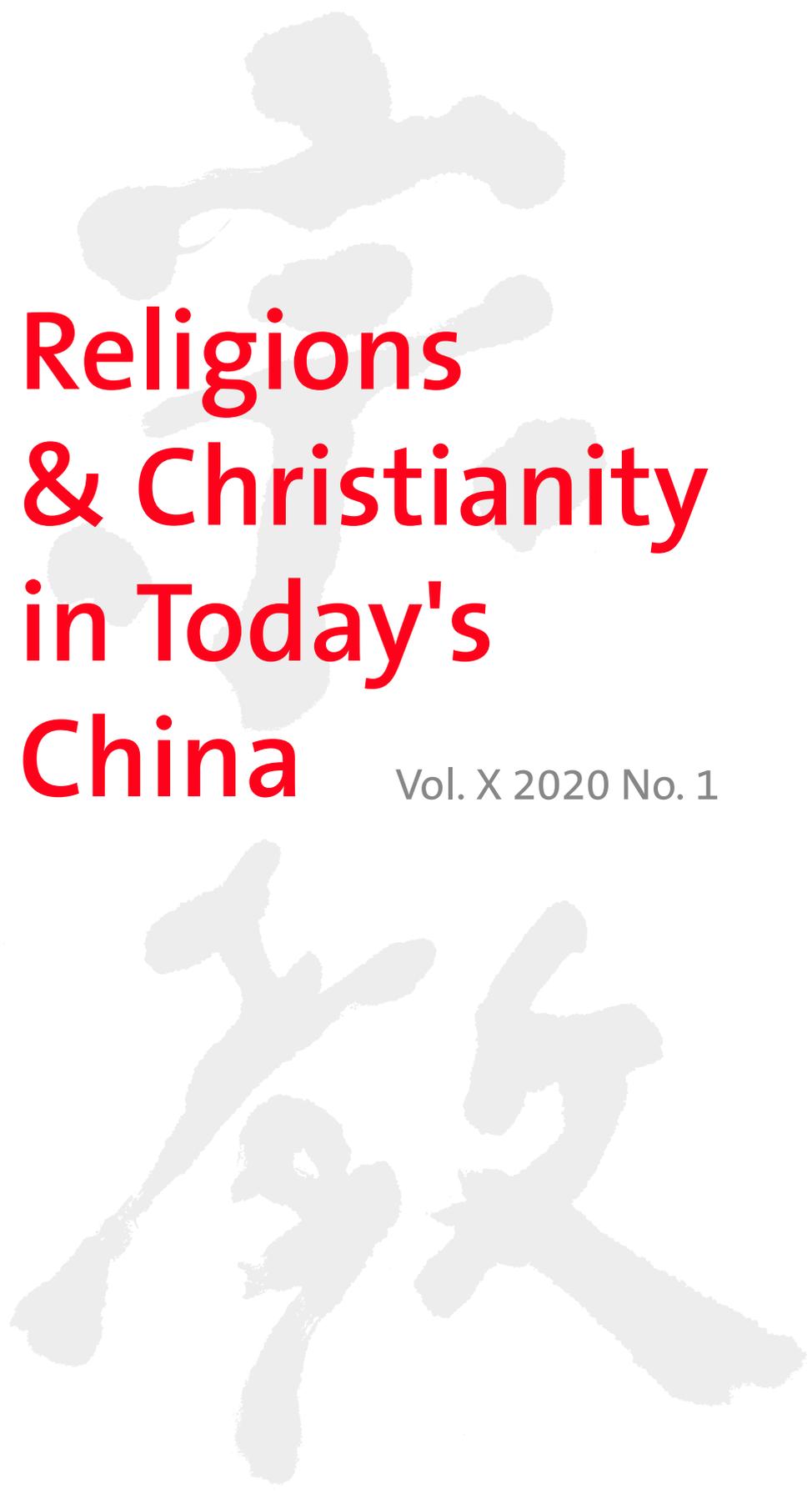


中國宗教評論



Religions
& Christianity
in Today's
China

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Editorial

Dear Readers,

Today we present to you the first issue in 2020 of *Religions & Christianity in Today's China* (中国宗教评论).

As usual, the issue starts with the regular News Update on religions and Christianity in China, covering the period from 23 September to 12 December 2019.

In the editorial of the last issue we had already informed you that Fr. Prof. Dr. Roman Malek SVD passed away on 29 November 2019. This issue contains an obituary dedicated to the founding director of the China-Zentrum, written by Katharina Feith (China-Zentrum) and Barbara Hoster (Monumenta Serica Institute) with the collaboration of Katharina Wenzel-Teuber (China-Zentrum).

We then continue with two more contributions of the 10th European Catholic China Colloquium “Laudato Si’ and Technoscience – Implications with Focus on the Church in China” which was organized by the China-Zentrum and took place in Siegburg/Germany from 30 August to 1 September 2019. Both contributions were part of the panel discussion of the colloquium on the topic of sinicization/inculturation. Fr. Dr. Li Jingxi, vice rector of the Catholic Seminary of Shaanxi, looks at the process of sinicization of the Catholic Church under four aspects – sinicization of theology, Church, arts and liturgy, citing many historical examples. Fr. Prof. Dr. Batairwa Kubuya Paulin SX discusses the inculturation of the Church in Taiwan against the background of its particular history and explores to what extent it can be considered “a Church at home.” Fr. Paulin is professor at the Department for Religious Studies at Fu Jen Catholic University in Taipei, and in November 2019 was nominated undersecretary of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue.

Religions & Christianity in Today's China is freely available on the website of the China-Zentrum, www.china-zentrum.de. Additionally, readers who subscribe to *Religions & Christianity in Today's China* will regularly receive e-mail updates providing web links to the contents of each newly published issue. – The China-Zentrum is a non-profit organization. For the publication of *Religions & Christianity in Today's China* we are dependent on the generosity of our friends and readers. In order to help us cover inevitable costs, we would be very grateful if you could consider sending a voluntary contribution.

Sankt Augustin, March 2020

The Editors

News Update on Religion and Church in China September 23 – December 12, 2019

*Compiled by Katharina Wenzel-Teuber, Katharina Feith,
Isabel Friemann (China InfoStelle) and Barbara Hoster
Translated by David Streit SVD*

The “News Update on Religion and Church in China” appears regularly in each issue of Religions & Christianity in Today’s China (RCTC). Since the editorial staff learns of some items only later, it can happen that there are chronological overlaps between “News Updates” of two consecutive issues of RCTC. In these cases stories referred to in earlier “News Updates” will not be repeated. All “News Updates” can be found online at the website of the China-Zentrum (www.china-zentrum.de). – The last “News Update” (RCTC 2019, No. 4, pp. 3-19) covered the period June 28 – October 2, 2019.

Politics, Human Rights

October 24, 2019:

Detained Uyghur academic Ilham Tohti receives the European Parliament’s Sakharov Prize

The European Parliament is awarding this year’s Sakharov Prize to the detained Uyghur academic Ilham Tohti in recognition of his efforts to “promote dialogue and understanding between the Uyghurs and the peoples of China.” Tohti, now fifty years old, an economist at Minzu University for Ethnic Minorities in Beijing and an advocate for the rights of the Uyghur people in the Xinjiang Autonomous Region, was sentenced to lifelong imprisonment in 2014, after being accused of inciting separatism. Tohti sees himself as a mediator between cultures. The harsh sentence handed down in 2014 is seen as a warning signal from the Chinese government to all critical intellectuals. Tohti was considered to be very well networked, including connections with Han Chinese civil rights activists. The actual award ceremony is to take place on December 18, 2019. When the award ceremony was announced in the European Parliament on October 24, President David Sassoli asked the Chinese authorities to release Tohti immediately. Sassoli described Tohti as a man who dedicated his life to dialogue between the Uyghurs and the Han Chinese in Xinjiang. He called him “a voice of moderation and reconciliation.” The Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought has been awarded since 1988 by the European Parliament to people or organizations engaged in the defense of freedom of expression (dw.com Oct. 24; *AsiaNews* Oct. 25).

October 27, 2019:

New moral guidelines for China's citizens

The Central Committee of the Communist Party and the Chinese State Council have issued new guidelines for the moral behavior of all citizens, ranging from civilized behavior in public to child rearing and waste separation. The “Outline for the Implementation of Building Citizens’ Morality in the New Era” calls upon Chinese citizens to be honest and polite and requires good manners when eating, traveling or attending sporting events. The measures were proposed to help the Chinese “defend China’s honor” abroad. They are intended to help promote patriotism and formulate “national etiquette,” e.g. while singing the national anthem, raising the national flag or at the ceremony for admission to the CP. The guidelines emphasize the importance of President Xi Jinping’s thinking as the core of citizens’ morality. Compared to previous guidelines of this kind, it is striking that other Communist Party leaders such as Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping are no longer mentioned. The present document is seen as a sign that propaganda work should be strengthened and the party’s specific view of Chinese tradition, particularly in the fields of culture and ethics, should be reinforced.

As a part of educating Chinese citizens in their understanding of patriotism, one must also take note of an October 31 instruction by the Chinese Ministry of Education, according to which certain textbooks are to be removed from primary and secondary schools. These include “illegal books” that run counter to Chinese law or the political direction of the Communist Party, and “inappropriate books” that do not correspond to the core socialist values (*The Guardian* Oct. 29; *Xinhua* Nov. 12).

November 24, 2019:

International Consortium of Investigative Journalists publishes leaked internal documents from Xinjiang with information about the “Vocational Training Centers”

The consortium – according to the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (SZ November 24) – received the documents from Uyghurs in exile, but the original source is apparently a person in Xinjiang of unknown identity. According to the style of the language, experts believe them to be real, the SZ said, adding that they were also available to at least one Western intelligence agency which had judged them to be authentic. Several documents were signed by Zhu Hailun, head of the Xinjiang Autonomous Region Political and Legal Affairs Commission. However, according to SZ, the Chinese embassy in London has informed the British *Guardian* that the documents are “pure forgery.” The papers which generated a great deal of international media coverage and were seen as definitive evidence of the mass forced internment in Xinjiang can be found at www.icij.org/investigations/china-cables/read-the-china-cables-documents. The most important of the leaked papers is a 9-page secret telegram issued by the Xinjiang Autonomous Region Political and Legal Affairs Commission (the last page is missing) entitled “Views on Further Strengthening and Standardizing the Work of the Training Centers for Vocational Skills,” from which the prison-like character of the centers is evident. In the first chapter on the security of the centers, it says that strict measures must be taken to prevent escape. In addition to security guards, patrols, video surveillance, etc., the document specifies the requirement that “dormitory doors, corridor doors and floor doors must be double locked, and must be locked immediately after being opened and closed. Strictly manage and control student activities to prevent escapes during class, eating periods, toilet breaks, bath time, medical treatment, family visits, etc. Strictly manage students requesting time off, if they really need to leave the training center due to illness or other special circumstances, they must have someone specially accompany, monitor and control them.” Ideological problems and abnormal

feelings of the students are to be assessed and solved at all times, the document says. “Training centers with more than one thousand people” require permanent specialist staff for food and hygiene control as well as for disease prevention. The document also contains information on the content of the training and the classification and rating of students. According to the document, one of the prerequisites for ending the training is “at least one year of education and training in the training center.” This is to be followed by 3–6 months of “skills training courses” for all, followed by job placement – thus the document.

Religious Policy

November 26, 2019:

Consultation on the contemporary interpretation of religious teachings and precepts in the Committee for Ethnic and Religious Affairs of the Political Consultative Conference (PCC) – Translations of canonical books must be re-examined and corrected if necessary

The exchange took place with the theme of “Using the Core Socialist Values to Lead Religions to Interpret their Religious Teachings and Precepts [教义教规] in Accordance with the Requirements of the Progress of Time.” Sixteen persons, including members of the PCC from religious circles, scholars and other religious representatives, took part in the exchange. The participation of Wang Yang, Chairman of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference and a member of the Politburo of the Communist Party, underlined the high political importance of the consultation.

In his speech, Wang Yang called for the gradual formation of a “system of religious thinking” (宗教思想体系), which has special Chinese features and corresponds to the progressive development of the times, as an ideological basis for the adaptation of religions to socialism. As stated in the report from *Xinhua*, all participants felt that “the canonical books and teachings of religions must be interpreted in a contemporary, authoritative, and correct manner to ward off extremist thinking and heresies. The existing translations of the canonical books of the religions [宗教经典] must be comprehensively evaluated and content that does not correspond to the progress of the times must be commented, corrected or re-translated as necessary.” There is need to develop a “plan for the interpretative work” (阐释工作计划), which would also take into account the peculiarities of the individual religions and avoid “lumping everything together,” the participants said according to *Xinhua*. The *Xinhua* report remarked that the responsible authorities should ensure the interpretative work through support and services.

Another report on the consultation in the PCC newspaper quoted among others Bishop Fang Xingyao, chairman of the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association and vice-chairman of the Chinese Bishops’ Conference, who is reported to have said: “Love of the country is above love of religion. Chinese law is above religious precepts” (www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2019-11/26/c_1125277447.htm; *AsiaNews* Dec. 2; *South China Morning Post* Nov. 27; www.tyzz.people.cn Nov. 29; *Xinhua* Nov. 26).

