

The Sinicization of Chinese Religions under Xi Jinping

Richard Madsen

The recent resurgence of many forms of religious belief and practice in China has been met by new forms of repression and control. Basic party and state policy were established in a pair of documents promulgated in the early 1980s. The ideological foundation for the policies was Marxist secularization theory, in which religion will inevitably disappear, but its demise will take a long time and, in the meanwhile, heavy-handed attempts at repression may be counterproductive. The policies include government supervision and management of religious practices through state institutions controlled by the United Front Work Department. New regulations promulgated in 2018 maintain most of the policy instruments of the 1980s, but they have been streamlined to achieve greater efficiency and more effective supervision. The ideological framework is now mainly based on “Sinicization” rather than Marxism. Since Sinicization generally requires adaptation to an idealized version of Han Chinese culture, outsiders to this culture, such as Christians, Tibetan Buddhists, and Muslims, especially Uighurs, are subject to even harsher repression than they were under the former Marxist ideology. Han Chinese Daoism and Mahayana Buddhism are faring somewhat better, although they too are still subject to restrictions by a watchful state.

Since 1979, when Deng Xiaoping’s reforms opened up limited space for religious practice, religions of all sorts have been growing and rapidly evolving throughout China, far exceeding their limited boundaries. This religious renaissance includes not only the revival and re-invention of many traditional forms of Chinese religion, but also the creation and creative adaptation of new forms. Millions of local deity temples have been built or re-built during the past forty years, pilgrims flock to refurbished Buddhist temples and Daoist shrines, numerous forms of Christianity have undergone explosive growth, and many forms of Muslim practice have been revived.

A survey originally published in an officially approved journal by East China Normal University estimates that there are at least 300 million religious believers.¹ But even that number is too low because it attempts to count only believers who are affiliated with some kind of recognized religious association. If we look at the sum total of religious practices, such as praying, burning incense on festival days, hanging image of some deity at home, sweeping tombs of one’s ancestors on the Qing Ming Festival, going on pilgrimages to a sacred site, practicing meditation, or consulting *fengshui* masters, then, according to sociologist Fenggang Yang, about 85 percent of the population can be considered religious to a certain degree. Even about one-half of the self-identified atheists hold some religious beliefs, such as believing in supernatural forces, heaven, hell, or reincarnation.²

This resurgence of religion from below has now met new forms of repression from above. This includes concentration camps (officially called “vocational education centers”) for Muslim Uighurs in Xinjiang and, according to a recent report, also for Buddhist monks and nuns in Tibet.

Less extreme but nonetheless troubling, it also includes demolition of temples and churches throughout the country and the confinement of lawful religious practices to venues strictly controlled by the state. Continuing policies implemented twenty years earlier, it still includes prosecution and imprisonment of members of “New Religious Movements” (aka “evil cults”) such as Falungong and the Church of Almighty God.

The guiding slogan for this new era of repression is “Sinicization.” The idea is that all parts of Chinese culture should “match the needs of China’s development and the great traditional culture and pro-actively fit into the Chinese characteristics of a socialist society.”³ The imperative of Sinicization was formally inserted into the regulation on religion in Xi Jinping’s keynote speech at the Communist Party National Conference on Religious Work in April 2016. (The conference had been planned for several years but postponed several times because of difficulties in setting an agenda.) The key themes in Xi’s speech were, first, the need to carry out a “Sinicization” of all religions and, second, the need to manage religions according to the rule of law and to make such management more effective.⁴ Later, in his 3.5-hour speech at the Nineteenth Party Congress in October 2017, Xi Jinping stressed the need to “uphold the principle that religions in China must be Chinese in orientation, and provide active guidance to religions so that they can adapt themselves to socialist society.”⁵ Although Sinicization appeals to “China’s great traditional culture,” it is not the same as indigenization. All forms of culture, secular and religious, need to “adapt to socialist society.” By this logic, even Confucianism must be Sinicized. The main imperative is to homogenize Chinese culture to make all parts conform to a party-led nationalism and to use the full force of the state to control any dissenting voices. As some ordinary Chinese are saying *Zhongguohua* (Sinicization) really means *tinghua* (obedience).

