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Examples of the Role of Benedictines in University Education: Preparing the Way for European Universities (6th-12th centuries); Fu Jen University in Peking (1925); and Preparations for the Re-opening of Fu Jen University in Taiwan as Seen by a Benedictine (1961)

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Fu Jen Catholic University, when it was in Beijing and now when it is in Taiwan, is in the eight-century long tradition of universities that began during the Middle Ages. Today I will speak about the Benedictines, medieval universities and Fu Jen University, but a somewhat similar report could be done in terms of the Dominicans, Franciscans, Jesuits and the Society of Divine Word, each of which has had their special impact on university education and each of which has had a relationship with the Fu Jen University re-established in Taiwan. The Dominicans and Franciscans are important for the development of universities beginning in the thirteenth century. In the sixteenth century, the Jesuits became the school masters of Europe. And higher education in Asia in the twentieth century owes much to the work of the Society of the Divine Word. Fu Jen University is probably one of the few universities in the world which has so many religious orders in their background and history; and it should be a fine basis from which Fu Jen University can become a world-class university.

In this presentation, I will discuss three topics: the role Benedictine monasteries played in preparing the way for the establishment of universities during the Middle Ages; what has been written recently about the Benedictine approach to setting up Fu Jen University in Beijing in the 1920s; and the contribution of Benedictines to the re-opening of Fu Jen University in Taiwan.

PART ONE: PREPARING THE WAY FOR EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES (6th-12th centuries)

The first universities in Europe appeared during the beginning of the thirteenth century: Bologna, Paris, Montpellier, and Oxford (Verger 45). Education in the Roman Empire had lasted until the fifth century when "Germanic invasions" led to the collapse of the "imperial schools" (Cobban *Medieval Universities* 5-6). Much has indeed been written about Medieval universities: "No period in the history of universities has been more intensely studied than the Middle Ages" (Rüegg 3). Moreover, the creation of universities is "one of the great achievements of the Middle Ages" (Lewis vii). There are, however, approximately seven centuries between the end of education in the Roman Empire and the beginning of universities. What happened during those centuries has not been studied as extensively as education in the centuries before and after thi-s period. It was of course during these centuries that Benedictine monasticism began and developed, having so great an influence that five of these centuries (the sixth through tenth) have been called the "Benedictine centuries," during which, at various places in Western Europe, and at times in the face of great turmoil, there was a Pax Benedictina, just as in the Roman Empire there was a Pax Romana.

The Benedictine contribution to education is somewhat ironic in so far as St. Benedict (480-547) as a young man was disgusted with education in Rome and fled to a life of solitude. According to his biography by Gregory the Great (540-604),

> He [Benedict] was born in the province of Nursia, of honorable parentage, and brought up at Rome in the study of humanity. As much as he saw many by reason of such learning fall to dissolute and lewd life, he drew back his foot, which he had as it were now set forth into the world, lest, entering too far in acquaintance with it, he likewise might have fallen into that dangerous and godless gulf.
>
> Therefore, giving over his book, and forsaking his father's house and wealth, with a resolute mind only to serve God, he sought for some place, where he might attain to the desire of his holy purpose. In this way he departed, instructed with learned ignorance, and furnished with unlearned wisdom. (Dialogues, Book II, Prologue)

Benedict, having experienced Roman education, fled in disgust so as to save his soul, and began a life of solitude. Eventually, disciples gathered around him and small monasteries were formed.

Some years later there appeared the Rule of St. Benedict, a rule which regulated monastic life. From the Rule it is clear that reading was an important part of the life of a monk. During meals, there was no talking, rather all the monks listened to a book being read (Chapter 38). After supper, the monks came together to listen to readings from the "Conferences [of Cassian] or the Lives of the Fathers" (Chapter 42). And, a part of each day was set aside for personal reading (Chapter 48). Moreover, during Lent, each monk was given a book to read (Chapter 48). Finally, Sundays were for reading (Chapter 48). Clearly there were books in a monastery and a monk had to be able to read. Although the Rule mentions a number of places in a monastery (the oratory, the refectory, the sleeping quarters etc.), no mention is made of a library as such. Monks also were able to write, though the writing equipment was common not personal property and would be provided by the abbot (Chapters 33, 56). Letters could only be written with permission of the abbot (Chapter 54). All of this suggests that monks were educated to the extent that they could read or write, or, if they were not able to, they would be taught. Moreover, that children were given to the monastery (Chapter 59) to be raised there to become monks also is another indication that there would have been teaching done within a monastery.

When Theodoric the Great (454-526), the king of the Ostrogoths ruled Italy, he had Boethius (c. 480-525) as head of his government, but then executed him, at which time Cassiodorus (Flavius Magnus Aurelius Cassiodorus Senator) (c. 485-c.585) was given the position held by Boethius. Cassiodorus lived approximately the same time as Benedict, but, whereas Benedict's life was spent in a monastery, Cassiodorus, first spent much time in government service. After his retirement from the government, Cassiodorus eventually founded a monastery called Vivarium on his estate in southern Italy (Jackson 91). Before this, Cassiodorus had hoped to find a Christian school in Rome (Jackson 90). At Vivarium, he composed a book entitled *Institutiones* in which the first book presented "teachers of a former age," that is, the great commentators on the Bible, and the second "on the arts and disciplines of liberal studies" (107). Among the Latin and Greek Fathers of the Church, there was divided opinion as to what extent secular learning could be used by the Christian. Cassiodorus presents his stance as follows:

> I offer the following advice: since both in the Bible and in the most learned commmentaries we understand a great deal through figures of speech, through definitions, through grammar, rhetoric, dialectic, arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy, it is not irrelevant to touch briefly on the

teachings of secular teachers . . ." (159) Book I, XXVII

Secular teaching therefore can assist with a deeper understanding of the Bible.

In the *Rule* of Benedict, a portion of each day is given to manual labor. For Cassiodorus, however, it is the copying of manuscripts that he sees as the best work for a monk to do: "Still, I have to admit that of all the tasks that can be achieved among you by physical labour, what pleases me most (not perhaps unjustifiably) is the work of the scribes, if they write correctly" (163). He also mentions bookbinders, lamps for use at night, and clocks. (165).

