

Coalition and Hegemony: Religions' Role in the Progress of Modernization in Reformed China

By Zeng Chuanhui

1 Introduction

In the past thirty-two years, mainland China has risen from one of the poorest countries to the second largest economic body in the world. The sweeping but stable progress of modernization in China may be listed among the most important events in human history. What are the proper cultural factors contributing to this marvel? What is the role of religion in the progress?

According to Max Weber, the Protestant ethic was coincidental with the rise of the capitalism in Europe. Protestantism is obviously irrelevant to the situation in China, because Protestants are still a very small minority up to day,¹ and Calvinistic ethic has little influence there.

Through the 1970s to 80s when “the four little dragons in East Asia”, i.e. Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Korea, took the lead in modernization in

¹ According to the census data conducted by our institute in 2009, about 1.8% population in mainland China claimed themselves as Protestants.

Asia, many Neo-Confucian scholars ascribed the great success to Confucian morality which still somewhat influences the cultural mores of these countries. China was the cradle of Confucianism and of course has been regarded traditionally as the major enclave of Confucian culture. Nevertheless, the role of Confucianism has been criticized and rejected by the mainstream intellectuals as the opponent to modernity since the May 4 Movement in 1919. After Chinese Communist Party (CCP) came into power in 1949, especially during the Cultural Revolution, Confucianism has been treated as one of “the putrescent cultures” that “should be thrown away into the trash pile of the history”. Until the past several years, conditions have changed a little, with the government and some intellectuals trying to make use of Confucian morality to help to rebuild the social order. The voices of Neo-Confucianism have just begun to echo out of the studies of scholars.

Are the above observations sufficient to let us make reasoning that religion has been basically absent from the modernization in reformed China? How can we evaluate properly the role of religion in that country? I am trying to answer these questions briefly in this paper.

2 Religion Plays a Part in the Elite Coalition

2.1 The Elitist Governance

The Chinese government claims that China is a socialist country, but the meaning of socialism has changed fundamentally from the traditional sense in that 1) it embraces totally the market economy, which was purported to be one of the lethal factors of capitalism, 2) most of the state-owned enterprises have been privatized, and 3) the distribution of wealth in China today is among the great disparities in the world. According to traditional

Marxism, public ownership and distribution in proportion to work are two basic standards of socialism. Nowadays state ownership and collective ownership have been transformed in favor of joint-stock ownership. Social wealth has been more and more concentrated in the holdings of a small percent of the population. The Gini coefficient¹ was around 0.469 in 2008, approaching an alarming level.

Thus China is no longer a socialist system, at least in the traditional sense. Nor is it a capitalist system. The major difference between the system of China and that of other western capitalist countries, I think, is the system of governance. Chinese people have not voted to select their president directly. This does not mean that there is no democracy at all, or that the Chinese government lacks legitimacy. It is the special way of governance and its high efficiency that have supported its legitimacy.

Some scholars of politics named this system of governance neo-authoritarianism, which was quite popular in the 1980s through the early 1990s. As to the rampant corruption, some scholars called it crony capitalism, but I prefer to characterize it as elite governance. I do not adopt the term “elitism”, because it takes many multivocal and derogatory meanings. The elite governance I refer to in this article is the style of political practice in reformed China, which implies that the government rules with the cooperation of the selected groups whose members have either great achievements, or widespread social influences, or high level of specialized trainings. The gist of elite governance in Chinese context is often expressed as a popular slogan: “Experts manage state affairs.” (*Zhuanjia Zhiguo*) Most of “the third generation leading group” and the present government, headed by Jiang Zemin and “the Hu-Wen leading group”, have the backgrounds of technocrats. This pattern is a result from the objective development because the technicians are easier to accumulate good performances hence get promoted faster in an “economy-centered” era; it is also an intentional selection because Deng Xiaoping and his think-tank have

adopted a strategy of technocracy. This strategy has successfully avoided the waste of rifts between the leftist vis-à-vis rightist ideologies and cushioned the implementation of pragmatism. The technocracy with the cooperation of elites from other circles forms the distinctive characteristic of elite governance.

