



A marriage between a Chinese and Westerner in a Catholic church in Qingdao, China (2006).
Source: Franco Rabbazo – Flickr.com

‘SINICISING’ CHRISTIANITY

China vs the West?

Abstract

The Chinese Government has, through its Director of the State Administration of Religious Affairs Wang Zuonan, underscored the importance of promoting the development of a Chinese Christian theology. The idea of doing this stirs controversy, considered by some as hyper-nationalist rhetoric which may further worsen religious freedoms in China and is likely to incur significant criticism, particularly from the West. Yet China defends its right to sovereignty over religious affairs and the idea of ‘sinicising’ (nationalizing) Christianity. The debate over the role of Christianity in China strikes at the heart of relations between the West and China and is perhaps indicative of where their relationship may move in the future. To bring deeper understanding, three main elements are assessed: the past historical accounts of Christianity in China, the present perception of Christianity in China as a growing threat, and the question of sinicising Christianity as a solution. I conclude that the sinicising of Christianity has fundamental weaknesses, which not only invite misunderstandings but also may potentially result in a backlash and other intended consequences.

Dani
jayamulyanto@gmail.com

In August 7, 2014, a government-backed newspaper, China Daily, published an article titled, “China plans establishment of Christian theology.”¹ The article explained that “China will continue to promote the development of Christian theology and establish a Chinese Christian theology,” which is “compatible with the country's path of socialism.” Wang Zuoran, the director of the State Administration of Religious Affairs, was interviewed and commented that Christian teaching should be in line with China's circumstances. The article was quickly spread to a global audience, provoking criticism, particularly from Western media and Christian groups. The BBC,² International Business Times,³ and CNN⁴ were but few of the Western media outlets which covered the issue. A spokesman for Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW), was quoted by Christianity Today⁵ and Christian Headlines⁶, commented, saying “...it is difficult to predict what this will look like in practice. The main purpose, however, may be to remind Christians that their allegiance is to the country, and the Party, first.” This plan becomes more controversial and heated because of several preceding incidents between officials and Christian communities in China, which preceded this announcement.⁷ All of this intensifies criticism, mainly from, the West, that

China’s religious freedom policy and practice, may constitute a violation of human rights. China itself claims its full sovereignty over its internal issues and provides rebuttal against this criticism while also striking back, attacking the West’s double standard. It provides a good illustration of the way in which religion is framed in China, as a competition between Chinese sovereignty and Western interference. The topic of sinicising Christianity may be framed and analysed from this perspective too. However, it should be seriously questioned too whether sinicising Christianity be merely an issue of China against the West, or whether it has deeper roots. There are at least three important premises to understand this perspective better: the past historical accounts, the present situation perceived and the ‘threats’ maintained, and an effort to find an answer to the threats.

1. Christianity: A Dark Past?

Whilst Christianity in China has a long history, spanning many centuries, the overall picture of it is quite murky. Since its arrival in the 7th century of Tang dynasty⁸, several different authorities banned Christianity as it was deemed to be incompatible with local values and was closely associated with threatening foreign

powers. In order to get rid of foreign influence, Emperor Wuzong of Tang dynasty banned Christianity, along with Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, and Manichaeism and only permitted native beliefs, Taoism and Confucianism. Despite of Buddhism as the main target, the increasingly popular Nestorian Christians were heavily persecuted too. Reischauer (1955) mentioned economic, social and religious reasons of this persecution.⁹ Having a moment of freedom during the Mongol of Yuan dynasty in the 13th century, the Nestorians were completely annihilated as the Ming dynasty emerged.¹⁰

Catholic Franciscans, who came to China during Yuan period, also did not survive the Ming regime's hostility. Later, the Jesuits under Matteo Ricci's leadership came and engaged more intensively with Chinese, introducing Western science and a dialogue between Christianity and Confucianism in the late of 16th century.¹¹ Although Ricci's tolerance and appreciation to Confucian's tradition had resulted to a wider space for Christianity in China,¹² this situation did not last long. Following the dispute among Catholics over Ricci's adoption on Confucianism, Kangxi Emperor of Qing dynasty finally

issued a decree banning Christian missions in China.¹³ The situation for Christians in China worsened with the passing of anti-Christian policies by the Qianlong Emperor.¹⁴ The Yongzheng Emperor rejected the conversion of some Manchu to Christianity,¹⁵ and the Jiaqing Emperor prohibited the preaching of Catholicism by deeming missionaries to be sorcerers and sorceresses, who would be executed for spreading Catholicism.¹⁶

