

PREFACE

This translation is the result of the combined efforts of Protestant and Catholic translators. This work was begun in 1965 and continued until its completion in September 1972.

The Four Gospels were first translated and published separately in 1968, because the Catholics had a particularly urgent need for the Gospels for their Sunday liturgy and for their preparation of a homily based on the Gospels.

After the Acts, Letters, and Revelation were completed, the Four Gospels were revised and included in this translation of the entire New Testament.

What is more remarkable than the actual finished translation in Taiwanese Romanization is the fact that over a period of seven years Catholic and Protestant translators for the first time in the history of the Church in China, have been able to patiently and humbly collaborate in the production of a common New Testament in the colloquial language of the people of Taiwan. This required that the Protestants and Catholics had to be in constant dialogue, sharing each other's opinions and constantly becoming more aware of the fact that there are many different ways of expressing the same idea. Perhaps no effort has brought the Catholics and Protestants to a better understanding of each other's religious attitudes as this collaboration in translating the New Testament.

All of those involved in this joint effort had to make great sacrifices of time and energy. Both the Protestants and the Catholics had to make many trips back and forth from Taipei to Taichung. The translators during the last two years which were spent in incorporating the observations, suggestions and corrections offered by the Review Committee (5 Catholics and 5 Protestants) lived alternately a week in Taipei and a week in Taichung until the manuscript was finalized for publication.

The final edition of the translation was turned over to a Consultant Committee consisting of 50 people, 35 Protestants and 15 Catholics. Archbishop Stanislaus Lo Kwang very graciously accepted the responsibility of heading the Catholic group on the Consultant Committee.

The Protestants were especially thoughtful and considerate in yielding to our request that the translation be rendered in the CHIANG-CHIU (漳州) rather than the CHÖAN-CHIU (泉州) pronunciation. This was judged to be the proper thing to do since the Catholics who would be using this translation are mostly foreigners, while the Protestants are mostly Taiwanese, for whom it would be easier to make any necessary adaptation.

A very remarkable characteristic about this translation is the agreement on the term for God. The Catholics usually use the term THIAN-CHÜ (天主 = Lord of Heaven), while the Protestants use the term SIÖNG-TÈ (上帝 = the Highest Ruler). After very many long and

repeated discussions it was finally decided to use the term SIÖNG-CHÜ (上主 = the Supreme Lord) which occurs very frequently in Catholic liturgical texts and in many Catholic as well as Protestant prayers and hymns. It just happens, and this was purely a coincidence, that SIÖNG-CHÜ (上主) is half of the Protestant term SIÖNG-TÈ (上帝), and half of the Catholic term THIAN-CHÜ (天主). This term seems to suit the Chinese language in a very admirable way since the character SIÖNG (上) is often used to express the superlative degree e.g. "Siöng hó 最好 = the best," "Siöng toa 最大 = the greatest". In the Catholic Gloria of the Mass we have the very beautiful expression, "Chí-ū Lí sǐ Chú, Chí-ū Lí sǐ Chí-ko Bū-siöng ê. 只有祢是主 只有祢是至高無上的 = Only You are the Lord, only You are the Highest and there is no other above You."

We hope that this decision is in the proper direction, namely, to prove to the pagan world that the Catholics and Protestants are all the children of One Father. "There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, there is one God and Father of all men, who is Lord of all, works through all and is in all." (Ephesians 4-5,6) And hence it is not necessary for us to prove to the world that we are opposed to each other, by deliberately choosing different terminology.

The Protestants in Taipei made a survey of Protestant opinion in regard to the use of this term "SIÖNG-CHÜ". They rewrote the Ten Commandments substituting the term "SIÖNG-CHÜ 上主" in place of "SIÖNG-TÈ 上帝".

They sent out several thousand copies of this all over Taiwan. They did not receive one unfavorable criticism.

Another significant change in terminology is the new term for the Holy Spirit in this translation. Our Scripture scholars are convinced that the old term "SENG-SIN 聖神" is very inaccurate and very misleading especially to those who are not yet Christians. The character SIN = 神 in Chinese and especially in Taiwan has the primary meaning of a pagan god or spirit. These gods, whose images appear in their pagan temples were human beings who once lived on earth and because of their great and heroic deeds were elevated to the status of a god by the scholars and by influential people. It seems very inappropriate to call the Holy Spirit a holy one of these pagan gods.

The character "Lêng = 靈" does have the primary meaning of something incorporeal, bodiless or spiritual. The final decision on the use of this term had to be made by the Chinese themselves. We foreigners are certainly not competent to make such delicate distinctions. It does seem, however, that "Sêng-lêng 聖靈" while it may not be the best term for the Holy Spirit, is definitely an improvement over "Sêng-sin 聖神". Here again the Pastor will need to take into consideration the sensitivities of his Christian congregation.

The geographical names and the names of persons used in this translation are Protestant. The reason for this again is to establish common bonds wherever this is at

all possible. "And so shall we come together to that oneness in our faith and in our knowledge of the Son of God; we shall become mature men, reaching to the very height of Christ's full stature." (Ephesians 4-14)

The second reason for using the Protestant names of places and persons is that it must be obvious to any unprejudiced scholar that the Protestant names are much superior to the Catholic ones and that they are usually simpler and more closely correspond to the original Greek.

In making these decisions it was observed that any Catholic or Protestant when reading the Scriptures in a public assembly should make his own prudent decision about what terms should be used. We first considered putting the Protestant or Catholic term in parenthesis after the term used in the text. We later decided that this would clutter up the text and make for less smooth reading.

We are very much aware of the fact that colloquial Taiwanese is constantly changing and here in Taiwan it is being influenced by spoken Mandarin. We have seen many changes in colloquial Taiwanese since 1952 when we first came to Taiwan. So, apart from the fact that this translation could certainly be improved in places, it will most probably be outdated and very much in need of revision before 1982, a short period of ten years. The transformation which spoken Taiwanese is undergoing seems to be that rapid.

In the meantime we do need a translation

which will speak to the modern, young Taiwanese today, in his language about God's message and His boundless love for men.

May this humble combined effort by Protestants and Catholics help to remove the scandal that we have been to those who don't believe in Jesus because they see us not acting as brothers and sisters, but as enemies looking for opportunities to express our opposition to each other.

May this joint translation of a common New Testament for Protestants and Catholics be joined to Our Lord's pleading with His Father as He prayed in John 17-21 and 22:

"I pray that they may all be one. Oh! Father! May they be one in us, just as You are in me and I am in You. May they be one, so that the world will believe that You sent me."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

There are many persons both on the Protestant side and on the Catholic side to whom we should make an acknowledgement of thanks. It is not possible to enumerate them all here. There are however two persons to whom we must make a special acknowledgement:

Mr. Ko Chek Hoàn 高 積 煥

Mr. Tân Pang Tín 陳 邦 鎮

It was through the patient, persistent and untiring efforts of these two scholars

that this translation was brought to completion in spite of very many obstacles. In fact this translation could very properly be called:

The Ko-Tân Colloquial Taiwanese Version
高陳台灣白話聖經譯本

or the

K.T.V.

The Ko-Tân Version or The Kerymatic
Taiwanese Version.

Ēng Tâi-gí Thoan-pò· Hó-siau-sit ê
Sèng-keng Ēk-pún

以台語傳播好消息的聖經譯本

K.T.V.

The Greek word KERYGMA means to proclaim. In the primitive Church it meant the proclamation of the Gospel as the good news of salvation.

Albert V. Fedders
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Language School
Taichung, Taiwan.
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