

Lo Hing So (1916–1988) and Chung Wai Chee, Rose (1919–1996)

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Lo Hing So (洛 清 苏, pinyin: Luó Qìngsū) was best remembered as an outstanding teacher, scholar, author, counselor, pastor, and education leader who served the church in the South China Union Mission for 42 years. One of his most significant contributions was in the area where he made use of his excellent talents in bilingual Chinese-English interpretation and translation. His wife, Rose Wai Chee Chung (钟 惠 慈, pinyin: Zhōng Huìcí), was a nurse, school teacher, and librarian who served the church for 28 years alongside her husband.

Family Background

Lo Hing So was born on January 19, 1916, in Foshan (佛山), Guangdong Province (广东). His father, Lo Sin Tshoi (洛 新 推, pinyin: Luó Xīncái) was the first Chinese minister to be ordained in the Seventh-day Adventist Hakka Mission. His mother, Chan Shun Tak (陈 慎 德, pinyin: Chén Xìndé), was a Bible worker and was among the first group of graduates from the Bethel Girls' School (贝 瑟 尔 女 子 学 校) in Canton (广州), now Guangzhou), the first school established by Adventists in South China.¹

Lo Sin Tshoi, a Hakka native from Xingning County (兴 宁), was originally a member of the German-based Tsung Tsin Mission (德 人 宣 道 会) in Guangdong but accepted the Adventist faith in 1905 and was baptized by Pastor Edwin H. Wilbur. Since becoming an Adventist mission worker in 1920, Lo Sin Tshoi traveled throughout the hilly Hakka region and towns along the shores of Dongjiang (东 江), eastern distributaries of the Pearl River) to preach the gospel. As a result, since his childhood, Lo Hing So traveled with his parents itinerating among the Hakka people. He was home schooled until the age of twelve, an experience that helped him to develop effective self-study skills that benefited him for the rest of his life.

Lo Hing So has three other siblings: an elder sister Susana Wong, a nurse who lived with her husband in Penang, Malaysia for many years; a younger brother Timothy Lo, a medical doctor who served at several hospitals in China and also served as the director of the nursing school at Nanning, Guangxi; and another younger sister Ruth Lo, also a nurse who served as the superintendent of nurses at the Jiangxi (江 西) Medical College.

Education and Marriage

In 1928 at the age of twelve, Lo Hing So was sent to Canton Middle School at Dongshan (), Guangzhou. That was the year when the school changed its Chinese name from (Sam Yuk Middle School) to (Theology Training Institute). After completing his study there, Lo Hing So went to Jiangsu province in 1934 to attend the China Training Institute (), the Adventist junior college at Qiaotouzhen () to further his education. Upon graduation from the teacher training course, he was hired by his alma mater at Canton, now renamed South China Training Institute, where he taught mathematics and science. Due to the Sino-Japanese War, he followed the school to Sha Tin () in 1937 and then to Clear Water Bay (), Hong Kong, in 1939.

At about that time, his father, Lo Sin Tshoi, after laboring many years for the Hakka Mission in Guangdong and Goungxi, decided to retire in 1940 for health reasons. In 1941 Lo Sin Tshoi returned to his hometown, Xingning, to visit relatives. Unfortunately, he contracted a rare disease and died that year due to lack of appropriate medication because of the war. Because of poor communication, the news of his passing did not reach his family in Hong Kong until many months later. Lo Hing So, who was teaching at the Sam Yuk School at the time, immediately took on the full responsibility of supporting and caring for his widowed mother. With his meager income, he continued to financially support his mother and the cost of medical training for his younger brother, Timothy, during those war years and beyond. In his mother's sunset years, he dutifully took care of her with love and full attention until she passed away in 1979. As a result, he was known among the Chinese congregation as a "model filial son."⁴

In early 1942, Pacific War broke out, and Hong Kong fell into the hands of Japan. Lo Hing So again moved with the school to Laolung (), one of the towns along Dongjiang, an eastern branch of the Pearl River.