Daoguang Emperor then included Protestant missionaries under this regulation too.¹⁷

The condition was to some degree reversed after the first Opium War

in 1842, in which the British victory paved a much smoother path for Western and other Christian missions to China. The devastating Taiping Rebellion from 1850 to 1864 in southern China was led by a local leader, Hong Xiuquan, and was considered partially as a result of Christian mission influence. Along with a social reform agenda, the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace intended to substitute Confucianism, Buddhism and other Chinese folk beliefs with Christianity. Hong himself encountered a Protestant missionary and had an American Baptist missionary, Issachar

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Jacox Robert as a teacher.¹⁸ Hong Xiuquan later employed religious ideas more frequently, and even considered himself as a younger brother of Jesus.¹⁹ Although Taiping was finally defeated, the number of Christian missions was still growing rapidly, as a consequence of the “unequal treaties”, allowing the Western missionaries to reside in China.²⁰ Moreover, following the religious awakening in Western Europe and North America, the Christian evangelisation in China gained significantly from its success, by increasing the quantity of believers and increasing the variety of services provided.

considered to be the main driver the rebellion in which hundreds of Christian missionaries and thousands of Chinese Christians were killed.²¹ Moreover, the Western powers, known as the Eight-Nation Alliance, consisting the UK, Russia, France, US, Germany, Austria-Hungary and Japan, successfully defeated



A painting illustrating the siege of Beicang Cathedral in Beijing during the Boxer Rebellion in 1900. Sixty six foreigners were killed, whilst no record for Chinese Christian casualties (Fleming, 1959).

Source: Jane Elliot in *Some Did It for Civilisation, Some Did It for Their Country: A Revised View of the Boxer War* - Commons.wikimedia.org.

However, the growing success of Christianity in China led to growing tension between the local Chinese population and the Western powers. This led to the 1868 riot in Yangzhou, which ruined China Inland Mission’s house and led to a conflict between the British army and Qing authority. These tension eventually manifested themselves as an anti-imperialist, anti-Christian movement in the Boxer Rebellion between 1899 and 1901. The Christian missionaries

the Boxers or the *Yihetuan* movement which was allied with the Qing Empire. Despite the subsequent indigenisation of Christianity,²² the failure of the Boxer Rebellion and the manner with which it was crushed cast a shadow of bitterness over many Chinese people.

The rule of the Chinese Communist party since 1949 advanced the localisation of Christianity in China, and greater independence from its Western source,

however in principle Party was not very friendly toward religions, and sought to control the organised religions. In 1951, Wu Yao-tsung started the Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM) Protestant Church, whose principals were “self-governance, self-support and self-propagation” (自治、自养、自传). This Church aimed to distance itself from Western influence and was more supportive of the newly established People’s Republic of China. Hundreds of Chinese Christian leaders formulated the “Christian Manifesto”, stating loyalty to the country and rejecting imperialism, feudalism and capitalism in 1954.²³ The Catholics, on the other hand, had significant tension with the Communist regime, due to their desire to maintain their relationship with the Holy See in the Vatican. As a result, the Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association (CPCA) was established in 1957 by the Religious Affairs Bureau. However Christianity was severely curtailed by the Cultural Revolution of 1966-1976, which practically annihilated any religious life, including the Three-Self Patriotic Movement. Religious groups, including

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Christians only survived through moving their activities underground during this period.

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historically been viewed negatively, with many fearing that it would destroy or weaken China and its societal establishment.

There are seemingly always conflicting values while some common and shared ideas are generally undermined. Under this understanding, there has

always been tension between China with its local beliefs against Christianity, which has been viewed as a tool of the West.

2. Christianisation: A Growing Threat?

Although the Cultural Revolution aggressively restricted religious freedom, including Christianity, the dynamics between the China authorities and religions still continued. Responding to the ban period of the Cultural Revolution, the underground meetings had been countered

by a revitalisation of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement and the Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association, and also an establishment of the China Christian Council (CCC) in 1980s. The TSPM and the CCC, known as *liang hui* (两会) of the umbrella for Protestant churches, and the CPCA, are the only government-sanctioned and allowed to operate freely Christian authorities in China. Yet, the undergrounds movement in fact, persists and continues to grow.

The existence of these two parallel



House church is the underground Christian communities, which is indicated to grow rapidly in the recent years despite of no official acknowledgment.

