



Edited by Cheng-tian Kuo

# Religion and Nationalism in Chinese Societies

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# Religion and Society in Asia

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*Edited by Cheng-tian Kuo*

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# Notes on Chinese Names, Terms, and Transliteration

This book adopts Chinese pin-yin transliteration. In most of the text, an English translation is provided first, followed by either Chinese pin-yin transliteration or (traditional) Chinese characters, or by both, when the Chinese characters first occur.

Some well-known Chinese names and places or those related to Taiwan and Hong Kong may use other spelling systems to accommodate local dialects; for instance, Sun Yatsen, Taipei, and Taiwanese authors of this book. In most cases, Chinese characters are provided after the transliteration.

All Chinese names retain the Chinese order of family name first, followed by the given name.

Chinese names and places use normal font; Chinese terms are italicized.

Standard academic transliteration is used for religious jargon of Islam and Tibetan Buddhism.



## Preface

(Jesus) got up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and it became perfectly calm. The men were amazed, and said, "What kind of a man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

*Matthew 8:26-27; New American Standard Bible*

Dense smog and cloud constantly hovered over Beijing all year long. But on 3 September 2015, the seventieth anniversary of the establishment of the People's Liberation Army, a 'military-parade blue sky' (*yuebinglan* 閱兵藍) was all over Beijing. Even though it lasted for only one day, the whole world was amazed: What kind of a State is this, that even the winds and the smog obey Her?

*Cheng-tian Kuo*

The above comparison illustrates a new pattern of religion-state relations called religious nationalism in China and its impact on those in China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. It is no longer the state versus religion, but hybrid mixtures of religion and nationalism in these three Chinese societies.

On a hot summer day in June 2015, I received a mysterious long-distance phone call from the Chinese government in Beijing. The official asked me whether I would be available to attend a conference in early September. I thought the conference would be the long-overdue National Religious Conference which had been held once every ten years. So I immediately said OK. Then, the officials whispered a sentence to conclude our short communication: "There will be a military parade!" I cheerfully replied: "That's great! I have never been invited to a military parade before." But why would the Chinese government hold a military parade in September, not on 1 October – National Independence Day – like they had always done? I wondered. It must be because of the National Religious Conference for which I have been invited, I naively thought. In the following two months, I did not receive any concrete confirmation about this secretive invitation until one week before my scheduled flight. One official solemnly gave me very detailed instructions about the security measures I should follow once I arrived in Beijing, because 'the entire city will be under martial rule.'

I arrived in Beijing three days earlier so that I could do some interviews with my academic friends and give a talk at the State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA). On the day of my arrival, the sky was packed with dense smog as usual, but the street traffic was unusually light due to the

martial rule. All the shops were closed, including the beverage vending machines in the massive subway system. Governmental officials received last-minute orders to strictly limit their use of official cars during the week and to promptly leave town in the early afternoon of 2 September; otherwise, they would have to stay one long night in their office. My talk at the SARA was first postponed, then, canceled at the last minute. The entire central government in Beijing was almost shut down and ordered to do nothing else except to accommodate the military parade.

At five o'clock in the morning on 3 September, some other guests and I went through the waterproof security checks at the secluded hotel, boarded the designated buses to the parade platform, and waited for other distinguished guests to arrive. The sky began to reveal a golden light and crystal blue with only a few traces of white cloud. Everyone in the audience started to praise the blue sky as if they had the luck to see the aurora of the North Pole. Not for long, though. The next morning when I opened the curtains at my hotel, the sky was packed with dense smog and acid drizzle again; so was the next day and the next. On my airplane back to Taipei, I jotted down the verses from Matthew above and applied them to the 'miracle' of the military-parade blue. After all, the military parade was not just a secular ceremony but also a sacred religious ritual for the Chinese Communist Party-State in search of political-religious legitimacy. It is a religious ritual of the state religion, which I call 'Chinese Patriotism'.

This book discusses the origin, development, content, and implications of religion-state relations in contemporary Chinese societies, i.e. mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. On the one hand, state policies toward religions in these societies are deciphered and their implications for religious freedom are evaluated. On the other hand, Chinese Buddhism, Tibetan Buddhism, Daoism, Christianity, Islam, and folk religions are respectively analyzed in terms of their theological, organizational, and political responses to the nationalist modernity projects of these states. What is new in this book on religion and nationalism in Chinese societies is that the Chinese state has strengthened its control over religion to an unprecedented level. In particular, the Chinese state has almost completed its construction of a state religion called Chinese Patriotism. But at the same time, what is also new is the emergence of democratic civil religions in these Chinese societies, which directly challenge the Chinese state religion and may significantly transform their religion-state relations for better or for worse.

This book could not have been published without the compassionate support of the following persons and institutions, to whom I express my

most sincere appreciation. The International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) and the Ministry of Education of the Republic of China in Taiwan jointly sponsored a Taiwanese Chair of Chinese Studies program, which enabled me to convene the conference on New Religious Nationalism in Chinese on 21-22 April 2016 in Leiden, the Netherlands. Most of the chapters in this book are revised versions of these conference papers. Deputy Director Willem Vogelsang and staff members (in particular, Martina van den Haak and Sandra van der Horst) of the IIAS provided the most cozy and efficient working environment. The Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange and the National Chengchi University provided additional funding to the conference to bring in more Taiwanese scholars than the previous Taiwanese Chair programs. It also generously funded the production of this book. Research assistants Huang Yuchia, Chang Chenghao and Huang Iwei added extraordinary warmth and comfort to the conference, like the tulip blossom in the Netherlands. Huang Iwei, Song Chunli, and Chen Li painstakingly corrected all the style problems in these book chapters. At Amsterdam University Press, Dr. Stefania Travagnin of the University of Groningen, Commissioning Editor Saskia Gieling, and copy-editor Roger Nelson patiently guided us through the laborious editing and publication process. Finally, on behalf of all the authors of this book, I express my most sincere gratitude to the two anonymous reviewers who provided very helpful and detailed comments on each chapter of this book.

# 1 Introduction

## Religion, State, and Religious Nationalism in Chinese Societies

*Cheng-tian Kuo*

### Abstract

Originating in the common responses to threats of modernity in the beginning of the twentieth century, three models of religion-state relations have respectively taken shape in China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, and each has important implications for both internal stability and external relations. In China, a totalitarian state religion of Chinese patriotism has been under construction and has almost fully established itself. In Taiwan, the initiation and consolidation of democracy after 1987 has contributed to the rise of a civil religion shared by many religions that provides for healthy checks-and-balances between the state and religion. In Hong Kong, there has been increasing confrontation between the totalitarian Chinese patriotism and a fragile civil religion.

**Keywords:** China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, religion, nationalism

### Three models of religion-state relations in Chinese societies

Since modernity started threatening the Chinese nation at the beginning of the twentieth century, three models of religion-state relations have taken shape in China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, and each has had important implications for both internal stability and external relations. The 'Rise of China' has been fanatically propelled by a state religion called 'Chinese patriotism'.<sup>1</sup> An 'imagined community' of 'China' serves as the supreme God to be worshipped by all Chinese.<sup>2</sup> The core catechism of this state religion is a political Trinity: patriotism, socialism, and the rule by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). All other religions should be submissive to this state religion and integrate the Trinitarian political theology into their respective theologies. Freedom of religion, although in incremental

1 For the debate on the 'peaceful' rise of China, see Guo (2006).

2 Anderson (1991).

progress, remains confined within the glass ceiling of Chinese patriotism and is meticulously restricted to pre-approved clergy, time, and place.

In Taiwan, checks-and-balances between the state and religion have largely replaced the state's dominance over religion. Taiwanese religious groups probably enjoy more freedom and autonomy than their counterparts in Western democracies.<sup>3</sup> They also regularly exercise significant influence over state policies and in democratic elections. The Taiwanese state maintains effective legal instruments to curtail illegal activities of fanatic religious groups, at the same time promoting normal religious activities without 'excessive entanglement' or 'discrimination'.<sup>4</sup> In turn, most religious groups have gradually adapted to democracy by integrating democratic values into their theologies and organizational structures. They begin to endorse a 'civil religion' which is not closely linked to either Chinese patriotism or Taiwanese nationalism.<sup>5</sup> Harmony and cooperation, rather than conflict, characterize the relationships between not only the state and religion but also among religious groups in Taiwan.

By contrast, religion-state relations in Hong Kong are moving precariously between the Chinese model and the Taiwanese model. Emanating from the Christian community, a fragile civil religion is under construction by Christian leaders, intellectuals, independent mass media, and democratic parties. They also organize various democratic movements to challenge the Hong Kong government and the Chinese state. In response to these challenges to Chinese patriotism, the Chinese state and Hong Kong government have rapidly tightened their leash on Hong Kong's Christian community and civil religion.

Inherited from the common responses to the threats of modernity, why have China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong developed such different models of religion-state relations? What has happened during the past one hundred years that may have caused these differences? And what are the practical and normative implications for religion-state relations, political stability, and external relations of these Chinese societies?

Before proceeding to the next section and to other chapters of this book, let me define the core concepts used in this book: religion, the state, nationalism, and religious nationalism. A common definition of 'religion',

3 U.S. State Department, Religious Freedom Report (Taiwan), annual issues.

4 Since *Lemon vs Kurtzman* (1971), these two criteria have been considered by the U.S. Supreme Court in cases related to violation of the principle of separation of state and religion.

5 'Civil religion' refers to citizens' strong commitment to democratic values and institutions, not necessarily linked to particular religions. The term was coined by French philosopher Jacques Rousseau but was made popular by Bellah (1967).

especially for Chinese religions, is the one offered by C.K. Yang, who put most Chinese religions into a continuum between ‘institutional religion’ and ‘diffused religion’. An institutional religion is ‘a system of religious life having (1) an independent theology or cosmic interpretation of the universe and human events; (2) an independent form of worship consisting of symbols (gods, spirits, and their images) and rituals; and (3) an independent organization of personnel to facilitate the interpretation of theological views and to pursue cultic worship’. Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism as practiced by the Chinese dynasties, temples, and shrines fall into this category. A ‘diffused religion’ is ‘a religion having its theology, cults, and personnel so intimately diffused into one or more secular social institutions that they become a part of the concept, rituals, and structure of the latter, thus having no significant independent existence’. Various folk religions (including folk Confucianism, folk Buddhism, and folk Daoism) fall into this category.<sup>6</sup> Yang’s definition of religion is largely applicable to most Chinese religions but may encounter problems when some folk religions (e.g. Yiguandao discussed in Chapter 8 of this book) become institutionalized in response to modernity. Nevertheless, Yang’s definition appropriately directs our attention to the cores of any religion, namely, theology, ritual, and clergy, no matter how institutionalized or diffused they are.