In June 1943 he married Rose Wai Chee Chung (), a nurse from the Canton Sanitarium and Hospital, in Laolung. After the war in 1946, he followed the school to Dongshan, Guangzhou. A year later, in 1947, he moved again with the school back to Clear Water Bay, Hong Kong.⁵

Rose Chung was originally from another Hakka town of Wai Chow (, now Huizhou), where her parents, father Zhōng Z jūn () and mother Zēng Dìngmèi () were dairy farmers. They came in contact with the Adventist mission by supplying milk to the American missionaries: Pastors Sherman Nagel and John P. Anderson. Rose was trained as a nurse at the Canton Sanitarium and Hospital⁶ where she later worked and met Lo Hing So when he was convalescing at the hospital. To this union were two sons, Bruce, the elder, was born in 1944 and Joseph, the younger, was born in 1951.⁷

Early Teaching Career

From 1947 to 1959, Lo Hing So continued to teach at the Clear Water Bay school, rising to the ranks of the lead teacher in mathematics and science and eventually becoming the academic dean of the school. Along the way

he also took on the additional responsibility of being the librarian of the school.⁸

Throughout this period he continued to broaden his academic skills in Chinese literature, history, philosophy, and theology. In addition to assisting the school students, he also wrote many articles for church magazines and periodicals and engaged in public speaking among the churches in the South China Union Mission, ministering to the spiritual needs of the church membership at large. His ability to write with clarity, logic, and good literary skills made him a favorite of his readers, both young and old.⁹ He delivered many speeches and sermons and was a much sought after speaker in evangelism crusades and weeks of prayer meetings. His knowledge of Chinese history and literature enabled him to make meaningful connections between the teaching of Christianity and the accepted values of the traditional Chinese society, which found resonance among his audience. His popularity as an author and a public speaker continued to rise during the time of his early teaching career.

Not having the opportunity to receive formal training in English language schools, he self-taught himself the English language to a level of proficiency that matches the graduates of famous language institutes. In the South China Union Mission of Seventh-day Adventists, he became one of the most sought-after interpreters for formal church gatherings. His knowledge of Chinese literature and the English language earned him the reputation as the most proficient bilingual interpreter (from English-to-Chinese, as well as from Chinese-to-English) in the church circle.¹⁰

Furthermore, he was well liked by his students because he cared deeply about not just their academic achievement but also their physical, psychological, and spiritual wellbeing. His quiet demeanor and nonjudgmental personality made him the preferred counselor for students who might have run into disciplinary problems with the school. The following incident illustrates this point well.

One Sabbath morning the school community was shocked to find that the chapel where their church morning service was to be held was broken into and totally ransacked, with dirt all over the floor and broken pot plants spread all over the rostrum and tables. No one could figure out what was going on, and the morning worship meetings had to be canceled. Not knowing what to do, the school administration immediately notified the police, and detectives were sent to the premise to take fingerprints. Still the authority could not understand what had happened. That afternoon, while at his home on campus, Lo Hing So heard a knock at the door. As he opened the door, he found a rather upset nine-year-old male student standing there asking for advice. Lo kindly invited the student to go into his home to discuss the matter. The student confessed that he was the one who ransacked the chapel out of rage, because the school principal had just denied his request for leave permission to visit his home that weekend. He now regretted his action and would like to seek advice from someone he trusted as to what he should do from that point onward. Lo explained to the student that while the courage to accept responsibility was commendable, the normal disciplinary action could not be avoided. This story demonstrated the degree of trust and respect that student had toward this teacher.¹¹

In 1957 Lo Hing So was sent by the South China Union Mission to study abroad. He graduated from the Philippines Union College in Manila in 1958 with a Bachelor of Science degree in mathematics. He then went back to Hong Kong to serve as academic dean of the South China Training Institute until 1960. Even at a time when he was fully occupied with his academic duties, he did not neglect to preach in the surrounding churches in the union mission and to participate in public evangelistic meetings. His devotion to the spiritual needs of the mission field was recognized, and in 1958 he was formally ordained to the pastoral ministry.¹²

Educational and Pastoral Leadership

After teaching full time continuously in the church school system for 22 years, Lo Hing So's dedicatory spirit and administrative ability were well acknowledged by church leaders. In 1960 he was appointed the principal of Kowloon Sam Yuk Secondary School (), where he remained at that position for 20 years until his retirement in 1980. At the time of his appointment, the school was facing several severe financial challenges. With prayers and hard work, Lo Hing So turned the school around into a position of strength within a few years. He obtained authorization from the Hong Kong government Department of Education to run the school as a full-day, bilingual (Chinese and English) senior secondary school. The school enrollment grew to around eight or nine hundred students (so did its reputation) in the local community. As a result, in the late 1960's it became the school of choice for many families in the cities of Kowloon and Hong Kong.¹³