December 12, 2019:

Conference of National Religious Organizations: With “self-confidence” “tell the story of China’s religions well”, “transforming the advantages of China’s religions into international discourse advantages”

“Tell the Story of China’s Religions Well” (讲好中国宗教故事) was the main theme of the 11th session of the Joint Conference of National Religious Organizations, i.e. of the state-sponsored umbrella organizations of the five religions plus China’s YMCA / YWCA. Wang Zuo’an, deputy minister of the Communist Party’s United Front Department and director of the National Religious Affairs Administration, attended the Beijing meeting and delivered a speech.

According to a report on the United Front Department website, the conference found that in an attempt to curb China’s rise, some foreign forces were trying to twist truth and falsehood and accuse China of persecution. According to the conference, “the Chinese people can best judge for themselves whether the Chinese religious policy and the situation of the religions are good.” The most important thing in this situation is “self-confidence” (自信), it is important not only to act well, but also to present it well, so that “people in the world understand it,” the report said. The “logic of the historical development” of China’s religions and their “unmistakable political character” against the background of socialism with Chinese characteristics must be emphasized. Compared to history and reality in the world, China’s theory and practice could be “a successful example for the international community as to how religious relationships should be dealt with,” the report remarked. The national religious organizations would have to consolidate the “Four Self-Confidences” (四个自信 [i.e. confidence in the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics, in the theories, the system and the culture]) and to “effectively transform the advantages of China’s religions into international discourse advantages [国际话语优势]” – claims the report of the United Front Department (www.zyztb.gov.cn/tzyw/321265.jhtml).

At the meeting, all the leaders of the religious associations gave speeches, with Bishop Ma Yinglin, chairman of the Chinese Bishops’ Conference, speaking on behalf of Catholicism and Yanjue, vice chairman for the Chinese Buddhist Association whose chair is currently vacant, speaking on behalf of the Buddhists.

Daoismus

November 11, 2019:

Five-year plan published for the Sinicization of Daoism

After five-year plans for the Sinicization of Protestantism (March 2018), Catholicism (adopted May 2018, published October 2018) and Islam (January 2019) had already been published, the Chinese Daoist Association now also presented an “Outline of the Five-Year Work Plan on Adhering to the Orientation of Daoism towards Sinicization (2019–2023),” which was posted on its website on November 11. Like the plans of other religions, it contains a large number of the party’s political demands and political language. However, a first look at the document shows that apparently also significant interventions in the teachings and practices of Daoism, the only indigenous religion among the “five religions” of China, are planned: Traditional Daoist rules (道教戒律) should be re-ordered; provisions not in line with the times should be corrected or deleted and modern rules of conduct should be added (point 8). The clothing of the Daoist religious personnel should be standardized (point 10). Daoist practices (法务活动) should also be standardized, practices that do not correspond to the requirements of the times

should be simplified or abolished (point 11). The Daoist classics should be organized and the modern construction of a system of the Daoist teachings should be actively pursued (points 13 and 14). The text of the 坚持道教中国化方向五年工作规划纲要 (2019–2023) can be found at www.taoist.org.cn/showInfoContent.do?id=5209&p='p'.

A project group on the “Modern Construction of a System of Daoist Teachings” had already started its work in April of 2019; see: *RCTC* 2019, No. 3, p. 7. See also the entry on the five-year plan for the Sinicization of Buddhism in the following section.

Buddhism

October 27, 2019:

The two rival Karmapas publish a common prayer for the reincarnation of the Shamarpa

The Shamarpa is an important incarnation line of the Karma Kagyu School of Tibetan Buddhism, headed by the Karmapa. The 14th Shamarpa died in 2014. For the current 17th Karmapa Lama, two different boys were confirmed as the reincarnation by different high-ranking lamas: Karmapa Trinley Thaye Dorje, born in 1983, was confirmed by the 14th Shamarpa; he came to India as a child and was trained there. Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje, born in 1985, is recognized by both the Dalai Lama and the Chinese government. The Dalai Lama, however, is the head of a different school of Buddhism, the Gelugpa school. Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje, was trained under government supervision in the PRC but fled to India in late December 1999.

Karmapa Trinley Thaye Dorje had announced on October 27, 2014 that he would identify the next incarnation of the Shamar Rinpoche. That he is not doing this in conflict with the “other” Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje can be assumed from the fact that exactly five years later, on October 27, 2019, both published a joint long-life prayer for the reincarnation of the 14th Shamarpa on their respective websites. Already on October 11, 2018, both Karmapas had issued a joint declaration of intent to overcome the division in the Karma Kagyu line (the prayer can be found at: <https://kagyu.org/shamar-joint-prayer> as well as at www.karmapa.org; the announcement can be found at: www.karmapa.org/karmapa-thaye-dorje-find-reincarnation-of-shamarpa; see: *RCTC* 2019, No. 1, p. 6).

November 14, 2019:

Five-year plan for the Sinicization of Buddhism published

The “Outline of the Five-Year Work Plan on Adhering to the Orientation of Buddhism towards Sinicization (2019–2023)” was adopted on July 24, 2019 by the Standing Council of the Chinese Buddhist Association but was only posted on its website on November 14. It is significantly longer than the five-year plans of the other religions.

Among other things, it contains plans to “enrich and further develop the thinking of humanistic Buddhism [人间佛教].” The origins and lines of development of humanistic Buddhism are to be researched further; experiences from overseas are to be included while resisting wrong thinking and acting. The establishment of a system of humanistic Buddhism with teaching, canonical scriptures, spirituality, rules and liturgy is to be explored.

Another future task envisaged in the document is to provide interpretations for the teachings and precepts of the Tibetan and Theravada traditions of Buddhism that correspond to the development of China today and the excellent traditional culture of China.

The text of the 坚持佛教中国化方向五年工作规划纲要(2019–2023) can be found at www.chinabuddhism.com.cn/e/action/ShowInfo.php?classid=506&id=40672. See also the entry on the five-year plan for the Sinicization of Daoism in the section above.

Islam

December 4, 2019:

Chinese Islamic Association (CIA) rejects the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act of 2019 of the United States

After the U.S. House of Representatives passed a reinforced version of the draft law on December 3, 2019, the CIA published a statement the following day on its website, expressing outrage at what it believed to be a distorted representation and unfounded allegations of the human rights situation in Xinjiang. In Xinjiang, human rights and freedom of belief are protected, the statement said. Since the 1990s, the “three forces,” under the guise of religion, have used people’s ethnic religious feelings to stir up religious fanaticism, spread religious extremism and incite some people to commit violent and terrorist acts, thus the CIA. According to the statement, Xinjiang is the most important battlefield in China’s fight against terrorism and extremism, and Xinjiang’s Islamic circles actively participate in the work of de-extremization, by interpreting the canonical writings and the teachings of Islam and by refuting heretical theories such as “martyrs of the holy war go to heaven” or the “doctrine of the unbelievers” (www.chinaislam.net.cn/cms/news/jujiaoredian/201912/04-13661.html).

Hua Chunying, spokeswoman of China’s Foreign Ministry, also refuted the bill on December 4. The draft law calls on the U.S. administration to impose sanctions on Chinese officials identified as involved in the internment in Xinjiang (*South China Morning Post* Dec. 4).

Orthodoxy

October 30, 2019:

Chinese Consul meets with Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I in Istanbul

A Chinese government official visited the Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople for the first time. The meeting took place on the initiative of the Chinese Consul General Cui Wei, who also visited the Orthodox Cathedral in the Phanar, a district of Istanbul, on this occasion. Bartholomew I explained to the guest the history of the patriarchy and its function for the Orthodox Churches all over the world and also informed him about the Orthodox metropolis in Hong Kong. Cui outlined Chinese religious policy to the honorary head of world orthodoxy and invited the patriarch to visit China. Bartholomew agreed to this as soon as he received an official invitation from the Chinese government. According to *AsiaNews*, observers see the visit of the Chinese Consul General as an anti-Russian note, since the Chinese viewed the Patriarch of Constantinople as a possible counterweight to the Russian Patriarch of Moscow (*AsiaNews* Nov. 1).

Protestantism

September 23, 2019:

“Code of Conduct for Protestant Church Personnel” adopted

The two umbrella organizations of the Protestant Church in China, the Chinese Christian Council (CCC) and the Three Self Movement (TSPM), adopted a catalog of nine rules of conduct, which church ministers must commit to by signing. Under the leadership of the party, they must dedicate themselves voluntarily to cooperation in the expansion of socialism with Chinese characteristics and follow the course of Sinicization, resist infiltration from the outside and use the medium Internet in a self-disciplined manner. The text of the code of conduct entitled 中国基督教教牧人员行为规范 was published at www.ccctspm.org/cppccinfo/12833. A complete German translation of the code of conduct can be found in *China heute* 2014, No. 4, pp. 227-228.

Isabel Friemann, China InfoStelle

November 11–12, 2019:

Amity Printing Celebrates 200 Millionth Bible

The Amity Foundation's Nanjing printing house, founded in 1986, celebrated the printing of the 200 millionth Bible. So far Bibles have been printed in over 130 languages and dialects, including 85 million for the Chinese market. The anniversary took place with the participation of over 200 guests from church and society, including many international guests from Africa. Amity set up the Amity Printing Africa Service Center in Ethiopia in 2015, and the Amity Printing Kenya Corporation in summer 2019. On the occasion of the anniversary, the print shop showed an exhibition of historical gospel books and Bibles in Chinese. Bishop Hans-Jürgen Abromeit from the [German Evangelical] Northern Church represented the German Bible Society as second chairman. Pastor Dr. Christian Wollmann, head of the Center for Mission and Ecumenism at the Northern Church, was asked to speak as a representative for all foreign guests (<http://en.ccctspm.org> Nov. 29. Personal report C. Wollmann).

Isabel Friemann, China InfoStelle

November 21–22, 2019:

Meeting exchanges ideas about linking “meeting points” (house churches) to established, registered churches

The Chinese Christian Council (CCC) and the Three Self Movement (TSPM) organized a two-day training course in Qingdao with an exchange of experiences on strategies for connecting non-registered meeting points or house churches to registered congregations (“以堂带点”). After the opening by TSPM chairman Xu Xiaohong, CCC President Wu Wei gave the introductory speech, in which he explained the active connection of unregistered meeting points to registered communities as a necessary next step in the implementation of the new Regulations on Religious Affairs. “As long as they have a pure faith and do no activities that endanger the state or society, they are our brothers and sisters that we should serve,” said Wu. 70 church employees in leadership positions in various provinces and cities then heard exemplary local reports in the plenum before they exchanged ideas in small groups. On the second day, there were visits to various Christian house churches in Qingdao, which have already joined registered congregations. At the closing, Pastor Wu Wei emphasized the function of CCC and

TSPM as a link between believers on the one hand and party and government on the other (www.ccctspm.org Nov. 25).

Isabel Friemann, China InfoStelle

December 9, 2019:

Pastor Wang Yi detained for one year

Wang Yi, leader of the Rainbow Covenant House Church in Chengdu, is still in custody after his arrest on December 9, 2018, but has so far been unable to speak to his lawyer. He has not yet been finally sentenced. Conjectures assume a prison sentence of up to 10 years. A parish presbyter, Qin Defu, was sentenced to four years in prison in late November. The reasons for arresting Wang Yi included his open criticism of Xi Jinping's personality cult and religious politics. Wang's wife Jiang Rong and her son are under house arrest (*AsiaNews* Dec. 3; see *RCTC* 2019, No. 2, pp. 9-10).

Isabel Friemann, China InfoStelle

Catholic Church

October 28, 2019:

Public ordination in Mindong without Bishop Guo Xijin

Bishop Zhan Silu of Mindong in Fujian ordained two deacons to priests in the absence of his Auxiliary Bishop Guo Xijin, one for his own diocese and the other for Minbei. It was the first public ordination in the Mindong Diocese in 70 years, according to *AsiaNews*. In December 2018, the bishop Guo Xijin, who was not recognized by the government, yielded his office at the request of the pope to the former illegitimate bishop Zhan Silu, who had been pardoned by the pope, but Guo was not recognized by the government as an auxiliary bishop. In May 2019, due to constant pressure from the authorities on his underground priests, he had withdrawn his application for state recognition. A priest told *AsiaNews* that Bishop Guo had been invited by the government to attend the ordination but felt that he was unable to do so until his priests' situation improved. "I must take care of these unofficial priests and faithful. This is the specific task that the Holy See has given me," *AsiaNews* quoted Bishop Guo.

On November 13, 2019, *AsiaNews* reported that since November 9, pressure has again been exerted on Bishop Guo to join the "independent" (official) clergy. A few dozen Mindong underground priests had already signed the document supporting the "independence" of the church, but are criticized by believers, *AsiaNews* said; there is confusion in the diocese (*AsiaNews* Oct. 30; Nov. 13; see *RCTC* 2019, No. 2, pp. 11-12, 16; No. 3, p. 13; No. 4, p. 13).

