

***A Review of. The Rise and Fall of Fu Ren
University, Beijing: Catholic Higher
Education in China by Chen, John Shujie***

by

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Over the years some scholarly attention written in English has been given to the establishment of Fu Jen University in Peking in the 1920s. 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 about the founding of Fu Jen; one was for a conference at Fu Jen University and was about the early letters of Hildebrand

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Brandsetter, OSB., the first Prior of the Benedictines who went to Peking to set up the university; 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. Then, in 2004, John Shujie Chen, a Chinese priest who until this year was the head of the National Catholic Seminary in Beijing published his dissertation 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.

In this review, my emphasis will be on what John Chen has to say about the Benedictine years (1925-1933) of the Beijing Fu Jen University in his book. His study represents the work of a Mainlander Chinese scholar and priest who, as far as I can tell, has never had 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 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 that took over in China in 1949.

My remarks on his book will deal with the following topics: the good points of book, new information in the book, at least from my perspective; the prejudices of Chen, and his criticism and praise of the Benedictines

First, the good points. The first one is the survey and analysis Chen does of what has already been written about Fu Jen University (26-35). Here he expresses a number of criticisms that I would agree with, such as when he writes about the existing studies: “It is hard for readers who are unfamiliar with China to piece

together what the university was really like because these scattered pieces are neither coherently connected nor are able to present a whole picture of this university” (30-31). The next strength of the book is that, 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 Entanglements,” 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 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, but it is very interesting to know that the Pope tried to get the Benedictines to cooperate in this way.

Chen also provides new 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 that 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 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).

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 degrees. In 1931, the ten Benedictines teaching there mainly had MA degrees (104)

The two strongest criticisms that Chen gives of the Benedictines 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 “unfriendly” 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 Beijing]” (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, such as their not being involved with disputes among various Catholic religions orders working in China.. 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.

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The Rise and Fall of Fu Ren University, Beijing: Catholic Higher Education in China

書評：《北京輔仁大學的創建和結束：
天主教的高等教育在中國》

—康士林—

這些年來，有些以英文書寫的學術報告著眼於一九二〇年代北京輔仁大學之創辦。例如，舊金山利氏學社(Ricci Institute)主任吳小新於一九九三年完成一篇論文，題為“A Case Study of the Catholic University of Peking during the Benedictine Period: 1927-1933”「本篤會時期(1927-1933)的北京天主教大學個案研究」。我亦曾寫過兩篇文章，其一在輔仁大學研討會上發表，內容是本篤會士 Hildebrand Brandsetter, O.S.B. (伊德風)的早期書信；伊德風神父為前往北京籌設大學的本篤會首位院長(Prior)。另一篇為巴黎利氏學社主辦的研討會

而寫作，會議主題為基督教大學在中國，我的論文是關於一九二〇年代在北京創建輔仁大學時代，諸美國本篤會士的教育哲學。爾來則有中國神職人員陳書傑（John Shujie Chen）於二〇〇四年發表一部超過二百頁的論文，題曰 *The Rise and Fall of Fu Jen University, Beijing: Catholic Higher Education in China* 《北京輔仁大學的創建和結束：天主教的高等教育在中國》。陳神父的博士研究是在波斯頓學院(Boston College)完成的。

在此書評裏，我的重點為檢視關於本篤階段的北京輔仁大學(1925-1933)。陳神父的研究代表的是一個中國大陸學者及神職人員的著作，就我所知，作者本人和台灣輔仁大學從沒直接接觸。因此，他的觀點應不受今日立足於台灣的輔仁大學之影響。還有，陳神父成長於中國大陸，因此他理當幾分熟悉中國大陸的教育體系。

然而，我一開始要提及的是，對於此書標題 *The Rise and Fall of Fu Jen University, Beijing*，我感到不解。誠然，輔仁大學有其「創建」階段，然而我不認為有一個(Fall)。或許可用的字眼是「失落」(Fell)，意謂因為一九四九的新政權，輔仁大學如同樹木被切伐斷落。

