

Statistics on Religions and Churches in the People's Republic of China – Update for the Year 2016

Katharina Wenzel-Teuber
Translated by Jacqueline Mulberge

The annual statistical update in *Religion & Christianity in Today's China (RCTC)* compiles data on the religious life in the People's Republic of China (Mainland) from available recent sources of various kinds. As the following pages will show, since several years Chinese researchers of religion have been able to obtain more and more data from large scale, national panel surveys on the socio-economic situation of the population. However, they are still experimenting to find an appropriate formulation for China that will ascertain the religious attitude of those questioned and additionally identify possible “hidden” adherents of religions – that is, those who do not wish to reveal themselves in official surveys, perhaps, for example, because they belong to unofficial religious groups (see para. 1.1). New figures also come from the State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA) that continually expands its online database on official religiosity (see para. 1.3).

In the studies presented the questions brought to the fore are also those that concern religious policy. Among these are religion in the Internet (para 1.4), the administration of popular beliefs, which are only just gaining gradual recognition by the authorities but which are partially promoted in the countryside to counterbalance the spread of Christianity (para. 2.3), or the attitude of university students toward religion and Christianity (para 5.1).

1 Religions and Religiosity in General

1.1 How to Ask about Religion in Chinese? An Attempt of the China Family Panel Studies 2014

The China Family Panel Studies (CFPS, *Zhongguo jiating zhuizong diaocha* 中国家庭追踪调查) is a “nationally representative, annual longitudinal survey” that focuses on the “economic and non-economic wellbeing of the population.”¹ Since 2010 the Institute of Social Science Survey of Peking University has conducted surveys at regular intervals of a fixed panel of families and individuals in 25 of the 31 provinces, direct-controlled municipi-

This article was first published under the title “Statistik zu Religionen und Kirchen in der Volksrepublik China. Ein Update für das Jahr 2016” in *China heute* 2017, No. 1, pp. 24-38.

1 See how CFPS describes itself on the website of the project: www.iss.edu.cn/cfps/EN (English) and www.iss.edu.cn/cfps (Chinese).

palities and autonomous regions of (Mainland) China, i.e. in all except Xinjiang, Tibet, Qinghai, Inner Mongolia, Ningxia and Hainan. The survey in 2012 had a question module on religion for the first time. An article published by Lu Yunfeng of Peking University in 2014 presented the data on religion gathered by CFPS in 2012, in conjunction with other socio-economic data such as religious affiliation according to age, educational level, income, residence in city or countryside, etc.² In 2012 only 10% of those surveyed gave a religious affiliation; already at that time Lu guessed that this could have been due to the way the questions were formulated.³

In the new survey of the panel in 2014⁴ the question module on the topic of religion was, therefore, changed. The number of those surveyed who gave a religious affiliation then rose to more than 25%.⁵ Lu Yunfeng with Zhang Chunni, also of Peking University, gave the following relevant background information in an article published in 2016:

In 2012 the first question of the CFPS module on religion asked: “To which religion do you belong?” 您属于什么宗教? Possible answers were: 1. Buddhism; 2. Daoism; 3. Islam; 4. Protestantism; 5. Catholicism; 6. No religion; 7. Other (please state).

CFPS 2014 formulated the question thus: “[In] what do you believe?” 您信什么? Possible answers were: 1. Buddha, Bodhisattva[s]; 2. Daoist Gods and Immortals 道教的神仙; 3. Allah 安拉; 4. The God of the Catholics 天主教的天主; 5. The God of the Protestants 基督教的上帝; 6. Ancestors 祖先; 7. None of the above-named.⁶ As Lu and Zhang explain, in 2014, unlike in 2012, the question did not directly ask for the religious affiliation but, since systematic identification with a religion is not very pronounced among the Chinese, it made the deities its focus, in order to come closer to the actual percentage of religious believers.⁷ A comparison of the CFPS results from 2012 and 2014 shows the following:

Table 1: Religious Beliefs of Adults in China according to CFPS, Surveys of 2012 and 2014 (%)

	2012	2014		2012	2014
Buddhism	6.50	15.87	Protestantism	2.00	2.19
Daoism	0.31	0.85	No religious belief	90.06	73.56
Popular belief		0.81	Other	0.15	5.94
Islam	0.71	0.45	Total	100.00 (20,035)	100.00 (19,260)
Catholicism	0.27	0.34			

Excerpt from a more extensive table in Lu Yunfeng – Zhang Chunni 2016, p. 36. According to Lu and Zhang the data for 2012 were already weighted, the 2014 data not yet.

- 2 Lu Yunfeng 2014. See also the detailed presentation of this study in Wenzel-Teuber 2015, pp. 21-28.
- 3 As a second possible reason for the low percentage of those stating religious affiliation in the CFPS survey of 2012, Lu Yunfeng’s article in 2014 named the survey’s exclusion of the strongly Buddhist and Muslim western regions; cf. Wenzel-Teuber 2015, p. 22.
- 4 In CFPS 2014, 13,857 families and 31,665 individuals were surveyed; Lu Yunfeng – Zhang Chunni 2016, p. 36. In CFPS 2010 there were 14,960 families and 42,590 individuals; in CFPS 2012, 12,725 families and 42,970 individuals; *ibid.*, p. 35.
- 5 From an international view the percentage is still not a high one but it is clearly higher than the 7% of the Chinese, who described themselves as religious according to a survey published by WIN/Gallup on March 13, 2015; according to the results of that survey, China was the least religious country in the world. Cf. Wenzel-Teuber 2016, pp. 24-25.
- 6 Lu Yunfeng – Zhang Chunni 2016, p. 38. A possible answer of „Other“ is not listed there but was presumably included since it appears in the table in *ibid.*, p. 38 (excerpts are given here in Table 1).
- 7 *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38.

Table 1 does show in 2014 a higher percentage of the adult population than in 2012 for all religions except Islam. The difference for Buddhism, Daoism and Other is particularly evident.

The intention of the article by Lu and Zhang was to determine the number of Protestant Christians in China, since, as these two researchers say, estimates of their number showed extreme differences. With the new questions on religion in CFPS 2014 they believe that also “hidden” Christians (i.e., those who conceal their religious affiliation in surveys) can be detected, since “no genuine Christian will deny that he believes in Jesus Christ.”⁸ Yet as Table 1 shows, the difference in the data of 2012 and 2014 is not very great, from which the authors conclude that there are not many “hidden” Christians. In the light of all the relevant data of the CFPS and of the older Chinese General Social Survey (CGSS, 中国综合社会调查)⁹ they estimate that Protestant Christians only account for 1.93% to 2.2% of the total adult population, from which they calculate that in Mainland China there are at most only approximately 14–16 million adult Protestants. With the inclusion of the under 18’s, they estimate a proportion of 1.97% in 2010, i.e. approximately 26 million Protestants.¹⁰

1.2 Situation of Registered Religious Sites in the “China Religion Survey” of Renmin University

The “China Religion Survey” (CRS, 中国宗教调查) has been carried out since 2011 by the School of Philosophy and the National Survey Research Center of Renmin University under the direction of Wei Dedong and Wang Weidong. Whereas CFPS and CGSS surveyed private households or private individuals, the CRS focussed its surveys from 2013–2015 on the official, state registered sites for religious activities (*zongjiao huodong changsuo* 宗教活动场所) of the five recognized religions – Buddhism, Daoism, Islam, Protestantism and Catholicism. According to its own statement, it is “the first nationally representative survey on sites for religious activities.” For this they selected a sample of 4,383 religious sites in 243 administrative units at county level in all 31 provinces, direct-controlled municipalities and autonomous regions.¹¹ Of the total sample of 4,383 religious sites, 34% were Protestant, 31% Buddhist, 15% Islamic, 10% Daoist and 10% Catholic sites.¹² Leaders of the religious sites were surveyed, as were also leading officials of the local government religious authorities.¹³

Some interesting results of this survey were already presented in 2016 in *RCTC*, based on an article that Wei Dedong published on his blog in 2015.¹⁴ In 2016 Wei Dedong and

8 *Ibid.*, p. 38.

9 The CGSS was begun in 2003 and according to its own introduction is “the oldest nationwide representative, continual survey project conducted by academic institutions” in China. It is carried out by the National Survey Research Center at Renmin University of China. See Introduction at www.chinagss.org/index.php?r=index/introduce. Data connected with religion are also collected.

10 Lu Yunfeng – Zhang Chunni 2016, pp. 38 and 46.

11 CRS 2016, p. 314.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 315.

13 According to CRS 2015, cf. Wenzel-Teuber 2016, p. 21. CRS 2016, p. 313, states only that the leaders of religious sites were surveyed.

14 CRS 2015; cf. presentation of the results shown there in Wenzel-Teuber 2016, pp. 20–24.

Wang Weidong published a more formal evaluation (in the following: CRS 2016) of their research. Some of its results that have not been presented last year will be supplemented below; the authors subsume them under the heading “social participation” of the religious groups.

