

Divine Word Missionaries at Fu Jen Catholic University: A Historical and Statistical Review

Conference on the History of Cultural Exchange:
Memory, Boundaries, and Belief – A Century of Glory at Fu Jen Catholic University

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1. Introduction

We celebrate 100th anniversary of our university. There are many personalities in these one hundred years, to whom our university owes a lot, including Vincent Ying Lianzhi 英斂之 and Joseph Ma Xiangbo 馬相伯, demanding a Catholic University in China in the beginning of the 20th century; Fr. George Barry O’Toole and other the Benedictines who established the Catholic University of Peking in 1925; President Chen Yuan 陳垣 and thousands of Chinese and Taiwanese professors and students, teaching and studying at Fu Jen Catholic University over the years; finally Paul Cardinal Yu Pin 于斌 with Chinese Diocesan Clergy and Jesuits, like Msgr. Eugene Fahy (1911-1996), who cooperated in the re-establishment and continuous administration of the university here in Taiwan. An important and in some kind unique role in Fu Jen Catholic University was and is played out of doubt also by the Divine Word Missionaries (SVD) and the Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit (SSpS),¹ forming some kind of bridge between the Peking and Taiwan period of the University. In this paper I will focus on Divine Word Missionaries.

Divine Word Missionaries are mentioned in the research on Fu Jen Catholic University in some crucial periods of the university, as, e.g., taking over university from the Benedictines in 1933, Japanese occupation, Communist taking over,² and finally the re-establishment of the University in Taiwan.³ A few SVD members related to Fu Jen University are better known, like

¹ For more about Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit at Fu Jen Catholic University, see: Laumann, Maryta, “Fu Jen Catholic University and its Commitment to Human Dignity,” in: *Journal of Holistic Education* 全人教育學報 9:1 (2012), pp. 1-43, 45-47; Laumann, Maryta (Luo Mairui 羅麥瑞), *Fu Ren Daxue yu Shengshen Chuanjiao Xiunühui 1963-2006 輔仁大學與聖神傳教修女會 1963-2006* (Fu Jen University and the Holy Spirit Sisters, 1963-2006) (Xinzhuang 2006).

² Cf. Ke Boshi 柯博識, *Sili Beijing Fu Ren Daxue 1925-1950: linian, lichen, jiaoyuan 私立北京輔仁大學 1925 ~ 1950 理念、歷程、教員* (Xinzhuang 2007); *Beijing Furen Daxue Xiaoshi 1925-1952* 《北京輔仁大學校史 1925-1952》(Peking 2005); Chen, John Shujie, *The Rise and Fall of Fu Jen University*, Beijing: Catholic Higher Education in China (New York-London 2004).

³ “Zai Tai fuxiao zhi Tianzhujiao Furen daxue: Shengyanhui yu Furen daxue lishi yuanyuan zhi er” 在台復校之天主教輔仁大學——聖言會與輔仁大學歷史淵源之二, by Zbigniew Wesolowski (Wei Siqi 魏思齊) (in: Zhou Shanxing 周善行 et al., *Zhi shan da ren: Shan sheng ji shen, mingda daode yu keji 致善達仁——善省己身、明答道德與科技* (Xinzhuang 2003), pp. 108-129).

Harold Rigney - the last American SVD rector of Fu Jen University,⁴ Richard Arens, playing a crucial role in the re-establishment of the university in Taiwan,⁵ or famous SVD professors or chairs of the Board of Trustees, like Thomas Cardinal Tien Keng-hsin 田耕莘,⁶ or Prof. Franz Giet,⁷ whose names can be found on the university campus in the names of buildings and halls, like Arens Hall, Cardinal Tien Memorial Building and Fr. Franz Giet Building.

My paper is intended as a preliminary historical and statistical review focused on all members of the Society of the Divine Word at the Fu Jen Catholic University, all these about 270 Divine Word Missionaries, SVD priests, brothers, and seminarians who were or are related to Fu Jen Catholic University and contributed in some way to the “Century of Glory” we celebrate today. This preliminary research is based on internal *Catalogus* of SVD members,⁸ some available archive documents from the General Archive of SVD in Rome (SVD AG) and Provincial Archive in St. Wendel in Germany (SVD AP), oral testimonies and literature available on this topic.⁹ After a short general overview about Divine Word Missionaries and Fu Jen Catholic University, the paper will analyze the situation of members of the Society of the Divine Word in ten different periods of Fu Jen Catholic University, presenting a quantitative and some basic qualitative characteristics of them. [Finally, a short biography of selected less known but significant Divine Word Missionaries will be presented for every discussed period].

