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CHRISTIANITY IN CHINA: A FORCE FOR CHANGE?

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**Opening Remarks:**

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THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL STATUS OF CHRISTIANITY IN CHINA:

**Moderator:**

RICHARD BUSH  
Director and Senior Fellow, Center for East  
Asian Policy Studies  
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**Panelists:**

LIU PENG  
Professor, Institute of American Studies  
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CARSTEN VALA  
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PARTICIPANTS (CONT'D):

HOW CHRISTIANITY IS IMPACTING CHINESE CIVIL SOCIETY:

**Moderator:**

DAVID AIKMAN  
Professor of History  
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**Panelists:**

JIEXIA ZHAI AUTRY  
Global Fellow, Institute for Global  
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## P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. CHENG LI: Good morning. On behalf of the Brookings China Center, I would like to welcome you all to this special event occurring at a very sensitive time in both Washington and Beijing, the onset of summer humidity. It's not political.

This year, we are recognizing the anniversaries of some very important moments in China's recent past. Back in March, some of you probably attended our Brookings event commemorating the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of U.S.-China diplomatic relations. Our event today also happens to coincide with another very important event in modern Chinese history, the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Tiananmen.

Now, as we acknowledge these two anniversaries and the impact these events have had on the U.S.-China relations, it is also important to understand the strong impact or inference of these events on Chinese society. Arguably, nowhere can the combined social effects of China's reopening to the West and aftermath of Tiananmen be more closely seen

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than in the advancement of Christianity in China and among Chinese communities abroad.

Now, a great illustration of the long journey of the Chinese Christian movement in China over the past three decades is a story about a meeting between Deng Xiaoping and President Carter 35 years ago which I heard in Shanghai about six or seven months ago when I visited there.

Now, as an American president who cared profoundly about human rights and religious freedom, President Carter told Deng Xiaoping 35 years ago during his visits to Beijing that he had three requests -- that the Chinese authorities first reopen churches in China and no longer consider Christianity what the Chinese propaganda machine called poisoning or poisonous spiritual opium. Number two, allow the printing of Bibles in China. And number three, permit westerners to do missionary work in the country.

It was said that Deng Xiaoping replied in the meeting that these are tough issues that require some thought. The following day, Deng Xiaoping told

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President Jimmy Carter that he had thought about these requests and could provide his answers.

So here is his response. He said yes to the first one, to reopen churches. Yes to the second one, to print Bibles. But never for the third one; that China would not allow foreigners to do missionary work in China.

With such a mixed reaction from the Chinese leadership, Christianity has managed to find a foothold among students, scholars, entrepreneurs, and also Chinese from all walks of life, including officials. And in spite of some government sanctions, continuing sanctions on church activities, as we will hear from our guests in today's presentation.

It is also incredible to consider that Christianity has grown to have more than 30 million followers. This is the government's account. I think the real number is much higher according to a distinguished scholar Liu Peng, he will tell us the whole country has about 300 million believers, a significant number of them Buddhist, but also

Christians and Catholics, et cetera.

Now, it has also been interesting to see that Chinese president Xi Jinping has openly communicated with Pope Francis, and as Pope Francis is planning a visit to China's neighbor, South Korea this August, and also his visit to the Philippines next January, one can only imagine that the church will become an even greater topic of Chinese discourse in the weeks and months to come.

Now, we are honored to have some of the world's leading experts on Chinese Christianity with us, especially those who have traveled all the way from China for this particular meeting. The moderator for our first panel is my esteemed colleague, Richard Bush. He grew up as his parents served as missionaries in the Philippines, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. I hope that he doesn't mind that I mentioned these. And he will be joined by Zhang Boli, a well-known student leader in the Tiananmen movement, who later escaped China. He was one of the 28 student leaders that immediately announced after the Tiananmen

event and should be arrested, but he remarkably escaped from China, and now he serves as a pastor in Fairfax, Virginia. He is still on the way to come to this meeting, and I hope that he will arrive very soon. I'm really so delighted that he can join us, especially on this very painful anniversary. And his personal and spiritual journey is an inspiration for many of us.

Now, the panel will also include religious experts, Liu Peng and also Carsten Vala, who will provide helpful academic assessment, you know, they may have some different assessments but that's great so we can have some debate of the social-political developments surrounding Christianity in China today.

Now, for our second panel, David Aikman, former Time Magazine Beijing Bureau Chief and also of the famous book, Jesus in Beijing, will moderate discussion about how Christianity has and will continue to influence Chinese civil society.

Now, the panelists include well-known religious scholars Richard Madsen, also of the 1998

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groundbreaking book, *China's Catholics: Tragedy and Hope in Emerging Civil Society*. After so many years it is still the same subject, a paradox of fear and hope and emerging something very important in the country.

And also, we have Elisa Zhai, a young scholar who also works in NGO communities. Really already you see her impact in both academic work and also NGO and also think tank work.

And also, especially, Zhao Xiao, a distinguished economist who has already made his impact on China's development beyond the rim of economics.

Finally, in case this event was not exciting enough already, today is a very important day for our Brookings China Center. We are launching our center's Twitter account at Brookings China. Now, we invite you to follow us to stay abreast of the China Center's events, publications, and scholarly views on all China-related issues. We will also be live tweeting today's event. So now would be a great time to log

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onto Twitter and follow us. Again, our Twitter handle is BrookingsChina.

Please join me in welcoming our very special guests, and also feel free to Twitter along, just do so quietly. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

MR. BUSH: It's my great pleasure to be part of this program. Not just because my father was a missionary in Asia. Actually, he wanted to go to China in the late 1940s and was not able to get in, but he ended up writing one of the early books on the fate of religions in the first two decades of the Mao Period.

I am also very interested in this subject because it is a key issue for understanding the dynamics of state and society in China. Also, whether one is religious or not, the survival of religious belief and faith in China from 1949 to 1979 is really one of the most inspiring stories that one could ever come across, and I think it is appropriate to link Christianity in China with Tiananmen because both in a

way were a response to the political and moral vacuum in China in the post-Mao Period.

Now, I should make one point of definition. When we're using Christianity for purposes of this program, we refer not only to Protestantism but also to Catholicism.

Cheng Li has also already introduced Reverend Zhang. I'll just say that Liu Peng is a senior research fellow at the Institute of American Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. He is also the founder and head of the only private think tank in China that works on the issues of religion and the rule of law. Carsten Vala is an associate professor at Loyola University in Maryland and has written widely on these subjects.

So without further ado, I'd like to invite Liu Peng to come up and give his remarks. He and Carsten will speak for about 15 minutes.

(Applause.)

MR. LIU PENG: Good morning, ladies, gentlemen and friends. I'm very honored to be here to

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share something about religion in China. Actually, I was here almost three months ago, I think about the end of February, and it's just before Dr. Li Cheng got the position as a director of the China Center. Now he is a director of the China Center. So I try to say something, congratulations. Thank you for your invitation.

My talk is Christianity in China: Challenge versus Opportunity. I'll try to give you some rough idea what's going on in general in Christianity. But actually, Christianity here mainly means Protestant because the Roman Catholic Church is not as big as the Protestant.

Sorry for that. This is the subject.

First, let's talk a little bit about what Christianity has achieved in China today. I will say some main factors.

Number one is Christianity gets lots members keep growing rapidly. Someone said it may have 300 million believers in China. Among that, Christianity may have 100 million maybe maximum or the government

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may say 23 million, something like that. So I will say probably something in between so you can guess. Nobody knows exact numbers but the facts everyone believe it is a great number that keeps growing.

Second, it is broadly distributed everywhere, even in some special region area, like Tibet or Xinjiang. So it's hard to find a place without Christianity or Christian believers.

The third point is it is much younger and the fourth is better education, lots of college students, Ph.D.s joined Christians, make Christians very different from old time. It's no longer considered as older women in the countryside, no education. This is a very significant change. And then you have to pay attention on one thing is today's Christian believers, they have a huge or big social capital network, especially for some entrepreneurs and business people and it's really something new. Plus, some people who studied overseas come back to China and everyone tried to make a new life and new idea different from the old one. So these things may not

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be very popular, but begins.

Because of that Christianity made a change, made a difference from before in the past 35 years. However, Christianity also gives us some serious problems -- external problem, internal problem, and some problems with itself were very special -- let's say what kinds of problems?

The first is church state religions. Church state religion is not very normal or harmonious as what people expected, especially recently. In some regions, some areas, the conflicts have taken place.

The second one is whether Christianity is good or bad, is positive or negative is really uncertain or unclear. Someone said Christianity may be a tool used by a foreign government, especially western countries try to overthrow China or someone said Christianity can make a positive role, very positive contribution to society to promote the social development. So which one is correct? Actually, nobody ever made that sense clearly. It's hard to say that. It really depends on what kind of context and

who is talking in what time.

The third thing is we do have religious freedom, but religious freedom is something comes part as policy which is pretty clear. However, it doesn't have legislation or we call the law to really carry on that. That is something we need to do, but so far there is no rule of law on religion. So the highest legal documents is either what we call the constitution or something one level below the law, which is administrative regulation. So in between the constitution and administrative regulation there is a law which missed. So because of that, sometimes this is a legal issue.

Number four is widely political and social discrimination. This is not a new issue at all. This is a very, very old issue because of the policy and the rules in 1950s, 1960s. For example, whether a Christian believer can join the party and can become a government employee. Obviously, he cannot. But if you don't mention that you may do it. So why it is an issue? So this kind of thing, nobody talked that

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loudly but it exists widely. We don't think this is good.

Besides that, we have a traditional cultural conflict. For example, in the Shandong Qufu there was a place. It used to have a building. The local government tried to rebuild it with a local church. It has a permit with a legal procedures permit. Everything is legal. However, someone said you cannot do it because this is the hometown of Confucius. Why you build a church here? Is this a political issue? No. Is this a legal issue? No. This is a cultural issue. So it makes no sense.

The last one is because of all this kind of issues, it makes Christians actually under society. So people are saying why you believe Christians? Our Christians say it seems like this is not equal treatment and makes you feel you won't get equal treatment. So this kind of things has been for a long time. So we need to work out all these kind of things and make a better relation or harmonious society. Okay, that's an external issue. But that is just

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something everyone knows.

Internally, it's another size issue, which is only for Christianity itself. The first is they don't have enough or sufficient high-quality pastors. Lots of churches, lots of believers, but where are good pastors? This is the issue. If you don't have a real good high-qualified pastors, how could you make good believers or a good church?

The second is Christianity grows rapidly, but there is no sufficient or enough theological training centers or seminaries, so generally theological foundation is very small. It's badly needed. This is another issue. From a long-term point of view without a good theological base it cannot make a good church.

The last one is the internal management on church is not very standard. This is an internal issue. And some special issue only for Christianity itself. First is someone is still considered Christianity as a foreign religion Yangjiao. It's from western country. It's bad rules and why it comes

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to China, so as old words, one more Christian and one less Chinese may still function in some people. And the second is, internally, in church or in Christianity or Protestant Church there are two systems. One is Three-Self Church, which recognized by the government. Another is house church, which is unregistered church. So they are all the church but split. This is not good. And the third one is an negative impact of fundamentalism and charismatic thought. So fundamentalism or charismatic may be good here in the U.S. in some period of time, but in China it's different. It's a total different impact because China's Christians don't have its own theology. So if you adopt something, whether this is good for China or not, how can you make a balance between today and yesterday? Someone needs to really digest it. If you don't know that, then you adopt something. It may cause some consequence.

The last one is what we call the cults. Recently you heard six people killed one person in a McDonald's. This group is called Eastern Lightning.