To meet the increase in enrollment, Lo Hing So persuaded the school board to approve a series of expansion programs to improve the teaching facilities and human resources of the school. At about the same time during the 1960's, the Hong Kong Government recognized that the rate of growth in the government-based public school system could not adequately meet the need of the general population growth in Hong Kong. The government adopted the policy to encourage the private education sector to fill this inadequacy by providing financial grants to private schools for facility expansion, as well as salary subsidy to teachers' remuneration. Initially the church was hesitant to accept such subsidies in case of governmental interference in the management of these church schools. But with the careful guidance of the respective school boards, these government grants were able to produce the desired positive influence at the Adventist School System in the Hong Kong-Macao society.¹⁴

The rapid success of the Kowloon Sam Yuk Secondary School in the 1960's and 1970's did not lead Lo Hing So to overlook the real goals of the school—to be a witness for Christ in the local community. His greatest desire was to share the Advent message with the students, their parents, and the local community. Indeed, under his leadership the school became one of the most effective means for soul winning. In 1968 Lo Hing So reported in an article in the *Far Eastern Division Outlook* that in a very successful Voice of Prophecy (VoP) promotion campaign in the Kowloon Church where the Sam Yuk Secondary School was located, out of the 17,122 new VoP enrollees, 16,757 were obtained by the school students.¹⁵ Many students, their parents, as well as members of

the general public in the local community were led to Christ. The Kowloon Church, which shared the same address as the school also experienced membership growth due to the synergic cooperation between the two institutions.¹⁶

Lo Hing So's influence was not limited to the local educational ministry and congregational ministry at Kowloon. He was also a very effective administrative leader at both the conference-mission and union- mission levels. He was appointed to the position of the education director of the Hong Kong-Macao Mission and also of the South China Islands Union Mission. The "school-based discipleship" model was replicated successively at other educational institutions throughout the conference and union. In addition to his main responsibilities at the school, he authored and edited many articles for publication in the Chinese *Signs of the Times* monthly and the *Last Day Shepherd's Call* magazine, the main channel of communication among the South China Islands Adventist Community.¹⁷

His ability and his scholarship were also recognized by his peers in the Hong Kong society outside the Seventh-day Adventist Church. For three consecutive years, Lo Hing So was elected the chairperson of the Association of Hong Kong Independent Schools, an organization that represented the non-public or non-government schools.¹⁸ During his 20-year tenure as the principal of Kowloon Sam Yuk Secondary School till his retirement, he was once concurrently serving as the acting principal of Tai Po Sam Yuk Secondary School () and the acting senior pastor of the Kowloon Seventh-day Adventist Church.¹⁹

His biographer, Dr. Timothy Lo, commented:

Lo Hing So was a *multitalented* educator who did not have a *Doctorate* degree and yet was a Chinese scholar with an in-depth knowledge of Chinese literature, philosophy, and *an exceptional ability to master the art of Chinese authorship*; an inspiring, powerful, and well respected gospel minister who never graduated from a theological seminary; an *English student* who was proficient in oral, written, and translational English, yet had never attended a foreign language school. ... But above all, he was my mentor, my exemplar, and spiritual role model."²⁰

Retirement Years

After serving in the educational work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church for 42 years in South China, Lo Hing So formally retired in 1980. His wife, Rose Wai Chee Chung, who served the church for 28 years alongside him, also retired the same year. They both migrated to Australia and set up their new home in Cooranbong, New South Wales, near Avondale University, where their eldest son was teaching.²¹

While they both enjoyed a more relaxing retirement lifestyle at their new home, Lo Hing So never ceased to share the Advent message with those who were seeking the truth—especially those among the Chinese speaking community in Australia and elsewhere in the world. He often told his friends, "It has been my most treasured privilege and honor to be able to continue to share the love of God and the Advent message with the people

here in my sunset years."²²

From 1980 to 1988, he was able to continue to utilize his Chinese and English language skills to author and translate many devotional writings. Working jointly with E. L. Longway, he translated many of Mrs. E. G. White's writings into Chinese for use as morning devotional books for the years from 1985 to 1988. He was one of the contributing authors for articles in two Chinese devotional books, *Twelve Sweet Water Springs* (?????) and *Twelve Spiritual Rain and Dew* (?????) published by Signs of the Times Publishing Association, Taipei, Taiwan. From 1986 to 1988, he translated the *Adult Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly* into Chinese for use by Chinese SDA churches throughout the world. He also wrote many broadcasting scripts for use by Advent World Radio (AWR) in Guam and the East Asia Committee. During the eight years of retirement in Australia, he was invited to preach at various churches, conducting visitation and giving Bible studies and counseling, especially among overseas Chinese. In 1987, Lo Hing So and his wife, Rose, had the opportunity of traveling to mainland China with his elder sister Susanna and her husband, Stamford Wong, to meet up with his younger brother Timothy and younger sister Ruth and other former Adventist friends in China who they had not met for many years. That was a most memorable experience to be able to recount the blessings of the Lord to the Chinese Adventist believers.²³