With Cassiodorus, therefore, we see clearly the *scriptorium* as a part of a monastery. Leclerqc has explained in detail what a *scriptorium* is:

> This word refers to the whole group who were engaged in bookmaking: the head of the workshop, the copyists, the correctors, rubricators, painters, illuminators and binders, for a number of monks took part in the making of every book. The task of the copyist was an authentic form of asceticism. (153)

It was with Cassiodorus that we have the beginning of the copying of manuscripts as an important monastic work: "The products of the scriptorium managed by Cassiodorus inspired admiration all over Europe, and imitation, especially by the Benedictines" (Jackson 93-94).

Besides the importance of Benedict and Cassiodorus for European monasticism in the sixth century, it was also the time when St. Columba (521-597) took Irish monasticism to Scotland, and St. Augustine of Canterbury (early 6th century-604) Roman monasticism to England by the arrangement of Gregory the Great. By the seventh and eighth centuries, however, there were changes in monasticism:

> From being a small building housing a dozen or twenty men 'the world forgetting, by the world forgot', the monastery became a large complex built around one or more open courts and containing, besides a large church and the necessary accommodation for the monks, their novices and their infirm and elderly members, offices for the administration and exploitation of large estates, guest-houses and rooms for servants and labourers. In its most extensive form, as in the monasteries of southern Germany and Burgundy, a monastery became a miniature civic centre, with almonry,

> hospital, school and halls for meetings of its dependents and civil and criminal lawsuits." (Knowles 38-39)

In the seventh century numerous monasteries were founded in what is today France, such as Fluery (631), which lasted until the French Revolution and then was re-established following World War II. In England, monasteries were also established, such as the twin foundation of Wearmouth and Jarrow (674), which was the monastery of Bede the Venerable (672/673-735). Almost his entire life this great scholar lived in his monastery, as he explains in this description he wrote of his life:

> When I was seven years of age I was, by the care of kinsmen, put into the charge of the reverend abbot Benedict [Biscop] and then of Ceolfrith, to be educated. From then on I have spent all my life in this monastery, applying myself entirely to the study of Scriptures; and amid the observance of the discipline of the rule and the daily task of singing in the church, it has always been my delight to learn or teach or to write." (qtd. Ward 2)

The monastic libraries at this twin foundation had the Biblical commentaries of "Augustine, Ambrose, Jerome and Gregory." (Ward 8), classical grammatical works, early Christian poets, "parts of Pliny's Natural History, and Church histories (Ward 9). Using this material, Bede was able to write his own Biblical commentaries, his history of the Church in England, and his poetry. Although he was suspicious of classical works, he nonetheless "converted the secular learning of the ancient world into a new mode, suitable for monks and priests . . ." (Ward 21). His monastery and many other English monasteries came to end with the Viking invasions at the end of the ninth century.

Time does not permit any discussion of the monasteries founded in Germany by St. Boniface (c. 680-755) and other Benedictine English missionaries, such as Echternach (698), which used the insular and Roman half uncial script, and Fulda (744), which preserved classical works such as the *Annals* of Tacitus. During the reign of Charlemagne (c. 742-814) (King of the Franks from 768; Roman emperor 800-814) the English Benedictine Alcuin (d. 804) played a central role in the Carolingian Renaissance, which stressed monasteries were to be centers of learning. The years 850-950 were a "dark period" for Germany and France, and "monasteries decayed or were secularised" (Knowles 48). But with the founding of the abbey of Cluny in 909, there are the beginnings of what will be an immensely influential abbey in France that will eventually have hundreds of other monasteries under it. Cluny

was fortunate to have five great abbots from 927 to 1157. With the reforms initiated under Pope Gregory VII (pope 1073-1085), monks from Cluny became "cardinals, legates and bishops, and for almost fifty years (1073-1119) the papal throne was occupied by six monks, of whom at least three were Cluniacs" (Knowles 51).

Other important events related to monasticism in the eleventh century are Saint Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109) who was from the monastery of Bec in Normandy, and the resurgence of Monte Cassino as an intellectual center under Abbot Desiderius (abbot 1058 - 1087). Anselm was one of the founders of Scholasticism which became the dominant theology in Medieval universities. Monte Cassino, now with over 200 monks, produced numerous manuscripts with the Beneventan script and also was the place where Arabic texts were being translated (Cobban *Medieval Universities* 41).

In the twelfth century, the tension between monasticism and the teachers from the newly arising cathedral schools is seen in the intellectual conflicts between Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153), the Cistercians abbot who led a reform of the Benedictines and who was at loggerheads with Peter Abelard (1079-1149), the brilliant teacher from Paris. This century has also been called a Renaissance of Western learning. The years between approximately 1050 and 1200 have been called the "pre-university era" (Cobban *Medieval Universities* 14)

It was against this background that universities began to appear at the beginning of the thirteenth century. Jacques Verger has stressed how these universities were much influenced by what came before them:

> [I]t is important to bear in mind that, for the most part, medieval universities were structured in terms of pedagogic conceptions and classifications of knowledge which the 12th-century schools had bequeathed to them and which were often of a much more antient provenance, dating from the Carolingian reformers (Alcuin), from the church fathers (St. Augustine, Saint Jerome), and from theorists of antiquity (Quintilian, Varro, Boethisu, Cassiodorus, etc.), who had themselves drawn their inspiration from Aristotle and Cicero. (41).

He further explains how common to both periods was the use of Latin (43), which had been preserved by the monasteries, and the use of scholasticism (44) which had been developed by philosophers such as Anselm.

As mentioned at the beginning of this presentation, it was in the opening years of the thirteenth century that there is the founding of the universities of Bologna, Paris, Montpellier, and Oxford. I would like to conclude this part of my presentation with a discussion of monasticism and the founding of Oxford. Verger has pointed out that there is no clear reason why a university should have been placed at Oxford, a "small market-town, which was not even the seat of a bishop" (52). He does suggest, however, that "Oxford had long had several ecclesiastical establishments, which may have provided a point of departure." (52). These "ecclesiastical establisments" would include St Frideswide's Monastery (Augustinian Canons,1122), Oseney Abbey (Augustinian Canons, 1129) , and Godstow (Benedictine nuns, 1113). It is possible, then, that Oxford University was located where it now is because that area already had centers of learning in the monasteries in the area.