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So it's really bad. But this is just one group of the cults. Lots of these kind of things are also growing in China today.

Why is that? Okay, we may not have time to make an analysis, but continually was a problem internally for Christians itself. So in lots of churches, lots of church members, Christian believers, they don't know the civil society, they don't have the sense of responsibility of citizens or political and legal rights as constituency. And they don't understand or they don't think much about the democracy and the constitutionalism and how can make themselves a good citizen in modern China. So they think as long as I'm a believer, that's all. So for the rest of things, they don't think much.

The last point may be more serious. In China, lots of churches, they just get in the society for a short time. So before they really understand what it means for a Bible, then they got another kind of thing corrupted, which is consumerism or secularism. Before it becomes a real church, not like

the U.S., so the secularism may be a reaction to sanctification. But if you don't make itself with a real church and not growing mature enough, then you've got something very new. It's really bad. People get confused what it means for a church. So that's just the problem.

And why is that, some factors? Someone said, oh, China make a new trends after 18<sup>th</sup> Party's Congress. I'm not a defender for President Xi. I don't want to criticize anyone. I just want to say if you say this is a trends for China, you can keep your idea in mind. You can find something like that. But if you don't agree with that, fine. You can find the same things evidenced in other ways. So I don't list everything. But in some points, someone believed that, but for the second, the religion policy maybe also can change which impacts religious trends.

The third one is whether China can make a better rule of law on religion, can make a good legislation on religion is also a key impact religion of Christianity. Among religion itself there is

competition. Confucianism, Buddhism, and folk beliefs, and some new religions, they come from outside, join the competition. Then we have a new market which is charitable business, charitable service, huge demand. If Christianity wants to play a big role, this is a new approach.

The last two, it's very important. People always forget. One is without social infrastructures, without growth of civil society, just to think religion or talk religion cannot make a good religion or good Christianity. It has to be related to the way the civil society's infrastructure -- it has to be at the same time. Globalization also impacts China. Today we use email. We use iPhone. We can get news in one second globally. All this seems make a difference.

So the conclusion is what it means for Christianity in China? More challenges with opportunities. It's not easy, but more opportunities. So it depends on Christianity itself. Permit okay is not from the government. The government may have a

good relation or bad relation with Christianity, but what about society? What about culture? What about the majority of people's attitude? If they appreciate Christianity or they enjoy or think Christianity positively, Christianity may have a brighter tomorrow. Otherwise, it's not just simply say church state religions or religion politics, it's more than that. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. VALA: Good morning. My name is Carsten Vala. I'm an associate professor at Loyola University, Maryland, and I want to say thanks to Li Cheng for the invitation, wherever he is, and to the Brookings Institution. It is an important time to be talking about religious faith and ideology given that it is June 3<sup>rd</sup> and we remember what happened 25 years ago. For myself personally, also, I first came to China 25 years ago, a few weeks after the suppression of the Tiananmen Square Movement. And for what I'm talking about today, there were many Chinese intellectuals who turned to Christianity in the

aftermath of losing trust and confidence in the Chinese Communist Party.

My own research began in the early 2000s and has continued through a research trip a week ago. I've interviewed dozens of house church leaders, official church pastors, officials in the Patriotic Protestant Associations and others from the northeast to the southwest, in cities like Beijing, Shanghai, and inland provinces, and the coastal areas.

For this talk I asked Chinese believers, I asked Chinese scholars, as well as foreign Protestants who have lived and worked in China for years, to reflect on what kind of impact they have seen Christianity doing on China. Now, for me this is all culminating in a book manuscript that I'm finished called *God above Party: The Politics of Protestants and Party State in Contemporary China*.

So today what I want to talk about is three dimensions of the rising status of Christianity. First, I will talk briefly about the individual characteristics of Protestants and the population.

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Secondly, the impact of churches and Protestant influence on professions. And then thirdly, about the relationship of the party state to Christianity.

Many of us have read about the rapid expansion of Chinese Christianity, particularly Protestants. And there's lots of dispute about the numbers. The highest numbers as Professor Liu Peng said go up as high as 100 million. I think a safer bet is to say that there is in the range of 40 to 60 million Protestants and Catholics. Some, like Purdue University, Fenggang Yang have said that he predicts that the population will expand to nearly 250 million Christians by the year 2030, making China the largest Christian country in the world.

Now, Professor Liu Peng already described some of the transformations from the characteristics in the 1980s when scholars talked about the three manys -- women, elderly, and sick, and the transformation to a Protestant -- and here I'm going to talk mostly about Protestants as well as I know them the best -- to a population that looks much like

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the broader population. So as he said, we have seen Chinese Christians become younger, become more educated, and become more balanced in terms of their gender.

The China Blue Book of Religions published by the Social Sciences Academy Report in 2009 noted that more than 70 percent of Protestants have become believers since 1993. So when we talk about the rapid expansion, it's important to note that we're talking about adherents who have been only believers for a short time. More than a quarter in that report were listed as being 15 to 44 years old.

So what this reflects is a maturing of Chinese Christianity, and it's spread among the general population. This is not an automatic transformation, but it is one that has happened through the efforts of primarily Chinese living in China, but also ethnic Chinese in the diaspora in Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong, the U.S., as well as nonethnic Chinese Christians from South Korea, the United States, and elsewhere. These efforts have

resulted in substantial populations, particularly in areas like universities. So many of the universities where I have interviewed people noted that there are campus Christian groups, and usually those campus Christian groups are not affiliated with official churches.

So this represents a rise in the status of Christians in society. Again, a 2009 annual report on China's religions published by the Social Science Academy noted a study of six universities in Shanghai where nearly five percent of the students claimed a belief in Protestant Christianity. That was triple the rate of the general Shanghai population.

That's not the case in all universities. In the same report, they mention an unnamed Beijing university where fewer than two percent of the university students were Christians. But as I was in China a week ago and I was talking to scholars, they mentioned that in Renmin University in Beijing, at least 30 professors claim belief in Protestant Christianity, and it may be as many as 50. The point

here is that the status of Christianity is rising among this intellectual and academic group.

If we look to the arts and writing as well, there are groups of Protestants who have formed circles on social media, such as Weibo or China's Twitter, and are expressing their faith through their professionals. Some, such as the famous Chinese actor, Sun Hai Ying, have made waves with outspoken stances like his controversial disapproval of Chinese gays.

But others, such as rights defense lawyers and constitutional law scholars have made names for themselves by defending weaker groups in society. I'm speaking here about Chinese farmers who have had their land illegally confiscated, by government officials. I'm also talking about groups who are practicing other religions, such as Falun Gong. People in this category include those like Teng Biao, Pu Zhiqiang, Xu Zhiyong, Gao Zhisheng. Now, the last three among these have been detained, imprisoned, or in the case of Gao Zhisheng, have been disappeared by the

authorities for their unyielding activism.

So if on the one hand Christians are becoming more like the rest of society, we also see elites in circles such as law, education, the performing arts, who are drawing on their faith and their international connections, to push for changes in society.

Well, what about the churches? Because arguably, the greatest impact that Chinese Christianity will have is through the everyday efforts of normal Chinese who are worshipping and attending churches, official and unregistered, in big cities and in rural areas.

So if we look, for example, at disaster relief, Chinese Christians gave millions of Chinese Yuan to help their fellow citizens in 2008 in the aftermath of the Sichuan earthquake. Now, the regime, the Chinese Communist Party state banned the national Protestant church from going to the affected area. That opened a door for unregistered churches to do charity work. And they have set up centers to do

direct relief and counseling. Other examples, in education we see Chinese Christians, who have established hundreds, if not thousands of schools in Beijing and in Chengdu, for example, there are church leaders who have made it a priority for their own children, to educate themselves outside of the Atheist Education System run by the party state.

In publishing, Chinese Christians have spawned a network of Christian bookstores across the country. Now, these are small, but they are publishing devotionals, study bibles, popular counseling books, and some Protestants have even begun translating and publishing major works by Western Religious figures, like John Calvin. This is having an impact among Protestants who are considering reestablishing denominational structures.

In marriage and family counseling, Chinese Protestants have recognized the crisis area and have established counseling centers, publishing works, holding seminars, maintaining online activities.

One interesting activity I was told about

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was a Protestant -- a Chinese Protestant in the northeast who had produced a counseling training program under the auspices of the Communist Youth League. The publication uses biblical principles, and it has proven so popular that that publication is being used nationwide.

Now, if we turn to churches, it's important to recognize, as Liu Peng may have suggested to you, that there is enormous diversity in China. China is often described as many Chinas in one place.

So we have to recognize that there are official churches that are registered with the party state and supervised by the Protestant Association. We also have the traditional unregistered house churches, which typically in cities will remain hidden and meet in smaller groups. And then there is a third way, which I have been doing a lot of research on, which are what they call newly emergent urban churches. These are churches that are trying to be above ground but they are rejecting registration to avoid what they see as being compromised. We can find

them in large cities, like Beijing, Chengdu, Shanghai, Wuhan, and elsewhere.

Now, the most well-known you may have heard about in the New York Times. It's Beijing Shouwang Church. Their open conflict began in the late 2000s and has continued even today. Last week there were Christians who went out to try to hold outdoor worship services and were detained by the police week after week.

Now, among this urban church group I have asked the leaders what their vision is and they have said because the authorities are so effective in learning what happens within churches, they have effectively remained hidden only to society. So they have decided that they are going to open the doors, welcome in both police, as well as domestic security agents, and at the same time be open to visitors or strangers who don't know anything about Chinese Christianity

So how do we read this development? We can look at it as a maturing of relations really between

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Chinese Christians and the party state in that there is a lessening of distrust between the church leaders and the regime, and the regime itself has developed many informal monitoring mechanisms outside of official policies, ways that they can keep track of what's happening within Chinese Christianity.

So lastly, let me talk a little bit about the Chinese Communist Party state and its relation to the status of Christianity. The Chinese Communist Party state is quite happy to channel the energies of laypeople in congregations. So when there is work being done in areas of charity, for example, poverty alleviation, social welfare work, disaster relief, the regime is quite happy to have these nongovernment entities doing work that lessens the revenue that they have to expend to do that kind of social welfare work. The limitation is that it has to happen in a way such that the regime does not lose face, so that oftentimes religious organizations cannot do it trumpeting it that they are doing it in the name of religion.

Now, why does the party state fear the

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increase or Protestant Christianity? So on the one hand there's a welcoming of what they call -- their word is "secularization," the secular work. But on the other hand there's a fear about the increasing numbers. And the fear is that the party's power will weaken and perhaps in the long run will lead to democracy.

Now, it's not surprising in some ways that these are fears. 1989 was a turning point where party figures have written letters to each other saying that we need to be careful about Protestant Christianity's rise, and we have Reverend Zhang Boli who is an example of some of the Tiananmen exiles. We can also mention Chi Ling recently became a Protestant, Zhou Fengsuo and others.

It's interesting to notice that among this group, and among the rights defense lawyers, typically the Christian faith follows their activism. So it acts as a support rather than a catalyst for their political and social activism.

Of course, if we remember back to the late

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'80s and the early '90s, also, this was a time when the Polish Catholic Church, when the Lutheran German Church, played key roles in mobilizing protests that led to the downfall of Communist regimes in Eastern Europe. So it's not surprising that the party state is fearful. There's also a continuing party historiography that links Chinese Christianity to the Western imperialism. There is a national narrative about a century of humiliation. It's sometimes easy for us to forget that in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the opium wars, Great Britain fought and defeated China, forced ports to be opened, and as gunboats came into Chinese ports, missionaries came in their train. And so there's an association not only in party propaganda but in the popular imagination that the gunboat and the Bible go together. Now, this is something very useful for the Communist Party to harp on when it is fearful of the increase in Christian numbers.