Which events beyond the regular religious activities were organized additionally by the religious sites? The responses of those surveyed by the CRS are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Activities of Various Kinds Organized by Sites for Religious Activities in the Year 2013 (%)

Religious affiliation of the sites Type of activity	Buddhism	Daoism	Islam	Catholicism	Protestantism	Total
Discussions on current topics	16.2	21.1	23.4	17.4	19.9	19.1
Study groups for non-religious classics	5.7	5.5	4.8	4.2	4.4	5.0
Summer camps for the youth	3.5	1.4	2.9	32.2	16.3	10.4
Courses on marriage	1.5	0.2	9.8	39.1	19.5	12.4
Training for mission activities directed towards people outside [their own religion]	9.8	8.9	6.8	23.3	12.7	11.6
Training in religious knowledge for religious personnel	43.1	35.5	28.0	28.2	45.6	39.5
Training in religious knowledge for religious believers	50.7	35.9	47.8	61.7	65.5	54.9
Training for social services	13.4	8.4	9.4	20.7	20.6	15.4
Interreligious activities	7.3	10.9	4.0	9.9	5.5	6.8
Exchange with foreign religious groups	6.3	10.7	0.8	3.3	5.3	5.3
Other	2.1	1.8	1.2	1.9	0.7	1.4
Number of questionnaires	1,356	440	646	425	1,465	4,332

Source: CRS 2016, p. 324, Table 2.

The authors noted on this that the activities that reached the highest percentage are of an inner-religious nature (such as ongoing training in religious knowledge), and from this they conclude that the social participation of the religions in China is at a low level. As noticeably high they stress the numbers for youth summer camps, marriage courses and ongoing training for social services in the Catholic and Protestant sites.¹⁵ – In ongoing training of religious personnel the Catholic sites figure on the lowest places. One result of CRS showed also, however, that Catholic personnel have by far the highest academic qualifications, with 43% having a university degree or higher, whereas the average percentage of university graduates among the religious personnel of all religions is around 18%.¹⁶ It is also surprising that precisely the Daoists – the only religion whose roots are not in a foreign country – have, according to CSR, the most exchange with foreign religious groups.

In the non-profit charitable work of the religious sites there is still leeway, according to the authors, for increased development, since on the average 60% of all sites could

15 CRS 2016, p. 323.

16 CRS 2015 according to Wenzel-Teuber 2016, p. 23.

not show any corresponding activities, even though the Christian churches are somewhat more active in this field than the other religions.¹⁷

Table 3: Sites for Religious Activities according to the Number of their Non-Profit Charitable Undertakings (CU) (%)

No. of CUs per site	Religion				
	Buddhism	Daoism	Islam	Catholicism	Protestantism
none	65.3	69.9	68.8	51.6	51.1
1	16.1	14.3	16.4	21.4	24.9
2	8.0	8.0	8.7	12.4	12.8
3 and more	10.6	7.8	6.1	14.6	11.2

Table compiled from data from CRS 2016, p. 325, diagram 12.

Membership of religious personnel in political bodies is also counted by CRS as social participation. The following table shows this:

Table 4: Proportion of Religious Sites per Religion which Have a Religious Personnel Member Holding a Post in a Political Body or some Office in Society

Type of position	Religious affiliation of the sites					Total
	Buddhism	Daoism	Islam	Catholicism	Protestantism	
Member of a Political Consultative Conference	21.5	14.5	18.1	27.5	11.6	17.5
Member of a People’s Congress	6.8	5.1	5.8	0.9	2.4	4.5
Communist Youth Association	6.9	5.4	5.7	2.1	2.7	4.7
Other offices in society	6.9	5.4	5.7	2.1	2.7	4.7
Number of questionnaires	1,374	448	653	426	1,480	4,381

Source: CRS 2016, p. 324, Table 3.

The data presented in CRS 2016 on how the religious sites use the Internet are given in para. 1.4.

In the coming years, according to the authors, the surveys of the religions will be continued, so as to support science and politics with reliable data.¹⁸

1.3 Registered Institutes for Religious Education of the Five Religions in the Online Database of the SARA

Since 2014 the State Administration for Religious Affairs has gradually been setting up a database for reference on “basic religious data” on its website (in the following: SARA

17 CRS 2016, p. 324.

18 *Ibid.*, p. 327.

database). In 2016 data on the registered institutes for religious education was uploaded. According to the accompanying announcement of the SARA of October 11, 2016, this new database will make it possible for the public to distinguish between “legal” – i.e. SARA approved – and other institutes and to protect the rights of the institutes.

On the SARA website select the button 宗教基本信息查询 (“Information on Basic Data of the Religions,” <http://sara.gov.cn/zjbbxxcx/>) and then the new button 宗教院校基本信息 (“Basic Data on Institutes for Religious Education,” <http://sara.gov.cn/zjxy/cs/index.htm>). Here you can select one of the five religions. You will get a list of the state-approved institutes for religious education of the religion you selected, with an indication of the sponsoring organization, name and address of the institute, as well as the name of the person responsible for the institute. The sponsoring organizations given in the database are almost without exception the official religious organizations of the respective religion at the national or provincial level. Exceptions to this are the Buddhist Academy of Tibet in Lhasa and the Dechen branch of the Buddhist Academy of Yunnan, which are supported by organs of the Chinese Communist Party (!) (United Front Department of the Autonomous Region of Tibet, or the Party Commission of the Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture of Dechen in Yunnan respectively). The respective dioceses are the (co-)sponsors of two Catholic seminaries (Diocesan Seminary of Beijing, and Shanghai).



Map: d-maps.com/carte.php?num_car=27749&lang=de

Provinces, Direct-Controlled Municipalities and Autonomous Regions of China – Map and List of Abbreviations

AH Anhui, BJ Beijing, CQ Chongqing, FJ Fujian, GD Guangdong, GS Gansu, GX Guangxi, GZ Guizhou, Hain Hainan, HB Hubei, Heb Hebei, Hen Henan, HL Heilongjiang, HN Hunan, JL Jilin, JS Jiangsu, JX Jiangxi, LN Liaoning, NM Inner Mongolia, NX Ningxia, QH Qinghai, SC Sichuan, SD Shandong, SH Shanghai, SN Shaanxi, SX Shanxi, TJ Tianjin, XJ Xinjiang, XZ Tibet, YN Yunnan, ZJ Zhejiang.

Table 5: Number of all Registered Institutes for Religious Education of the Five State-Recognized Religions, SARA database “Basic Data on Institutes for Religious Education,” Accessed on March 16, 2017

	Number per Religion	Number of these per Province / Metropolis / Autonomous Region
Buddhism	36	BJ 2, CQ 1, FJ 2, GD 2, GS 1, Hain 1 (in preparation), HB 1, Heb 1, Hen 1, HL 1, HN 1, JS 5 (of these 1 in preparation), NM 1, QH 1, SC 3, SD 1, SH 1, SN 1, SX 1, XZ 1, YN 3, ZJ 4
Daoism	10	BJ 1, FJ 1 (in preparation), GD 1 (in preparation), HB 1, Heb 1, HN 1, JX 1 (in preparation), SC 1, SH 1, ZJ 1 (in preparation)
Islam	10	BJ 2, GS 1, Heb 1, Hen 1, LN 1, NX 1, QH 1, XJ 1, YN 1
Protestant	21	AH 1, BJ 1, FJ 1, GD 1, GZ 1, HB 1, Heb 1, Hen 1, HL 1, HN 1, JL 1, JS 2, JX 1, LN 1, SC 1, SD 1, SH 1, SN 1, YN 1, ZJ 1
Catholic	9	BJ 2, HB 1, Heb 1, LN 1, SC 1, SH 1, SN 1, SX 1 (temporarily closed)
Total	86	

Source: <http://sara.gov.cn/zjxyys/index.htm>.

It is noticeable that the number of Daoist institutes for religious education is currently being increased – according to the database, four of the ten Daoist institutes are in preparation. In addition two new Buddhist academies are planned. The number of Catholic major seminaries on the other hand has decreased – SARA 2014¹⁹ still gave the number as 12. – Apart from the registered institutes there are numerous non-registered facilities for religious education which are regarded by the authorities as “illegal.”

According to the above-mentioned announcement of the SARA of October 11, 2016, approx. 10,000 students are currently studying at the 86 registered institutes for religious education in China; since they were reopened in the 1980s until today around 40,000 students have graduated from these institutes.

On the SARA website there is also a databank with “Basic Data on the Sites for Religious Activities” (<http://sara.gov.cn/csjbxx/index.htm>), from where since the end of 2015 all registered Buddhist and Daoist sites can be found, as well as a link to the online reference system for the Living Buddhas of Tibetan Buddhism recognized by the Chinese State (<http://hf.tibet.cn>).²⁰

1.4 Religion in the Internet

The growing phenomenon “Religion in the Internet” (*wangshang zongjiao* 网上宗教 or *wangluo zongjiao* 网络宗教, “Cyber Religion”) is increasingly attracting the attention of the state and the religious authorities. Zhao Bing of the Institute of Marxism of the Shanghai Dianji University and the Research Center for Religion and State Security of China of the Fudan University explains the phenomenon in an article. He distinguishes two phases of “Religion in the Internet” for China: the phase from 1996 to 2003, in which web 1.0

19 This source is an excerpt of a reader compiled by the SARA on the study of the socialist theory of religion with Chinese characteristics.

