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ETHNOGRAPHIC PROJECT

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ANALYSIS OF THE ENGLISH SEGMENT OF LEADERSHIP IN A CHINESE DIASPORA CHURCH; AND ITS IMPACT ON MISSIONS WITHIN THE DIASPORA, AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.

This paper is the representation of the analysis of a mini- ethnographic study, of a Diaspora church. The Diaspora church identified in this paper is the New York City Christian Missionary of Alliance Church. I met with several leaders of the church, including the senior pastor, the associate pastor, and a couple of deacons of the church. The senior pastor was unable to meet with me for a formal interview because he had to meet with a baptism class(which he informed me in an email the day before the interview; when I emailed him for the directions to the church). He informed me also, that there are people who are capable of providing me with a formal interview. Before the closing of the day, the senior pastor informed me that we could have a telephone interview in the near future. I agreed to this suggestion. I had a formal telephone interview with Rev. Ko, on April, 05, 2023. Rev. Ko also, formally introduced Rev. Gustav Heung and myself via telephone, and pastor Milly who are both alumni of ATS. Rev. Gustav is the pastor of the Chinese ministry while Pastor Milly is the associate pastor of the Chinese diaspora ministry. Rev. Gustav, and Rev. Ko, reportedly are “co-senior pastors” of the NYCCAC so, reportedly, there are two pastors in this Diaspora Church. Rev. Gustav asked for us to have an interview on April 05, 2023. Reportedly, he is just recovering from COVID. Pastor

Milly scheduled an in person interview with me for March 26, 2023. I made four visits (all Sundays; by virtue that most people are available on Sundays).

HISTORY, LOCATION, PHYSICAL APPEARANCE AND COMPOSITION OF THE ENGLISH DIASPORA CHURCH - 3 STONE

DATA WAS GIVEN BY - THE ASSOCIATE PASTOR, CRISTOBAL T. (PASTOR CHRIS) AND JUSTIN, ONE OF THE DEACONS.

The NYC Chinese Christian Alliance Church is located at 160 Eldridge St. in Chinatown, Manhattan, N. There are many restaurants, including on-the-go aries, such as pizzaplaces, etc. There are alo many other businesses such as, vegetable stands, fish stores,etc. NYCCA is within close proximity of the World Reknown Bowery Missions. There are several ministries to this Diaspora church. For example, there is the chinese ministry, and within the ministry, there are different chinese speaking members, for example, there is the Mandarin speaking group, the cantonese, and the english ministry. Each ministry has a senior pastor, and an associate pastor. The English ministry is called 3 Stone. Rev. Dr. Ko, is the senior pastor of the english ministry; 3 Stone, and Pastor Christobal is the associate pastor of the english ministry,(which I attended on my first visit on 03/19/2023.

THE SOCIAL COMPOSITION OF CHINATOWN AND NYCCA

Reportedly, fifty years ago, the NYCCA was planted by a Hong Kong immigrant to the U.S.A., Rev. Andrew Leung; who reportedly, deceased several years ago, in his nineties. It is shared that Reverend Andrew Leung was originally from Hong Kong, moved to Vietnam, then immigrated to the U.S.A. The church reportedly, was always in the Alliance network. NYCCA is referred to, as a” commuter church” by both leaders, and congregants. It is shared that originally it was not so, that the majority of the congregants lived in Chinatown; but now, because of the

“high cost of Living people moved” to various places, such as Brooklyn, Queens, New Jersey & Staten Island. There are many outreach programs, such as a learning center that offers classes in Cantonese, english, and mathematics in the annex building. NYCCA also provide services for the homeless within the community. NYCCA also provides Christian education to the community. Reportedly, the vision that Rev. Andrew Young for NYCCA to reach out to first generation Chinese immigrants; then, to reach out to Chinese with immigrant background. The NYCCA is within the metro district of the C&MA.