Cobban, in his *English University Life*, has explained another monastic influence on Oxford:

> In common with many continental universities, Oxford and Cambridge had inherited a remnant of monastic ethos that for centuries had so permeated education. . . . The monastic legacy found expression in the communal mode of living prescribed for the academic halls of Oxford, the hostels of Cambridge and for the colleges of both universities. Monastic influence is also manifest in the denial of bodily pleasures that is inherent in so many of the university and collegiate statutory prohibitions relating to non-academic activities. (2)

The life in common at the new universities is indeed a contribution from monastic life. Cobban's use, however, of the expression "the denial of bodily pleasures" is perhaps a negative way of expressing the Benedictine monastic ideal, which is more one of moderation. Indeed, does not Benedict allow his monks to have each day their bottle of wine (Chapter 40)?

PART II: THE BENEDICTINES AND FU JEN UNIVERSITY IN PEKING

Over the years some scholarly attention written in English has been given to the establishment of Fu Jen University in Peking in the 1920s. Paul A. Varg has a chapter about Fu Jen in his book *Missionaries, Chinese and Diplomats* (1958). Wu Xiaoxin, now of the Ricci Institute in San Francisco, wrote a dissertation finished in 1993 entitled "A Case Study of the Catholic University of Peking during the Benedictine Period (1927-1933)." I've also written two essays; one was for a conference at Fu Jen University and was about the early letters of Hildebrand Brandsetter, OSB., the first Prior of the Benedictines who went to Peking; and the other, for a conference on Christian universities in China sponsored by the Ricci Institute in Paris, about the educational philosophy of the American Benedictines who founded Fu Jen in the 1920s. Recently John Shujie Chen, a Chinese priest who until this year was the head of the National Catholic Seminary in Beijing published his dissertation in 2004 in an over 200-page book form. It is entitled *The Rise and Fall of Fu Jen University, Beijing.* Father Chen did his doctoral studies at Boston College.

What I would like to do for this part of my presentation is to consider what John Chen has to say about the Benedictine years of the Beijing Fu Jen University (1925-1933) in his book. His study represents the work of a Mainlander Chinese scholar and priest who, as far as I can tell, has never has direct contact with the Taiwan Fu Jen University. His views then should not be influenced by the Fu Jen University as it now stands in Taiwan. Furthermore, he grew up on the Mainland so he would have some familiarity with the educational system there.

I should mention at the very beginning, however, I am confused by the title of the book: *The Rise and Fall of Fu Jen University, Beijing.* Fu Jen University did indeed "rise," but I do not think there was a "fall." Rather it was "fell," in the sense of a tree being cut down, by the new regime.

My remarks on his book will be based on the following categories: the good points of book, new information in the book, at least from my perspective; the prejudice of Chen, his criticism and praise of the Benedictines

First, the good points. The first one is the survey and analysis it does of what has already been written about Fu Jen University (31-35). Here he expresses a number of criticisms that I would agree with. To date, I have not seen anywhere else

the extended discussion Chen gives to the finances, curriculum, faculty, student activities and the political situation of the Benedictine years (1925-1933) as well as the time when the Society of the Divine Word was in charge (1933-1950). Almost each of these topics has a chapter that goes into much detail, first treating the Benedictine period and then that of the Society of the Divine Word:

Chapter Four: "Finance and Structural Development of the University"
Chapter Five: "Development: Curriculum, Faculty and Student Growth"
Chapter Six: "Extra-curricular Activities"

In Chapter Seven, "Political Engtanglements," as well as elsewhere in the book, Chen discusses at length Fu Jen University in its "cultural and political environment." (36), something that has not been done before. For anyone interested in these topics this book is a good place to begin.

Some of the things new for me in the book include a Roman decision is in the 1932 as to how the Benedictines should handle the financial problems they were facing. According to Chen,

> The Holy Father did not want the university to be closed after only a short few years of operation. Therefore, he declared on 28 July 1932 that the support of the university should be an all-American Benedictine affair of both the Swiss American and American Cassinese Congregations." (75)

St. Vincent Archabbey belongs to the American Cassinese Congregation, which is comprised of the monasteries founded by Boniface Wimmer (1809-1887) and their daughter houses. The complexity of the structure of the Benedictines can be seen in the fact that there are twenty-one congregations of male Benedictines. The other large congregation of Benedictines in the United States is the Swiss American Congregation that was founded by monasteries in Switzerland. It is hard enough for monasteries in the same congregation to co-operate. The co-operation of two Benedictine congregations is even more difficult since the congregation head does not have much power over the monasteries in the congregation. At any rate, as far as I know, the Swiss American Congregation was not able to assist financially the Fu Jen project.

Chen also provides very usual information about the students at Fu Jen. University, For instance he presents a chart with the number of Catholic students

(112). He is also able to give figures such as in 1930 there was awaiting list of 2,000 students who wanted to enroll in Fu Jen (114). He also explains much about the degree to which sports were stressed and how this came about (126). I knew of course that in the United States there is the Big Ten for intercollegiate athletic competition but I did not know that Beijing had its Big Five (Yenching, Tsinghua, Beijing Normal, Peking University and Fu Jen) (128).

Chen also gives me a new perspective on the warlords in Beijing and northern China at the time of the founding of Fu Jen University (157) and of the three student strikes that occurred in 1928 and 1929 (158). Another point he makes that I had not quite understood before was the lack of much influence by Fu Jen University on higher education in China: "It is rather difficult to discuss the role of Fu Ren in the context of Chinese higher education. As a young university, Fu Ren did not influence Chinese higher education as the Protestant ones did" (186). After it closed, however, with its faculty members being sent to other universities in Beijing, it did have a great influence on other universities in Beijing.

