

Is the True Jesus Church a Chinese Indigenous/ Independent Pentecostal Denomination? With Special Reference to the Orientalism of Western Scholars toward “Pentecostalism” in the Global South

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Abstract: The True Jesus Church has been regarded as a Chinese Indigenous/Independent Pentecostal denomination by scholarship specifically in the area of Global Pentecostal/Charismatic Studies and World Christianity irrespective of those scholar’s definitions—inclusive or exclusive. This paper argues that it might be inappropriate for scholarship to define the True Jesus Church as Pentecostals at least for three factors: 1. The refusal from the True Jesus Church to be regarded as Pentecostalism due to its’ providential and exclusive self-identity; 2. The primary intent of the establishment of the True Jesus Church was to seek church independence and religious reformation rather than promote Pentecostal spirituality; 3. There is a lack of synchronous network between the True Jesus Church and Pentecostalism both at global and local levels. Also, this paper indicates a latent Orientalism among Western scholars of Pentecostalism based on an exotic imagination and representation of Non-Western Christianity enhanced by the complicity of Orientals and native informants.

Key words: Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies, the True Jesus Church, Independent Church, Chinese Christianity, Orientalism

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1. Introduction

Nowadays, studies on Christianity in China have been viewed under the concept of World Christianity, which emphasizes the developments of non-Western churches and their locality, diversity, and heterogeneity.¹ Therefore, indigenous/independent churches in the “Global South”

1 It was a summary for the definition of the term. Here, I try to juxtapose the perspectives of three (or four) scholars for reference. The first one is missiologist Andrew F. Walls, who saw a worldwide changing demography of Christianity. He called it “the massive movements toward the Christian faith in all the southern continents.” Walls described this phenomenon as “Christianity’s shifting center of gravity.” See Andrew F. Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996), 68; Andrew F. Walls, “The Transmission of Christian Faith: A Reflection,” in Sanneh and McClymond ed. *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to World Christianity* (Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 2016), 688. The second one is Lamin Sanneh, who tried to disconnect Christianity from its Western form of domination. According to him, World Christianity is a movement of Christianity, as it takes form and shape in societies that were previously not Christian, and it is an indigenized form of Christianity. See Lamin Sanneh, *Whose Religion is Christianity? The Gospel Beyond the West* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2003), 22. The third one(s) is Kirsteen Kim and Sebastian Kim, who stated that Christianity is one of the groups of trans-regional religions, all of which can be called “world religion.” Contrary to Walls and Sanneh, the Kims included Europe and the US into the term World Christianity. See Sebastian Kim and Kirsteen Kim, *Christianity as a World Religion: An Introduction* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), 1–4, 270–71.

have been attracting many western scholars more than mission churches. Anthropology of Christianity, a sub-discipline of Anthropology, was not formed until the Western anthropologists discovered non-Western Christianity, which reflects a cultural alterity more than the Christianity they thought was familiar in their daily lives and “ready-at-hand.”² The formation of Anthropology of Christianity was indirectly connected with World Christianity, but that in the “Global South” or non-Western world is significantly highlighted. However, the trend that Southern Christianity, particularly independent/indigenous churches being in favor with the Westerners, may result in an exotic imagination. As Philip Jenkins noted, “Members of Africa’s mainstream Catholic and Protestant churches often resent the attention that European and American academics pay to independent churches ... However, well-intentioned, this slant tends to make African Christianity look far more exotic and even syncretistic than it really is ... For academics and journalists alike, the ordinary is just not interesting.”³

The attention paid to Southern Christianity has been similarly paid to Pentecostals/Charismatics or churches with similar characteristics to the Global South. Dana Robert noticed that some observers are describing the ongoing growth of World Christianity as Pentecostal; Western Pentecostal scholars include all phenomenologically similar movements as somehow related to Pentecostalism or their own missionary success. Social scientists, particularly anthropologists, tend to describe new Christian movements as Pentecostal because of the prominence of common charismatic phenomena and the alleged marginalized social status of many adherents.⁴ With this trend, scholars conducting Pentecostal studies wish to find cases of indigenous/independent Pentecostal churches among Christianity in China; the True Jesus Church (TJC), a Chinese autochthonous Pentecostal-like body, became a prominent case of that. For example, Brill published a collection called *Global Chinese Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity* in 2017, part two of which is titled *A Chinese Pentecostal Denomination: The True Jesus Church*, which demonstrates the recognition from editors and some authors. Historians such as Daniel Bays,⁵ Deng Zhaoming,⁶ Lian Xi,⁷ and Murray Rubinstein⁸ also refer the TJC to Pentecostalism. Some

2 Jon Bialecki, Naomi Haynes, and Joel Robbins. “The Anthropology of Christianity,” *Religion Compass* 2, no.6 (2008): 1140.

3 Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 57–8.

4 Dana L. Robert, “Shifting Southward: Global Christianity Since 1945,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 24, no. 2 (2000): 57.

5 Daniel H. Bays, “Indigenous Protestant Churches in China, 1900–1937: A Pentecostal Case Study,” in *Indigenous Responses to Western Christianity* ed. Steven Kaplan (New York: New York University Press, 1994), 124–43; Daniel H. Bays, “China,” in *International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* ed. Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. van Der Mass (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 62–3.

6 Deng Zhaoming, “Indigenous Chinese Pentecostal Denominations,” in *Asian and Pentecostals: The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asia* ed. Allan Anderson and Edmond Tang (Oxford: Regnum, 2005), 441–52.

7 Lian Xi, *Redeemed by Fire: The Rise of Popular Christianity in Modern China* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 51.

8 Murray A. Rubinstein, “Holy Spirit Taiwan: Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity in the Republic of China,” in *Christianity in China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present* ed. Daniel H. Bays (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 353–66.

of them are ethnic Chinese, whereas they may be functioning as the role of “native informants,”⁹ who are trying to represent their perception of these independent churches with their Western training that has been used to orientalize the Orient. That is, they are attempting to present what the Western Scholars of Pentecostalism wish to find in Chinese Christianity.

This study argues that regarding the TJC as a Chinese indigenous/independent Pentecostal church is inappropriate. However, Western scholars of Pentecostalism used to doing so.

2. A brief Introduction to the origin of the TJC and Pentecostalism

Two different narratives about the origin of the TJC exist. The official and widely accepted version is Paul Wei (Wei Baoluo 魏保羅, formerly Wei Enbo 魏恩波) who established the church in Beijing in 1917. Wei converted to Christianity and was baptized by Samuel Evans Meech 宓治文 of London Mission Society (LMS) in 1904. Living in the context of the late Qing and early Republic, which might have provoked his patriotic sentiments, Wei felt LMS was a product of cultural imperialism by its name. Claiming to be inspired by an instructor Lu Wantian 鹿完天¹⁰ from Huiwen University, Wei started to engage himself in independent church movement. According to his autography, Wei launched a rally for establishing an independent church in “Ciqikou 磁器口” chapel (LMS East Liushujin chapel) and invited well-known local Christian leaders to take part in the rally.¹¹ With respect to this event, Melissa Inouye refers it to the “Chinese Christian Church 中華基督教會” (Zhonghua Jidujiaohui) established by Cheng Ching-Yi 誠靜怡 and some other Protestant leaders in 1912.¹² However, the credibility of this argument remains open to question. In reality, the “Chinese Christian Church” was established by Cheng in Dengshikou 燈市口 Chapel (LMS Mishi chapel) instead of Ciqikou Chapel.¹³ Judging from the context, even if

9 Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin Books, 2003), 324.

10 Lu was the author of *Brief Note of Boxer Rebellion in Beijing* 庚子北京事變紀略. According to his account in this book, he was besieged in the embassy of Beijing Legation Quarter 東交民巷 during the Boxer Rebellion. When the news that the Eight-Nation Alliance conquered Beijing resounded, Chinese Christians were frantic with joy for being saved by foreign powers, which got his mind into dilemmas. As a Christian on the one hand, he was joyful for the rescue from the threats of the boxers; as a Chinese on the other hand, as he saw Chinese army was defeated and escaped from Chongwenmen 崇文門 (one of the gates of Beijing city fortifications), his teardrops fell. See Gu Weiming, *Christianity and Modern Chinese Society* (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2010), 264.

11 Wei Baoluo, *True Testimony of the Holy Spirit* vol. 1 聖靈真見證冊(上) (Beijing: the True Jesus Church, 1918). 1-2.

12 Melissa Wei-Tsing Inouye, “Charismatic Crossings: The Transnational, Transdenominational Friendship of Bernt Berntsen and Wei Enbo,” in Fenggang Yang, Joy K. C. Tong, and Allan H. Anderson eds. *Global Chinese Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity* (Leiden and London, Brill, 2017), 100. The footnote shows that the citation came from Daniel H. Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China* (Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 110, but Bays did not mention Wei's involvement in Cheng's independent Church movement.

13 Jiang Lixun ed, *History of Religions in Beijing* 北京宗教史 (Beijing: Beijing Publishing House, 2007), 484; Marina Xiaojing Wang, “Cheng Jingyi and the Church of Christ in China,” 「實現一個純全中國本色化和合而為一的教會」: 誠靜怡與中華基督教會 *Ching Feng* 13, no.1-2 (2014): 90.

Wei was involved in the rally for the formation of “Chinese Christian Church,” he might only be one of the donors, for no other additional evidence can prove he was the organizer of the rally and the “Chinese Christian Church.” To some extent, becoming an advocate of independent church movement could be the first post-conversion crisis experience for Wei.