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THE PHYSICAL APPEARANCE OF NYCCAC (DIASPORA)

There is a mural on the wall outside of the building which reportedly is a representation to the community that this church, Reportedly, the mural is a representation of their support to the community during the disenfranchises that the Chinese and African americans were experiencing during the emergence of COVID. There are two black pianos, there are many ceiling lights, there is a high stage for the musicians, and the tech. Group that administers the lighting, and the adjustments of the music. There is a cross done in a knitting fashion, that hangs on the wall almost from the top of the ceiling, to almost to the end of the floor. There are several mikes and lights situated in the ceiling of the sanctuary.**NYCCA**

I interviewed two leaders of the ministry today. One of the interview was informal, and the other was a formal interview. Both interviews were conducted after the church service and during lunch. Just after the church service (while we were still in the sanctuary), the senior pastor (just after his message), he came and formally introduced himself to me. He also reiterated his apology for his inability to sit and have a formal interview with me today because he has to teach a baptism class. He stated however, that “there are people” who will be able to

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furnish me with a formal interview today. Several other leaders introduced themselves to me also one of the deacons (Justin) and intern from ATS. reportedly, there are five deacons, two english serving pastors, and one intern. Pastoral meetings are held on Friday mornings, and the goal is to help each other prepare for preaching. It was shared from the pulpit that all visitors are invited to their lunch after church (which is a monthly gathering as a fund raising; however, for first time visitors, it is a “free lunch.” The Chinese Alliance Church, is reportedly under the auspices of The Christian & Missionary Alliance network (C&MA). During lunch, Justin (deacon), came over and sat with me, and we had an informal interview.

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INFORMAL MEETING JUSTIN -DEACON OF 3 STONE - DIASPORA- 03/19/2023 1:30-2:30 p.m. (first visit to the Diaspora Church for this project).

According to Justin, the NYCAC DIASPORA is a commuting church, and that he was born in new York, and his parents moved to New Jersey with the family (including himself, and his siblings). His parents reportedly met here in the NYCCAC. His parents were born in Hong Kong and both came to the United States in the “70s.” His father reportedly came to the United first, his mother also came in the same year but did not know each other before they met in this church. His mother teaches children’s Sunday school, and his father teaches the adult Sunday school. He further stated that “at one point his father served as a deacon.” As per Justin, he came to Jesus as a little boy, and rededicated his life to the Lord in his junior high school period.

FORMAL INTERVIEW PASTOR CHRIS. (ASOCIATE PASTOR OF 3 STONE (ENGLISH CHURCH OF THE DIASPORA) 03/19/2023 3:00pm. - 4:30pm.

According to Pastor Chris, the church was established fifty years ago, and the members were mostly residing in “Manhattan Chinatown, and now the church has become a “commuter church.” He further shares that now the “majority” of members reside in Brooklyn, Queens, Manhattan, New Jersey, & Staten Island.

Reportedly, the NYCCAC was planted fifty years ago by Rev. Leung, that he was originally from Hong Kong, moved to Vietnam, came to the United States, and planted the church. Reportedly, Rev. Leung deceased “several years ago in his nineties.”.

Pastor Chris reports that his duties entail that of support pastor in congregational leadership. Pastor Chris shares that there are several outreach departments within 3 Stone and the Chinese ministry within the Diaspora. For example, within the Chinese ministry, there is a tutoring center (annex) it is called the Alliance learning center.

Reportedly, is a ministry of the chinese diaspora; this ministry focuses on overseas people in the community; for example, this ministry focuses on teaching chinese classes in cantonese, and mandarin Also, English and Mathematics.

Within the 3 Stone (English) Diaspora, they mentor International students at New York University. The 3 Stone church is both Chinese and English. Reportedly, the 3 Stone focuses on young adults, youths, and young families. The church also has a Chinese elderly Service. Reportedly, the NYCCAC was to serve second generation Asians(slowly hispanics and slavics).

According to Pastor Chris, he attended this church in 2005, and has been serving in the church for 10 yrs. I asked Pastor Chris to share how he came to the Lord; and he shared his testimony with me (how he became a child of God). In regards to immigrating to the United States of America, he states that he was born in Venezuela, grew up in New York City; and in the eighties, and nineties, a huge wave of Asians went to South America, and America.