Finally, in terms of Fu Jen's influence, Chen notes: "In one instance, its influence was manifested during the Cultural Revolution of the 1960's when governmental officials who were Fu Ren graduates refused to persecute intellectuals and Catholic clergy on moral grounds" (192). He gives no documentation for this influence but it would certainly be interesting to know more about it.

In reading the book, it became obvious that Chen was prejudiced against the French and their missionary work in China, as is seen when he describes the Benedictine interaction with the French bishop of Beijing (51-52) Then, in a number of places in the book he makes comments such as "The French looked down on the Chinese just as they looked down on the Vatican" (183). I wonder if this prejudice came from the seminary education in China.

Chen is very generous in his praise of the Benedictine work at Fu Jen but let us first look at the few criticisms he makes of the Benedictines. First, he indicates that the original curriculum the Benedictines designed for the University was just like that in the United States:

> When they [the Benedictines] first designed this curriculum, they did not know much about the cultural and political situation in China . . . . The school and curriculum they envisioned were just like any typical Catholic

> university or any Christian university in the West, with the inclusion of a school of theology. (87)

It was only with the help of Vincent Ying that a new and better curriculum was designed (89).

Chen also shows that the Benedictines teaching at Fu Jen were not as well educated as the members of the Society of the Divine Word, most of whom had doctoral degress. In 1931, the ten Benedictines teaching there mainly had MA degrees (104)

The two strongest criticisms that Chen gives is, first, that the Benedictines "failed to cooperate in financing Fu Ren University" (181). This criticism is indeed correct, but it's simply not in the nature of one Benedictine monastery with its near complete autonomy to help another one. The second major criticism is that the Benedictines and the members of the Society of the Divine Word "were unfriendly toward each other" in 1933 during the time of transition (182). It remains to be studied exactly how "unfriendly" the two groups were, but I suspect this might even be too soft a word for what happened then.

One of the major praises that Chen has for the Benedictines, and this is often repeated in the book, is that they "decided to focus on the studies of Chinese literature and classics" (177). He is also impressed with the willingness of the Benedictines to work with non-Benedictines"

> The Benedictines determined not only [to] associate themselves with the Europeans but also with members of secular priests and other religious orders, as well as prominent Chinese littérateurs and scholars so that the university would be true to its name as an universal entity [gong jiao]. (55)

Chen also mentions as praiseworthy the care that the Benedictines gave to the property on which the University was built, a Prince's palace (57) and the fine faculty that was developed. The faculty had "diversity," Chinese and non-Chinese, Europeans and Americans (100). It was also "cosmopolitan" (99). As for the quality of the faculty it was "outstanding" (106). He also argues that the Benedictines, and later the Society of the Divine Word, were not at all imperialistic (178-179). In his remarks Chen speaks of the Benedictines in general. Further

study will probably reveal which Benedictines in particular were responsible for which successes, or failures. The one Benedictine that Chen singles out for praise is Archabbot Aurelius, who was responsible for the Benedictines undertaking this mission: "The most striking thing is the devotion and zeal of this Benedictine abbot from Saint Vincent in making the future university to be the best in China" (53). Overall, Chen indicates that from 1925 until 1933 "the achievements the Benedictine Fathers made were tremendous" (67). And he further states: "In the year of 1935, Fu Ren was almost on an equal footing with other universities [in Beijng]" (117)

Chen refers to some matters that probably need further explanation. For instance, he thinks the Benedictines were chosen to open the University "because of the nature of their stability as monks and their wisdom as intellectuals and scholars" (60). I suspect there might have been others reasons as well.
Also in preparing his study, Chen mentions his use of the archives at St. Vincent Archabbey, St. John's Abbey, and the Sisters of Saint Benedict in Minnesota. More material, however, about the Benedictine years at Fu Jen can be found at Newark Abbey and St. Procopius outside of Chicago (13).

In the conclusion to his book, Chen marks four areas for future research: "the transition from the Benedictine Fathers to the Divine Word Fathers certainly deserves more research" (190); the Women's College (191), St. Albert's College for Chinese secular priests (191) and a study of the Catholic students at Fu Jen (192). I could not agree more with his recommendations.

PART III: PREPARATIONS FOR THE RE-OPENING OF FU JEN UNIVERSITY AS SEEN BY A BENEDICTINE

This part of my presentation is based on the materials in the Archives of St. Vincent Archabbey, which was involved in a small way in the re-opening of Fu Jen University in the 1960s. The Archives have the following:

Letters between then Archbishop Paul Yu-Pin and Denis Strittmatter, O.S.B, the Archabbot of St. Vincent.
Letters between Archabbot Denis and Fr. Hugh Wilt, OSB, a St. Vincent monk invited

to go to Taiwan in 1960 to help Archbishop Yu-Pin.
A ten-page typed manuscript by Fr. Hugh entitled "The Fu Jen Catholic University of China" describing the founding of Fu Jen in Beijing and its continuance in Taipei.
Minutes of the council of seniors and of the large chapter of St. Vincent Archabbey

First, a brief explanation about "council of seniors" and "large chapter" or "chapter meeting." Chapter 3 of the Rule of Benedict is entitled "Summoning the brothers for Counsel," and explains how the abbot is to call the community together to discuss major matters: "As often as anything important is to be done in the monastery, the abbot shall call the whole community together and himself explain what the business is; and after hearing the advice of the brothers, let him ponder it and follow what he judges the wiser course" (179). This meeting is called a "chapter" and those of your familiar with European monasteries will know they often have a "chapter house" where such meetings are to be held. For other matters that need discussion, the abbot should meet with the seniors of the monastery: "If less important business of the monastery is to be transacted, he [the Abbot] shall take counsel with the seniors only . . ." (181). This group is now called "council of seniors" and half the members are elected by the community and half appointed by the abbot..

St. Vincent Archabbey and most Benedictine monasteries throughout the world follow these practices. At St. Vincent, the chapter meetings are usually every two months or so and the "counsel of seniors" meets once a month. Now, however, in most cases decisions of the chapter must be followed by the abbot. Among other things, the "council of seniors" goes over matters to be presented to the chapter.

