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Church-State Relations in Contemporary China and the Development of Protestant Christianity

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I. Definition of church-state relations

Before discussing religious policy in contemporary China, let us first define the concept of church-state relations. 'State' may refer to the government or to political activity, while 'church' may refer to a church organisation or to a religious faith. Consequently, church-state relations cover four aspects: the relations between government and religion, between government and the church, between religion and politics and between the church and politics.¹

Firstly, the relation between the state or government and religion. The 'state' refers to the government which holds sovereign power, while the 'government' has the narrower meaning of the executive arm of the government holding sovereign power, such as the 'government' of George Bush Jr in the USA. However, the nature of relations between government in this narrow sense and religion is determined by the nature of the particular political regime; for instance, the US government, which is a democracy practising the separation of powers, is very different from a one-party state.² Generally speaking, democratic and open governments will not impose any laws or policies on religion,³ whereas, out of a desire to control every facet of society, authoritarian regimes or single-party states will often institute a law on religion or a religious policy as a means to exercise effective control over the development of religious affairs. Their main concern is to stress that religion must not damage national security, public morality or social order.⁴ The differing attitudes towards religion of parties and governments (elimination, attack, control, etc.) are the basis of their policies on religion. Consequently, in the relations between government and religion, the form of the political regime plays a decisive role.

Secondly, relations between government and church. The 'church' may be a specific religious body, or certain church organisations or groups of religious believers. By church-state relations we mostly mean the relations between the two organisations of government and church, while the 'separation of church and state' describes the mutual organisational independence between government and church. As stated above, the political form of a state affects the relations between its government and the church. In democracies, interaction between government and church mainly takes place in the sphere of public affairs outside of religious matters, and does not pertain to the distribution of power. But under authoritarian regimes, because the party-state does not give up its control over social organisations, the development of religious bodies, as a part of the social system, is restricted by the organs of administration over religious matters.⁵ In the internal operation of religious bodies, there is still some degree of control and intervention by the party-state.

Thirdly, the relation between the church and politics. What is meant by politics here is political activity and also political rights. According to political theory, religious bodies, as social organisations, have the right to participate in any legal political activity and in public affairs. The rights granted to the people by the constitution, such as the rights to freedom of assembly, association, speech and the press, can all be enjoyed by religious bodies. Whether religious bodies can exercise these rights, and how they exercise them, depends on the beliefs and the political stance of different religious bodies, and on the nature of the political activity: if it belongs to their sphere of autonomy, then others have no right to interfere.⁶ However, such autonomy occurs only in democratic societies. In an authoritarian society, not only can religious bodies not enjoy full political rights, but they are often ordered to take part in political activities required by the party-state.

Fourthly, the relation between religion and politics. The doctrines and values of religious faiths themselves inevitably give rise to different understandings of politics. Although religion and politics belong to different spheres, the two do have an effect on each other. Religion, as an ideology, influences people's view of life, values, and world view, and thus has a direct influence on people's political judgments. Religious faith and theology may influence the direction of society, but the social environment may also in its turn determine the development of theology. Thus the relationship between religion and politics also has a mutual influence on the relationship between the church and politics. In an open society, different religious bodies may take diverse political directions according to their own doctrines. However, in authoritarian societies, there is not much difference between 'the relationship between the church and politics' and 'the relationship between religion and politics'. Because of the active intervention and restrictions imposed by the party-state, the political function which may be played by religion is entirely controlled by the space granted by the government.

In the following paper, the writer will analyse the development of church-state relations in China from the 1980s to the present in accordance with the four aspects indicated above, with particular emphasis on their effect on the development of Protestant Christianity.

II. Relations between the party-state and religion: pragmatic considerations

The implications of ideology

The communist view of religion is that with the realisation of a socialist society religion will eventually disappear of its own accord. However, while the ideal of a communist society has not yet been attained, and religion still has an objective existence in socialist society, how the ruling communist party deals with religion becomes a matter of practical policy. Should the government use all possible methods (both administrative and political) to reduce (or even eliminate) the influence of religion on society? Or should it emphasise the long-term nature of religion and, while religion has not yet disappeared of its own accord, champion freedom of religious belief as a way of uniting with the broad mass of religious believers? We can see that since the foundation of New China, the party-state's policy on religion has mostly wavered between these two alternatives. When

the leaders of the party-state have held the ideal of realising communism in the short term, religion has been regarded as a reactionary force obstructing social progress. When they have objectively accepted that China is still in the preliminary stage of socialism, their main concern has been how to unite the people (including believers), and develop production. These two differing attitudes towards religion paradoxically both derive from an interpretation of the socialist theory of religion.

However, even if the party-state perceives the impracticality of its desire to eliminate religion, and accepts the long-term survival of religion, it still remains an important tenet of the Marxist view of religion that religion will ultimately disappear of its own accord. And this inevitably affects the question of whether the nature of religion is beneficial to social progress. A commentator in the mainland has acutely observed that, since the foundation of New China, mistakes over religion have actually been related to the contradictions within the theory of religion. The traditional views and policies on religion of socialist states are theoretically perfectly rational. But these views and policies are based on expectations regarding the speed of the realisation of communism and the disappearance of religion. When these expectations are thwarted in practice, these views and policies cannot fail to fall into contradiction. On the one hand there is the resolute maintenance of freedom of religious belief, to avoid hurting the feelings of religious believers, and on the other hand there is the denial of the positive value of religion, and the effort to reduce ordinary people's religious faith.⁷

*The concept of 'the opiate of the people' replaced by that of 'adaptation'*⁸

On the level of party-state ideology, we can basically see that, under the banner of building socialism with Chinese characteristics, the Marxist-Leninist view of religion is gradually being revised to make it correspond more closely to the actuality of Chinese society. By the mid 1980s, the Chinese government had basically abandoned the view that 'religion is the opiate of the people', and religion was no longer regarded simply as a reactionary, negative ideology. This shows that the party-state was obliged to acknowledge the fact that religion would continue to exist for the long term in a socialist society. The book *Religion in China in the Period of Socialism*, edited by Luo Zhufeng, set the tone on this controversial issue.⁹ The primary concern of the party-state was how to turn religion into a positive force for social stability. In the early 1990s, the party-state officially introduced the slogan of the 'mutual adaptation of religion and Chinese socialism.'¹⁰ 'Mutual adaptation' mainly implied that the religious sphere had to change, to follow or adapt to the development of Chinese socialism. As the United Front worker Huang Zhu pointed out, 'To talk about adaptation means that there is also non-adaptation, and necessary reform must be undertaken to reform things that are not beneficial to the people's production, livelihood and physical and mental well-being, while developing things that are adapted to the socialist system.'¹¹ As far as the party-state is concerned, what is crucial is to carry out the policy of freedom of religious belief and, particularly under the precondition of internal contradictions among the people, to strive for the unity of the broad masses of believers.¹²

At a national conference on United Front work which was held at the end of 2000, Jiang Zemin frequently affirmed that religion is a phenomenon which will have a 'long-term existence' in socialist society. He actually stated that the disappearance of religion is 'a lengthy historical process', which 'may take even longer than the disappearance of class and the state.' Therefore, the government should not equate religion with 'political opposition', or try to restrict normal religious activities or eliminate religion through administrative means.¹³ Jiang Zemin's acknowledgement that religion will remain in existence longer than class or the state may be described as a breakthrough in the party-state's long-standing contradiction on the theory of religion, and an adjustment of theory to correspond to reality. Later, at a national conference on religious affairs work, he repeated that 'the long-term existence of religion must be fully recognised' and that the basis for the existence of religion 'will still continue to exist in the long term.'¹⁴ In this case, how to turn religion into a positive force for social stability became a topic which the party-state was obliged to face.

The spirit of mutual adaptation is 'unity and cooperation in politics, mutual respect in belief', i.e. differences in matters of belief between religion and socialism are 'secondary differences', while their basic economic and political interests are the same. If the Chinese Communist Party represents the basic interests of the broadest masses of the people, this naturally includes those of the broad mass of believers.¹⁵ This can be discussed at three levels.

Firstly, within the political system, no matter which religion people believe in, the most important thing is to love the motherland and uphold the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party. At the beginning of the 1990s, the party-state introduced 'education in patriotism', with the intention of further deepening this way of thinking. In fact, the party-state's purpose in actively promoting patriotism was to arouse and unite the nation by means of the 'new legally constituted authority' of nationalism and patriotism, in the wake of the collapse of official Marxism-Leninism.¹⁶ As Deng Xiaoping pointed out, love of the motherland is not an empty concept, but one which should have practical content, i.e. to uphold the Chinese Communist Party. This view of patriotism focuses upon political power. Therefore, some scholars have criticised China's patriotism as lacking in content, with its only content being to love the Party.¹⁷ Thus, whichever religion is followed by believers, as long as they respond patriotically, they have adapted to socialism in terms of the political system. As Jiang Zemin said at the national meeting on religion:

To actively work for the mutual adaptation of religion and socialism is not to require that religious figures or ordinary believers abandon their religious beliefs, but to require them to love the motherland, uphold the socialist system, uphold the leadership of the Communist Party, and respect the nation's laws, regulations and policies; and to require that the religious activities which they carry out should accord with and serve the highest interests of the state and the over-all interests of the nation.¹⁸

In Jiang's report to the Sixteenth Party Congress, he most unusually referred four times to work on religion, and treated doing a good job on religious affairs as a way of 'uniting every force which can be united with', in order to enhance the 'cohesiveness of the Chinese nation'.¹⁹

Secondly, in economic development, all religions have the obligation to guide believers to advance the construction of socialist modernisation. 'The enthusiasm evinced by religious believers for patriotism and socialism under the banner of loving the motherland and loving their religion can combine and already has combined with the broad masses of non-believers to form a tide of constructing the four modernisations.' Religious belief thus mobilises believers' 'enthusiasm for constructing the motherland, constructing socialism, and constructing a beautiful "heaven on earth".'²⁰ In other words, as long as religious belief can shake off its 'other-worldly' tendency, and encourage believers to take an active part in economic construction, this is a manifestation of adaptation to socialism.

Finally, in the construction of spiritual culture, although economic reform has stimulated material culture, the people are comparatively poor in their spiritual lives, and there has even been a decline in morality and a rise in all sorts of serious social problems. Therefore taking a grip on the construction of spiritual culture has become a topic with which the party-state has to deal. However, from the 1980s until now, the party-state's view of the core of spiritual culture has undergone a major change. Previously, Marxism-Leninism formed the core ideology of spiritual culture, and models such as the 'Lei Feng spirit' and the 'spirit of Kong Fansen' were constantly being put forward, though the practical results of this were far from ideal. After the 1990s, although the party-state continued to stress the ideology of Marxism, Leninism and Mao Zedong thought, and Deng Xiaoping's construction of socialism with Chinese characteristics, it also took a fairly open and positive attitude towards Confucianism and the idealist religious faiths, which had previously been regarded as feudal poisons. Although Marxism, Leninism, Maoism and Dengism remained the core of spiritual culture, they were no longer its only content. All elements which could contribute to social stability and ameliorate the moral and social problems which had developed in the wake of reform and opening up were incorporated by the party-state into the construction of spiritual culture. The *Outline for Implementing the Construction of Public Morality* which has recently been brought out by the government acknowledges that this is an immediate and urgent obligation which affects social order and stability.²¹

We can see that the role played by religion in spiritual culture has been increasingly affirmed by the party-state. The reason why the party-state has changed its view of religion, as many studies have pointed out, is that in places with a high proportion of religious believers, the crime rate is generally low, and local cadres have already expressed approval of this. Faith has ameliorated the moral problems affecting society under the impact of secularism. Since religion can make people more virtuous, maintain social stability, and help to reduce crime, it has been able to become part of the construction of spiritual culture.²² Recently, Li Pingye, who bears special responsibility within the United Front Department of the Party Central Committee for work on

Protestant Christianity, has also pointed out that in an era in which idealism has declined and utilitarianism has flourished throughout the world, religion is a form of spiritual life which can effectively maintain beliefs, morality and ideals. 'The reason that Communists respect religion is not that it cannot be eliminated but because in some aspects it is worthy of respect and its existence has value.' She emphasises that in future the superstructure of socialism will inevitably be pluralist, and religion can become one element in this. 'While socialist ideology and culture lead the way, they can also incorporate all other types of healthy culture, including religious culture.'²³ Another religious affairs cadre, in Jiangsu province, has even defined religion as an intermediate structure [between infrastructure and superstructure], pointing up the fact that in an era of social change, religion's 'function in maintaining social stability is becoming ever more evident.'²⁴ The advance from acknowledging the long-term continued existence of religion to affirming that it is a component of healthy culture clearly reflects the developing sense of the 'practical value of religion' within the party-state.

Advancing with the times

Ye Xiaowen of the State Religious Affairs Bureau has pointed out that one of the most important political topics in the 21st century will be the need to resolve the relations between religion and socialism. He would like to establish 'socialism with a human face', a socialism that can 'truly become the faith and the spiritual goal of the majority of people'. In this, a 'simplistic and careless' treatment of religion must be avoided, and a new leaf must be turned over in the relations between socialism and religion.²⁵

In its treatment of the religious question, how can socialism show its 'human face'? At the national conference on religion, Jiang Zemin indicated that 'we must closely unite the 100-plus million ordinary believers in China around the Party and the government', and in order to achieve this goal, it would be essential for the government to implement the policy of freedom of religious belief, and to respect the religious faith of ordinary believers. 'If we do not respect or make allowances for their faith, but instead take wrongful actions against them, the broad masses of believers will not stand by us, but will be divided from the Party and the government.'²⁶ Thus, it is understandable that in his article 'A new historical phase in the relations between socialism and religion' Director Ye Xiaowen of the State Religious Affairs Bureau summed up the new turn taken in religious affairs work as follows:²⁷

1. Changing from regarding believers merely as backward elements and a negative force, to regarding them as 'part of the family' and a positive force;
2. Changing from simply emphasising the negative aspect of religion as the main spiritual means whereby the exploiting class controls the masses in the present stage of society, to affirming, in the spirit of seeking truth from facts, that religion has both positive and negative aspects in a socialist society, and that the negative aspects must be controlled while the positive aspects are harnessed;
3. Changing from the emphasis during the revolutionary period on criticising religion, to an emphasis on unification with the mass of believers during this period of construction;

4. Changing religious affairs work from relying on traditional ideological and political work and internal work, to being managed by the government as more of a matter of public affairs or social affairs, and putting this management on the track of legality and regularisation;
5. Changing religious affairs work from a departmental or case-by-case matter to something involving the whole Party and the over-all situation.