Let me make two last comments as sort of suggestions that we can discuss. One is to think about this rapid growth. I mentioned Purdue

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University Professor Yang's projection about rising Christian numbers. If the Chinese Christian population is increasing so rapidly that it will be the largest Christian country in 2030, and many have taken issue with this, we need to think about not just the numbers but the quality. If we're asking the question about change, many of the Chinese Christians have only been believers for less than 10 years. And so if we're going to look at large-scale change, we may need to look in terms of generational change. We can think back to the Chinese Christians in the Roman Empire and how the influence there took several generations, several hundred years before the major impact was happening.

The second thing I want to say is maybe one way to understand Chinese Christianity and the relationship with the party state is to think in terms of different levels. There's a party center and there's an ideology about the fear of Christianity, and then there's the local reality where local officials get to know church leaders and they find

them very useful to do good works. If we look at the recent church demolitions in Zhejiang Province, we can explain some of it by that way.

So the concept here for academics is public transcript; that there is a public version of what has to happen. And that means that Chinese Christians can make an impact socially, individually, as long as they don't become too high profile. When they become too prominent, that is when the party state is more likely to step in and to crack down.

Thank you very much, and I look forward to our discussion.

(Applause.)

MR. ZHANG BOLI: First, I would like to briefly introduce myself. I was one of the student leaders in 1989 during the Tiananmen Square incident. I was one of the 21 Most Wanted by the Chinese government. But among us, many of us have become Christians. Chai Ling, Yuan Zhiming and many others. This is showing you the progress of Christianity in China.

Today I'm going to talk about policy regarding Christianity. And basically, for looking at how Chinese Christianity is going to develop.

China has never experienced such fast progress of Christianity. In 1949, there were 800,000 Christians in China. Then, by 1989, when the Tiananmen incident happened, we had about 10 million Christians. But by 2004, according to official data, there were 100 million Christians.

In one of the shows produced by the Chinese military in 2013, there was something that's been said. Basically, the influence of Christianity has now become more important or is emerging because of the lack of a mainstream value system in China. And so quietly, the number of Christians has actually reached 100 million in China according to relevant documentation. According to the analysis of Mr. Liu Peng just now, basically, churches in China are divided into two categories. One, as we know, the house churches; the other one are the government monitored churches.

So both categories are under the pressure of the government only that the House churches are under greater pressure. So basically, the Three-Self Churches have been there for 20 years. And they are under the protection of the Chinese government. By last year, the number of Three-Self Christian memberships has reached over 20 million. However, recently we have seen some changes in the Chinese government's policy towards religion.

The reason that caused them to decide to make that change is because Christianity is moving very, very quickly in China. So the Chinese government started cracking down on churches at the beginning of 2014, using Wenzhou as one of their key areas. The way they cracked down on the churches was by taking down the crosses or crucifixes, as well as demolishing the churches. Or some churches had been forced to rename themselves, rebrand themselves. And the house churches have been closed down. Leaders of the house churches were either under house arrest or had been arrested. And they do a religious background

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check on all the government officials as well. CCP members have to sign a pledge to not believe in any religion. And online sales of Christian products is prohibited. These are all phenomena that are emerging in China.

This is a Sanjiang church in Wenzhou which accommodates 3,000 members for worship. It was a landmark in Wenzhou before it was demolished. But last month it was gone. Now, the Chinese leaderships are tailored towards Buddhism. Basically, they are opposed to Christianity and Islam. So this Xingyun monk came from Taiwan and he was -- he had an audience with Mr. Xi Jinping.

Those are the other dignitaries, Buddhist dignitaries. Xia Baolong, who is the party secretary of Zhejiang Province, the number one party secretary of the Zhejiang Province, originally the right-hand man of Xi Jinping. And he was his assistant when Xi Jinping was party secretary, and he openly supported Buddhism. He was one of the advocates for the cracking down of the churches in Wenzhou.

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In the Blue Book on National Security issue by the Chinese government, it says the pervasiveness of religions is a threat to Chinese socialism. So from here it is clear what kind of policies the Chinese government has towards religion from the actions of the state president as well as the Blue Book. Starting on April 3<sup>rd</sup> of this year, the churches were demolished.

I mentioned earlier that first they took down the crucifix or the cross, and over a dozen churches are already demolished. Or they would cover it up in tarps so that you could not see the façade. And here are 3,000 protestors who are trying to protect their church. And to do that, many supporting thousands of Christians are supported by praying with them throughout the night. These are all pictures. April 28<sup>th</sup>, finally, the church was completely raised to the ground.

Up to this point, more than 60 churches had already been gone. This is one, another photo, April 24<sup>th</sup>, another church was raised. Over 300 police and

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public security officers demolished a church and hurt six Christians. Many of them sustained injuries during the process of demolishing.

So why would they start with churches in Wenzhou? Wenzhou is now being called "the new Jerusalem of China," where you see the fastest development of Christianity because Wenzhou is famous for its businessmen around the world, and not only do they promote Christianity locally; they also bring Christianity all over the world. Fifty percent of all the former Wenzhou residents overseas now are Christians. And in China, 20 percent of Wenzhou residents are Christians. Therefore, this is what many scholars have called this action of the Chinese government as a decapitation of Christianity in China. To crackdown on Christianity, you have to start with Wenzhou.

On March 28, 2014, the Provincial Committee had a meeting. So they said that we need to take actions to curb the overly heated development of Christianity and the overpopulation of Christians. So

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in this document, they had to do three things. First is to take down the cross. And then the second one is to take down the churches or the structures of these gatherings which the government considers as illegal buildings. So the third action would be to set up a mechanism to restrict the growth of Chinese Christians but to encourage other religions that would be conducive to the development or the culture of China. So as I said before, they first took down the cross. So they started with taking down the cross and then demolishing the church.

So the Chinese government always has this habitual way of doing things in that they will first pick some pilot areas to make them as examples. They do that because especially when it comes to very sensitive religions or political issues, they do a little just to see what would be the world's reaction. Because when the Chinese government started to take down crosses or crucifixes, there was no reaction from the West. Many countries considered it the internal affairs of China, but we know that religion is not an

internal affair. Freedom of religion is the first and foremost freedom or right of the people. Without freedom of religion, you can't talk about any other freedom. So in May, they started taking down churches. This very beautiful cathedral or church is no longer there. One after another.

This has been covered with a tarp so that it won't be demolished. It was covered by a tarp but then it still did not escape the fate of being demolished. May 7<sup>th</sup>, in Hangzhou. This is another one in Hangzhou that's been taken down. A very historic building.

May 8<sup>th</sup>, on Wu Chang Street, another church was demolished. And the name of the church etched into the wall had also been removed. And another cathedral(that was taken down). This is a historic building with over a few hundred years of history. The crucifix has always been there. It was attacked once during the Cultural Revolution.

This is a Seventh Day Adventist Church taken down. In two hours it was raised to the ground. This

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is what they called the Riverside Church in Wenzhou.

This is what they call the Church of Bethany having received a notice from the government asking them to stop their services. This letter came from the RAB.

Another one. Go on.

Another.

This is covered in tarp. Cross being thrown to the ground.

With all these pictures, this is the kind of impression we have now. This all happened after someone in China proclaimed that the spring of Christianity has arrived in China. I'm still optimistic about development of Christianity in China. I'm optimistic because of what I saw being the growth of Christianity from 1989 till now. This is the wonderful work that God has done. And also, the wonderful leading of the Holy Spirit in China because the Chinese churches are not largely supported by Western churches, they grow mostly by themselves. And of course, in terms of theological training and so

forth, they are not as well trained.

However, Chinese churches have always been under the pressure of the government. So internally, they actually grow very well and very soundly. But I will never be optimistic about the Chinese government's policy towards religion because Christianity is in direct opposition to the Communist Party, as well as one party leadership. Don't put your hope too high up on that the Chinese government will bring spring to Christianity. So I don't think I should pile my hope on the Chinese government. I believe God will have even better or more wonderful things for the churches because the churches have grown in the midst of persecution. The stronger the persecution, the purer the church will become. The more persecutions, the more lively the church will become. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. BUSH: Thanks to our speakers for three outstanding presentations. We now have about half an hour for questions. So the rules are, first of all,

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wait for the Mic. Then please identify yourself and specify to whom your question is posed. And please try to keep your question brief.

So who -- okay, Arnold, right here in the front.

MR. ZEITLIN: My name is Arnold Zeitlin, and I've been teaching in China in Wenzhou.

Can someone put Christianity in China in context of all religious activity in China? In other words, we haven't even talked about Islam, for example, this morning. There's been some mentions of Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, and other traditional religions. Where does Christianity stand and what is the dimension of religious observance in China now? Anyone can answer that.

MR. LIU PENG: I think in China today, government recognizes the five big religions we call *Wu Da Zong*. Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism. Among these five religions, actually, the real powerful religions are Buddhism and Protestantism. The rest of the three cannot compete

or compare with these two because Christianity or Protestantism keep growing rapidly. Mainly it is Protestantism. The Roman Catholic Church is growing as well, but it's not as fast as Protestantism. So this is number one.

Number two is the rest of the three groups, they all have some kind of internal issues which restrict them. They cannot spread or distribute everywhere to anyone like what Buddhism or Protestantism indeed for majority people, mainly Han people. I will give you an example. Islam would never be a major religion in China. It cannot be main believe or faith for Han people and for some crazy reason they don't eat pork. Chinese people love dumpling. I don't know whether this is the reason but it's a fact. So it's only forminority groups.

Taoism is very, very weak. I will say it is sort of good things for your body or exercise yu jia or something like that more than religion. So you don't need to think that much.

Among the three other groups, the Catholic  
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Church, Protestant Church, and Buddhism, mainly Han Buddhism, Roman Catholic has a long tradition but it cannot spread or distribute as much as Protestant for many religions -- religious reasons, political reasons. This is another story. Before normalization, before China and Vatican it is hard to imagine Roman Catholics can grow up as fast as Protestants. So it's really competition between Protestants and Buddhism. The Buddhism is mainly for business people and lots of officials, government officials. Protestantism Mainly for educated people, but among them some elites, some grassroots, like Henan, Shandong, Anhui, Jiangsu, what you heard 20 years ago, 30 years ago until today still keep growing.

So this is some kind of rough picture. If you talk religion competition, it's really an issue of which one is really bigger or can be a main =. Either Buddhism or Protestant. Confucianism is no hope because its hierarchy is look back. Today we call it democracy or equal treatment, all these kinds of

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things, and for Confucianism, they look back. Meanwhile, they don't talk, so they don't talk afterlife. It's not real religion, so the issue is whether Protestants can beat Buddhism or not, unless someone created a new religion which cannot be a success. This is my answer.

MR. BUSH: I saw a question back there.

MS. HOFFMAN-STOWE: Priscilla Hoffman-Stowe, State Department, retired.

My parents were missionaries in China, so I'm interested in any of the panelists saying what you think is the judgment of Chinese believers on the role of the foreign missionaries starting in the 1800s -- positive, negative, mixed?

MR. BUSH: Carsten, do you want to?

