

Religion and Modernization in China

by Arnold Sprenger

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I. Introduction

To do justice to this topic in a short paper is next to impossible. Only a few aspects can be addressed here. It should be remembered that the following deliberations are strongly colored by my own experiences and impressions; they should be taken and valued as such.

I will refrain from defining the concepts "religion" and "modernization" in China. They will unfold in the course of our deliberations. Instead, I prefer to quote statements and/or concerns of some Chinese authorities or friends representative of certain sectors of society. These statements will highlight some of the problems and concerns that the discussion of our topic will bring into focus.

Let us consider, first of all, the statements of the "paramount" leader Deng Xiaoping, echoed by the Party leadership, insisting to the last that economic reforms can be completely divorced from the immensely complex social and cultural effects these reforms bring in their train and that China can join the modern world entirely on its own terms, sacrificing nothing of its prevailing ideological purity.¹

This optimism voiced by the most powerful man in present-day China is not at all shared by friends of mine, working as researchers and in think tanks at the Academy of Social Sciences and at top universities in the country. They are deeply disturbed by the continuous erosion of cultural phenomena such as traditional ethics and the formerly commonly accepted value system.



They notice with dismay a growing superficiality in and indifference to matters of cultural, social, and national concern. They are appalled by the glaring divorce of science and technology from their cultural and intellectual backgrounds. They criticize the present educational system which neither provides for a solid introduction into China's national history nor offers an adequate understanding of Western cultural phenomena.

In this chorus of critical intellectuals you may discern voices that ask questions and raise issues never heard and discussed before in Chinese intellectual circles. One of the leading professors in the Institute of World Religions (Academy of Social Sciences) seems to have come to the conclusion that Christianity is one of the few religions - if not the only one - that is not in conflict with modern science.

A promising young scholar, by now well known in many academic circles all over China, has published the results of his comparative studies of the cultural histories of China and the West. He suggests that the root of China's present problems may be found in the lack of a universal and absolute principle ("absolute" God). Chinese humanism is based on principles grounded in human knowledge only. Lack of the concept and non-acceptance of an absolute, rational God has prevented the Chinese from establishing an adequate democratic system, from developing modern science, from drawing up an objective legal system which gives justice to all, from rationalizing business transactions and from appreciating and endorsing human rights.²

In this context it makes sense to speak about a certain (religious?) awakening in China. A Chinese professor of one of the top universities in Beijing discusses the Bible in the context of Western cultural history. Hundreds of students attend his lectures. His own published version of Bible stories sold 900,000 copies in a short time.

A member of the Institute of Philosophy of the Academy of Social Sciences, who had just returned from a short visit to Münster in Germany, confided to me in a recent private conversation: "What China needs most urgently now is religion."

II. Modernization and Socialism

What strikes the foreigner as bizarre in China is the all-

embracing presence and power of the Party in the "People's" Republic. Every working unit - in government circles, in the military, on different educational and academic levels, in the media, in factories, in the countryside - has its local party secretary. No matter whether he is competent or not, no important decisions can be made without him. The people are little more than puppets in the Party's schemes.

The public media (press, radio, television) must tread the party-line. Their task is to convince the Chinese and the international community that the four modernizations in China are well underway. Socialism with its "Chinese characteristics" will soon outshine and outdo the capitalistic world if only productivity is boosted in the country. "In the final analysis, to triumph over capitalism, socialism will have to create productivity surpassing that of capitalism".³ Modernization based on Marx, Engels, Lenin and Mao Zedong will make use of Western science and technology to achieve its social and cultural goals.

The media have to refrain from all critical assessments and comments. "In China, the press prints what the local party secretary tells it to print. Good news is fit to print and bad news is banned."⁴ Deng Xiaoping's principle "to seek the truth from the facts" is not taken very seriously in reporting. "Bad" facts are often simply not reported. If they have to be dealt with, they are manipulated in such a way that the sting is taken out. An example of distorted news is the official figure of the 1991 flood victims released by the Ministry of Civil Affairs. Officially, there were 2,295 deaths by the end of August.⁵ But visitors (Chinese and foreign) to the flooded area report that more than 60,000 deaths have been counted in the province of Anhui alone. Reporters were not given access to the flood-stricken area. How are the Chinese, and how is the world to learn the truth from the facts? How is modernization in China to be achieved if facts are blurred or manipulated?