In 1915, Wei met Adventist missionary Arthur Clifford Selmon 施列民 and Xu Dianqin while they visited Beijing. After discussing doctrines with them, Wei decided to turn to keep the Sabbath, which could be his second post-conversion crisis experience.¹⁴ Since his conversion to Christianity, Wei had not been able to be a leader with discourse grabbed on his hands in the circle of independent church movement because of his lack of education and normal religious training. It was not until the receiving of Pentecostal experience that he obtained another type of religious authority from visions, dreams, or prophetic inspirations. His Pentecostal experience came from his encounter with a Norwegian-American Oneness Pentecostal missionary Bernt Berntsen 賁德新.

In 1916, Wei claimed his recovery from being sick through the prayer of elder Xin Shengmin 新聖民 from a Pentecostal church Faith Union 信心會;¹⁵ through him, Wei was acquainted with Berntsen. They became close friends, and Berntsen helped Wei a lot in his faith formation.¹⁶ Two reasons might explain their association: First, Berntsen also practiced the Sabbath keeping as Wei did; second, Wei said Berntsen looked financially “poor,” which means he was ethically just; hence, he might be different from other missionaries who were oppressing the Chinese. With the experience of inspiration and spiritual gifts as his authority, Wei began to develop his followers within the Faith Union. In May 1917, with claims of receiving extraordinary visions and revelations, Wei believed God pointed him to correct churches all over the world for their false doctrines. Wei called what he was doing “Universal Correction Teachings” 萬國更正教,¹⁷ and then renamed it as “the True Jesus Church” 真耶穌教會. One must notice that it was not yet a denomination initially. The term “Christianity” in early 20th century Chinese society was often called “Jesus Religion” 耶穌教, and the Christian church was called “Jesus Church” 耶穌教會. In accordance with this perspective, the TJC should be understood as “true” Jesus Church, which means his congregation is the true one, and others are false ones; hence, he must “correct” the latter into true churches. Significantly, to some extent, his reformation was based on the dislike of churches with mission ties or those that are incompletely independent from mission societies. In his view, the fundamental problem of these mission churches was the imperial power behind them. Meanwhile, the World War I, to him, demonstrated the Westerners’ low morality that made

14 Hsieh Shundao, *Pneumatology* 聖靈論 (Taichung: Philemon, 1966)

15 Sometimes also called Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM). Actually, AFM could not be understood as a denomination, rather it was a loose union for Pentecostal churches in China.

16 Wei, *True Testimony of the Holy Spirit* vol. 1, 1.

17 Some English writings translate the name as “Universal Correction Church.” However, it was not a “church” but something like a reformation movement to correct false teachings in all churches worldwide. “更正” Gengzhen is a verb that means “to correct something.”

it covet others' lands and commit killings, proving their preaching was false.¹⁸ One can conclude that first, "Universal Correction Teachings" and "the TJC" were types of radical independent church movement. Second, Wei used Pentecostal experience to empower himself for disclosure in promoting church independence.

Wei's "evangelistic" preaching was aggressive. As what Pentecostals and Berntsen were doing, Wei's converts were nearly all already Christians. Initially, the TJC post "Correction Principles" 更正條例 claimed receiving through inspiration from God to Protestant churches around Beijing, including Berntsen's Faith Union. Afterward, Wei visited those churches personally to convert church goers to his new revelation. Wei had been taken to authorities and detained because of his aggressive acts.¹⁹

With the revelations Wei declared about receiving and "Universal Correction Teaching" reformation, division between Wei and Berntsen came to the fore. Wei's exclusive statements reoriented his band as supreme position in Christianity, which reinforced the tension between the two Christian leaders. Another event that resulted in schism might be a financial issue. According to Wei, Berntsen's mission had an account at the Tianjin Bank. When Wei demanded to borrow money to start a new branch of his fabric store, he went to Berntsen for a loan; however, Berntsen required a 2% interest on the loan. Later, Wei failed to pay back the loan in time and was sued by Berntsen in court. Wei's attitude toward Berntsen became bitter, and he constantly described Berntsen as a mommonist.²⁰ However, Barnabas Zhang (Zhang Banaba 張巴拿巴, formerly Zhang Dianju 張殿舉), one of the three major pioneers of the TJC, presented a different description of the transaction through a comparison to Wei's report. According to Zhang, Berntsen loaned the money to Wei to earn interest. When Berntsen became aware of Wei's failing business, he wanted to withdraw the money he had loaned. However, Wei was unable to repay the funds.²¹ In any case, this event reinforced Wei's attitude of xenophobia, acting as a catalyst in promoting his radical church independence.

Despite the disconnection from Berntsen, in the rest of Wei's life, the interaction between them was unchanged, and the boundary between the two parties remained fluid and ambiguous for a time; they kept a relationship that was incompatible but interactive. Historiographies about the TJC simply noted it was established in 1917, but determining the discontinuity point of the TJC and the Faith Union was difficult. Therefore, 1917 is not a clear watershed, as many historians have stated. Wei's death in 1919 only put an end to the interaction between the TJC and Berntsen's Pentecostal mission.

18 Wei Baoluo, "Serious Transgressions of Religious Leaders from Every Country," 宗教各國掌大權者大罪過 *Universal Correction News* 萬國更正教報 no. 1 (1919): 3; Wei Baoluo, "An Open Letter to Foreigners by the Holy Spirit," 聖靈指示致外國公函 *Universal Correction News* 萬國更正教報 no. 1 (1919): 6.

19 Wei Baoluo, "Notes of Wei Baoluo for being detained for the second time," *Universal Correction News* 萬國更正教報 no. 1 (1919): 1.

20 Wei Baoluo, *True Testimony of the Holy Spirit* vol. 1 聖靈真見證冊(上), 121-122.

21 Barnabas Zhang, *Travel Notes of Preaching* 傳道記 (Nanjing: The True Jesus Church, 1929), 9.

Wei passed away on October 29, 1919, with 60 churches left behind. His son Wei Yisa 魏以撒 and Liang Qinming 梁欽明²² were appointed to be in charge of affairs of the Beijing General Assembly, but Wei Yisa was the real leader-in-chief. To continue Wei Baoluo's ministry, the TJC called the first general congress on May 1, 1920. At this meeting, Liang, Gao Daling 高大齡,²³ and Zhang Lingsheng (Zhang Lingsheng 張靈生, formerly Zhang Bin 張彬) were appointed to preside over affairs of the general assembly while Wei was still the real leader.²⁴

Another narrative of the genesis of the TJC is from Barnabas Zhang and Zhang Lingsheng's statements. According to Barnabas Zhang, the TJC was established by him in 1912 and was based on Zhang Lingsheng's independent church "Jesus True Church" 耶穌真教會 formed in Shangdong in 1910.²⁵ Zhang Lingsheng had been a presbyterian before encountering Pentecostals through his son Zhang Puquan 張溥泉's introduction to a missionary of Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM), Shanghai in 1909.²⁶ He received Spirit Baptism and spoke in tongues at home in 1910. Zhang preached the Pentecostal belief to his family and relatives, and Barnabas Zhang was among them.²⁷ Zhang Lingsheng went to Suzhou and got himself baptized by immersion again by a Pentecostal minister.²⁸ Which AFM was it? Who is the missionary that he met? In Allan

22 In 1919, under his promotion, a viral sensation of "Changing each one's surname to Ye (耶)" occurred in the TJC. In Chinese, Jehovah has been transliterated as Yehehua 耶和華, and Liang took "Ye" as the surname of God. He suggested that since all TJC members are children of God and belong to one family, everyone should change their surname to "Ye." Wei highly agreed with Liang's suggestion because surname is something constructed by humans. See "Now some sixty True Jesus Churches in China are in unity and became one family of Ye," 現在中華國六十餘處真耶穌教會聯合一家同姓耶 *Universal Correction News* 萬國更正教報 no. 3 (1919): 4. In my opinion, this action might be influenced by Buddhists. Chinese Buddhist monks took "Shi" 釋 as their surname, for Buddha's title Śākyamuni was transliterated to Chinese as shijiamoni 釋迦牟尼. Before the East Jin Dynasty 東晉, Chinese Buddhist monks used to take their master's surname as theirs, and then Master Daoan 道安法師 indicated that Śākyamuni is the greatest master. From that time on, all the Chinese monks' surname became "Shi" 釋.

23 Gao was a "bachelor" 稟貢 while living in the Ching Dynasty. He used to be a Mandarin instructor for well-known missionary Timothy Richard. Before joining the TJC in 1920, Gao established an independent church named the New Jesus Church 新耶穌教會 with a clear intention to get rid of mission churches. In the winter of 1920, Wei Yisa preached in Shanxi where he lived, receiving Wei's preaching, and he converted his New Jesus Church to the TJC. Wei Yisa 魏以撒 ed. *Commemorative Volume on the Thirtieth Anniversary of the Founding of the True Jesus Church* 真耶穌教會創立三十週年紀念專刊 (Nanjing: True Jesus Church, 1947), M10; Gao Daling 高大齡, "A Letter from a New Church Established in Shanxi which is the True Jesus Church," 由山西太原自立新教會就是真耶穌教會來函 *Universal Correction News* 萬國更正教報 no. 5 (1920):1.

24 Wei, *Commemorative Volume on the Thirtieth Anniversary*, D1-D2.

25 Jiang Yuehan 蔣約翰 ed. *Commemorative Volume on the Tenth Anniversary of Headquarters of the True Jesus Church* 真耶穌教會總部十週年紀念專刊 (Shanghai: The Headquarters of the True Jesus Church, 1936), 80-1; Zhang, *Travel Notes of Preaching*, 4.