This year we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the setting up of Fu Jen University in Taipei. Fr. Hugh Wilt, O.S. B. (1904-1987) was one of the Benedictines who had worked at Fu Jen University in Beijing during the Benedictine years. At the time he was a cleric, and his ordination to the priesthood took place there too. Upon his return to St. Vincent he studied history at Columbia University and then taught it at St. Vincent College for many years. In the 1960s, he was also Prior of St. Vincent Archabbey, which means he was second in command. He was also in Taipei when Fu Jen Catholic University was re-opened. In this presentation I want to talk about his presence in Taiwan the year before the re-opening of the University and what he reported to Archabbot Denis about the preparations for having once again a Fu Jen University. As the University was about to open, the Benedictines were also asked to run a research institute of history.

On October 2, 1961, Fr. Hugh wrote to Archabbot Denis about the opening of Fu Jen University in Taipei:

> After many months of doubts and fears the Catholic University finally got under way. With appropriate ceremonies we opened last Wednesday with full governmental approval. For this year, at least, we will strictly limit all activities to the graduate school and accept only a token number of students. The Archbishop [Yu-Pin] is most anxious to have the school approved and registered so that officially for the record we can claim to be functioning again.

First to be noted here is Archbishop Yu-Pin's concern to "have the school approved and registered." As we will see, the government allowed Fu Jen University simply to be "re-opened' on Taiwan so the University did not have to go through the paperwork of registering as a new university.

Fr. Hugh also mentions that Board of Trustees meeting that was held the same day as the opening as going "smoothly," which apparently was not always the case. And he goes on to add:

> A few days later, however, friction broke out between the Religious Orders and the Archbishop over the land question in Kaohsiung, the southern section of the University. They will be solved in time but building is being held up.

More about this problem of the university's location will be discussed later, but for now it should be pointed out that, as with the establishment of almost any large educational undertaking, there were many controversies and debates, or much "friction," to use Fr. Hugh's word, involved in the setting up of Fu Jen, one type of which was between the religious orders involved in the project and Archbishop Yu-Pin..

Finally, Fr. Hugh explains that Archbishop Yu-Pin has become ill and cannot leave for New York as originally scheduled after the opening.. The toll on the Archbishop in working to bring about this day must have been very great.

Now allow me to go over the letters and other material in the St. Vincent Archives that deal with the events leading up to the re-opening of Fu Jen in

September of 1961. After the Chinese Communists first took control of the Chinese Mainland, Archbishop Paul Yu-Pin was in Washington, D.C. and soon established contact with the Benedictines at St. Vincent Archabbey. On March 25, 1950, he wrote a letter from the Institute of Chinese Culture in Washington, asking if he cold spend Holy Week at St. Vincent Archabbey with his secretary Fr. John Niu and another secretary named Bernard Yoh. The coadjutor Archabbot at the time, Denis Strittmatter, O.S.B, warmly responded with a letter of welcome. St. Vincent at this time was a monastery with over 200 monks. Then, in November of 1951, Archbishop Yu-Pin wrote a letter of condolences to Archabbot Denis on the death of his predecessor Archabbot Alfred Koch, saying:

> Archabbot Koch was one of the pioneers of the Catholic University of Peiping. He was the second Chancellor of that University from 1932 to 1934. His departure for his eternal reward at this moment when the Catholic University in Peiping as well as the whole Catholic Church in China are under one of the most severe and systematical anti-religious persecution in China's history, is indeed a heavy blow to us Chinese. Although we well realize that he will not cease praying for China in Heaven, but his physical absence at this crucial moment is felt by all of us. (Letter of November 16, 1951)

Those of you familiar with the early history of Fu Jen University in Beijing will know that Archabbot Alfred was elected abbot after the death of Archabbot Aurelius, who had worked so hard to establish Fu Jen. One of the reasons why Archabbot Alfred, a former S.V.D, was elected archabbot was because he was strongly in favor of St. Vincent withdrawing from Fu Jen University given the tremendous financial problems following the Great American Depression. Needless to say, Archbishop Yu Pin, being the great diplomat that he is, mentions none of this and only has good things to say about Archabbot Alfred.

Nothing more happens about Fu Jen University and St. Vincent Archabbey until the end of the 1950s. On October 28, 1958 John XXIII was elected pope. He had great interest in the missions as can be seen in his second encyclical *Princeps Pastorum* that was promulgated on November 28, 1959, and emphasized the need of Catholics to be mission-oriented. It was also about this time when he decided that Fu Jen University should be re-opened. Fr. Hugh has recorded what happened to him, then Prior at St. Vincent, at that time:

> In November 1959 Bishop Hugh Lamb of Greensburg, Pa., [the diocese where St. Vincent Archabbey is] having received a copy of the general letter sent from Rome to the American Hierarchy [about setting up Fu Jen University in Taiwan], sent the letter to me with a footnote—"perhaps you will be interested in this". Frankly, I was not, for I still considered the time inopportune since all Asia is deeply restless and unsettled third of the world—and will probably remain so for fully fifty years or so. . . . Some six or seven weeks later Archabbot Denis Strittmatter received a copy of the same letter from Rome which he read to the Senior or Small Chapter and asked for the comments of the members. I again remarked that I thought it was too early since the matter had only recently been decided upon. I did suggest, however, that the Archabbey should not flatly reject the letter. I recommended that the Archabbot write the Cardinal [Tien] that we were pleased to learn of the reopening of Fu Jen and would be interested in future developments. Thomas Cardinal Tien, who had meanwhile been appointed Chancellor and Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the University, responded at once with the assurance that Archbishop Paul Yu Pin would visit the Archabbey shortly. (6)

Fr Hugh also gives an interesting account as to why Fu Jen University was to be opened in Taiwan:

> When the mainland fell to the Communists hope persisted for many months that the various governmental and missionary forces might possibly return in the near future. Unfortunately this false hope led to a period of inaction both in Taiwan where large numbers of refuges fled, as well as in other areas. Yet the alumni and friends of Fu Jen continued their appeals for the reopening of the University in Taiwan. By 1955 and 1956 numerous appeals had been received in Rome and at the headquarters of the Divine Word Society. The leaders of the Church in Taiwan likewise became concerned as years passed without any leaders being trained for the future. (5)

Most of us are aware of the work of the Fu Jen alumni in re-opening Fu Jen University but I at least did not know of the concern of the leaders of the Church that the University was to be a place to train future Church leaders.