Elite governance differs from neo-authoritarianism in that it accepts low political involvement from the grass-roots, but does not exclude them. It lurches, though cautiously, towards universal suffrage; it is not in tantamount to cronyism in that it demonstrates strong will, tries to determine the best way to fight against corruption and disparity, and allows vertical social mobility.

After the Tiananmen Square Movement in 1989, the Chinese government launched a nation-wide reindoctrination and rectification movement to reestablish its authority, on the one hand, and insisted on the implementation of reform strategies, on the other. The policies, most of which had been designed by the former leading group but stagnated by the radical movement in 1989, have been realized under the powerful endorsement and resuscitation of the late paramount leader Deng Xiaoping's Southern Cruise in the early Spring of 1992. The governing party has imparted economic interests to the business elites by adopting joint-stock system, and shared ideology and decision-making with the intellectual elites. There are more separations of functions among party, government, enterprise and university. A more independent judiciary system and more professional civil service have been improving. It is true that the party today still controls the appointment of top officials at every level, who also hold concurrent posts of both party and administration in many cases. But the party and government are far less involved in day-to-day management, except, of course, in sensitive political areas. Experiments with the election of village leaders by universal voting have been extended throughout the countryside. In some places elections to local legislatures

have become more democratic, allowing independent candidates. In 2002, the party revised its charter in order to reflect the growth of a new bourgeoisie, letting private entrepreneurs join the party. And the party has recently encouraged more public involvement in the drafting of some local legislation by holding open hearings. It was reported that more than 5,000 experts from all walks of life participated in the drafting of *The Eleventh Five-Year Plan*, which has passed by the national congress in June, 2006.

2.2 The Resuming and Development of the United Front Policy

In 1978, with the ascension of Deng Xiaoping to power and the introduction of the profound reform program, the leading group also reached a consensus that they must shift the role of the party from revolution to governing and bring back the united front policy, the coalition strategy. In October 1978, the Central Committee issued a document to “address two emergent questions on religious work”, which were (1) to “distinguish the two contradictions with different natures” and “earnestly and roundly implement the constitution article about the freedom of religious belief”, and (2) to return a few venues for open worship.² This document initiated a journey to install the new coalition with religious organizations. In the next year, the Central Committee once again approved its United Front Work Department’s (UFWD) request for abolishing the “hat of capitulationism”³ put on the heads of the organs of the united front, ethnic and religious work during the Cultural Revolution throughout the country.⁴ This actually was a formal top-down purge of the new coalition strategy. This purge cleared the way for religious participation in the public life.

Nevertheless, the new coalition strategy encountered much resistance from the “leftists” in the early post-Maoist era, which required a more sophisticated ideological justification. In September 1979, Deng Xiaoping gave an order to rationalize “ethnic and religious policies”.⁵ In the coming

years, Hu Yaobang, the late general secretary of CCP, presided personally over attempts to articulate a new set of theories convincing to all standpoints in that period. In March 1982, the Central Committee issued the well-known Document 19: *“The Basic Policy and Standpoint Our Country should Have on the Religious Question during this Period of Socialism”*⁶, which is today still the working guideline and theoretical foundation for CCP to deal with religious affairs. It highlighted from a Marxist context that religion is a historical social phenomenon, which means that religion is not only a kind of ideology but also an important social force, and has a natural process of origination, development and perishing; it stressed “the five natures” of religion, i.e. long-term, mass, ethnic, international and complex nature, which were articulated in the 1950s by Li Weihuan, a late director of central UFWD; these five were later reduced to “the three natures”, i.e. long-term, mass and complex nature in 2002 by Ye Xiaowen, the present director of the State Administration of Religious Affairs (SARA).⁷ This theoretical formulation led to the conclusion that the freedom of religious practice should not be a policy of expedience, but must be guided and supervised under laws and regulations.