MR. VALA: Yeah. I think there's a very positive evaluation in my experience. I think there's an alternative narrative to the official historiography that paints missionaries as exploiters, as people who didn't want to allow the Chinese believers to take charge of the churches. The Three-

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Self idea is actually -- originally was a foreign missionary's idea, and it was then taken over. There was an anti-Christian movement in the 1920s. Some of the missionaries saw the writing on the wall and started to hand over leadership to Chinese believers, but among Chinese believers there is a very strong affection for the missionary work. There are missionaries -- many of these stories circulate about missionaries who came back during the anti-Japanese War or the Second World War from the late '30s to '45, who came and protected Chinese believers and died and their graves are there. There are also foreign Christians who come into China and want to reestablish their denominational structures, so there certainly are power struggles going on. I've heard stories about foreign missionaries who come in and are trying to insist that Chinese believers act a certain way or do certain hand motions, and that's what efficacious. But overall I would say there's a reflection that -- and ironically, there's a reflection that the missionaries are good. Ironically, the Three-Self,

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meaning that the official churches are self-governing, self-supporting, self-propagating, those churches look most like the missionary churches. They have most similar mainline types of liturgies, of hymns, and people in those official churches trying to promote new kinds of Chinese written hymns have a very difficult time. So ironically, the house churches in many ways are more indigenous than the official churches are.

MR. BUSH: Another question? Right here.

MR. WON: Hi. My name is Seiko Won. I teach at Southern Methodist University.

It is a question directed to Professor Liu Peng. I think you mentioned that Christians have no social responsibility or concept of civil society. My impression is that Christians are deeply interested in the sense of modern country or democracy or constitutionalism. I'm just curious whether, number one, you could elaborate a little bit more on that, and secondly, what sort of civil society does the government envision?

MR. BUSH: The second part of the program is about Chinese Christianity and civil society, so maybe we'll defer that.

MR. LIU PENG: So we can escape.

MR. BUSH: Well, no, do the first part of the question.

MR. WON: Elaborate on the Chinese Christians' lack of social responsibility.

MR. LIU PENG: I'm talking the general phenomena. It's not just in house church or Three-Self Church. Christian believers generally, I think they are good citizens, but because of lots of political pressure or discrimination and tradition, they try to keep churches alive and take this as top priority. As long as they can worship and they have some kind of congregation people, I think they feel happy enough. They don't think lots things as what you saw here in the U.S. Part of the reason is they don't have this kind of environment. Meanwhile, the government doesn't have a civil society no social infrastructure to provide NGOs free speech, free

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assembly, free association, all this kind of thing.  
But meanwhile, the people are also saying if they join  
the church, probably mainly it's just for themselves.

One example is very good, which makes a very  
positive impression for the whole country is a  
Wenchuan earthquake. So a church provided lots of  
help, relief on the Wenchuan earthquake to the people  
there. But that is not very normal. After that where  
they can help people? Where is a platform? where they  
can set up their stations or organizations or office  
to do regular charitable work? It is a big, big  
issue. No registration permit. No legal status. No  
legal regulation or law to ensure them to have a free  
tax, to have a deduction for donations. So how can  
they raise up money? All these issues are not just a  
single one. Without all kinds of conditions, It is  
hard for them. Meanwhile, they need to learn how to  
work as a citizen, to have their neighbors, without  
mention much religious issues. So this takes time, a  
little while, but they were coming up. It's just a  
long process. Now is the very beginning.

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MR. BUSH: Okay. Thank you.

The gentleman in the back. And then I'll come up here.

SPEAKER: Thank you. My name is Qian Qiang. I'm the founder of a nonprofit organization called Channel Reporter Foundation, D.C.

I have a question for both Mr. -- Professor Liu Peng and Reverend Zhang Boli.

Because you both talk about the growing Christian population in China, and Professor Liu pointed out that there are some, both internal and external problem, like shortage of pastors. And also, some problem within the church itself, but while Reverend Zhang Boli pointed out that churches themselves are growing very healthy, and mostly form within China with very little assistance from outside tie.

So what do you think -- who do we believe? As I understand it, the Sanjiang Church by the state media reporting is a registered legal entity in Whenzhou, why it was tore down. So what is your

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response to that? Thank you.

MR. LIU PENG: Okay. I'll try to give you a short answer. You can believe both, number one. Whatever someone said on China must be correct because it's huge, its complexity. It's just big.

So from my perspective, I think if you talk church in China generally, churches keep growing rapidly, which is a true, but if you go to a single church, you'll find lots of difficulties, problems. Maybe other problems in other churches.

A different problem on a different church, mainly, the general was no more problem for most of the church. Never means there is a church with all kinds of problems as what I point. But I also want to say although they have all kinds of problems, these problems never stopped there. Sure, it's neat to learn all these kinds of things in order to grow up, to mature enough. They cannot become very mature without all these kinds of problems.

MR. BUSH: Reverend Zhang?

MR. ZHANG BOLI: So the Sanjiang church was

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indeed a Three-Self Church, which is considered a legitimate church in China. So the government actually had given award or complements on the church being one of the best structures in the city. So there is a phenomenon that we should pay attention to. In fact, the Chinese government is also cracking down on Three-Self Churches. So the TSPM churches are very unhappy with what is happening. since it had a lot of joint projects with the government before and was assisted by the government, so they basically supported the government's policy on churches, and also supported the government's policies. For example, they were prohibited from preaching or evangelizing to people under 18 years old and they did that, and they abided by that. And sometime they also helped the RIBs and also the public security departments to crack down on house churches. So a lot of people were puzzled as to why the government now is putting its hand on the Three Self-Churches as well. And that's why it drew my attention and that's why I was studying it.

This is causing a discomfort or a very This is causing a discomfort, or uneasy feeling among the senior leadership of the Three-Self Churches. So the head of the CCC in China, Mr. Chen, who is actually Reverend Chen, who is also the president of the Union Theological Seminary in Nanjing recently wrote an article. Basically, some thoughts on the modern management of the churches by the Zhejiang provincial government. He was critical of the government's handling of the churches there being too harsh, which actually marred the image of the government as he said. That would actually cause distability in a society he said. And those two committees, namely the leaders of CCC and TSPM, had also been critical.

The Bible says that all things work together for the benefit of good. So I believe that in the future, many members of the Three-Self Churches may shift towards house churches. So I think as they became disappointed with the government's protection, then they would shift towards house churches, and so we have seen that thousands and thousands of Three-

Self Churches' leadership, as well as the members had signed petitions to the government criticizing the demolishing of the churches.

There were examples in the past where CCC or TSPM pastors or clergy left their churches to form their own house churches. They were not happy with the theological theories. In the past they were disappointed with the churches philosophically, and now they are disappointed with the government policy. So you could see that these demolished churches, they were Three-Self Churches.

MR. BUSH: I would only observe that in American Protestantism there is a great variety in the governance of churches, levels of centralization, decentralization, institutionalization. It would be surprising if you didn't find that kind of variety in China as well, even though the political situation is very different.

The lady back there?

MS. WELD: I'm Susan Weld. I work on Asian Law at Georgetown Law Center, and I'm interested that

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this obviously happens in many regions and this is just the picture in Zhejiang. When I was back and forth to Henan Province all during the '90s for two months a year, one of the strange things you could see there is when I first went there were churches in each town that you passed through to go to the site we were looking at. And then in another two years it was as if they had never been there. So this is already happening and maybe happened earlier than -- I don't know whether Henan is still happening -- the destruction of churches is still going on in Henan, but we never heard of it outside of China.

MR. Vala: I can tell you that in the '90s there was this strike hard campaign, Yan Da Yun Dong, and one of those targets was to strike at churches. The news sometimes doesn't come out from inland areas. There are varying opinions as to whether it's useful to involve international media or not. Some people, like in the U.S., there are a diverse range of opinions. Whether international media pressure actually helps to ameliorate. And you can imagine

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that after the media goes away the locals still have to deal with each other -- the church leaders on one hand and the officials on the other.

So from the reading that I've been doing and the interviews that I've done in the last week, it seems that this is perhaps a testing point that may spread more broadly, but right now it is in Zhejiang Province, and the close association as we've heard between the party secretary as the right hand man of Xi Jinping, this may indicate that there's not a lot written. There are some documents that say that it's targeting Christianity in Zhejiang Province. There have been some rumors that there are also Buddhist sites that have been raised. The official excuse is that this church had -- it was not only opposite the government headquarters; it was built far larger than the permit allowed. And yet we know that the policy on the ground is very different from what you read on the paper. So local officials knew that it was being built oversized. And so we can't explain the demolition in those terms. But whether this is the

kickoff or a larger campaign or whether this is a testing and an isolated incident, I think it's very difficult to tell because of that disjuncture between the party center and the grassroots reality. But maybe Reverend Zhang?

Rev. ZHANG BOLI: In the past, the Chinese government was trying very hard to limit the growth of church, and for one period of time they tried to limit the growth of the house churches. So when the Chinese government took down the house churches, they are not taking down the structure per se, the building per se; they were taking down the church, the assembly of church. Because they don't go to like a particular place for the official meeting; they just gather together.

And everyone heard the news that two years ago there was a church called the Shouwang Watchers Church that had been demolished. It was the largest house church in Beijing. They were not allowed to build a church per se, and so they rented an office building and they spent about 30 million renminbi,

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which are actually donations from the brothers and sisters without any foreign assistance at all. But they never got the key to that building because the government withheld the key. And so they had their assembly somewhere on the street. And when they went to the street, the government arrested them. In the beginning there were a few hundred people that were arrested, and they were detained for a couple weeks. The number went down to dozens of them. They also held the services on the street, and again they were arrested.

So it's actually like a cat and a mouse game, and so now they have this practice of, okay, if you go there I'll arrest you and then I'll let you go, and then I'll arrest you again. And what really shocked us is that recently they are putting their hands on the Three-Self Churches as well, and then for the petition, they totally ignore the petitions of the leaders of the Three-Self Church. Because this Patriotic Church is actually one of the fundamental national policies of China because the Chinese

government really hopes that they can have control over the five main religions in China. And so for the past two decades, they basically protected the Three-Self Church. And so in the last two months they were cracking down on the Three-Self Churches as well, which actually dented the confidence of the members towards the government. And so they lost all their illusion of the government. I don't think this is necessarily a bad thing; that the bad thing works for something good because there is only one head in the church, which is Jesus.

MR. BUSH: I'll take the last question right here.

MR. LIU PENG: This is a circle question. I may have to say a few words to finish this question.

The question is why the government tornd down the Three-Self Church building. This is a big picture because the new leader wants to make China different and the strategy and approaches are different from before. So maybe China should talk a little bit more about nationalism and patriotism or

something about traditional culture which is easier or better to get people to work together, rather than what was before. So try to cool down a little bit about the foreign impact, like Christianity, is to feed this general purpose. In other words, China is growing as a strong super power, new super power globally, so if China always does something without China's characteristic or features, it may not be good. But Christianity, as I mentioned, is too strong, too fast, too big. So in some points maybe it's good or it's time to cool down or slow down it at some points.

So there is a significant difference this time the campaign torn down church and campaigns in 1950s, 1960s is. Before, the target was people. The government never tornd down church buildings in 1950s. All the church buildings were there but no pastors, no believers or combined or merged all people in one church building. The purpose is it destroys Christianity no matter whether you have a building or not. A building can change the use. We

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need buildings, but we don't need the believers, the pastors, organizations. This time, no one or almost nobody has been arrested, but makes the image much smaller. Okay.

MR. BUSH: Okay. I think we have run out of time. This has been a very stimulating session. We'll take a break for about 10 minutes, so please reconvene by then. But before we break, please join me in thanking our three presenters for an outstanding job.

(Applause)

MR. AIKMAN: I guess we say good morning still. Thank you very much, Dr. Li, for your very kind invitation to Brookings with a very distinguished panel of co-speakers, and I'm delighted to be here. I never thought I would be invited to Brookings, but I'm delighted to come. That's great.

