

Conflict and Compromise between Religion and Secular Education: A Case Study on the Establishment of St. John's University

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Abstract: Sociologist Max Weber's "Religious Rejections of the World and Their Directions", clearly analyzed the essence of the conflict between religion and secular world. After Christian missionaries entered Chinese world and established schools to spread their doctrine, by varying of strength of the rulers, the controlling power to the schools are differences. The article explores through Weber's view, looks at St. John's University which set up from 1879 in Shanghai and re-founded in 1967 in Taiwan. The politics, economics, and intellectuality in the forces of affecting the church will be elaborated of how it influences the development of the schools.

Key words: Christianity school, religious education, Max Weber, holistic education

1. Introduction

In 1970, there are three universities which have a church background in nine of all. In the rest of the independent institutes and the colleges, there are five schools which have a church background. Those are close to 10% of the church school which only 4% Christians in Taiwan was undoubtedly the result of deliberately putting effort into education. St. John's University, founded in 1967 (the original name "Sin-pu College"), is also one of these "church schools". The school was set up by Bishop Wang who was the first Chinese bishop of Taiwan Episcopal church. Initially it was founded by alumni of Shanghai St. John University and St. Mary's Hall in Taiwan, they contact with church and request recalibration. Alumni donates the land, and Taiwan Episcopal church co-ordinates funding and equipment to establish the school. The name of the school specifically refers to the local name "Sin-pu college" (St. John's and St. Mary's Institution Technology), and its name "St. John's University" has been upgraded and changed several times till now.

However, there are twelve universities which have Christian backgrounds in Taiwan, except seven comprehensive universities. The remaining five technical and vocational schools are health care professional, or professional foreign as their language teaching content. These content of medical and liberal arts are relatively easy to attach Christian beliefs through their professional teaching. But St. John University is the one and only technology professional school in Taiwan. Moreover, the school is the only science and technology professional school in 124 Anglican colleges and universities of the world.¹ The unique phenomenon shows the particularity

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¹ Colleges and Universities of the Anglican Communion website (CUAC): http://www.cuac.org/53810_53925_ENG_HTM.htm.

of time and space, the unusual religious background and historical heritage of the school which prompt us to explore how these Taiwan's political and economic environment interactively influence these schools.

German sociologist Max Weber in his theory "Religious Rejections of the World and Their Directions" analyzed clearly the essence of the conflict between religion and secular world,² he said: "Between Every prophet or savior religion and secular order, there is a sharp and sustained tensions, the more redemptive religious character has more intense tension..." (Max Weber, 1989, p. 109). Weber classifies worldly affairs as the political, economic, and intellectual and so on. These areas will produce a relationship of confrontation and conflict with religion. When religious groups undertake a school, they are involves a secular value areas, such as the state machinery, government decrees, funding requirements, the school administrative operation, etc. In other words, because of the established of educational institutions, religion will shape conflict with the "worldly affairs".

University established in the name of religion will make conflict and to seek compromise in the field of both religion and secular educational institutions. Namely, these phenomena presented in the course of three aspects: the religion and intellectual, religion and political, as well as religion and economic. The following table describes these three levels of conflict and compromise connotation.