20 A detailed evaluation of the data on sites for religious activities can be found in Wenzel-Teuber 2016, pp. 26-28; on the online reference system for Living Buddhas of Tibetan Buddhism see *ibid.*, pp. 25-26.

technology – classical websites – were predominant and offered religious information; the phase from 2004 on with interactive web 2.0 technology.²¹

In Zhao Bing’s estimate the degree of activity of the five major religions of China in the virtual sphere is approximately equal, with the exception of Buddhism, which according to Zhao is somewhat more active than the other religions. As an example Zhao Bing cites a search on the two favorite Weibo 微博 (microblogging) platforms, those of the firms Sina and Tencent, that he carried out in January 2014:

Table 6: The Five Religions on the Weibo-Platforms of Sina and Tencent

	Sina Weibo		Tencent Weibo	
	Weibo-users*	Weibo-Entries at the time of search**	Weibo-users*	Weibo-Entries at the time of search**
Buddhism	45,773	29,860,843	12,823	1,981,400
Protestantism	11,536	5,188,017	5,484	389,200
Daoism	3,648	3,109,165	2,509	211,700
Islam	505	1,564,549	9,693	126,700
Catholicism	5,405	2,687,958	1,038	115,900

* This means the number of Weibo users, in whose profile in the self-portrayal or in the tags (*biaoqian* 标签) the term “religion” or the name of a specific religion came up.

** This means the total number of Weibo entries on the different religions on the platforms of Sina or Tencent, which the author (Zhao Bing) ascertained by means of the research tool of the respective platform at a specific time (January 8, 2014, 15.30–16.00 hrs.).

Table with notes compiled from Zhao Bing 2015, p. 102, Tables 1 and 2.

Zhao noted, however, that the main emphasis of the virtual activity of the Protestants in China shifted between 2011 and 2013 from Weibo to WeChat (Chinese Weixin 微信, Instant-messaging-service of Tencent with additional functions).²² – Since this shift corresponds to the general trend in the use of social media in Mainland, it could be similar for the other religions.

Whereas Zhao Bing’s study also included private religious internet activities (which are possibly in the majority), the China Religion Survey (CRS), presented in paragraph 1.2 above, gave information on the official internet activity of the registered sites for religious activities. According to CRS 2016, 14.4% of Buddhist, 7.0% of Daoist, 0.8% of Muslim, 6.6% of Catholic and 10.1% of Protestant sites somehow use the Internet.²³ If we differentiate according to the type of internet use, we come up with the following picture:

21 Zhao Bing 2015, pp. 100-101.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 102. – As opposed to the open Weibo, WeChat (similar to WhatsApp) is a platform for exchange in closed or semi-open groups.

23 Data from CRS 2016, p. 321, diagram 9.

Table 7: Type of Official Internet Use by Registered Sites for Religious Activities (%)

Religious affiliation of the sites	Buddhism	Daoism	Islam	Catholicism	Protestantism	Total
Sites maintain:						
Official Website	10.5	6.0	0.4	1.8	6.1	6.2
Official Forum / BBS	1.2	1.1	0.4	0.0	0.4	0.7
Official Blog	3.0	2.0	0.4	1.0	0.8	1.6
Official Weibo	3.5	2.0	0.4	1.3	1.3	1.9
Official WeChat / Fetion-Group	7.8	2.6	0.4	2.5	4.7	4.7
Official QQ-Group	6.7	1.1	1.3	5.0	6.7	5.2
Number of questionnaires	1,128	351	472	400	1,163	3,514

Source: CRS 2016, p. 322, Table 1.

Notes [kw]: BBS = Bulletin Board System; Fetion (chin. Feixin 飞信): an Instant Messaging Service of China Mobile; QQ: an older Instant Messaging Service of Tencent.

2 Buddhism, Daoism and Popular Beliefs

For this large sector of religious life in China older surveys such as the Chinese Spiritual Life Survey (CSLS) of 2007 still present a certain orientation.²⁴ It came among other things to the following results:

- 185 million consider themselves Buddhists, i.e. 18% of the population over 16 years.
- 17.3 million have taken the triple refuge (in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha), i.e. have formalized their adherence to Buddhism through ritual.
- 12 million of the adult population clearly identify with Daoism.
- 173 million have exercised some Daoist practices or participated in them, but these are difficult to distinguish from popular religion.

2.1 Buddhism

33,837 registered Buddhist sites for religious activities (SARA database 2017),²⁵ of which:

- 28,270 Han-Chinese Buddhism (+ 183)
- 3,862 Tibetan Buddhism (+ 2)
- 1,705 Theravada Buddhism (+ 0)

24 For the CSLS, from May to July 2007, a sample of 7,021 individuals aged 16 to 75 years was interviewed in 56 selected localities of different size as to their religious self-identification. In July 2010, Yang Fenggang from the Center on Religion and Chinese Society at Purdue University (West Lafayette, USA) presented the results of the study in Beijing. For CSLS see also Wenzel-Teuber 2012, pp. 30-36.

25 SARA database “Basic Data on the Sites for Religious Activities” at <http://sara.gov.cn/csjsx/index.htm>, accessed on March 28, 2017. The figures in parenthesis show the difference from the last search on March 17, 2016 (Wenzel-Teuber 2016, p. 27, Table 1).

222,000 Buddhist monks and nuns (SARA 2014), of whom:

- 72,000 Han-Chinese Buddhism
- 148,000 Tibetan Buddhism
- 2,000 Theravada Buddhism

36 Buddhist academies (SARA database 2017)

2.2 Daoism

8,278 registered Daoist sites for religious activities (SARA database 2017), of which:

- 3,955 Quanzhen-Tradition (+ 10)
- 4,323 Zhengyi-Tradition (- 1)

48,000 Daoist monks/nuns and priests (*daoshi* 道士) (SARA 2014)

10 Daoist academies, 4 of which are in preparation (SARA database 2017)

2.3 Popular Beliefs in Zhejiang: A “Cycle of Demolition and Reconstruction”

Interesting numbers come up in an article by Chen Jinguo (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences) and Lin Minxia (Zhejiang Normal University), which deals with the policy towards sites of popular religion in the Province of Zhejiang.

According to the authors, popular beliefs are very influential in the province and more widespread than the five major religions taken together. Thus, according to the data of the Ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee of Zhejiang Province (in the following abbr. as ERAC Zhejiang) in 2010 the five religions together had 10,000 [registered] sites for religious activities,²⁶ whereas in 2013, according to a survey of the same committee there were 33,678 temples of popular religion each with a ground space of more than 20 sqm (cf. Table 8).²⁷

Table 8: Number of Temples of Popular Religion with over 20 sqm Ground Space in Zhejiang Province in 2013 according to a Survey of ERAC Zhejiang

City region	Number of temples	City region	Number of temples
Hangzhou	1,253	Quzhou	88 (“inexact”)
Huzhou	2,000	Shaoxing	1,691
Jiaxing	753	Taizhou	5,686
Jinhua	5,000	Wenzhou	8,579
Lishui	3,888	Zhoushan	682
Ningbo	4,058	Total	33,678

Table compiled according to Chen Jinguo – Lin Minxia 2016, p. 197, with data from the website of ERAC Zhejiang, mzw.zj.gov.cn.

26 Chen Jinguo – Lin Minxia 2016, p. 196.

27 *Ibid.*, p. 197, with ref. to the website of ERAC Zhejiang, mzw.zj.gov.cn.

In February 2013 the provincial government of Zhejiang initiated the three-year action “Three Remodelings, One Demolition” (*san gai yi chai* 三改一拆), which included the remodeling of old residential areas, factory areas and villages within cities, as well as the demolition of illegally erected buildings. In the course of this operation many religious buildings were also forcibly demolished by the authorities. The media coverage, especially in other countries, concentrated on the actions against Christian churches and the compulsory removal of church crosses.²⁸ According to Chen and Lin, however, the sites of popular religion were one of the main targets of *san gai yi chai*. According to data of ERAC Zhejiang quoted by the authors, by August 2014 illegal religious and popular religious buildings with a total ground space of 1.340.000 sqm had been demolished. Chen and Lin point out that of these only 2.3% were illegal Protestant buildings, whereas in the city of Taizhou over 1,200 and in the city of Wenzhou over 800 popular religious sites had been demolished.²⁹

According to Chen and Lin, time and again in campaigns in Zhejiang since the 1980s tens of thousands of small temples and shrines of popular religion were demolished by the authorities but often just as quickly rebuilt. The authors speak of a “cycle of demolition and reconstruction.” As an example they give figures from the city region of Taizhou: Over the past 20 years altogether more than 6,600 small temples were demolished there, 4,918 of them in the years 2000–2001 and 1,200 in the years 2013–2014. In spite of the clearing actions of the years 2000–2001, in 2005 there were again 4,170 small temples to be found.³⁰

To give some idea of the demolition actions in 2013 and 2014, Chen and Lin cite the following figures from bulletins of city and county governments in Zhejiang concerning their actions in the context of *san gai yi chai*: The County of Ninghai (Ningbo City) determined the formula “Per town one church, per 5–10 villages one temple, per village one belief site.” In 2013 alone, 230 religious and popular religious sites were demolished or regulated, whereby the number of sites was reduced by more than 20%. In the administrative region of Taizhou City, within two days on September 17/18, 2013, 96 so called illegal religious and popular religious sites were demolished and by October 23, 2013 a total of 158 sites had been destroyed. In 2013 Sanmen County (Taizhou City) carried out a “month of county-wide concentrated advancing of the regulation of illegal temples,” in the course of which a demolition squad of a thousand men “regulated” 102 temples.³¹ Chen and Lin learned from representatives of the authorities in Taizhou and Jiaxing that many villages preferred to fulfil the demolition quota by taking down old temples with heritage

28 On the measures taken against Christian churches in Zhejiang in connection with *san gai yi chai* cf. the reports and documentation in *China heute* 2014, No. 2, pp. 72-75 and 91-93; No. 3, pp. 143-145 and 165-170; 2015, No. 2, pp. 72-75; No. 3, pp. 140-143 and 157-161. The demolition of the Protestant church in Sanjiang on 28 April 2014 had a signal effect. An unknown number of other church buildings were demolished. However, the forced removal of crosses from roofs and towers between spring 2014 and the beginning of 2016 reached a far higher degree. Around 1,500–1,700 churches, mainly of Protestant parishes were affected (the proportion of Catholic parishes affected was around 10% by the beginning of August 2014). The majority of the churches affected were officially registered. In all, the measures taken against churches appear to have taken place mainly at a later time than the demolitions of sites of popular religion reported by Chen and Lin.

