baskets, the brigands helping us to do this with no gentle hand, shouting all the time for us to hurry up. Breakfast which consisted of a little thin maize gruel and a boiled egg each, had to be eaten standing. In half an hour we were on the road again, going further into the hills, following the banks of the river. We were now well into the robbers' country where it is impossible for any traveller to go except under such an escort as we now had with us, therefore I was the more interested to take note of the fertile and beautiful valley in which we found ourselves. The first few li led through a magnificent bamboo forest with trees of a size I had never seen previously. We now had only four guards with us on the road and part of the time two of them were out of sight. We thought how easy it would be to disarm and overpower these two, but to what purpose? With so many who could walk only a few li an hour, and a small child in the party, in unknown country which is the robbers' reserve, what chance would we have to get away? The reaction from the strain and exhaustion of the previous days was telling on the party, several of the ladies being very exhausted, as was the bishop, whose illness made the experience especially severe on him. We had to cross streams on bridges consisting of a single log, and once had to remove shoes and stockings and wade across a foaming torrent, which though only about six feet wide and about a couple of feet deep, took us about half an hour to negotiate.

At length we arrived at a point where the river was suddenly closed by a narrow gorge with a towering precipice on each side, between which the now narrow river roared down in a deep green torrent. Either side of the gorge was sheer mountain and the only way forward was by a path a foot wide which wound down the steep side of a small ravine, and up the opposite bank, zigzagging its way through the thick jungle until at length it crossed over the top of the gorge and dropped down into the river valley behind. This little path was the one entrance into the valley, which lay behind the gorge, and ten men hidden in the jungle at the top could hold the path against an army.

Dropping down into the valley we at length reached a little farmhouse of a family called Ch'en. This our captors appointed as our quarters: for themselves they commandeered the main house and put us into an out-house consisting of two rooms. The real owners had to shift for themselves as best they could. Our clothing and bedding were again dumped down on the mud floor and we were left to make what arrangements we could. We found some rough planks and laid them down on the ground and spread our sleeping gear on that. To our relief we found that having no fear of our escape from this place, our guards allowed us considerable liberty. We were by the banks of the river and we were soon enjoying

a good bathe and a wash with soap! The river is very swift and turbulent and full of rapids, but we found a place where an outcrop of rocks made a little bay, which was safe even for non-swimmers.

August 11th. We are quartered in a shed with a roof made of bark, which leaks badly. It has two little rooms, which are dark, and horribly dirty; the fleas jump everywhere, as is the invariable condition in all these houses, and the smells are horrible, for just outside is the inevitable cess-pit. What a relief it is to get outside this filthy place to the beauty of the riverbank! This morning had a glorious time there in spite of all the brigands, and the best bathe and swim I have had in China, diving from the rocks into twelve feet of crystal-clear water after which I enjoyed a sun-bath and forgot all our troubles for an hour. We had a great time afterwards washing clothes and the ladies had quite a hay-day, one or two of our guards merely sitting on the rocks and looking on. There are great stretches of white sand here, which formed an ideal beach for Audrey to play on, and it was good to see the delight she took in building in the sand and paddling in the water.

We have always to leave two or three behind in the house on guard while the rest are by the river. Our guards still continue the practice of coming in and snatching away any little article which takes their fancy, sometimes a towel, or a basin, or a looking-glass, and they have several times tried to get hold of my safety razor. It is the only one left to us and we men all three use it, so I hide it away carefully. But the presence of one of us on guard, especially if that one can speak Chinese, is some safety, as they still seem to retain a sneaking fear of us. I am often able to go back to their house and snatch back something, which they have filched. As a precaution I make my bed outside across the door, using a ladder laid on trestles and covered with sheets of bark on which my bedding is laid.

Wednesday, August 12. Raining all morning. I went out to look at the big waterfall in the gorge and jumping from a slippery rock I slipped and fell into the torrent and came out drenched, lacking one leather slipper. Now I am reduced to two pairs of straw sandals one of which is already worn through. All the morning the brigands had been busying themselves constructing a rude raft of pine logs tied together with bamboo strips and in the afternoon as soon as this was ready they forced us to pack up our remaining belongings and cross the river. We protested that two of our party were very unwell and unable to walk, but they paid no heed and we soon learned that it was no good making protests to these men, we had to do what they wanted us to. The crossing of the turbulent stream was quite exciting work. The raft was manipulated by bamboo strips twisted together into a rope, one tied to each end of the raft, the other ends being held by men on the two banks. By this means, two by two, we got safely across, but got considerably wet in the process. The other shore was covered with thick woods right down to the water's edge, and in the midst of these woods was the farmhouse of the Chong family whose guests we were now to be. By this time we were adepts at making beds for ourselves out of whatever material we could find, and in a little time we had found boards to put down on the floor, and better still had found a great stock of dried bamboo leaves which we laid down on the boards until we had a mattress three inches thick. We were all now in one room, but it was much cleaner and more airy than the other places we had been in, and while we were in this place we managed to get a much better rest at night. We spent several days here during which we were allowed to go to the waterside for bathing and washing. Here too were wide sandy beaches with the beautiful woods behind, so our little girl was again kept happy in spite of improper food and insects, which kept her moaning and scratching all night.

While here by the riverside a coolie sent by our friends in Mienchuh reached us with a basket of provisions. There was bread – how good it tasted though it was four days old – and marmalade; and toothbrushes which we immediately strung on string and attached to our waistbelts for safety; and best of all there were newspapers and letters, the first news that had reached us from the outside world. They told of friends praying for us in many places; but they could not tell of any progress being made in negotiations for our release, for as they went on to tell us, there was at the moment no authority who could undertake the negotiations; in Chengtu there was no tupan, in Mienchu there was no magistrate, and no soldiers; outside there were only hordes of robbers still attacking the city.

The valley in which we are displays a remarkable combination of scenery. Beautiful as are the mountain valleys we are already familiar with in Szechuan, this district beats them all for beauty. Alas that one has proved so often in China the most beautiful districts are the habitations of the worst men. A wide

swift river, broken by innumerable rapids, flows between mountains of some ten thousand feet in height, covered lower down with forests of bamboo and fir, and higher up with the dense jungle. Half a mile lower down the granite is broken by a huge outcrop of smooth black rock through which the river has forced a passage in a majestic waterfall, after which the foaming white torrent carves a sinuous course for itself through a gorge of great beauty. It is this combination of the picturesqueness of Scottish highland with the grandeur of a Yangtse gorge that makes the scene so memorable.

Our clothing though scanty is decidedly interesting, especially perhaps my own. As we sat on the beach this morning the others compared me quite aptly to Robinson Crusoe. My trousers are all torn to rags at the knees, my socks have been worn to holes and discarded so that I have to wear my sandals barefoot. I have one shirt left, and yesterday while it was being washed I had perforce to go without it; in consequence, my back is very sore today and beginning to peel from sunburn, but still, my shirt is now clean, which is great gain.

These people who are our unwilling hosts show us every kindness when they have opportunity to do so without attracting the robbers' attention. At the Ch'en family across the river, the old woman thinking of the scant rations usually meted out to the robbers' captives, several times came stealthily to the ladies bringing with her little gifts of food, and asking if we had enough to eat. Here too the simple old folk are very kind and indeed we are glad enough of the gifts of maize cake they give us for our food is getting very scarce and we live chiefly on boiled cobs of maize. The boy, Ho Si, is back with us now, and he and the ladies undertake between them the preparation of our meals.

Every time we move we lose more of our remaining belongings, for they are carried on ahead of us to the place we are to stop at, and before we arrive the robbers have taken the opportunity to pick them over again. They are now showing a worse temper towards us and are growing more rude and insolent. We cannot learn their names and so have to give them nicknames in speaking to each other. Two very objectionable ones who worry us most we call "Nosey" and "Insolence".

"Take joyfully the spoiling of your goods"; one of the hardest things to endure is perhaps to witness the way in which our better things are wilfully "spoiled" in front of our eyes. They play with the cameras and typewriter and gramophone, knowing nothing of their mechanism, until they have ruined them. One wears my best flannel coat, another has my wife's best hat on his head, while another wears the bishop's felt, which has already passed into the hands or rather onto the heads of two or three other owners according as their luck has fluctuated in the dice gambling which they indulge in continually.