October 31, 2019:

In the diocese of Handan, believers are unable to withstand church demolition

In the early morning of October 31, hundreds of believers gathered with their priests outside the church in Wugaozhuang (Guantao County, Handan, Hebei Province) to protest against the government ordered demolition of their church. In an appeal for help to the Churches of the world, the faithful asked for prayer. Wugaozhuang belongs to the official Church, but is said not to have obtained all the permits required for its construction. This is repeatedly used as an argument for demolishing churches.

As *AsiaNews* writes, local believers did not see the Sino-Vatican agreement of September 2018 as the direct cause of this persecution, but the deal has made government authorities more powerful. They claimed that “the Vatican supports us.” In Wugaozhuang, an agreement was finally reached with the government representatives that the church may be rebuilt elsewhere with financial support from the government. – According to statements by believers in the Handan Diocese, another 40 churches are listed for demolition by the authorities (*AsiaNews* Oct. 31; *UCAN* Nov. 4; persecution.org Nov. 4).

November 19, 2019:

***AsiaNews*: Lightning rod instead of Christ figure on church in Shandong**

A statue of Christ the King attached to the top of the church in Linjiazhuang (Jinan, Shandong Province) was removed by the authorities and replaced with a lightning rod. This was done as a further measure to “Sinicize” the Catholic Church, said *AsiaNews*, and was in line with the attempt to remove visible signs of Christianity more and more. Numerous crosses, which up to now were often visible from afar, were removed from church towers or church facades in many places; this particularly affects the provinces of Zhejiang, Henan, Xinjiang, Shanxi, Hubei and Guizhou, as *AsiaNews* reported on November 19.

November 20, 2019:

Death of Bishop Andrew Jin Daoyuan, Diocese of Changzhi

Bishop Jin, who died at the age of 90, was born on June 13, 1929 to a Catholic family in Lucheng District in Changzhi, Shanxi Province. After studying in various seminaries, including that of Beijing, he was ordained a priest in Beijing in 1956. In the same year he returned to Changzhi for pastoral work. He was arrested during the Cultural Revolution and spent 13 years in prison until 1979. The following year he was appointed pastor of the Nantiangong Church and in 1992 Vicar General of Changzhi Diocese. Bishop Jin was ordained bishop in Beijing in 2000 without papal permission, but in 2008, at his request, Pope Benedict XVI. recognized him. However, the Vatican did not assign a diocese to him. The current bishop of Changzhi is Peter Ding Lingbin, who was ordained bishop in 2016 with the approval of the Vatican and the Chinese government. Bishop Jin was buried in Nantiangong village on November 26 (*UCAN* Nov. 25).

Sino-Vatican Relations

November 11, 2019:

Congolese professor from Taiwan named undersecretary of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue

Xaverian Missionary Father Batairwa Kubuya Paulin, originally from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and fluent in Chinese, is a professor in the Department of Religious Studies at Fu Jen Catholic University in Taipei and executive secretary of the Commission for Interreligious and Ecumenical Dialogue of the Regional Episcopal Conference of Taiwan. According to Sr. Beatrice Leung Kit-fun from the Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages in Kaohsiung, the appointment of P. Paulin is

groundbreaking. So far, no representative of an Asian Church has been appointed to such a position in the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, she said. Father Paulin could contribute to the understanding of the Chinese Church. Fr. Paulin has lived in Taiwan for many years. In May 2019 he accompanied a delegation of the Buddhist Association from Taiwan to Rome, where they also met with Pope Francis (*UCAN* Nov. 19; *Vatican News* Nov. 11).

November 19-26, 2019:

Journey of Pope Francis to Thailand and Japan – References to China

On the flight from Thailand to Japan, the Pope sent the usual greeting telegrams to the governments over the respective territories, including China's President Xi Jinping, Hong Kong's Chief Executive Carrie Lam, and Tsai Ing-wen, President of the Republic of China (Taiwan). *UCAN* reported that Catholics from the PRC traveled to Thailand and Japan to see the Pope. It said that Thai media had spoken of a strong presence of Chinese Catholics at the Mass in the National Stadium in Bangkok and of travel groups of Chinese Catholics in Bangkok who came to see the Pope. The Catholic website *Xinde (Faith)* published numerous reports from *Vatican News* about the Pope's trip. The joint official website of the Patriotic Association and the Chinese Bishops' Conference did not report on the trip (www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2019-11/pope-francis-telegrams-flight-thailand-japan.html; *UCAN* Nov. 24).

November 26, 2019:

Pope Francis at the press conference on the return flight from Japan to Hong Kong and China – China's response

During the press conference, the telegram to Carrie Lam was mentioned in a question to the Pope and he was asked what he thought of the situation in Hong Kong.

The telegrams were sent to all heads of state when they entered the territories, which was an automatic process and should only be understood as a courtesy, the Pope replied. He continued: "With regard to the other question you asked me: when we think about it, it's not just Hong Kong. Think about Chile, think about France, democratic France: a year of yellow jackets. Think of Nicaragua, think of other Latin American countries that have problems like this, and even some European countries. It's something general. How does the Holy See handle this? It calls for dialogue, for peace. But it's not only Hong Kong, there are various problematic situations that I am unable to evaluate at the moment. I respect peace and I ask for peace for all these countries that have problems, Spain too. It is better to put things in perspective and to call for dialogue, for peace, so that problems can be resolved." To the question when he would travel to Beijing, he said: "I would like to go to Beijing, I love China."

On November 28, Geng Shuang, spokesman for the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was asked at a press conference about his reaction to the Pope's statement; he said: "We saw the reports and appreciate the Pope's friendliness and goodwill. China and the Vatican City State have good communication between us, and we are pleased of the improvement in our relations. China is sincere and active in advancing China-Vatican relationship. We welcome and are open to exchange between the two countries" (www.vatican.va/content/francesco/de/speeches/2019/november/documents/papa-francesco_20191126_voloritorno-giappone.html; www.fmprc.gov.cn Nov. 28).

December 8, 2019:

Philippines' Cardinal Tagle appointed head of "Propaganda Fide"

Pope Francis has appointed Cardinal Luis Antonio Gokim Tagle, Archbishop of Manila, to head the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples in Rome (formerly known as "Propaganda Fide"). The Vatican announced this on December 8. The 62-year-old Tagle will take over his new position in mid-January 2020 as the successor to the 73-year-old Cardinal Fernando Filoni, who has been head of the Congregation since 2011. Tagle is the second Asian in this position after Cardinal Ivan Dias (2006–2011) of India. The congregation is primarily responsible for the Churches in Africa, Asia and Oceania. Cardinal Filoni was appointed future Grand Master of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem.

Cardinal Tagle was born in Manila in 1957 to a Catholic family and ordained a priest in 1982. His father belonged to the local Tagalog ethnic group, his mother was of Chinese origin. He studied in Manila, Washington and Rome and is today, among other positions, also president of Caritas Internationalis and the Catholic Biblical Federation. Pope Benedict XVI. made him a cardinal in 2012. As *Vatican News* writes, the "charismatic Filipino, whom some call the 'Asian Francis', is one of the most distinguished members of the College of Cardinals. He has made a name for himself primarily through social initiatives and impulses for evangelization." The cardinal is considered a gifted communicator and has hosted various television programs in the Philippines. He is said to be very close to Pope Francis and to share his vision of a missionary Church and of care for the poor. According to Paolo Affatato, Asia Editor at *Fides*, and Fr. Bernardo Cervellera PIME, editor-in-chief of *AsiaNews*, Cardinal Tagle's appointment could be helpful in negotiations with Mainland China, thus *Crux Now* (*Crux Now* Dec. 10; *America Magazine* Dec. 8; *Vatican News* Dec. 8).

Hong Kong

October 23, 2019:

Jesuits assume leadership of the Centre for Catholic Studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong

In a simple ceremony that took place on October 23, 2019, the centre, which is part of the Department of Cultural and Religious Studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, passed into the hands of the Jesuits. Prof. Anselm Lam, the new director, emphasized that reconciliation will be an important study topic of the centre, "hoping to make a positive contribution at a time when reconciliation is very much needed in Hong Kong's socially divided society" (*AsiaNews* Nov. 1).

Hong Kong, Protests

October 12, 2019:

Cardinal John Tong addresses "all Hong Kong friends" on Hong Kong's RTHK radio station

In his speech at the RTHK, the cardinal spoke of his pain at the worsening situation in the unrest in Hong Kong. However, he is convinced that God will accompany the citizens of Hong Kong through these difficult times. He advised the audience, of whom he said he knew that most were not Christians,

to remember at difficult moments how they had weathered previous challenges and to speak with friends. He warned them to keep a grip on hope because disappointment and anger lead to hatred, which gradually consumes the ability to distinguish between good and evil and leads to violence. We all have the same origin, nature and dignity, Cardinal Tong said. He called for the rebuilding of mutual respect and trust. He urged the government to listen to the “cry of Hong Kong citizens” and to respect the law (<https://app3.rthk.hk/special/pau/article.php?aid=3722>; www.asianews.it/news-en/Card.-Tong-appeals-against-violence:-Restore-hope-and-trust-48254.html; *Hong Kong Sunday Examiner* Oct. 18).

October 20, 2019:

Police splash blue-dyed water on Kowloon Mosque

Police used water cannons to spray water containing blue dye on protesters at an unauthorized rally, hitting the entrance to the mosque on Nathan Road twice in the process. As the *South China Morning Post* reported, the police immediately contacted the main imam and leader of the Muslim community and said in a Facebook post that the water cannon “accidentally affected the entrance and front gate of the mosque.” The Muslim Council of Hong Kong also published a statement on Facebook in the evening, calling on Hong Kong’s Muslims to “seek calmness over revenge, wisdom over emotions and unity over division.” According to the newspaper report, passers-by, including demonstrators, helped clean the dye stains from the entrance to the mosque. The incident caused mixed reactions among Hong Kong’s Muslims, the newspaper said. Around 300,000 Muslims live in Hong Kong, among whom are 50,000 Chinese, 150,000 Indonesians and 30,000 Pakistanis (*South China Morning Post* Oct. 20; 2016 census data from Wikipedia).

October and November 2019:

Calls for prayer and prayer meetings for Hong Kong (selection)

On October 21, Hong Kong Auxiliary Bishop Joseph Ha on Facebook reiterated calls for prayer, urging the faithful to pray the rosary during the month of October and finish with the intention: “Mary, untier of knots, pray for us!” In the same Facebook entry, he also wrote that he was impressed by an exchange of Catholic youth with the entire Hong Kong diocesan leadership on October 19 and called for an independent commission of inquiry [into the violence].

On October 26, 300 people took part in a public rosary prayer for Hong Kong in Chater Garden; the prayer meeting was organized by the Justice and Peace Commission of the Diocese of Hong Kong. Auxiliary Bishop Ha said in his address: “God can help us realize that everyone is human, not cockroaches, dogs or yellow objects.” As *UCAN* explained, pro-government groups often call demonstrators “cockroaches,” while demonstrators call police officers “dogs.”

On November 11, once again in the Chater Garden, a Christian prayer meeting for the student Chow Tsz-lok took place. Chow had died on November 8 after allegedly falling from a parking garage deck four days earlier while fleeing from the police (*AsiaNews* Oct. 21.; Nov. 11; *Catholic News Agency* Oct. 23; ucanews.org Oct. 28).

November 11, 2019:

Statements on arrests at the site of Hong Kong's Holy Cross Church

On November 11, police broke into the grounds of Holy Cross Church in Sai Wan Ho and arrested protesters in its parking lot who had fled to the church grounds after a clash with the police. The diocese of Hong Kong issued a statement on the same day expressing deep regret for the incident, pointing out that churches today differ from those of the past: "Today, there is no way for a church to guarantee that those who enter it will not be arrested according to the law." According to the *Sunday Examiner*, the Holy Cross parish apologized in its own statement that they could not prevent the police from entering their premises. The parish condemned the excessive force used by the police, and released pictures from the surveillance cameras in the parish parking lot. On November 12, the parish said it had set up a legal team to follow up the issue and to protect the rights of those who were arrested (*Hong Kong Sunday Examiner* Nov. 11, 12).

November 8 and 12, 2019:

Christian churches in Hong Kong are referred to as "rioters" by mainland media

In an article dated November 8, 2019, the news portal www.people.com.cn, which belongs to the party newspaper *Renmin ribao*, accused Hong Kong Christian churches of being the instigators of the unrest that would have turned the "Fragrance Harbor" 香港 into a "Chaos Harbor" 乱港. The Christian-run 285 primary schools and 235 middle schools used brainwashing to influence their students in a pro-western and anti-Chinese way, so that they had yellow skins but white hearts, the article said. It criticized the churches as "petrol stations" for the protesters, providing them with drinks, food and medicine. The best mirror for the current events in Hong Kong is the revolution in Poland in 1980, in which the Vatican's support for the Solidarność trade union played a similar role, the article claimed. It concluded by saying that it is time to scrape out the churches of Hong Kong [as once scrapes out an ulcer] ("香港的教会, 是时候刮骨疗毒了!") (<http://hm.people.com.cn/n1/2019/1108/c4227231445458.html>).