On February 1, 2018, the State Council officially promulgated new regulations on religion.⁶ Much in the new regulations simply reproduce the substance of the former regulations, but the new regulations specify a stronger level of activism: The state “actively guides religion to fit in with socialist society.”⁷ There is also a new emphasis on national security: “suppressing extremism, resisting infiltration, and fighting crime.”⁸ Reflecting worries about religious support for “separatism” among Buddhist Tibetans and Muslim Uighurs, the regulations condemn “[a]dvocating, supporting, or funding religious extremism, or using religion to harm national security or public safety, undermine ethnic unity, or conduct separatism or terrorist activities.”⁹ To better control all forms of religion, the new regulations specify harsh fines for engaging in “unapproved religious activities” (up to RMB 300,000) and for providing venues for such activities (up to RMB 200,000). Finally, the regulations place strict restrictions on the use of the Internet to disseminate religious materials.

Continuity and change in religious policy

These new developments under the Xi Jinping regime are a response—probably inadequate—to the ambiguities and contradictions in the policies developed four decades earlier by the Deng Xiaoping regime and to the bureaucratic structures that had been established to implement such policies.¹⁰ The basic policies were included in the revised Constitution and Party Central Committee Document 19, both published in 1982 but drafted at the same time that Deng Xiaoping rose to be paramount leader in 1978. The Constitution states that people of China enjoy

freedom of religious belief and that the state protects normal religious activities.¹¹ Document 19, “The Basic Viewpoint and Policy on the Religious Question during our Country’s Socialist Period,” expounds upon the meaning and implementation of the Constitution.¹² It proclaims that “We Communists are atheists and must unremittingly practice atheism,” and religion will eventually die out. But it will probably take a long time to die out and in the meantime any attempt to eliminate religion through coercive means, as was done in the Cultural Revolution, will be counterproductive and “will do no small harm.” It outlines a policy of forming a “united front” with “patriotic religious professionals,” restoring temples and churches and putting them under the control of the State Bureau of Religious Affairs, and reconstituting the “patriotic religious organizations” established in the 1950s to coopt religious leaders and ensure that members of their religions follow the directives of the party and state. The document insists on the need to respect religious customs and ethnic minorities but cautions against “any use of religious fanaticism to divide our people.” It advocates “friendly contacts” with religious persons abroad but warns of the need to “resolutely resist the designs of all reactionary religious forces from abroad who desire to once again gain control over religion in our country.”

From the beginning, this policy framework contained ambiguities that rendered it unable to address the complexity of China’s religious situation. And this complexity has been increasing, which makes the framework even more out of touch with reality today.

The first ambiguity is the term “religion.” The Chinese term itself—*zongjiao*—was coined in the late nineteenth century, on the basis of a term used by the Japanese, which itself was a translation from German that was shaped by Western Protestantism. A “religion” was defined as an organized institution with systematic doctrines overseen by a professional clergy. In this view, there were five religions in China: Daoism, Buddhism, Islam, Catholicism, and Protestantism. (Although its values permeated society, Confucianism did not have organized doctrines or a clergy, so it did not count as a religion.) Beyond these, there was a rich array of communal practices that intellectuals and officials (but not the people who practiced them) called “superstitions.”¹³ The religious freedom in the Constitution pertains to the five official religions, not to “feudal superstitions.” But under the more open economic conditions of the reform era, there has been an efflorescence of such “superstitious practices” — including temples to local gods, pilgrimages, healing practices, prayers of all kind—and it has been challenging to policy makers to determine what to do about them.

Furthermore, the officially recognized religions embrace unofficial practices that flourish outside of those formal hierarchies that can be recognized and controlled by the party and the state. Daoism was never tightly organized and Daoist-inspired healers and fortune tellers are flourishing well outside of the framework of the Patriotic Daoist Association.¹⁴ The same is true for Buddhist meditation and sutra study groups.¹⁵ Among Protestants, before 1949 there were networks of indigenous Christians inspired by charismatic preachers outside of the old missionaries that were dominated the Protestant establishment. Such networks have experienced explosive growth during the past four decades and membership in their unregistered “house churches” has far outstripped the officially recognized Protestants under the supervision of the government-controlled Three Self Protestant Association.¹⁶ Among Catholics, there has been a flourishing “underground Church,” with its own hierarchy operating outside of the government-recognized hierarchy.¹⁷ Are these part of the “religion” included in the Constitution or not? The

answer is not clear. Some of the activities of the folk religions come under the authority of the bureaus of cultural affairs, some of the unregistered Christian groups come under the authority of the public security bureaus, and others are under the purview of the religious affairs authorities.