When “the third generation leading group” came into power, some subtle changes had taken place in the religious situation in China: most returnable religious properties had been handed over to the religious organizations; the focus of religious affairs switched to daily coordination and supervision; the religious “boom” enabled temples and churches to play a larger role in society; the implosion of the former socialist countries, the entry into the WTO and deeper involvement in globalization ushered in a whole new range of challenges, etc. In November 1993, President Jiang Zemin’s address to the National United Front Work Conference⁸ updated the CCP’s reflection, and was condensed as the “Four phrases”, among which the last was appended to Jiang Zemin’s report at the Sixteenth Party

Congress held in November 2002. The four phases are: (1) implement the Party's religious policy thoroughly; (2) administer the religious affairs according to the law; (3) positively guide the mutual adaptation between religion and socialist society; and (4) insist on the principle of independence and self-administration. ⁹

2.3 The Religious Organizations' Involvement in the Elite Coalition

With the implementation of the new policies, all of "the five major religions", i.e. Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Catholicism and Protestantism, have enjoyed three decades of blossom, and multiplied their memberships and properties. According to government's incomplete statistics, until 2004 there are over 100 million religious followers, more than 110,000 religious venues, some 330,000 religious personnel and at least 74 religious schools throughout China, among them eight million laypersons, 4,000 clergy and over 4,600 venues belong to Catholicism; over sixteen million lay persons, some 18,000 clergy, 37,000 churches and temporary venues belong to Protestantism. Since the 1980s, approximately 600 Protestant churches have been reopened or initiated each year in China; through 1995 to 2004, the annual increase rate of Protestants is above 5%.¹⁰ In 2009, Institute of World Religions conducted a large scale sampling which made 63,680 questionnaires from 2,718 villages and communities in 321 counties. The statistics counts 23.05 million Protestant population in China.

This religious "boom" cost governments at all level a lot of authority, energy and money to vacate the occupants from the temples and churches, or transplant some residences for planned new religious buildings. They also provided subsidies to repair and maintain the old religious buildings because they are evaluated as cultural relics. For example, the central government has appropriated 330 million yuan for the second-stage

rehabilitation of the three famous ancient lamasery compounds in Tibet, i.e. Potala, Norbuglinkha and Sagya in 2002. In some cases the government may also compensate the needy religious organizations for the operating expenses. This financial support enables religion to share public prosperity and greatly consolidate the foundation of the elite coalition.

There are some conduits for religion to share power, ideas and honor with the public authority. Religious personages, having recovered from injustices suffered by them during the Cultural Revolution, became saintlike figures in their own religion; thousands of younger persons have graduated from religious schools and become clergy; many religious students abroad have come back to serve their flocks. Thousands of them have ascended to be the members of the gradually expanding elite coalition, the major organizations of which are the congresses, political consultant committees and youth leagues at national, provincial, municipal and county levels. These are active and efficient ways to represent the voices of their believers and participate in the decision-making, supervision, and policy-improving processes.

These coalition members are selected instead elected. The procedure of the selection is obscure from the outside and varies in different zones, organizations or periods. The general pattern seems to be that the inner circle of one religious organization determines and submits the candidates to the related government and party organs, e.g. religious affairs bureaus, united front work departments, congresses or committees to coordinate and approve. Although the public opinion and reputations of the candidates are important variables for consideration, the recognition within the elite groups plays a more direct role.

3 The Adaptation and Contribution of Religious Culture to the Gestating Cultural Hegemony

3.1 Challenges that Have Prompted Remolding the Cultural Hegemony

There are certainly cultural factors behind Chinese success. Different from European countries, North America and “the four little dragons in East Asia”, modern China has no dominant religious culture. The functioning cultural elements that facilitate the fast growth in the reform era are the harmonious cultural bonds, product of a long history. The people share a common national language, ethnopsychology and custom. No religious background can be found in the existent political system. Laws may be incomplete but are quite simple and practical. The governing party sticks to Marxism as its leading ideology, and keeps honing new discourses and propagating new ideas to shape the national mindset. Therefore it is easy for the government to reach agreement, and execution encounters low resistance.

This way of governance successfully holds mainland China in a monolithic configuration, but the legitimacy of dominant ideology has faced with great challenges in the post-cold-war years; tension between the ideal and social reality is becoming ever more salient; in many cases, the government cannot defend itself against many charges at home and abroad with consistent theories, when confronted with sensitive questions, such as the yawning disparity between the rich and poor, human rights, democracy, freedom and openness.