The ‘state’ (sometimes, ‘government’) in the Chinese context refers not only to traditional dynasties or kingdoms before 1911 but also to the modern states of the Republic of China (ROC) and the People’s Republic of China (PRC), although this definition is not intended to imply China’s unification or Taiwan’s independence. The Hong Kong government (not a modern state) was a colonial government of the United Kingdom before 1997, and a local government of the PRC since then. The core of a traditional Chinese state is the emperor and his/her royal family. A bureaucracy (including the military) is established to serve the interests of the royal family. The territory and subjects are regarded as the properties of the emperor, and are frequently subject to expansion or contraction because of war with other kingdoms. A modern state is defined by political scientists as a political entity consisting of a fixed territory, a people (including different ethnic groups) living within the territory, a government governing the territory and the people, and the sovereignty of the government to govern its territory and the people without the permission of other states.

Adapted from the definitions provided by scholars of nationalism, a ‘nation’ (*minzu* 民族 or *guozu* 國族) is defined as ‘an imagined political

6 Yang (1961, pp. 294-295).

community' bounded together by 'imagined' common history, people of ethnic ties, culture, religion, language, government, sovereignty, and territory.<sup>7</sup> A nation is imagined because it does not necessarily meet, nor exclude, scientific evidence or international laws. Nationalism is thus an ideology that combines and elaborates these imaginations. Again, nationalist imaginations are different in kinds and degrees across temporal and spatial contexts. Furthermore, according to the above definition, the concept of nationalism is applicable to the nationalism of traditional kingdoms before the eighteenth century, whose people and territory frequently changed ownerships and definitions, as well as to the modern nationalism that originated in the early eighteenth century, which has distinctive components of people's sovereignty and fixed territory.

As noted above, there are two Chinese translations of 'nation': *minzu* 民族 or *guozu* 國族. In Chinese politics, academics, and mass media, *minzu* has been the favorite term since it was invented more than one hundred years ago by Liang Qichao 梁啟超 to refer to the newly imagined 'Chinese nation' (*zhonghua minzu*; see Chapter 2 of this book for the origins of the Chinese nation). But Liang and most Chinese also use *minzu* to refer to the fifty-six ethnic groups, which together constitute the one and only Chinese nation. To differentiate a nation from an ethnic group, a growing number of the Chinese elite, including CCP Secretary General Xi Jinping, have employed *guozu* to refer to the Chinese nation and *minzu* to refer to any one of the fifty-six ethnic groups.<sup>8</sup>

The combined term of religious nationalism refers to the interpenetration, overlapping, or syncretism of religion and nationalism. It consists of two subcategories: a nationalism that incorporates existing religious elements or develops a new state cult in nationalist ideologies, state bureaucracies, public education systems, and national holidays; and a religion that incorporates nationalist imaginations in its theology, ritual, and religious organization. The former can be labeled as religious nationalism; the latter, nationalist religion. There are different kinds and degrees of religious nationalism as well as nationalist religion across temporal and spatial contexts. Unless specified, the concepts of 'religious nationalism' and 'nationalist religion' are used interchangeably in this book in order to emphasize the mutual influence between religion and nationalism in both traditional and modern

7 Anderson (1983, pp. 6-7); Gellner (1983, pp. 5-7); Hastings (1997, pp. 3-4); Hobsbawm (1992, pp. 5-13).

8 Kuo (2014, pp.10-13); Xi Jinping inaugural address (17 March 2013), <http://lianghui.people.com.cn/2013npc/n/2013/0317/c357183-20816399.html>.

China, as compared to the one-sided dominance of the state over religion described by the modernity approach discussed below.

Rogers Brubaker calls our attention to religious nationalism in the development and studies of state-religion relations. Most of the studies on state-religion relations belong to one of three types: those that treat religion and nationalism as analogous phenomena, those that use religion to explain nationalism, and those that treat religion as part of nationalism and analyze their interpenetration and intertwining. The emerging religious nationalisms in Algeria, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, Northern Ireland, Palestine, Pakistan, Turkey, and the United States, however, are different according to Brubaker. It is 'a distinctively religious type of nationalist program that represents a distinctive alternative to secular nationalism'. In religious nationalism, religion 'provides a distinctive way – or a distinctive family of ways – of joining state, territoriality, and culture'.<sup>9</sup> Brubaker's definition covers the first subcategory of religious nationalism used in this book but does not refer to the second subcategory of religious nationalism (i.e. nationalist religion). While consistent with Brubaker's insights on religious nationalism, most chapters of this book keep a balance between these two subcategories.

## **Two theoretical approaches: Modernity and revisionism**

Since John Locke started promoting the thesis of separation of state and religion four hundred years ago, the modernity approach has been the dominant explanation and prescription for religion-state relations in the world.<sup>10</sup> It postulates that the state should be free from the interference of religion in secular matters so that the state and society may mobilize their resources and talents more effectively to build up a modern nation-state. During the Enlightenment, Immanuel Kant further degraded religion as something irrational and harmful to modernity; religion was better confined to the private sphere of families and religious compounds. Emile Durkheim similarly treated religion as superstition harmful to modernity and would finally be replaced by the development of rationality-based science.<sup>11</sup>

9 Brubaker (2015, pp. 102, 113-14).

10 Locke (1685/1955).

11 Kant (1999); Durkheim (1995).



The modernity approach deeply influences how major historians (re-) interpret the rise of nationalism in Western countries. Since modern state-building is regarded as scientific and religion is viewed as anti-scientific, the two cannot be compatible. Religion is treated either as anti-state-building or is totally absent from analyses. Instead, the modernity scholars prefer to focus their analysis on the factors of industrial revolution, military technology, printing, and rational bureaucracy, which allegedly contributed to modern state-building.<sup>12</sup>

Applying the modernity approach to religion-state relations in modern China, Chinese intellectuals and politicians around 1900 promoted various modernity programs to reform or to eliminate religions in order to build up a powerful Chinese state. Most folk religions in the countryside or religions of the ethnic minorities were regarded as superstitious and needed to be replaced by modern schools teaching science. This modernity program is almost as 'colonizing' and 'missionizing' as the Western powers, as Julia C. Schneider in this volume argues. Large institutional Buddhism and Daoism underwent reforms following the model of Western Christianity. Neo-Confucians made great efforts to 'reimagine' Confucianism as a secular and rational philosophy compatible with modernity programs. However, none of these religious reforms would appease Chinese atheists who aimed to eliminate all religions, including Christianity, which allegedly came to China under the aegis of Western imperialism. As the following sections demonstrate, the modernity approach continues to influence the academic analysis and religious policies in contemporary Chinese societies.<sup>13</sup>

In retrospect, the modernity approach is only partially correct in terms of empirical evidence and normative implications. Recent scholarship on religion-state relations argue that the traditional Chinese state was a 'religious state' (or 'religio-political state'), the Chinese society was a 'religious society', and the state sponsored a 'state religion' of Confucianism.<sup>14</sup> Even when the Chinese state (e.g. the powerful Ming Dynasty) tried to control

12 Anderson (1991); Gellner (1983); Hobsbawm (1992).

13 Wang (1977); MacInnis (1989). Ashiwa and Wank's book (2009) applies Talal Asad's secularization thesis to modern Chinese religion-state relations and is another exemplar of the modernity approach. Mayfair Yang's book (2008) tries to distance itself from the modernization theory by emphasizing the modernity's discursive process between the modern Chinese state and religions. Although its major arguments are closer to the revisionist school, I would still put Yang's book in the modernity school because it underestimates the mutual influence (albeit asymmetrical) of state and religion in both traditional and modern China.

14 These 'revisionist' works include: Chau (2011); Goossaert and Palmer (2011); Lagerwey (2010); Dean (2009); Platt (2007); Yang (1961); Yang (2012); Yu (2005).

religion, its efforts were short-lived and ineffective. In Chinese history, various religions permeated Chinese politics from the basic political/religious unit of family up to the imperial court. Religious freedom and tolerance were largely maintained in the dynastic government and in society. Furthermore, the authority and legitimacy of centralized Chinese dynasties were buttressed by various major religions. Chinese religions also provided political justification for the mobilization of rebellions against weak and corrupt dynasties. Therefore, religion is not necessarily anti-state-building but may become complementary to state building, which became the core of the modernity program in the Republican era. In this volume, Adam Yuet Chau describes how, in the early Republican era, the Chinese literati tried to incorporate 'religion in the nation' and 'the nation in religion'. In fact, a nationalist program based purely on secular appeals may soon run out of steam, as Robert D. Weatherley and Qiang Zhang's chapter in this volume demonstrates.

The normative and empirical validity of the revisionist approach gets a boost from the recent and fast developments in neurotheology, an interdisciplinary study of religious behaviors. Although still in its infancy of academic development, neurotheology has generated a vast amount of scientific evidence to support the theses that 'rationality is a slave to emotion' (an argument first proposed by David Hume), that religious/spiritual thinking is part of human nature (just as rationality and emotion are), and that 'religious (god) brain' (or 'religious circuits' in the brain) may enhance or constrain human rationality and emotion.<sup>15</sup> This religious brain consists of various circuits connecting different functional parts of the brain to generate religious feelings, theological thinking, and images of transcendental gods. The thalamus receives incoming religious signals from sensory organs (eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and skin) and forwards these signals to different parts of the brain for response. The amygdala sends out quick emotional responses of anger, aggression, fear, and sexual desire to religious signals. The septum reinforces or regulates religious anger, fear, and pleasure generated by the amygdala. The hippocampus compares and learns new religious signals based on memory. The frontal lobe conducts rational thinking on religious signals and produces theological or moral arguments. The anterior cingulate generates a sense of peace, loving, and compassion associated with religion. And the parietal lobe enables humans to construct spatial and temporal dimensions of religion as well as of other

15 Barrett (2011); Fingelkurts and Fingelkurts (2009, pp. 293-326). Jeeves (2013); Newberg and Waldman (2009); Ramachandran and Blakeslee (1998).

transcendental ideologies, aliens, and mystical powers. It strengthens and prioritizes the thinking circuits related to these concepts as guiding principles to emotional and rational behaviors. Thus, humans get feelings of holiness and unity with supernatural powers when these concepts are stimulated by external signals.