On December 10, 1959, Archbishop Yu-Pin writes to Archabbot Denis

explaining his appointment of as the rector magnificus of the Fu-Jen Catholic University to be "restored" in Taiwan. He furthers states:

> I am most interested in having your Order to participate in its restoration in Taiwan. There are seven religious orders and societies which have been invited to take part in the university, and the Society of [the] Divine Word is one of them and the assignment given to and accepted by the SVD is a College of Sciences.
>
> To your Order we propose either a School of Music, or a Department of Journalism and Literature. To build a separate School or a College will cost about $100,000 while to assume the responsibility of a Department in the College of Arts will cost $20,000 to build it. You are given priority of choice in the above mentioned three subjects, that is Music, Journalism, and Literature. Of course, when you assume the expense of building a part of the university, you will have also to send an equivalent personnels to teach in it. (Letter of December 10, 1959)

Archbishop Yu-Pin lost no time in inviting the Benedictines to participate in the new Fu Jen University. His proposal, however, is directed to the Benedictine Order. As many of you know the Benedictines, unlike the Jesuits and other orders, are not directed by a superior general at the top with full authority to make decisions. Rather, each Benedictine monastery is fully independent and makes its own decisions. Archabbot Denis was in charge of St. Vincent and also President of the congregation of Benedictines to which it belongs, but he could only be directly involved with decisions related to St. Vincent. This organizational structure of the Benedictines was one of the major problems related to their running the Fu Jen in Beijing.

Besides this letter to Archabbot Denis, Archbishop Yu-Pin also wrote to Fr. Gregory Schramm, O.S.B., a monk of St. Mary's Abbey in Newark, N.J., who was one of the Benedictines who had served at Fu Jen University in Beijing when it was still run by the Benedictines. Fr. Gregory was in contact with Archbishop Yu-Pin when the latter was in the States. On March 11, 1960, Archbishop Yu-Pin wrote him and first mentions that Fr. Gregory had "played a very important role in the establishment of the Department of Education therein . . .":

Then the Archbishop continues:

> You are hereby appointed to be my personal representative, with full power, to negotiate with any or all the Benedictine Abbey for the purpose of inviting them to establish and administer the College of Education for the Fu Jen Catholic University." (Letter of March 11, 1960)

Fr. Gregory responds with a long list of questions (Letter of March 29) and says the matter will be brought up at the "Chicago Meeting of Abbots, April 21, 1960." What happened to this proposal can be seen in the minutes for the Council of Seniors on May 27, 1960:

> The formation of a Catholic University in Formosa was discussed. It had previously been mentioned that American Benedictines would be asked to take over the school of Education. (cf. Oct. 28, 1959) However, since then Cardinal Tien has advised us that the School of Education must be under the control of natives, although individual departments may take in foreigners. The Cardinal's letter suggested that St. Procopius Abbey take charge of the College of Agriculture. He also suggested that it would be more feasible and more advantageous for the Chinese if we would operate a School of Western Studies.

What is to be noticed here is that we now have Cardinal Tien taking part in planning for the organization of the new Fu Jen University, and it seems that he and Archbishop Yu-Pin are not sufficiently discussing matters before making offers to religious orders to participate in the undertaking. These minutes are also the first mention of the Benedictines taking on "a School of Western Studies."

In September 1960, because the Archbishop was not able to schedule a visit to St. Vincent, Archabbot Denis and Fr.Hugh go to New York to have supper with him and talk about Fu Jen University: Here is Fr. Hugh's account of this meeting:

> Quite suddenly in early September Abbot Denis asked me to be ready to leave for New York at short notice. A few days later I flew to New York with him to have dinner with Archbishop Yu Pin. . . . Later that evening, with Father Gregory [Schramm], a few lay friends and about six Chinese priests, the Archabbot and I had dinner with Archbishop Yu Pin at the Manhattan Hotel.
>
> The Archbishop, Archabbot Denis and I, sat at the top of the table and

> for fully two hours we discussed every possible angle and problem to be met in the reopening of Fu Jen. Everything seemed quite uncertain and indefinite. . . .
>
> Early the following morning I dropped in to see Abbot Denis and when he asked for my impressions I told him very frankly that I felt the whole question was still too nebulous. And when I said, "I think the Archbishop seemed quite confused and uncertain. He didn't seem to have any clear ideas as to when and how the entire project is to be started". Archabbot Denis' response to my remark ended the discussion. He said—"That is quite true. He is quite lost and confused and that is why he wants you to go with him as early as possible."

I'm not sure if "quite confused and uncertain" are accurate ways to describe the Archbishop's condition then, but that was at least the impression given. Apparently during the dinner Archbishop Yu-Pin must have taken Abbot Denis aside and asked for the help of Fr. Hugh. If his intention was to get Benedictine help, this was certainly a good way of going about doing it.

Two weeks after the dinner in New York, Abbot Denis presented the matter to large chapter. The minutes read:

> The business presented to the Chapter was the Catholic University of Formosa. Cardinal Tien and Archbishop Paul Yu-Pin [have] been designated by Rome to form this University. The Benedictines were offered the school of "Western Studies," i.e. History, Literature and modern language. This offer was first presented to the American Cassinese Congregation but the Archbishop felt that a single abbey could operate the school more efficiently. The Archbishop had also requested that Fr. Hugh because of his previous experience at the University of Fu-Jen in Peking, China, accompany the Archbishop within the next few months to help develop the University.
>
> Father Archabbot then asked for a consultive vote on the question: Whether Fr. Hugh should be sent to Formosa top investigate the project. The result of the vote was 42 affirmative votes, 4 negative and 4 indifferent votes. (Large Chapter, September 27, 1960)

That the Benedictines were here being offered "modern languages' suggests that at this time the Society of the Divine Word had not yet agreed to be in charge of this part of the University. In his letters from this period Fr. Hugh refers to the S.V.D.'s as being in charge of the College of Science. It is also clear with this letter that the Archbishop is now better familiar with the Benedictine structure of each monastery being fully independent, so he asks that only one monastery be in charge of the School of Western Studies.