29 Chen Jinguo – Lin Minxia 2016, p. 200.

30 *Ibid.*, p. 199. As source for these figures the authors cite information from the then director of the bureau for ethnic and religious affairs of Taizhou City in 2014, as well as a study by Zeng Chuanhui 曾传辉 in 2009.

31 Chen Jinguo – Lin Minxia 2016, p. 200.

value, rather than new buildings bearing donor plaques. Chen and Lin write that destruction of the “ecology of traditional beliefs”³² and historical cultural monuments, as well as social conflict in the face of this campaign of temple demolition was inevitable. According to their description, some authorities and party media began in early 2014 to warn of the destruction of listed monuments in the course of *san gai yi chai*. On September 17, 2014 the Office of the People’s Government of Zhejiang published “Opinions on Strengthening the Administration of Popular Belief Affairs,” and on November 17, 2014 ERAC Zhejiang published “Measures for the Registration and Administration of the Serial Numbers of Sites for Popular Belief Activities of Zhejiang Province.”³³ Chen and Lin describe that as an attempt to reduce the “crisis in governance” caused by *san gai yi chai*, by creating a legal basis by which dealing with popular religious affairs can be included within the framework of the regular tasks of the government authorities.³⁴

3 Confucianism

In Mainland China Confucianism is not classified as a religion. The Blue Book of Religions of the Chinese Academy of Social Science, however, in the last few years has always included a chapter on Confucianism in its annual publications. In the Blue Book of 2016, Yang Li took up the situation of the Confucian temples (*wenmiao* 文廟) in detail. In the imperial city, these were generally state establishments and served the ritual veneration of Confucius; instruction often took place there, as well as examinations of civil servants.

According to data cited by Yang Li, before 1949 there were 1,749 *wenmiao* in all of China. Today there are around 500. Of these, about 60 are fully preserved, 109 are preserved to a large extent, in 53 temples the central building group is still intact while in a further 287 temples there are only some separate buildings left, such as the *dacheng dian* 大成殿 (Hall of Great Perfection). Yang’s article also has a list with the numbers of original and preserved *wenmiao* by province.³⁵

According to Yang Li, efforts to revive (religious) Confucianism (*rujiao* 儒教), already going on for some time in academic and popular circles, grew into a broader movement after Xi Jinping’s “Qufu speech” in 2013. Now many of the scholars who tend towards Confucianism are of the opinion that the *wenmiao*, “formerly the most significant representatives of the faith and holy places of Confucianism” should be no longer just tourist attrac-

32 Chen Jinguo – Lin Minxia 2016, p. 200. The term “religious ecology” (*zongjiao shengtai lun* 宗教生态论) is a relatively new concept used by some Chinese religious scholars. Mou Zhongjian 牟钟鉴 advocates, for instance, support of popular religion in order to restore the balance of religious ecology which – as he sees it – had been disturbed by the enormous growth of Protestantism. He argues that this growth had become possible because of the efforts to eradicate popular religion which had curbed the spread of Protestantism before. Cf. Gaenssbauer 2015, p. 87.

33 Chen Jinguo – Lin Minxia 2016, p. 200. The text of both documents is appended to their article, on pp. 208-215.

34 *Ibid.*, p. 196. – Chen Jinguo had early on made his name with research into the way authorities deal with popular religiosity. Cf. the discussion of an article by Chen Jinguo in Philipp Hetmanczyk, “Administrative Neuerungen gegenüber ‘volksreligiösen Versammlungsstätten.’ Zum religionspolitischen Status der Volksreligion in China” (Administrative Innovations Regarding “Sites for Popular Belief Activities.” On the Status of Popular Religion in Religious Policy in China), in: *China heute* 2011, No. 2, pp. 103-106.

35 Yang Li 2016, pp. 177-178. In support of these figures Yang indicates a source published in 2011.

tions subject to the cultural authorities, but should regain their historic role, Yang writes.³⁶ For the future development of the *wenmiao* Yang makes the following recommendations among others to politics: Confucius temples that are still used for other purposes should be restored, maintained and – “like Buddhist temples or churches” – be made accessible to the public without admission tickets. In addition, in Yang’s opinion, practice of the ritual veneration of Confucius should be standardized for the entire country.³⁷

4 Islam

In the multi-ethnic State of the People’s Republic of China, ten ethnic groups are considered Muslim. In the statistics presented by Chinese authorities and academics their population numbers are generally equated with that of the Muslims in China. The figures, therefore, do not take into account the members of these ten ethnic groups who do not practice Islam or who profess a different religion, nor converts to Islam from traditionally non-Muslim ethnic groups.

According to the census of 2010, approximately 23 million people belong to the 10 ethnic groups rated as Muslim, that is 1.74% of the total population,³⁸ distributed as follows:

Table 9: Muslim Population according to Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Population in 2010 (persons)	Percentage of the total Muslim population (%)
Hui	10,586,000	45.74
Uyghur	10,069,000	43.51
Kazakh	1,462,600	6.32
Dongxiang	621,500	2.69
Kirghiz	186,700	Less than 1
Salar	130,600	Less than 1
Tajik	51,100	Less than 1
Uzbek	10,600	Less than 1
Bao’an	20,000	Less than 1
Tatar	3,556	Less than 1

Data: 2010 census. Table compiled according to Liu Xiaochun 2014, p. 71.

In addition in the People’s Republic of China there are

- 35,000 larger and smaller mosques (SARA 2014)
- 40,000 mosques, 24,000 of which in Xinjiang, as well as around one hundred mosques for women (Guo–Xinhua 2016)
- 50,000 ahongs (imams) and mullahs (SARA 2014)
- 10 Qur’an institutes (SARA database 2017)

36 Yang Li 2016, pp. 174-175.

37 *Ibid.*, pp. 192-193.

38 Liu Xiaochun 2014, pp. 70-71. – In 2014, in the periodical *Huizu yanjiu*, Liu Xiaochun of the Tangshan Normal University published an analysis of the population structure of the members of ethnic groups rated as Muslim, based on the data of the last, 6th, national population census in China of 2010. This was given in Wenzel-Teuber 2016, pp. 30-34.



One of the approx. 100 women's mosques in China – here in Henan Province. They are a peculiarity of Chinese Islam. Photo: Ariane Reimers.

5 Christianity

5.1 Attitude of University Students towards Christianity

In view of the discussion in Chinese politics regarding religious infiltration, Chinese academics are inquiring further into the development of Christianity in Chinese universities. In an essay published in 2016, the sociologist Li Ding (Renmin University) examined how the influence of Christian missionary activities in universities in Beijing affected the attitude of the students towards Christianity. He referred to the data from various surveys, including in particular the “Beijing College Students Panel Survey” (BCSPS, 首都大学生成长跟踪调查). In this survey, conducted by the National Survey Research Center of Renmin University, a sample of 5,100 students from two different years (beginning of studies in *benke* 本科 / Bachelor courses in fall 2006 and 2008) at 15 Beijing universities was repeatedly questioned on different topics over five consecutive years (2009–2013), thus beyond graduation.³⁹ Among other things the students were asked about their religious beliefs, e.g. how often and where they participated in religious activities – and

39 On this study, see Li Ding 2016, p. 50, as well as Wu Xiaogang 吴晓刚, 中国当代的高等教育、精英形成与社会分层 – 来自“首都大学生成长跟踪调查”的初步发现 (Higher Education, Elite Formation and Social Stratification in Contemporary China), in: *Shehui* 社会 (Chinese Journal of Sociology) 36 (2016) 3, pp. 1-31, online at <http://html.rhhz.net/society/html/20160301.htm>.

how often they were the subject of [Christian] mission activity (*bei chuanjiao* 被传教) (cf. Table 10).

Table 10: Percentage and Absolute Number of Students Surveyed at Beijing Universities who were the Subject of Mission Activities (BCSPS, 2012 Survey of the 2008 Courses), according to Li Ding 2016)

University	Missioned (%)	Missioned (number)	Foreign students (number)
Peking University	73.8	221	2,359
Renmin University of China	66.2	219	1,527
Qinghua University	60.0	225	2,353
Beihang University	59.6	141	648
Beijing Institute of Technology	56.4	149	328
North China University of Technology	42.6	136	
Beijing University of Chemical Technology	48.2	137	102
Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications	38.6	114	136
Beijing Institute of Petrochemical Technology	31.3	131	
Beijing University of Agriculture	21.6	125	
Beijing Language and Culture University	63.6	140	1,824
Communication University of China	41.5	118	191
Capital University of Economics and Business	33.3	123	
Minzu University of China	49.6	135	
China University of Mining and Technology	63.2	125	120
Total	47.2	2,235	

Data: BCSPS; number of foreign students according to *Jiaoyubu zhishu gaoxiao 2012 nian jiben qingkuang tongji ziliao huibian* 教育部直属高校2012年基本情况统计资料汇编 (Statistical Data on the Situation of Universities under the Ministry of Education in 2012).