I'm supposed to introduce the panel discussion of Christianity's impact on civil society in China and the neutral relationship. What I want to do in the few minutes that I have is to put the

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context -- to put civil society in a context far beyond where China is right now. And actually to go back to the origins of the concept altogether.

In Greek society civil society was thought of as a way that you could improve the welfare of ordinary citizens without actually being involved in political direction. That was the loose association of the notion of civil society.

But where we saw civil society really taking root in a Western country was, of course, the United States. It's striking that at America's founding the founding fathers were almost all of them church going men, not all of them were Orthodox Christians at all, of course, but not only were they church going men, but they believed that Christianity was a good thing because it made people virtuous. That was the supposition.

In fact, the belief that a constitutional democratic republic could not function unless the people who were the citizens were virtuos was absolutely, solidly embraced by all of the founders at

the origins of the American Revolution. You can see this when you read the correspondence among the founders.

The founders had studied very carefully the failure of certain republics in the past not to function, or at least to break down and collapse. They'd come to the conclusion that the main reason was the lack of personal virtue, or if you like, Republican virtue, in the people operating those republics.

So they were determined to change their approach when they set up the American government. It's very interesting to read the quotes of some of the American founders. For example, John Adams, after he was President and having a correspondence with another former President, Thomas Jefferson, wrote "without religions this world would be something not fit to be mentioned in polite society, I mean hell." Jefferson agreed.

Jefferson, of course, was not what you would call a conservative or an evangelical or even an

orthodox Christian of any kind. But he ascribed to the virtues he believed Christianity was instructing ordinary citizens to embrace.

Then we move on to the first important foreign observer of the new American republic just a few decades after its establishment. Of course, the famous person you all know about, Alexis de Tocqueville. One of his most interesting remarks is "in my arrival in America, the religious aspect of the country was the first that attracted my attention, and the longer I stayed there the more did I perceive the great political consequences resulting from this state of things. Whilst the law permits Americans to do what they please, religion prevents them from conceiving and forbids them to commit what is rash or unjust. The Americans combined the notions of Christianity and liberty so closely in their minds that it is impossible to make them conceive of the one without the other."

De Tocqueville, at large, wrote about an aspect of civil society that he felt was absolutely

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essential to its successful functioning. He used the Latin word *mores* which basically means habits, customs, cultural traditions, and so forth. It is a feature of American civil society that it has risen to the occasion time and again after natural or political catastrophes have hit the country.

The classic example, very recently, is Hurricane Katrina in 2005 which, of course, caused tremendous damage, killed lots of people, devastated the City of New Orleans, and caused thousands of residents to have to leave. What was striking about Hurricane Katrina is the follow-up by thousands, literally thousands of American churches that sent their members down to New Orleans to help reconstruct the houses that had been destroyed, repair the houses, help displaced people acquire new accommodation. I mean, it was a phenomenal point.

This was observed by many foreigners who were reporting on what the Hurricane Katrina catastrophe had produced. This American concept of helping each other in all circumstances quite

independently of what the government says or is or is not doing has been central throughout American history. I'll just give you one current example.

Thousands of churches in the United States are sending out teenagers and slightly older people on a program called Reach Work Camp. What these programs do is to repair the houses and the living facilities of poorer communities across the country.

The people who go are young. They're not necessarily skilled, but they're very eager to work and help. This is the tradition that most American churches, Protestant churches as well as Roman Catholic, really encourage.

Let's go now to China and see the analogous situation. Liu Peng and several other speakers have pointed out the remarkable fact that after the Sichuan earthquake in 2008 there was an outpouring of Christian support for the survivors of the earthquake, and efforts to reconstruct the villages which had been completely destroyed.

The amount of money that was raised by the  
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Chinese Christian churches was absolutely phenomenal. Chinese Christians are extraordinarily generous, and they certainly showed it in the wake of the Sichuan earthquake.

Just to give you one example, and we'll mention a city that we've mentioned before, Wenzhou, China's most capitalistic city and one of its most Christian, the Catholic diocese, that's the official Catholic Church, the Catholic Patriotic Association collected about \$395 thousand and sent it to Sichuan. The Protestant Pastoral Union in Chengdu raised \$8 million and helped rebuild entire villages.

This wonderful generosity by Christians was noticed by the government and widely praised at the time. But the problem is it was not followed up at a sustained level as it has been in the United States because of the bureaucracy and restrictions that Liu Peng mentioned.

Now what we're seeing is this very peculiar response to the presence of Christians in China. The growth is supposed to be excessive. Who says it's

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excessive? Who decides what is excessive growth of any religion? There should be a new award given for Communist Party leaders, and I'll start with suggesting Xia BaoLong in the Province of Zhejiang a good friend, apparently, or at least an associate of President Xi Jinping, Xia BaoLong ought to be awarded the Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin award for the destruction of churches. Why do I say that?

In 1931 in the month of December, Joseph Stalin as part of his anti-religious campaign destroyed the largest church in the whole of Moscow in broad daylight. Absolutely trashed it. Well, good old Xia BaoLong is trying to duplicate that, and maybe Mr. Xi will get a sort of ancillary award.

Just one last thing that I want to mention. Civil society depends on trust among its members. It requires a certain measure of freedom, and it certainly requires truth. One of the struggles that China is having to develop a civil society that is healthy and successful is that there is not enough truth around. There is not enough trust.

Let me just quote a reader who wrote -- actually it was a columnist in the Beijing Evening News just a couple of years ago. He said the following. He said there is no trust in what you buy in the store. You can't rely on anything. People have lost their confidence in others. Of course, the effect of the Cultural Revolution was to destroy people's trust among each other, generally.

If you look to China's future you have to come to the conclusion that China in order to have a healthy civil society and be a nation that is respected around the world it must speak truthfully and it must speak honestly about its own past.

I was in Beijing 25 years ago, and I saw an awful lot of stuff that happened in and around Tiananmen Square. Of course, most of the killing was not in Tiananmen Square. It was on the approach to Tiananmen along Chang'an Avenue.

I just want to leave you with a quotation from an elderly Chinese gentleman who approached me, a foreigner whom he didn't know, but he realized I was,

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obviously, either a reported or a diplomat. He held me by the lapels and he said, thank you, thank you for telling the truth to the world about what the Chinese government has been doing to the Chinese people.

Now, I realize the suppression of the student movement was a very complex issue. There were lots of different sides of things. There were certainly many points that the government could make about the work of hooligans, and so forth, but until China is willing to face its own past and really speak truth about it I don't see how you can ever get a successful, and a flourishing civil society. Thank you.

MS. AUTRY: Thank you, Dr. Li. I'm much honored to be here. Thank you for everybody. Before we talk about how Christianity affect Chinese society, I want to talk about what Christianity was like in China. Because the characters of Christianity affects how it engages with society.

So I argue that Christianity has long been transformed from a foreign religion to a Chinese

religion. So my title is "Becoming Chinese: How Christianity and China are transforming each other".

I'm glad several of you have already mentioned this notion that "one more Christian is one less Chinese". This is a very popular saying in china. The idea is, well if you converted to Christianity means you converted to a foreign religion, you must turn your back against your own tradition. That becoming a Christian means you're abandoning your Chinese identity.

That notion really comes from a historical, unique context where yes, although Christianity was brought to China before 635 A.D., the large sum of Christians brought to China was more after 1840 was yes, along the gunboats. So for a period of time, yes, Christianity was a foreign religion. Then when you think of Christianity you think of imperialism and foreign infiltration.

But even during the time between 1840 to the beginning of the 20th Century when Christianity was a foreign religion when the church was established

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mostly be foreign missions. Christianity, the foreign religions still affecting society significantly, especially in advancing China's modernization.

Christian churches, and especially the mission churches, have advanced China's -- started China's modern hospitals, the Western hospitals, has started China's mass education, translated Bibles, started modern printing, and brought all kinds of modern technology to China.

For example, in higher education areas China's first 16 colleges were all established by foreign missionary educators. These colleges and their graduates were instrumental to China's early modernization.

So the Chinese people, the Chinese believers on one hand they were thankful for the care of foreign missionaries. On the other hand, they were resenting the foreigners of the religion. In a broader context that was the same time, the 1920s and the '30s, the rise of the wild spread of anti-foreign sentiment, and the rise of China's nationalism really affected or

limited the impact of this foreign Christianity and its influence in China. That's also the same time Chinese believers really eagerly looking for or searching to indigenize their religion.

So, three notable groups have emerged in that time. They were the True Jesus Church, Watchmanese, Assembly House *Xiaoqun*. They were the China Inland Nation, *NeiDiHui*. Those groups, they were nothing about foreigners. They reject the foreign aids. They rejected the foreign organizational clergy call of support, and they had truly indigenous leadership.

By 1949, studies showed that more than a quarter of China's believers already belong to those Chinese indigenous Independent Churches. Also, interestingly those Chinese churches, they were rejecting the foreigners of Christianity by rejecting the idea of advancing society through education and medicine. Because those areas were counted as the foreign Western liberalism or the product of social gospel.

They want one thing-- is to save Chinese souls, and they want the fundamental approach of Christianity. Not the Western liberalized, social gospel where advancing society is the top call.

So, but interestingly how they engage in society is through organizing large evangelism conferences, have also marked with Pentecostalism where miracles, miraculous healing, speaking tongues, and all kinds of super natural encounters were the primary characteristics of those Chinese religions.

Also, for example, the True Jesus Church, the primary Pentecostal group, for a while they were called the anti-opium religion, because people became Christian through this group of people, through experience of healing from their opium addiction. Where, especially in the south, South China, Southeastern China, lots of Chinese men and women were addicted to opium. Opium has also become a symbol for humiliation because you hear the term of the China's, Asia's sick men.

So in addition to this emerging, thriving

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grassroots indigenous movements that China is seeking to indigenize their religion, the Chinese Christian elites were also trying very hard to think of ways to reform their country with their new found faith. I'll give you a few examples.

For example, Yan Yangchu was a very significant reformer who was the leading person to advance China's mass education movement to the Chinese peasants. So in the early 20th Century, most of the Chinese were illiterate, especially the peasants, that no one could read or write.

He started his passion for serving the Chinese peasants during World War I. When he was in Europe he realized that there were thousands of Chinesepeasant workers *Min Gong* in Europe during World War I because, for example, in France they were lacking labor. So they brought in about 30,000 Chinese *Mingon* to France to help build, the work in the farms, to help build factories, or constructions.

But no one really reached out to these Chinese peasant workers living abroad. So Yan

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Yangchu realized those group of people they were poor, and also they were illiterate. The core of poverty to him is lack of education. So he started to -- he made a very practical solution by creating a 1,000 character dictionary, pocket dictionary, to teach mass peasant workers how to read and write Chinese.

Also, he was the person, by the way, he was a Yale graduate. When he went back to China, he organized a massive Chinese highly educated intellectuals to go and work with the countryside peasants and to live with them. I suspect the leader during the *Shang Shan Xia Xiang* was actually as copied by this model of mass educational movement.

Second, in business setting, this one is also very interesting. Ma Yingbiao he was the pioneer of China's modern businesses, and especially in bringing the idea of chains of department stores to China, which is a very Western concept. He started this first, and also arguably the most reputable China's chain department stores called the Sincere Company *Xianshi Gong Si*.

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First from Hong Kong, then through to Shanghai, Guangzhou and then eventually become a transnational corporation that he opened chains in London and other parts of Europe. Through this, his business, he was also engaging work charity work, education, serving the society. His business was a mode of combining the traditional Chinese practices with modern business management and Christian ethics.