Thus, neurotheology challenges the very foundation of the modernity approach, its zealous faith in rationality, and its empirical and normative controversies. For instance, the fundamentalism research project led by Martin Marty regards the rise of religious-political fundamentalisms around the world in the 1980s as temporary irrational responses to modernity that would be withered away by modernity.<sup>16</sup> But if rationality, emotion, and religious thinking are all interrelated and interdependent parts of human nature, then, the explanation and normative goals of any modernity program should be revamped, to include all these facets of human nature. If religion is a cause of the 'clash of civilizations', it should also be a part of the solution.<sup>17</sup>

Neurotheology puts emphasis on individuals' religious behaviors. But individuals live in institutional settings and are molded by the institutions, such as family, clan, school, work place, and most important of all, religion and the state. Thus, in addition to neurotheology, empirical and normative claims of the revisionist approach get another boost from theories of institutions.<sup>18</sup> The symbiosis of the state and religion is ubiquitous in human history.<sup>19</sup> Anthropologists have traced the importance of religion to political leadership in primitive societies. The evolution of human societies from primitive tribes, ethnic groups, kingdoms to dynasties was accompanied and supported by the development of various religions. The rise of Western nation-states since the early eighteenth century, which was the core of the modernity program, also witnessed the symbiosis of the state and religion. No modern state was established without the support of a dominant domestic religion or without creating a new state religion for its own sake. For example, the Church of England independently created the religious/national identity of England; French nationalism claimed its origin in Joan of Arc's divine calling to fight against the English; the United States established the first democratic state because most Americans

16 Marty and Appleby (1995).

17 Huntington (1996).

18 Classical works on institutionalism include North (1990), Powell and DiMaggio (1991); March and Olsen (1979). Ashiwa and Wank's book (2009, pp. 6-12) applies this institutionalism to the analysis of state-religion relations in China.

19 Cook (2005); Davis (2005); Diamond (1999).

believed it to be the ‘New Heaven and New Earth’ on earth; the Protestant-turned-Eastern-Orthodox Catherine II transformed Russia into a modern state with the blessings of the Eastern Orthodox Church, and the Meiji reform installed the State Shinto for the very purpose of social and political modernization.<sup>20</sup> Even the atheist communist regimes in Eastern Europe transformed Marxism into a state religion in order to consolidate their legitimacy and to facilitate modernity programs.<sup>21</sup> Since the 1980s, the ‘Third Wave of democracy’ has contributed not only to the establishment of democracies but also ‘religious nationalisms’ in developing countries, which rebelled against secular nationalism and its modernity programs.<sup>22</sup> Finally, Robert Bellah points out the rise of a ‘civil religion’ in Western democracies, despite the general decline of Christian religiosity in these democracies. Citizens develop strong emotional commitment to democratic institutions and values through education, mass media, public museums, laws, and national holidays. According to Yang’s definition of religion discussed before, civil religion can be regarded as a ‘diffused religion’ merged into the political system, society, and institutional or diffused religion. Strengthened by theories of neurotheology and institutionalism, this chapter (and most chapters of this book) take various revisionist perspectives to reassess the interpenetration and interdependence of the state and religion in modern Chinese societies.

## A revisionist interpretation of religion-state relations in modern China

Based on the neuro-institutional assumptions, a revisionist interpretation of the emergence of modern ‘China’ can be traced to one hundred and thirty years ago when modern nationalism was first introduced to China, or to traditional Chinese dynasties. The Chinese modernists would argue the impetus to the rise of Chinese nationalism and nation-state probably should not be traced back to any time earlier than 1900. A simple reason is that modern nationalism and the nation-state emerged in Western Europe only in the early eighteenth century and were not introduced in China until the late nineteenth century. But before then, as Chishen Chang says in this volume, there were already various dynasties (*chaodai* 朝代) and

20 Tocqueville (1969); Hardacre (1989); Hastings (1997); O’Brien (1999).

21 Crossman (1949); Gentile (2001).

22 Juergensmeyer (1993).

different interpretations of China (*zhongguo* 中國), mostly of Han ethnic rulers governing flexible amounts of territories and subjects in East Asia. On the one hand, these dynastic governments were religious states in the sense that they maintained their legitimacy by mixing secular governance with various institutional religions: Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. On the other hand, local elites and the people regularly mixed their religious rituals and values into their secular lives, and constituted a diffused religious society. The Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), ruled by the Manchu ethnic group, was the last religious dynasty before the modern Chinese state (the Republic of China) was established in 1911.

Chinese intellectuals and political leaders began to 'imagine' a political community called 'China' only in the late nineteenth century when the Qing Dynasty failed to stop the repetitive invasions by other modern states. The incompetent Qing Dynasty signed a series of unequal treaties with other modern states, and surrendered a significant part of its territory or sovereignty to them (Great Britain in 1840, 1858, and 1886; France in 1858, and 1884; Russia in 1858, and 1864; and Japan in 1872 and 1895). Together, these treaties shattered the traditional sacred image of the Chinese dynasty being the 'central territory' (*zhongtu* 中土) or 'all-under-heaven' (*tianxia* 天下).

Emulating the Japanese State Shinto modernity program, neo-Confucian reformers of the Qing Dynasty responded to external threats by promoting a State Confucianism in order to modernize the whole nation around a god-like emperor.<sup>23</sup> Bart Dessein's chapter in this volume provides a detailed analysis of this State Confucianism as a state religion. At the same time, it aimed to reform, if not eliminate, folk religions that deviated from State Confucianism and were deemed as 'evil cults' (*yinci* 淫祠).<sup>24</sup> But this modernity program, called the Wuxu Reform (*wuxu bianfa* 戊戌變法, 1898, also called 'Hundred Days' Reform'), flew in the face of the ambitions of Empress Dowager Cixi 慈禧 who was the de facto supreme ruler of the dynasty but did not fit into the patriarchal neo-Confucianism. She found an alternative source of political and religious legitimacy in the traditional folk religion of White Lotus (*bailian jiao* 白蓮教) which worshipped the Mother of No Birth (*wusheng laomu* 無生老母) as the omnipotent creator of the universe. The Queen Mother staged a palace coup, terminated the neo-Confucian reform, and instructed the White Lotus to exorcize all foreign 'demons' out of the 'central territory'. The White Lotus led the Boxer Rebellion (*quanluan* 拳亂) against the foreign demons from 1898 to 1900. In 1900, a military alliance

23 Kuo (2008); Yang (2008, pp. 65-84).

24 Goossaert and Palmer (2011, pp. 27-50).

of eight nations (Great Britain, the United States, France, Russia, Prussia, Austria, and Japan) swiftly crushed the Boxer Rebellion and threw the Qing Dynasty into anarchy. Dr. Sun Yatsen 孫逸仙 took advantage of the anarchy and led a Han-ethnic revolution to establish the Republic of China in 1911.

But the Republic of China was actually a republic of convenience made possible by the anarchy and a truce among different religions and political forces. The very concepts and legitimacy of both the Republic and China were unfamiliar to most Chinese people and were contested among political leaders and intellectuals. The neo-Confucians' repeated attempts to establish State Confucianism came to a halt in 1916, because all other religions and the atheists opposed it. Since Sun Yatsen was a Christian, along with a high percentage of Christian presence in the Republican government, all other religions and the atheists were suspicious of a Christian Republic on the rise. Buddhism and Daoism had decentralized structures in traditional China and were too weak to challenge the rising modern state. White Lotus' claim to integrate Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism in one religion only served to discredit their scientific nature of modernity. Furthermore, most Tibetan Buddhists and Xinjiang Muslims did not want to be part of the Republic or the Chinese nation due to their distinctive religious traditions of theocracy and distinctive ethnicity. In this volume, Antonio Terrone traces various ways in which Tibetan Buddhists resisted China's nationalist modernity program.

The political and religious anarchy in the early Republican era contributed to the rise of a new state religion, called 'Chinese nationalism'. China became the new god above all other gods (Buddha, Confucius, Laozi, Jehovah, Allah, Mother of No Birth, and others). The Chinese state officials and intellectuals became the greatest prophets and priests among all religious clergy, although they were free to take on other religious identities. All other religions were supposed to serve this supreme god and obey the new political revelations of its prophets and priests. Following neo-Confucian Liang Qichao's creative definition, the 'Chinese nation' (*zhonghua minzu* 中華民族) now included not only the ethnic Han people, but also the Manchu, Mongolian, Muslim, and Tibetan.<sup>25</sup> All of them were given, voluntarily or otherwise, membership to this new state religion overnight. The holy national land became the fixed territory inherited from the Qing Dynasty, including Taiwan which was ceded to Japan in 1895.

The catechism of Chinese nationalism was based on a creative hermeneutics of the separation of state and religion. Around 1900 when the

25 Liang (1936).

phrase ‘separation of state and religion’ was first introduced to China, it was translated into *zhengjiao fenli* 政教分離, rather than *zhengjiao fenli* 政教分立, by most Chinese intellectuals and politicians and has been the most popular translation since. The former translation connotes that the state and religion are segregated entities and have no interaction between them while the latter accurately captures the authentic meaning of the American separation of church and state. Even worse, influenced by the French law of *laïcité* (‘secularization’) passed in 1905, Chinese political leaders and intellectuals used the former translation to justify the state’s arbitrary intervention in internal affairs of religion while forbidding religion from intervening in the state. The separation of state and religion thus became a one-way separation.<sup>26</sup> Hence, the modern Chinese state was fully justified by this political catechism to intervene in all religions while forbidding religion to intervene in politics.