26 According to Christian Teachers' List at The China Continuation Committee ed. *Chinese Christian Church Year Book* vol. 4 (Shanghai: The Christian Literature Society for China, 1917), 266, Zhang Puquan was a member for Baoshan Road AFM in 1917. The church he attended in 1909 might be the one mentioned above.

27 Zhang Lingsheng, "For the Baptism of the Holy Spirit," 為聖靈施洗 *Popular Gospel Truths* 通傳福音真理報 no. 4 (1915):2; Zhang Hongxin 張鴻信, "The Evidence of Independence," 自立明證 *The Sound of the Horn* 角聲報 no. 36 (1935):6. Hongxin is Barnabas' father who was one of those taught by Zhang Lingsheng about the belief of Spirit Baptism.

28 Wei, *Commemorative Volume on the Thirtieth Anniversary*, D1-D2.

Anderson's opinion, it might be either George Hensen²⁹ or Nattie Moomau;³⁰ according to Bays, it might be Mr. and Mrs. Lawler.³¹ From my judgment, the AFM church Zhang Lingsheng contacted in Shanghai and Suzhou might be Moomau's. According to a resource, Moomau built her unit in Suzhou in 1909,³² and a church was planted in Baoshan Road, Shanghai in the same year.³³ It might be the AFM church his son had been attending since 1909. Although Barnabas Zhang was taught by Zhang Lingsheng to seek Spirit Baptism, he entirely denied the influence from the former. According to his report, on his way home one day, he prayed for obtaining "the spirit of Prophets and Apostles" on a ridge; suddenly, he heard a voice from heaven saying, "The salvation in the end time will be preached from the east to the west; you have to preach this message and awake all the people." At the same time, his body was shaking, he started singing "Hallelujah," and then started speaking in tongues spontaneously.³⁴ He also claimed to receive a revelation that one should be "Baptized in Jesus' name" in February 1911.³⁵ As far as Pentecostal historians know, it was not until a camp in 1913 that Oneness doctrine had been formed.³⁶ If Zhang's statement was true, then the history of Oneness Pentecostals in North America might have to be rewritten. No evidence has been found, except his claim suggesting that Barnabas Zhang practiced the Oneness formula of baptism in 1911. It seems like an intentional redaction for his *Travel Notes of Preaching* to ignore his connection with Pentecostals. Zhang Lingsheng and Barnabas Zhang also related to Berntsen. A TJC official literature reports that Zhang Lingsheng went to Beijing for being ordained by Berntsen and "Elder Qui" 奎長老 in 1914.³⁷ We have no idea how Zhang Lingsheng contacted Berntsen, but in my opinion, Hansen might be the medium that connected them because of his close relation to Berntsen and his residence in Shanghai. Barnabas Zhang also had a connection with Berntsen. As Barnabas Zhang reported, in the spring of 1915, Berntsen and Zhao Deli 趙德理 came to Shangdong to negotiate with Zhang in cooperation of running a

29 When Berntsen left for China from the Azusa Street where he received Spirit Baptism. He recruited 12 missionaries to China with him, and Hansen is one of them. Her daughter Helga became Berntsen's son Henry's wife. Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires: The Missionary Nature of Early Pentecostalism* (London: SCM & Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 2007), 133. R.G. Tiedemann, "The Origins and Organizational Developments of the Pentecostal Enterprise in China," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 14, no. 1 (2011): 138; B. Berntsen, "Came from China to America for Pentecost," *The Bridegroom's Messenger* 1, no. 14 (1908): 2

30 Anderson, *Spreading Fires*, 137.

31 Bays, "Indigenous Protestant Churches in China," 132.

32 "Pentecostal News," *Bridegroom's Messenger* 3, no. 49 (1909): 2.

33 Zhang Hua 張化, "A Review of Spiritual Church in Shanghai in the first half 20th Century," 20 世紀上半葉上海基督教屬靈派評述 *Christian Scholarship 基督教學術* [Jidujiao xueshu] 17 (2017): 23.

34 Zhang, *Travel Notes of Preaching*, 1-3.

35 Ibid, 4.

36 See, Douglas Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit: Theologies of the Early Pentecostal Movement* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2003), 238-39.

37 Hsieh, *Pneumatology*, 175. Some English writings note that Zhang Lingsheng was ordained by "Elder Peterson," see Anderson, *Spreading Fires*, 137; Daniel H. Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China* (Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 129. Actually, it was Berntsen. "Peterson" was a wrong name cited from Chinese scholar Deng Zhaoming's work "The True Jesus Church Yesterday and Today (Part I)," *Bridge* no. 62 (1993): 4.

church. Barnabas Zhang accused Berntsen's teaching of "going against the truth" and hence cut off connection with Berntsen.³⁸ According to my observation, Zhang's *Travel Notes of Preaching* was not merely a journal recording his life and ministry, but a rhetoric work used for the justification of his "orthodox" and the stand of the founder in building the TJC as he was expelled from it in 1929. Therefore, in this writing, he estranged himself from the influence of Zhang Lingsheng and Berntsen and attributed his practices or teachings to revelations from the Divine.

According to Barnabas Zhang, his TJC combined with Wei's Universal Correction Teaching into "Universal Correction True Jesus Church" 萬國更正教真耶穌教會 in 1918, but the two parties separated in 1920.³⁹ To put it simply, Barnabas Zhang stated that Wei established Universal Correction Teaching; he launched the TJC, but Wei and his fellows misused the name and thus confused the believers. This narrative began in 1920s. In Spring 1924, Wei Yisa sent a letter about holding a third general congress to Gao Daling in Shanxi, Zhang Lingsheng in Shandong, and Barnabas Zhang preaching in Fuzhou. Gao suggested that the congress could be convened in Henan in April, and the TJC members there welcomed Gao's suggestion. However, Barnabas Zhang merely responded that he would not be available to take part in the congress in the first half of 1924. Gao and Wei arrived at Henan in advance during the spring season waiting for Barnabas Zhang's response, but he did not reply. However, in May, Zhang suddenly mailed to churches in the south in his name that the general congress is going to be held in Changsha, Hunan. From 1924 onwards, Zhang alienated from churches in the North (most of them were churches affiliated with Gao and Wei in Shanxi, Hebei, and Beijing) on purpose; among churches in the south (most of them established by him), he started to spread the narrative that he was the founder of the TJC, and the so-called "TJC" in the north was in fact Wei's "Universal Correction Teaching."⁴⁰ During the 1920s, apart from continuing to spread his "orthodoxy" in the formation of the TJC, Zhang also launched a great expansion of the TJC to the southern provinces, Japanese colonial Taiwan, and ethnic Chinese communities in Southeast Asia. During this era, the South TJC directed by Barnabas Zhang increasingly became organized and denominational, not a movement anymore.

As the Sixth Congress was about to be convened in 1929, a suggestion urging the headquarters to explore the TJC's historical origin was proposed by some delegates because questions had been raised about the claim of Barnabas Zhang on the origin of the TJC. At the Seventh Congress in 1930, a conclusion and consequence were reached that the TJC was established by Wei Baoluo in 1917, which means Zhang is not the founder. Consequently, Zhang was anathematized by and excommunicated from the TJC, and the North Churches and the South Churches merged again.⁴¹

38 Zhang, *Travel Notes of Preaching*, 9.

39 Ibid, 27.

40 Wei, *Commemorative Volume on the Thirtieth Anniversary*, D4. Zhang called this meeting "the Second Congress" for not accepting the First Congress that he did not attend. Meanwhile, he intentionally ignored the fact of receiving a letter from the north informing holding the Third Congress in his *Travel Notes of Preaching*. Instead, he only mentioned "the Second Congress" is going to be held in the middle of April (lunar calendar). See Zhang, *Travel Notes of Preaching*, 83.

41 Wei, *Commemorative Volume on the Thirtieth Anniversary*, D6-D8, D12-D13.

Before Zhang's excommunication from the TJC in 1930, he moved his headquarters to Hong Kong in 1929 and renamed the church to "Chinese True Jesus Mission." Churches admitting his authority continued being affiliated with him. In 1932, Zhang established a branch in Ipoh, Malaya, which became the base of his church in Southeast Asia.⁴² Zhang came back to China in 1933 and set the general assembly in Nanjing.⁴³ When the Sino-Japanese war broke out in 1937, his church moved to Hankou,⁴⁴ and then resettled in Hong Kong the following year. In 1939, the general assembly was migrated to Ipoh. In October 1947, Zhang went to Singapore with it; note that his migration to Singapore was expedience, and he planned to move the general assembly back to China if the political situation become stable in the future.⁴⁵ However, Zhang never went back to China since then, and he died in Singapore in 1961. Today, the headquarters of his True Jesus Mission is still located in Singapore.⁴⁶

During the 1920s, when Barnabas Zhang presided over the TJC, some crucial doctrines were established. First, the TJC started to declare that it is the only true church. An article in 1926 asserted that the TJC is the only gate for salvation. In John 10:7-8, Jesus said he is the gate for the sheep, all who came before him were thieves and robbers; hence, the gate for salvation should be exclusively one, and this gate is the only true church directed to the TJC.⁴⁷ Second, the discourse of "Latter Rain of the Holy Spirit" came to the fore. Zhang Sajia stated that the place where the Restoration of the Latter Rain of the Holy Spirit occurred will be at the East, where the TJC is established in China. As the ark made by Noah was distinguished from other boats, this true church is distinguished from churches made by men. He stated that the TJC is the end time ark.⁴⁸ Zhang allegorically argued that the Bible made a prophecy that the Spirit will cease falling down for three and a half years or 42 months, which means 1,260 years (Revelation 12:14; 11:2); Elijah prayed for the rain to stop for three and a half years; according to James 5:7, when the right time comes, it will rain again. He contended that rain in the paragraphs is the symbol of the Spirit; the understanding of the cease falling down of the Spirit is therefore biblical.⁴⁹ The metaphor of "Latter Rain of the Holy Spirit" was obviously borrowed from Pentecostals but was used by the

42 "Announcement of the True Jesus Mission," 真耶穌教會啟事 *Sound of the Horn* Special Issue (1932): 29.