2. Divine Word Missionaries and Fu Jen Catholic University – General Overview

Divine Word Missionaries (Society of the Divine Word, SVD) are an international Catholic religious order, founded in 1875 in the Netherlands by the German priest Arnold Janssen. Thus, we celebrate now the 150th anniversary of our foundation. As the Benedictines established the Catholic University of Peking in 1925, the Society was 50 years old, and consisted of about 3000 members: priests, lay brothers, seminarians and novices.¹⁰ About 150 of them served in China that time: in Gansu, Henan, and in South Shandong – the first mission of Divine Word Missionaries at all, started in 1882. Based on the Christian faith that provided their moral and ethical compass, SVD members have gained much experience and played important role in the

⁴ Because of his book: Harold W. Rigney, *Four years in a Red hell; the story of Father Rigney* (Chicago 1956).

⁵ Kuepers, Jac, “The Re-establishment of Fu Jen University in Taiwan and the Role of the S.V.D., in Particular of Fr. Richard Arens,” *Verbum S.V.D.* 54 (2013), pp. 395-423; Ke Siming 2015, pp. 182-183.

⁶ Fleckner, J., *Thomas Cardinal Tien* (1975); Fang Ruohan 方若翰, 田耕莘樞機傳 (1990); Brandewie, E., *The Last Shall Be First. The Life of Thomas Tien Keng-hsin* (2007).

⁷ Ke Siming 克思明, *Tianzhujiao Fu Ren Daxue 90 nian shigao: Zhanxian Zhu rongde licheng yu jianzheng 天主教輔仁大學 90 年史稿--彰顯主榮的歷程與見證(1925-2015)* (2015), pp. 174-175. Here also short biographies of Cardinal Thomas Tien (pp. 163-164), Joseph Murphy (p. 165), Rudolph Rahmann (pp. 172-173), Franz Huber (pp. 184-185), Arnold Sprenger (pp. 204-205), Heinz Hesselheld (pp. 206-207), Imre Zsoldos (210-211), Franz Freisinger (pp. 212-213).

⁸ *Catalogus 1925-2025* (annual).

⁹ Inter alia: Miotk, Andrzej, *The Missionary Endeavor of the Society of the Divine Word in Latin America and China* (Rome 2023); Leeb, Leo, *A History of the SVD in China 1879-1955*.

¹⁰ Cf. *Schematismus Societatis Verbi Divini* 2027 (Steyl 1927), p. 109: “Episcopi: 4; Praefecti Apostolici:3; Administrator Apostolicus: 1; Patres: 846; Fratres clerici: 380; Novitii clerici: 223; Fratres laici: 1083; Novitii laici:336; Postul.:184; Alumni:2552; Cand.:117.

missionary work and social development of numerous countries in Asia and Africa, but also in other continents. One of their fields of activity was education. In China, alone in South Shandong in 1909, Divine Word Missionaries ran various kinds of high schools, primary schools and catechism classes, with a total of 5000 students.¹¹

Catholic University of Peking, later Fu Jen Catholic University (FJCU), was established, as known, in 1925 in Peking by the Benedictines, as a comprehensive university under the direct authority of the Holy See, and one of the few Catholic universities in the Sinophone world. Since 1933, eight years later, because of economic crisis in the United States and some internal problems, Divine Word Missionaries were asked by the Congregation of Propaganda Fide to administer Fu Jen Catholic University. Based on the solid foundation left by the Benedictines, with the help of many Chinese scholars, Divine Word Missionaries could manage it in the following fifteen years 1933-1948, regardless of difficult times of Japanese occupation, and the Second World War. In these fifteen years Fu Jen Catholic University became one of five important Peking universities, and could educate thousands of students,¹² valuable for the country's development. The university was also a proof for a successful cooperation and dialogue between the Chinese erudition, Christian faith, and Western science, from which many students benefited. This Peking period came to an end after Fu Jen Catholic University was taken over by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China in 1950 and finally annexed to Beijing Normal University two years later. All foreign Divine Missionaries had to leave the country.

Only in 1961, after repeated requests of Alumni Association of Fu Jen University in Taiwan, the re-establishment was decided as a cooperation of the Chinese Diocesan Clergy, the Society of Jesus, and the Society of the Divine Word, with Archbishop Yu Pin appointed as the first Rector Magnificus. Thus, Divine Word Missionaries, with the help of the Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit, were anew in charge of a part of Fu Jen Catholic University, running one of three founding units for forty years 1963-2002, including the College of Natural Science (1963, later in 1982 renamed to the College of Science and Engineering), College of Foreign Languages and Literatures (1980), and the College of Human Ecology (1994) (ran by sisters), serving as teachers, administrators, and spiritual companions, trying to shape and implement Catholic ethical standards in the Taiwanese society.

In the year 2002 the three units of Fu Jen Catholic University were merged into one, but Divine Word Missionaries continue to be active in many fields, inter alia as professors in departments, in Holistic Education, in counseling, and in the Board of Trustees, supporting and promoting the mission of Fu Jen Catholic University started 100 years ago.