Mr Ye's use of the term 'a new historical phase' indicates that the party-state intends to further alleviate the contradiction between theory and practice, and to set a new tone for work on religion in 21st century China. Of course, work on religion has a dual aspect: the freedom of religious belief proclaimed by the party-state is not without its limits. As Jiang Zemin has indicated, one cannot 'take an easy-going, lax attitude' to any problems that emerge in religious affairs.²⁸ To implement freedom of religious belief and to respect the faith of ordinary believers is certainly not to 'abandon ideological or political work towards them'.²⁹

Nothing in religious affairs is of minor importance

At the work meeting of the United Front Department which took place in 1993, Jiang Zemin stated: 'Nothing in religious or ethnic minority affairs is of minor importance.'³⁰ Ethnic minority problems, especially Tibet's and Xinjiang's bids for independence, have forced the centre to take them seriously. As for the idea that 'Nothing in religious affairs is of minor importance', this can be understood either from a leftist or a rightist perspective. From a rightist perspective, this indicates the long-term, ethnic, international and mass aspects and the complexity of religion. When the party-state revived this doctrine of the 'five-fold nature' of religion, this demonstrated that they were taking a cautious attitude towards work on religion.³¹ This was because an inappropriate approach to work on religion would not only give rise to a negative mood among religious believers, but would directly affect the unity and stability of the whole of society, and even cause damage to China's image abroad.³² At present, about one tenth of the population of China (including ethnic minorities) has a religious faith; if the party-state were to use Cultural Revolution era tactics of attack and suppression in order to bring about the forcible elimination of religion, this could only lead to extreme social disorder.³³ Therefore, 'Nothing in religious or ethnic minority affairs is of minor importance', from a rightist perspective, implies that the party-state must prevent 'leftist' leanings in religious policy, and must take a cautious and positive approach to religious matters, putting religious policy back on the track of normal development.³⁴

Understood from a leftist perspective, this demonstrates that the party-state is taking a careful approach to religion, worried that religion may become a channel for foreign infiltration. The party-state has never relaxed its guard against those persons overseas who oppose the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party. These 'anti-China elements' are always making use of religious problems to divide and splinter the unity and stability of the Chinese people, and even aim to overthrow the power of the CCP through peaceful evolution. Director Ye Xiaowen of the State Religious Affairs Bureau has pointed out: 'Hostile international forces want to make use of ethnic minorities and religion as

bridgeheads to carry out the Westernisation and disintegration of China, and reactionary international religious forces are also plotting to 'return to the Chinese mainland'... With the expansion of opening up to the outside world, some infiltration is almost inevitable. All departments should carry out long-term, active cooperation to prevent the infiltration of hostile religious forces from abroad, and fight a defensive war on all fronts.'³⁵ The concerns of the left have thus taken an anti-rightist direction, with 'resisting infiltration' becoming the main thrust of religious affairs work.³⁶

From this it can be seen that Jiang Zemin's idea that 'Nothing in religious affairs is of minor importance' has a dual significance. On the one hand, it warns Party and state cadres that they must never again use ultra-'leftist' means to suppress religion, and that the more the party-state can normalise religious affairs and implement the policy of freedom of religious belief, the more this will benefit the stability and unity of the whole country. But at the same time, the party-state cannot abandon its management and control of the religious sphere, because complete liberalisation would eventually lead to the exploitation of religion by anti-communist and anti-China elements, and clear the way for peaceful evolution in China. This approach of opposing rightism while guarding against 'leftism' is precisely the true implication of Jiang Zemin's 'Nothing in religious or ethnic minority affairs is of minor importance'.

In sum, pragmatism has become the core of the party-state's policy on religion; they have recognised that religion has a positive social function, and are actively inducing it to serve the interests of the party-state and promote social stability and unity, to advance economic development, and even to consolidate the Party's authority. But on the other hand, at the same time as affirming the positive function of religion, the party-state also maintains its administrative control over religion. As the political power in a one-party state, the Chinese Communist Party will certainly never abandon its control over religion. 'Nothing in religious or ethnic minority affairs is of minor importance': Jiang Zemin's words reflect the basic principle and approach towards religion of the Chinese Communist Party today.³⁷

III: Relations between the party-state and the church: the party-state in control of the church

The granting of legal status

That the party-state is the grantor of all openness and legitimacy for all groups within civil society in China (including religious groups) is an uncontested fact within China. The current 'Regulations on the registration and administration of social groups' grant wide-ranging powers to the administrative units of social groups, and place all legitimate social groups under the direct control of the government.³⁸ Under the spirit of these regulations, the State Religions Bureau of the State Council (originally known as the State Religious Affairs Bureau) forms the 'administrative unit' of religious groups; in May 1991 the 'Implementation Method for the Registration and Administration of Religious Social Groups' was promulgated, clarifying that national and regional religious social groups must register with a Civil Affairs office after examination and approval by

the Religious Affairs Bureau.³⁹ In other words, the openness and legitimacy of religious groups totally depends on whether or not they obtain approval and recognition from a government department of religious affairs: it is the latter which grants the former the basis of its administrative and political legitimacy.⁴⁰

Since the founding of the PRC, the party-state has made a distinction between legitimate religion and feudal superstitions and cults;⁴¹ the ‘five major religions’ (Buddhism, Daoism, Catholic Christianity, Protestant Christianity, and Islam) are the legitimate religions acknowledged by the party-state.⁴² The government is opposed to feudal superstitions and heterodox sects because such activities not only damage the physical health of their adherents but are apt to create social unrest and form a negative force threatening social order.⁴³ The government, just like the imperial court throughout Chinese history, will classify a religious organisation or denomination as a feudal superstition or a heterodox sect the minute they suspect that it may threaten law and order, and will attack and eliminate it.⁴⁴

The Chinese government has not only granted legitimacy to the ‘five major religions’ but has further specified that their respective ‘patriotic religious associations’ are acknowledged as religious bodies. The establishment of these patriotic religious associations was to a great extent inspired and brought about by the party-state, and they can be viewed as ‘top-down social groups’.⁴⁵ However, in the course of reform and opening up, the essential nature of these organisations has changed from originally being representatives of ‘officialdom’ to taking on a role which combines ‘official’ with ‘unofficial’.⁴⁶ The main functions of the patriotic religious associations are on the one hand to assist the party-state in the implementation of its religious policy and to raise the patriotic and social consciousness of ordinary believers, and on the other hand to represent the legitimate rights of the religious world, to organise normal religious activities, and to run the practical affairs of the religion.⁴⁷ Currently, the ‘five major religions’ have seven patriotic religious associations at national level (two each for Catholicism and Protestantism and one each for the others).

The Management of Religious Affairs

In addition, the Chinese government in recent years has taken an extremely serious attitude towards the proper management of religious affairs in accordance with the law; it has defined ‘normal’ religious services, and no religious body may transgress these limits without being regarded as breaking the law, in which case the public security authorities can take legal action against them. So-called ‘normal’ religious services mainly conform to three requirements:

1. Religious services must take place in a legally registered location recognised by the religious affairs authorities;
2. Religious services must be in accordance with the rites, rules and traditions of the respective religion;
3. Religious services must be presided over by a member of the clergy or an appropriate person according to the regulations.⁴⁸

Ever since the 1980s, the party-state has drawn up and promulgated a number of policies or laws on religion, which to varying degrees have set the parameters for religious activities. The main policies, laws and regulations on which the state currently relies to handle religious affairs are the following:

1. The constitution promulgated in 1982, of which clause 36 specifies that religion must not interfere in the state's administration, education, etc;
2. The Party's policies on religion, including 'Document 19': 'Basic Views and Basic Policies on Religious Questions in the Socialist Era of our Country' (1982); 'Document 6': 'Announcement on Various Questions Regarding the Improvement of Work on Religion' (1991); and 'Document 3': 'Decision on Strengthening Work on Religion' (2002);
3. The national administrative regulations on religion, principally orders no. 144 and 145 issued by the State Council in 1994; the former is aimed at foreigners who carry out religious activities within China, while the latter is about the management of the locations for religious activities, specifying the requirements and procedures for registration;
4. Regulations of government departments under the State Council, mainly those promulgated by the State Religious Affairs Bureau regarding the registration and annual inspection of locations for religious activities and procedures for religious seminaries to appoint professionals of foreign nationality;
5. General regional laws on religion, mainly those passed by the People's Congresses of the provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions regarding the management of religious affairs within their respective administrative regions;
6. General regulations of regional governments on religion, mainly temporary regulations promulgated by the People's Governments of the provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions regarding the management of religious affairs within their respective administrative regions;
7. Individual regional laws on religion, mainly those passed by the People's Congresses of the provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions regarding the management of locations for religious activities within their respective administrative regions;
8. Individual regulations of regional governments on religion, mainly temporary regulations promulgated by the People's Governments of the provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions regarding the management of locations for religious activities within their respective administrative regions.⁴⁹

Policies on religion are set by the Party and become administrative regulations on promulgation by the government, or become law through the legislative process (the People's Congress), so as to restrict and regulate the activities and development of religious bodies. Religious bodies and their activities must be completely in accordance with the party-state's policies and the government's laws and regulations in order for them to be open and legal.⁵⁰ At present China still has no 'Law on Religion' which would provide specific and concrete rules defining the right to freedom of religion and the obligations of China's fifty-six ethnic groups.⁵¹ In fact, back in 1987 and 1988, the

government initiated discussion and consultation on a law on religion, but this petered out as a result of various difficulties.⁵²

As well as defining legitimate religious services, the government has specified 'legitimate' and 'normal' locations for religious services. All locations for religious services must have a fixed group of believers, a fixed area for assemblies, qualified clergy, a regular income, etc. Those which qualify under these conditions must register with the government in order to be recognised as 'legitimate locations for religious services' and to carry out legitimate religious services.⁵³ 'Only in those locations for religious services which are registered and have obtained legal status are the locations and the religious services legal and enjoy the protection of the law. If they are not registered they are illegal and do not enjoy the protection of the law.'⁵⁴ All registered locations for religious services must also undergo an annual inspection.⁵⁵

Mechanisms for the co-ordination of the party-state and religious organisations

The party-state has set up specialist administrative departments to deal with religious affairs, and has various channels through which it co-ordinates its relationship with religious organisations. In the government structure, the State Religious Affairs Bureau under the State Council (and the Religious Affairs Bureaux and Departments at every level) is the department which specialises in managing religious affairs,⁵⁶ forming the 'administrative unit' for religious groups. According to the rules in the *Handbook for the Management of Social Groups* compiled by leading officials of the Ministry of Civil Affairs, the 'administrative unit' should 'be responsible for the day-to-day management of registered social groups', mainly covering:

Responsibility for undertaking frequent political education of the responsible persons and office-holders in social groups in respect of form, duties and ideology, to familiarise them with and ensure that they uphold the laws and policies; responsibility for overseeing the election and periodic replacement of the responsible persons in social groups, and the management of the setting up of Party structures, allocation of work, adjustment of wages, job specifications etc. for office-holders in social groups; responsibility for carrying out inspection and management of major operational activities (including the holding of conferences), financial activities, acceptance of subsidies, and foreign affairs activities of social groups; responsibility for carrying out inspection and making suggestions regarding the adjustment, addition or decrease of internal organisational structures of social groups, and ensuring that social groups carry out the procedures for registering alterations or deregistering with the administrative organisation with which they originally registered; at the same time, for assisting social groups in clearing debts and moneys owed to them and carrying out the final processes of certification of the winding up of debts.⁵⁷

As well as belonging to the government system, work on religious affairs also belongs to the sphere of work of the Party system; one of the main tasks of the United Front departments at Party Central Committee and local levels is to deal with religious affairs.⁵⁸ It must be pointed out that in the current conditions of ‘Party rule’ in China, the United Front role is actually the more important.

Apart from the state having set up departments of special responsibility, religious leaders are also elected or appointed as representatives of the religious world on the National People’s Congress or the Political Consultative Congress. Meetings of the People’s Congress or the Political Consultative Congress at national or local levels become channels for them to exchange opinions or report problems to the state, and are also the basic mechanism for coordination between the party-state and various organisations in society. There was a Committee on Religion under the national-level CPPCC (later combined with the ethnic minority delegates to form the Committee on Ethnic Minorities and Religion);⁵⁹ we have seen that representatives of the religious world have made use of this to report on failures by the state to effectively implement policy on religion.

Beginning in 1991, Jiang Zemin invited the leaders of the ‘five major religions’ to Zhongnanhai in Beijing every Chinese New Year for a joint service of celebration. If Jiang himself was unable to attend he would delegate Li Ruihuan to greet the religious representatives, and this practice continues to this day. In this unofficial forum for communication and dialogue between government and religious leaders, state leaders have always communicated the party-state’s requirements for the religious bodies, and have made important speeches.⁶⁰ As one Chinese religious affairs cadre describes it, this is ‘the Party Central Committee with Jiang Zemin as its core personally coming forward to strengthen its links with religious figures’ and ‘a new form of educating the religious world on unity’.⁶¹

The ‘leadership’ of the party-state over religious groups, in addition to its embodiment in the law and the political structure, also extends into the churches and other religious organisations, most obviously in the ‘posting’ by party and government departments of individuals to work in religious bodies. According to the regulations laid down by the Religious Affairs Bureau, these ‘individuals undertaking work (including some advanced elements in the religious world who are in practice already being employed as cadres)’ can have their period of work counted towards their ‘length of service’ as government servants.⁶² Moreover, as the ‘administrative unit’ for religious bodies, the Religious Affairs Bureau also has the right to oversee the election and periodic replacement of the responsible persons within social groups. The appointment and replacement of the leadership within religious organisations at national, provincial or municipal, and county levels must virtually always get the nod from the Religious Affairs Bureau and the United Front Department, as everyone is well aware.⁶³ And at important meetings of religious bodies at national or local level, party-state cadres must be included and must make a speech. Party-state officials must also make an appearance at other events such as the consecration of churches, or graduation ceremonies at theological colleges.