The post-cold-war global situation has also given the Chinese elite a tug. While the vocal discussions on Samuel Huntington’s theory of the conflicts

of civilizations rippled through the nation, the Kosovo and Iraq Wars, the September Eleventh Incident, and the Color Revolutions in the former Soviet Union states, made them think more deeply on how culture matters, even though they might not agree with Huntington's conclusions.

3.2 Antonio Gramsci's Theory of Cultural Hegemony

In 1992, the *Selected Writings by Gramsci* was translated by the Central Compilation and Translation Bureau and published by Renmin Press.¹¹ Antonio Gramsci was a founder of the Communist movement in Italy. His *Prison Notebooks* spent a lot of energy on discussion of issues affecting Marxist theory after the worldwide economic depression of the early 1930s, when Marxism failed to materialize in the most advanced capitalist nations. It seemed that Marxism was not defeated either. These capitalist governments managed to survive the economic and political crisis and stabilize themselves by making compromises and transforms. This situation needed new theories to explain the extraordinary resilience of capitalism, and new strategies which would be different from those had worked in Russia. Gramsci's theory developed in oppositions both to Idealist philosopher represented by Benedetto Croce, and to the mechanist materialists represented by Karl Kautsky and other theorists of the Second International. He opposed Kautsky's idea of political inactivity which proposed to wait passively for the "objective moment" when the crises of capitalism would produce system collapse, but he agreed with Lenin and Luxemburg in that class struggle could create conditions for socialist revolution. He especially emphasized cultural struggle, which resembles Croceanism to some degree. To develop his cultural struggle, he put the concept of cultural hegemony at the center of his vast and loose network of ideas.

What is most interesting to contemporary Chinese intellectuals is

Gramsci's departure from the definition of hegemony, which was widely accepted to be a strategy of political leadership that was based upon a fundamental alliance with the peasantry (Lenin and Mao). He articulated that it was not the economic foundation that determines directly the power structure but rather the cultural hegemony. His version of Marxism repudiates linear and mechanistic thinking which reduces culture and ideas, including religion, to a direct passive reflection of economic forces. He views culture as a semiautonomous sphere of society that plays an important mediating role in the totality of social life. Revolution struggle, for Gramsci, is ultimately a matter of education. Education in Italy at that time was still a rigidly bourgeois affair. The subaltern classes must generate their own "organic intellectuals" capable of creating new forms of hegemony by shattering the universalistic claims of old worldviews. These organic intellectuals function within the ranks of a social stratum or class in an educative or leadership role in associational context provided by trade unions, workers' councils, and especially, political parties. The professionals such as managers, engineers, advertisers as well as scholars and journalists are the organic intellectuals of bourgeoisie, but the priests are not organic to either proletariat or bourgeoisie. They are traditional intellectuals who appear to serve universal values but whose careers, regardless of their class of origin, are tied to the church, which is rooted earlier social formations such as feudalism. Thus he shares the common Marxist view that religion is the residue of past time, but he provided more concrete analysis. For Gramsci, religion never exists without conflicting with the ideas that express the "protest of the oppressed". The example is popular religion, which is a conception of life and the world that, on many points, conflicts with official conception of the world. "Every religion is in reality a multiplicity of distinct and often contradictory religion" that vary along class lines. ¹² He even believed that popular religion in Italy was at best a source of passive resistance.

Furthermore, he extended hegemony to include the bourgeoisie as well as other social classes. Although one class is inevitably to become the hegemonic class, this "presupposes that account be taken of the interests and tendencies of the groups over which hegemony is to be exercised, and that a certain compromise equilibrium should be formed"¹³. In other words, the dominant class will not only exert a moral-intellectual leadership, but will also go beyond its own "economic-corporate" interests in order to ally itself within a social bloc of forces (historical bloc) which represents a basis of compromise and consent. In a sense, he supposed that the triumphant group was evolving to represent the universal advancement of society beyond the pitfalls of the capitalism. This moral and intellectual leadership in/of hegemony is Gramsci's addition to Lenin.