The first component of the religious modernization program promoted by the KMT government was to turn temples and shrines into schools of modern education. Christian churches were left out because they were protected by unequal treaties with Western states. Besides, Christian organizations brought in their own modern education systems complementary to the modernity program. The second component of the modernity program was to organize traditional religions into hierarchical national religious associations so that the state could promote other modernity programs through them. However, some political leaders and intellectuals inserted a third component in the modernity program, that is, to eliminate all religions but Chinese nationalism. After all, all religions are exclusive to some extent against other religions. If the god of Chinese nationalism is the supreme and true god, what is the use of all other minor or false gods?<sup>27</sup>

Christian General Jiang Jieshi 蔣介石 (or Chiang Kaishek) defeated Chinese warlords and unified China in 1928. By mixing neo-Confucianism and Christianity in the modernity program, he ushered in the Golden Ten Years of rapid economic growth and social transformation under the guidance of an authoritarian Chinese state, which was legitimized by Chinese nationalism.<sup>28</sup> Unfortunately, Japan’s invasion in China from 1937 to 1945 cut short Jiang’s modernity program. After World War II, the civil war between the Nationalist Party (*Kuomintang* 國民黨; KMT) government and the CCP

26 Kuo (2016).

27 On religion-state relations in the Republican era, see Goossaert and Palmer (2011, pp. 50-63); Duara (2008, pp. 43-64).

28 Goossaert and Palmer (2011, pp. 69-79).

from 1945 to 1949 could be interpreted as a contest for orthodoxy within the Chinese nationalism. Mao Zedong 毛澤東 won the contest, and Jiang Jieshi's views became political heresy. From then on, three different models of religion-state relations developed in China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong.

In China, religion-state relations went through three periods of transformation.<sup>29</sup> The first period, from 1945 to 1957, saw the gradual withdrawal of the United Fronts strategy by which the CCP formed an amicable alliance with almost all major religious groups, including Daoism, Buddhism, Protestantism, Catholicism, Islam, and folk religions. The United Fronts strategy respected the autonomy of religious groups, which in turn provided religious justification for the CCP's fights against the Japanese and the KMT before 1949. At the same time, Chinese communism began to develop its quasi-fundamentalist religious form. Describing the Chinese religious nationalism during the Yan'an Period (1942-1946), David E. Apter and Tony Saich said they were amazed by what was contained in 'its logocentricism certain proto-religious characteristics intertwined in a secular theory of politics that identified logos with power'. In fact, as 'compared to most religious movements,' they argue, 'the Yan'anites may have been more deeply sincere'.<sup>30</sup> It was this type of religious nationalism that significantly contributed to the establishment of the PRC. After 1949, the United Fronts strategy shifted gear and aimed to reeducate various religions in order to rally them behind this emerging Chinese communist state religion.

Radical communists in the CCP did not tolerate the existence of religion under communism. Therefore, the second period, from 1957 to 1979, saw attempts to eliminate all religions during the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution, for the purpose of promoting a communist modernity program. During this period Chinese nationalism further developed its socialist theology along with the Mao cult.<sup>31</sup> CCP chairman Mao Zedong was treated as the Pope, if not the god, of Chinese nationalism. He was praised as the Great Helmsman, the Great Teacher and the Messiah of Workers. His pictures were displayed and worshipped in government offices, factories and family living-rooms. His speeches were edited into the Little Red Book, to be recited by all Chinese people performing worship rituals in front of Mao's pictures. The zealous Red Guards served as religious police spying on anyone who might show contempt for Mao's picture or for the Little Red

29 The following discussion on the Chinese case draws from Goossaert and Palmer (2011, chapters 6 and 7).

30 Apter and Saich (1994, pp. 3, 179).

31 For the Mao cult, see Myers (1972, pp. 1-11); Zuo (1991, pp. 99-110); Overmyer (1986).



Book. Transgressors were subject to public criticism, imprisonment or the death penalty. The death of Mao and the downfall of his radical vanguards called an end to the second period of religion-state relations and ushered in the third period, from 1979 to the present.

The third period of religion-state relations witnessed the return of the United Fronts strategy with a new political theology of Chinese nationalism. The reformers at the central government needed a new source of legitimacy to justify reform policies because the old political theology of radical socialism was discredited due to economic disasters. The massacre of students in 1989 further accelerated the theological reform of Chinese nationalism.<sup>32</sup> It got a slightly different name, Chinese Patriotism (*aiguo zhuyi* 愛國主義). 'China' remained its supreme god but with increasing tolerance of other religions under the condition that they internalize Chinese patriotism into their theology and organizational structures. Richard Madsen calls it the 'CCP's neo-imperial sacral hegemony'.<sup>33</sup> I call this new political theology the 'Chinese Trinity': China, socialism, and the CCP are the three holy *personas* in one god. China is socialism; socialism is the CCP government; and the CCP government is China. One cannot love one without loving the other two *personas*. Conversely, one cannot reject one without rejecting the other two. In the minds of CCP leaders, the constitution of the PRC is not the supreme law of the land; the Chinese Trinity is. Applied to religion-state relations, the Chinese Trinity requires all other religions to place 'love your state' above 'love your religion' (*aiguo aijiao* 愛國愛教). The political theology of Chinese Trinity takes precedence over the theology of each religion, and the latter should be modified in order to integrate the former. More details of this Chinese patriotism are discussed in the next section of this chapter.

In Taiwan, religion-state relations started similarly but evolved quite differently from those in China. Defeated by the CCP in mainland China, the KMT government had already lost its legitimacy in the eyes of the Taiwanese people who still had a vivid memory about the massacre of Taiwanese elites by the KMT military in February 1947. Trained as a model communist, Jiang Jingguo 蔣經國, the eldest son of President Jiang Jieshi, promoted an extensive reform of the KMT and the state, and merged the two into a Leninist party-state, similar to the one in communist China. The party-state organized various religious groups into hierarchical associations whose leaderships were appointed or approved by the KMT. Being afraid of possible persecution by the atheist CCP in China, many leaders of various

32 Zhao (2004).

33 Madsen (2010, pp. 58-71).

religions fled to Taiwan along with the KMT government, including Daoism, Buddhism, Protestantism, Catholicism, and Islam. They had no choice but to support the KMT party-state and help it consolidate its legitimacy among the Taiwanese believers.<sup>34</sup>

The state religion of Chinese nationalism, which the KMT government promoted in mainland China before 1949, was kept intact afterwards but with a new political theology. First, the asymmetrical religion-state relations of the Republican era in China were transplanted to Taiwan. Secondly, similar to the Chinese Trinity, the KMT party-state merged the KMT with Chinese nationalism but minus socialism and the CCP rule; Taiwan was part of China, and China needed the KMT rule. And thirdly, the same level of religious freedom as in traditional China was also applied to Taiwanese religious groups, except for those which carried a different political agenda than the KMT's, as in the case of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan. The KMT party-state did not and could not eliminate Taiwanese religions because neo-Confucian President Jiang Jieshi became a devout Christian after 1949, Jiang Jinguo was a nominal Christian, and the United States, pressured by domestic human rights groups, always looked over the KMT's shoulder.

The KMT's state religion of Chinese nationalism began to crumble during the political democratization during the mid-1980s. Both the god of China and the priestly KMT were severely challenged by the rise of Taiwanese nationalism adorned with a religious fever. In fact, it was the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT) that led the religious/political challenge to the KMT's state religion. In a series of public statements addressed to both the Taiwanese people and the international community, the PCT promoted democratic reforms to challenge the life-long priestly role of the KMT, and it espoused Taiwan's independence as an alternative god to China.<sup>35</sup> Under pressure from both the domestic democracy movement and the U.S., the KMT party-state finally lifted martial law in 1987.

From 1987 to the present, the state religion of Chinese nationalism continuously lost its believers. After President Jiang Jinguo died in 1988, his successor Li Denghui 李登輝 (or Lee Tenghui), a Presbyterian, began to promote a state religion of Taiwanese nationalism.<sup>36</sup> In 2000, he helped the candidate of the opposition party (Democratic Progressive Party, DPP) Chen Shuibian 陳水扁, who was also a believer in Taiwanese nationalism, to topple the KMT

34 Kuo (2008, pp. 9-14).

35 Rubinstein (1991).

36 Li (2013).

government. During the Chen regime, the state actively promoted Taiwanese identity in the mass media and the education system through revising Taiwanese history, propagating the Taiwanese dialect, and subsidizing those 'homeland' (*xiangtu* 鄉土) cultural activities. Although the returned KMT regime tried to rejuvenate Chinese nationalism from 2008 to 2016 in order to contain the rise of Taiwanese nationalism, more and more Taiwanese were attracted to the latter. There seems to be a revival of Taiwanese nationalism since DPP President Tsai Ing-wen 蔡英文 took power in 2016.

Concomitant with the decline of Chinese nationalism and the rise of Taiwanese nationalism has been the gradual consolidation of a civil religion shared by the majority of Taiwanese religious groups. Although not as active democrats as the PCT, Buddhist Compassion Relief Association (*Ciji* 慈濟 or Tzu Chi), Buddha's Light Mountain (*Foguanshan* 佛光山), Dharma Drum Mountain (*Fagushan* 法鼓山), and the Enacting Heaven Temple (*Xingtian Gong* 行天宮) helped smooth Taiwan's democratic transition by promoting peace and tolerance among contending political forces.<sup>37</sup> After 1987, religion-state relations in Taiwan experienced fundamental transformation as a result of democratization. Various religious groups are no longer subject to the guidance of Chinese nationalism nor the strong state. Due to their significant influence in increasingly competitive democratic elections, they have developed a checks-and-balances relationship with the democratic state. Inter-religion relations in Taiwan are best characterized as tolerant, harmonious and cooperative (e.g. in ethical issues and in disaster relief works).

As for the antagonism between Chinese nationalism and Taiwanese nationalism, most Taiwanese religious groups seem to keep an equal distance from both so as not to offend either the Chinese or Taiwanese nationalists. On the one hand, they eagerly explore the astronomical religious market in China and do not want to blaspheme Chinese patriotism with Taiwanese nationalism. On the other hand, Taiwanese nationalism has yet, if ever, to develop into a solid state religion. Except for the PCT, which constitutes only two percent of the Taiwanese population, no other major religious groups in Taiwan publicly endorse Taiwanese nationalism. It is more like the New Age movement in Western societies: it has many audiences but few believers.