我對此部著作的看法根本上涵括以下範疇：書中可取之處、書中提供的新訊息(至少依我之見)、陳神父的偏見、以及他對本篤會的批評和美言。首先，先談著作中可取之處。此書首先對先前有關輔仁大學的書寫資料有概述和分析(26-35)。再者，陳神父提出諸項批評，我對之有同感。比如，他書寫既有的相關研究：「對不甚熟悉中國的讀者而言，要拼湊大學的形貌種種，著實困難。因為這些散亂的片段既非首尾相連，亦無能呈現這個大學的完整圖像」(30-31)。此書另一力道在於，至今我尚未在他處看過其他更詳盡完整的論述，一如陳神父在此書中對北京輔仁大學本篤階段(1925-1933)的經濟財務、課程、師資、學生活動以及政治處境之描述，當然，陳神父也談到聖言會掌理的階段(1933-1950)。這種種論題幾乎都有專門單章詳盡討論，先是記述本篤階段再是記述聖言會階段。比如，

第四章：輔仁大學的財務和結構發展

第五章：成長階段：課程、師資和學生數

第六章：課外活動

第七章談的是「政治糾葛」，亦如在此書他處，陳神父長篇討論輔仁大學的「文化和政治環境」(36)，在此之前未有他人如此著墨。任何人如果對這些議題有興趣，此書是很好的入門著作。

此書於我有新意者包括一九三二年羅馬所下的決定，關乎本篤會應該如何處理他們所面臨的財務問題。根據陳神父的說法：

教宗不希望這所大學在經營短暫數年後就關門結束。因此，他在一九三二年七月二十八日聲明，支援這所大學將是所有美國本篤會的事務，包括瑞士美國和美國加西尼(Cassinense)會眾。(75)

聖文森總修院隸屬美國加西尼聯會(American Cassinese Congregation)，乃是田波尼費斯·威瑪(Boniface Wimmer)(1809-1887)建立的諸修道院以及他們的姐妹修道院所組成。本篤會組織結構複雜，見諸於本篤修道會士共有二十一個聯會(Congregations)，美國境內其他較大的本篤會聯會是由在瑞士的諸修道院所建立的瑞士美國聯會(Swiss American Congregation)。同聯會的各個修道院要彼此合作，自有其相當難度。兩個不同本篤會聯會要互助合作，難度更高，緣於聯會領袖對聯會內的不同修道院並無足夠權力。如此一來，就我所知，瑞士美國聯會並無能在財務上協助輔仁大學創校計畫。

關乎輔仁的學生，陳神父也提供一些較為尋常的新資訊。例如，他提出一個圖表，說明輔仁大學的學生數(112)。他亦提出一些數據，比如一九三〇年，有意等候入學的學生名單，為數二千人預備在輔仁註冊(114)。他也能解釋甚多，曰輔仁大學強調運動，並探討其緣由(126)。當然，我知道在美國大學校際間運動員有所謂的「十大聯盟」大賽，我卻不知北京輔仁大學有所謂的「五大聯盟」(燕京、清華、北京師大、北京大學和輔仁大學)(128)。

陳神父亦為我提供一個新觀點，思考輔仁大學創校階段北京和中國北方的情形(157)，以及發生於一九二八年及一九二九年的三次學生示威運動(158)。他另外提出我先前不甚瞭解的一個觀點—輔仁大學對中國的高等教育缺乏影響。他說：要討論輔仁大學在中國高等教育中的角色，還真是相當困難。做為一所年輕的大學，輔仁大學並未如清教大學一般影響中國的高等教育(186)。然而，輔仁結束後，教學人員四散到北京的其他大學，就此的確對北京的其他大學有重要的影響。

最後，就輔仁的影響而言，陳神父說：「舉一例，輔仁的影響彰顯於一九六〇年代文化大革命階段，此時畢業於輔仁大學的政府官員因道德理由拒絕處死知識分子和天主教神職人員(192)。據此影響，陳神父沒有提供文獻資料，誠願聞其詳。

攬書而論，顯然，關乎法國及其在中國的傳教工作，陳神父抱持偏見。茲舉一例是陳神父敘述本篤會和北京法國主教之互動(51-52)。再者，書中有多處陳神父評曰「法國人瞧不起中國人，正如同他們瞧不起梵蒂岡(183)」。我懷疑這種偏見是否來自中國神學院的教育。