Finally, there have been “new religious movements,” such as the Falungong, which combine elements of Daoist and Buddhist traditions together with folk religious healing practices and sometimes an apocalyptic worldview. The 1982 framework did not envision how popular these would become in the future. Their rise in the 1990s prompted the government to revive the old imperial term of “heterodox teaching” (*xiejiao*), or in its official English translation, “evil cult.”¹⁸ Some charismatic Christian groups with apocalyptic messages, such as the Church of Almighty God (which claims that the Deity has been incarnated in a woman who now lives in political asylum in Queens, New York) have also been added to the “evil-cult” category.¹⁹ The government has been attacking such groups with an extra-judicial police organization called the “610 organization,” named after its founding date on June 10, 1999 in response to the rise of the Falungong.

Another ambiguous term in the 1982 framework is “normal.” “The state protects normal religious activities.” What the state may see as normal is not necessarily what is seen as normal by religious practitioners. For example, according to the government, normal religious activities are those that are confined to the inside of churches. But many religions have a missionary impulse—they want to reach outside to attract new members. Under some circumstances, the government has tolerated a limited amount of this, but under other circumstances, it may also seek to crack down on it. From the point of view of religious practitioners, the boundaries of “normal” may seem to be in unpredictable, arbitrary flux.

A third ambiguous word is “fanaticism.” Assessment of “fanaticism” depends on the context. Can fasting during Ramadan among Muslims in Xinjiang be considered fanatical? It has been allowed in the past, but more recently it has been prohibited in Xinjiang and its practice can land one in a concentration camp.

Finally, there is ambiguity about “friendly contacts with religious persons abroad.” When does “friendship” turn into unacceptable foreign influence? Can Catholic bishops attend meetings of fellow bishops at the Vatican? Can Muslims go on the haj? Answers to such questions fluctuate over time.

These ambiguities provide unclear guidance for policy makers, who are themselves entrenched in different bureaucracies—religious affairs, cultural affairs, foreign affairs, public security—that have their own vested interests. Moreover, the Marxist ideological premise that is supposed to unite all religious work is fatally flawed. Religion is not inevitably declining. Mao Zedong famously said that the party did not have to attack religion directly because once it had liberated the masses from poverty, the peasants would tear down their idols with their own hands. But today rich peasants are enthusiastically putting up images of deities in many new temples.²⁰ The “religious ecology” of China is evolving in different directions and in different forms. In 2009, well-connected party theoreticians with whom I am acquainted admitted that the Marxist framework for understanding religion no longer worked, but they said the party could not afford to abandon it. Thus, officials were reacting to the evolving religious ecology in ad hoc ways.

Sinicization under Xi Jinping

Xi Jinping has partially replaced the Marxist ideology with his own notion of Sinicization. The term is supposed to bring about ideological coherence. Following on Xi's earlier declaration that the Chinese Communist Party is now a "ruling party" rather than a "revolutionary party," the notion rejects the iconoclastic condemnations of traditional culture that grew out of the May Fourth Movement and were carried forward by Mao. It replaces the idea of Marxist class struggle with an evocation of nationalistic pride in the past glories of Han Chinese civilization. It imagines this civilization selectively and nostalgically in terms of a harmonious society, in which children serve their parents, everyone obeys authority, and individuals are subordinate to the common good, which is now represented by the party. Visual images of this are the ubiquitous posters, in a faux traditional woodblock style, of children serving their parents and their parents serving the grandparents—coupled with posters of Lei Feng, the humble soldier who supposedly said that he just wanted to be "a small screw in the great locomotive of the Revolution." Xi's rhetoric is often sprinkled with words and phrases from Confucius and Mencius and the government's Ministry of Cultural Affairs has sponsored the refurbishing of the huge Confucian temple in Confucius's birthplace of Qufu and supports public rituals on festivals. But Sinicization means that while affirming those parts of Confucianism that promote obedience to authority and projection of Chinese power "all under heaven, the government also monitors and restricts the increasingly popular grassroots development of Confucian worship. Everyone, including members of all religions, should conform to the core values of this Han Chinese vision. Even among the Han, this requires a homogenization of local cultures to conform to the unitary vision of what it means to be Chinese. Adherents of "foreign religions" such as Christianity may need extra guidance. Ethnic minorities such as Tibetans and Uighurs may require even more effort.