In Hong Kong, religion-state relations have taken yet another developmental path, different from both China and Taiwan. The British colonial government fully respected religious freedom of all religions and did not establish any state religion in Hong Kong from 1898 to 1997. Although many Chinese religious groups fled to Hong Kong after 1949 and enriched Hong

37 Madsen (2007).

Kong's religious market, the principle of two-way separation of state and religion was maintained. The Anglican Church was treated as equal to other Christian denominations as well as other Chinese religions. It was an extension of the economic laissez-faire principle of the British government to religious affairs. Religion's participation in public policies was rare and limited to educational and charity projects.<sup>38</sup>

The British and the Chinese governments began negotiation on the handover of sovereignty in 1979. China's supreme leader, Deng Xiaoping, laid down the principle of 'one country, two systems' (*yiguo liangzhi* 一國兩制) in 1984 and promised that existing political, social, and economic systems in Hong Kong would not be altered in the next fifty years. Most religious groups in Hong Kong took Deng's promise on face value and welcomed the handover of sovereignty. After all, they thought the CCP state would be just another colonial master to live with. The Protestant and Catholic community, which together constituted about seven percent of the Hong Kong people, had a brief discussion about whether to support or oppose the handover of sovereignty, or whether Hong Kong independence was an option to be placed on the negotiation table. A consensus was soon reached to support the handover of sovereignty, because the other two options were simply unrealistic.

However, many of the Protestant and Catholic leaders still had a vivid memory of the persecution of Chinese Christians during the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. The massacre of students in 1989 only heightened their concern for religious freedom. At the same time, Taiwan lifted martial law in 1987 along with any restrictions on religious freedom. The guarantee for religious freedom, Hong Kong Christian leaders thought, would be better provided by a democratic government in Hong Kong rather than by the promise of the diseased Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping. Therefore, an annual political ritual is established on 1 July every year; while the Hong Kong government holds a celebration ceremony at the Chief Executive Office in memory of the Chinese promise, the Christians lead a massive pro-democracy demonstration marching toward the Chief Executive Office in fear of a broken promise anytime soon.

Furthermore, influenced by the political theology of Social Gospel, Hong Kong Christian leaders began to promote a 'public theology' (*gonggong shenxue* 公共神學) which, they frequently commented on, was based on political, social, and economic policies, such as human rights, democratic

38 Kuo (2012a, pp. 123-144).

governance, gender equality, income equality, and immigrant welfare.<sup>39</sup> They also expanded their proselytism from Hong Kong to China via the convenient access across the border, because they soon realized that their religious freedom would ultimately depend not on Hong Kong's democratization alone, which was always fragile, but on the growth of the Christian population in China. That is why Christian theological seminaries in Hong Kong generously offer fellowships and scholarships to Chinese Christians and actively provide training lessons for both three-self churches and family churches in China.

The Chinese government is aware of the political and religious activities of Hong Kong Christians in both Hong Kong and China and is not likely to tolerate them forever under the iron canopy of Chinese patriotism. Particularly, the Umbrella Movement in 2015 probably stepped on the last nerve of the Chinese government. In addition to the regular democratic slogans, some leaders of the Umbrella Movement made contact with social activists and DPP politicians in Taiwan, and some even proposed Hong Kong independence in order to speed up democratization in Hong Kong as the opposition movement did in Taiwan in the 1980s. And many of the leaders of the Umbrella Movement are Christian pastors and elders. It is not a surprise that since 2015 the Chinese government has tightened its control over Christians in Hong Kong and Guangdong Province, which shares the border with Hong Kong.

The above narrative describes the evolution of religion-state relations in China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. How will they evolve in the near future? What are the implications for religious freedom, domestic political development and regional relations? The next section tries to answer these questions from the perspective of five issues (signs) of religious nationalism being developed in these Chinese societies: state religion, separation of state and religion, religious autonomy, traditional religion as superstition, and applicability of democracy to Chinese societies. Although interrelated, these issues consist of idiosyncrasies that deserve separate treatments.

## Signs of new religious nationalism in Chinese societies

### The construction of state religion

By 2015, the Chinese government had almost completed the construction of a full-fledged state religion, called 'Chinese patriotism'. The god of this state religion is 'China' (*zhongguo* 中國; or Chinese state). Its aliases include

39 Jiang, Yang and Liang (2008); Deng (2015); Zhao (2013).

Han, Dragon or the Yellow Emperor. It has a Trinitarian political theology: China is socialism, socialism is the CCP rule, and the CCP rule is China.<sup>40</sup> The great prophets of this state religion include Marx, Lenin, Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping, and former and current general secretaries of the CCP. Usually, the incumbent general secretary is the greatest prophet because it is he who interprets and reinterprets what earlier prophets have said. Their writings and speeches constitute the holy scripture to be studied and memorized by all CCP members throughout the year. All CCP members, schoolteachers, and religious leaders serve as political priests to proselytize the holy scripture to all Chinese people. Its religious holidays include 30 May, 1 July, 7 July, 1 August, 3 September, 18 September, and 1 October to pay tribute to the martyrs of Chinese patriotism. These 'patriotic education bases' of museums and memorial halls in major cities are holy places where these national holidays are held and local school pupils and government officials are required to visit them regularly. The devils and arch enemies of Chinese patriotism are Japan, the United States, national separatists (in Tibet, Xinjiang, Taiwan, and Hong Kong), and democracy activists, who blaspheme or rebel against Chinese patriotism. The People's Liberation Army is given, through rituals like the military parade on 3 September 2015, a special religious status of guardian angel for the protection of China and the holy war against domestic and foreign devils.<sup>41</sup>

Xi Jinping 习近平 summarized well the religious nature of Chinese patriotism in his speech delivered to Politburo members on 30 December 2015: 'We need to raise the patriotic feeling and consciousness of the people through memorial activities of major historical events, patriotic education bases, Chinese traditional holidays, and national funerals and rituals'.<sup>42</sup> The same thesis was elaborated in his speech to the National Religious Conference held on 22-23 April 2016, which would serve as the concrete guideline for future Chinese religious policies.<sup>43</sup>

The Chinese communist state's paradoxical attitude toward religion probably exposes the fundamental differences between atheist patriotism and

40 One of the major 'hymns' promoted by the CCP is 'No CCP, No New China'. *Chinese Communist Party News*, <http://cpc.people.com.cn/BIG5/64156/64157/4544006.html>, accessed 9 March 2016.

41 I owe the last point to Petra Anelova of the Metropolitan University at Prague for her helpful comment.

42 *Chinese Communist Party News*, <http://cpc.people.com.cn/n1/2015/1231/c64094-27997763.html>, accessed 9 March 2016.

43 'Xi Jinping's Important Speech at the National Religious Conference'. <http://www.sara.gov.cn/xwzx/tplb/333676.htm>, accessed 25 April 2016.

nationalist religion, as well as the limits of political mobilization of atheist patriotism. According to the neurotheology discussed in the second section of this chapter, it is the belief and emotion associated with supernatural powers that effectively inspires believers to take altruist behaviors like patriotism. But atheist patriotism relies much more on non-theist emotion and rationality and too little on the supernatural powers of religious circuits in the brain. Hence, the political legitimacy of an atheist state is constantly under challenge when it fails to deliver economic performance or when it encroaches upon the autonomy of major religions.

However, one should not push the above argument too far and suggest that Chinese religious groups (Christians in particular) may follow their counterparts in Western societies to become significant political forces of democratization in the near future, as the modernity approach might imply.<sup>44</sup> The major differences lie in the Trinitarian nature of the Chinese state: the unity of the Leninist state, communism, and patriotism. This 'perfect dictatorship', as Stein Ringen calls it, is a Leviathan strengthened by its quintessential religious patriotism which permits only complementary political influence but strictly and effectively prohibits political challenge from religious groups.<sup>45</sup>

By contrast, Taiwanese nationalism has not yet developed into a full-fledged state religion. It has a big curious audience but few devoted believers. Although about sixty percent of the Taiwanese identify themselves as distinctive from the Chinese,<sup>46</sup> 'Taiwan' is only a vague object of identification and has not acquired a holy status as a god. Paul Katz describes it as only one (and probably not the strongest) of the various identities of Taiwanese people.<sup>47</sup> After all, the official name of the Taiwanese state is still the Republic of China, not the Republic of Taiwan. Who are the great prophets of this 'state religion'? A list of potential prophets may include Lin Xiantang 林獻堂, Jiang Weishui 蔣渭水, Li Denghui (popularly dubbed the 'Moses of Taiwanese Exodus'), and Chen Shuibian (the self-proclaimed

44 In retrospect, Carsten T. Vala's optimistic assessment of the Protestant Shouwang Church to challenge the Chinese state has turned out to be the proverbial exception that only proves the rule. The Church has failed to conclude a business contract to buy a meeting place, and half of its believers have left the Church since an open confrontation with the state broke out about ten years ago; see Vala (2012).

45 Ringen (2016).

46 Election Study Center National Chengchi University. The Distribution Trends of Taiwanese/Chinese Identity of Taiwanese People (June 1992–October 2015). <http://esc.nccu.edu.tw/course/news.php?Sn=166>, accessed 6 April 2016.

47 Katz and Rubinstein (2003).

'son of Taiwan'). But there is no general consensus about this list, not to mention that Chen Shuibian has been serving a jail term for corruption. The DPP, the Taiwan Solidarity Union, and the newly formed New Power Party may qualify as its political priests. But the DPP is losing its zeal to pursue Taiwan independence because of the fear of invasion by China. There is a national holiday on 10 October, but it belongs to the Republic of China. The memorial day of Taiwan's retrocession to China on 25 October is not viewed as an appropriate day for Taiwanese nationalism. The national holiday of 28 February, in memory of the massacre by the KMT military, is probably the only religious holiday of Taiwanese nationalism, and the 228 Memorial Hall may be its only political temple. However, it is a private organization sparsely visited by domestic and foreign tourists. Taiwanese nationalism used to treat first-generation mainlanders as devils, and second-generation as devil's children, both of whom were strong believers in Chinese nationalism. Since most of the first-generation mainlanders have passed their average life expectancy and many second-generation mainlanders have Taiwanese spouses, Chinese patriotism and the CCP have become the greatest devils. Chinese married to Taiwanese, as well as the one million Taiwanese living in China since 1987, are seen as untrustworthy. However, most Taiwanese do not support such a fundamentalist version of Taiwanese nationalism, which violates universal human rights – the gods of Taiwan's rising civil religion.