Li Ding 2016, p. 50, Table 2, excerpt (only the data from the 2012 survey of the 2008 courses were taken from the original table; the data from the 2012 survey of the 2006 courses as well as from the 2011 survey of the 2008 courses were omitted).

Li found that, according to BCSPS the percentage of students surveyed who had been on the receiving end of missionary work in the “211 universities” (key universities receiving priority support from the state) was at 56%, higher than in the non-“211 universities” (39%). It was especially high in the elite universities – Peking University, Renmin University and Qinghua University. According to Li’s analysis this is due among other things to the fact that the elite universities have many foreign students and lecturers and teaching staff who have been trained in other countries, as well as international exchange programs, which means that there is a circle of persons who have possibly come into contact with Christianity and hence potentially come into question as missionaries.⁴⁰ According to Li, however, the data from the BCSPS show that the greater the percentage of students

40 Li Ding 2016, pp. 50-51.

at a university who were the subjects of Christian missionary activity, the lower the percentage of students at that university who are believing Protestants.⁴¹ Also according to BCSPS, although 30% of the students show some interest in Christianity and its culture, only about 1% of those who were subjects of missionary activities show a greater interest in the content brought by the missionary activity. Li attributes this among other things to the at times “coarse” mission methods.⁴²

During the BCSPS surveys in 2012, students from the 2008 courses indicated belief in the following religions (in brackets the numbers for the 2006 courses): Buddhism 13.5% (17.3%), Daoism 3.3% (4.4%), folk beliefs 1.5% (1.5%), Islam 1.5% (1.5%), Catholicism 1% (1%) and Protestantism 2.8% (2.3%). In the 2008 courses there were additionally 0.3% Orthodox Christians, 0.3% other Christians, 0.1% Jews and 0.1% Hindus. With that, according to Li Ding, the number of Christians in the Beijing universities was just as high or higher than the national population average.⁴³ According to Li, surveys at universities in other regions of China (cf. Table 11) show a similar picture: though they differ in method and exhibit regional peculiarities, Li finds that in all of them the percentage of students who believe in Protestant Christianity is higher than the national average of the general population and the proportion of Christians in general is comparatively high among students who believe in a religion. The comparatively high probability of university students believing in Christianity is a warning “to reconsider more deeply the multifaceted relationship and interaction between socio-economic status and religious belief,” Li argues.⁴⁴

In the résumé of his article (which contains figures of many detailed questions), Li Ding comes to the conclusion that mission activities have become a part of the students’ daily life. However, as Li observes, this leads neither to the students converting en masse to Christianity nor to their endorsement of an expansion of Christianity. China’s universities, according to Li, are not likely to become Christian in the near future, especially since the university Party organizations and the pluralizing of the campus culture present a counterweight and, according to surveys, 70% of Beijing’s university students apply for membership in the Communist Party of China. Therefore, according to Li, the persons and authorities responsible for the politico-ideological formation do not need to worry excessively and certainly not to “blindly suppress and forbid.” The State, says Li, ought to regulate the mission activities on the campus according to the law, “include the religious activities and sites within [!] and in the neighbourhood of the universities within the scope of [official] administration and service,” as well as promote the students’ understanding of religious belief and culture, so as to educate an elite for the building up of socialism and international cooperation who will accept a pluralism of cultures and values.⁴⁵

In addition, in 2011, Li Ding collaborated in a study of Sun Shangyang (Peking University), in which 2000 students from B.A.-, M.A.-, and doctoral studies from 13 Beijing universities (7 of which are not included in BCSPS) were surveyed regarding their attitude

41 Li Ding 2016, p. 55.

42 *Ibid.*, p. 56.

43 *Ibid.*, p. 52.

44 *Ibid.*, p. 53.

45 *Ibid.*, p. 60.

Table 11: Religious Situation of University Students in the Regions of China (Compilation of the Results of Different Surveys according to Li Ding 2016)

Region	Year	Percentage of those believing in a religion (%)	Percentage of Christians (%)	Number of universities surveyed	Size of the sample	Source
Zhejiang	2009	11.7	2.86	3	500	Wang Shihua 汪士华 – Chen Zhenliang 陈真亮 2009
Wenzhou	2010	15.2	5.53*	3+	1,790	Chen Jianyong 陈建勇 – Ying Julin 应巨林 2011
Jilin	2010	10.1	3.24	7	1,326	Zhao Liang 赵良 – Wen Chengtao 温成涛 2011
Hefei	2005	6.8	2.08	3	960	Shao Yijiang 邵一江 – Wang Xun 王迅 2006
Guangzhou	2007–2008	19.0	11.3**	10	979	Kou Ailin 寇爱林 <i>et al.</i> 2009
Shanghai	2014	17.0	2.5	6	600	Liu Fuzhong 刘福忠 2015
Shaanxi	2013	15.0	3.3	15	1,444	Wang Yongzhi 王永智 2014
Shanxi	2012–2013	4.8	1.3	8	1,007	Liu Xiaoyan 刘晓燕 2013
Guangxi	2012–2013	44.4	11.8	6	1,372	Zhao Lugui 赵录贵 <i>et al.</i> 2014
Fujian	2010	41.4	7.0	3	532	Bao Zhenxing 鲍振兴 – Zhang Fengying 张凤英 <i>et al.</i> 2011
Henan	2010	18.3	8.82	all	985	Song Lili 宋丽丽 2010
Hubei	2010	8.91	1.16	13	2,064	Gong Shengsheng 龚胜生 <i>et al.</i> 2012
Hunan	2006	10.2		1	695	Wu Xiaolin 吴小林 – Liu Lifu 刘立夫 2007
Yunnan	2014	28.8	2.83	5	1,906	Yang Yongjian 杨永建 <i>et al.</i> 2014

* Total percentage for Protestants and Catholics; Protestants 4.58%, Catholics 0.95%.

** Total percentage for Protestants and Catholics; Protestants 8.78%, Catholics 2.55%.

Note [Li Ding]: In the majority of surveys, the method of survey sampling is not clear, in most cases no probability sampling was conducted. Results only for information.

Table with notes taken from Li Ding 2016, p. 54. *Ibid.*, p. 60 has the bibliographical details for the sources given in the table.

to the meaning of life and religion. Over 95% of the students surveyed stated that they often or sometimes reflect on the meaning of life. 7% indicated belief in Buddhism, 4% in Confucianism, 2.7% in Daoism, 2.9% in Protestantism, 1.0% in Catholicism and 2.1% in Islam. On the question: “If you do not believe in any religion, which of the following religions interest you most?” 31.5% of those asked chose Buddhism, 10.2% Daoism, 3.3% Islam, 17.6% Christianity, 7.9% Confucianism, 6.6% for all these religions and 21.9% for none of these religions.⁴⁶

46 Sun Shangyang – Li Ding 2011, pp. 49 and 51.

5.2 Protestant Church(es)

Believers

- 20 Mio. Protestant Christians, of whom 70% are in rural areas, according to the information of the official Protestant bodies – Three-Self Patriotic Movement and China Christian Council.⁴⁷
- 23.05 Mio. consider themselves Protestant Christians (independently of whether they belong to an official or an unofficial group), of these 67.5% are baptized – according to a household survey conducted in 2008/2009 by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS 2010).⁴⁸ SARA 2014 also gives the figure 23 Mio.
- 23–40 Mio. Protestant Christians (1.7–2.9% of the population) is the figure given by the state-run *Global Times* as the consensus of academic experts at a symposium held in Shanghai on 5/6 August 2014 for the 60th anniversary of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement of the Protestant Churches in China.⁴⁹
- 26 Mio. Protestant Christians (1.97% of the total population) is estimated by Lu Yunfeng – Zhang Chunni 2016 on the basis of CFPS and CGSS (for details, see above).
- 58.04 Mio. Protestant Christians (4.3% of the population) is the estimate of the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life (PFRPL 2011).

Some international estimates of differing origin are even higher. One example is the evangelical mission organization Asia Harvest which arrives at 83.5 million Protestant Christians in Mainland China.⁵⁰

- Furthermore in the Protestant Churches in China there are
- 21 (official) theological seminaries (CCC-TSPM 2013; SARA database 2017) with 300 teachers and 3,700 students (CCC-TSPM 2013).
- 56,000 churches and meeting places (SARA 2014).
- 48,000 male and female pastors and preachers (SARA 2014).

5.3 Catholic Church

The following numbers on the Catholic Church in Mainland China in 2016 are based – alongside the sources already named – on the data of the Holy Spirit Study Centre (HSSC)⁵¹

47 For some years these figures have been on the website of the official Protestant bodies at www.ccctspm.org/quanguolianghui/lianghuijianjie.html (last accessed on March 29, 2017).

48 The results of the CASS Study were presented in Malek 2011, pp. 32-33 and 51-53. For the resulting discussion cf. Wenzel-Teuber 2012, pp. 30-32.