對於本篤會在輔仁的事功，陳神父不吝讚美。然而，我們且先看看他對本篤會的一些批評。首先，他指出本篤會為輔仁大學設計的原始課程如同在美國的一樣：

當他們[本篤會士]開始設計這份課程時，他們不甚瞭解中國的文化和政治情況……。他們眼中所具的學校和課程就如同任何典型的西方天主教大學，或任何基督教大學一般，也把神學院含括在內。(87)

直到在英斂之協助之下，較新、較好的課程才設計出來(89)。陳神父也指出本篤會在輔仁的教職人員教育程度未若聖言會教職人員，彼時聖言會教學人員大多數有博士學位。一九三一年，在此擔任教職的十名本篤會士大多有碩士學位。

陳神父對本篤會提出的兩項最言重的批評是一其一：本篤會「在財務支援輔仁大學一事上無能通力合作」(181)。此種批評誠然無誤，然而這並非單純是個別本篤修道院的本質，修道院幾乎完全獨立自主，互助與否取決於自己。第二項言重的是本篤會和聖言會成員在一九三三年移轉階段「彼此不友善」(182)。這兩個修會到底如何「不友善」，有待研究。可是我懷疑，這類字眼用來形容彼時諸事還嫌太溫和了。

陳神父多所美言本篤會，其中較主要、又不時在書中出現者為：「(本篤會)決定專攻於中國文學和古典之研究」(177)。他也印象深刻，讚美本篤會士願意和非本篤會人士同工共事。本篤會士決定他們不只和歐洲人共事，並且和教區的

神職人員及其他修會的會士共事，亦且和傑出的中國文人、學者交流，如此一來這所大學將能名符其實，成就其大，其普世合一[公教大學](55)。陳神父亦讚許本篤會出讓大學建址所在的地產—舊濤貝勒府，以即日後發展而出的優秀師資。師資「多元」，有中外人士，有歐美人士(100)，堪稱「國際級」(99)。至於師資品質堪稱「傑出」(106)。他也認為本篤會士，以及以日後的聖言會不全然是「帝國主義者」(178-179)。在陳神父的諸多評論中，他提及本篤會，皆是概括論述。日後若有更多研究，或將釐清各別本篤會士，誰當成就何種事功，誰當負起何種失敗之責。在陳筆下，唯一指名多所美言的本篤會士為司泰萊(Aurelius Stehle, OSB)總院長，此時司泰萊負責綜攬本篤會創建輔仁之任務。「最讓人印象深刻的是本篤會聖文森總會院院長的奉獻和熱忱，意欲促成這所未來的大學成為中國最好的大學。」(53)總而言之，陳神父指出從一九二五年到一九三三年，本篤會神父們的成就非凡(67)。他又說：「一九三五年，輔仁幾乎已和[北京]的其他大學同步邁進。」(17)

陳神父指出一些事件，或許須要更多解釋釐清。例如，他認為被選任來創設大學的本篤會士是「因為他們作為神父修士的穩定特質以及他們作為知識分子和學者的智慧。(60)。我想，除此之外，或許還有其他因素。比如，他們不

介入在中國服事的不同天主教修會中的紛爭。陳神父在準備這部研究著作時，亦提到他使用諸會院的檔案，包括聖文森總會院、聖約翰修道院(St. John's Abbey)，以及明尼蘇達的聖本篤修女修道院(St. Benedict's Monastery)。然而，關乎本篤會在北京輔仁的歷史亦可見於紐澤西牛瓦克 (Newark)修道院及芝加哥城外的 St.Procopius 修道院 (13)。

在著作結論中，陳神父指出未來研究的四個領域：從本篤會神父轉移到聖言會神父的過程的確值得更多探討(190)、婦女學院(191)、中國教區神職人員的司鐸書院(St. Albert's College)(191)，以及輔仁的天主教學生研究(192)。陳神父所言甚是，提示的研究方向無誤，我深表贊同。

引用書目

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