There are two ways a class can become the hegemonic: transform and expansion. The transform is how Moderate Party of Risorgimento won forces for unification, through a gradual but continuous absorption, even of antagonistic groups, which resulted in a bastard hegemony, merely passive consensus, the neutralization of the masses and a "passive revolution".¹⁴ The expansive hegemony operates by means of active consensus, the adoption of popular interests by hegemonic class, and the creation of "national-popular will." Only a fundamental class (which occupies one of the two poles in relations of production) can become hegemonic, as hegemony is ethico-political, but also economic. Sooner or later, Bourgeoisie comes up against limits of its hegemony, as it is an exploiting class, and then uses police, and then the working class can bring about expansive hegemony.¹⁵

Gramsci's theory seems more consonant with the Marxist context in China than Huntington's. His theory was read, discussed and applied to explain and guide the government policy. The party and government spoke highly of the cultural issue. In his report at the Sixteenth Party Congress held in November 2002, President Jiang Zemin said, "Attach equal importance to both material and spiritual civilization and run the country by

combining the rule of law with the rule of virtue. Socialist spiritual civilization is an important attribute of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Basing ourselves on China's realities, we must carry forward the fine tradition of our national culture and absorb the achievements of foreign cultures in building socialist spiritual civilization. We should unceasingly upgrade the ideological and ethical standards as well as the scientific and cultural qualities of the entire people so as to provide a strong motivation and intellectual support for the modernization drive.”¹⁶

The party and government realized the importance of the cultural issue, and adopted a two-hand strategy: to ally and regulate. They keep tight control on ideology, censor the media and internet to block subversive dissidents from being heard, while compromising with, absorbing and supporting other mainstream ideologies, including those of the functional religious organizations.

3.3 Religion's Engagement in Cultural Hegemony

In order to respond to the hegemonic attempts, the five major religious organizations all propagate discourses relevant to their own doctrines in the name of “serving the society and promoting people's well-being”, such as the Buddhists' "honoring the country and benefiting sentient beings", the Catholics' and the Protestants' "glorifying God and benefiting the people", the Daoists' "realizing divinity through virtuous deeds" and the Islam's "praying to Allah to give great reward in this world and hereafter".¹⁷ The “humanistic Buddhism”, coined by Master Taixu in 1920s and elaborated by Zhao Puchu, the former president of Chinese Buddhist Association, has been a common public doctrine in modern Chinese Buddhist history. The theology of love, formulated by Bishop Ding Guangxun, the former president of Chinese Christian Council, is the working theological thought in China today.

As Janice Wickeri, the editor of Bishop Ding's collected writings *Love*

Never Ends, commented, “Beginning with God as Lover rather than with human beings as sinners marks a significant point of departure for a minority Christianity reaching out to the broader society. By making it possible to affirm the good found outside the Christian community, this approach offers a Christian perspective on the accommodation between Christianity and secular society...could be very important for the future of the church in China, promoting Christian participation in the larger society and unity within a church with strong fundamentalist tendencies.”¹⁸ The traditional mainstream teachings of Confucianism, Buddhism and Daoism all exhort human beings are born from Dao or Buddha, hence human nature is of Dao or Buddha. In other words, human beings are originally good or innocent. The Chinese Marxism before reformed era deemed that there is only human nature of classes; no human nature can transcend the limitation of its class. A lot of post-Mao Chinese scholars agree that there is common human nature which is universally good. To begin Christian teachings with original sin is quite exotic in this context. The fundamentalist Christian views preach a lot on distinction between believers and non-believers, narrow down the purposes of being a Christian to only salvation. These views are very difficult for the minority Christians to get along well with the mainstream society in China. If the emphasis of Christian teachings in China is put on God’s Love, it should be more acceptable to Chinese population.

Harmony is a fundamental concept in traditional Chinese philosophy and a lofty social ideal cherished by Chinese people for thousands of years. Chinese scholars had discussed them for decades, before President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao advocated the “peaceful rise”, “harmonious society” and “scientific development” theories and planned to develop its cultural hegemony accordingly. President Hu and Premier Wen also extended the ideal of harmony to international relationship. Chinese religions have played the role of ambassador of peace in the world for years. They participate actively in international religious organizations, and provide

charity to the needy people in other countries, such as the tsunami victims. Until early February 2005, religious organizations in China had donated over tens of millions yuan to tsunami victims, among which about twelve million yuan (1.5 million US dollars) from the Buddhist organizations is the largest donation that Red Cross in China had received. ¹⁹