Four days later, the video channel China Youth Studio 青微工作室 uploaded a contribution entitled "Religion or Politics," in which Christian groups are described as the most active instigators of political turmoil. The Catholic Bishop Joseph Zen and the Protestant theology professor Ying Fuk-Tsang are mentioned as troublemakers and the Hong Kong Methodist Church as an evil shelter in which protesters are equipped for their illegal activities. The churches are accused of manipulating public opinion, acting politically through mass prayer meetings and inciting hostility to the People's Republic (www.youtube.com/watch?v=rZi78vywUPU).

Isabel Friemann, China InfoStelle

Between November 11 and 29, 2019:

Violent clashes between police and students at Chinese University, siege at Polytechnic University

In two days of clashes beginning November 12, the police attacked students on the Chinese University campus with tear gas, rubber bullets, and pepper spray while the students for their part threw stones

and Molotov cocktails. On November 13, *AsiaNews* published a statement by university teachers, employees, students and alumni accusing the police of shooting at the university president with tear gas immediately after the university president had tried to mediate, and refusing to agree to a ceasefire. Beginning November 17, police besieged Polytechnic University, which had been occupied by hundreds of protesters, including many minors; on November 19, about 100 people were still trapped on campus. In the course of the siege, which was finally ended on November 29, more than 1,100 people were arrested or, if minors, identified and registered by the police.

Religious leaders offered to act as mediators (see the following entry). *AsiaNews* reported that on the evening of November 12, an urgent message of Catholic Auxiliary Bishop Ha spread via Facebook in which he urged the police to stop and asked the students to take care of their safety and life. On November 18, he, together with pro-democratic members of the Legislative Council, tried unsuccessfully to mediate with the police chief at Polytechnic University (*AsiaNews* Nov. 12, 13, 19, 30; *Hong Kong Sunday Examiner* Nov. 18).

November 18, 2019:

Colloquium of Six Religious Leaders of Hong Kong releases urgent appeal regarding conflict escalation at Polytechnic University

The religious leaders demand:

“1. All parties should suspend all kinds of force. 2. Protesters who stay in the university, including the injured, should be allowed to leave campus immediately. 3. Protesters should stop using force, while on-site police force should make reasonable and legal arrangements and let the people leave the campus peacefully. 4. Police force and protesters should attempt to mediate and settle the issue in a peaceful way.” The religious leaders also agree to send representatives to mediate and resolve the crisis if necessary (see: www.examiner.org.hk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/eng.pdf).

The Colloquium of Six Religious Leaders of Hong Kong, which has existed for 40 years, is made up of the six leading representatives of Buddhism, Daoism, Confucianism, Islam, Protestantism (Hong Kong Christian Council) and the Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong. In connection with the protests in Hong Kong, they last published joint statements on October 12 and November 13, 2019.

November 24, 2019:

Pro-democratic camp wins overwhelming victory in Hong Kong district council elections

With an unusually high turnout of 71%, the pro-democratic camp tripled its number of seats and gained control of 17 of Hong Kong's 18 districts. All pro-Beijing parties suffered major drops in votes. The local elections have been rated as a de facto referendum on the ongoing protests by many commentators. On December 8, once again 800,000 people (police estimate: 183,000) carried out a mostly peaceful protest against the government and on behalf of the “five demands.” The crowd included Cardinal Joseph Zen and several Catholic priests. According to *AsiaNews* (Dec. 9), over 6,000 people, including many minors, have been arrested in Hong Kong in recent months in connection with the protests. The *South China Morning Post* reported that there were those among the Christians who were calling for the Churches to take a stronger stand against the protesters' violence (*AsiaNews* Nov. 25; Dec. 9; *South China Morning Post* Nov. 16; Wikipedia).

This “News Update” was first published in *China heute* 2019, No. 4, pp. 214-220 (in German). Unless otherwise indicated, all source references in the “News Update” refer to the year 2019.

“What you want to ignite in others must burn within you”

Obituary on Fr. Roman Malek SVD (1951–2019) – for Many Years Editor-in-chief of *China heute* and Founding Director of the China-Zentrum

Katharina Feith (China-Zentrum) and Barbara Hoster (Monumenta Serica Institute), with the collaboration of Katharina Wenzel-Teuber (China-Zentrum)
Translated by Jacqueline Mulberge SSPs



Fr. Malek at the 8th European Catholic China Colloquium in Freising in September 2010. Photo: China-Zentrum archives.

Fr. Prof. Dr. Roman Malek SVD died unexpectedly in Grudziądz in Poland on 29 November 2019. For more than forty years Fr. Malek belonged to the Steyl Missionary community in Sankt Augustin and worked additionally as director of the sinological Monumenta Serica Institute, as lecturer at the Philosophical-Theological Faculty SVD of St. Agustin, and in pastoral ministry. He was a formative figure on the SVD campus but also worked over and beyond

that. Through his numerous activities he contributed greatly to raise awareness of China and the Church in China.

Fr. Malek was born on 3 October 1951 in Bytów, Kashubia, Poland. After entering the Society of the Divine Word (Societas Verbi Divini SVD, Steyl Missionaries) in 1969, he studied philosophy and theology in Pieniężno and then Anthropology of Religion and Religious Studies at the Catholic University of Lublin. In 1976 he was ordained priest in Pieniężno. His Master's thesis dealt with Tenrikyō, a new Japanese religion, for Fr. Malek

The German version of this article was first published under the title “In dir muss brennen, was du in anderen entzünden willst’. Ein Nachruf auf P. Roman Malek SVD, langjähriger Chefredakteur von *China heute* und Gründungsdirektor des China-Zentrums (1951–2019)” in *China heute* 2019, No. 4, pp. 208-213.



At study in younger years. Private photo.

first wanted to go to Japan as a missionary. However, the SVD earmarked him for academic work on China and he was assigned to the Monumenta Serica Institute. At the end of May 1976, therefore, he came to Sankt Augustin to take up studies at the University of Bonn in Sinology, Japanology, Comparative Religion and both medieval and recent Church history. At the same time, he was already working on the editorial board of the Monumenta Serica

Institute whose tasks include the editing of academic publications on China. Thanks to his talent for languages and his studious discipline, Fr. Malek quickly and almost perfectly mastered the German language and also rapidly learnt Chinese, which he developed further during a time of studies at the Catholic Fu Jen University in Taipei, Taiwan from 1978–1980. He completed his doctorate in Sinology at the University of Bonn in 1984 with a dissertation on fasting in religious Daoism, making a significant contribution to the then little known area of Daoist rituals.¹

From 1985 on Fr. Malek was co-publisher of the internationally renowned periodical *Monumenta Serica*, as well as editor-in-chief of the Monumenta Serica Monograph Series, and additionally, from 1986 on a lecturer at the Philosophical-Theological Faculty. Besides research into Chinese culture, he was also interested in Christianity in present day China. Thus in 1984 he undertook the publishing of *China heute. Informationen über Religion und Christentum im chinesischen Raum* (China Today. Information on Religion and Christianity in the Chinese World), that had been founded two years beforehand in the Monumenta Serica Institute, later published by the China-Zentrum. He remained editor-in-chief until the end of 2003. The periodical gained its form under Fr. Malek – to which until 2008 the layout designed by himself also contributed – and became a reliable medium of information about the situation of the churches and religions in China. Due to his broad knowledge he was able to work on and assess topics about the different religions and the culture of China, as well as questions about the life of the Church in China, mission history or theology. From the outset he included Protestant colleagues in the work and time and again secured contributions from academics with whom he was acquainted. He wrote numerous news articles and analyses for *China heute* himself, especially on religious policy and on Sino-Vatican relations, as well as many statistics. He valued a thorough documentation of translations of significant texts of religious policy and ecclesial texts, many of which he made himself, as well as a bibliographic section which became more extensive over the years. Issues were often completed “overnight,” as witnessed the following morning by empty coffee cups and full ash trays. At the beginning Fr. Malek also liked to share in the

1 *Das Chai-chieh lu. Materialien zur Liturgie im Taoismus* (Materials on the Liturgy in Daoism), Würzburger Sino-Japonica, Vol. 14, Frankfurt a.M. – Bern – New York: Peter Lang publishers 1985.

sociable packing of the printed issues of *China heute* that were sent out. In 2006 he called the Polish counterpart *Chiny dzisiaj* into being and published it until 2011.

In 1988 Fr. Malek was appointed founding director of the China-Zentrum, also with its seat in Sankt Augustin, which serves to promote contacts with the Catholic Church in China. The Centre was initially supported by members of the German Catholic Mission Council (DKMR), including aid organizations, male and female missionary orders and representatives of German dioceses. Fr. Malek worked to ensure that the membership gradually spread beyond Germany. Thus from 1995 members were accepted from Austria and Switzerland and, later, also Italy.

In addition to his demanding position as director of the China-Zentrum, which he fulfilled with great commitment and verve, in 1992 he took over the positions of director of the Monumenta Serica Institute and editor of all its publications, as successor to Dr. Heinrich Busch SVD (1912–2002), who had shaped the destiny of the Institute over a long period of time. Fr. Malek maintained the leadership of both institutions parallel until 1998. On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the China-Zentrum and the simultaneous handing over of the directorship to Fr. Paul Raabe SVD (1937–2007) on July 1, 1998, Prof. DDr. Hans Waldenfels SJ, at that time vice-chairman of the China-Zentrum, honoured Fr. Malek with the following words: “It is Fr. Malek’s enduring merit that with great clear-sightedness he time and again directed attention to the needs and requirements of the Church in China, made visible the great perspectives and, wherever possible, initiated short-term steps that served the cause of China and the Church. This certainly required patience and discretion and untiring, often time-consuming effort.”²

Fr. Malek was involved early on in the Ecumenical China Working Group ÖCAK, which had already been founded in the early 1970s by the Associations of Protestant Churches



At the conference “Christianity and Culture” 1996 in Sankt Augustin with Prof. Dr. Zhuo Xinping of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (Beijing) and Dr. Justus Freytag, the then Protestant chairman of the ÖCAK. Photo: China-Zentrum archives.

² See *China heute* 1998, No. 4, pp. 100-103, here pp. 102-103.

and Missions and the German Catholic Mission Council. Also in this framework the numerous European Ecumenical China Conferences, co-organized by the China-Zentrum, as well as the European Catholic China Colloquia took place; the latter continue until today. In 1996 the China-Zentrum together with the ÖCAK organized the conference “Christianity and Culture in the Face of the Challenges of Modernity,” and Fr. Malek published an impressive collection of ecumenical contributions, written at his invitation, on religion, theology and Church in the Chinese context; the volume is entitled “*Fallbeispiel*” *China* (“Case Study” China).³

For several years he also co-organized the German-Chinese student meetings, which have taken place since the mid-1980s in Sankt Augustin and other places, originally to win over students for the topic of religions in China. The tradition of these meetings still exists today, they are organized annually by the China-Zentrum on different topics. In 2019 the meeting took place for the 34th time.

With regard to the People’s Republic of China, Fr. Malek was always anxious to maintain contact with both parts of the Catholic Church in China: the official and the underground Church. This is reflected among other things in the visiting programs of Church delegations, but also to China, as well as in the admission of Chinese seminarians, priests and religious sisters to the further training program at the Philosophical-Theological Faculty from the end of 1993 / beginning of 1994. A great concern of his was inner-Church reconciliation, and an informal, natural interaction, e.g. also with the annual summer workshops for Chinese theology students in Europe, which Fr. Malek co-initiated starting from the mid-1990s, contributed towards it substantially. In the year 1997, during



1995 at the summer workshop with retreat on the Grand Saint Bernard in Switzerland together with the Chinese seminarians and sisters from Sankt Augustin. Photo: China-Zentrum archives.

3 “*Fallbeispiel*” *China*. *Ökumenische Beiträge zu Religion, Theologie und Kirche im chinesischen Kontext* (“Case Study” China. Ecumenical Contributions to Religion, Theology and Church in the Chinese Context), Sankt Augustin – Nettetal: Steyler Verlag 1996.



Fr. Malek and Fr. Zbigniew Wesołowski SVD, Monumenta Serica Institute, meeting Pope John Paul II in Rome in the summer of 1997. Photo: China-Zentrum archives.

one such workshop in Rome, there was a personal meeting with Pope John Paul II. Fr. Malek followed very precisely how Sino-Vatican relations developed under this Pope, his countryman, and under the successors. Among the initiatives for Chinese theologians in Europe there were also regular meetings in the Monumenta Serica Institute, at which Chinese theology students could present their academic work. The academic studies of Chinese clerics was always dear to the heart of Fr. Malek. As moderator and doctoral adviser he accompanied many of the licentiate theses and doctoral theses of Chinese seminarians and priests in Sankt Augustin.

Fr. Malek also followed developments in Hong Kong and Macau intensively before and after the transfer to the People's Republic of China in 1997 and 1999. The result was two impressive book publications on the Church in both territories, as well as an exhibition "Macau '99, Origin is Future," arranged jointly by the China-Zentrum and the Monumenta Serica Institute.⁴ Together with Prof. Hans Waldenfels and the Auxiliary Bishop of Essen Franz Grave, Fr. Malek helped revitalize the partnership between Essen and the Hong Kong Diocese that had existed since the foundation of the Diocese of Essen.