In addition, the working organisations of all religious bodies and national level religious seminaries are all incorporated into the state system. Although church and theological college premises are the property of the church, and clergy are not civil servants, the administrative budget, personnel quotas etc. for national-level religious seminaries are all incorporated into the government system.⁶⁴

Furthermore, even the furtherance of religious activity by religious bodies cannot entirely escape 'co-ordination' with the party-state. In socialist China, the party-state cannot fail to be involved in religious work. This consists of both a negative and a positive aspect. From the 1950s, large amounts of religious property were confiscated, and getting their premises and property back has been one of the main activities of the churches in the last twenty years. But still, when the church has asked for its property back, this has more often than not been unsuccessful, and has required the cooperation of the party-state in implementing its policy in order to recover the property.⁶⁵ At the same time, if the church wants to buy land to put up a new church building, it needs to get permission from the relevant authorities. Going into the 1990s, the social space granted by the party-state was greater than ever before, but it still maintained its management at various levels. Consequently, the involvement of and co-ordination with the party-state is unavoidable whenever the church wants to do anything practical.

Political unity and cooperation

In principle, the patriotic religious associations must accept the leadership of the Party,⁶⁶ but how the party-state puts its power of leadership into effect is decided entirely by the different eras and different forms of politics, because of differences in personnel, situation, and time. The type of leadership may be 'omnipotent' or may be merely symbolic. In general, religious bodies must be 'patriotic', but what is the actual definition of 'patriotism'? It has different requirements in different eras. For example, in the 1950s and 1960s the only way to demonstrate one's patriotism and religious devotion was to throw oneself into the campaign to 'oppose imperialism and love the motherland' and of mass denunciation,⁶⁷ while in the 1980s and 1990s this was replaced by the new slogans of supporting economic reform and construction and adapting to Chinese socialism.

The unity and cooperation of religious organisations in regard to politics is an important basis for cooperation with the party-state, expressing loyalty to the party-state in exchange for the party-state's agreement to grant freedom of religious belief. Jiang Zemin has said that the relationship between the religious world and the party-state must be firmly based on the 'political foundation' of 'political unity and cooperation'. This means that the religious world 'must unwaveringly support the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, support socialism, and maintain the principle of an independent, autonomous and self-managing church, and must insist on carrying out religious activities within the scope laid down by the constitution, the laws, regulations and policies.'⁶⁸ Li Ruihuan has also said:

Religious activities must follow and serve the highest interests of the state and the over-all rights of the nation; religious figures must be patriotic and

advanced, and must contribute to the integrity of the motherland, the unity of the ethnic groups and the development of society.⁶⁹

So, how is the religious world to cooperate with the party-state in practice on the above 'political foundation'? This will be further examined below.

IV. Relations between religion/the church and politics: rationalisation according to the political situation

Chinese-style separation of church and state

The constitution of 1982 lays down explicitly that religion must not interfere in state administration, civil law or education, and religious affairs cadres of the party-state also frequently describe the situation in China as 'separation of church and state'. However, 'separation of church and state' in China mainly means that religious bodies are not to interfere in matters of state or government, and does not indicate that the party-state gives religious bodies absolute freedom. This is because religious thought and organisation itself is an ideology and a social entity; as expressed by an official who has carried out United Front work on ethnic minorities and religion for a long time, 'Religion is absolutely not just a matter of individual belief; it also consists of social entities such as a social organisation (the church), social facilities (church buildings), and mass social activities (religious services), and can have a profound effect on the consciousness of the broad masses of believers.'⁷⁰ Therefore, the party-state still needs to exert active direction on its development, in order for it to adapt to the development of socialist society. In other words, the development of religious thought and organisation can never escape the political situation.⁷¹ The fact that in recent years the party-state has defined 'religious affairs' as 'all relationships, behaviour or activities brought about by religion as a social fact and affecting the public interest'⁷² fully reflects this consideration. As Ye Xiaowen has said:

Religious affairs are a type of public affairs in society. Because of the characteristics of religion itself, they are inevitably associated with the internal affairs of religious bodies; and also because of their public social nature they are also distinct from the internal affairs of religious bodies. The key to defining religious affairs lies in judging whether they have a public social nature, and the yardstick lies in judging the extent to which they affect the public interest. In our country, every person and every organisation, including every religion, must uphold the rights of the people, uphold respect for the law, uphold unity between ethnic groups, and uphold the integrity of the motherland.⁷³

He has also said that undertaking the management of 'religious affairs' does not mean interfering in 'the internal affairs of religious bodies', but that the distinction between the two is 'relative'. The key factor is that, if the development of religion should affect 'the public interest', then it is no longer an 'internal affair', but must accept the government's 'legitimate management'.⁷⁴ This means that if a 'religious craze' should ever occur,

threatening social stability, even if no law has been broken, the government must exercise its management.⁷⁵ As Wang Zuoan has pointed out, 'If any relationship or behaviour relating to religion affects the interests of the state or the public interest of society, it must be brought within the scope of legitimate management by government, and freedom of religious belief or the separation of church and state cannot be used as excuses to cast off or get rid of the government's management of religious affairs.'⁷⁶

Baldly stated, the party-state requires religious bodies to keep to the 'four upholds' in 'religious affairs', and it is this that gives rise to the topics to be discussed below, and forms the main content of the relations between politics and religion or the church.

Affirmation of China's socialist society

Ever since the foundation of the PRC, the religious world has had to abandon its 'supra-political' stance, and explicitly adopt the same position as the party-state, since if it is not with it, it is against it. As early as 1953, Ding Guangxun [K.H. Ting] pointed out that Christians must 'draw close to the people and become one with them.' This meant that they should 'think the same thoughts as the people, have the same concerns as them, love what they love and hate what they hate.'⁷⁷ This perfectly expresses the extent to which theology had to conform totally to the spirit of the party-state.

We can see that Christian theologians in China mostly claim that the Chinese socialist system is 'the best of all possible worlds', while the 'liberation' of China was in accordance with God's plan for historical development.⁷⁸ They unconditionally accept a socialist China and acknowledge that since the founding of New China, the Chinese people have achieved a true turnaround, and the oppressed class have gained a new social status. New China completely eradicated the old society's problems of corruption, the sex trade, gambling, drugs etc. Although there were some errors in the party-state's policies, order was nevertheless restored. After more than a decade of reform, the people really have been enriched, so socialist China still deserves to be upheld.⁷⁹

The religious world not only has to make a positive affirmation of the Chinese social system, it cannot make any negative criticisms. The chief social mission of the Chinese church is to 'serve society', and the church's 'concern' for society is mostly limited to welfare services.⁸⁰ Chinese theological discourse basically steers clear of the social criticism or prophetic tradition of the Christian faith.⁸¹ Furthermore, Protestant Christianity must not only avoid any social criticism in its social mission but must be 'self-disciplined' even in its credal discourse. For example, a teacher at Jinling Theological College even objected to Christians quoting 'negative or pessimistic' passages of scripture such as Ecclesiastes' 'Vanity of vanities, all is vanity': does this suggest 'that the construction of socialism and the unanimity of the people of the whole country in striving to establish socialism with Chinese characteristics is vanity'? When the *Epistle to the Philippians* speaks of 'a crooked and perverse nation', can this refer to China's socialist society at the present day? What is mentioned here already touches on the question, in the movement for the construction of theological thought in recent years, of how to 'tone down' religious doctrines which are not 'adapted' to socialism.⁸²

The renewal and construction of theological thinking

Strictly speaking, the movement for the construction of theological thinking was formally established after the 'Jinan conference' held by the national *lianghui* in November 1998. However, the topics which it raises can obviously be traced back a long way to the discussions on 'rethinking theology' in the 1950s, when it first made its appearance, right through to the 1980s, when we can find a lot of common ground with Ding Guangxun's theological thinking.

What is known as the construction of theological thinking is the desire to adjust and renew the 'old theological thinking' which was not adapted to socialism.⁸³ In Bishop Ding's eyes, the 'old' theology mainly comprises the following two aspects:

1: A correct treatment of the relation between belief and unbelief has always been regarded as a principal topic in religious work.⁸⁴ A religious affairs cadre has pointed out that 'In preaching the gospel, some people do not treat the difference between belief and unbelief as an internal and secondary difference among the people, but regard it as a fundamental and absolute opposition, and therefore stir up a mood of hostility towards the mass of non-believers and even towards the Party and the People's Government (because they are not believers either).' This reveals an aspect in which religion is not adapted to socialist society.⁸⁵ Ye Xiaowen has also pointed out that to enlarge the contradiction between belief and unbelief and for 'believers to take the view that unbelievers will all go to Hell' both mean making 'believers' extremely narrow and fanatical, and if believers, because of their belief, are 'full of hatred towards the world, to the extent of hating their compatriots and their motherland', what sort of future is there for this sort of religion?⁸⁶

2: The eschatological tendencies of religion are regarded by the party-state as a doctrine which is not adapted to socialism. The tension between eschatology and the world, in the eyes of the secular authorities, often becomes a negation of the world.⁸⁷ If religious beliefs should become too coloured with or too much in favour of the idea of leaving the world or withdrawing from the world, and take a negative attitude towards the world, regarding everything belonging to the world as vain and meaningless, and that only Judgment Day or the Lord coming again are real, this all damages the values of social stability and economic development, and is not acceptable to the party-state. One of the 'crimes' for which the central government has condemned the Falungong in recent years is precisely its eschatological tendency.⁸⁸

Because of these facts, the Church and religious faiths must alter those spiritual views which are not adapted to socialism. As Jiang Zemin has pointed out, they must 'alter those religious systems and religious dogmas which are not adapted to socialism, and make use of certain positive factors in religious doctrines, rules and ethics to serve society.'⁸⁹ Ye Xiaowen has also said, 'We must induce religion to adapt to socialist society; when it comes down to it, in the concept of religion one can never get away from the question of what to tone down or alter, and what to guide or encourage.'⁹⁰

The relationship between belief and unbelief which derives from the Christian doctrine of justification by faith bears the brunt of the party-state's 'toning down' or 'altering'. The first person to suggest rethinking or 'toning down' justification by faith was Bishop Ding Guangxun: at the meeting of the religious affairs group of the national congress of the CPPCC in March 1996, he proposed reforming doctrines emphasising the opposition between belief and unbelief.⁹¹ Although Christianity emphasises that believers will gain eternal life, while unbelievers will be eternally lost, if this view is given excessive prominence, it is bound to come up against contemporary China's demand for stability and unity. If religious believers insist on drawing a distinction between belief and unbelief, and even go so far as to specify that unbelievers will not be saved and will go to Hell, this will inevitably pose a challenge to the ruling authority of the Communist Party (by definition atheists and unbelievers). From another aspect, because nobody outside Christianity, including believers in other religions and the people in general, is 'saved', this poses a serious threat to social stability and unity.⁹² Ding Guangxun has stated:

This [i.e. justification by faith] seems at first sight like a question of faith, but taken further it is a question of political attitude. If all believers go to Heaven, well, Chiang Kai-shek was a believer, so he must be in Heaven, sitting at the right hand of God. But Chairman Mao, Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, Zhou Enlai, Lei Feng: none of them was a believer, so they must all have gone to Hell. Isn't this a matter of political attitude?⁹³

So how does Christianity deal with this problem? As early as the 1980s, Ding Guangxun proposed the concept of the 'Cosmic Christ'. He pointed out that Christ's love fills the entire cosmos, and the whole human race can experience the love of Christ. Love is the most important component of the nature of God. Since Christ's love fills the cosmos, His love can go beyond the Church to reach those outside it: He loves not only those who believe in Him but also those who do not believe in Him. At the same time, the love of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit can be manifested even in 'unbelievers' outside the Church. Manifestations of the love of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit can even be seen in the persons of atheists.⁹⁴

As a consequence, when Christians are faced with believers in other faiths, or unbelievers, atheists or Communist Party cadres, they should not 'damn' them or accuse them of not being saved. On the contrary, Christians ought to consider and realise or discover how the love of Christ is shown through these people. No-one can restrict the actions of God, and He can manifest Himself just as well through 'unbelievers', and do good through people who do not believe in Him, including atheists: He can make use of them too. Therefore, the work of God can be seen in anything good done by all sorts of people. Ding Guangxun says:

Can atheism be compatible with the work of the Cosmic Christ? I believe it can. There are so many other things in the world which can be in line with the work of Christ. There are some atheists and Communist Party members whose words and deeds I can whole-heartedly approve, without

making a great fuss about this or that fault of theirs. I would rather treat them with sincere warmth, and stand alongside them in opposing our common enemies. Although they may be quite different from me in terms of faith, nevertheless, inspired by our differing faiths, we can work together in many ways.⁹⁵

He has also said:

The humanism of the atheists is actually just another way whereby the human race searches for God; it's just that they don't use the term 'God'. So we can see them as our allies, and this will help in saving the true faith. We can join together with many different believers in humanism, and work together to oppose the blind worship of all kinds of gods which disgraces the human race and restricts the liberation of humanity. Some of my friends express surprise when from time to time I praise some atheists or Communist Party members. As a Christian, I sometimes want to say a sincere 'Amen' to what they advocate. I am often unwilling to criticise them, but actually approve of them and would like to work together with them, to struggle against those forces which we both oppose, although what commands us to struggle against them comes from different sources.⁹⁶

In recent years, Ding Guangxun has gone further in promoting a new concept in Christian theology, and has advocated 'ethical Christianity'. He points out that in future Chinese Christian theology must develop in an 'ethical' direction. Bishop Ding is particularly opposed to the tendency in the church towards a belief in 'the uselessness of ethics' which argues that ethics or virtue cannot be the basis of salvation but simply emphasises redemption and the opposition between faith and unbelief. Ding Guangxun has clearly stated that Christianity must become an ethical religion, not just because this is what Christian doctrine requires of us, but because it is what the party-state requires of us. This is a reflection of how religion has adapted to socialism in terms of spiritual civilisation, and has further alleviated the contradiction between faith and unbelief.⁹⁷

The development from the 'Cosmic Christ' to 'ethical Christianity' reveals the structure of Ding Guangxun's theology, and how it deals with and resolves the contradiction between faith and unbelief. In summary, the contradiction between faith and unbelief is lessened on the basis of 'love'. At the Jinan conference which took place in November 1998, the national *lianghui* passed a resolution to 'strengthen the force of the work of constructing theological thinking' so that theological thought 'will be better adapted to socialist society.'⁹⁸ It can be said that Bishop Ding's theological viewpoint seems to have become the blueprint for the construction of theological thinking as a whole: not one article on the construction of theological thinking failed to quote the Bishop's views, and the church throughout the country made haste to organise activities to study *The Collected Works of Ding Guangxun*.