2. Conflict and Compromise between Religious Education and Intellectual

First, in terms of the dimension of conflicts between religion and intellectual, religious groups preach doctrines through educational institutions to contact with the public, which is based on the similarity of the inner meaning of intellectual and religious on the cognitive activity, especially in the characteristics of Anglican theology. They stressed that the Bible, Reason and Tradition, known as the three pillars, and therefore rational intellectual is not the barriers of religious converted, but rather the part of the religious revelation connotations. Knowledge is beneficial for religion in transformation. Religious groups use value-neutral intellectual education to reduce people's resistance, and to affirm positively the value of religious educational through obtaining the earthly riches. The US Episcopal Church's missionary put considerable resources in China in order to build and maintain educational institutions. In 1837, the United States Anglican missionary William Jones Boone (Mei-mei Lin, 2006, p. 106) came to China to participate in missionary work, till bishop Schereschewsky (Samuel Isaac Joseph Schereschewsky, 1831~1906) founded the St. John's University in 1879. They all hope to contact Chinese people through education and to reduce the missionary resistance. If the religious groups can interpret and link to the knowledge sufficiently, and can grasp the development of educational institutions, it mostly able to use knowledge as their own tools, but the educational institution since its inception, it will develop its own rules of operation, pursuit intellectual and organization of its conducive self-development. In 1881 Shanghai businessman based on business considerations requests that the school provides English education (Edward Yihua Xu, 1999, p. 27), the intellectual obtains the status of moral language to link with religion and students. It also brings prestige for church. In 1928, the School Board independent from the Missionary. Gradually, the purpose of intellectual is no longer connected to the religious inspiration. Education has also developed secular purposes for themselves, education place of religion. Francis Lister Hawks Pott who served as the President for 52 years said: "The education is purpose itself." (Edward Yihua Xu, 1999, p. 17). The schools incline to the secular world, and continue to produce alumni to support its secular values and secular interests acquired by alumni, followed

² Max Weber wrote *Sociology of Religion*, to analysis the world economic ethics of various religions, he wrote "Intermediate inspection~ Religious Rejections of the World and Their Directions", put forward questions to be analyzed.

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through alumni in order to serve as a director of the Board (Yuehchi Shone, Wo Chou, 2007, p. 33). As well as accepting alumni's donations to his alma mater, to feedback the educational institutions themselves, this cycle will strengthen the school's secular character and increase the conflict factor between religion and education.

	Intellectuality	Politics	Economic
Religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★mystical religious experience. ★the myth interpretation about the world. ★divine admonition generated from witchcraft. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★Charisma dominant that consistent with religion. ★pursuit universal consciousness compatriot relationships (love your neighbor, humanity and enemies). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★away from worldly wealth. ★ consider with fellow ethics, pursuit compatriots love and build relationships.
Secular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ exclude mystery, according with the logic of causal knowledge. ★demonstrable experience and knowledge to pursue a coherent sense. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★pursuit power and to use violence as a means of intimidation legal-dominated. ★ established dehumanization relationships without concern personal connecting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★non-object orientation, maximize the currency prices. ★ calculate things in interest considerations, establishing relationships based on the principle of supply and demand.

Religion grasps the world through revelation knowledge, but the purpose of school is not to cultivate believers who surrender to the divine religion instructions from Charisma leader. But it has the knowledge and skills to acquire earthly materials professionals, which would touch the religious and intellectual conflict and sensitive nerves, making religion and education gradually isolated. Francis Lister Hawks Pott was trying to convince the church to accept the students' "having the Christian spirit" instead of "becoming a Christian", but in 1940 he admitted: "St. John's university is the most expensive tuition school in China, it's unfortunate to making this school only the rich man can enter, is contrary to the ideals of our mission ..." (Feiya Tao, Peter Tze Ming Ng, 1998, p. 89), St. John's university face the problem of filing (?) because Chinese government's restrictions on education, and the church is unwilling to abandon their original intention of preach gospel which let the church threatened to close schools instead of to see a Christian school's existence without exerting their faith influence (Edward Yihua Xu, 1999, p. 146). Religion must be sacrificed intellectual rationality to defend value of religion, and this conflict is also working on the founding process of Sin-pu college. In 1965, Bishop Wang carried the heavy loading of task based on his personal education experience and beliefs, but Sin-pu needed huge capital and attention. That is not the church which members are fewer than 1,500 people. Bishop Wang invested his time and energy, and misappropriation 13 million NTD church's funds,³ endangering the development of the church, and resisting the proposed law which strengthen the importance of education institutions,⁴ and tried to reduce the negative impact from educational institutions.