Probably, one can say that a civil religion, not a Taiwanese religion, is in the early stages of consolidation in multi-ethnic and multi-religion Taiwan, which bestows godly status to universal human rights and democracy rather than Taiwanese nationalism or Chinese patriotism. Theories of democracy and experiences of Western democracies constitute the political theologies of the civil religion. In the past thirty years, this civil religion has been tenaciously promoted by intellectuals, civic groups, families, education system, mass media, students, political parties, the state, as well as religious leaders. They freely commemorate these democratic gods on national holidays, at regular elections, in schools, and in the streets (like the Sunflower Movement in 2014, which almost decimated the KMT in the subsequent elections because of violating a democratic procedure in the legislature).<sup>48</sup> Major religious groups have started to incorporate democratic values into their theologies, and democratic institutions into their organizational structures. For instance, all the four largest Buddhist

48 'Sunflower Movement', *The Diplomat*, <http://thediplomat.com/tag/sunflower-movement/>, accessed 7 April 2016.



organizations in Taiwan adopt Humanistic Buddhism (*renjian fojiao* 人間佛教) and are developing international lay-believer organizations. Most Protestant churches are governed by boards of directors who are elected by the congregation. Lay believers are given more decision-making powers, while clergy are made accountable for their professional performance. Even the supreme god of Jade Emperor (*Yuhuang dadi* 玉皇大帝) of folk religions is being reinterpreted as a rotating position to be elected by common gods.

The civil religion has become the most popular state religion after three turnovers of ruling parties in 2000, 2008, and 2016. Its guardian archangel is the United States; Japan may soon become another one in the aftermath of it having expanded its national security zone to cover Taiwan in September 2015. The devils threatening the growth of this civil religion include the CCP and domestic human-rights abusers of the past and present.

It appears that Taiwan's civil religion is more powerful and resilient than Chinese patriotism or Taiwanese nationalism. However, this optimism needs to be checked by four caveats. First, it is a new religion, only thirty years old. It takes generations for a new religion to consolidate and establish itself. Secondly, with growing human and material resources, Chinese patriotism and Taiwanese nationalism are competing with Taiwanese civil religion in the political/religious markets. Thirdly, major religious groups in Taiwan are still in the early stages of adapting to democratic values and behaviors. Finally, like atheist Chinese patriotism, which relies too much on secular emotion and rationality, a civil religion without strong support from major religious groups may quickly reach the limits of political mobilization and face political challenges to its legitimacy whenever it fails to deliver economic performance or whenever it encroaches upon religious autonomy.

In Hong Kong, despite the emerging whispers of Hong Kong independence, there is little trace of a state religion of any kind. Joseph Y.S. Cheng points out that (state) Confucianism might have contributed to Hong Kong's political stability and economic development before 1997. Even if it did, it no longer exerts influence after 1997.<sup>49</sup> In its place, there is an embryonic civil religion, modeled after its Taiwanese counterpart, promulgated by intellectuals, mass media, students, democratic parties, and the minority Christian community. Mariske Westendorp's chapter in this volume further demonstrates that some Buddhists have also embraced this public theology and support the democracy movement. Its political theology consists of Western democratic theory and Christian 'public theology' which has its roots in American Christian fundamentalism of the 1980s. This civil

49 Cheng (2015, pp. 161-196).

religion annually celebrates its holidays on 4 June (in memory of the 4 June massacre of Chinese students in 1989) and 1 July (to protest the handover of sovereignty from Great Britain to China without a democracy being installed in Hong Kong). It conducts its religious activities in universities, streets, churches, and at the June Fourth Museum. The devils are the CCP and Hong Kong's pro-China political and business leaders. However, this civil religion is not shared by most religious groups in Hong Kong, not even by the majority of the Christian community.

It is the god of Chinese patriotism who looms large over Hong Kong and the civil religion is its arch nemeses. Since 1997, the Chinese government has gradually taken over Hong Kong's mass media, intimidated intellectuals, and restrained the expansion of democratic parties. During the days when the Umbrella movement was at its peak in 2015, Hong Kong democrats were nervous about whether the Chinese military and the armed police, which are the guardian angels of Chinese patriotism, would intervene.<sup>50</sup> In March 2016, the June Fourth Museum announced that it would close for business on 4 June due to constant harassment by the Hong Kong government.<sup>51</sup> An escalated blow to Hong Kong's civil religion came in November 2016 when the Executive Committee of the People's Congress in Beijing delivered a constitutional opinion to disqualify two newly-elected councilors of the Hong Kong Legislative Council due to their pro-Hong-Kong-independence statements at the inauguration ceremony. Without political prophets, priests, and temples, Hong Kong's civil religion is not likely to have many believers in the near future.

### Separation of state and religion

In China, the one-way separation of the state and religion of the Republican era is totally discarded. All other religions are parts of the state and serve the state religion of Chinese patriotism. Accordingly, all other religions should demonstrate their loyalty by incorporating Chinese patriotism into their respective theologies and by joining the national religious associations created by the state. Under the guidance of the State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA), the goal of patriotic education in theological seminaries is to 'establish an army of clergy who have passion for the state, accept the guidance of the Party and the government, insist on the socialist

50 Hannah Beech, 'The Umbrella Revolution'. *Time*, 13 October 2014.

51 *United Daily News*, <http://udn.com/news/story/7331/1589123>, accessed 7 April 2016.

way, and are able to communicate with the people'.<sup>52</sup> Following a master textbook of religious education of Chinese patriotism, SARA has cooperated with national religious associations, theological seminaries, and religious scholars of the five official religions to publish a series of religious textbooks of patriotism.<sup>53</sup> Together, they would consolidate the hegemony of Chinese patriotism over every other religion in China. The table of contents of the master textbook, *Textbook of Patriotism (Aiguo Zhuyi Jiaocheng 愛國主義教程)*, spells out clearly the Trinitarian theology of Chinese patriotism to be incorporated into each religious textbook. Chapter One explains why Chinese patriotism urgently needs to be promoted in the current environment. Chapters Two to Four reimagine the history of 'China' and how important the CCP was to the state-building of China. Chapter Five explains the constitutional foundation of Chinese patriotism while Chapters Six and Seven elaborate the reasons why all religious groups need to support the two personas of Chinese patriotism (socialism and the CCP rule). Chapters Eight and Nine urge the readers to support the national unity and sovereignty of the third persona, i.e. the god of China.

Nevertheless, there seems to be some resistance from other religious textbooks to accept everything said in the master textbook. Absent from all other religious textbooks is the role of the CCP in each religion's history and theology. Nor is socialism an important subject in these textbooks. The only persona of the Trinitarian Chinese patriotism discussed in great length in other religious textbooks is China, not socialism, not the CCP rule. All other religious groups claim to have made great contributions to the establishment and consolidation of the Chinese state, and commit to do so continuously.<sup>54</sup> This persistent religious autonomy and political concession is well analyzed by Tsai Yenzen's chapter on Chinese Christianity and by Hsieh Shuwei's chapter on Chinese Daoism in this volume.

The administrative subordination of religions to the CCP state is clear from its chain of commands and controls. Each religious group has to join the state-sponsored local religious association; only one association, per religion, exists at a particular administrative level. A local religious

52 SARA (2005, p.3); Kuo (2011, pp. 1042-1064).

53 Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association and Bishops Conference of Catholic Church in China (2002); State Administration for Religious Affairs (2005); National Committee of Three-Self Patriotic Movement of the Protestant Churches in China and China Christian Council (2006); Islamic Association of China (2006). Two more patriotic textbooks of Chinese Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism are scheduled for publication.

54 More arguments of civil religions are presented at the Center of Religious Study of State Administration for Religious Affairs of P.R.C. (2010).

association is a mandatory member of a higher-level religious association. So on and so forth, until they all belong to the national religious association. SARA has set up four departments to supervise Buddhism and Daoism (First Department), Protestantism and Catholicism (Second Department), Islam (Third Department), and other religions as well as theological seminaries (Fourth Department).<sup>55</sup> SARA also has branch offices at each administrative level, although not necessarily at the town level due to shortage of personnel. Parallel to the SARA administrative system is the party's United Fronts administrative system, which supervises both SARA's work and religious groups. Appointments of clergy and theologians in religious groups need prior approval from SARA.<sup>56</sup>

In Taiwan, the one-way separation of state and religion has been gradually replaced by the American version of checks and balances between state and religion.<sup>57</sup> Even during the martial law period, most religious groups maintained high autonomy in theological and management matters. The KMT party-state kept only the power for appointment of the leadership of the National Buddhist Association and the National Daoist Association. After 1987, the state has confined itself to maintaining contacts with religious groups on public policies applicable to all social organizations, such as taxation, land use, building safety codes, financial fraud, and sexual harassment. Gone are the state's interference in personnel and management of religious groups, nor does the state adjudicate theological disputes among different religious denominations. The state regularly provides small-scale subsidies to promote religious activities without discrimination. At the other end of religion-state relations, not only do Taiwan's religious groups openly support different party candidates in elections, they also cooperate to organize demonstrations and lobby groups on ethical policies such as abortion, prostitution, gambling, divorce, and homosexual marriage.

In Hong Kong, due to its colonial heritage, the state and religion are largely separated in the sense that the state and religion interfere with each other's business as little as possible. The exception is the Christian community, which regards its divine calling to intervene in public policies and to protest restraints on religious freedom by the Hong Kong government as well as the Chinese state. After the Umbrella Movement, the Chinese government started imposing restrictions on some Hong Kong theologians

55 State Administration for Religious Affairs of P.R.C., <http://www.sara.gov.cn/index.htm>, accessed 24 March 2016.

56 Chan and Carlson (2005).

57 Kuo (2013, pp. 1-38).

who provided training courses to Chinese Christians in both China and Hong Kong. But no clear restriction by the Hong Kong government on religious freedom in Hong Kong has been reported.<sup>58</sup>

### **The conflict between state sovereignty and religious autonomy**

This controversy is mainly associated with the Chinese Catholic community but is intertwined with religious policies for Islam and Tibetan Buddhism. The Vatican has insisted on its religious autonomy and the right to appoint bishops in all Catholic communities around the world. But the Chinese government has insisted that this would violate the state sovereignty of China. The Chinese government continues to appoint Chinese bishops with or without the Pope's approval. This controversy is more complex than a semantic debate about whether the Vatican is referring to religious 'autonomy' (*zizhuquan* 自主權) while China has invented a new term called 'religious sovereignty' (*zongjiao zhuquan* 宗教主權) and deems the two incompatible. There is no such term as 'religious sovereignty' in political science textbooks or in international laws. But this does not prevent the CCP state from injecting nationalism into Chinese religions. In fact, the Chinese state is reluctant to seek a compromise with the Vatican on this issue for three possible reasons associated with Chinese patriotism.<sup>59</sup> First, during the civil war from 1945 to 1949, the Vatican publicly sided with the KMT government and moved its embassy to Taiwan afterwards. The Vatican is still one of the two-dozen states that recognize Taiwan as an independent state. Second, the Vatican is not only the headquarters of the global Catholic community but also a sovereign state recognized by most states in the world. How can a foreign state have the right to appoint religious clergy in China? Chinese nationalists ask. Thirdly, due to the national trauma of imperialist invasion, the CCP government has insisted that all Chinese religions should follow the three-self principles of self-finance, self-management, and self-proselytizing (*ziyang zizhi zichuan* 自養,自治,自傳), and not to receive financial help or managerial direction from foreign religious groups. Over the past sixty years, this policy has helped to establish a vast group of Chinese bishops and their followers who have vested interests in maintaining the status quo to counter those who have maintained underground churches accepting the Vatican's authority. Finally, the Polish revolution in 1989 is dubbed by the

58 US State Department. Religious Freedom Report: China (Includes Tibet, Hong Kong, and Macau), annual reports. Accessed 6 April 2016.