3. SVD members in ten different periods of Fu Jen Catholic University

Despite being aware of the obvious division of the history of Fu Jen Catholic University into Peking and Taiwan period, I would propose to analyze the history of Divine Word Missionaries

¹¹ Hartwich, p. 492.

¹² Cf. Chen 2004, p. 117 (4746 graduating students 1931-1951).

at the University, for analytical purposes, in ten subperiods, in order to understand the correlation of changing situation, and the number and characteristics of SVD members involved. The proposed periods are: First contacts with University (before 1933), Takeover (1933-1937), Japanese occupation (1937-1945), Last years in Peking (1946-1952), a short Taiwan episode (1948), Preparation for a new founding (1953-1962), Re-establishment on the University in Taiwan (1963-1969), Continuation (1970-1981), New SVD Programs (1982-2001), and Integration (2002-2025).

3.1. First contacts (before 1933).

Even before Divine Word Missionaries took over the administration of the Catholic University of Peking in 1933, a few SVD members had some vague contacts with the university and its idea. The SVD Bishop August Henninghaus¹³ reported so early as in 1914 about the idea of a Catholic High Education School to Rome.¹⁴ He has also apparently supervised the establishment and development of Catholic University in Peking by the Benedictines in 1925.¹⁵ Franz Biallas, the first SVD sinologist sent in 1926 his article about “Mission and Exploration of China” to *Bulletin of the Catholic University of Peking* for publication, was, however, asked for corrections and finally gave up.¹⁶ In the late 1920s he applied also for the position of lecturer at Fu Jen Catholic University but was denied. The first SVD member who settled in Peking was Theodor Mittler (1887–1956). Since February 1928, he was a member of the Catholic Education Commission (Commissio Synodalis), and the editor of the Catholic Education Series there.¹⁷ That is him who help to facilitate in the summer of 1933 the transfer of management of Fu Jen Catholic University from the Benedictines to the Society of the Divine Word.¹⁸

3.2. Takeover (1933-1937)

According to the Chronicle of the Catholic University in Peking, recorded in German by SVD members,¹⁹ in March 1933 the information from Rome about the overtaking the university by the Divine Word Missionaries came via the telegram to Peking. On Mai 31, 1933, two first SVD members: Fr. Regional Theodor Schu, and Fr. Franz Biallas arrived Peking, and together with Fr. Theodor Mittler met the President Chen Yuan and the General Secretary Ignatius Ying. On June 20 at 4 p.m. the official handover of administration took place, three Divine Word Missionaries (Schu, Biallas, and Wilhelm Cremer) moved to the University, and the Benedictine Prior Fr. Basilius Stegmann left for India. In July SVD Fr. Joseph Murphy was appointed as the Rector and in August Fr. Generalsuperior Grendel as the Chancellor of the

¹³ The Vicar apostolic of South Shandong (since 1924 Bishop of Yanzhou).

¹⁴ SVD AG 2147. Tao Fengju, Im Spannungsfeld zwischen der chinesischen Kultur und dem Christentum: Die Entwicklung der Katholischen Fu-Jen-Universität in Peking (1925-1951), Dissertation. Uni Trier (2023), p. 133.

¹⁵ Leeb 2019, p. 183.

¹⁶ Miotk 2023, p. 246.

¹⁷ *Steyler Missionsbote* 1927/28, p. 144.

¹⁸ Leeb 2019, p. 281.

¹⁹ *Chronik der Katholischen Universitaet Peking (1933-1938)*. SVD AG 6.

University. One month later an official opening of the new school year was celebrated on September 18 with speeches of Bp Henninghaus and President Chen Yuan. In these three months, between August and October 1933, fifteen other Divine Word Missionaries came to Peking from Shandong, Henan, Gansu, the Philippines and from USA to work at the Fu Jen Catholic University,²⁰ followed in the next three years 1934-1937 by other seventeen SVD members.²¹ Among these 35 SVD confreres coming as university staff in the first years, 29 were priests and 6 lay brothers; 11 were US American, 2 Chinese, 1 Austrian, 1 Polish, and 20 German missionaries.²² In the first year, next to eight older (46-59 years old) experienced missionaries from other parts of China, seven younger (26-32 years old) priests were sent to help. Divine Word Missionaries served in the years 1933-1937 inter alia as Teacher in the Art School and Prefect of Dormitory (Berchmans), Head of the Dept. of Philosophy (Feifel), Teacher of Ethics and Logic (Fu Kaipeng), Head of Dept. of Psychology (Goertz), Professor of Mathematics and Physics (Jaensch), Director of Studies and Teacher of Western History (Kroes), Teacher of Biology (Mathews), Teacher of Sociology (Oberle), Teacher of English and Supervisor of Laboratory for Chemistry (Oehler), Head of the Dept. of Physics (Oster), Head of the Dept. of Sociology and Economics (Rahmann), Teacher of English (Roesslein), Professor of the Dept. of Western Languages and Literature (Sandhaas), Manager of Catholic University Press (Tauber), Teacher of German and Spiritual Director (Sonderkamp), Teacher of Sport (Edwards). A major event became the arrival of famous SVD anthropologist Wilhelm Schmidt to Peking in 1935 and his lectures at Fu Jen Catholic University.