Fr. Malek was a master of networking. The geographical neighbourhood to the Konrad Adenauer Foundation led, for instance, to various joint projects and visitors' programs, such as in 1988 the international conference "Confucianism and the Modernisation of China," to which Fr. Malek made a decisive contribution.⁵ As a genuine European his

4 See both publications: Roman Malek (ed.), *Hongkong: Kirche und Gesellschaft im Übergang. Materialien und Dokumente* (Hong Kong: Church and Society at the Time of Transfer. Materials and Documents), Sankt Augustin: China-Zentrum – Nettetal: Steyler Verlag 1997, as well as *Macau. Herkunft ist Zukunft* (Macau: Origin Is Future.) A joint publication of the China-Zentrum and Monumenta Serica Institute, Sankt Augustin – Nettetal: Steyler Verlag 2000.

5 The contributions in this conference were published later on in: Silke Krieger – Rolf Trauzettel (eds.), *Konfuzianismus und die Modernisierung Chinas* (Confucianism and the Modernisation of China), Mainz: Hase & Koehler 1990.



The famous “Gang of Four,” from left to right: Fr. Angelo Lazzarotto PIME, Podium moderator Edmond Tang of the Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland, Fr. Jean Charbonnier MEP, Fr. Jeroom Heyndrickx CICM, Fr. Malek. Photo: China-Zentrum archives.

thoughts travelled early on across constricting borders and he made contact with fellow contenders and those with the same ideas in other European countries. With some “old China hands” he founded the “Four Seas Association,” jokingly also called the “Gang of Four,” that was dedicated to the promotion of European ecclesiastic and academic work on China: with Fr. Malek were the Fathers Jeroom Heyndrick CICM with the Verbiest Institute in Leuven, Belgium, Jean Charbonnier MEP with the then Relais Chine-France in Paris, and Angelo S. Lazzarotto PIME in Italy. Fr. Malek found a “brother in spirit”⁶ in the former editor-in-chief of *Christ in der Gegenwart*, Manfred Plate (1929–2007). Already in the 1980s the two functioned as bridge builders to the Christians in China.

Through Fr. Malek’s numerous international contacts a large number of significant personalities of the Chinese Church came to Sankt Augustin, among them early on Aloysius Jin Luxian SJ (1916–2013) who for many years was the Bishop of Shanghai, the then president



Fr. Malek with Bishop Aloysius Jin Luxian of Shanghai in the 1990s. Photo: China-Zentrum archives.

of the Taiwanese Bishops’ Conference and later Cardinal Paul Shan Kuo-hsi SJ (1923–2012) and the later Bishops of Hong Kong, Cardinal Zen Ze-kui SDB and Cardinal John Tong. Fr. Malek mostly accompanied the delegations personally on their visits to Catholic institutions and prominent persons in Germany.

Apart from representatives of the Church, numerous academics also came to Sankt Au-

⁶ See *Christ in der Gegenwart* 2019, No. 49, p. 552. In his obituary for Manfred Plate Fr. Malek paid extensive tribute to his commitment to China, see *China heute* 2007, No. 3, pp. 75-77.



Bishop Xie Tingzhe of Urumqi in June 1994 visiting Sankt Augustin. Photo: China-Zentrum archives.

gustin, due to the conferences and lectures at the Monumenta Serica Institute and the China-Zentrum, arranged through Fr. Malek's great talent for organisation. Special mention should be made of the international conference on the occasion of the 400th birthday of the important Cologne China missionary Johann Adam Schall von Bell SJ (1592–1666) in 1992 and the conference on the history of the Jews in China in 1997.⁷ In addition he enriched the cultural life on the campus of the Steyl Missionaries through various exhibitions which he inspired and planned in the ethnological museum Haus Völker und Kulturen (House of Peoples and Cultures), among them the exhibition “Die Gesichter Jesu in China” (“The Faces of Jesus in China”) in 2003, which was also exhibited in other European countries and which took up the theme of the book series *The Chinese Face of Jesus Christ* begun the previous year, showing the Chinese reception of Jesus in China throughout the epochs.⁸ Several times Fr. Malek held Good Friday meditations with Chinese Passion pictures in the church of the missionary seminary.

Fr. Malek was an exceptionally productive author and publisher. Alongside numerous publications of his own, he published 20 volumes of the periodical *Monumenta Serica*, 75 volumes of the book series of the Institute, as well as 20 years of issues of *China heute* – his literature index comprised almost 1.000 entries. Apart from that he often gave talks, took part in conferences at home and abroad and was a guest lecturer at different universities in Germany, Poland and Austria. After his habilitation in Sinology in 2003 on the academic and convert Wu Leichuan,⁹ he regularly gave courses at Bonn University. Several

7 See the conference volume published by Fr. Malek: *Western Learning and Christianity in China. The Contribution and Impact of Johann Adam Schall von Bell (1592–1666)*, Monumenta Serica Monograph Series XXXV/1-2, 2 Vols., Sankt Augustin – Nettetal: Steyler Verlag 1998; and also *From Kaifeng ... to Shanghai. Jews in China*, Monumenta Serica Monograph Series XLVI, Sankt Augustin – Nettetal: Steyler Verlag 2000.

8 This project comprises a total of six partial volumes (1, 2, 3a and 3b, 4a and 4b) that appeared between 2002 and 2019 as Vol. L of the Monumenta Serica Monograph Series.

9 *Verschmelzung der Horizonte: Mozi und Jesus. Zur Hermeneutik der chinesisch-christlichen Begegnung nach Wu Leichuan (1869–1944)*, Studies in Christian Mission 29, Leiden – Boston: Brill 2004.

trips took him to the People's Republic of China. The special topic of his research was the history of the Steyl Missionaries in China. In this field he published his own writings and initiated research projects of others. In the last period of his life Fr. Malek worked on a complete catalogue of all Steyl publications in China.

Fr. Malek did not see himself only as an academic, he was also a passionate pastor. For more than twenty years he cared for the Catholic community of the branch church St. Adelheid in Müllekoven, the smallest district of the city of Troisdorf. In addition he took on a great deal of pastoral help elsewhere. Apart from that he was very committed to the accompaniment of the Chinese theologians.

In April 2011 Fr. Malek suffered a serious stroke that affected him so severely that he had to retire from all his tasks. Well cared for by the Croatian Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul (Vinzentinerinnen) in the infirmary of the Mission Seminary in Sankt Augustin and in spite of his limitations, he continued to work on his book projects with great perseverance and discipline. Two sequel volumes of the series *The Chinese Face of Jesus Christ* still appeared in the publications of the Monumenta Serica Institute, in 2015 and 2019 respectively.¹⁰ For his commitment to the Catholic Church in China, in 2016 Fr. Malek was awarded the prize “Heart without Frontiers” by the Polish Cardinal Adam Kozłowiecki Foundation. In that same year the Monumenta Serica Institute honoured him on his 65th birthday with the two-volume festschrift *Rooted in Hope: China – Religion – Christianity*.¹¹ The forty contributions from colleagues,



Fr. Malek on 7 October 2016, on the occasion of his 65th birthday. Photo: Monumenta Serica Institute.

friends, confreres and companions united in this extensive work bear witness to the esteem in which the jubilarian was held, as well as to the breadth of his professional interests.

In April 2018 Fr. Malek left the community of Sankt Augustin, to which he had belonged for so long, and went back to his native Poland where he spent the last one and a half years of his life in the Steyl Mission House in Górna Grupa. After a brief illness he died in the early morning of 29 November in the hospital in Grudziądz. On 2 December he was laid to rest in the SVD cemetery of Górna Grupa in the presence of numerous Polish confreres and a number of Chinese priests, sisters and seminarians.

10 *The Chinese Face of Jesus Christ*, Vol. 4a: Annotated Bibliography (with Maney Publishing, Leeds), and Vol. 4b: Supplementary Anthology, General Index, Addenda (with Taylor and Francis, Abingdon, Oxon).

11 Barbara Hoster – Dirk Kuhlmann – Zbigniew Wesolowski S.V.D. (eds.), *Rooted in Hope. Festschrift in Honor of Roman Malek S.V.D. on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday / In der Hoffnung verwurzelt. Festschrift für Roman Malek S.V.D. zu seinem 65. Geburtstag*, 2 Vols., Sankt Augustin – Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge 2017. Fr. Malek's literature list is on pages xliii–cviii.



Fr. Malek and Fr. Wesolowski with the French sinologist Françoise Aubin at the Monumenta Serica Institute in May 2013.
Photo: Monumenta Serica Institute.

Fr. Malek was a strong personality, a convinced priest and a distinguished scholar who developed a wealth of activities and managed an enormous workload during the 68 years of his life. In view of his life's work, the French mongolist and sinologist Françoise Aubin (1932–2017), a frequent guest at the Monumenta Serica Institute, once speculated that Fr. Malek must have more than one life in order to be so extraordinarily productive. Nevertheless, he was far from being a pure “workaholic” – he loved conviviality, especially with good food and drink, had a great sense of humour and was full of joy and passion.



Fr. Malek on a visit to China in November 1990 during a conference in Xi'an, co-organized by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. Photo: China-Zentrum archives.

“What you want to ignite in others must burn within you” – these words, attributed to his favourite author, Saint Augustine, characterise Fr. Malek very well. The numerous expressions of condolence which were received in the Monumenta Serica Institute and at the China-Zentrum after his death are an impressive proof of how many people Fr. Malek guided, influenced and inspired in many ways worldwide. May his soul, as he always wished, free from all earthly fetters, now roam freely over Chinese lands.

R.I.P.

Reflections on the Sinicization of the Catholic Church in China

Li Jingxi

Introduction



Fr. Li Jingxi at the 10th European Catholic China Colloquium in Siegburg.
Photo: China-Zentrum archives.

The history of the growth of the Catholic Church in China went through a couple of major phases. Within every phase of the process of evangelization, those who spread the Gospel were all well aware of the importance of the idea of integration into the local situation for the establishment and development of the Church. Ten years after the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council (around 1975) the expression “inculturation” began to be used in all official documents of the Church.¹ Actually, within the language context of the Chinese culture, inculturation was also called “sinicization.”

In view of present day cultural pluralism and the rapid changes within society, how could the Catholic Church be sinicized? In this article the author will talk about some of his own considerations with regards to the sinicization (inculturation) of the Catholic Church. Hopefully these considerations can be of some benefit to the development of the Catholic Church in China.

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1 Zhong Mingdan 钟鸣旦 [Nicolas Standaert], translated by Chen Kuanwei 陈宽微, *Bendihua: tan fuyin yu wenhua* 本地化: 谈福音与文化, Shanghai: Guangqi chubanshe 2000 (see the preface).

I. Inculturation and Sinicization

Inculturation is an expression used by the Catholic Church in her missiological studies; it refers to a suitable way to propagate the Gospel in an area with a certain cultural background. Concretely speaking, inculturation refers to the question of the Gospel of Jesus Christ encountering another, completely different culture.² The Second Vatican Council, although not expressly using the term “inculturation,” nevertheless, by showing a quite open attitude towards every culture in the world and to every religion, surely is providing the Catholic Church with a fundamental and clear concept of inculturation.

The expression “inculturation” might have emerged quite late, but the essential idea of inculturation (its spiritual essence) as such did exist long before. In the New Testament it is mentioned that while St. Paul was preaching to the Greek philosophers in Athens, he told them that the “Unknown God” they were venerating was just the one he was going to introduce to them. Although St. Paul did not mention Jesus by name, he attracted those Greeks by using their language, their literature and symbols and by appreciating the positive value of their culture, and in this way was providing the right preconditions for the promulgation of the Gospel;³ this is clearly the first example of inculturation of the Gospel (cf. Acts 17:22-33). For the later history of the promulgation of faith in China, ample proof for the existence and the use of the concept of inculturation can be found within the work of evangelization and the realm of theological thinking. Fr. Jac Kuepers SVD (missiologist in Taiwan) believes that inculturation is not only an adaptation of the local Church on the surface with some technical changes to adjust to the situation, but it should begin from the center of the Church community itself, starting with a thorough process of repentance and cleansing of the total community and its complete life. Inculturation on one hand means to confirm the value of a certain culture and to identify oneself with it; on the other hand it should at the same time purify the negative sides by the light of the Gospel and upgrade the culture. In a word, inculturation brings about an encounter of Christian faith with the loftiest ideals of a certain culture.⁴

“Sinicization” – this expression appeared relatively late. By the end of the Qing Dynasty and the beginning of the Republic the missionaries were also using the term “sinicization,” but still were applying it in the sense of “inculturation.” Fr. Vincent Lebbe for example studied the Chinese language and got to understand the Chinese culture, he wrote Chinese characters with the brush, etc. Considering things from that level, it is appropriate to explain sinicization and inculturation from the mutual interchange and acceptance of culture. Cardinal Yu Pin once said: “China will have to be Christianized, Christ has to be sinicized.” Here it has to be stressed that the image of Christ has to be formed or a sinicized theology has to be established using the basic idea of truth, goodness and beauty in the

2 See Tan Lizhu 譚立铸, *Zai Zhongguo lun tianzhujiao* 在中国论天主教, Hongkong: Yuandao jiaoliu xuehui 2016, p. 133.

3 See Zhen Jianxiang 甄健湘 [Kin Sheung Chiaretto Yan], *Fuyin yushang Zhongguomeng: tianzhujiao zai Zhongguo de tiaozhan yu qianjing* 福音遇上中国梦: 天主教在中国的挑战与前景 [Evangelization in China: Challenges and Prospects], Hongkong: Yuandao jiaoliu xuehui 2016, p. 151.