Policies implementing the Sinicization imperative were in full force by 2018. In March 2018, the head of the Islamic Association of China declared that "Chinese Islam must adhere to official Sinicization policy by conforming to cultural norms."²¹ Concurrently, domes and religious motifs were removed from mosques, and Arabic script was removed not only from mosques but also from restaurants serving halal food. Minors under the age of eighteen were banned from entering mosques to study, and there was also a ban on using loudspeakers for the call to prayer. Clerics had to register their residential addresses as well as other personal information. Several months earlier, a Hui Chinese was sentenced to two years in prison for organizing a discussion group on Muslim worship on the popular messaging app WeChat. All forms of unauthorized travel abroad for religious education or pilgrimage (like the haj) are forbidden. And hundreds of thousands of Uighur Muslims in Xinjiang have been sent to "vocational education centers."²² Meanwhile, Tibetans are worried that the new regulations will stifle most expressions of Tibetan identity. Concentration camps like those in Xinjiang have recently also been established for monks and nuns in Tibet.²³

Christians worried that the new regulations would smother all forms of "house churches" or "underground churches." The number of unregistered church buildings that were demolished increased. Even on officially approved buildings, crosses and other prominent religious symbols

were removed. Minors under the age of eighteen were barred from attending church services and young people were not allowed to receive any religious education. (The restriction on minors was especially problematic for Catholics because of Catholicism's practice of infant baptism.) Government officials sometimes guarded the doors of churches to bar entry of minors and sometimes entered the churches to remove any minors who were inside. Not only all clergy but also all members of any religious congregations were supposed to be officially registered.²⁴

By the spring of 2018, under the auspices of their official patriotic associations, Catholic and Protestant leaders were drawing up five-year plans for Sinicization. This involved adopting Church architecture and painting and sacred music more in keeping with Chinese culture and traditions, at least as defined by the Chinese government. Even theology was supposed to be Sinicized. There are "plans to dig deeper into the contents of the Bible to find content compatible with the core values of socialism; to organize a working team to write a secular and understandable version of the Bible; to use socialist values as the main preaching principles for the next stage of theological development; and to organize teaching and exchange programs about socialism in theological seminaries and schools." Furthermore, the Protestant catechism will be revised.²⁵

For Buddhists, Sinicization involves incorporating the study of Chinese classical literature into the monastic curriculum and ensuring that the architectural renovation of temples conforms to the classical Chinese style. For Daoists it might mean a "pure" form of temple worship that eliminates Buddhist images from syncretistic temples.

But this covers only churches and temples officially registered under the corresponding "patriotic associations." There are other groups arising from their respective religious traditions that operate outside the official framework. Uncontrolled by the state, some of these are undergoing an organic cultural evolution, drawing upon indigenous cosmologies of ghosts and gods and following traditional customs of faith healing and divination. This Sinicization from below does not meet with approval from the architects of the official Sinicization from above. Following the principles of Sinicization, there will probably be ongoing efforts to incorporate such "wild" groups into officially approved organizations and to repress those that refuse to accept this.

Management of religion under Xi

In addition to emphasizing the need for Sinicization, Xi Jinping's speech to the 2016 conference on religious work stressed the need for effective management of religions according to the rule of law. In this articulation, in keeping with China's classical Legalist tradition, the law is not a set of universal rules that constrain even the ruler but a set of instruments used by the ruler to maintain power. Xi is seeking to make such instruments more efficient and more effective. This involves, first of all, streamlining the various agencies that control religion. In spring 2018, the State Administration of Religious Affairs was absorbed into the Communist Party's United Front Work Department, presumably to ensure tighter party control over religious work. (Many of its staff still work in their old offices but its former leadership has now moved into the headquarters of the United Front Department.) In a similar move, the 610 organization charged with eliminating "evil cults" has recently been moved into the building of the Ministry of Public

Security, although some of its agents still work out of their old offices. The new push for effective management also involves measures to combat corruption, to make the lower levels follow the directives from the center, and to make all levels follow clearly defined bureaucratic procedures.