For the dimension of compromise between religion and intellectual, the inherent laws formed after the birth of educational institutions, which will multiply itself and prevent themselves from being eliminated. It makes the religions not only take confrontation position to conflict, but also have to compromise with each other and find the way for two parties to survive with total profit. For example, in 1931, St. John's university could not accept the "Christian" deleted in its mission statement. They are unwilling to compromise in order to obtain filing qualifications. The school became the only one school which can't satisfy the qualification demand. Francis Lister Hawks Potthoped church to make a concession this time, even suggested that "the pursuit and dissemination the light and truth" (Edward Yihua Xu, 1999, p. 146) becoming their school purpose. Shanghai St. John& St. Mary schools abolished in 1952 result of dramatic political changes. Alumni came to Taiwan and assumed to continue

³ "Data files of the St. John's University Board,1971", *First Semester School Affairs Meeting*, Feb. 3th, 1972.

⁴ *Taiwan Episcopal Church Annual Conference*, 8th Annual Conference Record, p. 22.

the life of alma mater. They urged the church to handle complex school construct matters, led by the church, and the recall of two schools can be made through the unique religious sentiment and religious figures whose acting is without counting the cost.

Due to the alumni of two schools influenced personally by Christian in schools during the student days, they built up the personal trust to the church. Because alumni association is not permanent organization, they not only need the Anglican organization to handle, but also emphasize the continuity of tradition and win the legitimacy of the fundraising to the global alumni. For the position of Taiwan Episcopal Church, they did not have enough resources to establish a school. Through the political and economic strength, the alumni put in opening up a stable missionary field, religion and education. In this presentation it can be seen as a result of mutual compromise and mutual advantage.

3. Conflict and Compromise between Religious Education and Politics

On the dimension of the conflicting relationship between religious education and politics, once religious group wants to achieve their religious goals through educational institutions,⁵ they involve in the secular realm and strongly influence by politics rationality, which is most significant in its secular power because they are threatened by violence. Anglican shaped his denominational features in her special historical background, but also created his characteristic which is good to achieve religious benefit through political power. St. John's University and St. Mary's Hall was founded under the protection of national force of American government and international treaties.⁶ The international political environment is conducive to western missionary, the church also publicize western science and religion through education. These created St. John's universities' success. But the political environment around St. John's University was constantly changing: the school which filed in USA must remain friendly but not being a contained relationship with Chinese government, and the school consumes a lot of energy in the history of school's 73 years which include five different regime patterns. Because of the gradually rising nationalism and national self-awareness in China, and as nation-states have similar religious functions, the Charisma national leaders always been given "national savior, the world's great men". Religion became contender for nation, the political pressured strengthening on the control of religious schools, and launched the "Anti-Christian Movement".⁷ On the way, China government saw that the church schools are inconsistent with national loyalties, so it formulate schools that they may not use "spread religion" as the founding purpose, and also restrict the religious activities on campus, therefore, the conflicts between religion and politics put on table.

Although the effect of St. John's university missionary work is not ideal, but the political rationality which threat by violence, challenges the bottom line of the missionary goal of St. John's University, so that the school must declare his stand. At this time, if school insists to against national country, they put their life on the gambling table, otherwise, they have to compromise in their political environment.

⁵ Anglican Church is the Church of England, the sect's founding philosophy is not entirely based on theological differences, but maintain the unity of United Kingdom, Anglican Church and spread to the whole world, Anglicanism have the tradition of maintain a friendly relationship with the local government.

⁶ Wang Hiya Treaty (望廈條約) signed in 1844, the United States also have the rights to have trade in 5 ports, but also adds another Treaty that Nanking Treaty did not allow, that construction the churches, hospitals and graveyard, but also repeal the ban foreigners to learn Chinese.

⁷ 1924-1925, Chinese people started the "Anti-Foreign people manager school movement", 1925 the Ministry of Education set up "foreign people donated law", principal shall be Chinese, the majority of the Board shall be Chinese people, school purposes shall not be involved in religious slogans.