Sometimes they will give up some of their ill-gotten booty surprisingly tamely. Thus Miss Settle pointed out to me a man who was wearing her ivory bead necklace round his neck, the lower part being concealed under his shirt. I went up to him as if to speak, and then suddenly grabbed the necklace and had it over his head and off before he knew what was happening. As I handed it to the wearer one of the ladies called out to him "that is a thing women wear, not men", and the other robbers laughed loud and long at his discomfiture. This ornament was one of the things we managed to smuggle away by the boy to Mienchuh.

The little girl has begun to realize the real character of our guards and is full of indignation at what she calls these "naughty men". Passing their room today she saw and recognised my pillow, which one of them was using as a cushion. Without a moment's hesitation she marched straight into the midst of the brigands and laid hands on the pillow calling out in Chinese, "This is not yours, it's my daddy's; give it to me". The man who had it of course would not let her take it, but she was not to be denied. At last the others who were laughing at her audacity, said to him, "Let her have it then" and he had grudgingly to comply and to yield to public opinion, whereupon little Audrey tucked the pillow under her arm and marched triumphantly out; and I was able to keep the pillow until the last day when they took it again.

(We spent four days at this spot, and after our captivity was over we looked back on them as by far the most tolerable of the three weeks, for we had free access to the riverside and were able to keep our clothes and persons clean.)

Sunday, August 16. This morning we were moved again, crossing the river once more on the raft. This time the crossing was made with greater anxiety than before, for the rains of the last days had made the river into a formidable torrent. We were then led up a very steep path which followed a ravine in the hills for six or seven li, until we came to a most gloomy and isolated spot where was a small farmhouse in a very ruinous condition, high up on the mountain side. We learnt afterwards that this inaccessible house belonged to one of the robber chiefs, and was now occupied by one of the gang and the two women who were his wives. It was called Ts'ao O Tsi or Straw Nest.

Here we all had to fit ourselves into one room divided by a partition into two compartments. The very atmosphere of the place was enough to depress one and our hearts sank as we looked round the very small and vilely dirty room. The walls and roof were pitch black with soot, the roof was of rotted wood bark, which acted more as a sieve than as a roof, and on the mud floor were pools of black water and heaps of refuse. Once more we made the best beds we could by removing doors and laying them across trestles, but we could find hardly anything to use as bedding to soften their hardness. Food is getting more and more difficult to get and we are reduced to a diet chiefly of maize cobs, which are getting very tough and unpalatable. Our guards, chiefly "Nosey" are getting more and more insolent: they amuse themselves by sitting on our doorstep or even coming into the room if we let them, imitating our talk and teasing the child.

Monday, August 17. The little girl and most of the others had a very bad night. Poor little thing, she is bitten all over her body and keeps on complaining pitifully of "mos-ee-tos" (mosquitoes), which in reality are fleas. The ladies caught thirty this morning! I was not so industrious. My wife has not had a proper rest for eleven nights, and the strain is telling on her and on Audrey, and the rest of the party. We are not able to leave the house to go any distance. The only water procurable is from a muddy puddle nearby, so we have to be very sparing. We are not allowed any communication with the outside world, so we cannot send a boy into the town for bread or flour. Every day the food problem gets more serious. For dinner we have dry rice and boiled cucumber and maize cobs. Even of the latter we cannot get sufficient, though the corn is growing all round the house, they will not allow us to gather it though the robbers themselves do so. This we are told is a favourite place for keeping "fat pigs" until the ransom is paid, as it is the property of a bandit, and is so well hidden in the hills as to be inaccessible. Adjoining our room is a ruined house in which stand two coffins each containing corpses of captives who have been recently killed when ransom was not forthcoming? It is evident that our two boys, who are very much afraid of the robbers, are coming to an end of their endurance, and we are afraid they may run off.

This afternoon on the road the other side of the valley we saw two bands of robbers passing by on their return to Peh-Miao-Ch'ang nearby, laden with loot and captives. We found out that they were also Red Lantern brigands returning from the looting of Chiu-Long-Shan Market.

The next two nights were miserable in the extreme, for rain fell heavily all night, but especially in the early mornings, and in spite of half a dozen basins skillfully adjusted on our beds to catch the maximum rainfall our bedding was quickly soaked through. The behaviour of the robbers has grown steadily worse, and they are ever inventing new ways of insulting and annoying us; even mounting by ladder to the loft above our heads and then jumping upon the boards to shake down soot and dust upon us, which caused them great amusement. Another time having consumed two and a half chickens amongst themselves, one of them came in to offer the remaining half to us, stuck upon the point of his bayonet. Having nothing but dry rice and cucumber we were obliged to swallow our pride and accept the gift thus insolently offered.

The bandit to whom the house belongs is a man named Li who was once a Roman Catholic convert, but was afterwards excommunicated. He seems a little more amenable to good influence than his hardened companions. One day when they had been exceptionally rude to the ladies, I was remonstrating with them and asked them in the Chinese phrase, if they did not know how to "play manners". Instantly one of them answered loudly, "We Red Lanterns have no manners! We do not know how to play manners! We play these things", pulling out his big knife and flourishing it menacingly. The other all laughed loudly, and from henceforth they adopted this as a catchword to annoy us, and used it to us incessantly. "We Red Lanterns have no manners, no manners at all!"

Thursday. August 20. The boy Chang has run away. The other boy Ho is of course looked upon as a prisoner like ourselves, and it would be as much as his life is worth to attempt to get away without their permission. [The boy Chang later admitted that he ran away because he thought that "there was going to be killing", and in that case he thought he was better out of it.] There is no word from our friends, and things look as black as they can be. All are suffering from the lack of food and the unsavoury character of that we have, but "man's extremity is God's opportunity". I have often been encouraged these days with the memory of Livingstone's great word, when the missionary was faced with the great dangers which were likely to threaten him should he attempt the crossing of the Loanda: "I am with you always: it is the word of a gentleman, and that is an end o't!"

Little Audrey is really wonderful; I would never have thought that she could have stood it. Fifteen days of it! Bad food, cramped quarters, no sleep in the daytime, eaten up with fleas, rain and dirt and mud; and yet she always seems bright and happy and full of fun, with never a complaint.

Today a very welcome load reached us, having taken however six days to get here. It contained bread and tinned foods, and best of all a number of letters and newspapers. Amongst the letters was one, which encouraged and helped us all. It was from the Christians of Anhsien church, and it told how of their own accord they were meeting at five o'clock for prayer for us, and went on to offer words of sympathy and faith. Coming at a time when every Chinese newspaper was breathing out anti-foreign sentiments and hatred to the English, it came as a touching illustration of the truth that we are indeed "all one in Christ Jesus".

The record of the next ten days would make a story very similar to the preceding. We were moved again four times, each time to a small farmhouse, and crossed the river by raft twice more. At every move more of our scanty possessions were stolen, till on the day before our release even our blankets were taken from us and we had to pass the night in our day clothes.

On our last night of captivity, though at the time we did not know that the next day would see our release, the scene in our little room was not without an element of humour; and indeed we had many a hearty laugh at the ridiculous spectacle we presented. What remained of our belongings had all been dumped down in one indiscriminate pile in the middle of the floor, and we had painfully to sort them out into individual heaps. Each sat behind his own heap of bedraggled clothing and bartered odds and ends, conducting an exchange and mart with his neighbours, while a couple of hurricane lanterns shed their light on the scene. It was while we were in the midst of this disreputable commerce that a voice broke into the hubbub with, "How's this for Houndesditch market on Saturday night?"

The next morning, August 29, came the happy news that the negotiations for our release had been affected and that we were to start off at once for Mienchuh and liberty. But before we left the place we had to submit to the indignity of a violent and thorough search of our persons and we were relieved of any remaining little articles, which the robbers fancied.

After we had gone not many li we came in sight of a string of coolies coming towards us who proved to be men sent by the officials to carry back any things, which the robbers had allowed us to retain. On this our captors retired with no further ceremony, and we went on a few li when we met with a detachment of militia waiting at this safe distance to receive us. The officer in charge greeted us very courteously, and it was evident that he and all the other officials we met were bent on showing us every courtesy, and upon doing their best to make amends for the unpleasant experience we had been through. Light carrying chairs were provided for all the party, but only the ladies needed to use them. The next day, after having spent the night with them in a small temple, a hundred soldiers escorted us to the summit of a pass from which we could overlook Mienchuh city. Here we waited for an hour for the arrival of the major deputed by the mandarin to escort us into the city. The latter when he arrived with two hundred men, was accompanied by an official representing the mandarin, and by the local head man, who was himself a notorious brigand chief, and as we heard later, had been chiefly instrumental in effecting our release.