Because the construction of theological thinking championed by Ding Guangxun had a clear tendency towards liberal theology, this caused severe tension with those of a fundamentalist or evangelical background within the Chinese Church. Fears arose within the Church that the fundamentalists would be 'rectified', and there were even open conflicts. During 1999, in the Nanjing Union Theological Seminary, there was a conflict between the seminary leadership and some of the students and staff, in which some students were forced or chose to withdraw from the seminary,⁹⁹ and some staff were sacked.¹⁰⁰ At the same time, Ding Guangxun's call to tone down support for justification by faith caused a certain amount of controversy, with some differences of opinion even within the *lianghui*. A number of colleagues and believers from the fundamentalist tradition were even concerned that the construction of theological thinking was a move by 'liberals' to suppress the 'fundamentalists', and that toning down justification by faith was toning down a fundamental article of faith. For example, Cao Shengjie in her work report to the Seventh National Christian Congress did not avoid the words 'the development of the construction of theological thinking has been uneven in different parts of the church' and some responsible colleagues 'have failed to recognise the importance of the construction of theological thinking in good time' and 'certain colleagues' even 'have certain anxieties in their minds.'¹⁰¹

The party-state basically supports this development of theological thinking in the Protestant Church, and has affirmed that it represents the 'mainstream' of Christian thought. However, it has raised the need to 'allow the continued existence of different tendencies', saying 'the fact that we support this mainstream of thinking does not mean that we support any particular tendency and oppose other tendencies.' Cadres who have been involved in religious affairs work for a long time observe that within the Protestant church 'some people are worried that this will lead to building up one tendency and knocking down others.' They stress that everyone must 'keep a clear head', otherwise there is a possibility of once more stirring up conflicts between denominations: 'not only does this work against uniting with the great majority, there is even a possibility that it will push one group of people into opposition with us, and turn what was originally an attempt to strengthen the development of theological thinking into a denominational struggle and a theological war.'¹⁰²

In the face of the differing attitudes of people within the Church to the development of theological thinking, Ding Guangxun wrote an article in *Tianfeng*, in which he openly said that the Chinese church 'was splitting up under the impact of the development of theological thinking.'¹⁰³ Nevertheless, in the work report to the Seventh National Congress, it was re-emphasised that theological thinking 'can never alter the fundamental articles of faith', obviously in order to calm the fears of some colleagues and believers, and it was emphasised that Christianity must be Bible-based and must continue the historical tradition of the fundamental articles of faith, and, based on the experience of taking the Three-Self road, carry out the construction of theological thinking in accordance with the character of Chinese culture.¹⁰⁴

The expression of a political stance

In the unique political circumstances of China, the party-state frequently requires that groups in society should make a public 'statement' on particularly sensitive matters, as an expression of 'loyalty' to the policies of the party-state. The Protestant Church, as one particular social group, is naturally no exception to this.

For example, after 'June Fourth' in 1989, various groups all hastened to make 'statements' in support of the characterisation of 'June Fourth' as 'counter-revolutionary turmoil' by the Fourth Plenum of the Thirteenth Congress of the CCP Central Committee and of their decision to 'pacify the counter-revolutionary turmoil'. The national Christian *lianghui* could not avoid responding to the call to make a statement in support of the decision of the central government.¹⁰⁵ As for the question of the Falungong, which was regarded as another serious 'political incident' in the wake of 'June Fourth', we have also seen religious bodies at all levels throughout the country joining the ranks of denunciation.¹⁰⁶

Another extremely sensitive topic in recent years has been that of relations across the Taiwan Straits. In September 1994, the China Christian Council issued a statement, 'regretfully pointing out that political propaganda under the slogan "Taiwan is Taiwan and China is China", making out that Taiwan and China are two separate countries, is circulating in international Christianity.' The statement of the national *lianghui* particularly emphasised that churches which maintained relations with both the Taiwanese Presbyterian Church and the China Christian Council must guard against denominational relations 'being used to affect political harmony'. The China Christian Council's support for the principle of 'one China' was fully revealed here.¹⁰⁷ When Jiang Zemin expressed 'Jiang's Eight Points' at the time of Chinese New Year in 1995, he called for peaceful reunification with Taiwan. The religious world then held a conference in Beijing, under the title of 'continuing the struggle for the achievement of the great project of reunifying the motherland', to study this important speech by Jiang Zemin. Ding Guangxun also spoke, as one of the participants.¹⁰⁸ In 1999, Luo Guanzong, Chairman of the Committee of the China Christian Three-Self Patriotic Movement, publicly criticised Lee Teng-hui for suggesting the 'two states theory', and took the view that the letter issued by the Taiwanese Presbyterian Church in support of the 'two states theory' was equally aimed at 'splitting the motherland'.¹⁰⁹

The upholding of 'one China' by the religious world in China has become prominent even in relations with the international religious world. In October 1996, the fifth Asian Conference on Religion and Peace was held in Thailand. All countries in Asia, including China, were invited to send delegates to attend the conference, while the Taiwanese delegates attended as observers. Nevertheless, when the Chinese delegates arrived at the conference venue, they found that the Taiwanese observers were wearing the same name-badges as regular participants, and had even written 'Taiwan' or 'R.O.C.' in the space for 'nationality'. Moreover, in the official memorial volume for the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the Asian Conference on Religion and Peace, the Nationalist flag was actually shown. When the Chinese religious delegates perceived that the Taiwanese representatives were carrying out 'two Chinas' or 'one China, one Taiwan' activities in an international forum, they expressed great displeasure, and could not remain silent.

Ding Guangxun and the Buddhist delegates stayed up all night drafting a statement in which they protested strongly at the conference authorities' violation of the 'one China principle' and creation of 'two Chinas'.¹¹⁰ In addition, at the 'Millennium Peace Conference of World Religious and Spiritual Leaders' held in Los Angeles in 2000, the Chinese religious world firmly opposed the participation of the Dalai Lama.¹¹¹ When the Dalai Lama's representative was reading out his letter addressed to the conference, the Chinese religious delegates left the hall to show their displeasure.¹¹² Later, the Reverend Cao Shengjie, Deputy Chairman of the China Christian Council, responding to reporters' questions, pointed out that 'some people are always talking about peace and love on the surface, but behind the scenes they are spreading evil and hatred.'¹¹³

Apart from cross-Straits relations, another topic which frequently touches a nerve in the religious world (especially in Catholicism) is the relationship between China and the Vatican. For example, when the Vatican planned the canonisation on 1 October 2000 of 120 people 'martyred' in China, this event occasioned strong displeasure in the Chinese government. The Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs described this as 'hurting the feelings of the Chinese people and the honour of the Chinese nation', because these saints 'were mostly put to death for violating Chinese laws in the course of the colonialist and imperialist invasions of China, or stirred up trouble and oppressed the common people during the Opium Wars and the invasion of the Allied armies and were killed during the Chinese people's struggle against invasion.'¹¹⁴ The Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association and the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Union also issued strong statements saying that this 'canonisation' exposed the fact that there were people in the Holy See who were scheming to re-establish control over the Chinese Catholic Church and were urging Catholics to resist the government, disregard the law and oppose the socialist system, and were making use of religious matters to interfere in China's internal affairs.¹¹⁵ Not only did the Chinese Christian national *lianghui* issue a disapproving statement but a number of their leaders wrote articles expressing their stance.¹¹⁶ In addition, the religious world throughout the country also hastened to hold conferences to oppose the Holy See's 'anti-China' actions.¹¹⁷

Freedom of religious belief and the question of human rights

Starting from the 1980s, the USA has been very attentive to China's human rights situation, and has constantly criticised China's human rights record and used this to put pressure on China, making it a criterion for the continuation of Most Favoured Nation status and entry to the WTO. The human rights question is linked to the question of freedom of religious belief and has become a bargaining chip between China and the US in recent years. China's first 'White Paper on Human Rights' in 1991 and the white paper on 'Progress on Human Rights in China' in 1995, as well as the publication of the white paper on 'China's Human Rights Progress in 2000' laid special emphasis on the human rights situation in the mainland in response to Western criticisms.¹¹⁸

In March 1997, Xu Yongze, who was said to have been involved in the Yellers sect and later became the leader of a house church called the 'Full Spectrum Church', was arrested in Henan. This occasioned widespread comment internationally, and gave rise to the view

that China was once again persecuting Christianity. The US Congress expressed strong concern about this and stated that if China continued to carry out religious persecution, they would oppose the renewal of MFN status. In June, Ye Xiaowen, Director of the State Religious Affairs Bureau, issued a statement on this, saying that the West had ulterior motives in using the Xu Yongze case to attack China.¹¹⁹ Because the case was connected with Christianity, the Chairman and President of the national *lianghui*, Luo Guanzong and Han Wenzao, issued several statements on this in both Chinese and English, saying that Xu was a sectarian element and that his detention was merely a matter of criminal procedure, and criticising the accusations of religious persecution. On 4 July, Han and Luo issued a further, joint statement, repeating that there was no religious persecution in China.¹²⁰

In July 1997, the US State Department issued a report entitled 'United States Policies in Support of Religious Freedom: Focus on Christianity', stressing that the US would support freedom of religious belief and was duty-bound to protect freedom of religious belief throughout the world. In the report, particular criticism was made of China's suppression of religion as a violation of the principle of religious freedom.¹²¹ In response to the US criticisms, Ding Guangxun issued a statement rebutting the report of the US State Department.¹²² In August 1997, China's State Council held a conference to which they invited religious leaders and academics doing research on religion, to reject the US report and insist that there was no religious persecution in China.¹²³ In October, the US House of Representatives passed a draft bill, barring all officials carrying out the policy of religious persecution on behalf of the Beijing government and all personnel of official mainland religious bodies from entering the USA.¹²⁴ In mid-October, the Chinese State Council issued a white paper on 'Freedom of Religious Belief in China', defending China in great detail from the charge of religious persecution.¹²⁵ In November, when Jiang Zemin visited the USA, the Republican leader of the House of Representatives handed Jiang a letter at a breakfast meeting asking him to use his influence to obtain the release of over thirty mainland citizens who had been arrested for their religious beliefs.¹²⁶

In May 2001, the US State Department's Commission on International Religious Freedom issued a report, once again criticising China's policies on religion and viewing the Chinese government's suppression of the Falungong as religious persecution.¹²⁷ And in its most recent report, in 2002, it claimed that the Chinese government's respect for religious freedom and freedom of conscience 'remained poor'.¹²⁸ In addition to the Chinese government's response to these criticisms from the US,¹²⁹ Chinese religious figures also issued strong protests.¹³⁰

Thus, arguments between China and the West over human rights and religion have become white-hot in recent years. Ye Xiaowen has stated that, 'Since 1996, as well as stirring up the "Tibet problem", the US has given rise to an anti-China wave attacking "China's persecution of Christianity"'.¹³¹ In connection with this, when Ye Xiaowen visited the USA in July 1997 and February 1998 in his capacity as Director of the State Religious Affairs Bureau, he issued a defence against these criticisms.¹³² When invited to Hong Kong in 2001, Ye also particularly emphasised that the religious world in China

enjoyed ‘full freedom of religious belief’, and claimed that as far as the religious world was concerned, ‘this is unquestionably a “golden age”’.¹³³

Working for the implementation of freedom of religious belief

The relationship between the Chinese Church and politics is not all of a piece; where the policy of freedom of religious belief has not yet been properly implemented, the Protestant Church also has ways of working for this. For example, Ding Guangxun has tried to go through many different channels, including congresses of the CPPCC, meetings with party-state leaders and so on, to raise questions about the implementation of religious freedom by the government.

Starting in the 1980s, Ding Guangxun has protested against arbitrary and autocratic action by local cadres interfering in the internal affairs of the church. He has pointed out that cadres in some regions have actually intervened in personnel matters within the church. For example, the ruling that ‘only clergy are allowed to carry out religious duties’ goes against the Protestant tradition of giving important roles to ordinary believers and voluntary workers. And the announcement of the policy of the ‘three specifics’ – that worship can be conducted only by a specific person in a specific place for a specific area – requires that if clergy are to preach outside their own county, city or provincial boundary, they have to obtain the agreement of the Religious Affairs Bureau of their own local government. More seriously, the posting of pastors and preachers must be approved by the government’s Religious Affairs Bureau, while the appointment of clergy must also obtain agreement from the government.¹³⁴ In the selection of church leaders (pastors, committee members, general secretaries and office managers), because ‘the cadres’ word is law and the church has no say at all, cases have even occurred of cadres appointing as church leaders those people whom they themselves regard as trustworthy, even though they ‘have no religious training, are of very bad repute, or are not even church members.’¹³⁵ These ‘activists’ with their appalling reputations, despised by believers, ‘issuing orders on behalf of government cadres’, are actually ‘atheist church leaders introduced into the church from the religious affairs bureaux as Communist Party members’; as Bishop Ding laments, ‘How many of these cases are there?’¹³⁶ No wonder outsiders mock the Chinese Church as a ‘government-run’ church ‘totally unlike a real church’, to the distress of believers. How can a church be run properly like this?¹³⁷

Cases of local cadres meddling in religion or even ‘putting the government in place of the church’ are a commonly occurring problem. For example, in one particular county, the Religious Affairs Section had set a quota of forty people for every celebration of baptism. The Christian Three-Self Patriotic Committee of this county held a catechism class, from which a total of forty-one candidates were found to be deserving of being baptised and joining the church, but the Committee was unsuccessful in its strenuous efforts to get the quota increased and had no alternative but to go by date of birth and cross the youngest candidate off the list. Another district limited the church in the county seat to one service every week (on Sunday or Saturday) in complete disregard of the church’s tradition of holding prayer meetings, bible study, and women’s institute meetings, and actually publicised this restriction as a good way of preventing the spread of Christianity.¹³⁸ Such

cases of interference and unreasonable restrictions on the normal activities of the church have naturally greatly weakened the effectiveness of patriotic religious bodies and their ability to hold believers together.