Insofar as it reduces uncertainty, the renewed emphasis on rule of law can be helpful to some religious organizations. For example, it has led to a convergence of interests with the Vatican and has facilitated arrival at a “provisional agreement” for Vatican-Chinese cooperation regarding the appointment of bishops. Since the early 2000s the Vatican has quietly gathered information about potential candidates for bishop through an emissary in Hong Kong and has carried out informal negotiations with local officials to reach mutually satisfactory agreements regarding the appointing of new bishops. But each side would like more regular procedures: the Vatican more control by canon law and the Chinese by Chinese law. An agreement reached in September 2018 helps achieve this, although it probably cedes the balance of power to China. The agreement is supposed to be provisional, with the hope that mutual trust built through continuing negotiations will lead to mutually satisfactory outcomes and to a unification of the “official” and “underground” parts of the Church.²⁶ Recently, however, the Vatican has expressed disappointment with the way in which Chinese authorities are using the agreement.²⁷

Indeed, the new administrative measures have resulted in a weakening rather than a strengthening of religious communities. Nonetheless, state control over religion is not, and probably can never be, complete. There have been variations across provinces about the extent of the removal of religious symbols and the demolition of churches and mosques. In some places, local congregations have reached accommodations with local officials about preserving religious artifacts (a good way is to define them as part of the “cultural heritage”) and they have found ways to quietly provide religious instruction, even to youth under the age of eighteen. Local religious leaders can take advantage of the fact that officials are busy with numerous tasks and would rather not disrupt local religious practices as long as they do not upset public order. Even non-registered groups can find ways to be tolerated by distracted local officials. One ploy is to set up a “cultural affairs center,” or a “company,” that is not under the purview of the religious affairs agencies. Some temples function as “museums,” even though they carry out a full array of worship activities. Furthermore, there is still the possibility of bribing local officials.

Nonetheless, these efforts to achieve religious tolerance leave practitioners insecure. Things can change suddenly. For one example, the Early Rain house church in Chengdu was openly flourishing when it was described by journalist Ian Johnson in his 2018 book, *The Souls of Modern China*, but in December 2018 it was closed down and its pastor and leading congregants were arrested.²⁸

Conclusion

Overall, the story of religious policy under the Xi Jinping regime is one of increasing control and repression. The Marxist ideology that underlay the policy framework of the Deng Xiaoping era has largely been replaced by the nationalist ideology of Sinicization. Mao Zedong’s version of

the Marxist idea of class struggle, which led to so much suffering during the Maoist era, has now been replaced by an ideology of ethno-religious struggle. The suffering continues, but with new victims. Because Sinicization basically requires adaptation to an idealized version of Han Chinese culture, outsiders to this culture, such as Christians, Tibetan Buddhists, and Muslims, and especially Uighurs, are subject to even harsher repression than they were under the former Marxist ideology. Han Chinese Daoism and Mahayana Buddhism fare somewhat better, although they too are still subject to restrictions by a watchful state.

As for religious policy among the Han, the new goal of Sinicization still relies on the earlier instruments developed during the Deng Xiaoping era: the party's United Front Work Department, various state agencies for public security and religious affairs, and "patriotic associations" to oversee the various recognized religions. Although there has been a streamlining of this apparatus, there are enough cracks in the system that many religious believers can still find ways to evade some of its controls. A more fundamental problem with these instruments—originally developed by Stalin to control the hierarchical Orthodox Church²⁹— is that they focus on controlling the leaders of clearly organized religious institutions, whereas most religious life in China is communal, diffused throughout the social institutions of ordinary life. Control over the leaders does not necessarily lead to control over the practicing masses. Thus, a complex religious ecology continues to evolve, producing an irrepressible diversity that the homogenizing project of Sinicization is failing to contain.



Richard Madsen received an M.A. in Asian studies and a Ph.D. in sociology from Harvard. He is a distinguished Professor of Sociology the University of California, San Diego and was a co-director of a Ford Foundation project to help revive the academic discipline of sociology in China. Professor Madsen is the author, or co-author of twelve books on Chinese culture, American culture, and international relations. His best known works on American culture are those written with Robert Bellah, William Sullivan, Ann Swidler, and Steven Tipton: *Habits of the Heart* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1995) and *The Good Society* (New York, Knopf, 1991). *Habits of the Heart* won the LA Times Book Award and was jury nominated for the Pulitzer Prize.