3.3. Japanese occupation (1937-1945)

Following years were marked by Japanese occupation and the Second World War. Some professors (as Fr. Fu Kaipeng)²³ and students were arrested. However, generally the University could continue and even partly develop its activities. In November 1936 Fr. Rudolf Rahmann became the new rector after the sudden death of Fr. Murphy one year earlier. Collegium Sinicum Ecclesiasticum was opened in 1937 on the University for theological education of future Chinese priests. During these eight years, despite the unsettled situation in China, 27 new SVD missionaries were sent at least for certain time at the University.²⁴ Almost all of them were priests, only two were lay brothers. Twenty of them were Germans, 3 US American, 2

²⁰ Richarz Stephan, Sonderkamp Robert, Henkels Joseph, Edwards Ed, Görtz Joseph, Rushmann Peter, Chang Pius, Guggemos F. Philotheus B, Brückner F. Berchmans Austria B, Clemens Shapker, Kowalski Bernhard, King Clifford, Impekoven H. Potentianus B, Krahe M. Bernwardus B.

²¹ Jänsch August, Oster Franz, Feifel Eugen, Rühl Theodor, Kroes Heinrich, Fu Kaipeng John, Mathews Gregory, Köster Hermann, Oehler Edgar, Sandhaas Joseph, Tauber J. Severinus, Rahmann Rudolf, Oberle Alois, Cohill John, Roeßlein Charles, Spee Fr. Kephias, Elser C. Erminoldus.

²² SVD AG: Chronicle, pp. 1-75.

²³ For more about Fr. Fu Kaipeng, see Paul Han 韓清平, *Furen Daxue shouwei xundaozhang Fu Kaipeng shenfu xiaozhuan* 輔仁大學首位訓導長伏開鵬神父小傳 (New Taipei City 2016).

²⁴ Fitzgibbon Wilhelm, Hotze Alfons, Eder Matthias, Busch Heinrich, Kroker Edward, Held Rüdiger, Fuchs Friedrich, McDonough Joann, Hüngsberg Peter, Venne Peter, Giet Franz, Schreiber Gerhard, Czech Albert, Glanemann Johannes, Meiners Joseph, Arens Richard, Baumgartner Joseph, Bornemann Fritz, Grais Joseph, Guo Longjing Joseph, Lang Jakob, Lippert Sophronius, Isidor Schablitzki Hermann, Schmidt Wilhelm, Schneider Benedictus Jacobus, Schröder Dominicus, Schulz Hugo.

Austrian, 1 Chinese, and 1 Czech. Many of European missionaries, especially in the years 1939-1941, came on the Trans-Siberian Railway. All of them were quite young, on average 33 years old (26-39 years old). Divine Word Missionaries took some new tasks, in addition to the previously mentioned, inter alia German classes (Arens and Fuchs), Head of Engineering (Schneider), Director of Section for Western Art (Berchmans), Head of the Section of Philosophy (Czech and Fitzgibbon), Teacher of Japanese and Ethnology (Eder), Editor of Journal *Monumenta Serica* (Feifel), Prefect of Dormitory (Giet), Teacher of Logic and Music (Graisy), Teacher of Astronomy and Meteorology (Hagemann), Director of Middle School and Administrator (Hüingsberg), Head of the Administration Office (Spee), Teacher of Sociology and Latin (Meiners), Head of the Dept. of Mathematics and Physics (Richartz), Teacher of History and German (Schreiber). All SVD newcomers coming from abroad attended language classes at Fu Jen, and some of them continued their study, e.g. of Chinese History (Baumgarten), or Sinology (Busch). Many young missionaries were sent, also in these years for further studies abroad, to obtain the necessary qualifications to teach as professors at Fu Jen University.

3.4. Last years in Peking (1946-1952)

After the surrender of Japan, university classes were continued. In 1946 SVD Bp Thomas Tien became the Archbishop of Peking and was appointed the first Asian Cardinal, supporting Fu Jen Catholic University. Fr. Harold Rigney, newcomer professor of Paleontology, became the new Rector of the University. In these last few years, before the People's Liberation Army entered Peking in January 1949, seventeen new Divine Word Missionaries came to the University,²⁵ partly fleeing from the war, partly after their studies in the West, helping in the current affairs, for example as Assistant and Technical Advisor (Schablitzki), Director of the Middle School (Lang), Administration (Heintges), Teacher of Religion (Glanemann). One of them was a lay brother and 16 were priests, coming originally from the Netherland (2), Czech (2), China (1), US (4), and Germany (8). As the Chinese Civil War was approaching Peking, especially in the years 1948-1949 numerous SVD members (inter alia Berchmans, Jaentsch, Schablitzki, Spee) left Peking heading for Taiwan, the Philippines, Japan, and other countries. Soon in October 1950 the Communist government took over Fu Jen Catholic University. Last four SVD missionaries (Rigney, Sun Zhenzhi, Meiners, and Hüingsberg) were imprisoned on July 25, 1951. They were accused of espionage. Rigney and Meiners were sentenced to years in prison and labor camp, released and sent abroad, however, in 1955. Fr. Hüingsberg, as the "last foreign missionary" related to Fu Jen Catholic University in Peking could leave China only in the beginning of 1970s. Fr. Sun died in China in 1976.

