

Hangchow Christian College

Zhijiang wen li xue yuan

之江文理學院

[Hangzhou](#) (Zhejiang Sheng, China)

Founded in 1845 by American Presbyterians as a boarding school for boys, Hangchow was one of the earliest of the institutions that later developed into the thirteen Protestant colleges in china. In 1867 it was moved to the city of Hangchow (today Hangzhou, Zhejiang), where in 1897 it attained college rating and was called Hangchow Presbyterian College. By the early 1900s room was needed for expansion and the Hangchow Board of Directors sought a new site for the campus. A beautiful site was chosen, about six miles outside the city walls, overlooking the wide reaches of the Ch'ien T'ang (Qiantang) River as it made its way out of snow-capped mountains to the the southwest. At this relatively rural location the college began a building program and planted four thousand peach and plum trees, tea bushes, and an extensive bamboo grove, hoping to supplement its income through these crops.

The move to the new campus at Erh Lung T'ou - Second Dragon head - was made in February 1911, with 31 students in the college course and 86 in middle school. Severance Hall, the central campus building, was completed in 1911. It contained the administrative offices, a guest hall, and reading rooms on the first floor, laboratories and an assembly room on the second floor, and twelve classrooms on the third floor.. Dormitories were erected on either side of this building - Gamble Hall on the East and Wheeler and Dusenbury Hall on the west. Five faculty residences were built on the ridge above, and above them an astronomical observatory.

From 1920, Hangchow's College Construction Department was directed by Mr. J. Morrison Wilson, with the help of Mr. Dzu Sen-dang and a staff of 13 draftsmen. The Department designed and supervised buildings for various mission agencies and for the University of Nanking, as well as developing the Hangchow campus. Hangchow became well known for its architectural engineering program.

The late 1920s brought a time of financial distress for the college as political and military turmoil in the area limited the numbers of students attending. The process of registration with the Chinese government, completed in 1931, led to some major changes, including coeducation. A library and a science building were needed to satisfy the registration requirements. The alumni of the school raised the funds necessary to construct the library, which was completed in 1932.

The Teng Memorial Economics Building was an important addition to the campus completed in 1936. Sze Liang-ts'ai, a wealthy Chinese publisher and financier, and noted editor of the Shanghai newspaper "Shen Pao" visited the Hangchow campus in the fall of 1934 to see his son, a sophomore in the Economics Department. Mr. Sze was normally protected by bodyguards, but on this occasion the bodyguards were sent back by train to Shanghai, so that Sze's son and his son's friend, Teng Tsu-hsin, could make the trip in the family car. The car was waylaid by hired highwayman and the chauffeur and Teng Tsu-hsin were killed, as well as the elder Mr. Sze. Out of grief and sympathy for the family of his friend, young Mr. Sze and his mother contributed for construction of an Economics Building as a memorial to Teng.

During the Sino-Japanese war, Hangchow relocated to Shanghai but then was forced to move to the interior following the outbreak of the Pacific war in December 1941. The Colleges of Arts and Commerce were located in Shaowu, where Fukien Christian University had also found refuge, while the College of Engineering was located in Kweiyang. Administration, dormitory, and classroom buildings were constructed to serve the University during more than five years of refugee life. When President Baen E. Lee returned to the Hangchow campus in the autumn of 1945, he found nine buildings completely destroyed and the remaining ones in various stages of ruin. Hangchow's entire Chinese library, one of the best collections in Asia, had been destroyed. The water system had been wrecked and nearly all the furniture and laboratory equipment carted off. Despite this devastation, the University was in full operation again within two years, with approximately 900 students and a teaching staff of seventy Chinese and Westerners.

Hangchow Christian University came under Communist control in May 1949. By the summer of 1951 the HCU campus was occupied by the Chekiang Teachers College. Hangchow's College of Engineering was merged with the National Chekiang University in the city, and the Colleges of Arts and Commerce were dissolved.