When we eventually reached the city we had to go straight to the yamen, ragged and dirty and unkempt as we were. There the mandarin, who had been appointed subsequent to our capture, treated us with great courtesy, and gave a feast to us next day which we shall long remember. This feast we duly returned on the day following, when the mandarin and our military friends came to the hospital where a great repast had been spread. During the course of this, the mandarin gave us a graphic exhibition in pantomime of the cutting off of the bandits' heads, which he assured us would be a matter speedily accomplished if he were left in office. He is a short, stout little man, rapid of speech and movement, and the vehemence of his demonstration made us all laugh.

We now learned that thanks to the energetic representations made by Consul-general Affleck in Chengtu and by the Rev. T.Caldwell in Mienchuh the Chinese authorities had been stirred to real activity in negotiating for our release and that though money had to be paid it was extremely small compared to the ransom usually asked even for one well-to-do captive; and it had been paid by the Chinese authorities themselves under the guarantee of the Chengtu high officials.

After a few days at Mienchuh the party separated to the various stations. On reaching our station of Anhsien we found a great welcome prepared for us, such as we had never before experienced in China. Some li out on the road we were met by the Christians, men and women, and all the school children, the girls in their best flowery dresses and the boys in their clean white and blue uniforms. Here our sedan-chairs, even Audrey's little one, were draped with red silk and we were escorted in procession over the bridge and through the streets, while the crackers exploded with a horrible din, and all the street people ran out to see what was happening. Arriving at the Mission House we found the front gate and the inside courtyard draped with red satin hangings, and on the verandah a table covered with red baize, and chairs likewise with the inevitable clock in the centre. Here there was much more banging of crackers and the speeches of welcome and sympathy began, and had to be duly responded to.

Anyone watching this welcome of Christians, so obviously warm and sincere, would find it hard to believe that for the two months past all the newspapers had been shrieking vituperations at the wicked foreigner, and that the towns were being plastered with the posters of the students' union advocating war with England and the instant expulsion of all the English. For this reason it brought real encouragement to our hearts. There are ties which are too strong even for race prejudice to dissolve.

One result of our experience has been to reveal the vast extent and the exceeding beauty and fertility of a great part of the tract of country, which has been for these many years closed alike to trade and the Gospel by being the private reserve of these hordes of human wolves. Our continual prayer while we were in captivity there was that our experience might in some way be used to open up these valleys to the message of the world's Saviour. In several conversations we found the country people there very friendly and ready to hear more of our message. In those happy days which will come, when the temples where these idolatrous brigands burn incense have given place to Christian Churches, when instead of the reports of rifles will be heard the sound of church bells summoning a God-fearing people to worship, then these green and rich valleys will be indeed an earthly paradise.

V. H. Donnithorne
Anhsien, Sze.
Sept. 1925

NO OTHER NAME!
Has Acts 4:12 Passed its Used-by Date?

Michael Raiter

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In light of the contemporary debate concerning the state of the unevangelized, a previous article examined the ministry and preaching of the Apostle Peter before the Jerusalem Jews (Acts 3-4) and then the God fearers in the home of Cornelius (Acts 10). In particular, we sought to discern the attitude of the apostle to the question of the necessity, or otherwise, of a verbal response to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in order to be saved. Addressing the same questions, this paper continues the investigation focussing this time on the ministry of Paul.

Part 2: The Preaching of Paul

4. Acts 13:38-48 “Ordained to Eternal Life”

Acts 13:13-52 describes the ministry of Paul and Barnabas in Pisidian Antioch, and Luke presents for us his first record of a sermon of Paul's delivered to a mixed audience of both Jews and devout God fearers in the synagogue of that city. Paul begins, in a vein similar to the earlier address by Stephen, by recounting some of the key events in salvation history. Throughout he emphasizes what God had done for Israel, climaxing with the sending of the promised descendant of David, the Saviour Jesus (v.23). Paul tells them that this message of salvation is for both Jews and God fearers. He reminds them of Jesus' death and resurrection proclaiming, as Peter had done earlier, the forgiveness of sins through this man. In words distinctly Pauline, the apostle announces that “by this one everyone who believes is justified” (v.39).

Paul's sermon seems to receive a largely favourable hearing and “many Jews and devout proselytes” (v.43) followed the apostles who taught them further “and urged them to continue in the grace of God” (v.43). What precisely does this last statement mean? In what sense can these 'non Christians' be understood to be “in the grace of God”? Clearly this grace is already something that they know and have accepted, and so it is likely, as I. Howard Marshall observes, “these people already trusted in the grace of God, as they had come to know of it through the Old Testament, and were now being urged to continue in that basic attitude by believing in Jesus as the one through whom God's promises were being brought to fulfilment”. (1)

Luke then records the hostility of the Jews to Paul and his message, provoked by their jealousy at the number of Gentiles whom he seems to attract. As elsewhere in Acts, Paul then announces his intention to go to the Gentiles, so fulfilling the word spoken to Isaiah, that he “may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.” (Is.49:6) The clear implication is that, without the apostle having gone to the Gentiles, they would remain ignorant of this salvation. Finally, we are told of the joyful response of the Gentiles to this news - which, in context, must be the news of salvation - and in this most explicit reference to divine predestination in Acts, Luke records that “as many has had been destined for eternal life became believers” (v.48). This statement clearly places the origin of a person's salvation in the mind and purpose of God, who has enrolled the names of the righteous in the book of life (cf. Dan 12:1). Such a truth does not negate or diminish human responsibility. Earlier we had seen that Luke can record in terms as bold and as unqualified as these here, that “anyone who fears (God) and does what is right is acceptable to him” (10:35).

Before we make some further comments about the question of the unevangelized in the light of this passage, there is one more point of significance to be noted from this account. Following the success of Paul's preaching in Antioch we are told that the Jews “incited the devout women of high standing” (13:50). The term 'devout' simply describes one who worships and serves a god (cf. Acts 19:27), although it is often used positively to describe the God fearers who regularly are sympathetic to Paul's gospel.

However, here certain female God fearers join with the Jews in rejecting and persecuting Paul. It is clear, then, that what is crucial for acceptance before God is not simply faith or worship or a life of religious devotion, even Jewish devotion, but accepting the message or forgiveness, expressed by faith in the name of Jesus.

Divine Predestination and the Destiny of the Unevangelized

As we saw in Acts 4, Paul like Peter affirms that it is through believing on the name of Jesus that people are set free from their sins. Luke then tells us of those who respond to this message and, significantly, identifies them as the ones that God had already sovereignly ordained to eternal life. It is surprising how rarely the doctrine of divine election is mentioned in debates on the destiny of the unevangelized. Some, though by no means all, inclusivists are Arminian. Clark Pinnock has little sympathy for Augustine and those of his theological posterity, who have affirmed the total depravity of mankind, the inability of people to save themselves, and the sovereignty of God expressed in his decision to choose some while allowing the rest to remain in the *massa damnata* of humanity. However, Luke is clear here in his recognition that God does ordain some to salvation, and that this election is individual and not corporate.

Luke also, implicitly, affirms God's sovereignty in his descriptions of how the gospel comes to those he has ordained to eternal life. Acts 8 records the meeting between Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch. Following an angel's instruction Philip is directed to an encounter with this government official who, providentially, is reading Isaiah 53, "the precise portion of Scripture most apt for the discussion of matters messianic".(2) In what has clearly been a divinely engineered meeting, the Ethiopian is baptized. Similarly, in the Cornelius narrative, the centurion receives a vision in which he is instructed to send men to Joppa to find a man called Peter (10:1-8). Before their arrival, Peter himself receives a vision preparing him for their visit (10:9ff). Throughout the entire narrative it is clear that the saving encounter between Peter and Cornelius is one that has been determined and orchestrated by God. God's sovereignty in salvation is an important theme in Acts.