43 Cao Guangjie 曹光潔, "A Manuscript of a letter to Nanjing City Government," 呈南京市政府抄稿 *Sound of the Horn* 1, no. 1 (1933): 9-10.

44 Zhou Chengtian 周承奠, "The process of traveling from Nanjing to Hankou," 從南京到漢口的過程 *Sound of the Horn* no. 10-11 (1937): 11-2.

45 Barnabas Zhang, "An Open Letter," 公函 *Sound of the Horn* Reissue no. 1 (1947): 2; Barnabas Zhang, "A Brief Note of Traveling to the South" 南遊短記 *Sound of the Horn* Reissue no. 1 (1947): 32; Barnabas Zhang, "Announcement of the General Assembly," 總會啟事 *Sound of the Horn* Reissue no. 1 (1947): 15.

46 I visited this "headquarters" on January 28, 2018, and also paid homage to Zhang at Choa Chu Kang Columbarium two days ago.

47 Yu Zifang 余子芳, "The True Jesus Church Is the Only Gate for Salvation," 真耶穌教會為得救獨一之門徑 *Holy Spirit Times* 1, no. 1 (1926): 1-2.

48 Zhang Sajia 張撒迦, "The Overview of the Latter Rain of the Holy Spirit and the True Church. Part 3," 晚雨聖靈與真教會之概觀(三) *Holy Spirit Times* 2, no. 6 (1927): 6-7.

49 Zhang Sajia, "The Difficulties in Interpreting the Bible," 聖經之難解 *Holy Spirit Times* 1, no. 3 (1926): 9.

TJC to justify its uniqueness and supremacy by claiming it is the latter rain. Zhang stated that when the early rain fell down, the Spirit began sawing; then, the rain stopped working; finally, the latter rain fell down, the Spirit began harvesting, and the current falling down of the latter rain signified that the age of the true church has come.⁵⁰ Third, Amillennial eschatology. In 1927, Huang Chengcong 黃呈聰 wrote an article opposing Premillennialism and Postmillennialism. He thought that both center on building visible earthly kingdom, but the Kingdom of Christ should be spiritual. Believers will exist as spiritual bodies after their resurrection, living with human beings having physical bodies will be impossible for them. Huang claimed that the current period is a millennium, and those who received the Holy Spirit and overcame sins by the truth are living in the new era where Jesus is ruling with them.⁵¹ Furthermore, the Five Major Doctrines of the TJC holding today can be traced back in 1928, which were the Holy Spirit (Spirit Baptism), Baptism (in Jesus' name by immersion with the face down), Holy Communion, Sabbath, and foot washing.⁵² In my view, ecclesiology is the core element in the process of the formation of doctrines for the TJC. On the basis of the ecclesiological discourse, the TJC cut off its relationship with Pentecostalism.

3. Oriental imagination of the Western Pentecostal scholarship upon the TJC

With the tendency of focusing on Christianity in the Global South, independent churches with Pentecostal origins or characteristics, such as African Independent Churches (AICs), were often taken as cases of independent/indigenous Pentecostal churches by scholars of Pentecostalism and so were the TJC in China. The definition of Pentecostalism can be divided into inclusive and exclusive definitions; the former is usually held by social scientists or historians from universities, reflecting the perspectives of outsiders; whereas the latter is more insider-oriented, mostly advocated by theologians or historians from seminaries and Bible colleges. As the name implies, scholars who adopt the exclusive definition suggests a cautious view on defining who Pentecostals are; usually, those who are estranged from Classical Pentecostals are excluded from the scope of

50 Zhang Sajia, "The Overview of the Latter Rain of the Holy Spirit and the True Church. Part 2," 晚雨聖靈與真教會之概觀(二) *Holy Spirit Times* 2, no. 5 (1927): 14. The term "latter rain" has been adopted by Pentecostals and is a metaphor according to the weather in Palestine where the rain falls down twice in autumn and spring. The former is called early rain; the latter is called latter rain. To Pentecostals, the event at Pentecost in Acts 2 was the early rain, whereas the Pentecostal movement was the latter rain. See Peter Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days: Pentecostal Eschatology in Conversion with Jürgen Moltmann* (London & New York: T&T Clark, 2003), 18. See also Lian Xi, "The Search for Chinese Christianity in the Republican Period (1912–1949)," *Modern Asian Studies* 38, no. 4 (2004): 892, Lian indicates that the TJC and the Little Flock set in motion a global Salvationism launched from China.

51 Huang Chengcong, "Critiques on different millennialism," *Holy Spirit Times* 2, no. 7 (1927): 5–6. Huang was a famous Taiwanese elite promoting the Taiwan Parliament Petition League Movement in the Japanese colonial era. Since his conversion to the TJC in 1925, he withdrew from political engagement.

52 Guo, Meitu 郭美徒, "Truths that are necessarily to be practiced for Saints," *Holy Spirit Times* 3, no. 1 (1928): 22.

Pentecostals. However, in the TJC, both camps regard it as Pentecostal church. I would like to indicate that both do it on the basis of a certain type of latent Orientalism.

3.1 The Triumphalism of Exclusive Definition

Logically, scholars who adopt the “exclusive definition” are expected to be strict in defining Pentecostalism, and they incline to exclude groups or individuals who cannot conform to a set of historical or theological criteria from Pentecostalism. However, some of them triumphantly proclaim that the population of Pentecostal/Charismatic has reached approximately 500 million or 600 million by citing David Barrett, Todd Johnson, and Peter F. Crossing’s figures.⁵³ Anderson is a cautious “inclusivist” who worried about potential problems the statistics resulted in. First, the credibility is problematic. As Anderson said, according to Barrett and Johnson’s statistics in 2003, 523 million Pentecostals/Charismatics existed globally. Looking into their statistics, the 394 million “independents,” who also contained the “non-white indigenous” category in their previous statistics, were included into the realm of Pentecostals/Charismatics. Most “non-white indigenous” churches are the “Han Chinese churches” with an estimated 80 million people and the AICs with 55 million people, the figure of which is perhaps not very accurate.⁵⁴ In my opinion, the “independents” might be added to the third sub-group of Pentecostals/Charismatics/Neocharismatics. I would like to raise a relevant question. How many members among “Han Chinese churches” and AICs can be counted as Neocharismatics? Some Westerners have kept assuming the Southern Christians are predominately Pentecostal or have portrayed them as Pentecostals because their spirituality is often deemed to practicing Christianity, which is pre-Enlightenment, pre-modern, and irrational. Second, Barrett’s figures have not been analyzed into small sub-categories but have been combined as a single category, which resulted in some western Classical Pentecostal scholars quoting these inaccurate and exaggerated statistics as a proof of their particular form of Pentecostalism. They uncritically declare that Pentecostalism has grown to half a billion members without analyzing what is included in these figures; these scholars also connect such striking growth to missions of the Azusa Street Revival.⁵⁵ Anderson stated that if these Pentecostal scholars use these statistics, they should accept the “inclusive definition.”⁵⁶ Compared with “inclusivists,” “exclusivist” Pentecostal scholars rarely pay attention to the

53 David B. Barrett and Todd M. Johnson, “Annual Statistical Table on Global Mission: 2003,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 27, 1(2003): 25; David B. Barrett, Todd M. Johnson and Peter F. Crossing, “Missiometrics 2008: Reality Checks for Christian World Communions,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 32, no. 1 (2008): 30.

54 Allan H. Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 11–2.

55 Allan H. Anderson, “Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity,” in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to World Christianity* ed. Lamin Sanneh and Michael J. McClymond (West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2016), 655; Allan Anderson, “When is a Pentecostal not a Pentecostal? When She is a Charismatic! Responding to Irving, López Rodríguez and Wadrop,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 16, 1(2007): 60–1.

56 Allan Anderson, “Stretching the Definition? Pneumatology and ‘Syncretism’ in African Pentecostalism,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 10, no. 1 (2001): 99.

Southern Christianity, and they mostly tend to view it as something radiated or reproduced from Western Christianity. Fortunately, some emic scholars noticed those non-Western churches. Luke Wesley, an American missionary to China, is an example.⁵⁷ His research on Chinese “Pentecostal” churches obviously reflects the triumphalism mentioned previously while he has been holding the “exclusive definition.” Reviewing Danial Bays’ studies on Chinese indigenous/independent churches, Wesley suggested that the major influential Christian groups in the pre-1949 era were indigenous/independent churches, which were predominately Pentecostal.⁵⁸ He also cited Barrett’s debatable figures that over 54 million Pentecostals/Charismatics/Neocharismatics now reside in China.⁵⁹ Analyzing five major unregistered church⁶⁰ networks: China for Christ 華人歸主 (Fang Cheng 方城團契), China Gospel Fellowship 中華福音團契 (Tang He 唐河團契), Li Xin Church 利辛教會, Ying Shang Church 穎上教會, and Word of Life Church 生命之道教會 (Born Again Movement 重生派), he tried to divide them into four categories as distinctions with theological criteria: 1. Non-charismatic, 2. Charismatic, 3. Pentecostal, and 4. Classical Pentecostal.⁶¹ He argued that this taxonomy makes sense in the context of Christianity in China, for the three-fold classification of the *New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* defines the terms on the basis of ecclesiastical considerations, which are less helpful for elucidating the specific nature and theological orientation of the various groups in Chinese churches.⁶²

I cannot agree with his classification that is solely based on theological sense because of the historical decontextualization. It cannot be considered as exclusive definition,⁶³ for which, is never only based on theology. Historical linking and ecclesiastical considerations are also important

57 It is a pseudonym of a New Testament scholar being a missionary in China. To avoid possible problems, I would not use his real name here.