49 Chang Meng, “Protestants in China estimated at 23–40 million”, *Global Times* Aug. 7, 2014, www.globaltimes.cn/content/874757.shtml.

50 <https://asiaharvest.org/wp-content/uploads/christians-in-china/China.htm> (last accessed March 31, 2017). Asia Harvest gives 84 Mio. Protestants for China incl. Hong Kong and Macau; after subtracting the numbers given by Asia Harvest for Hong Kong and Macau, 83.5 Mio. remain for Mainland China. In the same table the number of Catholics in China is given as 21.3 Mio. (Mainland China 20.8 Mio.) It was apparently created around 2011.

51 We thank the Holy Spirit Study Centre for making available their figures for the Catholic Church in Mainland China (as of Jan. 4, 2017) quoted in the following.

of Hong Kong Diocese, which specializes in studies of the Catholic Church in Mainland China. We also give the data presented by the official Catholic governing bodies – this time according to the working report which Bishop Ma Yinglin, chairman of the (official) Chinese Bishops' Conference and vice chairman of the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association, presented at the 9th National Assembly of Representatives of the Chinese Catholic Church on December 27, 2016 (Ma-PA-BiCo 2016), as well as from the website of the two official Catholic governing bodies, www.chinacatholic.cn. Further important sources are the reports of the Catholic newspaper *Xinde* 信德 (*Faith*) (*xdb*) based in Shijiazhuang (Hebei Province) and its website www.chinacatholic.org (*xdo*) as well as of the Faith Institute for Cultural Studies which works under the same roof, those of the Chinese Catholic Research Office (Zhongguo tianzhujiao yanjiushi 中国天主教研究室) which is under the umbrella of the Patriotic Association and the official Bishops' Conference, those of the popular Catholic website *Zhongguo tianzhujiao zaixian* 中国天主教在线 (currently www.tianzhujiao.online) as well as of the Catholic news agencies UCAN (Hong Kong/Bangkok) and *Églises d'Asie* (EDA, Paris). For the Catholic Church the numbers reported are also contradictory.

Number of Catholics

- 9–10.5 Mio. total number of Catholics, including both the official part of the Church and the Catholics in the underground, according to the estimate of the HSSC.
- over 6 Mio. number of Catholics according to the official Catholic governing bodies (Ma-PA-BiCo 2016).
- 5.7 Mio. number of Catholics according to SARA 2014.
- 9 Mio. Catholics (0.7% of the population) according to estimates by the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life (PFRPL 2011).

Interestingly, the journalist Liu Dong remarked on August 18, 2016 in the *Global Times*, which is close to the Party, that “experts believe” that the Underground Church is “considerably larger” than the community “under the supervision of the State sanctioned Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association,” for whose members Liu gave the number of 5.5 Mio.

Dioceses

- 144 (112 dioceses and 32 other administrative regions) (according to HSSC, corresponding to the status of the Catholic hierarchy in 1951)
- 96 according to numbers of the official Church (HSSC)

Bishops

- 109 (88 in ministry, 21 not in ministry) (HSSC), of whom
 - 72 bishops in the official Church (64 in ministry, 8 not in ministry) (HSSC)
 - 37 bishops in the underground Church (24 in ministry, 13 not in ministry) (HSSC)
- 65 number of bishops according to data of the official Church (Ma-PA-BiCo 2016)

The official Bishop (not recognized by the Pope) Tu Shihua died on January 4, 2017. In counting the bishops, HSSC took January 4, 2017 as cut-off date, and thus no longer counted Bishop Tu, whereas Ma-PA-BiCo 2016 gives the status on December 27, 2016, before the death of Bishop Tu.

Since the death of Bishop Tu, there are now only 7 Chinese bishops not recognized by the Pope.

According to media reports, in recent years additionally more than 20 priests have been appointed as bishops by the Pope but they have not yet been accepted by the government as episcopal candidates (*UCAN* March 3, 2017). Many dioceses are vacant.

Priests

- 2,500 in the official Church (HSSC)
- 1,300 in the underground Church (HSSC)
- 3,100 number of priests according to data of the official Church (Ma-PA-BiCo 2016) – this number is higher than that given by HSSC for the official Church

Seminaries and Seminarians

- 9 major seminaries – HSSC, Ma-PA-BiCo 2016 and SARA database 2017 give the same number.⁵² There are 464 (HSSC) or 468 (Ma-PA-BiCo 2016) seminarians studying in the 9 seminaries.
- 20 minor seminaries with 300 seminarians (HSSC)
- 10 underground seminaries with 200 seminarians (HSSC)

Sisters

- 3,170 in the official Church in around 87 congregations (HSSC, figures from 2015)
- 1,391 in the underground Church in around 37 congregations (HSSC, figures from 2015)
- 5,800 in 75 congregations (Ma-PA-BiCo 2016) – astonishingly, this number is higher than that of the HSSC for sisters in the official Church and in the underground Church taken together

Churches

- over 6,000 churches and oratories (Ma-PA-BiCo 2016)

Social Engagement

- 259 non-profit charity organizations, including 121 homes for the aged, 8 hospitals, 99 outpatient clinics, 10 orphanages, 13 nursery schools, 8 charitable foundations (Ma-PA-BiCo 2016)

⁵² Ma-PA-BiCo 2016 gives the names of 8 of the 9 seminaries, among them the major seminary of Jilin which, however, does not appear in the list in the SARA database 2017.

185 Mio. RMB were donated by the Catholic Church in the whole of China over the past 6 years for charitable purposes such as catastrophe aid, poverty alleviation, etc. (Ma-PA-BiCo 2016)

Patriotic Organizations

619 of which 561 Patriotic Associations at district and county levels (Ma-PA-BiCo 2016)

Baptisms

For Easter – the most important baptismal date of the year – the Faith Institute for Cultural Studies and the Chinese Catholic Research Office compiled the statistics of baptisms in 2016. It was the 9th consecutive survey of Easter baptisms in the Catholic Church of Mainland China.

According to this data, at Easter 2016, 19,615 persons were baptized in the Catholic parishes of Mainland China (cf. Table 12), almost as many as at Easter 2015 (19,681 baptisms). Baptisms in the underground parishes are probably only partially recorded. Since in some dioceses baptism is administered several times a year, the numbers for Easter do not give an idea of the total number of baptisms. In fact the majority of catechumens are not baptized at Easter but spread out over the year, as noted by the report accompanying the statistics in *Xinde*. The majority of those baptized at Easter 2016 were adults, according to the report, thus first generation Christians. A fifth of all Easter baptisms took place in Hebei, the province with the highest percentage of Catholic population (*xdb* April 21, 2016).

In Hong Kong around 3,200 persons received the sacrament of baptism in Catholic churches at Easter 2016. That was half of the 6,633 baptisms in the Hong Kong Diocese for that year. (*Fides* March 17, 2016; Feb. 23, 2017).

In Singapore – where around three quarters of the population are Chinese – 1,127 adults were baptized in Catholic parishes at Easter 2016. Before baptism, the baptismal candidates have to attend a catechumenate course of over one year, the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults). The Catholic Church in Singapore numbers 360,000 faithful. In 2015, according to the data of the Singapore Bureau of Statistics 18.8% of the population were Christians of various denominations, 43.2% were Buddhists/Daoists, 14% Muslim, 5% Hindu, 0.6% adherents of other religions and 18.5% had no religion. (*EDA* March 21, 2016).

Deceased Bishops in 2016

Zeng Jingmu 曾景牧, Thomas (1919–2016), Yujiang (JX).

Zhang Huaixin 张怀信, Thomas (1925–2016), Anyang (Hen).

Huang Shoucheng 黄守城, Vincent (1923–2016), Mindong (FJ).

Table 12: Baptisms in the Dioceses of Mainland China at Easter 2016

Province / Metropolis	Diocese	Number	Province / Metropolis	Diocese	Number
Anhui		138	Jiangxi		155
Beijing		498	Jilin		775
Chongqing	Chongqing	300	Liaoning		570
	Wanzhou	445	Inner Mongolia total 590	Bameng	81
Fujian total 905	Fuzhou	680		Baotou	92
	Minbei	21		Chifeng	65
	Mindong	34		Hohhot	211
	Xiamen	170		Jining	141
Gansu total 290	Lanzhou	126	Ningxia		98
	Pingliang	58	Qinghai		9
	Tianshui	106	Shaanxi total 1,144	Ankang	39
Guangdong total 1,029	Guangzhou	274		Fengxiang	73
	Jiangmen	25		Hanzhong	98
	Meizhou	47		Sanyuan	170
	Shantou	224		Weinan	194
	Shenzhen	95		Xi'an	163
	Zhanjiang	364		Yan'an	275
Guangxi total 381	Beihai	101		Zhouzhi	132
	Guilin	12	Shandong total 1,124	Heze	123
	Nanning	239		Jinan	200
Wuzhou	29	Liaocheng		124	
Guizhou		Linyi		245	
Hainan		Qingdao		90	
Hebei total 4,063	Baoding	98		Weifang	54
	Cangzhou (incl. Langfang)	550		Yantai	7
	Chengde	110		Yanzhou	88
	Handan	821	Zibo [Zhoucun]	193	
	Hengshui	194	Shanghai		1,143
	Shijiazhuang	167	Shanxi total 1,436	Changzhi	60
	Tangshan	186		Datong	36
	Xingtai	1,826		Fenyang	221
Zhangjiakou	111	Jinzhong		108	
Heilongjiang		Linfen		108	
Henan total 991	Anyang	555		Shuozhou	204
	Kaifeng	5		Taiyuan	534
	Nanyang	83	Xinzhou	40	
	Puyang	81	Yuncheng	125	
	Shangqiu	103	Sichuan total 840	Chengdu	312
	Xinxiang	50		Leshan	178
	Xinyang	34		Nanchong	260
	Zhengzhou	57		Xichang	55
	Zhumadian	23	Yibin	35	
Hubei total 586	Chibi	110	Tianjin		128
	Jingzhou [Shashi]	30	Tibet Auton. Region		0
	Wuhan	180	Xinjiang		50
	Xiangfan	40	Yunnan total 305	Dali	140
Yichang	226	Kunming		117	
		Zhaotong		48	
Hunan			Hangzhou	128	
Jiangsu total 370	Haimen	45	Ningbo	229	
	Nanjing	90	Taizhou	12	
	Suzhou	58	Wenzhou	380	
	Xuzhou	177	Total		19,615

Source: *xdb* April 21, 2016; online at www.chinacatholic.org/News/show/id/35003.html.