4 Ke Boshi 柯博识 [Jac Kuepers], compiled by Lü Cihan 吕慈涵, *Fuchuan shenxue* 福传神学, Shanghai: Guangqi chubanshe 2005, p. 159.

Chinese culture. The author believes that, if we are spreading the Gospel with a language and culture generated from Chinese soil, then this is in itself an act of evangelizing the culture, it is sinicization.

Inculturation and sinicization have something in common and also something that distinguishes them from each other. What is common has been mentioned already above; when the Gospel is being propagated in the language context of the Chinese culture and elements of the local culture are being used to explain the Gospel and the religious doctrine, we may call it “sinicization.” What makes them differ from each other is that the term inculturation covers a wider scope, it can be applied to any culture including also the cultures of Latin America, Africa, Asia (like China, Japan, Korea, etc.) Inculturation has essentially a universal scope, while sinicization is basically limited to only one certain place and language context.

II. How is the Catholic Church being Sinicized?

How does the Catholic Church actually deal with sinicization? Where should she start from? Within a long stream of historical developments of the Catholic Church, the spirit of “sinicization” was always linked with the spreading of the Gospel and to a mutual cultural exchange; furthermore, it was widely used in various fields of thought and within the categories of arts. With regards to sinicization of the Catholic Church the author has, after thoroughly deliberating, come to view the process of sinicization under the following four aspects:

1. Sinicization of Theology

As early as during the Ming and Qing Dynasties there were missionaries from the West (like Matteo Ricci, Giulio Aleni, Alfonso Vagnoni, etc.) who clearly understood that if they were to succeed in the propagation of the faith, they had to have a good command of the Chinese language in order to proceed to a fluent and lively exchange with the Chinese people. At the same time they had to be familiar with the ancient books of the Chinese and be well-versed in the essence of the Chinese culture, be able to write theological books in Chinese and use thoughts from the Chinese tradition to express basic contents of the doctrine of the Church, this being the only way to successfully spread the Gospel, such as Matteo Ricci did with his *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven* (*Tianzhu shiyi* 天主實義, 1603), written in Chinese. From the Western missionaries we should learn their spirit of research and continue to explore what is true, good and beautiful in the cultural traditions and apply all these precious elements of the culture to the theological research and the doctrine of the Church. The deep thoughts of Western theology could, by way of properly being transferred into an understandable Chinese cultural context, make it possible to communicate the Christian truth, and by doing so establish a truly sinicized theology.

During the time of the Republic of China, Bishop Celso Costantini [from 1922 first Apostolic Delegate for China] paid special attention to an inculturated propagation of the Gospel. He put it this way:

The missionary is a disciple of Jesus Christ. It is not his vocation to transfer European culture to the mission area; his task is, rather, to prepare people, who may have a glorious culture of several thousand years, to accept and absorb the Christian way of life with its basic elements in a way that is suited to them. Every good and noble culture will easily and naturally assimilate the Christian way of life and draw sufficient strength from it to ensure a person's dignity and well-being. The local Catholic faithful should always feel like members of one Catholic family, like citizens of His Kingdom; because of this no one gives up his own homeland, he is still a citizen of his country.⁵

This sentence tells us clearly: Celso Costantini is not hoping that the missionary transfers the European culture into the local culture, but he is hoping that the Christian culture will meet the local culture and the Christian culture then will permeate and influence the local culture; finally the local culture surely will assimilate the Christian culture, or let us say, the local culture will finally be Christianized. Besides this we also may notice that Celso Costantini apparently wants to say: there is no contradiction between being a Chinese and being a Christian, he therefore corrected that absurd saying that “one more Christian means one Chinese less.”

Celso Costantini stresses that a real inculturation of the Gospel means to ground it totally and with all consequences. He requests us to follow the example of the old Western Church [during the time of the early Jesuit mission to China] by putting all efforts into it, to once more study carefully the essence of faith and truth and then present it in Chinese concepts from within the context of genuine Chinese thoughts.⁶ Actually, it does not really matter if these deliberations on inculturation were made by Matteo Ricci or by Celso Costantini or some other Western missionaries, an inculturation of theological thinking as such is worth studying and learning from.

However, if the sinicization of theology is only carried out by following the tradition as handed down, then that is not enough; we cannot avoid turning the focus of our theological thinking to the present day culture of China, because our life situation is based on our present world, our existing problems and our concrete circumstances, touching our life with its thoughts and beliefs. Let us just pay attention to and experience the current situation of the Chinese people, for example environmental pollution, smog, etc., we will then be able to produce some theological thinking with special Chinese characteristics and derive from it a truly sinicized theology. It is as Professor He Guanghu said about the principal problems when doing research on the “Sino-Christian Theology” (“Theology in Chinese Language”): for Chinese theology, when dealing with material on “survival experience” and “cultural resources,” there should be no limitation with regards to time and

5 Gu Weimin 顾卫民, *Zhongguo yu Luoma jiaoting guanxishi lue* 中国与罗马教廷关系史略, Beijing: Dongfang chubanshe 2000, pp. 154-155.

6 See Bulunuo Fabi'ao Biyoujing 布鲁诺·法比奥·毕友敬 [Bruno Fabio Pighin], translated by Jiang Guoxiong 江国雄, *Gang Hengyi shuji: yi wei chuanjiaoshi xinling (1876-1958)* 刚恒毅枢机: 一位传教士心灵 (1876-1958), Xinbei shi: Tianzhujiao Hengyi yuekanshe 2017, p. 80.

space, which means that the research should not be limited to the old times and exclude the present time, it should also not be limited to Mainland China and exclude overseas.⁷

2. Sinicization of the Church

With regards to promoting the process of inculturation of the Catholic Church in China, the contributions of Bishop Celso Costantini and Fr. Vincent Lebbe cannot go unnoticed. It could be put this way: The initiator of the inculturation of the Church is Fr. Vincent Lebbe, Archbishop Costantini, however, is the one who promoted the inculturation and completed it. Costantini surely was aware that if the Church of China was not administered by bishops who were from their native country, the Chinese Church would not be able to survive by herself and develop further. In order to implement the spirit of the Encyclica *Maximum Illud* of Pope Benedict XV., in 1926 Costantini himself took six Chinese priests to Rome and had them ordained as bishops personally by Pope Pius XI. From there on the real road of inculturation of the Chinese Church began, a sinicized Church was established. Costantini writes in his memoirs: “With the year 1926, the nomination and ordination of the first group of Chinese bishops, one phase of time came to an end, and another completely different phase of time began.”⁸

The Church is a community formed by people who believe in Christ, the Church has her own disciplinary and administrative system. After the Second Vatican Council the Church encouraged the faithful to actively participate in the affairs and the mission of the Church. The Chinese Church is not making an exception, she should let the faithful participate in the administration of the Church. Under the leadership of the clergy and the assistance of the lay faithful, all important matters of the Church will be, by way of democratic action and consulting and by pooling the wisdom for mutual benefit, properly handled in a joint effort. In this way the danger of having the priest in the administration of parish affairs “making all decisions on his own, without the faithful having any say in Church affairs at all” can be avoided. Presently the Chinese government is repeatedly stressing that people involved in religious affairs have their essential role in setting up a harmonious society. This kind of democratic view and harmony in the process of the development of the Church is of utmost importance. Characteristics like these are becoming the basic signs for the successful sinicization of the Church. Such a model of a sinicized management surely will in the future foster the process of sinicization of the Church.

3. Sinicization of Arts

Archbishop Celso Costantini not only played an important role in promoting the inculturation (sinicization) of the Church, he also stressed very much that the Catholic Church should play a leading role in the sinicization of arts. Besides studying theology, Celso Costantini was also very fond of painting pictures, he put a lot of effort into studying the

7 See Li Qiuling 李秋零 – Yang Xinan 杨熙楠 (eds.), *Xiandaixing, chuantong bianqian yu Hanyu shenxue (shang-bian)* 现代性、传统变迁与汉语神学 (上编) [Modernity, Transformation of Tradition and Sino-Christian Theology], Shanghai: Huadong shifan daxue chubanshe 2009, pp. 157-158.

8 Bulunuo Fabi'ao Biyoujing, *Gang Hengyi shuji: yi wei chuanjiaoshi xinling (1876-1958)*, p. 80.

history of fine arts. In order to promote the tradition of Chinese arts, in 1923 Celso Costantini wrote a letter to the superiors of two religious orders, where he stressed:

*China should have its own Christian tradition of fine arts, the missionaries should not imitate in China the art style of the Church they are coming from. The missionaries should attach special importance to the local culture and to the local art. The Catholic Church is called “Catholic” due to her surpassing all cultural specifics, so it can accept all elements of a certain local art.*⁹

In order to raise the quality of the religious personnel in the area of culture and arts, Costantini very positively supported the foundation of Fujen University in Beijing (1925), where later (1930) the department of Fine Arts was set up. The aim of Fujen University to set up a department of Fine Arts, was:

*To introduce the best spirit of science and literature of Western Europe and at the same time to preserve the best of the old Chinese traditional culture of literature and arts. Give up the Bad and choose the Good, don't let the prejudice win.*¹⁰

Costantini's thinking was extremely open, he put great effort into educating talents in the fine arts. He allowed Chen Yuandu, a non-Christian, to teach fine arts at Fujen University in Beijing and encouraged him to paint holy pictures in Chinese style. In 1932 Chen Yuandu received baptism from the hands of Archbishop Costantini, his patron saint was St. Luke.¹¹ The author thinks today's Chinese Catholic Church should follow the directives of Archbishop Costantini, try hard to discover and educate Chinese art talents and have them get engaged with studies of Chinese art, produce Chinese music, design Chinese architecture and draw paintings with Chinese elements and motifs: Chinese portraits (holy pictures), pieces of music in Chinese rhythm and sound (Masses), architectural structures in Chinese style (churches), and thus let the great dream of a sinicized Catholic art finally come true.

4. Sinicization of the Liturgy

The Catholic Church is a religion which attaches great importance to liturgy. The Church follows a liturgical year with various festival seasons. The Eucharist (Holy Mass) has its especially solemn liturgical celebration. While celebrating its liturgy the Church shows to the people the beauty of its communion and lets people be touched by its spiritual strength. China is a country that stresses ceremony. For different occasions there are different ceremonies. The author thinks that on certain feast days the liturgy of the Church could be combined with traditional Chinese festival ceremonies. For example, every year on the 2nd of November the Catholic Church celebrates “All Souls’ Day,” the day when one prays for the souls of deceased parents, friends and benefactors, offers Masses for

9 Lei Libo 雷立柏 [Leopold Leeb], *Wo de ling du: yi wei Aodili xuezhe de Beijing sui bi* 我的灵都: 一位奥地利学者的北京随笔 [De civitate inspirationis], Beijing: Xinxing chubanshe 2017, p. 206.

10 Liu Ping 刘平, *Zhongguo tianzhujiao yishu jianshi* 中国天主教艺术简史, Beijing: Zhongguo caifu chubanshe 2014, p. 287.

11 Bulunuo Fabi'ao Biyoujing, *Gang Hengyi shuji: yi wei chuanjiaoshi xinling (1876-1958)*, p. 80.

them and goes to the cemetery to perform a ceremony for their eternal rest. In China the people, following their traditional custom of Qingming Festival (Pure Brightness Festival or Tomb-sweeping Day), customarily go to the cemetery in order to *saomu* (sweep the tombs) with the main purpose of making an offering to the ancestors. The author believes that if the Christian faithful would choose the Qingming Festival to go to the cemetery to perform the commemorative ceremony for the deceased parents, relatives and friends (liturgy of perpetual rest), this also could be a most suitable choice (naturally, the common custom to go to the cemetery on the 2nd of November to pray, could also be maintained). In this way the liturgy of the Church and the traditional feast within the Chinese culture (ceremony) could become one unit, and thus even more efficiently embody the sinicization of the Catholic liturgy. In a word, on condition that the substance of Christian belief will not be changed, it should be tried as far as possible to bring the liturgy of the Church into line with the ceremonies of the Chinese tradition. In doing this, an era of sinicization of the liturgy would have come.

Concluding Remarks

A Christian philosopher of religion said: As long as the Church does not speak Chinese to communicate (the words and deeds of Jesus Christ) and is not accepting the Chinese culture, she has not fulfilled her universal mission yet.¹² Fr. François-Xavier Houang said, although the Western missionaries (from Matteo Ricci on) have for 400 years with tireless efforts spread the thinking of the Christian religion and its moral standards through all levels of the masses of the Chinese people, we still cannot say that what we proclaim is a real Catholic Church, because we are not yet able to completely use Chinese terminology to reflect on and communicate the truth of Christ.¹³ What he actually means is: If someone wants to establish a true Catholic Church, he has to rely on Chinese terms and elements from the Chinese culture to express the thinking of the Christian religion. Fr. Lu Zhengxiang confirms this when he says:

*The Chinese language is a kind of language that transfers meanings. The Chinese style and the way of thinking of the philosophers from East Asia are very suitable beautifully and accurately, as well as with incomparable richness, to express the thoughts and wisdom in the Old and New Testament.*¹⁴

It is evident that the Chinese culture and the Christian religion from the aspect of its content and thinking have very much in common. Therefore, the author is convinced that there is an urgent need to discuss and clarify the issue of sinicization of the Catholic Church.