Altogether, there were more than 80 Divine Word Missionaries related in some way to the SVD work in the Peking Period of Fu Jen Catholic University. Most of them, despite of the first eight experienced missionaries in the year 1933, came in their twenties or thirties, on average 33 years old. Out of 80 missionaries, almost a half of them (33) stayed in the University only for

²⁵ Hogan William, Hagemann Gregory, Rigney Harold, Lang Arthur, Albers R. Gerebernus, Rutgers Joann, Bates Joseph, Norton Ed, Vanderstappen Henrik, Zloch Stephen, Gerhards Peter, Brockmüller Alfons, Auer Paul, Grimm Franz, Krieffewirth Alois, Lang Jakob, Sun Zhenzhi Petrus 孙振之.

a relatively short time of one to three years. One fourth (21), however, worked in the university for ten or more years. Those who were associated with the university the longest in the Peking period were: Brückner F. Berchmans (16), Shapker Clemens (16), Cremers Wilhelm (15), and Görtz Joseph (15), serving the university as professors and administrators.

3.5. Taiwan episode (1948)

In 1948 a short Taiwan episode related to SVD and Fu Jen University took place. Because of Communist army approaching Peking the idea to move at least a part of the University to Taiwan appeared, to secure the continuity of the activities of the university. It was first suggested probably by the SVD Cardinal Thomas Tien.²⁶ For that purpose in the Spring 1948 the procurator of the Fu Jen Catholic University Fr. Peter Hüngsborg (Xu Siben 徐思本, 1909–1976)²⁷ was sent to Taiwan for a preliminary survey.²⁸ His long-range plans included the opening of a branch of the Fu Jen Middle School, a hospital, and re-opening of Fu Jen Catholic University. Hüngsborg bought a house in the central Taipei on Chang'an East Road and was promised a plot of land in Yuanshan by Taipei city officials. For that purpose, the SVD engineer Fr. Friedrich Linzenbach (Lin Shenbai 林慎白, 1904–1981) came to Taipei, who years later, in the 1960s, coordinated the establishment of the Fu Jen University in Xinzhuang.²⁹ Gradually other SVD members from various places in China came to Taiwan. Among the twelve Divine Word Missionaries in December 1948 starting the new community in Taipei³⁰ was the former Rector of Fu Jen Catholic University in Peking – Fr. Rudolf Rahmann, who became the SVD house superior. This promising development was, however, stopped, still before it could really start. In a changed political situation at the end of the year 1948 the land already promised for the re-establishment of the university was not available more; because of inflation, money borrowed before lost its value; some SVDs had doubts about the suitability of Taiwan due to safety and humidity.³¹ Therefore in January 1949 it was decided by the general superior Fr. Alois Große Kappenberg to leave Taiwan. Approximately 350 SVD missionaries working in Mainland China before, went not to Taiwan, but to other countries: for Europe – if old or sick, or for Japan and Philippines. In July 1951 the last SVD – Fr. Bernhard Kolanczyk – left Taiwan for Philippines.

²⁶ Kuepers 2013, p. 395.

²⁷ Leeb 2019, p. 67.

²⁸ Arens 2011.

²⁹ Leeb 2019, p. 88.

³⁰ Joseph Stier (Si Wende 司文德, 1911–1979) – a former missionary in Shandong and Henan, who was in charge of the charitable work there, Bro. Dionysius (Dennis) Coneys (Bro. Ke 科, 1900–1986) from Henan, Paul Heyer (Zhu Tingru 朱廷榮, 1895–1985), Johann Rùthers (Xie 謝, 1912–2000), Bernhard Braun (Bo Xinre 薄新熱, 1912–1990), Bernhard Kolanczyk (Guang Lingcai 光令才, 1903–1983), Franz Kissel (Ken Silu 肯司魯, 1902–1982), Josef Kosa (1898–1968), Rudolf Rahmann (Lei Man 雷冕, 1902–1985), and Bro. Flodobert Mrugalla (Fu Guangqia 福光洽, 1892–1967).

³¹ Bornemann 1981, p. 315.