There have been marked economical improvements in China during the last forty years, at least in certain sections of the country. However, I am inclined to believe, that these are mainly due to the implementation of liberal economic policies and/or the genius of the Chinese people rather than to socialistic policies. During the last forty years, China has been haunted repeatedly by revolutions and counter-revolutions, by Party and government infighting, by persecution or denigration of the

intellectuals,⁶ by the hunting down of "anti-revolutionary" elements, by waves of nation-wide indoctrination, and by periods of enormous blood-letting.⁷ It was the ideals and the interests of the Party that were at stake during these unruly decades rather than the well-being and the interests of the people.

No concept has been developed for a sound approach to modernization in China. The policies of Party and Government are marked by arguments concerning the "correct" socialistic approach to China's modernization. The result is a zigzag course which does not project any vision for the future.

The much heralded open door policy, started by Deng Xiaoping during the late seventies, is a "yes-no-process." Private business and the "responsibility system" were slogans up to the late eighties. Private business has not completely disappeared, but little is heard these days of the responsibility system. Without such a system the Party feels more secure, power and control are easier to maintain. A powerful propaganda machine compensates for the lack of independent and responsible work in the different sectors of society. Lethargy and apathy continue to characterize the work of the average citizen.

All citizens of working age are assigned a working unit where they belong with their family, normally for the rest of their lives. It is very difficult to move to another unit, even if one's own unit is not challenging, or does not fit one's educational background or one's interests. Students are assigned jobs upon completion of their studies. Often they are sent to places where they cannot put to use what they have learned. For a few years before June 1989 students were allowed and even encouraged to look for job possibilities themselves. After 1989 this practice was abolished.

Add to all these phenomena a judiciary system in which the Party functions ultimately as legislator and interpreter of the Law. Human rights are alien to such a system. Nepotism and corruption - especially in party circles - reign supreme.⁸ Is this genuine modernization? The answer to this question is given by millions of Chinese - young and old - whose only desire is to go abroad to escape from what they consider a prison camp.

The educational system in China deserves special mention. Great efforts have been made in the past decades to build up a modern educational system. The period since 1978 has seen

substantial growth (in terms of the number of schools and academic institutions) in the fields of higher and vocational education. The 120 research organs of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the 35 institutes of the Chinese Academy of Social Science play a leading role in the many educational and academic efforts.⁹

But the present educational system is beset by problems, and many of them are staggering. There is an alarming shortage of financial resources and educationally trained manpower, especially for the 80% of the population still living in the underdeveloped countryside. Besides financial problems there is also an indifference to education that proves fatal to the process of modernization as the following quotation suggests:

Indifference to education will provoke disastrous consequences, much more serious than that of overpopulation... The State Compulsory Education Law stipulates that every child is to receive nine years of education. Yet only 60% of the children attending primary schools can finish their six-year course ... Some 70% of the teachers are unqualified for their jobs, while 300 to 400 million illiterates are scattered in this country, the newspaper *Worker's Daily* reported ... Limited as they are, funds for education also have been misappropriated quite often by local officials, to build their offices or buy expensive cars ... The pay of intellectuals also is inadequate. It is far too common these days for a professor to earn less than a vendor or a bartender, and even less than in the 1950s despite the price increases in all these years ... The crux of all these problems, according to quite a few in the NPC and CPPCC sessions, is the government's ignorance and indifference towards the significance of education.¹⁰

Higher education in China has for decades been plagued by internal structural imbalances, especially between the liberal arts, the social sciences, the natural sciences and the engineering faculties. The aforementioned zigzag syndrome has been at work here too, sometimes with disastrous results. During the Cultural Revolution certain liberal arts subjects (philosophy, history) and the social sciences (sociology, law, political science) disappeared completely from the official curricula. Since 1989 all the freshmen of the most prestigious universities must spend time in military training.¹¹

It is not only internal structural imbalances that have troubled the educational system; education also suffers from outdated methods, programme designs, course books and teaching materials. Some courses in philosophy, economics, law and

other social sciences still follow rules, definitions and references developed in the 1950s, despite great changes in the country and the world. Courses in Chinese literature often repeat what is taught in primary and secondary schools.¹² The philosophy departments are sometimes termed the dullest and most unattractive departments in Chinese universities. Philosophical research is hampered by ossification and state control. The term "academic freedom" hardly applies to the work of the philosopher. Philosophical studies are, as a rule, detached from research in the natural sciences.¹³