The inculturation of the Church (sinicization) is the road of survival and growth of the Church in China, at the same time it is the basic request of the Second Vatican Council

12 See Huang Jiacheng 黄嘉城 [François-Xavier Houang], translated by Zhao Yanqing 赵燕清, *Zhongguoren de xinling jiduzongjiao* 中国人的心灵基督宗教, Taipei: Guangqi wenhua shiye 2013, p. 88.

13 *Ibid.*, p. 88.

14 *Ibid.*, pp. 98-99.

for the local Church to develop. The author is hoping that still more people will take part in the research work on the sinicization of the Catholic Church, in order to promote a healthy growth of the Catholic Church in China.

Inculturation of the Church in China: The Case of Taiwan

Batairwa Kubuya Paulin

Introduction



Fr. Batairwa Kubuya Paulin SX at the 10th European Catholic China Colloquium in Siegburg.
Photo: China-Zentrum archives.

Sitting on this panel and pondering on the inculturation of the Church in China evokes in me sentiments filled with honor and wonder. It is natural that both the Department of Religious Studies of Fu Jen Catholic University and the Conference of Bishops of Taiwan, the two institutions I am associated with, ponder seriously on issues related to the inculturation of the Church in the Chinese environment. I am aware that starting from the 1970s, inculturation has been one of the open battlegrounds for contextual theologies. Cohorts of scholars, theoreticians as well as pastoral leaders have striven to make Christianity a religion at home in the Taiwanese context. Their efforts unveil an undeniable awareness: Inculturation is a process co-natural to the proclamation of the Gospel because culture and context impact each other. The

preaching and the reception of the Gospel do not occur in a void, but rather in a context built up with cultural residues, categories and practices capable of conditioning the reception of the Gospel. Hence, inculturation is a necessity inherent in evangelization. As a

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result, neglecting the cultural dimension in the process of evangelization can be compared to welcoming a guest in a family while the hosting family members are absent. The guest remains at a loss for lack of components that would help his/her insertion and acquaintance with the milieu. Advocates of inculturation often attempt to downgrade portrayals of the Gospel, of Christianity and the Church to the level of perennial guests.

China, Hong Kong and Taipei are three geographical zones in the Church and Christian faith that are striving to take shape within the Chinese context. The merits of the present panel will consist in bringing forth the challenges and opportunities encountered in these specific zones and pondering on how they have shaped the kinds of inculturation attempts that have taken place in those zones.

As for my part, I will ponder on the situation of Taiwan, bearing in mind that the present panel is to focus on the “inculturation of the Church in China” and not on the general theme of the inculturation of the Gospel. I see in this nuance an invitation to an ecclesiology in context, illustrating the models of Church emerging in the various Chinese situations under consideration, and assessing the ability of those Churches to be at home within their respective milieus.

Needless to say, such an ecclesiology can only be fragmentary. It can't pretend to offer a comprehensive synthesis of endeavors of inculturation in China, nor claim to provide revolutionary novelties that would have the last word on the theology/ecclesiology of inculturation in China. Though a member of the present panel, I am also a learner, searching for answers to enigmas inherent to the dynamics of inculturating the Church in China. To this end, my inquiry will follow the following pattern: Which China? Which Church? And, how at home?

1. Which China?

Responses to how the Church is being inculturated in China can largely depend on one's conception of China. China presently represents a majestic country, renowned for its fast-growing economy and its expected impact in world politics.¹ The official image one gets of China today is that of a great nation of 1.3 billion people, rooted in thousands of years of history and tradition, and internally sharing one common vision. Close observations of this large picture, however, warn of the danger of speaking of China as a homogeneous reality. China is diverse and plural in many ways and for many reasons. Conceptions of what China is differ depending on ethnical, sociological, political, ideological and religious convictions. People with close contact to Chinese situations or immersed in its contexts are rather careful with generalizations about China. Moreover, they also refrain from claims of possessing an exhaustive and comprehensive understanding of present-day China. Instead of speaking of “China,” they prefer to dwell on particular situations within the Chinese context. To use Felix Wilfred's words, they are inclined to a fragmentary way;

1 www.youtube.com/watch?v=2B9t1hhhoCc.

that is, “a path to totality starting from fragments, from our experience and from our concerns.”²

I inscribed the question “which China?” in that methodological logic, not denying the existence of China as such, but concentrating in humility on Taiwan as the specific context in which I am immersed. Thus far, for Taiwanese Christians, the Republic of China – Taiwan has provided the Chinese context for the development of their locally inculturated Church. The Taiwanese environment has shaped their experience of being a local Church and defined the setting to ascertain it as a Church at home.

2. Which Church? The Local Church of Taiwan

The complexity mentioned about China as a specific locale impacts on the notion and reality of being an inculturated Church in Taiwan. To clarify further this observation, I would ponder on the following questions: Is the experience of being a local Church homogenous both in China and in Taiwan? Does the inculturation of the Church in these milieus encounter similar concerns? Has the Church provided homogenous answers? Or simply said, beyond the polemics of socio-political ideologies, to what extent can the Church of Taiwan be considered a Chinese Church?

I have elsewhere described the Church of Taiwan as a minority and yet influential Church.³ This was in function of the tiny numbers of converts and their evident impact and contribution to society. To that portrayal, I would add two main imminent challenges, namely ageing and shortage of personnel. Nonetheless, this Church has consistently remained Catholic – in full communion with the universal Church; sharing, receiving and being enriched by members from other countries. One might have heard of a witty caricature of the Catholic Church of Taiwan: the bishops are Taiwanese, the local priests are imported from surrounding countries (Vietnam, Philippines and Korea) and the Christians are Filipinos. Could this be the whole picture of the Taiwanese Church? Moreover, can such a description give space for any possible link between this local Church and the experience of being a Church in general in China? The larger picture of the Taiwanese Church is in fact related and intertwined with the history of Taiwan as such.

Speaking of direct or indirect implications of China on the experience of being a Church in Taiwan, I will mention three historical events that have had an enduring impact on the Taiwanese Church. The first is the conquest of Taiwan by Zheng Chenggong (Koxinga). It led to the extinction of the first efforts of evangelization of Taiwan and paved the way to the introduction of deities and divinities at the core of popular religion in Taiwan. The second is the influx of Christians and religious institutions following the debacle of the troops of the Kuomintang (KMT) from 1949 on. And last, is the call and mission Pope John Paul II assigned to Taiwan in the 1980s, calling on the Taiwanese Church to serve as a bridge Church to China.

2 Felix Wilfred, “Jesus-Interpretation in Asia: Some Fragmentary Reflections on Fragments,” in: *Quest* 5 (May 2006) 1, p. 3.

3 Batairwa Kubuya Paulin, “The Dialogic Dimension of Catholic Engagement in Taiwan,” in: *Ching Feng, New Series* 11 (2012) 2, p. 148.

a. Zheng Chenggong's Lasting Impact on Taiwanese Catholicism

Till the sixteenth century, animism and shamanism constituted the only forms of religions known and practiced by the dwellers of the Island. The first marks of another religion occurred at the beginning of the 17th Century, when Spanish (Catholic 1623) and Dutch (Protestant 1626) missionaries brought Christianity to the Island. Those first missionary efforts were brought to end by Zheng Chenggong (Koxinga) – a Chinese Ming loyalist who captured Taiwan from the Dutch in 1661. Seen from a religious perspective, Zheng's endeavour was more than a political or military victory. It channelled the popular religious culture of Southeast China on the Island. Chinese migrants, mostly from Fujian and Guangdong, brought their local cults, ancestral shrines and kinship gods. Legends of prominent deities such as Goddess Mazu, Guanggong and Wang Ye (Royal Lords) were incorporated in the story of the conquest and made part of the daily life of the settlement. These folk religions set the background against which Christianity was reintroduced in the 19th century (Catholicism in 1859 and Presbyterianism in 1865). As a consequence, Christianity could only spread among minority groups, especially the Aborigines. From then on, these religions were part of the obstacles which the evangelizing activity of the Church had to cope with. Further, worldviews of other traditions, such as Buddhism, Daoism, Islam and other New Religious Movements – founded inside of Taiwan or brought in from surrounding countries –, came in and were blended into the daily life of the people. Consequently, to be a wise and well-inserted Catholic today in Taiwan, one must adequately engage and interact with the practitioners of those religions from the recesses of his/her faith. They shape the convictions and psyche of the people, including Catholics.⁴

b. The “Local Church” in the Aftermath of the KMT's Retreat to Taiwan

The retreat of the KMT troops to Taiwan brought a tremendous impact on the development and self-awareness of the Church in Taiwan. The KMT troops brought along numbers of clergy, missionaries and lay people, who could not stand the prevailing communist and atheistic ideology that Mao Zedong was spreading over China. Their arrival increased Church personnel and wealth, diversified the types of missionary presences and approaches, and resulted in a sudden increase of believers.⁵ It also occasioned a mushrooming of parishes and Church institutions between the 1950s and the 1960s. The outcome was tremendous and complex. San Roman, a Dominican historian, in his history of the Catholic Church in Taiwan, narrated the development of the Church till 1949.⁶ When I inquired why he did not include the later development, he answered that what occurred after 1949 was too complex to account for. Unfortunately, current self-evaluation of the

4 See Batairwa K. Paulin (Bao Lin 鮑霖), “Faith Horizon of Taiwanese Lay Catholics,” in: *Xin shiji zongjiao yanjiu* 新世紀宗教研究 13 (2015) 3, p. 95.

5 See M.C. Chang, “The Internal Development of the Taiwanese Church: 1950s–1960s,” in: Francis K.H. So – Beatrice K.F. Leung – Mary Ellen Mylod (eds.), *The Catholic Church in Taiwan: Problems and Prospects*, Singapore: Palgrave MacMillan 2018, pp. 28-29.

6 For a concise history of the Catholic Church in Taiwan see www.catholic.org.tw/dominicanfamily/taiwan_history_english.htm (accessed on July 15, 2019).

Taiwanese Church refers nostalgically to that sporadic growth, forgetting its uncommon nature.

Nonetheless, that period also had its own challenges to reckon with: It introduced particular concerns of the Chinese Church to Taiwan. It took time for a number of Catholics (Mainlanders) to feel at home in Taiwan. They were guests in Taiwan, who shared the dream of returning home as soon as the KMT would re-establish its sovereignty over China. For some of them, their presence in Taiwan was only transient, and, though they would invest in Taiwan, the mental framework would still be that of a Chinese Church in displacement and waiting to return to the Motherland. In other words, it was a kind of a Church in captivity yearning to regain its freedom. Still, while in captivity, it also helped establish the structure of the Taiwanese Church.⁷ To accommodate the bishops who had come from China, Taiwan was organized into seven dioceses, and Mazu and Kinmen as two apostolic vicariates. Moreover, the concerns of the Chinese bishops and Christians were imported to Taiwan. For instance, to foster a Catholic version of the Three Selves,⁸ Archbishop Antonio Riberi, the envoy of the Holy See, created the Chinese Church Hierarchy in April 1946.⁹ Unfortunately, it was a short-lived organization there. Riberi was expelled from Mainland China and moved to Taipei in 1952. With this shift, Taipei would enter history since Riberi would seek ways to re-establish the Catholic Central Bureau, a precursor of the actual Chinese Regional Bishops' Conference. All of a sudden, Taiwan (Taipei) became the center where diverse powers were at stake. Since the arrival of Dominican missionaries, aspirations and claims of the Three-Self Movement have not been heard of in Taiwan. Now the criteria and strategies for the establishment of a local ecclesiastical structure would be discussed and implemented from here. These strategies concerned the entire China, because Taiwan supposedly offered the freedom from control of any political power.

Further discussions regarding the extent to which the Church could implement the strategies could be identified with the Taiwanese Church. On one hand, the timing offered Taiwan a chance to be counted and considered as the center of ecclesiastical power and decision making for the entire China, but on the other hand, some of its specific needs

7 Beatrice K.F. Leung, "The Introduction," in: Francis K.H. So – Beatrice K.F. Leung – Mary Ellen Mylod (eds.), *The Catholic Church in Taiwan: Problems and Prospects*, Singapore: Palgrave MacMillan 2018, p. 4.

8 Towards the end of the 19th Century, the wave of colonialism which spread into mission territories brought along a sense of nationalism – an increase and aggravation of paternalism, doubled with condescendence of missionaries, acted as a slow poison of the relationship between the missionaries and their local collaborators. To curb the sentiments emerging from such a context, Henry Venn (1796–1873, Anglican, Church Missionary Society) and Rufus Anderson (1796–1880, Congregationalist, American Board) prompted the three self- policy as a strategy of indigenization capable of constraining the extreme paternalism with which Western missionaries were managing the churches in mission territories in the early 19th Century. To achieve maturity, indigenous churches had to be self-governing, self-financing and self-propagating. The policy re-emerges at the Edinburgh Mission Conference in 1910 to answer the discontent and frustration the seventeen Asian indigenous leaders were bringing to the surface. The Three Selves became largely the policy adopted to foster indigenous Churches in Asia. With its assertion of self-determination and independence it was very appealing to the independent and anti-colonial movements. Some current appropriation of the three-self policy by local and national authorities lead to the creation of patriotic associations and Church organizations.