On the dimension of compromises relationship between religious education and politics, Shanghai St. John's university is the latest school which filing to the Chinese government (1947). This school has accumulated considerable influence in Chinese society after decades of development, and it also seen their religious beliefs' persistence. These strength are stronger than other Christian Universities that they can compete with the Chinese political power. Because of the rising of Chinese political power and nationalism, St. John's University ultimately surrenders to political rationality under the influence of education policy, in order to filing and subjecting various laws which restrict religious activities. But under the ages of Chinese political upheaval, it eventually overwhelmed St. John's University (and all Christianity Universities). Under the rule of the Communist Party of China in 1952, the event "Colleges Merge" showed that the polices eradicated all (totally 13) Christianity schools, and politically controlled manager for religious schools. Whether in Shanghai or in Taipei are the same situations. The ROC government led by Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) continued their education policy in the period of ruling Taiwan. It declared martial law and started to thirty-eight years of military ruling.⁸ The fear and suspicion of Nation to religious groups do not disappear because of withdraw to Taiwan, religious groups are difficult to preach religion through the established school. But alumni came to Taiwan, it highly-anticipated to initiate recall, which makes Taiwan's Episcopal Church continually to play as a negotiator role between religion and education.

Anglican Church in Taiwan before 1949 was founded by Japan Anglican Church, Japan was defeated in World War II and the church member returned to Japan in 1945, so the parishioners and alumni are together with the KMT back to Taiwan. The members of Taiwan Anglican Church and alumni compare to Taiwanese people are relative closer to KMT government. Lots of alumni worked for government agency and stayed in the important positions. From 1949 to 1970, Vice President, Premier, Minister of Finance, almost served by alumni (or their husband) are easy to gained the trust from government. Religious groups must lay down their gesture, and compromise with educational institutions, limitations policy and the needs for the countries' economic development. Therefore it changed the original plan that established elementary or middle school and industrial college. The politics deeply influence Sin-pu college. In the first president Vivian Shun-wen Wu's efforts, she restored the traditional of St. John's University in Shanghai, and implemented the honor system, tutor system, and full member boarding system and so on. She tried to foster students' personality and seen these systems as character education which are rooted in religious philosophy in Shanghai. But because of the limited resources, the impact of political and economic rationality in Taiwan, the effect in Sin-pu College is greatly reduced, these personality education policies are not effective than military education. Of course, this consequence is resulted from compromising to the political forces, at the background that Taiwan society is ruled by martial law and adhered to political rationality as the prerequisite that religious schools are eager to survival.

4. Conflict and Compromise between Religious Education and Economic

On the dimension of conflict relationship between religion and the economy, religious missionary activities, if it simply stays in the church or mission agencies (such as overseas missionary), they don't have to worry the legitimacy of using the funds. But if they apply to another institution — "school", it needs to have enough reasons to convince religious groups and congregations to make their own money into a non-missionary educational institution. This depending on how the school can achieve the end of religious mission. In the beginning of St.

⁸ Taiwan's martial law began in 1949 when the KMT government went to Taiwan and end in 1987, during the 38 years, all the freely assembly and association are forbidden, the freedom of speech were great harm.

John's University, the sources of funds were provided by missionary home country through effective persuasion, but education as a tool can accumulate worldly wealth. Through the English education, this school can quickly accumulate school's prestige, attract more talented and rich students into the campus, and expand the influence of religious groups, but it also makes this school to become a tool to profit and strengthen the secular values, violate to the principles of religion away from worldly wealth. Along with the school's success, it attracted majority of students who are willing to study in this school. The mission of St. John's University transferred to education itself, though the church felt scruples for donations from alumni, but the results of aristocratic, the church can't afford the financial needs. Increasingly spending dependent on sources of funding tuition and alumni donations, the proportion of church funds is reduced, so that the school gradually achieved its independence and inherent laws, but also let the school's management in thinking and acting led by economic rationality. The principle of the religion which relationship established by universality and compatriots is replaced by the economic rationality which operates supply and demands rules. Consequently, the development of its direction and goals are different, church and school were becoming two opposites parties.

Moreover, religion and economic conflicts also appear in the process of funding Sin-pu College, since huge funds demand for construction. In 1968, Bishop Wang shifted the fund totally 13 million NT dollars for constructing another middle School and the Church Missionary fund which shocked the parish development and the relationship with church members. For that, Taiwan Episcopal Church must established the regulatory boundaries to prevent excessive demand from educational institutions snatch church resources, unto education the things which are education's, and unto church the things that are church's in order to avoid collapse Church's development.