An international Buddhist forum was hosted on April 13-17, for the first time since Buddhism transmitted in China over 2000 years ago. About 1,000 monks and scholars on Buddhism from more than 30 countries attended the pageant in the scenic cities of Hangzhou and nearby Zhoushan in eastern Zhejiang province. The theme of the forum was "a harmonious world begins in the mind". Ye Xiaowen said at a meeting with the board of the Chinese Buddhist Association in Jiangsu province in March 2006, "The 'harmonious world' theory... will help dispel doubts in the international community about China's continued development and refute the absurd China threat theory"; "It is desirable for Buddhist affairs to help civilian rule." ²⁰

The present director of SARA commented that, "the relationship of religion with politics in China, has learned from both those of the ancient China and the western countries, but differs from them in some way. It is a new type with its own characteristics suited for the Chinese socialism. It takes the separation of church from state as its base, while the harmony of church with state as its value orientation. That is to say, to insist on the separation principle, and form a clear border between the state and church, in case the state replaces the church or vice versa. By doing so, we installed system security, while do not regard separation as the ultimate end of dealing with the relationship. On the contrary, we should realize the harmonious relationship between the state and church, and build up friendly interaction between them." ²¹

4 Resistance and Resolution

4.1 Domestic Resistance and Resolution

The elite coalition and cultural hegemony of course have encountered resistance from both domestic and foreign sources. The domestic ones are: (1) “the various crimes on the pretext of religion”, among which the Islamic Extremists of Eastern Turkistan independent movement and Lamaist splittists of Tibetan independent movement are the most audible, (2) the *Xiejiao* or destructive cults, among which Falun Gong is the most visible, (3) the dysfunctional religious groups, which neither violate the regulations and laws, nor join the coalition and hegemony, being commonly called “underground churches” in Catholicism and “family gatherings” (the Chinese government does not call them “family churches”) in Protestantism, and (4) the peripheral religious elements, including folk religious practices, some newly imported religions both for expatriate and local believers, which fall beyond the current official definition of religion.

The last category exists as a resistance not because they act against the government or are not happy to register; on the contrary, they are pushing to get a legal status. Furthermore, there are longstanding disagreements on their recognition and treatment with anxiety over whether a Pandora’s Box may open if these elements are recognized, the worst threat being that any religious group could claim the benefits of official recognition, and the current policy would lose its continuation.

The government resolves each of these issues in respective ways. It punishes the crimes and *xiejiao* “relentlessly according to the law”. As to the non-cooperative religious groups, there is a gray area. It is complicated because the motivations, in which some religious groups are not willing to join the recognized organizations or register with the government, are various: some group leaders are skeptical of the policy of religious freedom

because of the experiences of the Cultural Revolution; some have a difficult relationship with the leaders of recognized religious organizations; some have their theological reasons, for example, they are very spiritual and reject registration as profane, especially with a government that has an atheist ideology. The government once was very alert to these groups. But time has proven that they are not very serious dangers to the social order. Thus the government neither supports nor tries to disperse them, as long as they do not challenge the law and order, for example to ignite massive riots. In return, these groups naturally have to pay for their disobedience at some price. They cannot have legal person statuses, which is necessary for benefits such as real estate ownership and tax exemption.

There are widespread folk religious practices in China, including ancestor worship, worship of local deities, fengshui, fortune telling and other community traditions. The official policy is to treat them as “contradictions within the people”. In most cases publicity campaigns are used to convince individuals of the error of their ways. In few cases, where the practices are deemed to “bring about damages to the property or health of the people”, or “endanger the national security or social order”, the Criminal Code is applied. Thanks to the untiring defense by some liberal scholars, the situation is relaxing. In 2002, the Beijing municipal government announced its latest revision of religious regulations, and dropped the clause about banned “superstitious activities”. At the National Religious Work Conference held in January 2004, the government decided to set up a new unit within SARA to deal with folk religions. It is a sign that the government is conceding the existence of this cultural heritage under the mantle of religious affairs.