Source: Revival Chinese Ministries International

Catholic churches in China has inevitably created some problems. The appointment of church officials and controversial issues such as abortion and artificial contraception are important areas of

dispute. The case of Cardinal Kung is a clear example of this.²⁴ In 2007, Pope Benedict XV, writing in a letter to Chinese Catholics, recognised the conflicting interests of episcopal appointments.²⁵ There have also been efforts by the Holy See and China to improve their relationship as the appointment of church officials are accepted by both sides.²⁶ During his last visit to South Korea in August 2014, the Pope was allowed to fly over Chinese airspace, something which the previous Pope was prevented from doing in 1989. The Pope also sent a greeting telegram to President Xi.^{27 28} Nevertheless, a large rift exists between the two, which threatens to widen on certain controversial topics.

Although these are the two major Christian denominations in China, the Orthodox Christians, which are influenced by their Russian counterparts, exist in a small number, mostly in the northern area of the country. Despite their presence for several centuries, the Chinese government rarely formally acknowledges their existence particularly because of its close foreign relations (with Russia).²⁹ “House churches” are another phenomenon, as independent Christian groups from the TSPM, the CCC and the CPCA. Although their origins can be traced back since the establishment of the Republic, they have

been growing rapidly since policies restricting religious freedoms were loosened in the 1990s. Since then, other Christian denominations and groups have come to China more frequently, including the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches. These two religious movements are in fact closely associated with the rapid growth of Christianity and house churches in China, yet they retain important foreign and global links.^{30 31}

It is believed that there has been a significant increase of Christian believers in China as a result of China's economic reform program. In the year 2000, Chinese authorities stated there were 10 million Protestants and 4 million Catholics in China,³² yet by 2012, the government estimated that there were 25 million Protestants and 6 million Catholics.³³ This only accounts for those who attend registered government institutions. Liu Peng, a researcher from the Chinese Academy of Social Science, predicted that the total number of Christians in China reached 50 million in 2012, as a result of unofficial church attendance.³⁴ The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life assessed that there was approximately over 67 million Christians in China in 2010.³⁵ This

boom is predicted to continue so that by 2030 China will be the most Christian populous nation in the world with 247 million believers.³⁶ The rapidly expanding number is viewed within China as a risk to the regime, particularly in relation to political stability.³⁷

The demands for universal suffrage in Hong Kong are a good example of this as Christianity has played a significant role in this movement and many religious activities and symbols, can be found at the

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protest spots. The religious leaders also show direct and clear support toward the protest, with the Methodist Church expressing their encouragement to the protesters. Some protest leaders are quite candid about the role that their Christian faith has played in guiding their actions.³⁸ Although not all Christian groups or leaders have sided with the protestors, and an ambivalent position view taken by many Christians, in general far more Christian groups have been far more actively involved in the protests, compared to the passive stance of other religious groups.³⁹ While the PRC government does not address this issue specifically, it is likely to be regarded as an obvious signal for them that in the future, religion (especially Christianity)

together with the Western power can be (still) a serious threat to the regime. Under this understanding, Christianity and the West will continue to be viewed as a threat, not only for the regime, but also Chinese culture in general.⁴⁰ The debates, such as on Christmas celebrations⁴¹ and the Western values in education⁴², are the examples.

3. Sinicising Christianity: An Ultimate Answer?

Although the Chinese authorities' view of Christianity as a threat makes sense if understood both historically and politically, it is unclear whether the policies they apply will successfully assuage their fears, let alone solving the fundamental problem of people's desire for freedom of religion.

First, there is great possible potential of the Chinese authorities with its state sponsored Christian theology to inhibit peoples' freedom of religion and belief. The government already reserves the right to determine legal and illegal beliefs and what constitutes "normal religious activity."⁴³ The theology is likely to bring a more rigid understanding of the religion and narrow down opportunities for different interpretation and understanding

of the holy text. Worse still, it will close the space for religious dialogue on diverse theological concepts. This is definitely not productive and healthy for the religious believers in particular and the society in general and can often create a backlash as people see their fundamental beliefs being restrained. Furthermore, in the era of globalisation and internet, the ability to acquire and interpret information and express ideas cannot be easily blocked. While the flow of information is not only rapid but also more horizontal, any blockade of information vertically, is likely to be challenged.⁴⁴ In this context, a state single interpretation of Christian theology will be at great risk, creating a possible harder backlash. Such limitation