On the dimension of compromises relationship between religious education and economic, the start-up process of Sin-pu, not only as previously discussion, a production of compromise within intellectual and politics, but also adhering economics rational needs.⁹ Taiwan Episcopal Church did not have enough money to establish the school, but the alumni supported with political and economic power, persuaded the Taiwan Episcopal church to bear the heavy responsibility. Although, the funds are due to Bishop Wang, they used the title of Taiwan Episcopal Church to collect money from alumni around the world. The purpose of funding sources is not simply for missionary purposes, but for the alma mater which alumni's memory in Shanghai. However, if it didn't compromise to economic rationality, there will be no funds to assist from the alumni, and the school can't be founded. Bishop Wang paid his personal health cost and spent three years after the school opened, he sudden death due to heart disease in 1970.¹⁰

Sin-pu College's subject to the constraints of economic rationality after opened, since the third year after started, fund raising money is limited, heavy financial pressure sacrificed Taiwanese first Chinese Bishop, unsustainable funding endanger school's survival. At this time, successor Bishop Pong (龐德明) and President Vivian Shun-wen Wu (吳舜文) borrow money from banks in order to survive.¹¹ The repayment method is

⁹ April 16, 1966, Sin-pu college formal preparatory committee was established, Bishop Wang registered in personal name to set up school to the provincial education department, the Ministry of Education is not expected to consider the establishment have too much, hope that handle Industrial College, so the school was forced to change plans. "Fourth Republic of China Education Yearbook", Part II, Chapter VIII "The establishment of private schools of management and counseling".

¹⁰ Bishop Wang participated in the Board meeting on March 24th, 1970, he said because of poor financial condition, fundraising has been difficult, he resign the chairman, but others member invited he stay in the Board, he got heart attack in the Easter Service in the night March 28, he did not recover after hospital treatment and died on April 27.

¹¹ "Data Files of the St. John's University Board", "the Board letter to the Taiwan Episcopal", January 14th, 1972: "since rescue plight, forced to loans the cost of construction from following semester tuition NT 5.5 million..."

increasing enrollment to complete, but it also affects the character education effectiveness which based on teacher-student relationship. The teaching content of Industry College is guiding by economic benefits, the departments and internship place are required the business and enterprise of alumni. The school-enterprise cooperation relationship also can earn a reputation to attract outstanding students, which shows that, if religion didn't compromise with economic rationality, it can't create this school.

5. Conclusion

Sin-pu college born in the aforementioned exclusively special environment, is the only University which teaches science and technology professional in Taiwan Christian university currently. Taiwan Episcopal church obtained a stable missionary territory after struggle in compromise and conflict between religion and secular education, however, if there is no one like Bishop Wang who bears the tension between religion and secular world, the school will not be born, Max Weber faced the nineteenth century German politics situation, he signs:

I say publicly ..., they did not realize that the things they want to take, but just revel in the romantic moving, among the terms of humanity, I lack of interest in this kind of thing, nothing can touch my heart (Max Weber, 1991, p. 237).

Max Weber was talking about politics, but the ethics conflict between religion and secular world was also found in previously discussion. Weber considered those who “acting by moving” were worthless. They just burning by personal, selfish desire, but never take responsibility for their actions (they always shirk their responsibility that God will take the responsibility), and next, Weber proposes his personal preferences and choices:

Those really makes infinite moving, is a mature person (regardless of age), sincere and wholehearted felt responsibility for the consequences, in accordance with the ethical responsibility to act ,in a certain situation comes then said: “Here I stand. I can do no other”, This is the ultimate expression of humanity, as long as our hearts are not yet dead, each one of us will find in this situation at some point, in this sense, mind ethics and responsibility ethics are not antithetical poles, but complementary to each other, these two ethics together, constitute a genuine person, one can have “engaged in the political mission” person (Max Weber, 1991, p. 237).

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