58 Luke Wesley, “Is the Chinese Church Predominately Pentecostal?” *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 7, no. 2 (2004): 247–48.

59 Ibid, 249. Actually, with contemporary post-denominational Christian reality in China, dividing churches into Pentecostals, Charismatics or Neocharismatics is impossible. If possible, according to the taxonomy provided by the *New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, those Chinese “Pentecostal” churches should be regarded as Neocharismatic.

60 I did not call them “House Church,” which has not been able to reflected the reality of Christianity in China. For not all the non-Three Self Patriotic Movement churches worship at households, some of them have their own buildings even chapels for religious meetings. See Joseph Tse-hee Lee, “Christianity in Contemporary China: An Update,” *Journal of Church and State* 49, no. 2 (2007): 279.

61 Wesley, “Is the Chinese Church Predominately Pentecostal?” 228. In Wesley’s definition, 1. Non-Charismatic means those Christians who believe that the Spirit’s work flows out of regeneration and who deny a Baptism in the Spirit distinct from conversion and the validity of at least some of the gifts of the Spirit listed in 1 Cor 12:8–10 for the church today; 2. Charismatic means those Christians who believe that all of the gifts listed in 1 Cor 12:8–10, including prophecy, tongues, and healing, are available to the Church today; 3. Pentecostal refers to those Christians who believe that all of the gifts listed in 1 Cor 12:8–10 are available to the Church today and who also believe that the Bible encourages every believer to experience a Baptism in the Spirit, an empowerment for service distinct from regeneration; 4. Classical Pentecostal means those Christians who, in addition to the beliefs ascribed to Pentecostals above, also affirm that speaking in tongues is the accompanying sign of Baptism in the Spirit.

62 Wesley, “Is the Chinese Church Predominately Pentecostal?” 229.

63 Strangely, Wesley was critical of the “inclusive definition” in another work of his. He stated that if every similar movement can be called Pentecostal, then this term would be meaningless.

factors for defining Pentecostal in an exclusive manner. Wesley failed to unearth the evidence where the Pentecostal/Charismatic forms of belief and practice came from.⁶⁴ In addition, these four criteria are quite controversial. It is doubtful if the term “Pentecostal/Classical Pentecostal” and “Charismatic” can be defined by theological perspectives only; historical consideration is not only helpful but also dispensable. No theology can be isolated from historical context.⁶⁵ Unregistered churches connected to foreign Pentecostal/Charismatic churches, such as the five “house church” networks he noted, have many types. While not rejecting Pentecostalism, many of these churches are unwilling to take their root in a certain tradition.⁶⁶

Wesley did not entirely disregard historical roots while proclaiming Chinese Church is predominately Pentecostal by quoting Danial Bays’ scholarly works, which mention that the history of Pentecostal denominations from overseas and note that among the three largest independent Chinese churches that sprang up in the early part of the 20th century (The TJC, The Little Flock, and the Jesus Family), two were Pentecostal.⁶⁷ From my understanding, Bays did not contend that Chinese Church is predominately Pentecostal in the pre-1949 era and today. Rather, Bays articulated the internal familiarity between folk religion elements among Chinese indigenous/

64 Wesley’s interview with the five house churches’ leaders suggested that the five groups should be categorized as follows: 1. China for Christ: largely classical Pentecostal, partly Pentecostal; 2. China Gospel Fellowship: largely Pentecostal, partly charismatic; 3. Yin Shang Church: largely Pentecostal, partly charismatic; 4. Li Xin Church: largely Pentecostal, partly charismatic; and 5. Word of Life Church: largely non-charismatic, partly charismatic. See Wesley, “Is the Chinese Church Predominately Pentecostal?” 242.

65 The two or three categories are even inconsistent theologically within and between each tradition or group. The distinctions between Pentecostal/Classical Pentecostal and Charismatic are not only about the doctrine of Spirit Baptism that consists of “subsequence experience” and “initial evidence.” For instance, the Oneness Pentecostals do not hold “subsequence experience,” but some revivalists advocate this belief without the initial evidence of speaking in tongues. If Wesley’s criteria make sense, then those revivalists can be counted as “Pentecostal.” Some Classical Pentecostal denominations, such as Elim Pentecostal Church, Swiss Pentecostal Mission, and Methodist Pentecostal Church in Chile, do not support the “initial evidence” doctrine. If Wesley’s criteria are reasonable enough, should they be excluded from the category of Classical Pentecostal? While some Charismatics believe in “subsequence experience” and “initial evidence,” are they also Classical Pentecostal? Evidently, theological considerations are not enough to classify these churches. Even if insisting the use of theology as a criterion, it cannot be confined to Pneumatology only. The theological distinctions between Pentecostal/Classical Pentecostal and Charismatic should contain ecclesiology and eschatology. For instance, with the respect to ecclesiology, Charismatics are more ecumenical and catholic in general and are more positive to sacraments and traditions, whereas Classical Pentecostals mostly emphasize the invisible Church and are relatively negative toward the ecumenicity and catholicity of the Church. They even tend to practice separatism. Their view about ordinances is close to what low churches or Anabaptists often hold. In terms of eschatology, Classical Pentecostals tend to advocate dispensational premillennialism while Charismatics are not interested in millennialism.

66 Please refer to “The Statement of Faith for House Churches in China” 中國家庭教會信仰告白. This statement of faith was initiated by four House church networks (Li Xin is excluded). When it comes to the Holy Spirit, the statement clearly refuses cessationism and advocates the moving of Spiritual gifts for today. However, with respect to tongues speaking, it takes the position of “forbid not, insist not”(more positive than what the C&MA takes). These church networks have a clear synchronic connection with foreign Pentecostal churches, especially Fang Cheng Fellowship and Tang He fellowship, which has a strong connection with American Pentecostal clergy Dennis Balcombe 包德寧 in Hong Kong. See Zhang Yinan 張義南, *Sixty Years of Chinese House Churches* 中國家庭教會六十年 (Hong Kong: Revival Chinese Ministries, 2010), 136-39. According to Zhang, he hopes his church can learn from various Christian traditions and “discard the weeds, retain the flowers.” He is reluctant to confine his church to Pentecostalism.

67 Wesley, “Is the Chinese Church Predominately Pentecostal?” 247.

independent Christianity and Pentecostalism; he also noted another type of independent church movement, which is out of “Sino–Foreign Protestant Establishment.”⁶⁸ Bays did not entirely intend to boast of the figures of spreading or growing of Pentecostal. Whether those churches, especially the TJC that Wesley focused on, could be seen as Pentecostal (or more Chinese local term: Charismatic) by contemporary Chinese Christians in the pre-1949 era remains questionable. Despite the indirect link between the TJC and Azusa Street, the former left the network of Pre-1949 Chinese Pentecostals. Whether the Christians in the pre-1949 China are Pentecostal, the TJC would not be regarded as Pentecostal, and vice versa.

As mentioned above, the TJC has a historical connection with Oneness Pentecostal, out of which, some scholars and ministers uncritically include the TJC into the category of Oneness Pentecostalism on the basis of the diachronic link and the familiarity of its Oneness doctrine. Given this reason, the statistics of Global Oneness Pentecostals spurred a surge in some statistics. For example, official scholar David K. Bernard, from the largest Oneness Pentecostal denomination United Pentecostal Church, included the TJC in the Oneness Pentecostal Camp without further explanation.⁶⁹ Talmadge L. French, PhD graduate of Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies, University of Birmingham from the same denomination, also regards the TJC as the largest autochthonous Oneness Pentecostal Church in the world.⁷⁰ What French has done also reflects obvious triumphalism. Assessing the number of TJC members globally is difficult, but according to French’s assessment, it could be 1.8 million.⁷¹ French stated that 27.4 million Oneness Pentecostals exist globally, by quoting the assessed figures of Oneness Research Institute in 2008; he also said that this number has increased to approximately 30 million today.⁷² Including the TJC can become a substantial “income” for the total statistics of Global Oneness Pentecostalism. What French has done might be inspired and justified by Birmingham’s inclusive definition. In his PhD dissertation, French criticized Classical Pentecostal’s traditional definition by the “initial evidence” posed by Assemblies of God (AG). He said, “Essentially, the dominant Evangelical, fundamentalist, and ultimately, AG definitions, including dominant history, were usually viewed as adequate and representative, as, more or less, a microcosm of the Pentecostal movement as a whole.”⁷³ French, in particular, directed against the historiography of AG historians William W. Menzies and Edith L. Blumhofer because their works were critical and biased in their analyses

68 Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China*, 100, according to his description, it was a group of influential people who were the product of a series of processes and events of the period from 1900 to about the end of World War I.