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Since only 5% of China's secondary school graduates can be admitted to the country's colleges and universities, competition is fierce. Passing the college entrance examinations has become the students' main objective.¹⁴ In many schools the teaching programmes and curricula center on the subjects which will be tested in the college entrance examinations. Many students live under constant pressure. The rising number of dropouts endangers the country's educational policies. Many teachers who cannot bear the strain of work or who cannot cope any longer with the depressing situation turn to other professions.¹⁵

The problems referred to in the previous paragraph point to the many hardships and miseries individual students and teachers are exposed to in the current economic and political climate. The social scientist, Yu Wujin, discusses the topic of the relationship between the whole of Chinese society and the individual. He criticizes the traditional as well as the present inclination to attach importance to the establishment at the expense of the individual. A peculiar feature of traditional Chinese culture and Chinese humanism is for him the unconditional subjection of the individual to the class, to social institutions, and above all, to the state. Only outstanding figures have personalities, the 'masses' do not count.¹⁶

What is at stake here are the concept of the human being and, ultimately, moral issues. It is in this context that religions, especially Christianity, have become attractive in recent years.

III. Religion and Modernization

1. Chinese Cultural History and Religion

J.J.M. de Groot speaks of the three religions in China (Taoism, Confucianism, Buddhism) in terms of three branches, growing from a common stem, which has existed from prehistoric times. This stem is the religion of the Universe (univer-sism), for de Groot the one and true religion of China. Taoism is the oldest and was for many ages the most influential of these branches. However, in the Han period Confucianism became pre-eminent (state orthodoxy) sapping and destroying the vitality of Buddhism and preventing Taoism from growing into a religion of paramount importance.¹⁷

In this religious system gods of nature are revered; but demons and many other evil spirits threaten human beings. However, the Chinese do not recognize a god beyond the cosmos. A Creator-God is alien to their religion. Creation is simply the yearly renovation of nature. Ancestor worship has always played an important role. Belief in gods, demons and other evil spirits and the practice of ancestor-worship must be considered the pillars in the religious-ethical life of the Chinese.

Religion in China is a family affair rather than a dogmatic system. None of the Chinese religions has developed a creed. The religiosity of the family is primary, that of the individual secondary. This family-religion is embedded in Chinese society and culture resulting in the worldview of the Chinese. In this worldview you do not strictly distinguish between religious, philosophical and other cultural elements.¹⁸

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Of uttermost importance was the establishment of the Confucian state orthodoxy during the time of the Han dynasty. The Confucian state-cult was formulated and termed the "Great Tradition." This state religion was henceforth considered the true Chinese religion. It was based on the Confucian classics, it had incorporated a very elaborate code of ancestor-worship; its

cornerstone was the sacrifices to the gods of Heaven and Earth offered regularly by the Emperor in the name of the entire nation. It was this state religion that kept China united through so many centuries. But it was also the same state orthodoxy that - according to de Groot - led to imperial absolutism and made Chinese universism a very dogmatic religious system which persecuted all adherents of "false" doctrines.¹⁹

With the challenges of modernization in mind the following critical remarks may bring certain unresolved problems into focus:

- Chinese religions (except the state orthodoxy) never had the strength to play a major role in society and challenge the state doctrine. The latter made the Emperor "Imperator" and "Pontifex Maximus" at the same time. Politics and religion were never separated, i.e. religion was always dependent on the judgements and decisions of the Emperor, his mandarins and the literati.

- Modern science is not in agreement with many phenomena of traditional naturalism.

- Ancestor-worship has been weakened through dramatic changes in the structure of the Chinese family.

- Communist religious policy has dealt a severe blow to a belief in gods and to the effectiveness of religion in general.

- Since the end of the last dynasty (1911) the system of the state-cult has completely disappeared on the Mainland.²⁰

We may now take a critical look at Chinese religion(s) in general and point out elements that are not conducive to modernization:

- No philosophy of religion has ever been developed. The official interpretation of religion, religious rites and rituals and the right to distinguish between religion and superstition was left to those in power (the Emperor, the mandarins, the literati, the Communist Party, etc.). The present religious scene on the mainland reflects this phenomenon.