For example, the other person Dr. Wu Yifang, she was the first female university president in China. By then in the first part of the 20th century, it was considered immoral for women to receive any education outside of home. If you were from a well-off family you might receive some kind of private tutor at home, but it would count as immoral if women study outside the home, and even engaging public affairs.

So she was one of the pioneers for advocating women to receive education and to receive equal rights. Interesting, herself never married and had children. In the society that marriage was

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universal, she being a testimony of women, it's okay not to marry, not to have children, but pursuing your education was a leading pioneer advocate voice. In this picture she was one of the only four women to sign the United Nation Charter in 1945 when the United Nations was established.

Fast forward, also, Shi Meiyu. She was more well known in the West as Mary Stone. She was one of the first Chinese, and also Chinese women to receive a Western medical degree. She was the founder of China's huge nursing profession. Again, putting her in the context of China, where it was considered very inappropriate for a man to have any forms of physical contact with a woman, even including holding hands or passing an object from a man to a woman.

So what happened was the foreign missionaries established all these hospitals in China, bring the best and advanced technology. The Chinese women were not allowed to go to see a doctor, especially when a doctor was a man. So end up lots of women were not able to receive medical service,

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including women who go through delivery.

So she herself realized that Chinese need female doctors and female nurses. She studied abroad and then went back to really encourage Chinese women to come outside of the home to work as nurses so that it benefits the broader female population in China.

So those are all examples of, in different areas, of the Chinese elites were actually engaging society during the Republic China. Fast forward, the indigenization process continued, although there was political oppression. Interestingly, after 1949, the political oppression leads to some unexpected consequences of actually contributing and speeding up the process of becoming Chinese.

For example, after 1949, especially in the early 1950s, all foreigners were eventually all kicked out of China, and all foreign connections, if you have an organizations or even NGOs who were financially connected with the west, the financial connection was cut off. Clergies were sent back to whatever their country came from, and foreigners of Christianity was

smashed down.

However, that created a positive, unexpected positive consequence that really sped up the process of a Chinese Christianity become a Chinese affair. So nowadays when you ask people, so what about Christianity? What do you think about? What do you believe?

So in 2007, I was involved in this study that we conducted one of the largest surveys in China, random sample from all nationwide. We have about 7,000 respondents asking them all kinds of their beliefs and practice of their spirituality. One question was to ask, what do you think about -- what's the impression of Christianity and other religions, Buddhism or other religions?

So this question goes basically to saying, what's your opinion about the foreign notions? One is Christianity is a foreign Western region, thus it is not suitable for the Chinese? Compare to Buddhism is an Indian religion, thus it is not suitable for Chinese.

Surprisingly, we didn't expect to see this, more than half of the population surveyed, 52 percent of Chinese do not think Christianity is a Western religion anymore. Thus, the notion of "Christianity is not suitable for China" is not applicable. An interesting similarity that, in a sense, 60 percent of people consider Buddhism is not a foreign religion.

So in other words, Christianity is not more foreign to the Chinese than Buddhism. After all, Buddhism is a foreign religion anyway, and after all, Communism is not less foreign than Christianity. Only about 21 percent of the population surveyed consider still Christianity is a Western religion.

Actually, in our surveys, we further ask about pairing their sociodemographic backgrounds with their opinions. We found that, interestingly, as the education level goes up the idea of considering Christianity is Western religion goes down. So the more educated you are the less likely you think Christianity is a Western religion.

In a similar study, which is a few years

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earlier, 2003 conducted by Dr. Gao Shining. Dr. Gao was also one of the leading scholars in China on religion. Asking about -- this is actually focusing only in Beijing where political is not sensitive, about their opinions of their religion, especially Christianity.

Interestingly we found that more than 83 percent of the population surveyed considered that, yes, I'm willing to reveal my Christian identity. It's okay to let people know I am a Christian. Which is also surprising, because you would think of in the areas that the most sensitive people would be very more reluctant to say you are a Christian.

But also we found that the group that's most likely to admit to their Christian identity is a group of 55 years or older. Why? Because 55 is China's official retirement time. Once you're retired you're free of anything. You're not bounded by your *Danwei*, political party, and you can say whatever you want.

The group that are 45 to 54 are the most reluctant because they're the one that during -- they

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were the teenagers during the Cultural Revolution. So they had an idea of -- they remember vividly how religion was oppressed. China, you can say that the country, the nation is a fairly tolerant nation even among the people who are atheists. 70 percent of them said "I have no problem if my family member or close friends become Christians."

So we've really seen a really interesting disconnect here. So despite a great acceptance of Christianity in China's society of all levels that the notion that Christianity is already a Chinese religion the party, the policy still use this continuous assumption that religion is a foreign religion. There's a significant distrust toward Christianity. This notion is really based on this outdated notion that Christian is susceptible to foreign infiltration.

If you position yourself as -- think of it Christianity is a foreign religion thus, of course, China would be successful to foreign religion. On the other hand, when you think about engaging in society, Buddhism and Taoism gain more favor from the

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government because they're perceived as more Chinese than Christianity.

Lastly, when looking forward, let's look -- when we think about how China become global it's -- when China, the Christians not become strong them may think of how do we engage the society? You don't have to go far away to other countries. Look at China's own history. As I have said, at all levels grassroots there has been great models of China engaging society.

So history obviously show that once given social space Christian can become a positive progress force for society. However, and also China, the world is the ways China to take on a more larger, leading role engaging the global communities of religions. I argue that China has always been a religion exporting nation, not just importing.

When you think of importing you think China would be the victim of foreign infiltration or intruding, but China has always been a exporting nation. China had brought in religion to the rest of the world through their immigrants, through their

diaspora. So China has never been just been intruded by other countries.

Lastly, becoming Christian doesn't mean becoming less Chinese. Studies have shown from the diaspora when people become Christian actually being in a foreign setting, but coming to a new religion there are deep identity of being Chinese actually being awakened. They become even more Chinese with China even seeing, sometimes, email in China. That's all. Thank you.

MR. MADSEN: Well, this is an extremely exciting and stimulating conference. I don't know if I can add much to what's been said before, but let me basically say a few things about Christianity, and then a few things about civil society, and then a few things about how they come together in China.

Now, as far as Christianity is concerned, my own view is that it's really be best to study Christianities, plural, rather than Christianity in China. Not a common set of beliefs and practices, but many branches from the same beginning.

The basic Christian story, of course, is of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The basic ritual is the Lord's Supper which reenacts that story and renders a presence across the passage of time. The story has been told in many forms, and the ritual enacted many different ways, and a countless multitude of theologies explaining the cosmic significance of Jesus.

From its earliest days, Christianity has sometimes taken the form of an oppositional sect, but it has also been fused with state power as in Byzantium, it closely collaborating with state power as a medieval European Christendom fuse of national identities as imposed with Westphalian nation states, identify with different ethnic groups within a common empire, the Irish and English, for example, rejected the world as a (inaudible), transformed a world so the Protestant ethic, adapted to the world as in early 20th Century mainline Protestantism.

In Asia Christianity has served as an agent of imperialism as well as, at times, a force of

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indigenous opposition to imperialism to become the basis for ethnic identities, as among some national minorities in China, an agent of national unity. As in the Three-Self Protestant Movements with the so called reconstruction of theology.

Has become a source of support for the market economy as in the so called Boss Christian Wenzhou, and it's become a source of opposition to the market economy as in groups like the Little Flock. It has promoted modern science as to Matteo Ricci and the Jesuits of the 17th Century, and it's resisted nation science as some very fundamentalist sects.

So Christianity has done all of these things. It's very, very difficult to make any kind of generalization about Christianity. There's so many variations, and meaning, and social functions that from a sociological point of view it is best to talk about Christianities.

From a sociological point of view, and I'm a sociology, it best be neutral about contending claims about Christian authenticity. However, there is

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something about the fundamental stories and rituals steaming from life with Jesus that give certain common potentialities to each of the different Christianities. From its beginnings, Christianity carried the perspectives of the Hebrew prophets and the classic Greek philosophers from the first Millennium, BCE.

These were products of what the philosopher, Karl Jaspers called the Axial Age, a time also represented by the Buddha and Confucius. When religious cultural creators' development visions of universal ethics, and introduced a notion of a fundamental tension between transcendental and moral orders.

Christianity continued and radicalized its way of thinking. It posited a model of reality different from the model dominated by earthly rules. As Jesus said to Pilot, my kingdom is not of this world. As Saint Paul said, we preach Christ crucified to the Jews a scandal, and to the Greeks foolishness. But for those that believe the wisdom and power of

God.

In setting up such a radical tension between an earthly and a transcendent reality Christianity, from the beginning, has been potentially threatening to earthly rules. The Christian story implies that the will of God supersedes that of any earthly ruler, and involves the potential justification for radical critique of any political order.

Moreover, the Christian story posits a transcendent logic of human fulfillment that contradicts the incentive structures available to earthly rules. Jesus triumphed through dying on the cross. Generations of martyrs have followed his example enduring torture and death in his name. The standard political carrots and sticks for social control don't work with such people.

Insofar as the Christian story is still alive, therefore, worldly powers cannot really count on the loyalty of Christians and the absolute way. And insofar as Christians consider failure, suffering, and death a form of heroic (inaudible) to the faith,

Christianity can be suppressed, but can never be wiped out.

Finally, in the interpretation of Saint Paul, Christianity is a universal, global, beyond allegiance to any nation or ethnic group. The potential for radical critique, however, is only occasionally realized.

Therefore, like all the great world religions, Christianity's a deep, historical river of ideas, and symbols, and human experiences. In involves, violence. Jesus, after all, said do not suppose I have come to bring peace to the earth. It is not peace I have come to bring, but a sword.

But, of course, Jesus also tells his followers to love your enemies, to do good to those that hate you and be compassionate, even as your father is compassionate. Within history, Christianity has led to wars and crusades, but also the marvelous works of love.

When Christianity came to China its record was also mixed. It's bestly because of its connection

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with Western Imperialism, who was implicated in conflict and war. Yet it also introduced into China far flung charitable enterprises, hospitals, universities, social service work, and provided indispensable foundations for China's modernization. It was a conduit for much of the best in cross-cultural exchange.

To bring up some of the social disharmonious history of Christianity is not meant to criticize and debunk it. Every rich historical tradition contains negative elements. All the major religions, as well as modern atheism, have, at time, led to struggle and violence. This is the human condition. To do away with any of these eruditions would deprive us of the moral depth we need to have when confronting our present crisis.

We need to learn from the best it has been transmitted from all of our moral traditions while avoiding the worse. But we need to look realistically at our traditions in order to make full use of the best resources they have to offer while avoiding

trouble that they could bring.

The resources of Christianity as well as China's other great religious traditions must offer to help find a way out of China's current social crisis. Chinese society today is not harmonious. Stability is a major concern of the government, precisely because there are so much potential instability in a rapidly changing society.

Let's look a little bit at the sources of disharmony, and then show what resources Christianity could have to lead China toward harmony while avoiding pitfalls.

A civil society is emerging in China, and one of Christianity's main contributions, I think, would be make this a responsible civil society. The economic transformation that lead people out of a settle life and rural communities into the rapidly changing and complex relationships of the modern city inevitably create what Western social theorists call a civil society.

A civil society consists of voluntary

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associations which people freely enter into out of interest or conviction. Not just because they were born into the group or assigned to it by some outside agency. This kind of society is an indispensable part of the modernizing process. We can see it rapidly developing today as people are pushed out of their villages and work units to follow the opportunities of a market economy.