The implications of this truth for mission are obvious. Without minimizing the importance of people making a faith response to the gospel, we are confident that God will bring in his elect. God may well use a variety of means to save his people. He may send to them a messenger, or providentially order events to bring this person under the sound of the gospel. He may use dreams, visions, or nowadays radio broadcasts. No door is too closed, no region too remote, no barrier too impenetrable for the sovereign God to bring the saving message of the gospel of the Lord Jesus to each and every one of those whose names, before the foundation of the world, have been enrolled in the book of life. Just as confidence in divine election energizes the evangelist who knows that his work will be effective because he serves and proclaims the God who can and does regenerate hard hearts, so this same truth gives confidence to the missionary for he/she similarly knows that no power on heaven and earth will prevent God from bringing the gospel to those he has ordained will be saved through the hearing of that gospel.

5. Acts 14:8-17 "These worthless things"

Luke recounts here Paul and Barnabas' apparently brief ministry in Lystra. It is significant because Luke gives us here his first record of a speech by Paul to a purely Gentile audience. The themes Paul introduces here are spelt out in more detail in the account of his address to a similar audience in Athens, recorded three chapters later (17:16ff). Luke describes Paul's address to the crowd in Lystra, prompted by their assumption that the gods, Zeus and Hermes, have come amongst them in human form. Three points of particular note from Paul's address bear on the question of the uniqueness of Jesus. Firstly, Paul identifies the gods of these people as "worthless things" (*mataios*). The use of the word *mataios* is deliberate on the author's part as it is the word frequently used by the LXX in those contexts in the Old Testament where pagan idolatry is spoken of and condemned. It denotes different aspects of nothingness, worthlessness, and unreality. In short, it denotes the various ways in which human beings can resist the reality of God in his revelation and his claims on them.(3) Indeed, so empty is the worship of any god but YHWH, that sometimes the names of such idols is simply translated by the LXX as *mataios* (e.g. Lev 17:7, Isa. 2:20, 2 Chron 11:15). Understood against this background, it is a strongly condemnatory and pejorative term, highlighting the culpable folly of that which is a denial of the truth about God. However, the people of Lystra would hardly be aware of such allusions, having no awareness

of the Scriptures. As Barrett points out, the term *mataios* in non-Biblical Greek does not have the sense of a false god, but of the empty talk of foolish persons.(4) This gives Paul's words a certain ambiguity. At one level, they can be read as a critique of the idolatry of the people of Lystra, while on another level it may simply be interpreted as Paul's criticism of the foolishness of the Lystrans in ascribing divinity to mere men like the apostles who stand before them. As we will see, both here and later in Paul's address before the Areopagus, such *double entendres* were a deliberate rhetorical ploy of the apostle.

Secondly, Paul is recorded in the following verses as announcing: "In past generations he allowed all the nations to follow their own ways" (14:16). These words foreshadow what Paul will later declare to the pagan Athenians that "God has overlooked the times of human ignorance" (17:30). These words have often been interpreted as Paul expressing both his, and God's, sympathetic tolerance for those pagans who, through no fault of their own, have worshipped idols in ignorance.(5) However, given what Paul has just said about the Lystrans' vain idolatry, this surely does not reflect the real attitude of the apostle. Further, we must not underestimate the degree of horror and consternation that must have gripped these Jewish Christian believers at finding themselves honoured and worshipped as gods! The Decalogue had as its very first commandment the uncompromising prohibition of any such practice. Understood in this light the statement is not to be taken as an expression of divine indifference to, or permissibility of, false worship. Rather, it speaks of God's judgment upon these nations in withholding his mercy from them on account of their idolatry. This is consistent with what Paul clearly affirms in Romans 1:19ff where, again speaking of the empty vanity of people's idolatrous thinking, he concludes that, given the clarity of the witness of creation to God's eternal power and deity, those who fashion idols rather than worshipping the true and living God are "without excuse" (1:20).

The apostles then assert that, "yet he has not left himself without a witness in doing good - giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, and filling you with food and your hearts with joy" (14:17). Yet again, this can be interpreted positively, as a sign of God's unceasing goodness and grace, even towards idolatrous pagans. Equally, though, it can be seen as further evidence of their culpability. While God has not left himself without a witness in his gracious acts of providence, still the people of Lystra typify the response of men and women to this revelation: they worship worthless things rather than the true God. Indeed, the immediate response of the people to Paul's preaching should be read as bearing out all Paul has said about their culpable ignorance, and it only serves to confirm the depths of their sinful folly: "Even with these words they scarcely restrained the crowds from offering sacrifice to them" (v.18). Having heard the truth about God, they continue to worship the creature rather than the Creator.

6. Acts 17:16-31 "how extremely religious"

If one thing is agreed upon about Paul's address before the Areopagus it is that this is one of the most important passages in all of the Acts of the Apostle. Most would affirm that in it Luke presents us with a model of how Paul addressed a particular kind of pagan audience. It is a key passage in debates about the uniqueness of Jesus, and we will examine what light Paul's speech has to cast on this issue. In particular, this passage can be used to address five important questions.

Firstly, what was Paul's attitude to the religiosity of the Athenians?

In brief, Paul's dialogue with the pagan philosophers of Athens raises the question: Was Paul's attitude to their undeniable religious zeal essentially positive or negative? While, as we will see, there is deliberate ambiguity in the words Paul uses in speaking to the Athenians, from the outset Luke makes clear to the reader Paul's attitude when this veritable forest of idols confronts him. Luke records "that Paul was deeply distressed (*paroxyno*) to see that the city was full of idols" (v.16). *Paroxyno* is a strong verb meaning to stir up sharp emotions (cf. Acts 15:39). In the LXX it is used to refer to God's extreme anger at the idolatry of the chosen people (e.g. Deut 9:18; Ps 106:29; Hos 8:5). John Stott rightly captures the emotions of the apostle when he writes, "... (this pain) was due rather to his abhorrence of idolatry, which aroused within him deep stirrings of jealousy for the Name of God, as he saw human beings so depraved as to be giving to idols the honour and glory which were due to the one, living and true God alone".(6)

Luke's account of Paul's speech begins in v.22, and he opens his address by describing the Athenians as "extremely religious" (v.22). All scholars note that this term, *deisidaimon* can be interpreted either pejoratively or positively, and end up deciding for one option or the other. However, in a very insightful

article Mark D. Given has argued that throughout this entire speech Paul has made deliberate use of the *double entendre*, "words and phrases which have one set of associations for insiders in the Christian movement, such as the orator, and another for outsiders, such as the orates of this speech."(7) This is the best explanation of the character and intention of the speech, which from beginning to end is marked by such ambiguities. Indeed, it is even difficult to determine whether or not the tone of the whole encounter between Paul and the Athenians is cordial or hostile. However, when we appreciate that Paul's words can be understood on two levels, with almost two different kinds of hearers in view, then this explains the tension.

Upon first hearing him, some Athenians dismissed Paul as a "babbler" (*spermologos*), while others accused him of introducing a new *daimonion*. Given Paul's strong disapproval of the idolatry of the Athenians and the hostility of his dialogue partners, we can see why "he simultaneously compliments and insults". (8) In the light of this, therefore, we do not have to choose between a positive or negative reading of *deisidaimon*. On one level, with the reader in mind, it carries its most common meaning of superstition, reflecting the attitude of Theophrastus who described such a person as "one who, if anything dirty touches him, will wash his hands, sprinkle himself with water from the holy fountain, and walk about all day with his mouth full of bay leaves."(9) However, the Athenians could equally interpret this expression as a commendation of their religious devotion. There can be little doubt which interpretation reflects the attitude of the apostle; his initial revulsion at their idolatry betrayed that. But his careful selection of a deliberately ambiguous word disarms the prejudiced Athenians and leaves them, at worst, confused, and perhaps even disposed to hear more of him.

Secondly, do the pagan Athenians already worship God?

As Paul begins his address to the Athenians, he draws their attention to an altar erected for an 'unknown (*agnostos*) god'. Paul then says, "What you, therefore, worship as unknown (*agnoeo*), this I proclaim to you" (v.23). Once again, as Given points out, the term *agnoeo* can be interpreted more positively, implying a straightforward, non-culpable lack of knowledge, or more negatively, a culpable moral failure of acting ignorantly in regard to what is right.(10)

John Sanders reads far too much into Paul's words when he argues that Paul acknowledges that God has been at work amongst these people and "that some are worshipping the true God, though without full knowledge".(11) Luke has already given sufficient indications of the apostle's attitude towards the religion of the Athenians. Even this 'unknown god' is itself an idol. We cannot be sure what Paul actually saw, but it was some sort of statue, perhaps of a man. The inscription did not bear witness to the fact that some in that city had some experiential knowledge of the true and living God and were only waiting for someone to come to them and reveal to them his name and the complete details of his character. To the contrary, it was a very public testimony to their almost total ignorance regarding the truth about God. In the midst of the smorgasbord of gods, there is an acknowledgment by some of the existence of another god, but at the same time an admission of the fact that they are not able to make any meaningful statement about this god, apart from the fact that he exists. This is precisely the thing that Paul affirms about men and women in Romans 1. Clearly, these people are not worshipping God. Indeed, the best light one can shed on their religious devotion is that some amongst them know enough to know that they know virtually nothing!