- The religious system (universism) was based on yearly cycles.²¹ Man could never escape his fate. The concepts of "progress" and "history" in our modern sense did not exist in China. The sage kings of the remote past were the models for all social and cultural endeavors.

- Man as part of the Universe failed to project a rational (reflective) distance to this universe. The concept of creation of the cosmos through a rational creator remained alien to the Chinese worldview.²² A rational objective (universal) law system could never be established. Although China is known for her extraordinary scientific and technological achievements in

the past, she never discovered and formulated any scientific law in the modern sense.²³

-No attempt has ever been made to separate politics and religion. The question of freedom of religion and other items of human rights were of no, or little concern to those in power. This phenomenon seems to be behind the Communist hierarchy's rejection of the Western concept of human rights.

-Chinese religious orthodoxy was built on the Confucian classics. But since knowledge of the classics could only be acquired by the highly educated scholars, the masses lacked a deeper understanding of this official religion and turned to folk religions and superstitions.

-State orthodoxy controlled the educational system in China; it also saw to it that history was interpreted and written in the "correct" way; it effectively blocked attempts to project and present alternative worldviews. Enlightenment in the Western sense was made impossible.²⁴

2. Religion and the Socialistic System

Since this topic has been dealt with in many publications in recent years, I will highlight only a few points. Freedom of religion is sanctioned by the communist government, but the meaning of freedom and of religion is defined by the Party. As long as the various religions remain in conformity with government and party directives, they are allowed to function. The main task of religion is to work for the construction of a socialist society. Anything that goes beyond that goal is to be eliminated.

Freedom of religion as we understand it in the West does not exist at all in present-day China²⁵ Since 1949 all religions have been fighting for their survival. Up to this very moment, believers are severely discriminated against in all sectors of society. At the end of the Cultural Revolution it was assumed that all religions, especially the Christian denominations, had effectively been wiped out. Freedom of religion was again proclaimed, but it came as a shock to the Party to see enormous numbers of religious believers emerge from the "underground." The government immediately re-instituted the "Patriotic Associations" in order to keep a check on the different religions. Underground activities were outlawed as "counter-revolutionary." Since 1989 an enormous drive has been launched to destroy the underground Churches (Catholic and

Protestant). But the more the Party and Government endeavor to curb religious activities or to destroy certain sectors of the Churches, the more defiant believers become.

-Since religious believers in China are still fighting for their survival, little effort has been spent on theological reflection. Some attempts to cope theologically with the new situation were made in the fifties, but these were suspended during the Cultural Revolution.²⁶ Also, little reflection has been done on how to respond to the challenges of the Socialist system. At a time when socialism is rejected worldwide and the socialist regime is out of favour in China, little is being done to seek a dialogue with the masters of the present orthodoxy.

- No noticeable trends have been observed regarding ecumenism on the mainland, The individual religions have enough problems of their own. Furthermore, communication on a wider level is extremely difficult in China. Most importantly, Party and Government are not at all interested in such an enterprise. They will stick to their old tactics: divide and conquer !

3. The Catholics and Modernization

Chinese Catholics are, generally speaking, faithful and honest citizens of their country. They work as responsibly for the goals of modernization as do other citizens. They have proved their worth during times of crises, especially during the Cultural Revolution when through their strong faith they were of help to many other people.

The Catholics on the mainland are today accepted and often highly respected by their compatriots. The Catholic religion is one of the five religions (Taoism, Buddhism, Islam, Catholic and Protestant Christianity) recognized officially by the Government. The enforced separation of the Catholic Church from Rome has enhanced her status in the eyes of some non-Christians, but, unfortunately, this has also led to strong divisions within the Catholic family.

The Catholics on the mainland deserve the highest praise for their faithfulness to Christ during the last forty years. They have brought the Catholic Church closer to the Chinese people. The laity have in many instances grown to full stature. The communal life and the religious services have made a remarkable impression on many non-Catholic Chinese. The special dislike

of the Party for the Catholic Church has made her better known in China and has aroused the interest of many non-Christians in this particular religion.

Yet the Catholics are plagued by numerous problems. Although their number has grown to at least twice the number of 1949,²⁷ they remain a small community in a vast population. Government restrictions abound for members of the open Churches. Religious activities can only be carried out in government-approved churches, and even there, activities are controlled and often censured. Masses in the open churches are mostly said in Latin; they are not greatly directed toward evangelization. Evangelization on a larger scale takes place in certain areas of the countryside where government control is less rigidly enforced.