Moreover, Bishop Ding has made a particular point of local cadres suppressing house churches on the basis that they are unregistered, pointing out that depriving believers of their legitimate rights by administrative fiat and preventing people from holding normal religious services on various pretexts, and making many places of worship illegal by withholding registration have resulted not in wiping out the house churches but in driving them underground, and have ‘fanned the flames of extremist belief and proselytising activity, and strengthened hostility towards the Party and government’.¹³⁹ ‘In fact, how can you wipe them all out? If you wipe one out, it will turn into three or four, and go underground. If we recognise nowadays that religion cannot be eliminated, obviously it is better to have religion above ground than underground.’¹⁴⁰ Ding Guangxun is opposed to all-out elimination; as he points out, as long as these house churches do not oppose the Party or oppose socialism there should be room for them; their existence can encourage the churches affiliated to the *lianghui* to run the church more effectively as a way of competing with them. As for their relationship with the *lianghui*, ‘patience is the answer, not force.’¹⁴¹

As we can see, in the late 1980s, religious figures, including those from the Protestant Church, have put unanimous effort into achieving the implementation of the principle of ‘separation of church and state’.¹⁴² As the late Shen Yifan said, the church must be allowed greater ‘autonomy’ in matters of personnel, finance, organisation, administration, service etc. Increased autonomy for the church does not mean weakening the Party’s leadership role, but rather preventing local cadres from restricting the religious freedom of believers and interfering in or even taking over the running of the church’s internal affairs in the name of ‘administrative leadership’ and ‘better management’.¹⁴³ In its plea for ‘separation of church and state’, Protestantism reflects the interference of the party-state.¹⁴⁴ However, the ‘separation of church and state’ has been rather little discussed in recent years.

V. Conclusion

The lure of essentialism

In the society of a state with an authoritarian system, when we think about the topic of church-state relations, we must resist the lure of essentialism. What is called essentialism includes two different tendencies. One is to insist that ‘state’ and ‘church’ have nothing to do with one another; especially in the case of a government authority that believes in atheism, essentialists hold that if the church undertakes any interaction at all with government, this is a betrayal of its faith. The second is to take the view that since the church is faced with an undemocratic government, it should insist on carrying out its mission and break rather than bend, uttering its prophetic voice and opposing the government to the bitter end.

However, if we approach the matter from the perspective of actual church-state relations, on the one hand we can realise that even though the Chinese Communist Party believes in atheism, under the promptings of pragmatism, it has been obliged to abandon its extremist view that religion should be eliminated and accept the fact that religion will 'continue to exist in the long term' in Chinese society. Thus, its policy of freedom of religious belief, to a certain extent, does provide a basis beneficial to the spread of Christianity. From another aspect, we can see that the party-state, while implementing its policy on religion, has never given up its management and control of religious affairs, and this forms a restraint on the growth of Christianity.

At the same time, when we discuss the question of freedom of religious belief, we must not underestimate the factor of how grass-roots cadres implement policy. Because of long-standing dogmatism and 'leftist' tendencies, many cadres are ferociously opposed to religion, and create many (often illegal) restrictions on it. Moreover, local cadres are extremely suspicious of many faith groups which maintain a distance from the patriotic religious associations, in the fear that these may develop into heterodox sects. These are all reasons why local cadres, in implementing the policy on religion, generally prefer to be 'left' rather than right.

The present writer does not wish to take an absolutist stand on the question of religious freedom in China for the reason that, although at the present time China is still far from the ideal standard of the principles of separation of church and state and religious freedom, still, compared to the past, there has undoubtedly been some progress. Those who maintain the biased view that there is nothing but religious persecution in China, or that under an atheist government freedom of religious belief is seriously violated, or believe that the religious bodies acknowledged by the party-state are all its tools and follow its wishes for the elimination of religion, are obviously committing the error of judging the whole by the part. In the same way, those who claim that Chinese citizens can enjoy complete freedom of religious belief, and defend Chinese religious bodies as being entirely independent and autonomous in all their affairs, are ignoring the party-state's continued intervention and interference in the religious bodies and in religious belief. Only when we grasp the reality of church-state relations in China, can we fairly estimate both the space for, and the restrictions on, the growth of Christianity in China.

Adjustment and change in church-state relations

In this paper I have set out the characteristics of church-state relations in contemporary China, and their effect on the development of Protestant Christianity. We can see that in the last twenty years, because of the 'de-ideologisation' of the party-state as a result of economic reform, and the many non-economic consequences in Chinese society to which it has given rise, especially the weakening of the party-state's control over society, this has, by allowing the officially recognised patriotic religious associations to gain unprecedented room for manoeuvre, formed a basic infrastructure for the future development of church-state relations.

It is my firm belief that a pragmatic view of religion will continue to be the long-term guiding principle for the party-state in dealing with the question of religion. Jiang Zemin's 'three sentences' about religious affairs work: to fully and correctly implement and carry out the Party's policy on religion; to strengthen management of religious affairs in accordance with the law; and to actively guide the mutual adaptation of religion with socialist society, are the concrete manifestation of the above principles.¹⁴⁵ The party-state requires the patriotic religious associations to take a firm political stand and, under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, to uphold respect for the law, uphold the people's rights, uphold national unity, and uphold the integrity of the motherland (the 'four upholds'). On this basis, the church must respond to the demand for 'mutual adaptation between religion and socialism' and 'change the religious system which is not adapted to socialism, overcome negative factors, and give full play to the positive factors in religious doctrine, rules and ethics to serve socialism.'¹⁴⁶

In the case of the party-state's relations with the church, the scope of the party-state's guidance and control is perfectly clear. In accordance with the restrictions of over-all historical conditions, the basis for the existence of the church in China and its room for manoeuvre are to a great extent determined by the party-state. However, religious bodies, such as the Protestant national *lianghui*, have also changed in the direction of becoming more 'ecclesiasticised' and religious, and have strengthened their ability to run the church properly. Thus, church leaders have also increased their demands to be allowed to defend the rights of believers and the church, and prevent violations of their legitimate rights.¹⁴⁷ In recent years, religious bodies have gained greater autonomy than before, although it would still be unrealistic under authoritarian rule to demand that the government completely refrain from intervening in religious matters, and implement the separation of church and state that is found in democracies. It would not be easy to truly implement the 'separation of church and state' and further ameliorate the relationship between the church and the party-state. On another aspect, whether the patriotic religious associations and the grass-roots churches can further improve their own development and put the church on a firm footing, in order to better fulfil the religious needs of believers, is another vital topic.

Finally, in the relations between the church/religion and politics, unless the political environment changes, the condition of the church/religion cannot be altered in any way. In accordance with the actual conditions of the church in China, we can scarcely expect it to become a force for political change; in the authoritarian system of the party-state, the church/religion is 'powerless' to change its political environment. On the contrary, in recent years the party-state has been actively requiring the religious world to reform its thinking in order to adapt to the development of socialism, while some individual Protestant leaders have also been actively 'making use of the present favourable political conditions' to 'promote changes in the view of religion'.¹⁴⁸ In this atmosphere of the construction of theological thinking, a totally pragmatic and politicised theology and an ultra-fundamentalist ascetical theology are bound each to go to opposite extremes; as far as the structure of Chinese theology is concerned, this is obviously not a healthy tendency.¹⁴⁹ How the national *lianghui* deal with the tension between 'politicisation' and

'ecclesiasticisation' will have a profound effect on the future development of Protestant Christianity.

In accordance with the present socio-political environment in China, the party-state will continue to uphold its single-party system for some time to come. However, the promotion and deepening of the policy of reform and opening up has at the same time led to unprecedented and radical changes in society, producing a situation which is not entirely within the control of the party-state. The tension and contradiction between political conservatism and economic openness has become clearly apparent during the last decade or so, and how the party-state deals with this tension will become a topic of vital importance for the development of China in the 21st century. The relationship between the party-state and society, meanwhile, will also have a profound effect on the space for development available to the church in China.

Looking ahead to the development of church-state relations in China, the key still lies in adjustments and changes in the relationship between the party-state and society. At the present stage, the most effective way to expand the space for freedom of religious belief is to further improve the quality of cadres at all levels, perfect the development of the legal system, and implement the rule of law, so that the legitimate rights of religious believers receive full protection. Of course, in the long term, whether Chinese society can establish the basis for the rule of law, and guarantee the people's freedom of thought, speech and association, will also have a great influence on the expansion of the space for religious freedom. The present writer agrees with the view of Qu Haiyuan that 'the extent of religious freedom needs the support of a free and democratic system and a pluralist society.'¹⁵⁰

Notes:

[Translator's note: all titles of articles, books etc. in Chinese have been translated into English.]

1. Theoretical Group, 'Separation of church and state: misconception and clarification', in Hong Kong Christian Watch ed., *Hong Kong in Transition: Politics, Economy and Society*, Hong Kong: Wide Angle Press, 1988, p.96.
2. Lin Benxuan, *The Conflict between Church and State in Taiwan*, Taiwan: Daoxiang Press, 1990, pp.7-8.
3. Qu Haiyuan has pointed out that there are very few states in the world which have passed laws relating to religion, beyond merely stating the right to religious freedom in their constitutions. He believes that 'the fact that no relevant law has been passed does not mean that religious bodies are free of any legal restrictions.' See id., 'A reconsideration of the imposition by governments of regulations on religion', in Qu Haiyuan, *A Socio-Political Analysis of the Evolution of Religion in Taiwan*, pp.503-504.
4. According to Qu Haiyuan's analysis, while the constitutions of over seventy states guarantee freedom of religious belief, this is also limited by certain conditions, which may be summarised in the following four categories: (1) religious freedom must not

violate social order, public morality and decent habits; (2) religious freedom must not be harmful to national defence, public safety, public order, public morality, decent habits, etc.; (3) political propaganda or the obtaining of political advantage must not be carried out in the name of religious freedom; (4) the specific banning of certain religions. See id., 'The constitutional basis of freedom of religious belief', in Qu Haiyuan, *A Socio-Political Analysis of the Evolution of Religion in Taiwan*, Taipei: Guiguan Press, 1997, pp.414-421.

5. Zhang Xunmou, 'A preliminary investigation of church-state relations and the administrative model for religious affairs', in id., *A Study of Church-State Relations in Europe and the USA*, Beijing: Religious Culture Press, 2002, pp.6-7.

6. Lin Benxuan, *The Conflict between Church and State in Taiwan*, p.140.

7. Zhong Guofa, 'A discussion of the creative significance of "actively guiding the mutual adaptation of religion with socialist society"', *Studies in Contemporary Religion*, 1998, no.2, p.12.

Pan Yue of the State Council's Office for the Reform of the Economic System has actually brought up the original intent of the Marxist view of religion, which is that 'religion should not be regarded as the enemy but as a mirror to show what our reforms should be aiming at'. He believes that this 'mirror theory', not the 'opiate of the people' theory was Marx's and Engels' original view. See Pan Yue, 'The Marxist view of religion must advance with the times', *The CPPCC*, December 2001, pp.43-44.

8. For details, see Xing Fuzeng, 'A reading of the question of mutual adaptation between religion and Chinese socialism' in id., *Church-State Relations in Contemporary China*, Hong Kong: Alliance Bible Seminary, 1999.

9. Luo Zhufeng, *Religion in China in the Period of Socialism*, Shanghai: Social Sciences Press, 1986.

10. The forerunner of the doctrine of mutual adaptation was 'Can religion be harmonised with socialist society?'; this question was raised by Hu Qiaomu at a meeting on the Sixth Five-Year Plan for the social sciences in November 1982. In March 1983, Luo Zhufeng led research on this topic in the Institute for Research on Religion under the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences. On the basis of large-scale investigations, they completed the book *Religion in China in the Period of Socialism*, and officially propounded the theory of 'mutual adaptation of religion and socialist society' within academia. In the early 1990s, the Party Central Committee adopted this viewpoint. See Liu Jian, 'Learn from Comrade Luo Zhufeng's exploratory spirit of liberating thought and seeking truth from facts', *Studies in Contemporary Religion*, 1997, no.1, p.5.

11. Huang Zhu, 'Outline of lectures on the nationalities question and the religious question' (June 1990) in id., *Essays on the nationalities and religious questions in the new era of the United Front*, vol.2, Beijing: Huawen Press, 1999, p.9.

12. Huang Zhu, 'On mutual adaptation between religion and socialist society in China', in id., *Essays on the nationalities and religious questions in the new era of the United Front*, vol.2, pp.282-283.

13. Jiang Zemin, 'Speech at the national meeting on United Front work' (4 December 2000), in Documentary Research Office of the Central Committee of the CCP ed., *Jiang Zemin on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics (edited)*, Beijing: Central Documentary Press, 2002, p.371. It is an interesting point that when the *People's Daily* first reported the content of Jiang Zemin's speech, they did not include this sentence. See 'Opening of

national meeting on United Front work, important speech by Jiang Zemin', *People's Daily*, 5 December 2000. However, Ye Xiaowen, Director of the State Religious Affairs Bureau, has frequently emphasised the point that 'the disappearance of religion will take longer than that of class or the state.' See Ye Xiaowen, 'Retrospective on the last hundred years of religion in China and its future outlook', *Religion in China*, 2001, no.2, p.8, and 'Advancing with the times: on religion', *Religion in China*, 2001, no.6, p.5.

14. Jiang Zemin, 'Speech at the national meeting on religious affairs work' (10 December 2001), in Documentary Research Office of the Central Committee of the CCP ed., *Jiang Zemin on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics (edited)*, p.372. Similarly, the content as included in this book is much fuller than in the *People's Daily*.

15. Jiang Zemin, 'Speech at the national meeting on religious affairs work' (10 December 2001), p.374.

16. See Ding Xueliang, *China and Post-Communism*, Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1994, pp.166-174.

17. Bai Luxun (Lucian W. Pye) has pointed out the 'problem of lack of content' of Chinese nationalism, which is merely the sum of the party-state's current policy preferences. See Lucian W. Pye, 'How China's Nationalism Was Shanghaied', *Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs* 29, January 1993, p.126, quoted in Suisheng Zhao, *In Search of a Right Place? Chinese Nationalism in the Post-Cold War World*, Hong Kong: Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, 1997, p.23.