Zhuanghe City Xinhua Christian Church, Dalian, Liaoning, China in 2011. The name itself "Xinhua," which literally means "New China," has a strong nationalistic connotation. Author: Yoshi Canopus - Commons.wikimedia.org

is easily perceived as oppression and violence against human rights which has the potential to ignite more extreme attitudes or radical responses.⁴⁵

Second, although Christianity has in the past been associated with Western hegemony and used to serve their interests, Christianity in China has changed significantly, as have the goals of Western powers. The process of indigenisation that was started from the end of 19th century

has brought many positive contributions to China, such as helping to end the feudal system, thus laying the foundations for the establishment of modern China. One of the clearest examples is Sun Yat-sen, one of the greatest leaders of modern China, who is Christian. His political struggle and ideals were influenced significantly by Christian values.⁴⁶ Another more recent example is the initiative of Occupy Central leaders to surrender to police, after seeing the potential of the protests turning violent and deciding to capitulate. The leaders themselves are Christian, including those with religious titles such as Reverend Chu Yiu-ming, and accompanied by Hong Kong Cardinal Joseph Zen.⁴⁷ There are many other Christian figures and organisations who give a positive contribution to China too and there are

some important common and shared values of Christianity and Chinese culture.^{48 49} Furthermore, blind criticism and too hostile response to Christianity and the Western values are no use of China's development, as expressed by some young people and even the state media, Xinhua editorial.⁵⁰

Most importantly, the term

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the Director of the State Administration Religious Affairs does not use the term directly, although he did express his comment at a seminar on the Sinicisation of Christianity in Shanghai.⁵¹ He emphasised that “the construction of Chinese Christian theology” is important to be “compatible with the country's path of socialism,” and to “adapt to China's national condition and integrate with Chinese culture,” amidst the rapid development of Protestant churches in China. It is also related to “the five-year campaign to promote Christian theology in China; launched in 2013, it will provide theological guidance for church rostrums in China and will promote the positive and correct theological thinking with a range of publications, exchanges, discussions and evangelism.” Furthermore, Gu Mengfei,

deputy secretary-general of the National Committee of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement added, “This will encourage more believers to make contributions to the country's harmonious social progress, cultural prosperity and economic development.” Whilst there is a question about what theory stands behind the new Chinese Christian theology, the bigger question is how Chinese Christian theology will be in practice. In fact, a similar idea has been conceptualised and implemented by Chinese and non-Chinese since the imperial period and then since PRC's establishment, particularly limiting the non-registered groups and foreign involvement.⁵² It is not strange then, that many in the Western media understand it more as a top-down, one-sided and aggressive nationalisation campaign of Christianity. Thus, although the idea of



Before a visit to an elder care centre, a group of Christian volunteers pray together in 2006. Whilst Christianity in China is growing and attracting more young people, its systematic and massive social work may give partial answer to complex social problems in China, such as ageing population.

Source: Sheila - Flickr.com

establishing certain ideology is to protect the state, its sovereignty and its people, it has fundamental weaknesses which may undermine the very goals it seeks to achieve. It may also set a precedent - in trying to ‘sinicise’ other major religions in China such as Islam and Buddhism.

It is very clear that sinicising Christianity in China cannot be separated from the historical reality and China's government perceptions of it as a threat namely the regime's stability. The history of repression under Western powers still plays on the minds of many Chinese, which continues to shape policies in the present day. The links between Christianity and the West, although largely symbolic, feed into this collective memory of Chinese weakness. Moreover, the

modern growth of Christianity in China is slowly creating a challenge to the authority of the Communist Party.⁵³ Nevertheless, the idea of sinicising Christianity itself has many weaknesses. There are three main concerns: the threat against human rights and particularly freedom of belief, polarising and conflicting positions between Chinese and Western, and lack of further explanation toward the concept of sinicising Christianity

concept. Unless these concerns are well addressed, sinicising Christianity idea will easily fall into misunderstanding and quickly provoke further unnecessary tension. Portraying the issue merely as a wrestle between China and the West or Christian and non-Christian, does not give any productive results. It is therefore the

shared responsibility of the Chinese authorities, Chinese Christians and Western Christians to address the issue, to ensure that freedom of belief is allowed and people's spiritual need is satisfied, whilst at the same time respecting the Chinese authorities' sovereignty.