69 David K. Bernard, *The Oneness of God* (Hazelwood, MO: Word Aflame, 1983), 245.

70 Talmadge Leon French, “Early Oneness Pentecostalism, Garfield Thomas Haywood, and the Interracial Pentecostal Assemblies of the World (1906–1931),” (PhD Thesis: University of Birmingham, 2011), 285.

71 Ibid, 6. According to a rough estimation in Jiexia Zhai Autry, “Pentecostal Christianity and Church-State Relation of China: A Case of the True Jesus Church Movement,” *Review of Faith & International Affairs* 11, no. 3 (2013): 48, the TJC has 1.5 million believers in China.

72 French, “Early Oneness Pentecostalism, Garfield Thomas Haywood, and the Interracial Pentecostal Assemblies of the World (1906–1931),” 5.

73 Ibid, 3.

of Oneness origins. He also accused them of intending to represent Pentecostalism with AG history. French continued his severe criticism: “Such a starting point is, obviously, a problematic definitional standard, not only for Oneness Pentecostalism but also for large segments of diverse Pentecostals, not the least of which are the burgeoning autochthonous Pentecostals worldwide.”⁷⁴ The main reason why French blamed the definitional standard of Classical Pentecostals or AG might be his discontent toward the prolonged marginalization of Oneness Pentecostals within the Pentecostal tradition. In his view, Menzies and Blumhofer portrayed Oneness Pentecostals as a doctrinal debate, even a problem that resulted in the division of the movement, and they seemed to describe Oneness Pentecostals in a bad light. Therefore, by quoting the “inclusive definition” in response to the two AG historians, he also utilized the fact that independent churches are in favor with those “inclusivists” to include some “indigenous Oneness Pentecostal churches” into the global Pentecostal scope, including the TJC. Apparently, French’s use of the “inclusive definition” is strategic and rhetoric. His resorting to diversity is for self-justification and self-empowerment. To my way of thinking, his triumphalism is rather clear. Therefore, I would not view his approach as an “inclusive definition” but another type of “exclusive definition.”

In summary, scholars who hold the “exclusive definition” use their tradition and doctrines (e.g., subsequence experience and initial evidence) to self-define Pentecostalism and distinguish themselves from other groups (e.g., Charismatics, Neocharismatics, or independents). However, when claiming the numbers of “Pentecostals,” they cite the widely inclusive statistics to boast their development and growth. I will note that a highly independent and exclusive church similar to the TJC is impossible to accept the suggestion that it is affiliated with other churches, especially foreign missions.

3.2 The Essentialism of Inclusive Definition

After Walter J. Hollenweger’s ground-breaking scholarly works in the 1970s, Pentecostal was further identified and was no longer North American-centric defined by Classical Pentecostals. Given that Charismatic renewals arose among mainline Protestants and the Roman Catholics from 1960s, and the emergence of the AICs, Hollenweger was conscious of the fact that the definition of Pentecostalism should be broadened. In his encyclopedic classic *the Pentecostals*,⁷⁵ the global diversity of Pentecostalism has been well-demonstrated. Allan Anderson followed Hollenweger’s footsteps in Birmingham by theorizing Pentecostal studies through a postcolonial perspective to reinterpret Pentecostal/Charismatic movement as a global, polycentric, and multiple/polynucleated origins phenomenon instead of a product made in the United States held by many North American Classical Pentecostals.⁷⁶ He also renewed the taxonomy of Pentecostalism

74 Ibid.

75 Walter J. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals* (London: SCM, 1972).

76 Allan H. Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

by adopting Ludwig Wittgenstein's "family resemblances" analogy.⁷⁷ What Hollenweger and Anderson did can be considered a paradigm shift of Pentecostal studies. The new paradigm they brought about demonstrates the diversity of Pentecostals worldwide; in the sense that the definition of Pentecostalism has been broadened, many churches with familiar characteristics in the non-Western world or the Global South that had not been seen as Pentecostals or had been unknown to Western Pentecostals were regarded as Pentecostal due to the historical connection with Western Pentecostals or the familiar spiritual experience shared with those who are called Pentecostals. Briefly, they take the inclusive definition when determining who Pentecostal is. It is what is called global Pentecostal/Charismatic studies.

The "inclusive definition" embraces different types of "Pentecostal" churches. Its motivation is for global diversity, rather than triumphant diversity, stating the population by statistics. The main problem of this definition could be essentialism and generalization, although Hollenweger and Anderson carefully divided them into categories to prevent it from encountering the problems raised above. With respect to independent/indigenous Pentecostal groups in China, Anderson mentioned the TJC for several times.⁷⁸ The reason why he was concerned with the TJC so much was probably due to his taxonomy that situates the TJC in the category of "Older Independent Churches or 'Spirit Churches'" in the Majority World. Anderson paid attention to "Pentecostal" churches in the Majority World because this Area Pentecostalism considers forms quite distinctly from those of North America, the West, and even from region to region.⁷⁹ The example he provided in Africa is the AICs, whereas that in China is the TJC. Anderson contended that the term "Pentecostal" is appropriate for globally describing all churches and movements that emphasize the working of spiritual gifts on phenomenological and on theological grounds.⁸⁰ In 2013, he indicated that before the 1920s, AG was the largest Pentecostal body in China. Meanwhile, nationalist forces were forming churches totally independent of western missions. These Chinese churches already

77 Allan H. Anderson, *To the Ends of the Earth: Pentecostalism and the Transformation of World Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 5–6. The latest classification of different forms of Pentecostalism is the following: 1. Classical Pentecostals; 2. Older Church Charismatics, including Catholic, Anglican, Orthodox, and various Protestant Christians; 3. Older Independent Churches; 4. Neopentecostal or Neocharismatic Churches. In another article, when he describes the third type of Pentecostalism, he calls it "Older Independent and Spirit Churches" and places it in the second type. See Allan Anderson, "Varieties, Taxonomies, and Definitions," in *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods*, edited by Allan Anderson, Michael Bergunder, André Droogers, and Cornelis van der Laan (Berkeley: University of California, 2010), 18. Previously, he adopted Hollenweger's threefold taxonomy: 1. Classical Pentecostals; 2. The Charismatic Renewal Movement; and 3. Pentecostal and "Pentecostal-like" independent churches in the Majority World. See Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 13.

78 Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 13, 134; Anderson, *Spreading Fires*, 136; Anderson, "Varieties, Taxonomies, and Definitions," 18; Allan Anderson, "Emergence of a Multidimensional Global Missionary Movement: Trends, Patterns, and Expressions," in *Spirit and Power: The Growth and Global Impact of Pentecostalism*, edited by Donald E. Miller, Kimon H. Sargeant, and Richard Flory (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 34; Anderson, "Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity," 654.

79 Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 13; Anderson, "Emergence of a Multidimensional Global Missionary Movement," 33–4.

80 Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 13.

formed the majority of Pentecostals by the time of 1949. Among them, the two largest Chinese Pentecostal denominations were the TJC and Jesus Family.⁸¹ Anderson also indicated that some Pentecostal missionaries to China had a connection with local independent churches. For example, W. W. Simpson was in touch with independent churches in Manchuria.⁸² His statement obviously intended to imply a synchronic relationship between independent churches and Pentecostal.

Anderson stressed that calling Pentecostal-like independent churches as “Pentecostal” is reasonable, for some of their pioneers were nationalistic and anticolonial, and their work resulted in churches independent from missionaries. Many of them were formerly “native workers” connected to existing missions. Their reasons for leaving the network have nothing to do with the theological and phenomenological criteria that would otherwise make them fully Pentecostal.⁸³ Anderson tended to place independent Pentecostal-like churches in Asia (especially India and China) and Africa within the same scope, particularly in the category of “older independent churches or ‘spirit churches.’” Evidently, he implied that the TJC shares homogeneity with those independent churches in Asia and Africa. For him, the inclusion of the TJC or other independent/indigenous Southern Pentecostal-like churches into the scope of Pentecostalism would be an empowerment to them. He also argued that Western Pentecostal missionaries distanced themselves from those churches because they saw them as a threat or as heretic, especially in the case of heterodox movements, such as the TJC and the Zion Christian Church.⁸⁴ Anderson felt that the exclusion of these churches from the term of Pentecostalism means to press them down.

Nevertheless, Anderson’s definition of Pentecostalism in China has been amended in recent years, particularly churches in the current context of Christianity in China. He indicated that in China, “Pentecostal” is usually an inappropriate term and is politically incorrect if it implies a denomination or certain denominations. He also admitted that Chinese “Pentecostalism” should not be defined by an arbitrary criteria set by outside scholars, but by what contemporary Chinese Protestant network perceives themselves to be. In addition, one must know that term “Pentecostalism” is made in the West in the last half of the 20th century.⁸⁵ As a respectable and fruitful leading scholar of Pentecostalism, Anderson was willing to adjust his perspective to make it less essentialized. Anderson’s reflection might be toward the simple and triumphal claims of Luke Wesley that Chinese Church is predominately Pentecostal.

81 Anderson, “Emergence of a Multidimensional Global Missionary Movement,” 33–4.

82 Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 13.

83 Allan Anderson, “Varieties, Taxonomies, and Definitions,” in *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods*, edited by Allan Anderson, Michael Bergunder, André Droogers, and Cornelis van der Laan (Berkeley: University of California, 2010), 24.

84 Anderson, *To the Ends of the Earth*, 248.

85 Fenggang Yang, Joy K. C. Tong, and Allan H. Anderson, “Pentecostals and Charismatic among Chinese Christians: An Introduction,” in *Global Chinese Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity*, edited by Fenggang Yang, Joy K. C. Tong, and Allan H. Anderson (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2017), 4; Allan H. Anderson, “Contemporary Chinese ‘Pentecostal’ Churches in a Globalized World,” in *Transfiguration of Chinese Christianity: Localization and Globalization*, edited by Cheng-tian Kou, Fu-Chu Chou, and Sian-Chin Iap (Taipei: Chengchi University Press, 2018), 65, 69.