18. Jiang Zemin, 'Speech at the national meeting on religious affairs work' (10 December 2001), p.376.

19. Jiang Zemin, *Fully establish a well-off society, create a new situation in the enterprise of socialism with Chinese characteristics – report to the Sixteenth Party Congress of the Chinese Communist Party*, Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2002, p.9. Ye Xiaowen extended this statement further: 'Work on religion is an important component of Party and national work, with an important status in the over-all situation of the development of the Party and state project. Doing a good job on religion involves strengthening the close bonds between the Party and the masses of the people, advancing the construction of both material and spiritual culture, strengthening national unity, maintaining social stability, guarding national security and the unity of the motherland, and China's relations with the rest of the world.' Ye Xiaowen, 'On the four mentions of religion in the report to the Sixteenth Party Congress', *Religion in China*, 2002, no.6, p.5.

20. Luo Zhufeng, *Religion in China in the Period of Socialism*, pp.131-133.

21. *Outline for Implementing the Construction of Public Morality*, Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2001, p.2.

22. Although religion performs a positive social function, no-one within China has yet 'called for the recognition that religion in China at present is part of the socialist superstructure', and some scholars take the view that this 'vague' attitude should not continue. See Zhong Guofa, 'A discussion of the creative significance of "actively guiding the mutual adaptation of religion with socialist society"', p.16.

23. Mou Zhongjian & Li Pingye, 'The need for a new view of the question of religion in China', *Studies in Contemporary Religion*, 2001, no.4, p.8.

24. Zhou Jiakai, 'Politics cannot be ignored in work on religion', in id., *An Exploration of Work on Religion*, Beijing: Religious Culture Press, 2002, pp.9-10.

25. Ye Xiaowen, 'Advancing with the times: on religion', *Religion in China*, no.6, 2001, p.7.
26. Jiang Zemin, 'Speech at the national meeting on religious affairs work' (10 December 2001), p.373.
27. Ye Xiaowen, 'A new historical phase in the relations between socialism and religion', *Religion in China*, no.1, 2002, pp.13-15.
28. Jiang Zemin, 'Speech at the national conference on United Front work' (4 December 2001), p.371.
29. Jiang Zemin, 'Speech at the national meeting on religious affairs work' (10 December 2001), p.374.
30. Jiang Zemin, 'Ethnic minority and religious affairs work must be taken very seriously indeed' (7 November 1993), in General Research Team of the Documentary Research Office of the Central Committee of the CCP & Policy and Regulations Department of the Religious Affairs Bureau of the State Council ed., *Selected Documents on Religious Affairs Work in the New Era*, Beijing: Religious Culture Press, 1995, p.250.
31. Jiang Ping, who used to be Deputy Head of the United Front Department of the CCP Central Committee, has pointed out that after the 3rd Plenum of the 11th Central Committee, the doctrine of the 'five-fold nature' of religion 'once more became the theoretical basis of our understanding and treatment of the problem of religion.' See Jiang Ping, 'On the origin and practical application of the five-fold nature of religion' in id., *Collected Essays on Ethnic Minority and Religious Questions*, Beijing: CCP History Press, 1995, pp.385-395.
32. Deputy Director Ji Wenyuan of Beijing Religious Affairs Bureau has pointed out: 'Western society, led by the United States, has put greater and greater pressure on us regarding human rights, which has damaged our international image. Religion is an excellent way for the USA to put pressure on us, and if our work on religion is done badly this will provide ammunition for our critics. We must develop an excellent international image.' See Li Suju & Liu Qifei (Seminar on Youth and Religion), *Young People and the 'Craze for Religion'*, Beijing: China Youth Press, 2000, Appendix 2, p.229.
33. Director Ye Xiaowen of the State Religious Affairs Bureau has stated, 'We must implement the policy on freedom of religious belief, both in a legal sense and in an emotional sense. Only in this way will we be able to unite the believing and non-believing masses and inspire the Chinese people to develop the country successfully. Otherwise, our one hundred million ordinary believers will not be comfortable. If one hundred million people in a single country are uncomfortable, that country won't last any time at all.' Ye Xiaowen, 'We take a positive and supportive attitude towards religious cultural exchanges across the Taiwan Straits: a response to the Taipei United Daily correspondent (March 1998)', *Telling the American People the Truth about Religion in China: Transcripts of Interviews with Ye Xiaowen*, Beijing: Religious Culture Press, 1999, pp.241-242.
34. Ye Xiaowen has said, 'What reason would the Communist Party have for not peacefully co-existing with religion in the long term and for not taking a cautious and friendly approach to religion?' Ye Xiaowen, 'Retrospective on the last hundred years of religion in China and its future outlook', *Religion in China*, 2001, no.2, p.8.

35. Ye Xiaowen, 'The question of religion in China at present: a re-examination of the 'five-fold' theory', in id., *A Multiple Perspective on Social Questions*, Beijing: CCP Central Committee Party School Press, 1997, p.496.

36. Gong Xuezheng, 'Some questions regarding prevention of the use of religion to carry out infiltration by external forces under the tendency towards globalisation', *Studies in Contemporary Religion*, 2002, no.1, pp.7-10. Gong Xuezheng has also summarised various problems: (1) illegal and criminal activities to threaten national unity and social stability by means of religion; (2) the problem of Communist Party members believing in religion; (3) preventing infiltration. See Gong Xuezheng, 'Some problems in respect of religion which our country should take seriously at the beginning of the new century', in Central Committee Party School Curriculum Group ed., *Research on Ethnic Minority and Religious Matters in China at the Present Stage*, Beijing: Religious Culture Press, 2002, pp.87-108. Mr Gong currently teaches in the CCP Central Committee Party School.

37. Deputy Director Wang Zuoan of the State Religious Affairs Bureau has said, 'A correct attitude towards the question of religion must not be defeatist or inactive nor yet impatient for results or undisciplined. To say that we must not be defeatist or inactive means that by implementing correct policies, regularising religious activities, bringing into play its positive aspects and restraining its negative aspects, we should lead religion to adapt to social development and advancement...to say that we must not be impatient for results or undisciplined means to be clear that as long as religion has a basis for its continued existence and its influence on some people will continue in the long term, we cannot attempt to use administrative means to displace it or try to leapfrog the process of historical development, or go against objective laws. Not only will this not eliminate religion, but it will actually consolidate religious belief, and especially lead to extremely serious results in political terms. Actions taken to eliminate religion during the 'Cultural Revolution' have already taught us a profound lesson.' Wang Zuoan, *The Question of Religion and Religious Policy in China*, Beijing: Religious Culture Press, 2002, pp.90-91.

38. Kang Xiaoguang, 'Chinese social groupings in an era of transformation', in China Youth Development Fund & Development Research Committee of the Fund ed., *Chinese Social Groupings at the Crossroads*, Tianjin: Tianjin People's Publishing House, 2001, p.6.

The 'Regulations on the registration and administration of social groups' were promulgated in October 1989 and amended in 1998. See order no. 250 of the State Council of the PRC: 'Regulations on the registration and administration of social groups' (25 September 1998), clause 6. For the full text see <http://www.china2go.com/fzsh/newpage143.htm>, accessed on 13 February 2003.

39. 'Implementation Method for the Registration and Administration of Religious Social Groups' (6 May 1991), in State Religious Affairs Bureau Policy and Regulation Dept. ed., *Collected National Administrative Regulations on Religion*, Beijing: Religious Culture Press, 2000, p.8.

40. Gao Bingzhong, 'The rise of social groupings and the question of their legitimacy', in *Chinese Social Groupings at the Crossroads*, pp.83-89.

41. On the party-state's view of religion, feudal superstition and popular beliefs, and the evolution of relevant policy, see the present author's unpublished paper, 'The growth of popular beliefs since reform and opening up'.

42. In fact, in addition to the five major religions, the Eastern Orthodox Church has also gained legitimate status in the North-East, where the government accepts the activities of the Chinese Eastern Orthodox Church. See 'Administrative Regulations on Religious Affairs of Heilongjiang Province' (June 1997), in State Religious Affairs Bureau Policy and Regulation Dept. ed., *Collected National Administrative Regulations on Religion*, p.41. Moreover, in Fujian province, the Triune Sect [*Sanyi jiao*] has similarly gained legitimate status; see Zhu Guozhen, 'An examination and consideration of the Triune Sect in the Putian region', in Fujian Province Association for Research on Religion ed., *Religion: Multi-perspective thinking at the turn of the century*, Collected Papers of the Fujian Province Association for Research on Religion, vol.3, Xiamen: Xiamen University Press, 2000, pp.268-270.

In addition, in 2002 Fujian Province issued an 'Announcement on Strengthening the Management of the Activities of Popular Beliefs', clarifying the administrative approach towards the activities of popular beliefs; see Chen Hongxing & Tian Yueyang, 'Make every effort in work on religion in Fujian at the start of the new century – an interview with Governor Xi Jinping of Fujian Province', *Religion in China*, 2002, no.4, p.19.

43. So-called 'heterodox sects' are 'illegal organisations which are established in the guise of religion, qigong etc., which deify their leaders, and use the creation and spread of superstition, heterodoxy etc. to bamboozle and deceive others, to increase and control their membership and damage society.' See 'Explanation by the Supreme People's Court and Supreme People's Procuratorate on certain questions relating to the practical application of laws on organising and using heterodox sects to commit crimes' (October 1999), in Ministry of Public Security Internal Security Protection Bureau ed., *Laws and Regulations on Investigating and Eliminating Heterodox Sects*, Beijing: Masses Press, 1999, p.8.

44. C.K. Yang, *Religion in Chinese Society: A Study of Contemporary Social Functions of Religions and Some of Their Historical Factors*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970, ch.VIII.

45. Kang Xiaoguang, 'Chinese social groupings in an era of transformation', p.5.

46. Sun Bingyao, 'The question of the dual civilian and official nature of Chinese social groups', *Journal of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (Hong Kong)*, no.6 (February 1994), p.17.

See also Xing Fuzeng, 'The relation between the church and the party-state in China – the reform of the patriotic religious associations from the 1980s to the present', in id., *Church-State Relations in Contemporary China*, pp.72-75.

47. Wang Zuonan, *The Question of Religion and Religious Policy in China*, p.291.

48. State Religious Affairs Bureau Policy and Regulation Department ed., *A Reader in Chinese Law and Policy on Religion*, Beijing: Religious Culture Press, 2000, p.79.

49. See State Religious Affairs Bureau Policy and Regulation Department ed., *Collected National Administrative Laws and Regulations on Religion*, and see also Appendix 1 of this essay [a list of legislation; not included – Translator].

50. A religious personality within China has made an extremely incisive criticism of 'illegal religious activities': he regards 'illegal religious activities' as formed by the combination of the words 'illegal' and 'religious activities': understood from the meaning of the words, this indicates all activities undertaken in the name of 'religion' which go beyond or against the scope of the constitution, the laws, legal regulations or policies. To

define which activities are 'illegal', there must be a legal basis. But since China has no basic legislation on religion, the current administrative regulations on religion have never laid down clear rules for all religious activities of all religions (and it would be impossible for them to do so). Therefore, the policy concept of so-called 'illegal religious activities' is often abstract and unclear in scope, which results, in practice, in constant over-reaching of their authority by government departments and infringement of the rights of citizens to freedom of religious belief and personal freedom. At present many so-called 'illegal religious activities', such as those which take place outside the auspices of the Three-Self movement, which are not registered with the government, or which are controlled by foreign missionaries, are actually just 'activities which contravene regulations on social management' and not strictly speaking 'illegal religious activities' at all. See Xu Jiliang & Xu Yucheng, 'On religious activities and their legal status in the initial stage of socialism', *Religion*, nos. 3 & 4, 1998, pp.15-17.

51. Feng Jinyuan & Hu An, 'Analysis and estimation of the religious situation in 1992-1993', [caret].

52. For details see Xing Fuzeng, 'A discussion of two questions in Chinese legislation on religion', in id., *Church-State Relations in Contemporary China*, pp.188-210.

53. 'Regulations of the State Council on the Management of Locations for Religious Activities', *Selected Documents on Work on Religion in the New Era*, pp.275-277.

54. State Religious Bureau Policy and Regulation Department ed., *A Reader in Chinese Law and Policy on Religion*, p.81.

55. State Council Religious Affairs Bureau Policy and Regulation Department ed., *A Handbook for Annual Inspection of Locations for Religious Activities*, Beijing: Religious Culture Press, 1996.

56. The State Religious Affairs Bureau of the State Council (formerly known as the State Council Religious Affairs Bureau) is an organ directly under the State Council. Its main duties include formulating specific policy and law on religious work, and organising its oversight; encouraging religious figures to undertake self-education on patriotism, socialism, and on protecting the integrity of the motherland and ethnic unity; carrying out investigation and research on the religious situation; assisting religious bodies in carrying out their work and carrying out any activity which requires the assistance of government organs; organising the training of national religious affairs cadres, etc. See 'State Council Religious Affairs Bureau' in Office of the State Council & General Department of the Central Publications Committee Office, *Organisational Structure of the Central Government*, Beijing: China Development Press, 1995, pp.380-381.

57. Wu Zhongze & Chen Jinluo ed., *The Management of Social Groups*, Beijing: China Social Press, 1996, p.31, quoted in Kang Xiaoguang, 'Chinese social groupings in an era of transformation', p.11.

58. One of the duties of the 'Second Bureau' under the Central United Front Department is to carry out investigation and research and to co-ordinate and inspect matters related to important policy directions on ethnic minority and religious affairs work. See 'Basic information on the United Front Work Department of the CCP Central Committee' on the website of the United Front Work Department of the CCP Central Committee, <http://www.zytzb.org.cn/brief.htm>, accessed on 21 May 2001.