About 'Resurgence of Russia and China programme:

As the US starts to scale down its 'heavy footprint' from the Islamic-world; the resurgence of new powers becomes crucial to evaluate. The rise of today's regional and tomorrow's global power and their internal and external policies will determine future discourses. Among the rising economies and military powers; Russia and China stand out the most.

Russia has become a key global actor in the aftermath of Syrian revolution. It is the first time since the end of the cold war that Russia is not only directly involved in managing global affairs but has even managed to dictate them in Syria as well as in Georgia Taking further advantage from its new role of an emerging global power; Russia is now seeking new relations in different regions of the Islamic-world i.e. Middle East (Egypt, Syria), Central and South Asia etc.

Chinese foreign policy in the different regions of the Islamic-world can be seen a combination of foreign policy approaches. The over-riding themes of Chinese foreign policy however remains limited to the projection of 'soft power' mixed with economic interaction and developmental strategies. This paradigm may not be sustainable in the near-future as the global system seems to shift towards multi-polarity. Chinese inter-relations with the US hard power and their economic interdependency may empower its soft foreign policy approaches. If however, these trends continue to change as the current geo-strategic trends demonstrate, Chinese foreign policy may have to radically change in terms of projecting its economic and military power in order to cater for its huge energy demands, resources and raw material etc.

Furthermore; although China and Russia may have different geopolitical interests; they have also found common grounds and convergences of interests on different global issues. As the US tries to 'rebalance' Asia Pacific and Eastern Europe: the convergences of interests are likely to steadily grow in the near to mid-term future. Finally; as the internal unrest grows in many parts of the Islamic-world; the role of emerging power such as China and Russia will be hugely important to monitor.

Key Feature of the programme:

- Analysis of China and Russia's historic development in the last few decades
- Analysis of contemporary socio-political trends within China and Russia

- Analysis and evaluation of current Chinese and Russian foreign policy models and paradigms, particularly in the regions of the Islamic-world
- Exploration and evaluation of China and Russia's military and defence strategies
- Exploration and evaluation of Chinese cyber-warfare capabilities
- Analysis of fragility or sustainability of western power and Pax-Americana
- Analysis of the inter-relation of the emerging powers i.e. India, Brazil, Vietnam, Indonesia, Myanmar etc. with China and Russia
- Analysis of new blocs particularly Shanghai cooperation organisation (SCO) or ASEAN and Chinese influence and Russian led 'custom' and 'trade' Unions
- Establishment and anticipation of different Chinese and Russian foreign policy models, using 'futurology' studies and by the above mentioned analyses of current and emerging trends etc.