3.6. New preparation (1953-1962)

As in July 1956 former students at the Fu Jen Catholic University in Peking founded a Student Association in Taiwan and started to promote the re-establishment of the university, Divine Word Missionaries were there again for two years, working, however, in the south of the inland.³² Only one month later the SVD Vice-general superior Henrich Kroes (Hu Lushi 胡魯士) came to Taiwan and examined the possibility of that.³³ In the following two years SVD Cardinal Thomas Tien (in November 1957), and SVD General Superior and former China missionary John Schütte 舒德 (in November 1958) came to Taiwan, supporting the re-establishment. Finally in 1959 the Roman Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples appointed in 1959 the Cardinal Paul Yü Pin as the first president of Fu Jen Catholic University in Taiwan, and one year later the Board of Trustees was established, with SVD Cardinal Thomas Tian as the chair. He came in 1960 to Taiwan as the Apostolic Administrator of the Taipei Diocese.³⁴ Similarly in 1960 Fr. Richard Arens came to Taiwan, after seven years in the Philippines, commissioned to coordinate the preparations on behalf of Divine Word Missionaries. In September 1961 the official re-establishment of Fu Jen Catholic University in Taiwan was celebrated, with first eight master students started their classes in Taipei. Three patrons of the new university (Divine Word Missionaries, Jesuits and Bishops' Conference in Taiwan) decided to build up a united campus of the university in Xinzhuang (New Taipei City) with Fr. Linzenbach SVD as the main architect. On the picture from the year 1962 already six SVD members can be seen, discussing the project of the new campus: Arens, Linzenbach, Doyle, Behrla, Giet, and Richartz.³⁵

3.7. Re-establishment in Taiwan (1963-1969)

The new campus of Fu Jen Catholic University was opened in Xinzhuang and in October 1963 first 500 students could already start their classes there. In the first five years numerous Divine Word Missionaries were sent to the University from abroad. In the year 1964 for the first time the name *Universitas Catholica Fu Jen* appeared as a SVD community in the *Catalogus SVD* with eight confreres belonging to it:³⁶ Fr. Richard Arens (Jia Bailian 蔣百鍊) in charge of the College of Science and the Regent of the SVD Section, Fr. Franz Giet (Qi Defang 齊德芳) – as the head of German Department, Fr. Franz Huber (Hu Bo'er 扈伯爾) – the head of the Department of Biological Science, Fr. Peter Venne (Wen Ne 文訥) – the head of the English Department, Fr. Bernard Doyle (Du Yihua 杜誼華) – the head of the General Affairs Division, and three SVD lay brothers: Albert Behrla (Pan Guoliang 潘國樑) and Michael Helsper (Mai

³² Three SVD members and former China missionaries: Leo Kade (Jia Deliang 賈德良, 1903–1981), Alois Krieffewirth (Ji Futai 紀福泰, 1904–1990), and Alois Tauch (Tao He 陶賀, 1909–1987) came in March 1954 invited by the Bishop of Chiayi Bishop Niu Huiqing 牛會卿 (1895–1973).

³³ Kuepers 2013, p. 396.

³⁴ Leeb 2019, pp. 65-66.

³⁵ Cf. e.g. Wesołowski 2003; Kuepers 2013.

³⁶ *Catalogus Sodalium Societatis Verbi Divini* 1964.

Kunshan 麥昆山) who helped in the General Affairs Division, and Bro. Patrick Hogan (Hou Guanghua 侯光華) who became a head of the Language Center of the university.

In the next years the Fu Jen Catholic University grew and developed very fast. In that time every year new SVD confreres came to Taiwan and started to teach at the university, including Fr. Michael Richartz (Li Jiashi 李嘉士) and Franz Oster (Ou Side 歐思德) in the Department of Physics, Fr. Paulinus Ai Wen 艾文, Fr. Arnold Sprenger (Sun Wenzhi 孫志文) and Fr. Wilhelm Mueller (Mi Weili 彌維禮) in the German Department, Fr. Joseph Stier (Si Wende 司文德) in the English Department, Paulinus Suo (Xue Baolun 薛保綸) teaching Philosophy of Life, Fr. Imre Zsoldos (Zhao Deshu 趙德恕) in the French Department, Fr. Ernst Boehm (Peng Jiade 彭加德) as the superior of the community, or Fr. Matthias Christian (Tian Modi 田默迪) as the university chaplain.

Altogether 29 Divine Word Missionaries were related to Fu Jen Catholic University between 1963 and 1969.³⁷ Four of them were lay brothers, and 25 priests, coming from six countries: Germany (17), USA (4), China (4), Austria, Hungary, and Spain (each 1). Only seven of them (Arens, Czech, Oster, Giet, Meiners, Richartz, and Venne) were teaching in Fu Jen University in Peking before. Three more (Huber, Boehm, Stier) worked in other places in China. Three SVD Chinese priests (Ai, Suo, Huang) – former seminarians from Shandong – came from the Philippines, where they completed their studies interrupted in Mainland China. The majority were young foreign Divine Word Missionaries, coming to Taiwan after completing their studies abroad. Thus, apart from the older experienced missionaries, mentioned above, like Richartz (70 years old), Czech, Oster (both 65), Giet (61), Meiners, Boehm (both 56), Stier (53), Huber (52), Arens, Venne (both 50), numerous missionaries came in the age of 26 to 33 years old.

