

Step by Step, Steady, and Forward

I began the social scientific study of religion in China in the year 2000, when I, along with some assistants, conducted participant observations and interviews about Christian ethics in the market transition. Only 13 years later, my efforts in empirical research, theoretical exploration, and promotion of the social scientific study of religion in China have been recognized by fellow social scientists of religion worldwide. In summer 2013, I was elected the President of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (SSSR). Established in 1949 in the United States, the SSSR members include scholars in North America, Europe, Asia, and South America in the disciplines and fields of sociology, political science, psychology, economics, religious studies, international relations, gender studies, etc. Former Presidents include such renowned scholars as Talcott Parsons, Peter L. Berger, and Rodney Stark. This is the first time a Chinese scholar has received such an honor, marking the rise of research on Chinese religions in global academia. I hope to see more Chinese scholars and Asian scholars join this international association and prepare to participate in the 2015 annual meeting of SSSR (October 23-25 in Newport Beach near Los Angeles) under my presidency.



In the last three years, our Center has organized the Chinese Spirituality and Society Program (CSSP), which includes 16 empirical research projects on various religions in China. Through the CSSP Summer Institute for Teaching and Research Workshops, we have also introduced the latest developments in theory, research methods, and pedagogy in the social scientific study of religion. The final conference of CSSP was held in July 2013 at the Chinese University of Hong Kong as part of the 10th Annual Conference of the Social Scientific Study of Religion in China. This issue of the newsletter presents several summaries and reflections on various aspects of CSSP.

In response to the rapid development of the social scientific study of religion in China and the need for rising young scholars, we have planned, with generous support from Purdue's College of Liberal Arts and Department of Sociology, to launch a new journal in English, *Review of Religion and Chinese Society*, to be published by Brill. The first issue is scheduled to be out in spring 2014 and will include an exclusive interview with Robert Bellah which was done right before his sudden death in July 2013, and excellent articles by Richard Madsen, Robert Weller, and other scholars. We welcome your submission of manuscripts at www.brill.com/racs.

Let us strive together, step by step, steady, and forward!

We wish you a Merry Christmas!

Fenggang Yang

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Review of the 10th Annual Conference of the Social Scientific Study of Religion in China and Chinese Spirituality and Society Program Final Conference

The 10th Annual Conference of the Social Scientific Study of Religion in China and the Chinese Spirituality and Society Program Final Conference was held in Hong Kong from July 10 -14, 2013. The theme of this year's conference was "Religion, Spiritual Capital, and Civil Society," and it attracted more than 100 scholars from mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, the Middle East, Europe, and North America. More than 80 scholars presented papers. Presentation topics covered politics and religion, culture and religion, religion and civil society, faith among college students, modern transformation of folk religion, religious issues and problems in mainstream discourse, spiritual capital and religious market, market and identity, historical studies of religion, theories of spirituality and spiritual capital, psychology of religion, and fieldwork and historical studies of Confucianism. Among all the presentations, 16 of them were sponsored by the Chinese Spirituality and Society Program. The conference also featured keynote presentations delivered by Richard Madsen (University of California, San Diego) and Robert Weller (Boston University).



The 16 presentations of the Chinese Spirituality and Society Program were the highlight of the conference. Research sites for these projects extended from cosmopolitan areas such as Beijing, Shanghai, Wenzhou, the Yangtze Delta area, Fuzhou, Hong Kong, and Taiwan to inland rural areas including Heilongjiang, Northern China, Henan, and Ningxia. The religions studied included institutionalized religions such as Catholicism, Protestantism, and Islam, as well as folk and traditional religions. In terms of research concentration, religion and civil society was the hot topic. Zhidong Hao from Macau University presented a study on civic engagement and civic activism of the Catholic Church in Hong Kong, Macau, Taipei, and Shanghai. His study found that the Catholic Church in Hong Kong, Macau, and Taipei participated more actively in social services than did the dioceses in Shanghai. However, in terms of civic activism, Hong Kong outperformed the other three cities. Fuk-Tsang Ying from The Chinese University of Hong Kong discussed four types of relationships between church and civil community through a case study of a Beijing Protestant church. Zhifeng Zhong from Baylor University also used Beijing for his fieldwork in which he compared and analyzed the social engagement of Christian businessmen and lawyers. Qiangqiang Luo from Ningxia University talked about the role Islam played in the Hui peasants' protest. Based on case studies of three folk religion temples in Hunan province, Bin Chen from Hunan Normal University attempted to answer the question of whether folk religion helps construct civil society. He concluded that folk religion is the "seedling" of civil society but far from mature in form. Ying Wang from Henan University of Economics and Law discussed the role of Chinese religion in building civic culture.