Catholic education is almost non-existent. There are hardly any religious courses for the young. Most of the Catholic parents I know do not feel they can adequately teach the faith to their children when the latter hear nothing but anti-religious slogans in school. Furthermore, practically no religious literature is available in China, neither theological, biblical nor devotional books nor literature on topics such as religion and socialism, religion and modernization, faith and science, etc.

The problem of the clergy has also to be addressed. Most of the priests are in their sixties and older. They work admirably, but they preach and evangelize in terminology that is pre-Vatican Council II. The relatively few young priests and seminarians are being trained in a more up-to-date theology, but some of them (especially in the underground) possess little more than rudimentary philosophical and theological knowledge. Young seminarians with college degrees are scarce.

Life for Catholics can be very hard. Most of them have to work on Sundays; Mass attendance demands special sacrifices. In many instances mixed marriages become a heavy burden, especially if either husband or wife is a party member. The enforced "one-child policy" calls for hard decisions, so do the widespread phenomena of divorce and abortion.

In conclusion it may be said that many Catholics have lived heroic lives, and that they have preserved their faith in most difficult circumstances. But it has also to be pointed out that the beleaguered Church has not yet risen to a height from where it can deeply influence Chinese society and make substantial con-

tributions to modernization in China. Many non-Catholic students and other young intellectuals are attracted by the Catholic Church. They attend Mass in open churches (they have no access to underground Masses) and often leave the churches disappointed: neither the Latin Mass nor the sermon appeals to them. The Catholic Church in China is not ready yet to enter into a fruitful dialogue with the many inquisitive young people in a fast changing society.

IV. "What China Needs Most Urgently Now is Religion"

The Catholic and Protestant Churches have paved the way for a new understanding of Christianity in China. But it seems that there are other powers at work in that country that even more effectively draw large sectors of Chinese society into the orbit of Christian thinking and experience.

The socialist experiment in China has failed. The Cultural Revolution and finally the events of June 4, 1989, have made it sufficiently clear to the Chinese concerned about the future of their country that socialism and communism are outdated, that the phrase "Socialism with Chinese characteristics" is a combination of isms that makes modernization little more than wishful thinking. Socialism is on its way out all over the world. "Chinese characteristics" (state orthodoxy) has prevented genuine modernization from getting a foothold in China.²⁸

For many intellectuals the problem of modernization has turned into an agonizing question about China's identity in the modern world: "Why is it that the West is able to cope with problems of modernization and move ahead rapidly whereas we Chinese seem incapable of getting off to a reasonable start? What is it in our cultural fabric that blocks modern thinking, and what may be the missing elements needed for a positive approach to modernization?"²⁹

During the May Fourth Movement of 1919, Mr. Science and Mr. Democracy were hailed as China's saviors. They were regarded as the pillars of modernization. Under the influence of 19th century thinking in the West, religion was considered outdated and a relic of the Middle Ages. By now, Mr. Science and Mr. Democracy have reached the respectable age of seven-

ty. What are their achievements?

As the dust of socialist and atheist slogans has started to settle all over the world, many Chinese intellectuals are discovering that religion has been an enormous spiritual and intellectual force in the Christian West, a force that was crucial to the many movements leading to modernization.³⁰ They are beginning to understand that even modern science and democracy are closely linked to a religious belief in a rational God, the Creator of the Universe and the absolute Lord of all humankind and of history.

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During a recent conversation with a young lecturer in the most prestigious school for young party members in Beijing I was asked the question: "Why is religion so important to the history of modernization in the West?" The young man answered the question himself by saying: "I have begun to read the Bible." Recently, I attended an international meeting in Beijing on "Confucianism and Christianity." I was surprised to see a truly genuine interest in Christian belief and values on the part of famous Chinese professors.

There seems to be a spiritual awakening on the mainland leading to a new understanding and a genuine appreciation of religion. Christianity attracts the great majority of those interested in religion. Topics often researched and discussed in the light of Christian revelation and teaching are among others: the concepts of God and human beings; human dignity and human rights; Christianity and anthropology; Christianity and modern ethics; Christian faith and science; Christianity and the concept of history; Christian hope and orientation towards the future; Christianity and universality (universal love, universal law); Christianity and ultimate concerns; Christianity and the revival of Chinese culture;³¹ Christianity and politics; Christianity and modern ideologies.