Zhu Weifang 朱維方, Vincent (1927–2016), Wenzhou (ZJ).

Xu Jiwei 徐吉伟, Anthony (1935–2016), Taizhou (ZJ).

Tong Hui 童輝, Francis (1933–2016), Yan'an (Yulin, SN).

Episcopal Ordinations in 2016

Ding Lingbin 丁令斌, Peter (b. July 20, 1962), Changzhi (SX), November 10.

Tang Yuange 唐远阁, Joseph (b. November 17, 1963), Chengdu (SC), November 30.

Wang Xiaoxun 王晓勋, John Baptist (b. January 19, 1966), Ankang (SN), November 30.

Lei Jiawei 雷家培, John (b. June 1970), Xichang (SC), December 2.

Priestly Ordinations

61 deacons were ordained priests in Mainland China in 2016 (see Table 13). In 2015 there were 59,⁵³ in 2014 there were 78, in 2013 there were 66 and in 2012 there were 78 priestly ordinations. The number was taken from different sources and is certainly incomplete; therefore ordinations from the Underground Church may be added. According to some reports, there were isolated instances of members of religious congregations among the new priests. One third (21 out of 61) of the new priests of 2016 was ordained in the dioceses of Hebei Province. Priestly vocations are decreasing on the whole.

Catholic Church in Hong Kong

The *Hong Kong Catholic Church Directory 2017* gives the following data for the Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong (Status on August 31, 2016, here quoted from *Hong Kong Sunday Examiner* March 4, 2017 and *Fides* Feb. 23, 2017):

Catholics	591,000, of whom
– local	389,000
– temporary residents	166,000 Filipino/as and
	36,000 other nationalities
Baptismal candidates	10,464
Catechists	1,558
Priests	288 (68 diocesan priests and 220 religious priests from 18 congregations)
Sisters	469 from 27 congregations
Permanent deacons	25
Seminarians	24
Novices	28 (13 men, 15 women)

53 Wenzel-Teuber 2016, p. 39, gives only 53 priestly ordinations for 2015; later additions by the HSSC brought the total number of priestly ordinations to 59.

Table 13: Priestly Ordinations in the Catholic Church of Mainland China in 2016

Province / Metropolis	Diocese	Number of ordained	Date of ordination	Names of those ordained
Beijing	Beijing	2	June 11	Li Wenyu 李文雨, Zhang Bo 章博
Chongqing	Chongqing	1	May 24	Peng Yueyu 彭跃余
	Wanzhou	1	April 25	Chen Xianjin 陈先进
Fujian	Fuzhou	2	Oct. 4	Fan Ke 范科, Mei Zhengjun 梅正军
	Mindong	1	Jan. 6	Ruan Changzhao 阮昌照
	Xiamen	1	Jan. 6	He Longge 何龙格
Gansu	Pingliang	1	March 23	Wen Bin 温斌
	Tianshui	1	Oct. 30	Yuan Qiangqiang 袁强强
Hebei	Baoding	1	Nov. 30	Zhang Fei 张飞
	Handan	5	Nov. 19	Dai Xianglu 代向路, Ji Jinchong 冀进宠, Jin Jingchong 金敬冲, Wu Shangwang 武赏望, Yuan Xianyi 袁献仪
	Jingxian	1	Jan. 6	Zhang Yulai 张玉来
	Xianxian	4	Sept. 8	Chen Shoudong 陈寿栋, Gu Qinghui 顾清辉, Sun Shouhui 孙守辉, Zhu Ershuai 朱二帅
		1	Dec. 8	Xi Jianchun 席建春
	Xingtai/Weixian	4	Aug. 2	Chen Boquan 陈博全, Di Jixing 邸计星, Liu Zengxin 刘增信, Shen Tongyang 申同阳
	Zhaoxian	3	Aug. 23	Mi Tao 米桃, Niu Yanfei 牛彦飞, Shen Haibing 申海冰
Not specified	2	April 25	Not specified	
Henan	Xinxiang	2	June 14	Li Shanlin 李山林, Wu Yongheng 吴永恒
Jiangsu	Nanjing	2	April 16	Zhao Feng 赵峰, Zhou Yongming 周永明
	Xuzhou	1	Dec. 16	Shao Zhuyuan 邵珠远
Liaoning	Shenyang	1	April 25	Li Zhenqiang 李振强
Inner Mongolia	Bameng	1	Oct. 18	Shi Zhenxian 时振先
	Chifeng	2	Aug. 5	Zhao Hailin 赵海林, Zhu Dongming 朱东明
Shaanxi	Xi'an	1	June 18	Pang Hongwei 庞红卫
	Zhouzhi	2	Nov. 19	Lu Achang 卢阿昌, Ma Hongbin 马宏斌
Shanxi	Jinzhong	1	May 24	Han Bo 韩博
	Taiyuan	3	Nov. 19	Dang Xianli 党贤利, Guo Xiaowen 郭晓文, Li Yonglong 李永龙
Tianjin	Tianjin	2	April 2	Li Yue 李岳, Wang Kun 王昆
Yunnan	Dali	2	May 24	Ma Yongping 马永平 (Tibetan), Mao Qiaoshun 毛桥顺 (Jingpo-Nationality)
	Kunming	7	May 24	Bi Hezhong 毕何忠 (Yi-Nationality), Deng Jinmin 邓金敏 (Miao-Nationality), He Yingping 何应平 (Yi), Tao Guangrong 陶光荣 (Miao), Tao Youde 陶有德 (Miao), Xiong Zhenglin 熊正林 (Miao), Yang Weiming 杨伟明 (Miao)
Zhejiang	Wenzhou	3	April 30	Cai Zhengyou 蔡正佑, Lin Yi 林毅, Song Shanxun 宋善训
Total		61		

Sources (2016): catholic-bj.org June 11; chinacatholic.cn Jan. 11; April 25; May 28; Oct. 20; duxuan.cn Aug. 23; hncatholic.com June 15; jstzj.org Dec. 19; lnjq.org April 25; tianzhujiao.online April 30; xdo April 17; May 25; June 18; Sept. 12; Nov. 20, 22, 23, 24; Dec. 1; http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_500cf6040102w1en.html; <http://news.wewen.io/articles/46529652> and others.

In the last six years, more than 6,000 persons were baptized annually in the Catholic parishes of Hong Kong, approximately half of them adults. From August 2015 to August 2016, according to the statistics the number of Catholics in Hong Kong increased by 5,000. According to the *Hong Kong Sunday Examiner*, however, the number attending church in the parishes on Sunday has not increased accordingly.

The Diocese of Hong Kong runs 19 hospitals and specialized clinics, 26 rehabilitation centers, 249 educational establishments with 150,640 pupils, 14 centers for the elderly and 42 family centers.