Thirdly, are the pagan Athenians genuinely seeking to know God?

Paul goes on to proclaim the truth about this God, about whose existence the Athenians have some inkling. In brief, he tells them of God's work as creator, and (implicitly) of the absurdity of thinking that such a God could be contained in human constructions. Paul then affirms the essential unity of mankind, noting that he has made all the nations from one man, and he has done this with a two-fold purpose, that they may dwell upon earth and that they may seek him (v.27).

Paul acknowledges that God has created men and women so that they might know him and relate to him. Has this desire of God been fulfilled or thwarted? Once again, Paul's answer is ambiguous. Barrett notes, "Confidence in the possibility of successful seeking is expressed at the end of the next clause by the use of the verb *heurisko*, uncertainty by the...optative mood."(12). At one level, to his audience, Paul is not expressing outright the futility of their religious practices or their religious strivings. Yet, at another

level, the perceptive reader picks up the clear implication that such foolish idolatry is culpable, and all the more so since the God who men and women reject is, in fact, very near to us. The apostle characterizes pagans' search for God as a "groping". It is the word one would use for the searching hands of a blind man as he seeks to lay hold of that which, while it may be near, is out of sight and therefore unattainable. Ben Witherington helpfully comments on this verse,

The overall effect of this verse is to highlight the dilemma and irony of the human situation. Though God is omnipresent, and so not far from any person, ironically human beings are stumbling around in the dark trying to find God. When one is blind, even an object right in front of one's face can be missed. The sentence does not encourage us to think the speaker believes that the finding of the true God is actually going on, apart from divine revelation. To the contrary, the true God remains unknown apart from such revelation.(13)

It is unlikely that Paul's Athenian audience would have discerned this blanket rejection of their religious quest, although the message would not have escaped the sympathetic readers of the account.

Fourthly, what are "the times of ignorance"?

To what degree are pagans culpable for their failure to worship the true God, given that they have not been the recipients of special revelation? The apostle goes on to address this question, and describes the age up until the present as "the times of ignorance", and he makes the point that until now, the time in which Christ has been revealed, God has overlooked the idolatry of the nations because they have been predicated on their spiritual ignorance. Indeed, if one were to select a word, which sums up the character of Athenian religion it would have to be 'ignorance'. The Athenians worship an "unknown god" and such worship is "ignorant" and here God has overlooked the times of "ignorance".

The expression, "times of ignorance", has been variously understood. Yet again, scholars have divided themselves into two camps. The majority view has been that Paul is claiming that, while he has not excused idolatry, nevertheless God has withheld his judgment against people who committed this sin because they acted in ignorance. However, now that the full revelation has come and this revelation is being broadcast throughout all the earth, those who persist in idolatry are considered, to use Old Testament categories, to be sinning with a high hand. The other interpretation views these words less generously. Calvin, for example, rejects any interpretation which suggests that, when confronted with sin, God "did wink, being unwilling to punish it." He wrote,

...men went astray so long therefore, because God did not reach out his hand from heaven, that he might bring them back again into the way. It may seem a strange thing that men endued with reason and judgment should err so grossly and filthily in a most weighty matter. But Paul's meaning is, that men do never make an end of erring, until God do help them. And now he assigneth no other cause why he did not redress this any sooner, save only his good pleasure.(14)

In short, this view sees the statement as a testimony to the just judgment of God, who has withheld from sinful people a saving revelation about himself and his purposes. Once again, Given has helped us to see that this ambiguity which has for so long perplexed and divided scholars, is in fact a deliberate rhetorical technique on the part of the prudent apostle. The word, "overlook", a *hapax legomenon* in the New Testament, can have a neutral meaning, which implies that God recognized that these people have acted in ignorance and, therefore, does not hold them blameworthy. Or, the word can also be used negatively, with the meaning, 'to despise'. Again, the interpretation is not either/or, but both/and. The readers of Luke's account would know that God has never turned a blind eye to sin. This is Paul's testimony in Romans 1, that God has been continually revealing his wrath against all ungodliness and wickedness of men. Further, as given notes,

Since Stephen's speech explicitly affirms that God punishes idolatry, we can hardly expect another reliable orator in Acts to contradict this affirmation. The oratees at the Areopagus are left guessing whether or not God has overlooked or despised their conduct in the past, although the immediate following call for "change of mind/repentance" leaves no doubt as to what his attitude will be from now on.(15)

Fifthly, what contribution does this passage make to our understanding of the uniqueness of Jesus?

Paul's address concludes with the command that the hearers should repent because the day of the final reckoning has now been set, and it is soon. What is more, he has also appointed the one who will be the judge of all things. Further, he has given to people *pistis* by raising this man from the dead. *Pistis* elsewhere in the New Testament refers to faith; nowhere else does it have the meaning 'proof'. Nevertheless, virtually all scholars assume that the meaning here must be 'proof', and given the flow of the argument, this is the more natural reading. The hearers would have understood that Paul was saying that this man's resurrection is the evidence God has given to substantiate that he is the one appointed to be judge. However, as Given persuasively points out, this same resurrection when heard by righteous people provides faith.(16) The significant point, though, to note for our discussion is Paul's affirmation that Jesus is unique in that he alone is qualified to be the judge, having been risen from the dead. Further, he is to be the judge of all people. He will judge all idolaters and all those who have been the objects of human reverence or worship.

In summary, we see here Paul's carefully chosen method of dialoguing with a potentially hostile pagan audience. While his words are ambiguous and thinly disguised double entendres, his actual attitude to the religious beliefs and practices of pagans is unequivocal. While he acknowledges that they have some inkling of the truth about God, this 'sneaking suspicion' is hidden beneath a veil of ignorance. And, to continue the metaphor, the unbeliever is left groping blindly and helplessly, "while their efforts at worship of the true God are distortions, inadequate, shots fired in the dark".(17)

Paul, the Athenians, and Contemporary Spin Doctors

Those who argue for an inclusivist position emphasize the length and breadth of the love of God, not just for his church, but also for all his creation. They are well aware of how awful it is to be cut off from a relationship with God and, appropriately and understandably, long to see few people in this dreadful predicament. However, they are faced, as we all are, with the undeniable reality that comparatively few people have heard, and responded to, a presentation of the gospel. Consequently, they are left with the hope that many of those who are unreached with the gospel (and, indeed, even some of those who have heard the gospel yet because of cultural constraints were unable to *truly* hear and understand) will nevertheless be saved. In order to sustain such a position and remain a biblical Christian it has been necessary for such writers to try and find in the Scriptures examples, both of pagans who were acceptable to God, and statements which indicate God's sympathy with, and even admiration of, some aspects of pagan religion.

Typical of such an approach is Ken Gnanakan who calls for a re-examination of traditional exclusivist views of salvation "within the climate that prevails".(18) This climate is, of course, the reality of living amongst sincere adherents of other religions. Their presence in our midst suggests that we "may need to go beyond the narrow limits" of our previous understandings. Gnanakan points to statements in the New Testament, which could be interpreted as reflecting a positive attitude towards other religious traditions. Acts 17 looms large in Gnanakan's argument. He writes, of "Paul's attempts to establish a continuity between the gospel and the worship of the Athenians", and "Paul was able to commend Athenian worship". We have seen, though, that this is to seriously misunderstand Paul's true attitude. The apostle is appropriately contemptuous of the ignorance and idolatry that surrounds him. He is justifiably offended by it, as any right thinking worshipper of the true God ought to be.

In short, when one examines the speeches in Acts, where the apostles interact with people of other faiths, one sees a consistently critical attitude. Paul's denouncement of the worship of both the Lystrans and the Athenians as worthless and ignorant, and being worthy of condemnation, is of a piece with the testimony of all of Scripture. The call to all people, irrespective of their religious commitment, is to repent for God has fixed a day when he will judge the world in righteousness.