59. Zhao Puchu, 'The Ethnic and Religious Committee of the CPPCC should make the most of its unique characteristics' – Speech to the Committee on Ethnic Minorities and Religion of the National-level CPPCC', *CPPCC Journal*, 4 April 1997.
60. Jiang Zemin, 'Maintaining the stability and continuity of the Party's policy on religion' (30 January 1991), Li Ruihuan, 'Speech at the Spring Festival seminar for national-level religious leaders' (19 January 1993), in *Selected Documents on Religious Affairs Work in the New Era*.
61. Zhao Kuangwei, *Freedom of Religious Belief in China*, Beijing: Huawen Press, 1999, p.138.
62. 'A response by the State Council Religious Affairs Bureau on the question of the status of the YMCA and patriotic organisations in the religious world and whether the service of employees of these units can be counted as length of service [in government employment]' (5 May 1965); for the full text, see *National Law Net*, <http://search.law.com.cn>, accessed on 7 February 2003.
63. Ding Guangxun [K.H. Ting] has criticised local cadres for appointing as church leaders people whom they themselves trust but who 'have no religious training, are of very bad repute, or are not even church members.' See Ding Guangxun, 'Speech at the First Congress of the Eighth National CPPCC – Around the Party as a centre, let religious work provide a beneficial environment for reform and opening up', *Religion*, no.1, 1993, p.4.
64. Liu Peng, 'The characteristics and development of church-state relations in China', *Bridge*, no.88 (1995), p.6.
65. It must also be pointed out that sometimes it is government departments themselves that have occupied religious premises and refuse to give them back. See Wang Chunjing, 'Some thoughts on the implementation of policy regarding specific religious premises', *Religion*, no.1, 2000, pp.31-33.
66. In China, all social organisations have to accept the leadership of the Party to varying degrees. See Timothy Brook, 'Auto-Organization in Chinese Society', in *Civil Society in China*, ed. by Timothy Brook & B. Michael Frolic, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1997, pp.36-37.
67. Xing Fuzeng, 'The origins and development of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement (1949-1957)', in Xing Fuzeng & Liang Jialin, *A Study of the Three-Self Movement in the 1950s*, Hong Kong: Alliance Bible Seminary, 1996.
68. Jiang Zemin, 'Maintaining the stability and continuity of the Party's policy on religion' (30 January 1991), *Selected Documents on Religious Affairs Work in the New Era*, p.210.
69. 'Jiang Zemin and Li Ruihuan's discussions with ethnic minority and religious delegates to the CPPCC', *CPPCC Journal*, 5 March 1999.
70. Huang Zhu, 'On some questions in religious affairs work' (January 1997), in id., *Essays on the nationalities and religious questions in the new era of the United Front*, vol.2, p.347.
71. Huang Zhu has said, 'To put into practice the separation of church and state means principally the separation between religion and the sovereignty of the state: religion must not interfere in administration, in civil law, in education, or in marriage. This is not the same as religion being completely independent from politics. Religious organisations and religious individuals must similarly have a correct political orientation, e.g. to love the

motherland and their religion, to uphold the unity of the ethnic groups and the integrity of the nation, the mutual adaptation of religion and socialist society, etc. Still less should it be misinterpreted as meaning that politics cannot be considered in matters of religious work or religious questions.’ Huang Zhu, ‘An examination of questions regarding the unification of state and religion and the separation of state and religion’ (June 1997), p.371.

72. Ye Xiaowen, ‘Religion and the Propagation of Legal Knowledge: Introduction to A Reader in the Propagation of Legal Knowledge in Religious Affairs Work’, in State Council Religious Affairs Bureau Policy and Regulation Department ed., *A Reader in the Propagation of Legal Knowledge in Religious Affairs Work*, Beijing: Religious Culture Press, 1998, p.6.

73. Ye Xiaowen, ‘Religion and the Propagation of Legal Knowledge: Introduction to A Reader in the Propagation of Legal Knowledge in Religious Affairs Work’, p.6.

74. Ye Xiaowen, ‘Reflections on religious affairs work at the turn of the century – a further discussion of “Pay attention to policy, get a grip on management, promote adaptation”’, *Religion in China*, no.1, 2000, p.8.

75. Ye Xiaowen, ‘Religion and the Propagation of Legal Knowledge: Introduction to A Reader in the Propagation of Legal Knowledge in Religious Affairs Work’, p.7. Ye points out that the problem of religious crazes on the one hand ‘has obviously already gone beyond the level of “a question of religious belief in people’s minds”’, and on the other hand ‘it is not enough merely to rely on taking legal action, because it is obviously fundamentally not, or not entirely, a matter of breaking the law’.

76. Wang Zuohan, *The Question of Religion and Religious Policy in China*, p.124.

77. Ding Guangxun, ‘Spreading the Gospel and strengthening the body’, *Jinling Union Theological Journal*, inaugural issue (September 1953), p.3.

78. Chen Zemin, ‘Drops of theological thought in the Chinese church’, *Jingfeng*, no.68 (1981), p.28.

79. Shen Yifan, ‘The Chinese church in theological reflection’, *China and the Church*, no.66, 1988, pp.18-19.

80. Ding Guangxun, ‘Looking back along the road’ (24 April 1995), in id., *Collected Essays of Ding Guangxun*, Nanjing: Yilin Publishing House, 1998, pp.363-364.

81. Discussing the application of liberation theology in China, Ding Guangxun particularly points out that ‘we must not idealise or absolutise the poor’ and takes the view that ‘it will always be the case that some people get rich before others.’ See Ding Guangxun, ‘The inspiration of liberation theology, Teilhard de Chardin’s theology and process theology’, *Collected Essays of Ding Guangxun*, pp.195-196.

82. Xu Dingxin, ‘The key to making a success of Jinling is to maintain a correct educational policy and theological direction’, *Jinling Theological Journal*, no.1, 1999, pp.24-25.

83. Ding Guangxun, ‘Adjustment and renewal must be made to old theological thinking’, *CPPCC Journal*, 5 March 1999.

84. Wang Zuohan ed., *Religion and Religious Affairs Work in China in the Face of the New Century*, Beijing: Study Press, 2000, pp.311-312. Also Wang Zuohan, ‘On the question of relations between ordinary believers and unbelievers’, *Religion in China*, no.4, 2000, pp.4-5.

85. Huang Zhu, 'On mutual adaptation between religion and socialist society in China' (February 1995), in id., *Essays on the nationalities and religious questions in the new era of the United Front*, vol.2, p.281.

86. Ye Xiaowen, 'Actively and stably guide the mutual adaptation of religion and socialist society at a deep level', CCP Central Committee United Front Department ed., *Love the Motherland, Love Religion, March Forward in Unity – Proceedings of the North-Eastern Conference of Leaders of Religious Bodies*, Beijing: Huawen Press, 1997, p.19.

87. Lin Benxuan has pointed out that the 'heterodox sects' which have been banned by governments throughout China's history usually have a strong 'eschatological' colouring, while the eschatological viewpoint, which believes that the day of doom is at hand and the present world will be destroyed, has no desire to maintain social order or the present social system, and therefore poses a threat to the ethical authority and right to rule of the current sovereign power. See id., 'Relations between the Yiguandao sect and government: from ban to legalisation', in Ye Zhiming ed., *Religion and Culture*, Taipei: Student Books, 1990, pp.132-133.

88. Zhao Kuangwei, 'Proclaiming the imminent end of the world is a common characteristic of all heterodox sects', Editorial Committee of the Social Problems Research Series ed., *On Heterodox Sects – Proceedings of the First International Conference on the Problem of Heterodox Sects*, Nanning: Guangxi People's Publishing House, 2001, pp.90-97.

89. Jiang Zemin, 'Ethnic minority and religious affairs work must be taken very seriously indeed' (7 November 1993), in *Selected Documents on Religious Affairs Work in the New Era*, pp.254-255.

90. Ye Xiaowen, , 'Actively and stably guide the mutual adaptation of religion and socialist society at a deep level', p.19.

91. Ding Guangxun, 'Speech to the religious group at the Fourth Congress of the Eighth National CPPCC'.

92. Ye Xiaowen has said, 'If the contradiction between belief and unbelief is exaggerated, and if believers regard unbelievers as being certain to go to Hell, while unbelievers regard believers as an obscurantist and alien group, such a creation or exaggeration of opposition can only be welcomed by our enemies. Today, the reason why illegal religious activities have become one of the main dangers affecting the stability of Xinjiang, and some religious sects which have been dormant for many years are becoming more active by the day, and some ordinary believers are stirred up by dogmatic beliefs and some heresies are flexing their muscles and pulling the wool over people's eyes...one of the common points of these phenomena is that they all exaggerate the contradiction between belief and unbelief to an extreme extent and all take an extremely narrow and fervent view of "faith". They do not fill the world with love because of their faith, but fill it full of hatred, to the extent of hating their own compatriots and their own motherland. If a religion goes this far, what future can it have?' See id., 'Actively and stably guide the mutual adaptation of religion and socialist society at a deep level', p.19.

93. Ding Guangxun, 'Preface: Establishing a correct view of scripture', Mei Kangjun & Wang Aiming ed., *Proceedings of the Chinese Christian Academic Seminar on Views of Scripture*, Shanghai: Chinese Christian National *Lianghui*, 2000, p.2.

94. Ding Guangxun, 'The Cosmic Christ', *Jinling Theological Journal*, nos.14-15 (1991), pp.2-4.
95. Ding Guangxun, 'The Cosmic Christ', p.4.
96. Ding Guangxun, 'The Church in China – Speech given at the Retreat of the World Baptist Alliance', *Jinling Theological Journal*, no.21 (1994), pp.8-9.
97. For details see Xing Fuzeng, 'On ethical Christianity – the adjustment and adaptation to socialism of contemporary Chinese theology', in id., *Church-State Relations in Contemporary China*.
98. 'Resolution on strengthening the construction of theological thinking', *Tianfeng*, January 1999, p.11.
99. 'Seminary Members Quit in "Persecution" Protest: Rebel Trio Challenge Protestant Leader', *South China Morning Post*, August 26 1999.
See Ya Xiuji, Chen Shunfu and Chen Yong, 'Letter of protest by research students at Jinling Theological Seminary refusing to withdraw voluntarily from the seminary', *China and the Gospel*, no.30 (May-June 1999), pp.24-28. Also Liu Yichun, Li Zhimin & Luo Yunfei, 'Why we are withdrawing from the seminary – statement by three students at Jinling Union Theological Seminary'.
100. Shen Mo, 'Why has a lecturer at a theological seminary been dismissed?', *Life Quarterly*, no.16 (December 2000).
101. Cao Shengjie, 'Establish firm roots, build a strong basis, advance with the times, run the Church well', *Tianfeng*, July 2002, p.6.
102. Zhou Jiakai, Zhao Kuangwei & Wei Xiaolei, 'Encourage and support Protestantism in strengthening the construction of theological thinking', *Explorations in Religious Work*, p.75.
103. Ding Guangxun, 'A Christianity which brings an important message to the whole world', *Tianfeng*, October 2001, p.33.
104. Cao Shengjie, 'Establish firm roots, build a strong basis, advance with the times, run the Church well', p.8.
105. 'We call on figures in the Protestant church throughout China and on the broad mass of believers, to strive under the leadership of the Party to study Comrade Deng Xiaoping's important speech given when receiving leading cadres of the troops imposing martial law in the capital and all important documents at the present time.' 'National *lianghui* issue statement firmly supporting all resolutions of the Fourth Plenum', *Tianfeng*, no.9, 1989, p.29.
106. 'Religious figures criticise "Falungong"', *Religion in China*, no.4, 1999, pp.11-13.
107. 'Statement of the China Christian Council', *Tianfeng*, no.10, 1994, p.28.
108. 'Willing to do our best for the unification of the motherland', *Tianfeng*, no.4, 1995, p.2.
109. 'Resolutely preventing the emergence of any plot to split the motherland – interview with Chairman Luo Guanzong of the Committee of the China Christian Three-Self Patriotic Movement', *Tianfeng*, no.9, 1999, pp.3-4.
110. Tian Yu, 'There is only one China in the world – The Chinese delegation at the fifth Asian Conference on Religion and Peace', *Tianfeng*, no.12, 1996, pp.8-10.
111. 'The Dalai Lama must not attend the Millennium Peace Conference of World Religious and Spiritual Leaders', *People's Daily Online*, 24 August 2000, on

<http://www.peopledaily.com.cn/GB/channel2/17/20000824/200224.html>, accessed on 25 August 2000.

112. 'Stormy passage, splendid display – US visit of the Chinese religious leaders' delegation', *Religion in China*, no.5, 2000, p.15.

113. 'Chinese religious leaders call on international society to uphold the purity of religion', *People's Daily Online*, 30 August 2000, on <http://www.peopledaily.com.cn/GB/channel2/17/20000830/208951.html>, accessed on 21 May 2001.

114. 'Official criticism of Vatican canonisation', *Yahoo News*, 26 September 2000, on <http://chinese.yahoo.com/headlines/000926/china/mingpao/ca22230ytxt.html>, accessed on 27 September 2000.

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115. 'Religious figures express anger at Vatican "canonisation"', *Xinhua Online*, 26 September 2000, on <http://www.xinhua.org/hm/20000926/143119.htm>, accessed on 27 September 2000.

116. 'Statement of the Committee of the China Christian Three-Self Patriotic Movement and the China Christian Council in opposition to the Vatican's distortion of history in planning to announce the canonisation of so-called "saints"', *Tianfeng*, October 2000, p.7; Ding Guangxun, 'In support of the patriotic actions of the Chinese Catholic Church', Luo Guanzong, 'History must not be forgotten', Han Wenzao, 'We must never relax our guard', *Tianfeng*, November 2000, pp.9-11. Ding Guangxun, 'To forget history is treason', Han Wenzao, 'History does not permit distortion', Chen Zemin, 'Remembrance of the past gives lessons for the future', Xu Rulei, 'China's policy on freedom of religious belief cannot be besmirched', *Jinling Theological Journal*, no.4, 2000, pp.12-16.

117. 'Religious conference held in Zhejiang to protest at the Vatican's anti-China action in "canonising saints"', *China Online*, 5 October 2000, on <http://www.china.org.cn/ddd/58.htm>, accessed on 9 October 2000; 'Catholic Church in six provinces and municipalities holds conference to protest at Vatican's anti-China actions', *China Online*, 4 October 2000, on <http://www.china.org.cn/ddd/52.htm>, accessed on 9 October 2000.