All the above topics contain important elements of the

phenomenon that today we call "modernization." Many concerned Chinese have come to realize that religion, notably Christian (revealed) religion, has the power to set Mr. Science and Mr. Democracy in motion, to overcome Chinese state orthodoxy and to initiate a Chinese cultural renaissance that could become an effective instrument in the process of modernization. Reflecting on all the problems and issues discussed in this paper, one cannot but agree with the statement made by one of the aforementioned professors: "What China needs most urgently now is religion."

Endnotes

1. See Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1990), 746.
2. The scholar's name is Liu Xiaofeng. I have tried to summarize some of his main ideas in the article *Liu Xiaofengs neue Vision für China*, in *China heute* IX (no.6, 1990) 157-171. An English version of the paper appeared under *A New Vision of China: The Case of Liu Xiao Feng* in: *Inter-Religio* 19 (summer, 1991) 2-20. A Chinese version may be found in: *Zhonghua da dao* 24 (spring, 1990) 44-51.
3. See *Jiang on Interpreting Socialism*, in: *China Daily*, June 18, 1991, 4. According to Ai Da Cheng the Chinese communists are only interested in unleashing the power of production. There is no concern about the freedom of the people. The latter remain slaves of state capitalism and absolute despotism. See his *What Is Wrong with the Chinese Revolution?*, in: *Zheng Ming* 165 (July, 1991) 42.
4. See Kevin Sinclair, *Leaders Can Ignore the Power of the Press at Their Peril*, in: *South China Morning Post*, July 8, 1991, 19.
5. See *Ministry Puts Final Flooding Toll at 2,295*, in: *The Hong Kong Standard*, August 22, 1991, 7.
6. At the height of the Cultural Revolution, intellectuals were so exposed to harassment and terror that many committed suicide. According to reliable sources, seven professors from one department of a prestigious university in Beijing terminated their lives within one week. A recent statistic speaks about seventeen political campaigns during the years 1950-1989. Eleven were mainly directed against the intellectuals, in five additional campaigns the intellectuals were attacked together with other groups in society. See Ku Ren, *The History of Forty Years of Blood and Tears Must Not Be Falsified*, in *Zheng Ming* 166 (August, 1991), 88-91.
7. According to Ku Ren's estimates, 30-40 million Chinese (5% of the entire population) became the victims of communist atrocities and fatal misjudgements. *Ibid.*, 89f. It should be noted, however, that other estimates speak of much higher numbers.
8. In his aforementioned speech Jiang Zemin devoted some time to the phenomenon of corruption among party members. He used the standard phrase "a small number," but he then continued to warn: "We can by no means overlook this because it will damage the Party's prestige and destroy the relationship with the masses." See *Jiang on Interpreting Socialism*, 4. Corruption within the party was one of the major complaints that led to the student demonstrations in the spring of 1989.