7. Acts 26:18 "from the power of Satan"

Finally, and briefly, a few remarks need to be made about Paul's testimony before Herod Agrippa II, as recorded in Acts 26. Paul, not for the first time, describes his background in Judaism, his terrorizing of the fledgling Christian church, and his call and conversion on the Damascus Road. There Jesus revealed

himself to Paul, and announced that he would send him to the Gentiles "to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light, and the power of Satan to God, so that they might receive forgiveness of sins and a place amongst those who are sanctified by faith in me".

'Light' in Luke-Acts is a metaphor for salvation (cf. 13:47), and those who dwell in darkness are spiritually and morally cut off from God. In other words, they remain under the power of Satan. There is a malevolent force which holds those outside of Christ in bondage. Behind rampant human evil lies a diabolical evil being.

By such words is Paul suggesting that Gentiles cannot be held responsible for their spiritual predicament? Is Paul implying that pagans, "through no fault of their own", find themselves in this adverse spiritual condition? Paul's next words empty such suggestions of any weight or validity. Paul is sent to announce to those who have never heard the gospel a word of forgiveness and membership of God's holy community. Consistent with the speeches throughout Acts, the apostle is to call on all people, without distinction, to repent and do deeds consistent with repentance (26:20). It is clear that these Gentiles who sit in spiritual darkness and captivity are culpably sinful. The call to repentance and a dramatic change of behaviour, and the promise of forgiveness verify what is the consistent biblical testimony on the condition of each man and woman: that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

Indeed, it is through no fault of their own that they have not heard of the Saviour, but each person is fully responsible for their life of sin. The apostolic gospel is much more than a call to change allegiance: stop worshipping this god and now worship the true one. It is also a command to stop living lives of disobedience, and start performing deeds, which are acceptable in God's sight. Certainly, this is only possible for those who have been forgiven and sanctified, but this does not negate the justice of God in bringing into judgment all people on account of the evil they have done. Of only one man could it be said that he suffered under divine wrath "through no fault of his own". The Lord Jesus willingly bore the faults of guilty people.

CONCLUSION

The apostles believed that Jesus is the only Lord and Saviour of the world, and that God sends people to proclaim this truth so that he might be believed on, and they might be saved. Paul saw other religions as marked by darkness and folly. The call to all adherents of these religions was to repent and live lives of obedience. I would maintain that attempts to read an inclusivist understanding of salvation into the book of Acts must be an imposition on the text, not a true reading from the text. Such attempts have usually been marked by superficial exegesis, and broad sweeping generalizations. In the end, you may want to argue that the apostle Paul's words need to be reinterpreted in the light of the (supposed) new context. You may even simply disagree with the apostle's analysis of the character of religion. However, in the light of the text, all the evidence points to the fact that Paul and the other apostles had no doubts whatsoever that salvation was to be known and experienced through the preaching and hearing of the word of Christ.

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7. Mark D. Given, 'Not Either/Or But Both/And in Paul's Areopagus Speech', *Biblical Interpretation 3* (1995), p.364.
8. Given, 'Not Either/Or', p.365.
9. Barrett, *Acts*, p. 835.

10. Given, 'Not Either/Or', p.366.
11. Sanders, 'Inclusivism', p.41.
12. Barrett, *Acts*, p.844.
13. Witherington, *Acts*, p.529.
14. Calvin, *Acts*, p.173.
15. Given, 'Not Either/Or', p.368.
16. Given, 'Not Either/Or'. p.369. One need only think of Cornelius as an example of one for whom the announcement of Jesus' resurrection works faith (Acts 10:34ff).
17. Witherington, *Acts*, p.534.
18. Ken Gnanakan, 'Are There Disciples of Christ outside the Church?' in *No Other Gods Before Me: Evangelicals and the Challenge of World Religions*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001, p.179.

Book Review

Christians in China: A.D.600 to 2000
by
Jean-Pierre Charbonnier
Translated by M.N.L. Couve de Murville
Published by: Ignatius Press, San Francisco

Reviewed by Paul Rule, La Trobe University and the San Francisco and Macau Ricci Institutes.

Jean Charbonnier is well known to those interested in the Catholic Church in China today and in the past. A member of the Missions Etrangères de Paris working out of Singapore and Paris he has been a frequent visitor to China, one fruit of which is the *Guide to the Catholic Church in China* (China Catholic Communication, Singapore, frequently updated). He also is a historian of note with a doctorate in modern Chinese history and works to his credit such as *La Chine sans muraille: héritage culturel et modernité* (Fayard, 1988).

Charbonnier's major work on the history of Christianity in China, is *Histoire des chrétiens de Chine* (Desclée, 1992, new edition Les Indes Savantes, 2002) which now becomes available to English-speaking readers in an excellent translation by Charbonnier's friend the former Archbishop of Birmingham, Couve de Murville. It is not a comprehensive history which regrettably does not yet exist although the still in progress *Chinese Face of Jesus Christ* (Monumenta Serica, 2002- , 3 volumes so far) will come close when completed. As the title suggests, it does not purport to present Chinese Christianity but a series of studies of significant Christians. What the title does not indicate however is that, for the modern period, perhaps understandably but unfortunately, it almost exclusively focuses on Catholic Christians.

Christians in China opens not with the apocryphal mission of the apostle Saint Thomas but the definitely historical Syrian Christians of seventh century China. The first of its five major sections then moves on through a discussion of their Chinese writings, which have recently achieved false notoriety as the *Jesus Sutras*, to the Eastern and Western Christians of the Mongol period (13th. century).

Most of the book covers the modern period from 1680 to the present. The individuals chosen for study are sometimes well known (Matteo Ricci, Cardinal Gong Pinmei) but often probably unfamiliar to the general reader: that valiant lady Candida Xu, 1607-1680; Luo Wenzao, 1616-1691 who was appointed first Chinese Bishop of Nanjing in 1677; Father Andrew Li who ministered to Sichuan Catholics in the hard years 1732-1774; Ma Xiangbo the pioneer of Catholic universities in China; and Vincent Lebbe (1879-1940) who fought against fierce opposition for a Chinese rather than a European mission church.

The final section, 'Death and Resurrection' is a balanced and perceptive survey of the difficult relationship between 'official' and 'underground' Catholics in China and their gradual rapprochement. Charbonnier writes as a participant as well as observer of this process and it is to be hoped that in his Paris semi-retirement he is recording his memoirs of these events.

There is due attention at the end to the Chinese Catholics of Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan and beyond. The last fifty pages of tables and bibliographies would be extremely useful to anyone wishing to follow up the tantalizing glimpses of peoples and events in the text.

Book Review

Kouduo richao: Li Jiubiao's Diary of Oral Admonitions, A Late Ming Christian Journal.

Translated with introduction and notes by Erik Zürcher, 2 Vols. (including Chinese text)

Published by Monumenta Serica Institute, Sankt Augustin, 2007).

Reviewed by Kai-tai Tony Wong

Tony Wong is a historian, theologian and pastor of a Chinese Church shortly to take up a teaching position in a Hong Kong theological college.

Kouduo richao (henceforth *KDRC*), a journal compiled by Fujian Chinese Christians, Li Jiubiao and others, consists of the teachings of the Jesuit missionaries to the Christian community on different occasions and the dialogues between them. Its contents cover a period of ten years (from 3 March 1630 to 4 July 1640). This rare Chinese book was republished in 2002 from the copy in the Jesuit Archives in Rome (in Nicolas Standaert and Adrian Dudink eds., *Chinese Christian Texts from the Roman Archives of the Society of Jesus*, vol 7, (Taipei: Taipei Ricci Institute, 2002). The book reviewed is a translation by the late Erik Zürcher that also includes a resourceful introduction, annotations and notes.

KDRC provides us with primary sources of information of the life of Chinese Christian in Fujian province and a glimpse into the wider Chinese Church in the late Ming. The major concerns of these Chinese Christians of Fujian include the Trinity (p.364), the Incarnation (pp.296-297), apotheosised deities in Chinese folk cults (p280), ancestral rituals (pp532-533) and concubinage (pp345-346). In addition, it occasionally refers to Christians who lived in other provinces. The teachings of the Jesuit missionaries, Giulio Aleni (the "scholar from the West") and others in *KDRC* also portray the theological landscape in sixteenth and seventeenth century Europe. This enables readers to place the Chinese Church of the late Ming within the wider Church history context.