PASTOR MILLY FORMAL INTERVIEW APRIL 02, 2023 2:30 pm. -3:30 pm. Chinese

MANDARIN, AND CANTONESE speaking CONGREGANTS

Reportedly, pastor Milly speaks mandarin; and mandarin. She reported that she holds mandarin& cantonese services on Sundays from 9:30 am. -11:00 am; and facilitates an interpreter for the cantonese congregants present in these services. In addition, Pastor Milly shared that she pastors an online service and prayer group, for the older adults; she stated that they continue to be members of the church, but they stated that, they refuse to travel in public. For example, they range from the age of over eighty years.

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According to Pastor Milly, These older adults are the parents of children who are from Tiwan, “main land China” to study here in the U.S.A. in learning institutions such as Manhattn School of Music, New York University, and St. John’s University. She further shares that these elderly parents, hold post doctoral degrees and came to visit their children, and stayed on in the U.S.A. Reportedly, the number of these young people who are here in the U.S.A. to study, is: “20-30 young people.”

Pastor Milly was reportedly born and raised in Hong Kong, and immigrated to the U.S.A. in 1988. She reportedly joined a gospel camp of NYCCA, and in 1991 came to the Lord, and was baptized in 1993.

In 1996 Pastor Milly reportedly attended ATS, where she received a M.Div. degree in “how to serve Chinese Churches in America,” and that she is trained to service Chinese Diaspora in Mandarin, and Cantonese as well. She shares that she is affiliated with an organization that is called JLC Jesus Loves Chinatown and the main organization is situated in Chinatown. According to Pastor Milly, she holds prayer meetings

Monday-Saturday over the phone for the Cantonese Congregation for the “older adults “who do not come out in public.”

FORMAL SCHEDULED PHONE INTERVIEW WITH REV. GUSTAV 04/05/2023

12:30pm. - 1:15pm.

Reportedly, Rev. Gustav is now recovering from COVID. He serves as one of the senior pastors in NYCCA he is co-senior pastor with Rev. Ko. Reportedly, there are two senior pastors at NYCCA. Rev. Gustav is the senior Pastor for the Chinese Diaspora. According to Rev. Gustav, he was born and raised in Hong Kong, and came to the U.S.A. as a student studying fine arts. According to Rev. Gustav, he is married

with no children, and he resides in Queens, New York. Rev. Gustav reiterated what was mentioned before, by other leaders; that NYCCA “was founded by a Chinese immigrant to reach out to first generation Chinese immigrants.

Rev. Gustav shares that his functions in the church are to set long term visions for the church along with Pastor Ko, local outreach, Discipleship, Christian Education, and global mission. Rev. Gustav further shared that one of his responsibilities is to work alongside Rev. Ko, to decide on the sermons to be preached each Sunday. According to Rev. Gustav, he studied at ATS, where he received a M.D.iv. In North American Bicultural Studies. He further shared that there is nothing of the sort of studies in Hong Kong. Rev. Gustav shared that his uncle brought him to NYCCA many years ago, and the first time he he gave his life to the Lord.

FORMAL SCHEDULED PHONE INTERVIEW: Rev. Ko. 04/05/2023 1:15 pm.--2:15 pm.

According to Rev. Ko, he co-senior pastor with Rev. Gustav; he further shared that there is a co-senior pastor model at NYCCA. Rev. Ko shares that the Governing Board of the church takes care of the majority of the Deacons, and the Elders of the church. As per Rev. Ko, that there is a Chinese Association, and that there are eighty five Chinese churches in the Chinese Association. In regards to his salvation, Rev. Ko shared that his great-great grandfather was one of the first missionary to Taiwan, and that his father came to the U.S.A. in the late sixties, that he grew up in a Christian home, that he was aware of his sins; and he accepted Jesus Christ as his Saviour in middle school.

Informal interview with Lorrie a member of 3Stone (English Section of NYCCA) 7

After the message, I sat in the lobby of the church waiting to go downstairs to go mingle with the saints. When Lorrie came to me, called me by name, and asked me if I would like to have something to eat like dumplings? I responded in the affirmative. Sometime later, she came back with a parcel with food. Then she asked me if I would like to have the parcel of food here, or if I would like her to take it downstairs to eat at her table. It was then I realized that she went out the street, and bought food with her own money. Then our interview began, went downstairs to join her.