3.8. Continuation (1970-1980)

In the next ten years Fu Jen Catholic University continued to expand. However, the number of Divine Word Missionaries coming to the university decreased to one or two per year, partly related to the changes that occurred in the West Europe after the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), with only the year 1974 (four SVD newcomers: Lee Francis Xaver, Spee Franz Xaver Kephass, Vargo Edward, Kreitz Lothar) being exception. In all these ten years sixteen new missionaries came to Fu Jen.³⁸ Only four of the came from Germany, four from USA, each one from the Netherlands, Austria, Switzerland, Spain, Poland, the Philippines, and two from China (Yang, Lee). Different from other periods – almost one third of Divine Word Missionaries were lay brothers, and eleven – priests. Brothers and one priest took over the tasks in the General

³⁷ Tien Thomas, Arens Richard, Doyle Bernhard, Behrla Albert, Giet Franz, Hogan Patrick, Richartz Michael, Venne Peter, Ai Paulin, Helsper Michael, Huber Franz, Oster Franz, Stier Joseph, Suo Paulino, Zsoldos Imre, Detig Josef, Sprenger Arnold, Meiners Josef, Mueller Wilhelm, Armendariz Angel, Hesselheld Heinz, Specht Karl, Lennon Raymond, Czech Albert, Boehm Ernst, Christian Matthias, Klementa Dieter, Huang Paul, Quint Lucas.

³⁸ Aranas Gil, Freisinger Franz, Hardegen Matthias, Kuepers Jac, Van Holzen Vincent, Lee Francis Xaver, Spee Kephass, Vargo Edward, Kreitz Lothar, Yang Aloys, Bauer Daniel, Budenholzer Frank, Koster John, Weckenbrock Hermann, Fernandez Julian, Roman Malek

Affairs Division (Van Holzen, Aranas, Freisinger, Spee, Hardegen), with Bro. Vincent Van Holzen being the Head. Edward Vargo became later the Head of the Foreign Language College, Lothar Kreitz – Director of the Language Center, Aloys Yang and Jac Kuepers were teachers of Philosophy of Life, John Koster the Director of the Computer Center at the College of Science, Hermann Weckenbrock – professor of the Biology Dept., and Julian Fernandez – of the Spanish Dept., Fr. Bauer and Fr. Budenholzer were teaching in the English and Chemistry Dept.

After reorganization of the university administration in 1970 (the former function of the Regent of SVD Unit, *yuanwuzhang* 院務長) was changed to SVD Representative, *daibiao* 代表), Fr. Richard Arens still continued his leading work as SVD Representative for three years, before he went back to Germany in 1973 and was replaced by Fr. Arnold Sprenger (SVD Representative in the years 1973–1979), followed by Fr. Heinz Hesselfeld (1979–1984).³⁹ Only one student is known from the years 1970s: Fr. Roman Malek, who came here in the years 1978-1980 for his language studies, obtaining a fundament for his future fruitful academic work in the Institute Monumenta Serica in Germany.

3.9. New programs (1981-2001)

Between 1981 and 2001 only 15 SVD members⁴⁰ entered the university as teachers and administrators, less than one person per year. Four confreres came from Germany and USA (each 2), the majority, however, were Divine Word Missionaries from other countries not serving in Taiwan before: India (4), Japan (1), Chile (1), the Philippines (1), and Poland (2). Two came from the local SVD community in Taiwan. They worked subsequently as teachers in the German Dept. (Rudolph Kalesse), Japanese Dept. (Sakamoto Susumu), Spanish Dept. (Miguel Gonzalez), English Dept. (James Liebner), Holistic Education (Zbigniew Wesołowski, Leszek Niewdana), General Affairs Division (Norbert Ruf, Dennis Callan – as its director), Computer Science (Joseph Arul), director of the Student Assistance Center (James Vyathappan), director of the Language Center (Victor Yparraguirre), Counseling Center (Chinnasamy Irudayaraj), and Campus Ministry (John Hung). A few of them served later also as the SVD Representative or Vice-Provincial (Michael Wei-Hsia Kwo, James Vyathappan, Leszek Niewdana).

All these foreign SVD members, apart from Fr. Kalesse, came to Taiwan as a part of the so-called Overseas Training Program (OTP) – a new program allowing young SVD seminarians to learn the language, culture and reality of another country in the period of their studies. It was a fundamental change in the number of Divine Word Missionaries at Fu Jen Catholic University. Since the year 1981 every year 3 to 5 young SVD seminarians came for about two-three years to Taiwan and made their Chinese language course at Fu Jen. Altogether in the twenty years before integration of all units into one in the year 2002, about 70 SVD seminarians and a few

³⁹ Liou 2024, p.10.