In my opinion, Anderson's perspectives above leave some questions unaddressed. First, the establishment of the TJC revealed a radical discontinuity. From the points of view of TJC members, the distinction between the TJC and other churches, including Pentecostal, is "True Church" and "False Church." Therefore, identifying themselves with Pentecostals is impossible. They were also excluded in the statistics of Pentecostals in China before 1949. Apart from the foreign Pentecostal missions, the "real" independent Chinese Pentecostal Churches did not view the TJC as their counterparts.⁸⁶ I will demonstrate later that in general, Chinese Pentecostals and other local Protestants did not view the TJC as Pentecostal. In reality, the TJC stands against other Protestant churches as it stands against Pentecostal churches. Second, the relationship that Anderson stated between W. W. Simpson and some independent churches is not appropriated to understand the TJC. Not all Chinese independent churches in the pre-1949 era were willing to be in cooperation with Pentecostal churches. In addition, the breaking up of these independent churches and Pentecostal has nothing to do with the theological and phenomenological criteria. The TJC can be an example, as it has been differentiated in bodily experience, rituals, and doctrines. Specifically, its bodily experience has become a set boundary for the TJC and other churches, including Pentecostal ones.⁸⁷

Moreover, Anderson viewed independent churches in Africa and Asia as the same genre, which seems to mean that the TJC, Ceylon Pentecostal Mission, and AICs share homogeneity. However, the geopolitical commonality in the Majority World or Global South is something constructed. The familiarity of these independent churches may be built more on imagination than on facts. Anderson engaged himself in researching about AICs for a long time and showed his insightful knowledge on it. However, he knew less about the TJC apparently and could not conduct a microlevel comparison of AICs and the TJC. Thus, his juxtaposition of AICs and the TJC might be a wishful thinking. Even though certain independent churches identify themselves as Pentecostal (e.g., the CPM), it does not mean that the TJC would do the same thing. The major problem that Anderson's discourse raised could be a projection of the knowledge of AICs onto the

86 For example, Nathan Ma 馬兆瑞's Independent Assembly of God, independent Pentecostal churches in Guangdong, Hong Kong Pentecostal Mission and Kowloon Pentecostal Church in Hong Kong, and Pentecostal Federation of Shanghai. All of them are totally independent, but they do not entirely cut off their connection with Western Pentecostal missions. Even somehow keeping distance from foreign Pentecostals, they would not deny their roots in Pentecostalism; some of the churches might not have a strong synchronic network with other Pentecostal churches (e.g., Hong Kong Pentecostal Mission) but would not deny their Pentecostal identity.

87 As David A. Reed observed in his article, "Autochthonous and Multicultural: Beliefs and Boundary Keeping in the True Jesus Church," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 14, no. 1 (2011): 97 that the TJC's corporate tongue praying is unique, especially in that it does not reflect the familiar western language-like pattern. In addition, its speaking in tongues is accompanied by routinized bodily movements. In brief, the TJC's tongue praying sounds and looks different from Pentecostals; it makes a bodily boundary for the TJC. Reed cited J. A. Smith's argument that tongue-speech is the "language of communities of resistance who seek to defy the powers that be." Reed also indicated that the TJC was born as a resistance movement to the western missionary movement and to all other Christian bodies. To the TJC, tongue speaking may function as resistance speech, which suggests a theological consideration in ecclesiology, through which the TJC contends its sole legitimacy as the only true church.

TJC and other independent churches in the Majority World or Global South, that is, an “eisegesis” to read AICs into the TJC. Despite his reflection and criticism on the equivalent of the fast-growing phenomenon of Christianity in China with Pentecostalism and his statement about the cautious usage of the term “Pentecostalism,” I think the main reason is he has been conscious of the reality of the religious policies of Contemporary Chinese society and the post-denominational phenomenon since 1958.⁸⁸ Anderson also understood that if describing the Pentecostal-like churches in a denominational sense would be out of touch with reality, then he would prevent using the label of Pentecostalism in describing those churches. Nevertheless, when it comes to indigenous/independent Pentecostal churches before 1949, the TJC was still included on his list. Apparently, Anderson’s reflection is mainly due to the social and political situations in contemporary China, but it neglects reconsidering those called by him as Pentecostal in the pre-1949 era. The establishment of the TJC in his perspective was merely a product of anti-imperialism, but he failed to understand the radical discontinuity between the TJC and Pentecostalism. In addition, his taxonomy of “Older Independent Churches or ‘Spirit Churches’” in the Majority World could be highly generalized and essentialized. Similar to World Christianity, Anderson’s global Pentecostal/Charismatic studies are also conducted largely within the framework of “West and the Rest,” which is logically close to Samuel Huntington’s model.⁸⁹ Here, the “Global South” has been generalized as a whole entity or a complex in opposition to the “Global North.” It is like a type of Orientalism that dichotomously distinguishes the world into “the West, ‘us’” and “the East, the Orient, ‘them;’”⁹⁰ here, “the North, ‘us’” and “the South, ‘them.’” Thus, the homogeneity among independent Pentecostal-like churches in the Global South is something imagined and represented by northern scholars without the presence of the Orientals (southern Christians).⁹¹ Moreover, Anderson argued that the nature of Pentecostalism is spiritual experience and practice, although he did not use the word “nature” or “essence,” the context of his discourse reveals it clearly. The concept “family resemblance” is anti-essentialism, but it centers on “universality” among “family members” that does not refer to homogeneity. Furthermore, many independent Pentecostal-like churches, such as the TJC, do not perceive themselves as Pentecostal; they even state having supremacy over Pentecostals. Imposing

88 In the wake of the “Great Leap Forward” 大躍進 launched by the Chinese Communist government, many churches were demolished or confiscated, and church leaders were urged to participate in productive labor. Eventually, churches from different traditions or denominations were mandated to practice unified worship services, which caused the collapse of denominations or the Post-denominational era among TSPM churches. See Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China*, 177; Lian, *Redeemed by Fire*, 202. See also Zhang Hua 張化, “Unified Worship: The Results of the two determinations of the Protestant Church in China,” 聯合禮拜：中國基督教會兩次抉擇的結果 *Nanjing Theological Reviews* 金陵神學志 no. 2 (2019):58–81.

89 See Lalsangkima Pachuau, *World Christianity: A Historical and Theological Introduction* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2018), 23–4.

90 See Said, *Orientalism*, 43.

91 Cf. *ibid.*, 86: “when the natives had neither been consulted nor treated as anything, except as pretexts for a text whose usefulness was not to the natives.” *Ibid.*, 208: “the Orient is all absence, whereas one feels the Orientalist and what he says as presence.”

the term “Pentecostalism” upon the TJC may reflect a type of Western hegemony that deprives its subjectivity.

4. Is the TJC pentecostal?

In defining Pentecostalism, Michael Bergunder’s criteria of synchronicity and diachronicity are helpful here. He suggested, “This strict synchronous network must be supplemented by a diachronous perspective to be able to speak of a history of Pentecostalism. This second, diachronous criterion means that we can only speak of Pentecostalism in history when the synchronous Pentecostal network stands in a diachronous, direct, continuous, and historical relationship to previous synchronous networks.”⁹²

In the case of the TJC, the diachronous connection with Pentecostal exists. Nevertheless, if one can claim that the TJC is Pentecostal due to its historical connection with Berntsen’s Oneness Pentecostal mission, then one can also argue that the TJC is a sub-group of the Adventists, such as American Advent Mission Society.⁹³ Strangely, no scholar distributes the TJC to Adventists, and the reason may be because the striking development of global Pentecostal phenomenon has caught scholars’ eyes more than Adventists. As for synchronicity, although at the beginning of the TJC’s founding in 1917, the clear boundary between which and Berntsen’s Faith Union used to be blurred; synchronous networks also did not exist anymore when the TJC was entirely established in 1918. Here, contemporary Christian testimonies during the pre-49 era should be considered seriously.

A well-known Baptist literature evangelist, editor-in-chief of *True Light News* 真光報 Zhang Yijing 張亦鏡, used to criticize some problems of the TJC. In an article, he mentioned that Barnabas Zhang “stole sheep” from a church that a friend of his knows. This friend hoped that Zhang can blame what the TJC did in the paper for him. According to Zhang, the organization he was serving at had also received many leaflets from the TJC, as a catalyst for him to conduct research on this new sect. In his view, the TJC is a complex new religion comprising features from various denominations: adopting the practice of baptism by immersion from the Baptists; adopting presbyterian polity from the Presbyterians; adopting the practice of Christian name from the Anglicans; adopting speaking in tongues from “tongue-speaking sect” (refers to Pentecostals); adopting non-denominationalism from the Brethren; adopting Sabbath keeping from the Adventists; adopting the concept of “outside the church no salvation” from the Catholics; and adopting polygamy from the Mormons (The TJC does not hold this teaching).⁹⁴ Clearly, Zhang did not regard the TJC as Pentecostal. His critique revealed that the core belief of the TJC is

92 Michael Bergunder, “The Cultural Turn,” in *Global Chinese Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity*, 56

93 See R.G. Tiedemann, *Reference Guide to Christian Missionary Societies in China: From the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century* (Armonk, New York; London: ME. Sharpe, 2009), 111.