By December 8, 1960, Fr. Hugh was in Taiwan. He and Miss Anne Katz, the English secretary of Archbishop Yu-Pin had sailed there together. They were met by Monsignor John Niu and Fr. Lawrence Wei. Fr. Hugh also has described an interesting situation related to the Archbishop:

> President Kennedy had been elected President of the United States while I was enroute to China. His election was a shock and disappointment to the government of Taiwan—who had bet heavily on the election of Nixon. Archbishop Yu Pin met us the morning after our arrival with the news that he had to hurry back to Washington. He has been a close friend of Speaker John McCormick for years and he was being sent over the Chinese government "to mends some fences". (Hugh report 8)

After his arrival, Fr. Hugh wrote two letters to Abbot Denis in December of 1960. In the first one, he mentions the problems in general: "Conditions here are anything but practical and promising. The Cardinal and Archbishop have been gracious and kind and they are under heavy hardships" (Letter of December 11, 1960). In the second he makes special mention of Cardinal Tien: "Tomorrow I am driving out to the area where the University is to be built. I likewise have a meeting with the Cardinal in a few days—he is most kind and considerate" (Letter of December 16, 1960). At the end of the month, Abbot Denis gives this report to the Large Chapter:

> Fr. Hugh had written to the Archabbot from Formosa. He indicated that there is a great discouragement in Formosa and he feels that a Benedictine Priory would be a source of encouragement. However, since he has been there only a short time he does not feel ready to give a full report on the conditions. (Minutes of the [large] Chapter of December 30, 1960)

In early January, Abbot Denis responds to Fr. Hugh's two letters, but he is a bit surprised that Archbishop has not found much work for Fr. Hugh to do (Letter of January 7, 1961). .Less than two weeks later, Fr. Hugh is finally able to give a more thorough report on the situation regarding planning for the university:

> We had an official dinner last night with the University officers and secretaries which gave me a fuller picture of the situation and a more determined stand on an independent position with the staff. As you know Archbishop Yu is not expected back here until the first week of February. The staff is quite divided in its loyalties—between three forces, the government, the Cardinal, and the Archbishop. Unless he is here more permanently [he won't] hold the staff together. The funds are just not available for some of his dreams. The Cardinal, on the other hand, while hesitant and somewhat fearful by nature is far more dependable. I spent a very pleasant hour with him last week. The man really on the spot is the Internuncio or Apostolic Delegate. He wants action but can do little to hurry the Chinese government. On this point he needs the full support of Archbishop Yu Pin who still holds his position in the National Assembly. (January 16, 1961)

Clearly the absence of Archbishop Yu-Pin from Taiwan is creating problems in terms of getting the university started. Here, for the first time, Fr. Hugh is able to describe the three factions among those working for the starting up the university as related to whom they are loyal: "the government, the Cardinal, and the Archbishop." Fr. Hugh also characterizes the Archbishop as having "dreams" and the Cardinal as "hesitant and somewhat fearful by nature" but "far more dependable" The third person at the center of the planning for the University is the Internuncio who 'wants action but can do little to hurry the Chinese government. On this point he needs the full support of Archbishop Yu Pin . . ." In this letter, Fr. Hugh is also critical of the land in Shih-lin to be given by government for the University as too mountainous.

Apparently, Fr. Hugh developed a very good relationship with Cardinal Tien while the Archbishop Yu-Pin was away, and on January 21, 1961 asks permission from Abbot Denis "to open a Monastic house here in Taiwan, completely independent of the Fu Jen Catholic University" adding, "The full permission of Cardinal Tien is assured; in fact he is most anxious to second the request." Abbot Denis responds on January 31, 1961 saying: "I took the matter to the small chapter, and they felt that we should follow along with the original commitment for a reasonably longer time. The

first point is to gain information for our Congregation as to the possibility and advisability of participating in the development of the University. The second point is to assist the Archbishop in the development of the university. At least that is the way he proposed it to me."

In his next letter (February 7, 1961), Fr. Hugh again mentions the problem with Archbishop Yu-Pin being away. He also explains how the university will be in three different parts of Taiwan:

> Building plans are being developed at the moment for the College only here in the Taipei area. Meanwhile the Divine Word is going ahead with the College in Kaohsiung and the Madames of the Sacred Heart have begun their building of the Women's College. The Jesuits have changed their plans and are coming north to join the Taipei group. . . .

It is interesting to see that the Sisters of the Sacred Heart are at this time working on a Women's College for Fu Jen. Fr. Hugh also describes the conflicts going on among the various factions:

> There is an inner conflict going on at the moment and I am not able to get a clear picture of all the factions. Archbishop Yu Pin's group seems to be dodging the Roman group. . . . But his prolonged absences naturally weaken his group badly—and perhaps wisely for the Roman authorities in the long run are the most important as they represent the Church directly—and they control all of the funds.

After the return of Archbishop Yu-Pin to Taiwan, on March 2, 1961, Fr. Hugh writes again to Abbot Denis and says that the original site of the University in Shihlin was voted down as being too "expensive to develop." He further states one of the main problems facing the Archbishop, the Archbishop "is anxious to give Rome some proof that the Catholic University is actually getting under way." Then related to this, Fr. Hugh explains that the Archbishop has

> been urging me to be ready to open a research center this fall. I have asked him to clear the matter with you first but personally I am not too much in favor of such as action at this time. Before I would open a graduate level center I would like to have some assurance that the College will eventually get started. He has so far given us no guarantees of the future

> development nor of income. Rome is sending all funds through the Delegate."