When this happens people begin to form all sorts of associations, large and small. Some with official bylaws that are registered with the government. Others informal and unofficial. Most of these organizations are founded to serve some personal interest of the members, like getting jobs or just having fun together.

Some exist to carry out criminal activities. Others work to generously help people in need. Civil society produces groups that are both good and bad for social harmony.

It is certainly impossible to do away with civil society, and undesirable to try. But how can we

help develop a civil society that has many more good affects than bad affects, one that generates great social creativity while also sustaining harmony?

This is a problem that preoccupied most of the social theorists of the Western tradition. Classical liberal theorists have been fairly optimistic that through free interaction and the competitive marketplace of ideas and programs the best qualities of civil society will emerge and the worse will wither away.

Other scholars have not been so optimistic, Marx, for example, thought that associations of the rich would use their power and resources to dominate the others. Others worry that civil society could become a vehicle to carry out ethnic conflict or religious fanaticism.

People with such worries might advocate that the state should severely restrict or heavily handily guide civil society. History shows, however, that tight state control doesn't work, and often makes problems worse by driving socially disruptive forms of

civil society underground, and making them even more militant and dangerous. But there is no reason to be optimistic that a competitive civil society driven entirely by self-interest will produce social harmony.

Along with Western theorists like Alexis de Tocqueville, I believe that freely interacting civil societies lean toward social order only when they are adduced with moral virtue. Especially those virtues which lead to care for the welfare of others, tolerance for people with views different from oneself, and honesty and fairness towards all.

This way of thinking also has deep roots in Chinese traditions which hold that human flourishing depends not only on possession and material things, but in social relationships that provide the individual with security, moral support, and meaning.

But the Chinese tradition that talked about this was a family oriented society or a barian rural society, and the problem now today is that it's transforming rapidly into an urban society. The kind of social norm, social mores, the kind of mutual

support and meaning that comes from having a large extended family is becoming less and less available in the Chinese society.

Therefore, there's an increasing need for people to development, kind of wider notions of what affiliation with others would mean, and the notions that span far beyond local villages and local communities to deal with larger, more complicated social programs.

In the earliest 20th Century one source of creative imagination in this besides that of the Communist Party, in the May Fourth Generation, was, in fact, a religious group. Not just Christian groups, but groups like the so called Redemptive Society is a good example in which is the so called Yiguandao which spanned the whole country and developed programs of social reform. Redemptive societies had more members than the Communist Party, actually, in the 1920s and '30s. And look for ways to provide a new moral foundation for the country.

But besides them there were the Christian

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groups, and many of these native religious kind of movements drew, to some degree, on examples and inspiration from the various forms of Christianity. Therefore, I argue that Christianity , even today, has an important role to play in providing the kind of moral imagination and moral vision that would allow groups that are inevitably form in China to form in a way that's responsible and caring and conducive to social order, not just to violence and social disorder.

There's many different kinds of Christianity. As I mentioned, there's Pentecostal Christianity is growing extremely rapidly in the countryside. There are the neo-Calvinists, like the Shaouwang Church in Beijing. Many members of which are advocating universal human rights and political dissonance.

There are the, sort of, Calvinists prosperity gospel Christians in Wenzhou. Many, many varieties in between. So it's very, very difficult to generalize, but some of them, at least especially,

have developed a track record for doing very, very responsible and creative efforts toward healing the poor and the sick, and rejuvenating society.

A good example, of course, is the Amity Foundation based in Nanjing, coming out of the mainline Protestant Churches. This is one of the most effective NGOs in all of China because they do all sorts of work that reaches out not just to Christians, but to non-Christians of all kinds. The local community development work, et cetera.

A group kind of modeled after that is the Beijing Jinde which is the Catholic group based on Shijiazhuang and Hebei Province. Also basically carrying out these kinds of works and motivating people to try to solve for themselves the problems in society.

These groups have a fairly cooperative relationship with the government, but the Christian impetus sometimes pushes them beyond that. So, for example, I met some people connected with Beifang Jinde. I met a couple of Catholic nuns who had set up

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a center in Henan in a village.

It was one of those villages where all the women in the village had gone to local hospital to give birth to their babies, and the hospital gave them blood transfusions that were tainted with HIV/AIDS. So all the women had AIDS. All their husbands have AIDS. Most of their children have AIDS. It's a total mess.

The nuns had set up a program to try to give these women some spiritual and psychological and physical and moral kind of care and comfort. The local government didn't want that, and threw them out because it didn't want the shame of having caused such a mess. So the nuns were doing it anyway.

They'd found a new way to kind of skirt around the law, et cetera. So here is something that kind of defied local regulations, but in the basis of a vision of what was right, universal moral ethics of Christian charity and so forth. They had to go beyond it.

So these things are contributing to society,

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not necessarily contributing to the local government's vision of how it should work. But contributing to a sense of moral and loving society.

In places like Taiwan, you see that Christianity has influenced not just its own believers, but groups like the Buddhists and Taoists to create their own kinds of organizations. In Taiwan groups like Ciji Gongdehui, for example, or even Taoists organizations to carry out more social work and social service work and so forth.

So Christianity has kind of acted, in a place like Taiwan, as a leaven in building a kind of responsible society. I think they can do the same in China. I think the one thing that gives Christianity in China a certain kind of edge, in fact it's relatively powerless, it doesn't have any access to state power, and therefore has to rely, if it's going to rely at all, on pure kind of moral suasion in a government in which sometimes power is oppressive and corrupt.

Sources of this moral suasion are extremely  
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important, and precisely not just beyond the people they help, but providing a kind of the spirit, the kind of moral virtues, the moral discipline that enables civil society when it does development to be responsible civil society that helps solve the problems of the world rather than cause conflict and chaos.

MR. XIAO: I would like to thank Brookings for giving me the opportunities to speak to you. First of all, a disclaimer. I'm only a research scholar. Whatever I'm about to say here does not represent any person, any institution, any organization or Chinese Christians or Chinese church. This will be only my personal thoughts and my personal experience.

Because of time factor I will only focus on three things. My general observations, number one my observations on Christianity on the transformation of a country. In the Old Testament there's such a saying blessed is a nation whose God is the Lord the people he chose for his inheritance.

In the New Testament Jesus also said, the kingdom of heaven is like a grain or mustard seed which the men took and put in this field which is smaller than all seeds, but when it has come up it's greater than plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of heaven come and make their resting places in its branches. Look at the mustard seed. It's very tiny. This is the master plan that I found, and this is from the Middle East which is actually told in a true.

So these two things tell us basically blessed is a country or nation who relies on God, and so blessed are its people. The earthlings that the seed spread by Jesus Christ which is a cultural values, cultural order, cultural of the heavenly kingdom they will grow and germinate and grow and they will bloom and blossom and will continue to expand. This is a fact. Let's look at this in three categories.

First, science and technology. This is data that we have obtained from a journal published by the

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RAB or the SARA of China. Between 1901 and 1996 there altogether 639 Nobel Prize winners. Of whom 596 of them were Christians and the number accounted for 93.2 percent of all the prize winners. So you can see the contribution made by Christianity to the knowledge of men.

Next category would be democracy and constitutionalism. So conclusion of Samuel Huntington of Harvard, in his research, this is his conclusion that the religions that were the most influential were Protestantism, Roman Catholicism, and the Greek Orthodox.

In 1988 after 46 Western countries whose primary religion is Christianity or Protestantism, 39 of them are democracies which accounts for 57 percent of all the 68 countries in the world with Christianity as their primary religion. Of the other 58 countries whose primary religion is not Christianity only 7 of them are democracies which is 12 percent.

The third focus we're going to look at is the development level of the countries. Of 18

generally recognized developed countries, 17 countries have Christianity as their primary civilization. So indeed, as I said earlier, quoted the Bible verse, blessed is the country or the nation that trusts in God and that was the proof because Christianity, indeed, pushes forward the transformation and the advances of the human race.

So what's the reason behind? Economists actually did some studies on this. Douglas North, another Nobel Prize winner, said that religion is really important because religions will dictate what are acceptable and what are not acceptable behaviors.

Another famous professor from Harvard, also an economist, Andrei Shleifer, he studied and further discovered that not all religions can make that kind of contribution. However, he discovered that Protestantism was a very, very strong force in pushing forward civilization.

Another economist, Barrow, and his colleagues have also studied dozens of countries. In 2003 they wrote the book, Religion and Economic

Growth. So they discovered that religious beliefs actually are in direct proportion to economic growth whereas the time you spend on religions is in adverse proportion to the economic growth.

So what we have discovered or what we learn is that when we become secular we use our work to -- we worship God in our work and our careers and we glorify God in our work and our careers and all of that are conducive to the economic growth of civilization.

Finally, there's a conclusion made by a Chinese economist. So if he were still alive today there is a high probability that he would be the first Chinese to win the economic Nobel Prize. He said that from an economist point of view in terms of economy the one force that was able to push forward the expansion of a social order would be Christianity.

Now, I'd like to share with you my personal observations and thoughts about Christianity and its influence on China's transformation. Since the Opium War a lot of people have realized that China have

entered into a great transformation period that was never seen before in the last 3,000 years.

So more people understood or now have come to understand the nature of the basic direction that is to be taken by this transformation. In other words, the conventional or traditional Chinese civilization will now be affected or impacted by Christian civilization.

In 2008 a few hundred overseas students from China, who later became Christians, they joined hands with six Christian representatives from mainland China and they had a convention in San Francisco. Then they established what they call the San Francisco Consensus.

So basically the conclusion's that China is looking at a transformation that was never seen before in the last 3,000 years. This transformation is one that has incorporated the cross into it. This transformation, actually you should go back to 400 years ago, and Christianity was introduced into China.

I will not elaborate because my colleague

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before me had already mentioned this, Matteo Ricci. We know that there are many more Christian missionaries that enter China about 200 years ago which brought a sea wave of changes to China.

Then many Christians emerged, and these are Christians that had a great impact on the modern society of China. For example, Dr. Sun Yat-sen. A very famous educationalist, Zhang Bolin and Mei Yiqi. Most well-known authors including Laoshe, Bajin, Lin Yutang and Bingxin.

There were also improvements in the civil society of China. For example, the liberation of the Chinese women. Then opening and reform. When we talk about reform and opening of China basically we're seeing that China was learning from Christian civilization and not from Buddha civilization of Islamic civilization.

In fact, when China first introduce a market economy it, in reality, had actually introduced the theory of Protestantism into China which is to say bringing in some sort of order of the heavenly kingdom

into China. This sort of order will grow very rapidly like what we have seen with the example of the mustard seed.

When China opened up it also opened up to Western Christian civilizations. So there are Chinese officials or other anti-American personalities on the wept. Even though they opposed America, but they knew what is going on here. They would send out precision children to have education in the United States or other Christian countries, but not to atheist countries like North Korea.

So after China's reform in opening up there were many Christians who stood up, and they became the light and the salt of the society. They became a very good testimony for Christianity in China, and they became the positive force in going against corruption in China.

Now, my personal testimony. Other colleagues have already mentioned it, when China had this big earthquake in Sichuan, on May the 12th of 2008. Christians joined in the rescue and also other

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types of assistance. So we, the China Christian Business Fellowship, donated 1 million yen to the families of the victims.

So many, many Christians came and helped. So they believe that the rescue workers, 50 percent of volunteers were Christians. So basically those who stayed behind and continued to offer assistance were mostly Christians.