94 Zhang Yijing 張亦鏡, “Is the True Jesus Church so?” 真耶穌教會固如是耶 *True Light News* 真光報28, no. 4 (1929): 16–8.

not singular but multiple; Pentecostalism is only one element among the core beliefs, but other elements are also crucial.

Famous Chinese Christian leader Wang Mingdao 王明道, who was once involved in Pentecostal movement and withdrew from it later, also distinguished the TJC from Pentecostals. He said:

A so-called “True Jesus Church” exists in China, which also emphasizes on Pentecostalism, but it has many differences from the churches mentioned above (Pentecostal churches). Some people do not know what the TJC believes in, so it refers to the category of Assemblies of God, but the two parties are very different. Hence, the editor (Wang) will not put the TJC on the list of Pentecostal churches.⁹⁵

Wang argued that the TJC has a Pentecostal characteristic, but the TJC and Pentecostalism are different. He did not explain how they are different; his opinion might be close to Zhang’s observation that Pentecostalism is only a part of the TJC’s core beliefs or Wang was conscious that the synchronous network of the two parties did not exist. Only a few Christian studies referred the TJC to Pentecostalism in the pre-49 era. Missionary sources, such as *Chinese Recorders* or the sources from National Christian Council that maintained a friendly relationship with missions, such as *Chinese Christian Church Year Book*, did not regard the TJC as Pentecostal.

Apart from contemporary Protestants’ sources in the pre-49 era, sources from Pentecostals are also worth reviewing. Lu Boai 陸博愛 from Sainam Assembly of God, Guangdong, is the friend Zhang Yijing mentioned previously. His criticism on the TJC was even more severe than Zhang. I believe his comments provide us some sources in understanding how Chinese Pentecostals regard the TJC, as Lu often shared his insights on Chinese Christian Indigenous Movement through his contribution to papers. In one of his articles on this issue, he took the TJC as a negative example. In Lu’s view, what the TJC had been doing was merely based on narrowed patriotism or nationalism. In one of his articles, Lu indicated three facets of the TJC that were deemed to be dangerous: 1. Stirring the Chinese up to regard China as the Celestial Empire and provoke nationals’ anti-foreign sentiment; 2. Giving rise to religious war (as what the Crusaders did) and coloring the Church history red with human blood; 3. Intentionally imitating Muhammad to march to a different drummer to make use of the name of the Holy Spirit, to usurp the throne of the Father, and to deprive the sovereignty of judgment of the Son.⁹⁶ In my opinion, the divergence between the TJC and Chinese Pentecostal clearly revealed again a radical autonomous, independent church, as the ecclesiology of the TJC alienates itself from the Western missions, but that of Chinese Pentecostal does not. For the TJC, Pentecostal is in the same party with Western Christianity, which is corrupted and thus must be corrected. The TJC identifies itself as the only true church that arose in the East in succession to the Apostolic

95 Wang Mingdao 王明道, “Be cautious a little bit, brother Luke Ma,” 請馬路加君以後慎重些 *Spiritual Food Quarterly* 靈食季刊 no. 24 (1932): 64.

96 Lu Boai 陸博愛, “Dangers in the end time,” 季世的危險 *Assemblies of God Monthly* 神召會月刊 2, no. 4 (1927): 13–6.

Church; Pentecostals for Lu, although he also emphasized independent and indigenization, cannot agree with the TJC's extreme xenophobic discourse of anti-missionary and nationalism. Briefly, it is impossible for the two parties to accept each other as fellows, in spite of the familiar doctrines and practices.

In two other articles, Lu continued blaming the TJC's doctrines and practices. First is the rite of foot washing. Lu criticized that the true biblical meaning of washing foot is to encourage believers to love one another, rather than being practiced as a normal ordinance. He stated one can find no evidence in the Book of Acts that urges believers to keep this practice as a rite.⁹⁷ Second, he condemned its misinterpretation of the verse about "a mark on their right hands or on their foreheads received from the beast" in the Book of Revelation, which types the Christians who receive baptism by sprinkling with water (The TJC insists on face-down baptism by immersion); Third, the TJC stresses "Baptism in Jesus' name," which is consistent with Oneness Pentecostals, both of them quote the account of Oneness baptismal formula in the Book of Acts instead of the trinitarian formula in the Gospel of Matthew. Lu indicated that the former is only a short version of the latter for the reason of simplicity. In addition, Lu found the face-down baptism that the TJC practices questionable because in accordance to the report of the Bible, as soon as Jesus came up out of the Jordan River at His baptism, He saw the heavens were opened, which demonstrated that Jesus was baptized face-up, looking toward the sky. As a whole, Lu strongly criticized that the TJC was marching to a different tune and noted that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth, while what the TJC had done had nothing to do with the truth; hence, it did not belong to the Holy Spirit.⁹⁸

In Anderson's view, if a Pentecostal-like church's independence has nothing to do with the theological and phenomenological criteria, then it is still justified to be called Pentecostal. However, the TJC's anti-imperialism and patriotism shaped its theology, such as the falling down of the latter rain in China and anti-ecumenical ecclesiology. Anderson's assumption is that almost only American Classical Pentecostals take importance to doctrines, and the Pentecostalism concerns primarily with experiences. The TJC also places much emphasis on doctrines. Even though the TJC's five major doctrines look praxis-oriented, ordinances and practices cannot be isolated from theology. The five practices are in fact strongly based on doctrines. As previously mentioned, its prayer in tongues also suggests a discrepancy in the dimension of ritual. Therefore, in every aspect mentioned above, referring the TJC to Pentecostal is inappropriate; rather, it has been an independent church in accordance with its motivation since the very beginning. Referring

97 Obviously, he does not know that some Pentecostal denominations also practice foot washing as a rite.

98 Lu Boai, "For the Holy Spirit is the Truth," 因為聖靈就是真理 *Assemblies of God Monthly* 神召會月刊 2, no. 6 (1927): 20-3; Lu Boai, "For the Holy Spirit is the Truth, Part 2," 因為聖靈就是真理(續) *Assemblies of God Monthly* 神召會月刊 2, no. 7 (1927): 18-21.

the TJC to Pentecostal can also be a violation of its distinctive self-understanding as the only true church, which stands in opposition to other traditions, including Pentecostal.

5. Conclusion

A global academic network on Pentecostalism has been formed among scholars from different disciplines, and such a network can be seen as with a continuation of Hollenweger and Anderson's elaboration. Meanwhile, scholars in socio-scientific areas without association to the Birmingham network participate in relevant research concerning this global phenomenon. Scholars conducting Pentecostal studies take for granted the "inclusive definition" in understanding Pentecostal as etc. Meanwhile, the conventional exclusive definition of Pentecostal seems to have become outdated and represents a white, American-centric, emic, and conservative perspective. Even so, the "exclusive definition" is not entirely problematic as long as scholars from this camp face the problems of triumphalism. The strength of the "exclusive definition" can be its potential anti-essentialism, apart from doctrines, diachronous, and synchronous relationships that have been taken seriously. In accordance with the cautious exclusive definition, the TJC and some independent Pentecostal-like churches should not be called Pentecostal. To some extent, the "exclusive definition" actually empowers these churches to maintain their own self-identity, although it lacks a sense of diversity. Redefining Pentecostalism with a postcolonial perspective can be a new paradigm for scholars of Pentecostalism as a source to reflect the prolonged American-centric tendency, for which Classical Pentecostal has been used as the template to define and understand Pentecostalism worldwide. However, without sophisticated definitional criteria, such as diachronous and synchronous networks, arbitrarily labeling certain churches as Pentecostal can be questionable and can make this term overloaded.

The TJC is a case being misrecognized as Chinese independent/indigenous Pentecostal. In Chinese Pentecostalism, some scholars rush to the fore to take the TJC as the case. The reason may be due to the lack of primary sources of independent churches for the Western scholars but plenty of secondary or tertiary sources by "native informants" who have been scholarly trained in the West. They persistently portray the TJC as a Chinese independent/indigenous Pentecostal denomination through an "orientalized" understanding that describes the ongoing Christian phenomenon and independent churches in the Global South as Pentecostal to cater to what the Western scholars have been interested in. Meanwhile, Chinese independent churches with Pentecostal identity have been overlooked; therefore, further research is needed. The TJC can be a case for scholars of World Christianity and global Pentecostal/Charismatic studies and those from the socio-scientific areas who are highly interested in non-Western Christianity to reflect on their latent Orientalism on the former.

中文题目：

真耶稣教会是华人本土 / 自立五旬节教派吗？兼论西方学界对全球南方“五旬节运动”的东方主义

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提要：真耶稣教会向来被学术界视为中国的本土 / 自立的五旬节教派，特别是在“全球五旬节 / 灵恩运动研究”和世界基督教领域的学者，无论这些学者是采包容性或排他性定义皆然。本文认为，至少出于下列三个因素，学术界将真耶稣教会定义为五旬节派可能是不合适的：1. 真耶稣教会因其神佑式和排他性的自我认同而拒绝被视为五旬节派；2. 真耶稣教会成立的首要目的是寻求教会自立和宗教改革，而非宣扬五旬节派灵性虔修；3. 真耶稣教会与五旬节派之间无论是全球和在地层面都缺乏共时性网络连结。此外，本文指出西方五旬节派学者中潜隐的东方主义，其基础是对非西方基督教异国情调想象和再现，而东方主义者和“土著报道者”的共谋增强了这种想象和再现。

关键词：全球五旬节与灵恩运动研究，真耶稣教会，独立教会，中国基督教，东方中原