118. State Council Press Office, *The Human Rights Situation in China*, Beijing: Central Documents Press, 1991, pp.41-44. See also State Council Press Office, *Progress on Human Rights in China* (1995), *China Online*, on <http://www.china.org.cn/ch-book/jinzhan/jinzhan.htm>; *China's Human Rights Progress in 2000*, *China Online*, on <http://www.china.org.cn/ch-book/2000ren/2000ren.htm>.

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120. 'Dr Han Wenzao, President of the China Christian Council, issues statement on so-called "religious persecution" in China (23 June 1997)' *Tianfeng*, August 1997, p.6.

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121. 'US Attacks State Control of Religion', *South China Morning Post*, July 23 1997.
122. 'Statement by Bishop K.H. Ting on "United States Policies in Support of Religious Freedom: Focus on Christianity"', *Amity News Service* 6:7-8 (1997): 20. 'CCC/TSPM Heads Reaffirm Policy of Religious Freedom', *Amity News Service* 6:7-8 (1997): 6.
123. 'Religious figures and religious scholars hold conference, criticise US State Department's distortion of religious situation in China', *People's Daily*, 7 August 1997.
124. 'US plans to ban Chinese religious officials', *Kuaibao*, 2 October 1997.
125. State Council Press Office, *White Paper on Freedom of Religious Belief in China*, full text in *Ta Kung Pao*, 17 October 1997.
126. 'US urges release of 32 religious figures, Beijing claims no crime, no appeal', *Ming Pao*, 1 November 1997.
127. 'Report of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, II: People's Republic of China', as available on the Official Web Site of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, <http://www.uscirf.gov/reports/01May01/china.php3>, accessed on 12 May 2001.
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130. 'Authorities of the five major religions attack US report for inverting black and white, Chinese religious freedom allows no slander', *Yahoo News*, 7 May 2001, on <http://www.chinese.yahoo.com/headlines/010507/china/chinapress/050610dtx.html>, accessed on 18 May 2001.
131. Ye Xiaowen, 'Foreword: Rationally, beneficially and precisely strike back at US anti-China forces' attack on us over religion', , *Telling the American People the Truth about Religion in China: Transcripts of Interviews with Ye Xiaowen*, p.2.
132. *Telling the American People the Truth about Religion in China: Transcripts of Interviews with Ye Xiaowen*.
133. Ye Xiaowen, 'Retrospective on the last hundred years of religion in China and its future outlook', p.11.
134. 'Ding Guangxun opposes Guangdong's policy on religion', *Baixing*, no.187 (1989), p.18.
135. Ding Guangxun, 'Speech at the First Congress of the Eighth National CPPCC – Around the Party as a centre, let religious work provide a beneficial environment for reform and opening up', p.4.
136. 'Ding Guangxun opposes Guangdong's policy on religion', p.18.
137. Ding Guangxun, 'Speech at the Spring Festival seminar for national-level religious leaders held by Comrade Li Ruihuan in Zhongnanhai', *Religion*, no.25, June 1994, p.3. At a meeting with Jiang Zemin in 1991, Ding also said, 'Our enemies attack us as a "government-run religion", and even here in China there are those who say, "We are government-run, that's what the leadership of the Party means, so we should be proud of being properly government-run." But this is something which the broad masses of

- believers will never accept.’ Ding Guangxun, ‘Speech delivered at meeting with Comrade Jiang Zemin’, full text in *Bridge*, no.50, December 1991, p.12.
138. Sha Guangyi, ‘The function of patriotic religious organisations is irreplaceable’, *Religion*, no.19, May 1991, p.46.
139. ‘Ding Guangxun opposes Guangdong’s policy on religion’, p.17; Ding Guangxun, ‘Speech delivered at meeting with Comrade Jiang Zemin’, p.12.
140. ‘The correct handling of the question of religion – Speech by Conference Member Ding Guangxun’, p.11.
141. ‘Ding Guangxun opposes Guangdong’s policy on religion’, p.17.
142. ‘Church and state must be separate – Speech by Ding Guangxun at the 1988 National People’s Congress’, p.19.
143. Shen Yifan (Muxi), ‘On the right ordering of relationships’, p.14.
144. A Protestant figure has pointed out that the church has absolutely ‘no power to intervene in matters such as education which should be run by the government’, but that on the contrary, the government constantly intervenes in the internal affairs of religion. See Jiang Ye, ‘In the hope of seeing an article analysing the policy on religion further’, *Religion*, nos.3 & 4, 1998, p.146.
145. Jiang Zemin, ‘Ethnic minority and religious affairs work must be taken very seriously indeed’, *Selected Documents on Religious Affairs Work in the New Era*, pp.249-255. See also Ye Xiaowen, ‘Conscientiously do a good job of religious affairs work in the new era – studying Comrade Jiang Zemin’s comments on the question of religion’, *Religion in China*, no.3, 1999, pp.4-7.
146. State Council Religious Affairs Bureau ed., *Outline for Studying the Policy on Religion*, Beijing: Religious Culture Press, 1995, p.45.
147. Xing Fuzeng, ‘The relation between the church and the party-state in China – the reform of the patriotic religious associations from the 1980s to the present’, in id., *Church-State Relations in Contemporary China*.
148. Ding Guangxun, ‘A call to alter the view of religion’, *CPPCC Journal*, 4 September 1998.
149. Ji Tai, ‘Biblical research and the Chinese social environment’, *Culture and Art News*, vol.19, no.6 (November 1998), p.3.
150. Qu Haiyuan, ‘Respect freedom of religious belief, handle church-state relations with care’, in id., *Surplus and Deficiency – A Critique of Society in the 1980s*, Taipei: Yunchen Culture Press, 1988, p.368.

Church-State Relations in Contemporary China and the Development of Protestant Christianity

Appendix I: Current Chinese Administrative Laws and Regulations on Religion

1. National administrative laws on religion

Regulations for the management of religious activities by foreigners within the territory of the People's Republic of China – issued as order no.144 of the State Council in January 1994

Prescriptions for the management of locations for religious activities – issued as order no.145 of the State Council in January 1994

2. Regulations of departments under the State Council

Implementation methods for the registration and management of religious social groups – circulated by the Religious Affairs Bureau of the State Council and the Ministry of Civil Affairs in May 1991

Methods for the registration of locations for religious activities – issued by the Religious Affairs Bureau of the State Council in April 1994

Methods for the annual inspection of locations for religious activities – issued by the Religious Affairs Bureau of the State Council in July 1996

Methods for the employment by religious seminaries of specialists of foreign nationality – promulgated by the Religious Affairs Bureau of the State Council, the State Bureau of Foreign Specialists, and the Public Security Bureau in November 1998

Detailed implementation principles for the regulations for the management of religious activities by foreigners within the territory of the People's Republic of China – promulgated by the State Bureau of Religions in September 2000

3. General regional laws on religion

Prescriptions for the management of religious affairs in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region – passed by the 9th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 8th People's Congress of Xinjiang in July 1994

Prescriptions for religious affairs in Shanghai Municipality – passed by the 23rd meeting of the Standing Committee of the 10th People's Congress of Shanghai in November 1995

Prescriptions for the management of religious affairs in Heilongjiang Province – passed by the 28rd meeting of the Standing Committee of the 8th Provincial People's Congress in June 1997

Prescriptions for the management of religious affairs in Hainan – passed by the 31st meeting of the Standing Committee of the 1st Provincial People's Congress in September 1997

Prescriptions for the management of religious affairs in Guangzhou City – passed by the 36th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 10th Provincial People’s Congress in September 1997

Prescriptions for the management of religious affairs in Chongqing Municipality – passed by the 4th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 1st Municipal People’s Congress in October 1997

Prescriptions for religious affairs in Zhejiang Province – passed by the 41st meeting of the Standing Committee of the 8th Provincial People’s Congress in December 1997

Prescriptions for religious affairs in Jilin Province – passed by the 35th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 8th Provincial People’s Congress in December 1997

Prescriptions for the management of religious affairs in Liaoning Province – passed by the 6th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 9th Provincial People’s Congress in November 1998

Prescriptions for religious affairs in Anhui Province – passed by the 12th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 9th Provincial People’s Congress in October 1999

Prescriptions for religious affairs in Shenzhen Special Economic Zone – passed by the 27th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 2nd Municipal People’s Congress in October 1998

Prescriptions for the management of religious affairs in Sichuan Province – passed by the 16th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 9th Provincial People’s Congress in May 2000

Prescriptions for the management of religious affairs in Guangdong Province – promulgated by the Standing Committee of the Provincial People’s Congress in June 2000

Prescriptions for the management of religious affairs in Guizhou Province – passed by the 17th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 9th Provincial People’s Congress in July 2000

Prescriptions for the management of religious affairs in Shandong Province – passed by the 16th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 9th Provincial People’s Congress in August 2000

Prescriptions for the management of religious affairs in Hunan Province – passed by the 18th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 9th Provincial People’s Congress in September 2000

Prescriptions for religious affairs in Shaanxi Province – passed by the 18th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 9th Provincial People’s Congress in September 2000

Prescriptions for the administration of religious affairs in Jinan City – passed by the 16th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 12th Municipal People’s Congress in September 2000

Prescriptions for the administration of religious affairs in Hubei Province – promulgated by the Standing Committee of the Provincial People’s Congress in January 2001

Prescriptions for religious affairs in Jiangsu Province – passed by the 28th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 9th Provincial People’s Congress in February 2002

Prescriptions for religious affairs in Beijing Municipality – passed by the 35th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 11th Municipal People’s Congress in July 2002

4. General regulations on religion of regional governments

Provisional regulations for the administrative management of religious affairs in Guangzhou City – promulgated by the Office of the Municipal People’s Government in April 1987

Provisional regulations for the management of religious affairs in Gansu Province – passed by the 21st standing assembly of the Provincial People’s Government in [month omitted] 1991

Provisional method for the management of religious affairs in Tibet Autonomous Region – passed by the standing assembly of the AR People’s Government in December 1991

Provisional regulations for the management of religious affairs in Hubei Province – passed by the standing assembly of the Provincial People’s Government in October 1992

Provisional regulations for the administrative management of religious affairs in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region – passed by the 1st standing assembly of the AR People’s Government in March 1994

Provisional regulations for the management of religious affairs in Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region – promulgated by the AR People’s Government in June 1994

Regulations for the management of religious affairs in Yunnan Province – passed by the 9th standing assembly of the Provincial People’s Government in December 1997

Methods for the management of religious affairs in Jiangxi Province – passed by the 79th standing assembly of the Provincial People’s Government in January 1998

5. Individual regional laws on religion

Methods for the management of locations for religious activities in Henan Province – passed by the 23rd meeting of the Standing Committee of the 7th Provincial People’s Congress in August 1991

Regulations for the management of locations for religious activities in Qinghai Province – passed by the 28th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 7th Provincial People’s Congress in August 1992

Methods for the management of locations for religious activities in Shandong Province – passed by the 4th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 8th Provincial People’s Congress in November 1993

Methods for the management of locations for religious activities in Tianjin Municipality – passed by the 6th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 12th Municipal People’s Congress in February 1994

Methods for the management of locations for religious activities in Wuhan City – passed by the 9th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 9th Municipal People’s Congress in July 1994

Methods for the management of locations for religious activities in Chengdu City – passed by the 12th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 12th Municipal People’s Congress in July 1995

Methods for the management of locations for religious activities in Kunming City – passed by the 16th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 10th Municipal People’s Congress in November 1998

Methods for the management of locations for religious activities in Ningpo City – passed by the 30th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 10th Municipal People’s Congress in March 1997

Regulations for the management of locations for religious activities in Xiamen City – passed by the 22nd meeting of the Standing Committee of the 11th Municipal People’s Congress in January 2000

6. Individual regulations on religion of regional governments

Regulations for the administrative management of locations for religious activities in Guangdong Province – announced by the Provincial People’s Government in March 1988

Provisional rules for the management of locations for religious activities in Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region – passed by the 11th standing assembly of the AR People’s Government in May 1988

Regulations of Hebei Province to safeguard the normal religious activities of the Catholic Church (trial implementation) – promulgated by the Provincial People’s Government in May 1989

Provisional regulations for the management of religious activities in Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region – passed by the 96th standing assembly of the AR People’s Government in August 1990

Provisional rules for the management of religious personnel in Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region – passed by the 96th standing assembly of the AR People’s Government in August 1990

Regulations for the management of religious activities in Zhejiang Province – promulgated by the Provincial People’s Government in April 1992

Provisional regulations of Shaanxi Province regarding foreign tourists going to locations for religious activities to carry out religious activities – promulgated by the Provincial Tourism Bureau in May 1992

Provisional regulations for the registration and management of locations for religious activities in Fujian Province – promulgated by the Provincial People’s Government in September 1992

Methods for the management of locations for religious activities in Guizhou Province – issued by the Provincial People’s Government in December 1992

Regulations for the management of locations for religious activities and religious personnel in Hebei Province – passed by the 136th standing assembly of the Provincial People’s Government in May 1993

Regulations for the management of religious personnel in Sichuan Province – passed by the 15th standing assembly of the Provincial People’s Government in October 1993

Regulations for the management of locations for religious activities in Liaoning Province – passed by the 22nd standing assembly of the Provincial People’s Government in November 1993

Methods for the implementation of ‘Prescriptions for the management of locations for religious activities’ in Shaanxi Province – issued by the Provincial People’s Government in April 1994

Implementation methods for the management of locations for religious activities in Anhui Province – passed by the 52nd standing assembly of the Provincial People’s Government in October 1994

Regulations for the management of locations for religious activities in Shanghai Municipality – issued by the Municipal People’s Government in May 1995

Methods for the implementation of ‘Prescriptions for the management of locations for religious activities’ in Hunan Province – passed by the 99th standing assembly of the Provincial People’s Government in November 1995

Implementation methods for the management of locations for religious activities in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region – announced by the AR People’s Government in January 1996

Regulations for methods of management of locations for religious activities in Lanzhou City – passed by the 18th standing assembly of the Municipal People’s Government in November 1996

Methods for the management of the activities of religious personnel in Tianjin Municipality – promulgated by the Municipal People’s Government in October 1997

Methods for the management of religious printed materials in Shanghai Municipality – issued by the Municipal People’s Government in December 1997

Methods for the implementation of ‘Prescriptions for the management of locations for religious activities’ in Jiangsu Province – passed by the 14th standing assembly of the Provincial People’s Government in October 1998