59 For a more nuanced critical view of China-Vatican relations, see Leung and Wang (2016).

CCP leadership as an 'unholy alliance' between the Polish Catholic Church and the American Central Intelligence Agency. Beijing has no intention to encourage the Chinese Catholics to follow the Polish exemplar.

Since 2000, Catholic experts in Beijing have frequently mentioned an incoming establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the Vatican because the two sides had reached a consensus over the appointment of bishops. That is, the Chinese government would propose a list of bishop candidates and the Pope would pick only from this list, the person whom he deemed able to please God. Then, the Chinese government and the Vatican would simultaneously announce the appointment to save the face of both governments. The Chinese government also wanted the Vatican's embassy in Taiwan to move to Beijing immediately. If that should happen, it would constitute a watershed of religion-state relations in China, and not just a breakthrough in Beijing-Vatican diplomatic relations. But is Beijing ready to concede on the definition of religious sovereignty? Will Beijing apply the new principle to leadership successions in other Chinese religions? Will the vested interests of the Chinese Catholic clergy not impede this arrangement? This controversy about religious sovereignty is also applicable and linked to Tibet over the appointment of the Dalai Lama, although it is only a smaller part of a more heretic problem of Tibetan independence.<sup>60</sup>

In the Taiwanese Catholic community, which constitutes less than one percent of the population, religious autonomy has never been an issue since 1949. Most of the first-generation Taiwanese Catholics came from mainland China after 1949 and demonstrated their consistent loyalty to the KMT state. The state fully respected the religious autonomy of the Catholic Church, through which Taiwan could still have a voice, albeit small, in the world community. Even if China establishes a diplomatic relationship with the Vatican, it is not likely that the Catholic Church in Taiwan would make a loud political noise about it.

In the post-1997 era, Hong Kong's Catholic community has been in close cooperation with the Protestant community to implement its Social Gospel agenda. During his tenure as Hong Kong's bishop from 2002 to 2009, Bishop Joseph Zen Ze-Kiun 陳日君 assumed a critical role in transforming the social and political roles of Hong Kong Catholics. He frequently commented on religious freedom, social justice, and democratization in Hong Kong as well as human rights in China. The appointment of Bishop Zen seemed to be a unilateral action by the Vatican, amidst a low point of diplomatic relations between China and the Vatican. It is not clear whether Bishop

60 Han and Paik (2014, pp. 69-98); Crowe (2013, pp. 1100-1135).

Zen's successor Tang Han 湯漢 was jointly appointed by China and the Vatican or not. The fact that Bishop Tang has kept a low political profile while Cardinal Zen continues active engagement in social and political issues would further make China think twice before making concessions on religious 'sovereignty'. The last thing Beijing wants to see under the iron canopy of Chinese patriotism is a Polish-style 'unholy alliance' replicated in Hong Kong.

### The 'superstition' of Chinese traditional religions

The CCP government continues to follow policies hostile to folk religions of the Republican era. The fact that the Boxer Rebellion caused the national humiliation during the Eight-States Alliance War has become an institutional memory of the CCP: folk religion is not a politically reliable religion, it is a superstition, and the CCP has no intention to see the reincarnation of the White Lotus in communist China. The CCP has developed two strategies to control folk religions since 1949. One strategy is to deny the existence of any folk religion. Previous folk religions were either merged into Daoism or Buddhism, or forcefully eliminated. Folk religion is not among the five officially recognized religions. The other strategy is to explain the controversy away. The term 'folk religion' is replaced by 'folk custom and culture' (*mingsu wenhua* 民俗文化). Since 1979, economic liberalization has resulted in the resurgence of folk-religion activities in the countryside, such as religious rituals held for the opening of businesses, weddings, funerals, and on traditional religious holidays. Most local officials and party cadres have failed to stop this wave of resurgence in intensity and in quantity, but fear that the Beijing government may reprimand them for not suppressing these activities. Therefore, they have invented this new hermeneutics of 'folk custom and culture'. In fact, even the Boxer Rebellion is given a new nationalist interpretation. 'They demonstrated the extraordinary courage and sense of justice of the Chinese people even in front of the enemy's butcher's knife.'<sup>61</sup> Finally, folk religions now belong, de facto, to the jurisdiction of the Fourth Department of SARA. And some provinces (e.g. Hunan) have adopted experimental regulations on folk religions, making them semi-official. But Falungong remains solidly on the blacklist of evil cults.

In Taiwan, the KMT party-state also maintained the anti-folk-religion policies of the Republican era. Similar to the CCP, the party-state put pressure on folk religions to join either the Daoist Association or the Buddhist

61 SARA (2005, p. 4).

Association. Otherwise, they would be subject to harassment by local police, tax authorities, and the fire department. However, due to the deep-rooted popularity of folk religion among local elites, the pressure was not high and implementation of the hostile policies was lax, as in traditional dynasties. Furthermore, similar to the CCP's second strategy toward folk religion, local officials of the KMT state called these folk-religion activities as 'folk custom and culture'. Even after 1987 when religious freedom was fully guaranteed, some government officials preferred to keep the term 'folk custom and culture' to avoid criticism for violating the state's neutrality when they provided subsidies to these activities. For instance, the annual parade of goddess Mazu is very often called a 'folk custom and culture'. Other than this, the Taiwanese state and society have largely abandoned the Republican era's treatment of folk religion as superstition and accept it as one of regular religions protected by the constitution. Furthermore, different Mazu temples have actively played important political roles, both in the Taiwan independence movement and in the China unification movement, as Chang Hsun's chapter in this volume aptly analyzes.

Another example is Yiguandao, which is a syncretistic folk religion combining Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. It was declared an 'evil cult' by both the CCP government from 1949 to the present and by the KMT party-state from 1949 to 1987. Yiguandao had an ambiguous relationship with the White Lotus in terms of its major deities, rituals, and catechism. During WW II, it proselytized in east and northeast China occupied by Japanese forces. Therefore, both the CCP and the KMT declared it an 'evil cult'. After WW II, it proselytized to KMT officials in order to exonerate its 'political crimes' during the war. But it bet on the wrong political side again; the CCP won the civil war, and major leaders of Yiguandao fled to Hong Kong or Taiwan. The KMT government did not grant Yiguandao the status of a legal religion until after the lifting of martial law, while the CCP has not officially removed it from the blacklist of evil cults.

In Hong Kong, the British colonial government did not bother Chinese folk religions. Neither has the Hong Kong government done so since 1997. Most folk religions are not involved in the debate over democratization, unification, Hong Kong independence, human rights, or other social issues. They also keep a safe distance from the activities of Falungong.

### **The applicability of Western democracy in the Chinese context**

In light of the above analysis, the CCP government is not likely to reverse its staunch objection to Western democracy applied to China's religion-state



relations. Western democracy severely challenges, if not blasphemes, every sacred component of Trinitarian Chinese patriotism. In the eyes of China's political prophets and priests, democracy would diminish the sacred status of the Trinitarian god of 'China' by promoting multiple gods of other religions; democracy would discredit socialism; and democracy, the worst evil of all, would abolish the CCP rule. Although during the Hu Jintao regime from 2002 to 2012, the CCP government encouraged the 'deepening of democratization' to allow greater religious freedom, judicial justice, and civic participation in public policies, it was promoted under the iron canopy of Chinese patriotism.<sup>62</sup> Even worse, in the past five years of the Xi Jinping regime, a rearguard phenomenon orchestrated by the 'fundamentalists' of Chinese patriotism seem to have replaced the liberal Chinese patriotism. There has been little talk about the 'deepening of democratization' in the mass media or in the academic community. In its place is the 'seven no-talks' (*qibujiang* 七不講; CCP Document #9 May 2013) forbidding university professors and the mass media to discuss subjects related to universal values, freedom of press, civil society, civic rights, historical errors committed by the CCP, privileged capitalist class, and judicial independence.<sup>63</sup>

In Taiwan, democracy is the new game and the 'only game in town'.<sup>64</sup> Although religious freedom was relatively well-protected during the martial law period, it is much better protected by the democratic institutions of independent courts, elections, energetic civic organizations, schools, autonomous mass media, and subsidiaries of international NGOs in Taiwan. After three peaceful turnovers of government, Taiwan's democracy has been consolidated considerably and provides for a healthy checks-and-balances relationship between the state and religion. However, the phantom of Chinese patriotism constantly scrutinizes Taiwan's democracy from the other side of the Taiwan Strait. As long as Taiwan's democracy does not officially declare independence, Chinese patriotism is not in a hurry to start a holy war against it.

By contrast, it is a very different story in the case of Hong Kong's religion-state relations. After all, China exercises full sovereignty over Hong Kong. Democracy in Hong Kong is still a dream to be realized, if ever, because it directly challenges the 'China Dream'. Although the Chinese government

62 Kuo (2014).

63 BBC China. Xi Jinping New Deal: Sixteen requirements after seven no-talks. [http://www.bbc.com/zhongwen/trad/china/2013/05/130528\\_china\\_thought\\_control\\_youth](http://www.bbc.com/zhongwen/trad/china/2013/05/130528_china_thought_control_youth), accessed 6 April 2016.