⁴⁰ Kalesse Rudolf, Amaldoss G, Kwo Michael, Hung John, Ruf Norbert, Sakamoto Susumu, Yparraguirre Victor C, Arul Joseph, Vyathappan James, Callan Dennis, Chinnasamy Irudayaraj, Gonzalez Miguel A., Liebner James, Niewdana Leszek, Wesołowski Zbigniew

priests came to Taiwan. They came from various countries. The biggest group came from the Philippines (19), followed by India and Poland (each 9), Indonesia (7), Vietnam (6), Germany (2), Austria, South Korea, Australia, Spain, Paraguay, Hungary, New Zealand, Scotland, Chile, and Japan (each 1). All of them were in their 20s (23-30 years old) as they came. Some of them continued then their theological studies here, in the nearby Fu Jen Faculty of Theology of St. Robert Bellarmine, together with five Taiwanese SVD seminarians. These young people, although not directly involved in teaching, have made a significant contribution to the presence of Divine Word Missionaries at Fu Jen Catholic University through their activity and diversity.

3.10. Integration (2002-2025).

In the year 2002 three sections of Fu Jen Catholic University were unified into one, and Divine Word Missionaries are not more directly in the charge of the four Colleges (Science, Foreign Languages, Human Ecology, and Textiles) belonging to the SVD Section before. They continue, however, to promote Catholic values in the university, especially through the SVD Mission Office. In these last twenty-three years numerous young SVDs kept coming for OTP program and partly for theological studies at Fu Jen. Under these 65 seminarians in Taiwan, the majority was from Indonesia (14) and Vietnam (12), followed by the Philippines and Poland (each 6), India (5), Slovakia 3, Germany (2), Italy, Angola, USA, Togo, Benin, Malaysia, Hungary, Ireland, Paraguay, and Hong Kong. Seven SVD members coming in the last years,⁴¹ already support the older SVD generation, serving inter alia as Dean of Holistic Education, SVD Mission Office Director, Dean of Academia Catholica, director of Language Center, professors in Dept. of Religious Studies, Holistic Education, etc. A few more of them prepare for future service through PhD and Master studies in Taiwan and abroad.

4. Conclusion

The 100th anniversary of Fu Jen Catholic University and the 150th anniversary of the Society of Divine Word are both celebrated in the same year 2025, highlighting their mutual relations. For the university Divine Word Missionaries are an important part of its history and its spirit of Christian values, dialogue, and service to the society. For Divine Word, Missionaries, Fu Jen Catholic University is a place of long-term successful educational work in the Chinese culture. For both it is a bridge between the history and the future.

Missionaries entered the work at Fu Jen at different ages. At both beginnings: in Peking in 1933 and in Taiwan in 1963 a group of experienced missionaries (45-65 years old) were accompanied by younger SVD confreres (25-35 years old). In the following years the main part of the newcomers were young missionaries coming after their ordination or further studies. Seminarians, coming as students for the language course, OTP program, or theological studies, were usually younger, between 23-28 years old.

⁴¹ Belamide Paulino, Selvamani John Peter, Jijimon Alakkalam Joseph, Chiu Hung-Jen Anthony, Adamek Piotr, Rybka Wojciech, Edara Inna Reddy, Pham Trong Quang Anthony, Us'Abatan Lorens Rudy

About 30% of SVD members (33 in the Peking period, and 13 in the Taiwan period), worked in the university only for 1 to three years and left because of death, other appointment, leaving SVD, or because of the university closure. Among missionaries working or living the longest time in the university, albeit with some longer or shorter breaks, are: Fr. Suo (58), Christian (51), Kuepers (50), Zsoldos (45), Freisinger (34), Giet (30), Hogan (33), Venne (29). A few fathers are still present in the university to this day, as Fr. Bauer (who came 49 years ago), Budenholzer (47), Michael Kwo and Bp Hung (39).

Most of the Divine Word Missionaries working in the university were priests (126, some of whom became bishops⁴²). Only nineteen in the whole history of the university were lay brothers. 135 OTP students were usually seminarians, preparing for the future work.

In all these 100 years, about 150 SVD members were involved directly in the university work (80 in the Peking period, 70 in the Taiwan period). About 130 other SVDs came for Fu Jen University as students for a few years, especially in the last 45 years. Thus, we can speak about quite a big number of 280 Divine Word Missionaries present in the university over the years.

In fact, Divine Word Missionaries are a part of Fu Jen Catholic University. In the last 100 years they supported in various ways its development and its mission, and made a significant contribution to the development of the university profile.

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SVD AP: Provincial Archive of SVD in St. Wendel in Germany

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⁴² Cf. Bp. Hung, Bp Jaucian in the Philippines.

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