With this letter, Fr. Hugh also includes a picture that appeared in the Hong Kong *Sunday Examiner*, February 10, 1961,.of proposed Fu Jen chapel in shape of Tientai

Getting the land for the university was of course another problem for the Archbishop and the others involved with the university. Fr. Hugh gives this description as to what was happening in March 1961:

> During the Archbishop's absence we could do very little beyond getting acquainted with people and places and we did have a chance to see the various sites suggested for the campus of the proposed University. This was one of the first major problems facing the new Board of Trustees. Various areas were suggested and as soon as the Archbishop returned in March, 1961, the long and tedious process was begun. The Shih Lin areas was the first to be abandoned after months of serious meetings. Another five months were lost in trying to get an area on the Keelung Lung road south of the U.S. air base. The Divine Word Fathers finally voted to split the campuses having their own section in the south of Taiwan near Kaohsiung where they had land and the promise of more. This move really costs us a great deal of time and effort and mainly in vain for by early 1962 the Roman authorities were wondering just what was happening after the bright promises of the beginning.

In a letter from April 13, 1961, Fr. Hugh describes "a very decisive meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Catholic University [that] was held under the Chairmanship of the Apostolic Delegate." The determination of the Apostolic Delegate to get things moving is seen when Fr. Hugh notes: "Under no uncertain terms he [the Apostolic Delegate] kept hammering away for nearly four hours until the main issues were settled." Later in this letter, Fr. Hugh explains that the Board of Trustees was composed of the bishops in Taiwan. Although not on the Board, Fr. Hugh apparently was permitted to attend the board meetings. At this meeting it was decided that the S.V.D. and Jesuit section of the University would be in Kaohsiung and the Dominican College of Medicine in Tainan.

As for the College of Liberal Arts, the

> decision was to keep [it] here in Taipei and to maintain the graduate schools

> here where possible. Since the Fu Jen Catholic University is but a continuation of an older University the government has authorized the opening of the graduate school first. These classes will begin in September 1961. Land for this section will be bought here in the city and the Apostolic Delegate has authorized the spending of over $60,000.00 for land and the opening of the graduate school.

The Board then asked Fr. Hugh

> "What part will the Benedictines be willing to take in the graduate school or any other section of the University?" And secondly—"Will the Benedictines join the other Communities in buying the land proposed for a Catholic center of the city—of which the University will be a part?"

To these questions Fr. Hugh responded in this way: "I assured the Delegate and the Board (the Bishops of the island) that I would send the questions on to you [Abbot Denis] with my recommendations." Fr. Hugh's recommendations were:

> First—I do heartily recommend that the Benedictines accept the invitation to assist with the development of the University. To avoid far reaching commitments I would recommend a minor section of the graduate school—history or literature and western languages—which would oblige us to no dormitories, discipline or maintenance problems."

He also discusses the cost. "The University itself has bought three acres for the library, class rooms, and Administration building." He further adds: "It is the wish of the Board that the Benedictines will be able to begin work with the graduate school on a limited basis by Sept. 1961 but definite land or building commitments would not be expected before September 1962." As to where this land is, it must be the current site of Tien Hospital. In a later letter Fr. Hugh writes: "The Cardinal is expected to buy land in the Center for the Catholic Hospital but he had been ill of late and we have no final decision from him" (Letter May 27, 1961).

Abbot Denis took the proposal for the Benedictines to run a research center quite seriously. In his letter of May 17, 1961, he asks Fr. Hugh to get information on the following questions:

a) Is Taipei the place for the research center, or for a school of history or literature and western languages. . . .

b) If the research center were set in motion, what added personnel would be required.
c) Do you think we should do this alone, and just what could be done for a beginning on September of 1961.
d) Would the $35,000.00 be for the ground and the building including the library and faculty housing right in the Catholic center.
e) Would there be a proper section nearby for future monastic development, or should that be elsewhere, considerably removed from the part of the University to which the center is attached.

In his response of May 26, 1961, Fr. Hugh first gives a report on the situation of getting land for the University, saying there have been "many disappointments and problems." He also mentions for the first time that the College of Liberal Arts will be "with the secular clergy, with whatever help they can get." He also explains more about the circumstances under which Fu Jen University will open:

> Since Fu Jen is really being "reopened" rather than founded we are permitted to open the Graduate School without the undergraduate. September 1961 has been agreed upon for the opening of classes in philosophy. History could follow when we are ready.

These comments suggest that what we should be celebrating this year is the "re-opening" of Fu Jen University. As to what he thinks the Benedictines should do, he cautiously writes:

> I have strongly recommended that the American Benedictines take part in the Catholic University but to be a part of the project with the most minimum demands as to men and money. I recommend ONLY a department of the graduate school. If and when circumstances warrant such a move it is always easy to increase our commitment but never easy to cut back. . . .

And he recommends purchasing a half acre of land in the Catholic Center.

The following day Fr. Hugh writes another letter explaining the Archbishop needs a decision within ten days about the land and the money for it within 90 days. Then on the next day, May 29, 1961, Archbishop Yu-Pin writes to Abbot Denis, first thanking him for the services of Fr. Hugh saying that Fr Hugh "is in charge of the Bulletin for the University, and we expect to put out the first issue in about three

months." He also says, "We hope to be able to inaugurate the Research Institute of Western History in the Graduate School early next year." He concludes: "Any assistance you can give us in carrying out the wishes of the Holy See for Fu-Jen will be deeply appreciated.

Abbot Denis, in his letter of .July 10, 1961 to Fr. Hugh, is puzzled by the Archbishop's letter as it does not mention the Benedictines purchasing any property but nonetheless agrees to take it to chapter. I am, however, unable to find any record of this at the chapter meetings held at that time. The next letter from Fr. Hugh is the description of the opening of Fu Jen that was quoted at the beginning of this presentation. Accordingly, when Fu Jen was re-opened in September 1961, the Benedictines were being asked to open a Research Institute of Western History a year later in September of 1962. What happened that this did not transpire will be the topic of my next essay on the Benedictines and the Taiwan Fu Jen University. But, for now, I should mention that the following year saw the opening of the Second Vatican Council on October 11, 1962, which was the beginning of many changes in the Church. Furthermore, St. Vincent Archabbey suffered a disastrous fire on January 9, 1963 which destroyed many of the monastery buildings and soon occasioned the resignation of Archabbot Denis.

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