4.2 Foreign Resistance and Resolution

The outside challenges come from (1) “the foreign hostile forces” who

do not like Marxism and the Chinese system of governance and hence try to undermine them through the channel of religion, (2) some foreign religious groups who are “trying to restore their lost dominance over Chinese churches”, and (3) the western governments, especially the US government and human right organizations, who always keep an eye on Chinese religious freedom and try to censure or even sanction Chinese government.

According to Decree 144 of State Council and its supplement²² concerning the religious life of foreigners in China, they are free to join church services in China, but are not allowed to establish religious organizations in China. In some metropolitan cities, like Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, where foreign populations are big, there are registered “temporary venues” for religious services that the foreign congregations rent. For example, there are two temporary venues for the Protestant congregations of foreigners: one is in the Twenty-First Century Hotel in Chaoyang District; one is in the concerto hall of National Library in Haidian District. Both of them are located in the central place where foreign population are dense, and can hold more than 2,000 people.

The government also is refining its policy and hope that religion can cushion the transformations while China enters into the WTO and other international rules. The government admits that globalization may trigger new waves of foreign religious influence. The religious organizations are encouraged to cultivate positive relationships with their friendly foreign counterparts, while filtering unwanted foreign impacts. As Ye Xiaowen stressed, Chinese churches must step up their anti-infiltration efforts to block hostile foreign groups from establishing footholds in China.²³

5 Conclusion

According to the official representation of the CCP, the Marxism that

they hold fast to is an “incessantly developing Marxism”, so Marxism has become a useful label for the group in power to legitimize their ideology, although most of its connotations have been replaced. Having the largest membership of 78 million persons among the world’s political parties, the CCP cannot only represent one or two classes. As its revised charter stipulates, the party is the vanguard team of not only the Chinese workers, but also the Chinese people and nationalities. ²⁴ No longer limiting class background of its members, the recruiting policy emphasizes that the target members should be “good at both talent and virtue” (“*Decai Jianbei*”), and opens its door to top college students and entrepreneurs. The party itself is becoming an elite organization. The upper layers of this organization attract the upper layers of religious and many other circles to form an even larger coalition. It seems that this way of governance is successful so far in sustaining rapid development and political stability.

However, how long can this style of governance sustain itself? There are severe challenges behind the great expectations. We are not sure how and when and to what extent these crises can be solved. Even though I would like to believe that the elites in power could tackle all problems to a satisfactory degree, can we believe that they will be able to keep unity within the coalition and make the stage open to more talented, virtuous and ambitious elites? In other words, how can the power of elite coalition keep from degenerating and coagulating in a homogenous inner circle?

It was radical leftists within the CCP that once tried to exterminate traditional culture so as to monopolize or “purify” the state ideology. Nowadays it seems that the party is turning back the gears to traditional heritages for cultural hegemony. Can an assertive official ideology be humble and honest enough to learn from the wisdom of 5000 years? Can Marxism plus traditional culture plus free market amount to a dominant national cultural system? It takes time to watch.

¹ According to Wikipedia, the Gini coefficient is a measure of inequality of a distribution, which was developed by the Italian statistician Corrado Gini in 1912. It is often used to measure income inequality. It is a number between 0 and 1, where 0 corresponds to perfect equality (e.g. everyone has the same income) and 1 corresponds to perfect inequality (e.g. one person has all the income, and everyone else has zero income).

² 1978年10月，中共中央转发中央统战部《关于当前宗教工作中急需解决的两个政策性问题的请示报告》，中央统战部档案。

³ The “hat” here is actually the abbreviated name for “clown’s long hat”, which was a tall conical paper hat filled with large characters spouting insulting labels and put on the head of “bad element” at denunciation conference during the Cultural Revolution. In the Cultural Revolution, the Red Guards put the label of capitulationism on the united front work and stopped it.

⁴ 1979年中共中央统战部《关于建议为全国统战、民族、宗教工作部门摘掉“投降主义路线”帽子的请示报告》获得批准。

⁵ 《邓小平论统一战线》，中央文献出版社，1991年，第161页。

⁶ 1982年中共中央19号文件《关于我国社会主义时期宗教问题的基本观点和基本政策》. An English translation can be found in Donald MacInnis, *Religion in China Today: Policy and Practice* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1989).