In the early morning hours of August 11, 1988, Lo Hing So had a heart failure and passed away peacefully in his Cooranbong home. He was buried at the Avondale Cemetery near Avondale University in Australia. The funeral was conducted at the Avondale Memorial Church. He was survived by his wife, Rose, two sons, and five grandchildren. On August 16, 23, and October 1, 1989, respectively, separate memorial services were held in honor of Pastor Lo Hing So in the Sydney Chinese SDA Church, Australia, Kowloon Church, Hong Kong, China, and Loma Linda Chinese SDA Church, California, USA. In September 1989 the administrative committee of the Kowloon Sam Yuk Secondary School voted to name the newly completed school library "The Late Principal Lo Hing So Memorial Library."²⁴

Mrs. Rose Chung continued to live for another eight years and moved to live at the Alstonville Adventist Retirement Village in northern New South Wales, Australia, to be close to her son Bruce who was the Head of the School of Information Technology at Southern Cross University. She died on December 23, 1996, and was interred alongside her husband at the Avondale Cemetery.²⁵

SOURCES

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NOTES

1. Timothy Lo, *Biography of Lo Hing So*, unpublished manuscript, original written by Timothy Lo in 1999, revised by Bruce Lo in 2011, available: <https://ccah-collection.weebly.com/lohingso.html>; Timothy Lo, "Lo Hing So" *Chinese SDA History*, edited by Samuel Young, (Hong Kong, China: Chinese Union Mission, 2002), 607-609.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Timothy Lo, "Lo Sin Tshoi" *Chinese SDA History*, ed. Samuel Young, (Hong Kong, China: Chinese Union Mission), 2002, 610-613.
5. Timothy Lo, *Biography of Lo Hing So*, unpublished manuscript, 1999; Timothy Lo, "Lo Hing So" *Chinese SDA History*, 2002.
6. According to Joseph W. Lo, the second son of the biographee, it is possible that Rose Chung was trained at the Huiann Hospital () at Huizhou (), which was sometimes regarded as a branch of the Canton Sanitarium & Hospital ().
7. Bruce W. Lo, personal knowledge of the author as the son of the biographee.
8. Timothy Lo, *Biography of Lo Hing So*, unpublished manuscript, 1999; Timothy Lo, "Lo Hing So" *Chinese SDA History*, 2002.

9. Examples of his writings which began as early as 1933 when he was still a student at the Canton Sam Yuk School: [Hing So Lo, "The Example of a Perfect Being", *Last Day Shepherd's Call*, 1933, Vol. 21, p. 14.] and continued till his retirement: [See: Hing So Lo, "Be Like Jesus", *Twelve Sweet Water Springs*, edited by STPA Editors, Taipei, Taiwan: Signs of The Times Publishing Association, 1978, pp.305-334; & White, Ellen G., *Reflecting Christ*, translated by Hing So Lo, edited by STPA Editors, Taipei, Taiwan: Signs of The Times Publishing Association, 1987]
10. Timothy Lo, *Biography of Lo Hing So*, unpublished manuscript, 1999; Timothy Lo, "Lo Hing So", *Chinese SDA History*, 2002.
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12. Timothy Lo, *Biography of Lo Hing So*, unpublished manuscript, 1999; Timothy Lo, "Lo Hing So", *Chinese SDA History*, 2002.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Hing So Lo, "Voice of Prophecies Enrollment in Kowloon Church," *Far Eastern Division Outlook*, June 1968, 5.
16. Timothy Lo, *Biography of Lo Hing So*, unpublished manuscript, 1999; Timothy Lo, "Lo Hing So", *Chinese SDA History*, 2002.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid. The referenced articles incorrectly identified Lo Hing So as the Chairman of the Hong Kong Schools Examination Board. But as far as the author can determine, he was elected as the Chairperson of The Association of Hong Kong Independent Schools.
19. Timothy Lo, *Biography of Lo Hing So*, unpublished manuscript, 1999; Timothy Lo, "Lo Hing So", *Chinese SDA History*, 2002.
20. Ibid. NB: Italic parts are added for emphases by the author.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
24. Bruce W. Lo, personal knowledge of the author as the son of the biographee.
25. Ibid.