9 This was a great achievement since the suitability of erecting a Chinese ecclesiastical hierarchy ranked among the priorities of the Synod of Shanghai in 1851. See A. Thomas, *Histoire de la mission de Peking*, Vol. 2, *Depuis l'arrivée des Lazaristes jusqu'à la révolte des boxeurs (1785–1900)*, Paris: Louis Michaud 1925, p. 322.

might have been overlooked: issues related to ancestor veneration and the efforts of inculturation of the local Church in general. First, regarding ancestor veneration – the Dominicans, first evangelizers of Taiwan, had taken a radical position which completely ignored the problem. In fact, converts were simply asked to surrender their ancestor tablets and cut clear from their traditions. Jesuits and other missionaries who came after 1949 had a different approach. They were more accommodating and their position later on found a great support in the contextualized practice of *jitian jingzu* 祭天敬祖 (worship Heaven, venerate ancestors) formula prompted by Cardinal Paul Yu Pin and Archbishop Stanislas Lo Kuang. Both Church leaders believed this formulation to be the most fit Christian rendering of the two dimensions of Chinese filial piety.¹⁰ Accordingly, God is worshiped, because He alone is God, and ancestors are venerated as sign of gratitude and due respect for transmitting life to the progeny.

The second example is about inculturation. Generally speaking, one observes that the main point of reference and recipient group were the Han people and their cultures with less attention being given to other groups. It is the case with the formula of *huitong* 會通 – or conciliation between Christianity and Chinese culture, religion and worldviews. In most cases, the parameters considered in that conciliation were mostly about the Han people, and the archetypes of Confucian values. When Yu Pin, Lo Kuang, and even the erudite Wu Jingxiong, spoke of sinicizing Christianity and Christianizing China, their reflections remained within a Han Confucian framework. Similarly, the assimilation of “Chineseness” with the Han culture went as far as identifying Chinese with the language of an inculturated theology in the Chinese context. The policy of *Shenxue lunji* 神學論集, the journal of the Faculty of Theology of Fu Jen University, is just an example.¹¹ In all these instances, the other groups, mostly the Aborigines, who yet constituted the majority of converts before 1949 did not come to the surface. It took up to the third millennium to launch a journal for indigenous theology, concerned with issues of the inculturation of the Gospel among the Aborigines and highlighting different dynamics encountered by Aborigines in the reception of the Gospel. Unlike the previous types of inculturation fostered by Han people and for the Han people, the protagonists in the establishment of inculturated churches and theologies among the Aborigines have been missionaries (Maryknoll, MEP, Bethlehemites and Jesuits). Their efforts, put together, display a diversity of models of inculturation and Church in Taiwan.

c. Taiwanese Church: A Bridge Church

Another aspect of the experience of being an incarnate Church in Taiwan came from the call and mission Pope John Paul II assigned to Taiwan in the 1980s.¹² He called on the

10 See Paulin Batairwa, *Meaning and Controversy within Chinese Ancestor Religion*, Switzerland: Palgrave MacMillan 2018, pp. 130-134.

11 See M.H.L. Wang and B.K.F. Leung, “The Taiwan Catholic Church and the Indigenization Movement,” in: Francis K.H. So – Beatrice K.F. Leung – Mary Ellen Mylod (eds.), *The Catholic Church in Taiwan: Problems and Prospects*, pp. 59-69.

12 Pope John Paul II assigned that mission to the Taiwanese bishops during their special visit to the Vatican in February 1984. See B.K.F. Leung – W.-B. Kuo, “Taiwan Catholic Bishops and the Bridging Endeavor: Origins

Taiwanese Church and its Christians to serve as a bridge Church to those in China. The local Church should not content itself with its achievements but has the responsibility of reaching out and providing for the other Chinese Church across the straits. For that end, the Regional Bishops' Conference of Taiwan created a commission, headed by Bishop Bosco Lin. The commission organized several programs and outreach activities to support efforts of evangelization and catechesis. It worked with Caritas and encouraged those congregations who had communities in the Mainland to collaborate. They strove to send in books and material for liturgies. Where possible, they helped rebuild churches. The most important work of the bridge Church was to help Christianity and the Catholic Church in China to establish a link with the outside world and the universal Church.¹³ With accessibility to information and increase of flow of information and movement, the role of that commission seems more and more outdated. There are even sentiments of fear within some local congregations that a renewed enthusiasm for China – a “China fever” among missionaries – might deplete Taiwan of its taskforces. Whether that fear be founded or not, it remains true that the call of the Pope did help the local Church share and express a kind of concern of unity and sympathy for the sister Church of China. Moreover, today, though not strictly connected to the original idea of bridge Church, the Faculty of Theology of St. Bellarmine – Fu Jen Catholic University has been hosting priests and sisters from China and providing for their theological formation. The bridge has become a two-way street because it is not just Taiwan that reaches out to China, but also the Mainland which comes across to Taiwan, creating another unspoken type of an inculturated Chinese Church. Overall, though, the bridging mission has helped the Taiwanese Church to also fulfill its Catholic vocation, that is, a Church here and there, not only receiving and taking root but also sharing.

3. A Church at Home?

Inculturation, in my simplified understanding, is the process by which Christianity becomes a Church at home. When that occurs, Christians are no longer taken for an estranged community, a group of people alienated from its roots because of their religious practices and convictions or believed to be the running dogs of a foreign ideology. A Church at home uses the recesses of its tradition to express its convictions and celebrate that *homeness*. To what extent can the Taiwanese Church be considered a Church at home? There are several indications by which we can ascertain the attempts of the Taiwanese Church to be a Church at home. I would reiterate that diversity remains the emerging characteristic of that “at homeness” and this factor can be observed in terms of leadership, theology, liturgy and sacred art.

and Development,” in: Francis K.H. So – Beatrice K.F. Leung – Mary Ellen Mylod (eds.), *The Catholic Church in Taiwan: Birth, Growth and Development*, Singapore: Palgrave MacMillan 2018, p. 135.

13 For a concise record of the aid of the Bridge Church to the Mainland, see B.K.F. Leung – W.-B. Kuo, “Taiwan Catholic Bishops and the Bridging Endeavor: Origins and Development,” pp. 143-145.

a. Leadership

As a continuation of the process of localizing/indigenizing the Church mentioned earlier, the heads of the seven dioceses of Taiwan today were chosen from the local clergy. In fact, I recall the comment of a senior Presbyterian pastor, who looking at the composition of the present Catholic hierarchy, praised the Catholic Church for displaying a recognition and affirmation of Taiwan. The comment was made in contrast with the past, when he believed the Roman Catholic Church was headed by Chinese leaders, less rooted in the Taiwanese context. He furthermore praised the renaming of the Bishops' Conference as Taiwan Regional Bishops' Conference (Taiwan diqu zhujiaotuan 臺灣地區主教團).

The present observation, however, should not mislead one to think that all aspects and dimensions of leadership and authority in the Taiwanese Church are by Taiwanese. This is not the case in the religious congregations and even within the structures and services of the local Church, wherein positions and appointments are regulated on the basis of needs, competence and availability. Still, for administrative convenience, it is preferable that a Church organization or institution be headed by a native. And above all, it is crucial for all authorities to abide by the spirit of Catholicity fostered by the representative of the Holy See.

b. Theology

Concern for a Church at home gave rise to reflection on issues of inculturation.¹⁴ I have commented earlier how in the first stage those efforts focused on the Han culture. Now the journal for indigenous theology, which focuses on the Aborigines, is diversifying theological reflection and responding to the fact that Aborigine communities constitute the majority of Taiwanese Catholics. From a pastoral and catechetical perspective, besides the handy presentation of the catechesis of the Catholic Church – as that provided by Mark Fang – one also finds a guide to faith which takes into account the Chinese and scientific background of the Catechumen. Lefevre's *Yishanmen* 一閃門 is an attempt to lead the faith seeker while taking into account his or her Chinese and scientific background. Moreover, taking into account the many religious neighbors of Taiwanese Catholics and the challenges and opportunities that cohabitation brings about, further theological reflections should ponder on a theology of neighborhood. Such a theology will address the questions that the other religions are asking us, and which might impact our sentiment of being at home.

c. Liturgy

Liturgy is the manifest place where integration is felt. Generally speaking, Taiwanese liturgy is very Roman. One could say that the Roman Rite is normative. However, there are instances and areas where one can notice differences. Preparation for the sacrament of marriage has provisions to accommodate the needs of non-Christian spouses. In case of

14 See in particular the concise assessment of theological reflection on inculturation by Aloysius Chang SJ, "The Inculturation of Theology in the Chinese Church," in: *Gregorianum* 63 (1982) 1.

a mixed marriage, the non-baptized spouse is at least aware of the meaning and implications of the sacrament. Moreover, there are more specific accommodations made in the areas of funerals and remembrance of the dead. These were made to provide Catholic alternatives to current practices. For instance, in Aborigine communities, the Church has kept the tradition according to which all matters related to funeral and mourning are held at home. For the Han Chinese, the celebration of funerals includes rites of placing the corpse in the coffin (*rulian* 入殮), blessing of the urn for the ashes, placement of the urn in the columbarium and the seven commended masses (*qiqi* 七七). General commemorations and prayers for the dead are held in November, following the Catholic tradition, on Chinese New Year, around Tomb Sweeping Day and during the Seventh Month of the Lunar Calendar. All these additions are helpful alternatives for a Catholic accommodation in his or her religious and cultural milieu.

The inculturation of liturgy is only possible within the context of a Church at home. For it presupposes that Christians are both aware of the richness of their cultures and traditions and their potential contribution to the enrichment of the Christian faith. It also assumes that Christians can find the best expressions that can make Christian mysteries resonate with the local environment and into local practices. It also considers Christians as knowledgeable of the confines of orthodoxy and the demarcating lines defining and protecting the Christian faith. Would they be called to negotiate and compromise, they would know which rules to set and which priorities to claim.¹⁵

d. Sacred Art

Sacred art is another area for displaying the at homeness of the local Church. The Church can be considered at home when the faith it proclaims is assumed in the artistic imagination of the believers. Again, in this aspect, complexity and diversity are the characteristics of the Taiwanese Church. Conservative voices are faithful to models transplanted from the West in terms of church architecture and artistic presentations. Adherents and protectors of those models have a hard time imagining a portrayal of Christianity within Chinese artistic tones. In many cases, the fear is that the incorporation of a Chinese motive would remind them of the popular religions which they left in converting to the Catholic faith. Such consideration goes as far as the adaptation of incense. They would adamantly refute the introduction and the usage of Chinese incense in the liturgy and stick to the liturgical vessels and ornaments used in the Latin Rite. They find pride in the classification of Christianity as a Western religion and would not take any risk in modeling it or adapting it to local realities. Promoters of Church at home have not embraced such a path. They have ventured to mix ideas and views of Christianity with local traditions. One finds models of churches architecturally inspired from Chinese houses and temples. Archbishop Lo Kuang for instance conceived the Cathedral of Tainan following the model of the Temple of Heaven in Beijing. In the same way, one finds liturgical vestments designed or decorat-

15 In a similar reflection regarding the attitudes of Chinese Protestants and their efforts of answering demands of their cultures, I argued that they were doubly heirs who needed to struggle for a balance of their cultural and religious heritage. See Paulin Batairwa, "Conversion as Negotiation: Chinese Protestant Responses to Ancestor Related Practices," in: *Asia Journal of Theology* 28 (April 2014) 1, pp. 119-136.

ed with local motives. Churches built by the Disciples of Lord Jesus (CDD) founded by Fr. Vincent Lebbe, generally carry a Chinese inspired model. As far as church architecture is concerned, there are also churches in Aborigine communities designed and decorated in accordance to their cultural tastes. The incorporation of local art and design convey the capacity of the local culture to receive and transmit Christian values and ideas. When and where such an incorporation occurs, it also contributes to the domestication of the Church.

Conclusive Summary

The establishment of a Church at home requires a process irreducible to setting up physical structures or imposing how to manage those structures. An inculturated Church can only emerge as the outcome of an organic process, wherein the Catholic faith and ideals are brought into interaction with the challenges and aspirations of the contexts of the believers. The Chinese context wherein the Church intends to be inserted and inculturated is complex and particular. To accept the inculturation of the Church as an organic process is also to acknowledge that it cannot be an easy way. Growth entails a continuous regeneration, with some entities dying so to give life to newness. The encroachment of the founding values of the Church and local context must proceed through a purification and trimming. At times the process might be painful, but necessary. Without it the mutual enrichment between Gospel values and local cultures and contexts would never materialize. Finally, in crafting that living fusion of values and richness, the process must always seek for a balance wherein diverse kinds of fidelity are at play: fidelity to the Christian views and to the Catholicity of the Church, which implies both collegiality (universality) and contextuality/locality.

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