⁷ 叶小文：《社会主义宗教论》，《中国宗教》2003年第5期第6页。

⁸ The reliable full text of the document can be found on some

government website. For example the Guangxi congress and consultant committee: <http://lh.gxnews.com.cn/2006gx/article.php?articleid=302262>

⁹ The unofficial English version of the Report of the Sixteenth Party Congress can be found on some website, such as Foreign Languages Institute Fujian Normal University: <http://www.hzhot.com/Soft/publc/top/200509/43.html>. The Chinese text of the four phases is: “全面贯彻党的宗教信仰自由政策，依法管理宗教事务，积极引导宗教与社会主义社会相适应，坚持独立自主自办的原则。”

¹⁰ These data came from the Central UFWD’s statistic in 2004. The annual increase rate is calculated by the author.

¹¹ 《葛兰西文选 (1916-1935)》，中共中央马克思 恩格斯 列宁 斯大林著作编译局国际共运史研究所编，人民出版社，1992。

¹² Gramsci, Antonio, Selection from the Prison Notebooks, edited and translated by Quintin Hoare and G. N. Smith. New York: International, 1971, P420.

¹³ An Antonio Gramsci Reader, New York University Press, 2000, P211.

¹⁴ An Antonio Gramsci Reader: VIII. Passive Revolution, Caesarism, Fascism.

¹⁵ An Antonio Gramsci Reader: **VI Hegemony, Relations of Force, Historical Bloc.**

¹⁶ See note 9.

¹⁷ 佛教的口号是：“庄严国土,利乐有情”；道教的是：“功德成神”；伊斯兰教的是：“两世吉庆”；天主教和新教的是：“荣神益人”；新教丁光训主教提出的“爱的神学”，等等。

¹⁸ Love Never Ends, the English version of Bishop Ding’s selected papers

since the resurgence of Christianity in China in the early 1980s, was published by Yilin Press, Nanjing, China, in 2000. My citation here is on Page 9 of this edition. Other editions of this book are also available in the US: *God Is Love: Collected Writings of Bishop K. H. Ting*, Colorado: Cook Communications Ministries International, 2004; *A Chinese Contribution to Ecumenical Theology: Selected Writings of Bishop K. H. Ting*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 2002.

¹⁹ The web site of Xinhua News Agency:

<http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/ydyhx/zgys.htm>

²⁰ 叶小文 2006 年 2 月 24 日在中国佛教协会第七届三次理事会上的讲话《齐心协力办好“世界佛教论坛”》。在讲话中，他把直言举办佛教论坛是为了“文治”：“千载胜缘逢圣事，好将佛事助文治。”讲话全文见中华佛教信息网：

http://news.fjnet.com/zhuanti/lishihui/zxbd/t20060227_21511.html

²¹ 王作安：《关于当代中国政教关系》，《学习时报》2009 年 11 月 23 日。

原文为：“当代中国政教关系，既借鉴古代中国和当代西方国家的政教关系，又不同于古代中国和当代西方国家的政教关系，而是与中国特色社会主义相匹配、具有自身鲜明特征的一种新型政教关系。这种新型政教关系，以政教分离原则为基础，以政教和谐为价值取向。也就是说，坚持政教分离原则，在政教之间划分出清晰的界限，防止以政代教或者以教代政，为宗教信仰自由提供了制度保障；但并不把政教分离作为处理政教关系的终极目标，而是在政教分离基础上努力追求政教关系的和谐，形成良性互动的关系。”

²² The two national regulations on foreigners religious activities in China are *Decree 144 of State Council: Regulations on the Management of Religious Activities of Foreigner in China* 中华人民共和国境内外国人宗教活动管理规定 and *Specific Rules for Implementing the Regulations on the Management of Religious Activities of Foreigner in China* 境内外国人宗教活动管理规定实施细则 . The Chinese texts can be found at: http://www.uibe.edu.cn/upload/up_dfs/clxsfg3.htm and http://www.69law.com/Article/LAW_chi/17098.htm .

²³ 叶小文在第七次中国基督教代表大会开幕式上的讲话, 《中国宗教》, 2002年第4期, P11-13.

²⁴ The Chinese version of the new charter of CCP is available at: http://news.ewe.com.cn/show_news.php?blockid=81&articleid=9025