When the *KDRC* was published in the late Ming, its intended readers and the people who were involved in the discussions recorded in it were Chinese educated in traditional Confucianism. Modern readers with limited Chinese proficiency may find it difficult to comprehend. Zürcher's translation certainly enhances its readability and its availability to Western readers and researchers who are interested in this area. Zürcher's introduction, annotations and notes provide readers with sources from the Chinese Christian community, Chinese culture and Europe in the said period. They are highly useful and insightful to modern researchers. For instance, in Aleni's comment on the Buddhist and Daoist ways of gaining merit for the benefit of a deceased parent, readers may not be able to recognise the differences to the practice of Christians praying for the dead if Zürcher's annotation is not consulted (p228). The efforts to attach the text of every entry to its heading (the headings of entries were compiled as table of contents in the original document) and to assign numbers to each entry with cross references to the Chinese version make *KDRC* more accessible to modern readers. The index and glossary compiled by Zürcher proves to be effective tools for quick search and referencing. In addition, the bibliography functions as a navigation guide to future reading and research. The Chinese original text in Vol 2 also allows readers to verify the English translation against the original text if needed.

This translation of *KDRC* is certainly a masterpiece in many aspects. Improvements to several minor typographical errors will refine it even further. (e.g. p142). In an annotation to II. 6, Zürcher suggested that the concubine of Wang Zheng, a prominent Confucian Christian in Shaanxi province, had died before Wang confessed his adulterous sin (p295). However, Wang in his confession vowed to abstain from further sexual relationship with his concubine and to treat her as a friend, which does not suggest her early death. (v. Wang Zheng, *Qiqing jiezue qigao* in *Tianzhujiao dongchuan wenxian sanbian*, vol 2, (Taipei, 1998), p837. In fact, she seems to have outlived Wang. In entry I.20, Zürcher translated the phrase, "*wu zu*" (literally meaning "without sin") as "free from sin" (p220), which I consider misleading. "Innocent" seems to be a choice more appropriate to the context.

Overall, Zürcher's translation of *KDRC* should be fascinating to general readers of Chinese church history and an invaluable resource for researchers in this area. This is one of those rare occasions when we can hear the voices of the Chinese Christians rather than just those of the missionaries.

A History of the Orthodox Church in China, Korea and Japan

by Kevin Baker

2006 Lewiston, New York, Edwin Mellen Press, 2006.

Reviewed by Cyril Hally

When I was lecturing in Mission history, influenced by the great Latourette's statement that the history of the Orthodox in China can be ignored, I took his advice. Histories of Ricci in Beijing mentioned, more or less in passing that there were Orthodox in the city. It was only with Palmer's *The Jesus Sutras, Rediscovering the Lost Scrolls of Daoist Christianity*, 2000 that interest in the origins of Christianity in China was rekindled. The Xian Stone erected in 781 records the meeting in 635 of the Chinese Emperor of the Tang dynasty with a Persian monk, Bishop Aluyben (Abraham) of the Eastern Church, leader of a delegation of seventy monks and scholars. At imperial expense a monastery was constructed for the monks. By 650 the Church in China was organised in a hierarchical diocesan structure. It was persecuted in 845 along with Buddhists, by Imperial decree.

This book describes the history of the Orthodox Church in China and its Eastern Church forebears. I was particularly interested in the Church in the East. The members called themselves the Holy Apostolic Assyrian Church of the East rather than Nestorians. Around the year 900 there were more Christians east of than west of Damascus! Mingana in the Early Spread of Christianity in Central Asia and the Far East (p.14) claims the Church of the East to be "the greatest missionary Church that the world has ever produced". Baghdad was a major centre. It encouraged locals to take Orders and leadership positions in the Church.

Baker also provides a history of Jews in China. A Jewish community in Kaifeng (an ancient capital of China) in the 15th century told Europeans traders that their country had been founded in 74AD, a date linked to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD and the dispersal of the Jewish people. There may have been Christians among them travelling along the overland 'silk route' as distinguished from the sea 'porcelain' route to China. There was a Jewish synagogue in Beijing when Ricci arrived. A Jewish visiting rabbi thought the Jesuits must have been Jews because they believed in one God!

Baker wrote this book to correct the preconceptions about eastern Christian influences that obscure historical fact and affect the understanding that ordinary Christians have about early Christianity in China, also Korea and Japan. The story is absorbing, particularly due to the skill of the author.

Dr Kevin Baker has spent seven years lecturing in universities in Wuhan, Shanghai, Chengdu, Guiyang, Changai and Urumqi. He is also involved in online courses at ANU and online Masters Degree for La Trobe and Canberra and intensives for Masters degrees of Manchester and Leeds Universities in the UK.

Kate James. (2006). *Women of the Gobi*. Melbourne. Pluto Press.

Review by Leng Te.

Leng Te is a student at Tabor College and singer/songwriter (www.lengte.com).

What compels someone to follow in the footsteps of three missionary women's travels, when they themselves have given up the faith that those very women dedicated their lives to?

It is this question which hangs above Kate James' travel tale, *Women of the Gobi*. Inspired by the writings of three early 20th Century missionary women who left the comforts of English home life for the Silk Road, James set out on a mission of her own. Beginning in central China and heading along the old trading routes into central Asia, James aimed to explore the unique sites the women had described so vividly. What was James in search of? Adventure? A mission? Or perhaps she had hoped to reconnect with the faith of her childhood: James, after all, is an MK (Missionary Kid). She was raised in India with a brother, whom we meet in the book. Somewhere in the journey from adolescence to adulthood, Christian faith appears to have become increasingly insignificant in James' life, to the point where it registers as informing her upbringing, but little else. In her journey through China we are occasionally let in on her views of faith and religion. James discovers that China is a hotbed for Christianity.

As a travel book, *Women of the Gobi* is often charming, sometimes funny and consistently well written. Her descriptions of remote areas of China brought back a flood of memories from my own travels, engaging the smells, the tastes, the wonder, the fears and the experience of awkwardness from being a foreigner with limited local language skills. The characters she meets are intriguing and her experiences with them are stories worth telling and retelling. James is frank and honest and in so doing invites the reader to share her amazement or amusement (and sometimes both!).

But for all James' frankness, there remains a screen between writer and reader. Perhaps this is appropriate, even necessary, to keep the story focussed as a travel commentary. Certainly this is James' right, to share as much of herself as she is comfortable. But it is as if we are given a basket of conversation appetisers without ever digging into the main meal.

That said, this is a book I will pass on to friends. After all, a good quality appetiser can lead to so much more.

¹ The author would like to thank the guest editor, Paul Rule, for his advice and encouragement, and Peter Barry of the Holy Spirit Study Centre (Hong Kong) and a Chinese priest for their help in sourcing materials. As is usual, the errors all belong to the author.

² Li Maosen (1990): "Moral Education in the People's Republic of China" *Journal of Moral Education*, vol 19, no 3, October 1990, p.162.

³ Mao Zedong (1957): "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People" Speech delivered at the Eleventh Session of the Supreme State Conference 27 February 1957. Committee for Editing and Publishing the Works of Chairman Mao Tsetung, Central Committee of the Communist Party of China: *Selected Works of Mao Tsetung*, 1977, vol 5, (Peking, Foreign Languages Press) p. 412.

⁴ 龚平 Gong Ping (2004): "毛泽东的德治思想与新时期干部道德教育" ["Mao Zedong's Thought on Ethical Rule and the Moral Training of Cadres in the New Period"] 《毛泽东思想研究》 *Mao Zedong Thought Study* (May 2004) vol 21, no 3, p. 138.