64 Linz and Stepan (1996, pp. 5-14) argue that only when strategic elites unanimously regard democracy as 'the only game in town' does this new democracy become a consolidated democracy.

has announced that popular elections of the legislature would be held in 2020 and direct elections of the chief executive officer would be held in 2017, new constraints have been imposed on these 'democratic' elections. It is to the credit of democratic movements (particularly the Christian community) that a civil religion is on the political horizon. But the democratic movements in Hong Kong since 1997 seem to justify Beijing's concern that democratic movements are getting out of hand and are corrupting the minds of believers in Chinese patriotism. In the mind of Chinese political prophets and priests, is it not much easier to convert the seven-million Hong Kong people to Chinese patriotism, than to convert the 1.3 billion Chinese people to Hong Kong's civil religion?

## Conclusion and chapter outlines

What is new about religious nationalism in Chinese societies, and what are the implications for their internal stability and external relations? Theoretically speaking, this chapter contributes to the study of religious nationalism through the revisionist approach strengthened by neurotheology and new institutionalism. It assumes that religious thinking is part of human nature and is an integral part of empirical analysis as well as of the normative prescription for religion-state institutional relations.

In China, aided by the omnipresent and omnipotent Leninist state, the state religion of Chinese patriotism is close to becoming the hegemonic religion of all religions, not only requiring all other religions to be submissive to it but also to integrate Chinese patriotism into their theologies and organizational structures. Thus, the Leninist state's totalitarian control over religion has reached a historically high point never seen in traditional and modern China, or elsewhere in the world. However, the religious textbooks of patriotism also reveal some new resistance to this omnipotent and omnipresent state religion. While expressing support for China's glory and unification, most religions are reluctant to integrate socialism and the CCP rule in their theologies and organizational structures. Quite a few arguments related to civil religion are competing with Chinese patriotism in these textbooks. It remains to be seen whether Chinese patriotism will tolerate (and if yes, to what extent) the emergence of civil religion in the society. But the prospects for resolving China's territorial disputes with its neighbors do not look bright; after all, these territories have been sanctified by Chinese patriotism as the 'holy national lands' (*shensheng guotu* 神聖國土).

In Taiwan, the rise of Taiwanese nationalism since the 1970s reached its zenith during the DPP regime (2000 to 2008), lost its momentum during the KMT regime (2008 to 2016) and came back strongly after the DPP took over the government again in 2016. Chinese nationalism filled the minds of most Taiwanese from 1945 to 1987, and it was rejuvenated during the KMT regime from 2008 to 2016. KMT lost power in 2016 but it may rise from near extinction with the help of the Chinese state, which worries about the independence-leaning tendency of the DPP regime. Squeezed between Taiwanese nationalism and Chinese nationalism, a young civil religion is shared by many religions which gradually adapt to political democratization by incorporating democracy in their theologies and organizational structures, and exercise a healthy checks-and-balances relationship with the democratic state. It may take generations for the Taiwanese civil religion to consolidate their religious and political support, barring a unification war in the Taiwan Strait.

In Hong Kong, what is new about religious nationalism is that it includes an embryonic civil religion and Hong Kong nationalism. However, these two religious nationalisms are not widely nor deeply shared by Hong Kong's other religious groups, which tilt more toward Chinese patriotism. Furthermore, given the special political relationships between Hong Kong and China, political theologies of religious nationalisms of the two clash head-on with Chinese patriotism. Lacking a geographical and political buffer zone like its Taiwanese counterparts, the Chinese state and the Hong Kong government are not likely to respond kindly to these political 'heresies'.<sup>65</sup>

Finally, for the general theoretical and normative question about compatibility between religion and democracy, the Taiwanese model probably provides a moral and practical alternative to existing theories of religion-state relations, such as the state's dominance over religion (the modernity approach), religious fundamentalism, and the strict separation of state and religion.<sup>66</sup> In particular, it may help to gradually transform Chinese patriotism into a civil religion with Chinese characteristics for the benefit of Chinese people and neighboring countries.

The fourteen chapters of this book are divided into three parts. After an introductory chapter, Part I analyzes the origins of Chinese religion-state

65 In an immediate response to the announcement on the internet about the establishment of the Hong Kong Nationalist Party, the China Liaison Office in Hong Kong sternly warned that it would not tolerate its existence. *United Daily News*, 1 April 2016.

66 Juergensmeyer (1993, chapters 7 and 8) proposed legal suggestions for the coexistence of religious nationalism and democracy but could not find workable cases to substantiate his proposal.

relations before 1949. Part II discusses the contemporary religion-state relations in China. Part III explores contemporary religion-state relations in Taiwan and Hong Kong.

Chapter 1 (Religion, State, and Religious Nationalism in Chinese Societies) compares the modernity approach and the revisionist approach of religion-state relations in China. Building on the revisionist approach but adding theories of neurotheology and institutionalism, it compares three models of religious nationalism in China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. Five different dimensions of this religious nationalism are further elaborated in order to lay down the common theoretical and empirical foundations of all the chapters in this book.

Part I (Chinese Religion and Nationalism before 1949) explores the origin of religion-nationalism relations in the late nineteenth century to the early twentieth century when Western nationalism was introduced to China. Chapter 2 (Idea of Chineseness and Ethnic Thought of Wang Fuzhi) studies the first Chinese theory of nationalism by Wang Fuzhi (1619-1692). Wang employed a Daoist concept of 'ether' (*qi* 氣) to define a Chinese nationalism that goes beyond traditional loyalty to dynastic rulers. His definition of Chinese nationalism inspired many nationalist intellectuals around 1900. Chapter 3 (Missionizing, Civilizing, and Nationizing: Linked Concepts of Compelled Change) makes convincing arguments that the contents of Chinese nationalism in traditional and modern China are very similar to those of Christianity in the colonial era. Both aimed to convert the inferior cultures (religions) to their superior ones. Chapter 4 (The Nation in Religion and Religion in the Nation) studies how the Chinese nation and religion construct each other by the conception of 'religious sphere' (*zongjiaojie* 宗教界). However, the end result is mutual influence and resistance of the nation and religion. It helps to explain, among many Chinese cases of state-religion conflicts, why the CCP state has invented and insisted on the principle of 'religious sovereignty' in negotiating with the Vatican on the appointment of bishops in China. Chapter 5 (History and Legitimacy in Contemporary China: Towards Competing Nationalisms) studies two nationalist incidents in modern Chinese history (the destruction of the Old Summer Palace in 1860 and CCP-KMT relations in the Republican era) which the current CCP state has reinterpreted for the promotion of new nationalist programs. It demonstrates vividly that when these nationalist programs are promoted only in a rational manner without religious devotion and holiness, they easily fall into endless rational debates which ironically undermine these nationalist programs and the very legitimacy of the CCP state. Chapter 6 (Pilgrimage and Hui Muslim Identity in the Republican Era) explores how

the Chinese Muslim developed both Chinese nationalist and cross-national identities in the Republican era through the Islamic pilgrimage ritual (*hajj*).

Part II (Religion and Nationalism in Contemporary China) focuses on contemporary religion-state relations in China, although traditional and Republic relations are not ignored. Chapter 7 (Religion and the Nation: Confucian and New Confucian Religious Nationalism) discusses the religious aspects of New Confucianism promoted by the contemporary CCP state. State Confucianism existed in Chinese dynasties and continues to exist in modern China in the form of 'orthopraxy' (the center of all religions) but not in the form of 'orthodoxy' (the hegemonic religion excluding all other religions). In contrast to the CCP's State Confucianism, Chapter 8 (Yiguandao under the Shadow of Nationalism) demonstrates that a religious Confucianism (Yiguandao) may be more popular and sustainable among the Chinese. But State Confucianism in both China and pre-1987 Taiwan had persecuted this religious Confucianism for its cooperation with external and internal political enemies. Chapter 9 (Daoism and Nationalism in Recent and Contemporary China) analyzes the efforts by contemporary Daoist leaders to promote Daoism in order to build a community, forge cultural self-identity, and strengthen the nation-state. It concludes that the CCP state's effort to modernize Daoism according to the Christian model has resulted in the serious reduction of complexity and dynamics of Daoism, which is the only native religion among the five official religions recognized by the state. Chapter 10 (Nationalism Matters: Among Mystics and Martyrs of Tibet) uses two case studies (Tibetan Buddhist encampments and self-immolations) to demonstrate that Tibetan Buddhists have a choice between moderate fundamentalism and militant nationalism in response to Chinese religious nationalism. Chapter 11 ('We Are Good Citizens': Tension between Protestants and the State in Contemporary China) analyzes all the major religious policies and church confessions in contemporary China. It concludes that both the CCP and house churches support Chinese nationalism but emphasize different parts of it, resulting in their antagonistic relationships in the past and in the foreseeable future.

Part III (Religion and Nationalism in Taiwan and Hong Kong) studies contemporary religion-state relations in Taiwan and Hong Kong. Chapter 12 (Religion and National Identity in Taiwan: State Formation and Moral Sensibilities) compares the Buddhist Foguanshan which subscribes to Chinese identity, and the Presbyterian Church which is an active proponent of Taiwan independence. These two cases clearly demonstrate that the boundary between the sacred and the secular is easily transgressed, and that the state and religion continuously construct each other. Chapter 13 (Multiple

Religious and National Identities: Mazu Pilgrimages across the Taiwan Strait after 1987) analyzes a cross-strait pilgrimage from Xingang Mazu Temple (Taiwan) to Yongchun (China) which resulted in the establishment of a Taiwanese branch temple in China. It demonstrates how local politicians employ the pilgrimage for both religious and political purposes, not necessarily consistent with the nationalist programs of the central governments. Chapter 14 (Salvation and Rights in Hong Kong) compares Catholicism and Buddhism (more emphasis on the latter) as major proponents of a civil religion against the Chinese state religion of patriotism during the Umbrella Movement in 2014. However, unlike their Christian counterparts who were motivated by a common political theology, Hong Kong Buddhists were motivated by personal salvation. Therefore, this chapter not only demonstrates that the state and religion are neither dichotomous nor conflictual, such as the modernity approach assumes, but they can be coherent institutional actors as well as diffused individuals, thus, making the study of Chinese religious nationalisms even more nuanced and fascinating.

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