Another integrity movement for the businessman. In the last decade, we have been trying to promote the integrity movement designed for Christian business persons. So every year we have the leadership meeting. We also establish a fellowship in major cities of China. So we also challenge them to abide by the commandments of God. Thou shalt not cook your book. Thou shall not evade taxes. Thou shall not have mistresses or secret affairs. Thou shall not mistreat your employees, and so on.

In Haerbin, in the Northeastern part of China there was a businessman who was also Christian. He signed a contract with God saying that after he

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became Christian he would not be involved with briberies. Because of that all of his stockholders left the company, and then more than 10 sales managers resigned. But he kept at it. In the first year he lost \$8 million U.S., but currently his company has become one of the most competitive companies in his industry.

Another Christian who is in Beijing whose business is an ATM machine. After he signed a contract with God after he became Christian he realized that without bribery he could not sell one single unit of products. So he was forced to change his business model.

So instead of selling the ATM machines themselves he actually gave away ATM machines and worked with the bank to share their profits. This company's now a listed company, and the profitability was in many fold. So Christian business people in China are now building their confidence with doing their business and conducting their business with integrity, and to be walking with God on earth.

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In 2001 a group of Christian entrepreneurs gathered at the Saipan Island. Together they signed a Saipan Convention on Chinese glorifying god and blessing the world. So just take a quick look because we're rushing for time, and I will not read it out.

On February 14th this year the same group of people had a conference that was titled International Marriages and Family Festival. They also made a declaration on marriages and families. They advocated their family idea of one man, one woman, one husband, one wife, one life, one heart. Also, they pushed forward the new family movement of China.

So like the Western Christians this example shows that Chinese Christians can also have a great influence on the transformation of a society. I think this has become also acceptable in the Chinese society as reflected by the cover of this particular weekly journal.

In sports and entertainment businesses and so forth there are also many more celebrities who have become Christians. Not to mention Chinese writers,

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authors, or lawyers who defend the rights of the people. So that's it, not to elaborate on those points.

I believe that the Chinese leadership have also been affected by Christianity. In fact, I suspect that they are Christians in closet. So basically I think the potential of what Christians can contribute we have only done up to 10 percent. I think 90 percent of the people are still in their sleep. I hope that Christians can continue to play this role because it will be very meaningful not just for the transformation of China, but also for the world at large.

So Chinese Sera or RAB officials believe that the religions can become a lubricant to ease the relationship between China and the United States. I think that this is a very accurate insight or a positive insight. Because civilizations actually between them there are three types of relationships.

One is the acknowledgement of civilization, clashes of civilization and also those that are in the

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middle. We hope that between China and the United States we have an endorsement of each other's civilization and not the clashes of the each other's civilization.

Then when we talk about post-modernist countries, basically they come in two different models. The first is the Japanese model where they wanted to learn from the West technologies and civilizations, but rejected the Christianity, and in the end they fell into the pit of militarism of fascism.

The other model is the Korean model where they learned everything from the west, including Christianity. Of course, in the future China will catch up the United States in terms of its economy. By 2025 the military expenditure of China will also possibly exceed that of the U.S.

But if China believed that it had power and it didn't need anything else, then it would actually follow the footsteps of Japan or the fascism. I believe if China embraces the civilization of the

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heavenly kingdom, the heavenly kingdom of Christianity we believe that it will be a civilized country that will make contributions to the world. Now, it's all dependent on all of us putting in our efforts to make this happen.

MR. AIKMAN: Well, we have just a short time for questions and answers, so if you could please be kind enough to identify yourself and say to whom you wish to address the question.

MR. MALLOY: I'm Pat Malloy. I'm on the adjunct faculty at Catholic University Law School. My understanding is that the Vatican and the Chinese government do not officially have diplomatic relations at this point. One of the issues outstanding is whether the Vatican or the Chinese government will name the bishops in China.

Do you think the Vatican has any room to compromise on that kind of an issue so that Christianity is not perceived of as being director, at least the Catholic religion, from abroad? Is that something that Vatican will not be able to compromise?

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I would direct that to Mr. Madsen, and anybody else who wants to comment on it.

MR. AIKMAN: I don't know the latest state of play in these negotiations. In history, you know, there've been many different ways in which bishops were chosen. There's a precedent in many countries for the king, for example, to basically pick the bishops. This changed in the 19th Century when the Vatican concentrated more power in itself. So there's different precedents.

However, I think right now the problem with the Vatican is they want more say, certainly, in determining what kind of people become bishops. The Chinese government wants to have the last word on that.

The one model people talk about is sort of the Vietnam Model, in which basically the Vietnamese authorities present, you know, a list of maybe three people and then the Pope gets to pick one of those.

The difference with China and Vietnam though is that the Catholic Church is more strong in Vietnam

and has more leverage about getting the kind of bishops they want. Whereas in China, it's only about 1 percent of the population. It would be more difficult for the Vatican to have any leverage in that situation.

So these are some of the concrete political issues that are faced. Again, these talks go off and on. I'm not sure where they are at this moment.

MS. QUEBE: My name is Shanne Quebe. I have a question for Professor Xiao. My question for Professor Xiao is that why the Chinese businessman want to give up part of their benefit no matter whether it's from bribery or from the financial (inaudible) to join the Christianity? What their drives are considering the current Chinese culture in consumptionism in the environment of bribery when doing business? Thank you.

MR. XIAO: Well, there are two reasons for why they're doing what they're doing. First of all, they do not want to become schizophrenic. They don't want to be someone who would be a good person in

church and then a bad person in business.

Secondly, they have come to discover that if you follow God's principle actually you will become even more profitable. So I gave you two examples just now.

MR. WAY: I'm (inaudible) from China. (inaudible) I noticed Professor Xiao said more Christianity (inaudible) Chinese. As I know Xiao is a -- what I know about traditional Chinese is different under modern Chinese indoctrinated by Communism is totally different. The Chinese has Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, that I know.

The teachings of Confucianism are similar and compatible with Christianity. I'm questioning his definition about Chinese. Thank you.

MR. AIKMAN: I wonder if I can respond to that question because many people have mentioned that well-known saying one more Christian one less Chinese. These was very popular in the 1920s during the anti-Christian movement.

But a Chinese friend from the House Church

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told me that in the 1990s there was a no version of that, One More Christian, One Less Criminal, One More Church, One Less Prison. There is really a sense that the spirit of the Christian faith is changing behavior in a remarkable way to make Chinese behave differently in the sense of being less likely to go to criminal activity. So that's a new version of the saying.

MS. AUTRY: I'm not sure I understood your question, but if I understand correctly you were saying how do I define being Chinese? In a sense, how does that affect being, you know, one more Christian, one less Chinese?

I think, this is actually an interesting question because that reflects the Han-centric definition of China. Yes, you're right, China's not just including the Chinese Han, but also they're many non-Han including ethnic Chinese.

As a matter of fact, Christianity had strong presence among many ethnic minorities, especially in Yunnan, Sichuan, and Guizhou areas, in history and also present.

MR. XIAO: All of the answers are very good answers, and I'm going to give you, also, a very important answer. I actually understood your question. Because what you are going through now, what you're struggling with right now are something I experienced in the last decade.

But here's the result of my research on my experience after the last 10 years. The most important culture of China is actually the culture of God because the Chinese people believe in God since time in memorial.

Confucius believed in God. If you look at the Chinese history of all the different faces of Chinese history, every single Emperor they worshiped God. Why do you think the Chinese people are such a great people because they are people inspired by the will of God?

But why is it today many Chinese, including you and me, did not have this idea -- we are not aware of this at all. Because starting from the Qin and the Han dynasties China entered into an autocratic rule.

So the autocratic power that is imposed upon people are not just on their lives, but mostly on their souls, and also on their beliefs.

Only the emperors were allowed to worship God. Then for the other officials under them they could worship natural beings. But you and I we're the common people, we could only worship ghosts, including our relatives who had passed away. I can elaborate on that, next time we can chat together I'll tell you more.

MR. AIKMAN: Yes, sir. Your question?

MR. BALM: I'm Juliet Balm. I'm a journalist that was based in Beijing and Taipei, both, for many years. I'd like to ask, perhaps anybody, but especially Professor Madsen.

We heard this morning, in the first panel from Liu Peng, at CASS about the parties view of the growth of the Christian churches, and the risks that he saw in those churches from poor theological developments and the, perhaps, impacts of evangelical and other charismatic movements. Do you think those

are legitimate concerns of the government's point of view?

Also, is there any evidence from Taiwan's experience with freedom of religion, or perhaps from the growth of Christianity in South Korea, that would give us an idea of whether these are legitimate concerns or simply aspects of authoritarian rule?

MR. AIKMAN: I think the government's very afraid that anything that it can't keep tight control over, and the fact that Christianity has grown so rapidly is something they can't control. The fact that Christianity has the kind of global connections is something that they consider worrisome. So that makes them, you know, nervous.

I think that you look at a place like Taiwan, for example, look at a place like South Korea and the growth of Christianity didn't destabilize the societies, but there's a different kind of political order. So you have a certain order in which, basically, it's only kept together by a fairly rigid top-down control.

As long as it continues like that, I suppose, not just Christianity, but any kind of movements that transcend national borders and so forth and so on are potential threats. They're different kinds of -- like I said, there are many different Christianity, and so some kinds are much more cooperative than others, and so forth and so on, so you can't generalize either.

But I think they're worried about these things developing that they didn't anticipate, and don't know how to control. You know, are concerned about stability overall.

MS. AUTRY: There are actually a lot of studies comparing China with Taiwan and Hong Kong. One argument is if China had complete freedom of religion, allowing any religion to compete with one another would they be more like Taiwan or America.

For example, in Taiwan after marital law you do have complete freedom of religion, yet Christianity went never beyond 5 percent, Protestant, Catholic all together. So the dominant religion was still

Buddhism, the first religion.

In Hong Kong you never have the kind of restrictions that you see in China, yet Christianity never go beyond 10 percent. So in a sense, scholars often say the government shouldn't be afraid of Christianity because even if you allow them to grow, at most, they could be more like Hong Kong.

It wouldn't be, like 30 percent of Chinese suddenly become Christian or 50 percent of Chinese starting to become Christian. It's more like -- some people would be drawn back to the traditional religions or other religions as you've seen in the new movements of religions.

MR. AIKMAN: Question from the back.

QUESTIONER: Sort of a follow on. I think if the Standing Committee of the Politburo was here they would really be sort of appalled. They think you've just confirmed their worst fears that the system they are defending is not like the authoritarian systems or dictatorships in Taiwan in the old days or Hong Kong in the old days. But it is

an absolutist system.

Thus, you threaten Christianity or any free religion or civil society itself threatens the basic tenants that they must live by and die by. That is the preeminence of the Communist Chinese party has it's monopoly of truth and power whenever they wish to exercise it.

I think something so absolute it requires, for them, a serious response, and already we can see that. They're turning to Nationalism, emphasizing Nationalism as their vision for the foundation of Chinese society. Any comment?

MS. AUTRY: Well, for example, some scholars would say even look at Republic of China before 1949 actually the Jiang Jieshi government actually requires all religions to register official or even including the indigenous groups to register which is actually a continuity of many dynasties.

Before the Chinese government had always wanted to regulate religion. Emperor or Republic China, so somehow that's the culture. Somehow the

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culture forces have always wanted to control religion. Regardless, you were under republic era or feudal era or communist ear.

But will there be a way to learn how to manage it under the rule of law or constitution doesn't have to be oppression or suppression, but even look at its own pre-1949 Republic China if there are any model to draw to the present.

MR. AIKMAN: Well, I think that's all we have time for. So sorry to cut it short at this point because it's been a very interesting discussion. I wish you to applaud the members here. Thank you all.

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