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Endnotes

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- ¹ Hongyi, Wang. 2014. [China plans establishment of Christian theology](#).
- ² No Author. 2014. [China plans its own theology](#).
- ³ Schiavensa, Matt. 2014. [China Establishes New 'Christian Theology' To Control Its Christian Population](#).
- ⁴ Li, Zoe. 2014. [The future of Christianity in China: Sino-theology and the pope](#).
- ⁵ Borkett-Jones, Lucinda. 2014. [China's plan to nationalise Christian theology](#).
- ⁶ Dedrick, Carrie. 2014. [China Plans to Introduce Nationalized Christian Theology](#).
- ⁷ One of the infamous incidents is Wenzhou clash between officials and local believers in 2014, in which church demolition and cross removal were done with accusation of illegal structures.
- ⁸ The Nestorian Stele or Tablet explained that in 635 AD the Nestorian Christian Church or Assyrian Church of the East met the Emperor Taizong of Tang dynasty. It also explained some existed Christian communities in several places of northern China.
- ⁹ Reischauer, E. O. 1955. *Ennin's Travels in Tang China*. New York: Ronald Press.
- ¹⁰ Leslie (1998) wrote that besides Christianity, Manichaeism was also declared illegal, whilst Islam and Judaism were allowed as being considered not in conflict against Confucian belief. See, [The Integration of Religious Minorities in China: The Case of Chinese Muslims](#).
- ¹¹ Ricci accommodated extensively local traditions to his faith. Standaert (2010) mentioned that Ricci, yet, could not accept Buddhism, Taoism and even Neo-Confucianism which was seen as being “corrupted by Buddhism.” See, [Matteo Ricci: Shaped by the Chinese](#).
- ¹² Confucian scholars, to a certain extent, favored Christianity over Buddhism and Taoism (Chan, 2003), see [Commands from Heaven: Matteo Ricci's Christianity in the Eyes of Ming Confucian Officials](#). Also, some Jesuits had close relationship with and served the empire in various fora, i.e. court and observatory, and Kangxi Emperor announced the edict of toleration of Christianity which positioned Christianity as equal as Buddhism and Taoism.
- ¹³ Ristaino, M.R. 2008. [The Jacquinet Safe Zone: Wartime Refugees in Shanghai](#). Stanford University Press.
- Ellis, R.R. 2012. [They Need Nothing: Hispanic-Asian Encounters of the Colonial Period](#). University of Toronto Press.
- ¹⁴ Marinescu, J.N. 2008. [Defending Christianity in China: The Jesuit Defense of Christianity in the "Lettres Edifiantes Et Curieuses" & "Ruijianlu" in Relation to the Yongzheng Proscription of 1724](#). ProQuest.
- ¹⁵ Elliott, M.C. 2001. [The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China](#). Stanford University Press.
- ¹⁶ Maclay, R.S. 1861. [Life Among the Chinese: With Characteristic Sketches and Incidents of Missionary Operations and Prospects in China](#). New York: Carlton & Porter.
- ¹⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁸ Rapp, J. A. 2008. [Clashing Dilemmas: Hong Rengan, Issachar Roberts, and a Taiping "Murder" Mystery](#). *Journal of Historical Biography* (4): 27–58.
- ¹⁹ Other Christian groups consider Taiping rebels as heretic. Hong's teacher, Robert also criticised harshly Hong's faith on Christianity as theologically wrong. British and French forces, which were neutral at the beginning, then finally decided to assist the Qing empire defeating Taiping rebels. Interestingly, later, Mao Zedong, in “[Collected Writings of Chairman Mao — Politics and Tactics](#),” praised Taiping rebels as a grass root revolution against feudal elites.
- ²⁰ The term “unequal treaties” are generally used by Chinese referring to a series of treaties since the Treaty of Nanjing in 1842. They underline some unfair conditions imposed to the Qing empire by the Western countries, such as opening ports, ceding some territories, separate legal system, etc.
- ²¹ Thompson, L. C. 2009. *William Scott Ament and the Boxer Rebellion: Heroism, Hubris, and the "Ideal Missionary"*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland
- ²² It is important to note that Sun Yat-sen, the founder of Chinese Nationalist Party and the father of modern China, had close relationship with Chinese Christian community in Hong Kong and he is a baptised Christian. Chiang Kai-shek, the later head of Chinese Nationalist Party and the first “president” of Taiwan, is also a Christian.
- ²³ Lewis, D. M. & Eerdmans, W.B. 2004. [Christianity Reborn: The Global Expansion of Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century](#).
- ²⁴ The Cardinal Kung Foundation. 1996. [A brief biography of His Eminence Ignatius Cardinal Kung Pin-mei](#). Also, see the letter of Joseph M. Kung, 2002, “[The Persecution of the Catholic Church in China](#),” to the US Congressional-Executive Commission on China, and “[Three Heroic Shepherds of the Roman Catholic Church](#),” by These Last Days Ministries. While those stories depict the case of the Cardinal Kung, they also imply and assert the political tension between the West and/or the US against China government.