-
- ¹ Tong Shijun and Liu Zhongyu, as reported in the *China Daily* (February 7, 2007).
- ² Fenggang Yang et al., “Spiritual Life Study of Chinese Residents.” Project carried out by the Horizon Research Company, 2007). See also Fenggang Yang, *Atlas of Religion in China: Social and Geographical Contexts* (Leiden : Brill, 2018).
- ³ Xi Jinping, Keynote speech to United Front Work Conference on Religious Work, April 23-24, 2016. Xinhua News Agency.
- ⁴ Li Yuan, “At the Congress, Xi Reaffirms: Sinicization of Religions under the Communist Party,” AsiaNews.it. October 19, 2017.
- ⁵ Xinhua News Agency, Xi Jinping Speech to 19th National Party Congress, November 3, 2017.
- ⁶ Religious Affairs Regulations, 2017, Article 4. Translation by China Law Translate (www.chinalawtranslate.com).
- ⁷ Ibid., Article 4.
- ⁸ Ibid., Article 4.
- ⁹ Ibid., Article 63.
- ¹⁰ An expanded version of the next two sections will be published in Stephan Feuchtwang, ed., *Handbook of Religion in China* (London: Edward Elgar, 2020).
- ¹¹ PRC Constitution (1982) (Beijing: Publishing House of Law, 1986).
- ¹² Translated by Janice Wickeri, in Donald E. MacInnis, *Religion in China Today: Policy and Practice* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989), pp. 8–26.
- ¹³ Mayfair Mei-hui Yang, ed., *Chinese Religiosities: Afflictions of Modernity and State Formation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).
- ¹⁴ David A. Palmer and Vincent Goossaert, *The Religious Question in Modern China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).
- ¹⁵ Ian Johnson, *The Souls of Modern China: The Return of Religion after Mao* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2017).
- ¹⁶ Lian Xi, *Redeemed by Fire: The Rise of Popular Christianity in Modern China* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010).
- ¹⁷ Richard Madsen, *China’s Catholics: Tragedy and Hope in an Emerging Civil Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).
- ¹⁸ David A. Palmer, *Qigong Fever: Body, Science, and Utopia in China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 219–277.
- ¹⁹ Center for the Study of New Religions (Turin, Italy), “The Church of Almighty God.”
- ²⁰ Mao Zedong, “Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan” (March 1927) (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965).
- ²¹ UCAN News.com, March 27, 2018.
- ²² “Chinese Officials Remove Islamic Domes and Motifs”, UCAN (Union of Catholic Asian News), March 27, 2018.
- ²³ International Campaign for Tibet, “New Phase of Expulsion at Important Buddhist Institute Leads to Rounding Up of Monks and Nuns for ‘Re-education,’” July 15, 2019.
- ²⁴ “Parts of China’s Henan Enforce Registration for all Faiths,” UCAN, April 13, 2018; “Catholics in China’s Henan Warned Not to Cross ‘Red Line,’” UCAN, April 18, 2018; “Sinicization of China Church: The Plan in Full,” UCAN, July 31, 2018.
- ²⁵ “Chinese-State Protestants Plan ‘Socialist’ Christianity,” UCAN, April 16, 2018.

²⁶ Richard Madsen, “The Chinese Catholic Church: Between Rome and Beijing and Sinicization from Above and Below,” *Review of Religion and Chinese Society* 6 (2019), 5–22.

²⁷ Agenzia Fides, “Pastoral Guidelines of the Holy See Concerning Civil Registration of Clergy in China,” June 28, 2019. The Vatican says that bishops and priests in the “underground” should follow their conscience in deciding whether or not to register with the Catholic Patriotic Association. It asks that “no intimidatory pressures be applied to the ‘non-official’ Catholic communities, as, unfortunately, has already happened.”

²⁸ Johnson, *The Souls of Modern China*, 52–67; “100 Christians snatched in overnight raids on underground Chinese Church,” *South China Morning Post*, December 10, 2018.

²⁹ Richard Madsen, “Religion under Communism,” in S.A. Smith, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Communism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 585–601.