According to Lorrie, she resided in Brooklyn, NY, however, she and her family moved to Long Island, NY. She shared that some years ago her roommate in college invited her to the NYCCA and that she accepted the invitation, and after the service, she accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as her personal Saviour. Lorrie shared that she is involved with the family ministry; she is currently employed in a local hospital as a physician assistant (PA).

MISSIONS EXTENDED BEYOND THE DIASPORA

Reportedly, as mentioned previously in this paper, NYCCA is involved in missionary work with international students at New York University. While eating lunch with some of the congregants, Rev. Ko came and sat next to our table, acknowledging that this would be my fourth, and final visit to NYCCA regarding the ethnographic project. He shared that both the Chinese Diaspora, and 3 Stone are involved with providing missionary work to international students at New York University in mentoring them, and sharing the Gospel with them as well. In addition, Rev. Ko also shared that NYCCA also provide chaplaincy services to NYU. In addition to going beyond the four walls of

the DIASPORA, Pastor Milly evangelizes on the street corners, and in parks after church on Sundays (along with congregants from DIASPORA).

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VISION FOR THE FUTURE FOR NYCCA

Rev. Ko shared visions that he has for the future of NYCCA. For example, he shared that it is his desire to see people of all ethnicity to be part of the congregants of the church. That the evangelism efforts will spread across the community, and beyond. He pointed out for example, there are a few visitors who have been coming to 3 Stone who are not of Chinese

INFORMAL MEETING WITH REV. KO 04/09/2023 AT LUNCH AFTER CHURCH

Today, there were very few people in church; by virtue that the children had camp for the week-end. Rev. Ko joined a few of us at lunch after service. He spoke about the children's ministry, about NYCCA outreach ministries, , the different outreach

programs in the community, including the international students ministry at New York University.

TRANSNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS AT NYCCA

Reportedly, NYCCA does have transnational ties. Many of the congregants have families in the city of Hong Kong or the Guangdong province, and they visit regularly. One of the Governing Board members (Bobby) is in Hong Kong for several weeks. Rev. Ko shares that his own family roots are from Taiwan, and he still has extended family there. NYCCA reportedly has affiliations with Alliance Churches in China and Taiwan as well as Alliance seminary in Hong Kong. Previously NYCCA ran a Masters level program for Alliance Bible Seminary out of NYCCA for a decade.

The church also has missionary endeavors in Central America (Panama, Venezuela, Brazil, etc.) and ties to Chinese Churches there. Reportedly, NYCCA supports C&MA and non-C&MA missionaries there. In addition, there are also transnational connections to the healthcare endeavors of C&MA globally. Rev. Ko, is a pediatrician by profession, who has dedicated his talents to ministry.

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CONCLUSION

I would say without any reservations, that the NYCCA church is making a positive impact on the immediate community, and outside of the community including overseas; and these efforts are measurable. I have found that most of the congregants are professionals, and have brought their talents to help build the kingdom of God. I find the church as a whole to be very hospitable, from the first day that I went there, I felt welcomed, and certainly felt as if I were a part of “something big.” Once I was invited to have lunch on my first day, I felt at home right away; because as McCurdy et al states that when doing ethnographic fieldwork, one must be prepared to immerse himself/herself in the group, that it is not about observation, but doing also.¹ Therefore,

¹ McCurdy, et al “Conformity and Conflict: Readings in Cultural Anthropology,” 15 (Boston, Pearson, 2016).

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I made myself as part of the group each time as much as I could with respect, and compassion, for the people of NYCCA.

For me, the NYCCA is a very hard working church, both younger and older congregants. One of the positive things that I have come away with from NYCCA is the way the brethren work in unity. For example, the reported vision that Rev. Ko has for 3 Stone, the other leaders, are in agreement with this reported vision. The vision that 3 Stone evangelistic efforts should be extended to other ethnic groups as well as Chinese. The word of the Lord says that it is “good and pleasant for brethren to dwell

together in unity.”²



² See Psalm 133:1 KJV.