9. For a comprehensive survey of the educational system see *Encyclopedia of New China* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1987).
10. Li Xing and Gao Anming, *Education Vows Are Not Fulfilled*, in: *China Daily* April 21, 1988. 4. Before June 1989, discussions of educational problems in the media had become refreshingly open and critical. But now the situation is back to "normal", i.e. to absolutely controlled and heavily censored reporting.
11. The academic year 1991-1992 should have started for all colleges and university students in Beijing on September 1. But only a week before resumption of classwork it became known that the authorities had postponed the beginning of actual classwork at certain universities and colleges by at least 2-3 weeks. The official explanation of this policy decision was that the students (male and female) needed extra military training. The "unofficial" version said that in the wake of the momentous political and social changes in the Soviet Union Party and Government they want to forestall unrest on Beijing's campuses.
12. See Li Xing, *Liberal Arts Courses Are Adapting to Changes*, in: *China Daily*, February 9, 1988, 5.
13. See *Academics Decry 'Dull' Philosophy* in: *China Daily*, February, 24, 1988, 4.
14. See Suzanne Pepper, *China's Universities. Post-Mao Enrollment Policies and Their Impact on the Structure of Secondary Education. A Report* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan, 1984), 4.
15. See *Secondary Schools Face Dilemma*, in: *China Daily*, June 21, 1988, 4.
16. *Culture Caught in Throes of Change*, in: *China Daily*, August 30, 1988, 4.
17. *Religion in China* (New York, 1912), 3ff.
18. See Roman Malek, *Chinesische Religiosität*, in: Fränz König, Hans Waldenfels, eds. *Lexikon der Religionen* (Freiburg: Verlag Herder, 1987), 562-565.
19. *Religion in China*, 119.
20. See Roman Malek, op. cit. 564.
21. See J.J. M. de Groot, *Religion in China*, 216.
22. It is this phenomenon that Liu Xiaofeng deploras as the basic defect in China's cultural history. He expounds this idea in great detail in his *Zheng jiu gen xiao yao - Salvation and Leisure* (Shanghai: People's Publishing Company, 1988), 540 pp.
23. The historian and philosopher of science Stanley L. Jaki supports this statement when he states with reference to Needham's Science and Civilization in China: "Needham, in spite of his avowed Marxism, gave prominent place among causes that prevent the escape of science from its blind alley in ancient China to a theological cause, namely, the early vanishing among the Chinese of a belief in a rational Law giver or Creator of the world. Lacking that belief, the Chinese could not bring themselves to believe that man was able to trace out at least some of the laws of the physical universe." *The Road of Science and the Ways of God* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 14.
24. J.J.M. de Groot puts it this way: "...Unter dieser festen und strengen universistischen Führung hat die universistische Wissenschaft ihre Entwicklung genommen, ohne je den Boden ihrer erstarrten Grundformen zu verlassen. Sie hat also alle Zeit den chinesischen Geist in ihre Fesseln gelegt, ohne dass einne Wissenschaft in unserem Sinne neben ihr keimen, atmen oder leben konnte; durch ihre unzähligen Schrifsten und Bücher schmiedete sie sogar immer wieder neue Fesseln um den Geist des chinesischen Volkes." See his *Universismus. Die Grundlage der Religion und Ethik, des Staatswesens und der Wissenschafts Chinas* (Berlin, 1918),

- 362,
25. In a letter to Hong Kong, the anonymous leader of a Protestant house-church in Beijing complained bitterly about the brutal break-up of a religious service by a group of rude policemen. See his *Where is freedom of religion?* in: *Zhonngguo yu jiao hui - China and the Church*, 84 (July-August, 1991) 14.
 26. Philip L. Wickeri speaks about a "theological reorientation in the 1950s." But this did not amount to an "inauguration of a new theology" (248f). What he observes is a "theological fermentation at the grass roots" (258ff), a new understanding of the relationship between "Christians and the world" (261ff) and "Christians and Non-Christians" (266ff). See his *Seeking the Common Ground. Protestant Christianity, the Three Self-Movement, and China's United Front* (New York: Orbis Books, 1988).
 27. For some detailed information see *Christentumfieber in der VR China?*, in: *China heute IX* (no. 6, 1990) 147f.
 28. After the collapse of socialism in Eastern Europe and most recently in the Soviet Union the statements made here will hardly be considered an exaggeration.
 29. Rolf Trauzettel suggests that Confucian orthodoxy never developed any state-doctrine which would have called for the dichotomy of state and society. Instead Confucians came up with the utopia of a "Grand Society" (*da tong*) to establish order in the empire and the world and to save the people (*jing shi*), For Trauzettel this idea reflects an idealistic impotence because it is neither embedded in a philosophy of history nor in a religion. Confucian thinking was and still is characterized by the absolute primacy of consensus instead of dialogical communication. Confucians practiced instruction. But they hardly ever discussed the problem of who had the right to instruct and to correct and why. See Trauzettel's *Zum Problem der Universalisierbarkeit des Konfuzianismus*, in: Silke Krieger, Rolf Trauzettel, eds. *Konfuzianismus und die Modernisierung Chinas* (Mainz: v. Hase & Köhler, 1990), 64f.
 30. Renewed interest in the Middle Ages by Western scholars is exemplified by Thomas Nipperday's informative article *Die Aktualität des Mittelalters. Über die historischen Grundlagen der Modernität*, in his *Nachdenken über die deutsche Geschichte* (München: Verlag H. Beck, 1986), 21-30.
 31. One of the first Chinese scholars to be deeply interested in this topic was John C.H. Wu. Some of his truly enlightening essays can be found in Paul K.T. Sih, ed. *Chinese Humanism and Christian Spirituality* (Jamaica, N.Y.: St. John's University Press, 1965), 201 pp.
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