⁵ 夏伟东 (主编): 《中国共产党思想道德建设史略》, 2006, 山东人民出版社, 济南。

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- ⁶ Li Zehou: *A Study on Marxism in China*, 1993, Joint Publishing Co, Hong Kong, p.73.
- ⁷ Ci Jiwei: *Dialectic of the Chinese Revolution: From Utopianism to Hedonism*, 1994, Stanford University Press, Stanford Cal., pp.115-116.
- ⁸ Peter Barry MM, "Building Up A Spiritual Civilization", *Tripod*, vol XVI (no 91) 1996, p.21.
- ⁹ David Wen-wei Chang (1988): *China under Deng Xiaoping – Political and Economic Reform*, Basingstoke, MacMillan, 1988, p. 264.
- ¹⁰ Quoted in D E MacInnis (1989) (ed): *Religion in China Today*, New York, Orbis, 1989, p.420.
- ¹¹ Hu Yaobang (1982): "Create a New Situation in All Fields of Socialist Modernization" (1 September 1982); Part III: "Strive to Build a High Level of socialist Spiritual Civilization" in Research Department of Party Literature (1991): *Major Documents of the Peoples Republic of China*, Beijing, Foreign Languages Press, 1991, p 288.
- ¹² Hu Yaobang (1982): "Create a New Situation in All Fields of Socialist Modernization" (1 September 1982) Part III: "Strive to Build a High Level of Socialist Spiritual Civilization" in Research Department of Party Literature (1991): *Major Documents of the Peoples Republic of China*, Beijing, Foreign Languages Press, 1991, p 293.
- ¹³ Yu G-Y (1981): "Socialist Construction and Lifestyles, Values, and Human Development" *Social Sciences in China* 1981, vol II, no 2 p.18. Yu emphasizes various ethical relationships as part of our lifestyle.
- ¹⁴ See www.cctv.com/program/ddgc/01/index.shtml (visited 01 July 2005).
- ¹⁵ See www.godpp.gov.cn (visited 23 April 2006)
- ¹⁶ 刘清平: "儒家伦理与社会公德——论儒家伦理的深店悖论", 《哲学研究》2004, 第一期,37-41 页 [Liu Qingping: "Confucian Ethic and Social Morality" *Philosophical Researches*, 2004, no 1, pp 37-41].
- ¹⁷ Sergio Ticozzi PIME: "Building a Spiritual Civilization in China", *Tripod*, vol XVI (no 91), January-February 1996, p17.
- ¹⁸ Sun Jinping: "Creating a Nation Wide Ethics: the Case of China", *Global Virtue Ethics Review*, 2(2) 2000 pp. 159-174.
- ¹⁹ Chen Xinhan: "The Moral 'Landslide' of China during the Period of Social Transformation", *China Cross Currents*, January 2008, vol 5 no 1, p124.
- ²⁰ 《公民道德建设实施纲要》 (Implementation Outline on Ethic Building for Citizens) in 中共中央国务院 (2004) The Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party and the State Council): 《中共中央国务院关于进一步加强和改进未成年人思想道德建设的若干意见: 关联版》 (Certain opinions of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party and the State Council concerning the further strengthening and improvement of ideological and ethical construction for minors: Related edition) , 北京, 法律出版社, Beijing, Law Press, 2004, p 72.
- ²¹ This Project is described on the website of the China National Children's Centre, www.ccc.org.cn/7/ERTONG/XIAOGM/Indexx.htm (visited 23 April 2006)
- ²² anon: 《宗教事务条例》, 2005, 北京, 宗教文化出版社, p.42

²³ The 2002 Party Constitution may be found at <http://china.org.cn/english/features/49109.htm> (visited 23 February 2008). This paragraph was amended at the 17th Party Congress and the revised 2007 Constitution may be found at http://news.xinhuanet.com/enhenglish/2007-10/25/content_6944738.htm (visited 23 February 2008)

²⁴ 尤俊意 (You Junyi) (2005): “坚持以人体理念实现多元利益和谐统一” (“Persist in taking the human for basis, and realize harmonious unity of multi-interests”) 《政治与法律》 (*Politics and Law*) 2005, June, pp. 3-8; and 严颂 (Yan Song) (2005): “论和谐社会与法治” (On Harmonious Society and the Rule of Law) 《政治与法律》 (*Politics and Law*) 2005, June, pp. 9-16.

²⁵ Roderick O'Brien: “Data on Religion in China”, *Tripod*, vol XXVII (no 147), p.28

²⁶ anon (2006): “A Harmonious Society”, *Sunday Examiner*, 25 June 2006 page 11.

²⁷ 中国天主教爱国会、中国天主教主教团 (编): 《中国天主教独立自主自办教会教育教材 (试用本)》, 2002, 北京, 宗教文化出版社, 254

²⁸ anon: “紧密团结信教群众, 共同致力于建设有中国特色社会主义的伟大事业 (社论)” *People's Daily Online*, 13 December 2001; <http://www.people.com.cn/GB/paper464/4948/531464.html> (visited 29 January 2008)

²⁹ Wang Xiaochao: “Raising Civic Morality Among Chinese Citizens in the New Century: The Role of Christian Values”, *Chinese Cross Currents*, 2004 (Jan-Mar), vol 1 no 1, p 36.

³⁰ Ding Guangxin (K H Ting) (1998): “Greetings to the Sixth National Chinese Christian Conference”, *Chinese Theological Review*, vol 12, 1998, p 5.

³¹ 中国天主教爱国会、中国天主教主教团 (编): 《中国天主教独立自主自办教会教育教材 (试用本)》, 2002, 北京, 宗教文化出版社, 253

³² Peter Barry MM, “Building up a Spiritual Civilization”, *Tripod*, vol XVI (no 91) 1996, p.24.

³³ *Faith Reporter*: “A Conference on Religion and Ethics” (25-27 February 2005, Shijiazhuang) www.chinacatholic.org/English/news/2005530151829.html (visited 15 January 2008) see also www.chinacatholic.org/fics/xfhg4/news1.htm (visited 20 January 2008)

³⁴ Fides-Mancini: “Cina: Seminario Sulla Dottrina Sociale Della Chiesa”, 10.11.2005 18.34.26

³⁵ 李磊: “宗教信仰与道德建设”, 赵建敏 (主编): 《天主教研究论辑》, 2004, 宗教文化出版社, 北京, 192

³⁶ 杨晓亭: “浅谈在当代中国文化领域内的基督宗教伦理” 《融》 2005, 43 页

³⁷ 王晓朝: “论儒教伦理与季度宗教伦理融合的进路”, 赵建敏 (主编): 《天主教研究论辑》, 2004, 宗教文化出版社, 北京, 216

³⁸ 赵建敏: “天主教社会理论与中国现代文化的交合点”, <http://old.ccccn.org/Article/Teo/cul/200602/20060223200635.html> (visited 20 January 2008)

³⁹ 王中田: 天主教伦理思想发展的世纪转折—以孔汉思的思想为中心“赵建敏 (主编): 《天主教研究论辑》, 2004, 宗教文化出版社, 北京, 226

⁴⁰ Roderick O'Brien: "Beifang Jinde: Catholic Social Service Centre", 2000, *Tripod* vol XX no 118 pp57-64

⁴¹ The government seeks religious funding for its "Hope" programme for schools in remote areas, for relief works, and for support of national minorities. See Shanghai Ethnic and Religious Affairs Administration: *Brief Introduction about Religions in Shanghai*, undated, publisher not listed, pp.8, 24, and 30.

⁴² 王晓德: "天主教伦理与拉丁美洲不发达的文化根源—兼与新教伦理对美国发展作用的比较"《拉丁美洲研究》2006 第 4 期:
<http://scholar.ilib.cn/A-ldmzyj200604002.html>

⁴³ for an English translation see www.danwei.org/business/churches_and_the_market_econom.php (16 July 2006, visited 20 January 2008)

⁴⁴ Beifang Gucheng: "Spread the Good News in Ningbo"
www.chinacatholic.org/English/news/2006417155915.htm (visited 16 January 2008)

⁴⁵ 王康: "在杭州高校大学生宗教信仰问题的现状及对策"《当代宗教研究》2007 年第 1 期; 22-31, 7 页。

⁴⁶ The Catholic Church in Beijing operates an evening school for adults. See Jean Charbonnier: *Guide to the Catholic Church in China 2004*, 2004, China Catholic Communications, Singapore, p.55; and Roderick O'Brien: "A Catholic School in China:", *Catholic School Studies*, July 1987, vol 60 no 1, pp 37,40.

⁴⁷ Chen Jie: "Sociopolitical Attitudes of the Masses and Leaders in the Chinese Village: Attitude Convergence and Constraint", *Journal of Contemporary China*, (2005) 14(44) August pp 445-464, especially 454 and 456-7.

⁴⁸ You Xilin: Christianity's Dual Meaning in the Modernisation of China: In Commemoration of the 450th anniversary of the Death of St Francis Xavier", *Chinese Cross Currents*, January 2004, vol 1 no 1, p.34 (Although You uses 基督教, which is the usual Chinese term for Protestant Christianity, the context makes it clear that he includes both Catholic and Protestant Christianity.)