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- ²⁵ [Letter of the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI to the Bishops, Priests, Consecrated Persons and Lay Faithful of the Catholic Church in the People's Republic of China, May 27, 2007.](#)
- ²⁶ Valente, Gianni. 2005. [There's something new in Shanghai too.](#)
- ²⁷ AP. 2014. [Pope Francis arrives in South Korea on Historic Visit.](#)
- ²⁸ Also, see Squires, Nick. 2014. [Pope Francis snubs the Dalai Lama at Nobel Peace Prize event](#); Mirsky, Jonathan. 2014. [Pope Francis's China Problem.](#)
- ²⁹ B.C. 2014. [Orthodox Christianity in China: A comb worth fighting for.](#) For Orthodox Church in China, see [Orthodox Fellowship of All Saints of China](#) and [Chinese Orthodox Translation Project.](#)
- ³⁰ Koesel, Karrie. 2012. ["Where Faith Thrives: Russia and China;"](#) Viramontes, Ambroisa. 2011. [The Global Impact of Pentecostalism.](#) Also, the podcast [Karrie Koesel on Religion & Politics in China,](#) 2010.
- ³¹ See, also how foreign missions penetrate to China and confront strong opposition and restriction from the government: No Author, 2007. [Tough Times for Jesus in Xinjiang](#); Sebag, Clarissa. 2013. [Target Tibetans](#); Vanderklippe, Nathan. 2014. [China broadens crackdown on foreign missionaries.](#)
- ³² [China in Brief: Religions and Social Customs.](#)
- ³³ Dong, Liu. 2013. [The Bible business.](#)
- ³⁴ Dong, Liu. 2013. [Prayers from the past.](#)
- ³⁵ [The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life: "Global Christianity: A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Christian Population - Appendix C: Methodology for China"](#)
- ³⁶ Philips, Tom. 2014. [China on course to become 'world's most Christian nation' within 15 years.](#)
- ³⁷ No Author. 2014. [Cracks in the atheist edifice.](#)
- ³⁸ Tse, J.K.H. 2014. [Passive Compliance to Occupy Central: Catholicism, Democracy, Hong Kong](#); Ngo, Jennifer. 2014. [Religion on the Occupy Central front line puts faith into practice.](#)
- ³⁹ Yan, K.L. 2014. [Occupy Central, Umbrella Movement, and Democracy: A Theological Articulation.](#)
- ⁴⁰ The Constitution of the People's Republic of China (PRC) [article 34, 36](#) has stated clearly about it, which assert state authority on religious issues and reject "any foreign domination." Compare also with [the Regulations on Religious Affairs](#) (2004) and [the responsibilities](#) given to the council of State Administration for Religious Affairs.
- ⁴¹ Minter, Adam. 2014. [Xi Jinping's Dreaming of a Red Christmas](#); Chin, Josh & Jie, Yang. 2014. [China Gets Its Claus Out For Christmas](#); No Author. 2014, [Chinese university bans Christmas.](#)
- ⁴² Chan, Minnie. 2015. [China Communist Party magazine blasts professors who spread 'Western values.](#) No Author. 2015. [China says no room for 'western values' in university education.](#)
- ⁴³ Xiong, Ping. 2013. [Freedom of Religion in China Under the Current Legal Framework and Foreign Religious Bodies.](#) Brigham Young University Law Review. Issue 3. Yang, Fenggang. 2013. [A Research Agenda on Religious Freedom in China.](#) The Review of Faith & International Affairs. II(2).
- ⁴⁴ Whilst China claims its own sovereignty over internet policies, it is facing a tremendous challenge to control fully the internet. Compare: Leibold, James. 2011. [Blogging Alone: China, the Internet and the Democratic Illusion?;](#) Wenfang, Tang. 2012. [The Limitation of the Internet in Promoting Democracy in China](#); Xiaoru, Wang. 2010. [Behind the Great Firewall: The Internet and the Democratization in China.](#)
- ⁴⁵ It is also important to compare with the religious restriction done by the government against the Muslim Uyghur. See also another IISA paper, "[China's Religious Policy in Xinjiang: Fuelling Violence?](#)" 2014.
- ⁴⁶ Soong, I. T. 1997. [Sun Yat-sen's Christian Schooling in Hawai'i.](#) *The Hawaiian Journal of History* 31: 151-178.
- ⁴⁷ Kaiman, Jonathan. 2014. [Occupy Central leaders surrender to Hong Kong police.](#)
- ⁴⁸ One of contemporary example, is Dr. Peter Zhao (赵晓), Chairman of the Beijing-based Cypress Leadership Institute, who believed that China and Christianity can [grow together and bring mutual benefits](#) to each other. See also, his opinions in [China Economy Needs Churches, Market Economies with Churches and Market Economies without Churches](#) and his presentation [Christianity and China Transformation.](#)
- ⁴⁹ Also, see [Oxford Consensus](#), a public statement of Chinese public intellectuals, representing Confucian, New Left, Liberal and Christian. This is [the interview with Yang Fenggang](#), a Chinese Christian who was one of the initiators.
- ⁵⁰ Chiu, Joanna. 2015. [Students in China rail against government restrictions](#); Yan. 2014. [China's voice: No need to poop China's Christmas party.](#)
- ⁵¹ Hongyi, Wang. 2014. [China plans establishment of Christian theology.](#)
- ⁵² Huilin, Yang. 2014. [China, Christianity, and the Question of Culture.](#) Baylor University Press.
- ⁵³ Compare with Keck, Zachary. 2014. [Why is China Nationalizing Christianity?](#) The Diplomat.