List of Sources and Abbreviations

- CASS [Chinese Academy of Social Sciences] 2010: Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan shijie zongjiao yanjiusuo ketizu 中国社会科学院世界宗教研究所课题组 (Research Group from the Institute of World Religions, CASS), “Zhongguo jidujiao ruhu wenjuan diaocha baogao” 中国基督教入户问卷调查报告 (An In-House Questionnaire Survey on Christianity in China), in: Jin Ze 金泽 – Qiu Yonghui 邱永辉 (eds.), *Zhongguo zongjiao baogao (2010)* 中国宗教报告 *Annual Report on Religions in China (2010)* (Zongjiao lanpishu 宗教蓝皮书 Blue Book of Religions), Beijing 2010, pp. 190-212.
- CCC-TSPM [China Christian Council and Three-Self Patriotic Movement] 2013: Wang Dongyun 王冬昫 *et al.*, “Zhongguo jidujiao di jiu ci daibiao huiyi zai Beijing longzhong kaimu” 中国基督教第九次代表会议在北京隆重开幕 (Solemn Opening of the 9th National Assembly of Chinese Protestants in Beijing), Sept. 8, 2013, www.ccctspm.org/news/ccctspm/2013/98/1398528.html.
- CFPS [China Family Panel Studies, *Zhongguo jiating zhuzhong diaocha* 中国家庭追踪调查]: see Lu Yunfeng 2014 and Lu Yunfeng – Zhang Chunni 2016.
- Chen Jinguo 陈进国 – Lin Minxia 林敏霞 2016, “Ruhe zou xiang ‘shanzhi’: Zhejiang sheng minjian xinyang ‘shehui zhili’ zhuanxing de fansi” 如何走向“善治”: 浙江省民间信仰“社会治理”转型的反思 (Towards “the Good Governance” – Focusing on the “Social Governance” of Zhejiang Folk Religion), in: Qiu Yonghui 2016, pp. 195-215.
- CRS [China Religion Survey, *Zhongguo zongjiao diaocha* 中国宗教调查] 2015: “Zhongguo renmin daxue fabu ‘Zhongguo zongjiao diaocha baogao (2015)’” 中国人民大学发布《中国宗教调查报告 (2015)》 (Renmin University of China Publishes “Report on CRS [2015]”), on July 7, 2015 uploaded to the Blog of Wei Dedong 魏德东: http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_3d25d0c90102vpc2.html and also undated on <http://nsrc.ruc.edu.cn/news/510>.
- CRS 2016: Wei Dedong 魏德东 – Wang Weidong 王卫东, “Yindao yu shiying – Zhongguo renmin daxue ‘Zhongguo zongjiao diaocha baogao (2015)’” 引导与适应 – 中国人民大学“中国宗教调查报告 (2015)” (Guidance and Adaption – Renmin University of China’s “An Investigative Report on Chinese Religions [2015]”), in: Qiu Yonghui 2016, pp. 312-327.

- CSLS [Chinese Spiritual Life Survey]: Fenggang Yang with Anning Hu – Fan Jiang – R.J. Leamaster – Jun Lu – Zhenyu Tang (Center on Religion and Chinese Society, Purdue University), “Quantifying Religions in China,” 5-page manuscript of a presentation at the Seventh Annual Conference for the Social Scientific Study of Religion in China, Beijing, July 26–27, 2010.
- Gaenssbauer, Monika 2015, *Popular Belief in Contemporary China. A Discourse Analysis*, Bochum – Freiburg.
- Guo–*Xinhua* 2016: “Quanguo zhengxie weiyuan Guo Chengzhen: Zhongguo musuln zongjiao xinyang ziyou dedao qieshi baozhang” 全国政协委员郭承真: 中国穆斯林宗教信仰自由得到切实保障 (Member of the Political Consultative Conference of the Chinese People Guo Chengzhen: Freedom of Religious Belief of the Chinese Muslims Fully Protected), *Xinhua* March 2, 2016, taken from www.sara.gov.cn/mtjj/332597.htm.
- HSSC: Holy Spirit Study Centre (Shengshen yanjiu zhongxin 聖神研究中心, Hong Kong).
- Li Ding 李丁 2016, “Jidujiao zai Zhongguo gaoxiao de fazhan qingkuang ji daxuesheng de taidu” 基督教在中国高校的发展情况及大学生的态度 (The Expansion of Christianity in Chinese Universities and Attitudes of College Students), in: *SZW* 2016, No. 1, pp. 47-60.
- Liu Xiaochun 刘晓春 2014, “Jiyu renkou diaocha de Zhongguo musuln renkou tezheng fenxi” 基于人口调查的中国穆斯林人口特征分析 (Traits of the Muslims of China Based on Census Data Analysis), in: *Huizu yanjiu* 回族研究 (Journal of Hui Muslim Minority Studies) 2014, No. 1, pp. 70-76.
- Lu Yunfeng 卢云峰 2014: Beijing daxue zongjiao wenhua yanjiusuo ketizu 北京大学宗教文化研究所课题组 (Research Team Religious Culture of Peking University), text composed by Lu Yunfeng, “Dangdai Zhongguo zongjiao zhuangkuang baogao – jiyu CFPS (2012) diaocha shuju” 当代中国宗教状况报告 – 基于 CFPS (2012) 调查数据 (Report on the Religious Situation in Today’s China – Based on Data from CFPS [2012]), in: *SZW* 2014, No. 1, pp. 11-25.
- Lu Yunfeng 卢云峰 – Zhang Chunni 张春泥 2016, “Dangdai Zhongguo jidujiao zhuangkuang guankui – jiyu CGSS he CFPS diaocha shuju” 当代中国基督教状况管窥 – 基于 CGSS 和 CFPS 调查数据 (Observation in Present Situation of Contemporary Chinese Christians: Based on Survey Data from CGSS and CFPS), in: *SZW* 2016, No. 1, pp. 34-46.
- Malek, Roman 2011, “People’s Republic of China: Churches and Religions. Annual Statistical Overview 2010/2011,” translated by David Streit, in: *RCTC* 2011, No. 1, pp. 32-59.
- Ma–PA–BiCo 2016 [Ma Yinglin, Vice President of the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association (PA) and President of the Chinese Catholic Bishops’ Conference (BiCo)]: “Zhongguo tianzujiao dijiuci quanguo daibiao huiyi – gongzuo baogao” 中国天主教主教第九次全国代表会议—工作报告 (9th National Assembly of Representatives of the Chinese Catholic Church – Working Report), Dec. 27, 2016, www.chinacatholic.cn/html/report/17020718-1.htm.

- PFRPL 2011: Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life (Ed.), "Global Christianity. A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Christian Population" (with "Appendix C: Methodology for China"), www.pewforum.org/2011/12/19/global-christianity-exec/, published Dec. 19, 2011.
- Qiu Yonghui 邱永辉 (ed.) 2016, *Zhongguo zongjiao baogao (2015)* 中国宗教报告 *Annual Report on Religions in China (2015)* (Zongjiao lanpishu 宗教蓝皮书 Blue Book of Religions), Beijing.
- SARA [State Administration for Religious Affairs] 2014: Guojia zongjiao shiwuju dangzu lilun xuexi zhongxinzu 国家宗教事务局党组理论学习中心组 (Central Group for Theoretical Studies of the Party Group in the SARA) (ed.), "Woguo zongjiao de jiben qingkuang. Zhongguo tese shehuizhuyi zongjiao lilun xuexi duben jixuan zhi er" 我国宗教的基本情况《中国特色社会主义宗教理论学习读本》节选之二 (The Basic Situation of the Religions in Our Country. Excerpt No. 2 from the Reader for the Study of the Socialist Theory of Religion with Chinese Characteristics), *Zhongguo minzubao* 中国民族报 March 19, 2014, uploaded to the SARA website on April 1, 2014 at www.sara.gov.cn/llyj/63734.htm.
- SARA database 2017: *Zongjiao jichu xinxi chaxun* 宗教基础信息查询 (Information on Basic Data of the Religions, <http://sara.gov.cn/zjbxccx>), with sub-databanks *Zongjiao yuanxiao jiben xinxi* 宗教院校基本信息 (Basic Data on Institutes for Religious Education, <http://sara.gov.cn/zjxycs/index.htm>, accessed on March 16, 2017) and *Zongjiao huodong changsuo jiben xinxi* 宗教活动场所基本信息 (Basic Data on Sites for Religious Activities, <http://sara.gov.cn/csrbxx/index.htm>, accessed on March 28, 2017).
- Sun Shangyang 孙尚扬 – Li Ding 李丁 2011, "Guoxuere, yiyi de kuifa yu daxuesheng dui zongjiao de xingqu quxiang: yixiang jiyu Beijing shi de diaocha yu fenxi" 国学热、意义的匮乏与大学生对宗教的兴趣取向: 一项基于北京市的调查与分析 (Chinese Traditional Culture Study Fever, Scarcity of Meaning and the Trend of University Students' Attitude toward Religions: A Survey in Beijing [2011]), in: *Guoxue yu xixue* 国学与西学 (International Journal of Sino-Western Studies) 2011, No. 1, pp. 42-55, also online at <https://www.sinowesternstudies.com/>
- SZW: *Shijie zongjiao wenhua* 世界宗教文化 (The World Religious Cultures).
- Wenzel-Teuber, Katharina 2012, "People's Republic of China: Religions and Churches. Statistical Overview 2011," translated by David Streit, in: *RCTC* 2012, No. 3, pp. 29-54.
- Wenzel-Teuber, Katharina 2015, "2014 Statistical Update on Religions and Churches in the People's Republic of China," translated by Jacqueline Mulberge, in: *RCTC* 2015, No. 2, pp. 20-41.
- Wenzel-Teuber, Katharina 2016, "2015 Statistical Update on Religions and Churches in the People's Republic of China," translated by Jacqueline Mulberge, in: *RCTC* 2016, No. 2, pp. 20-43.
- xdb*: *Xinde* 信德 (Faith) (Shijiazhuang), print edition.
- xdo*: *Xinde* 信德 (Faith) (Shijiazhuang), online edition at www.chinacatholic.org.

- Yang Li 杨莉 2016, "Dangdai wenmiao chongjian yu fuxing xianzhuang yanjiu baogao"
当代文庙重建与复兴现状研究报告 (A Research on Contemporary Reestablishment and Revival of the Confucian Temple), in: Qiu Yonghui 2016, pp. 174-194.
- Zhao Bing 赵冰 2015, "'Wang shang zongjiao' xianxiang zai Zhongguo de xianzhuang, tezheng yu yingxiang" "网上宗教" 现象在中国的现状、特征与影响 (The Phenomenom of "Religion in the Internet," its Form, its Peculiarities and its Influence in China) in: SZW 2015, No. 1, pp. 100-105.