The other popular topic for the 16 project reports were religious economics and the market theory of religion. Heng Han from Zhengzhou University studied the networks and patterns of Christian converts in a rural community in Henan province as well as discussed the conversion proposition in the religion economy theory. Fengtian Zheng from Renmin University used survey data to analyze the intergenerational transmission of beliefs to convince the audience that the generational chain effect has led to the religious boom phenomenon in Chinese rural areas. Shangyang Sun of



Peking University studied the Christian conversion of Beijing college students. Using theories of social capital, Zhihui Fan of Heilongjiang University conducted a study of the religious gray market of a village in Heilongjiang. Fang Liu of the Shanghai University of Political Science and Law applied the market theory of religion to his study of the Catholic Church in Northern Chinese villages.

Religion and entrepreneurship received equal attention from the researchers. Yi Zhou of Fudan University used survey data to study the relationship between charitable donations and religious beliefs among entrepreneurs in Wenzhou. Mantang Gan of Fuzhou University analyzed the differential impact of traditional religion and Christianity on entrepreneurship.

The Chinese Spirituality and Society Program also included other topics. Based on a survey done in China's Yangtze River Delta region, Xiangping Li of Eastern China Normal University attempted to trace patterns of divinity-humanity relations in contemporary Chinese religious beliefs. Wen Fang from Peking University compared religious believers and non-believers' bias maps using a psychological experiment. Jin Li from Calvin College proposed that the processes of diversification and re-organization of urban house churches can be explained by a market differentiation model, based on a comparative study of Protestant house churches in urban China.



The conference also arranged two keynote presentations. Richard Madsen of the University of California, San Diego, proposed emphasizing the social attributes of Chinese religions. He suggested that religions in China emphasize belonging more than belief. Professor Madsen argued that belonging is religious but belief is secular. To conclude the conference, Robert Weller of Boston University spoke on pluralism. He argued that people construct identity and ego in society by differentiating from others through memory, mimesis, and metaphor.



This conference was co-organized by the Centre for the Study of Religion and Chinese Society, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, the Center of Religion and Society at Eastern China Normal University, and the College of Social Science at Hong Kong University. The event was co-sponsored by 11 other research institutes from mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau.



Chinese Spirituality and Society Program Final Conference Group Photo

A discourse on the research on religion and society

LI Xiangping
East China Normal University



The social scientific study of religion was once generally marginal in Chinese religious studies. But gradually it has become a major force, now one of the triune fields in religious studies, along with the philosophy/theology of religion and the humanities study of religion.

Professor Fenggang Yang and his Center on Religion and Chinese Society at Purdue University continue to push forward the scientific study of religion in China. They have developed a distinct expertise and consciousness in the social scientific study of religion, focusing on investigating the role of religion in China's changing society.

Accordingly, the Center on Religion and Chinese Society have organized 16 "Chinese religion and society research projects" in the past three years. These projects draw on perspectives from different disciplines to study Chinese Protestantism, Catholicism, Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, and folk religions, along with their relationship to social theory. The Center on Religion and Chinese Society at Purdue University has hosted three workshops on Chinese religion based on these projects, each lasting a month; they included discussing and lecturing on various issues pertaining to Chinese religion and society. These workshops have become an important source of support for the research projects.



Professor Yang invited prestigious scholars in religious studies, social science of religion, and sociology of religion from both China and abroad to integrate the workshop and research into a single string. Each investigator considered his or her research questions in light of other perspectives, leading to important breakthroughs on the international academic front.



In terms of academic fields, the workshops included religion and American politics, religion and civil society, religion and politics, and the spatial study of Chinese religions. They employed concepts such as spiritual capital, religious beliefs, religious attitudes, religious psychology, religious behavior, and religious politics, among others. The workshops covered not only academic exploration, but also practical problems from the research frontiers of sociology of religion and social sciences.

Based on the discussion of the above-mentioned theories, participants incorporated approaches from the social scientific study of religion to deal with contemporary China's social changes. The participants operationalized various concepts to make them measurable for real world research in China.

Of special note is that participant scholars openly exchanged their viewpoints, interests, and expertise, leading to impassioned discussion. Surely this workshop on Chinese society and religion has benefited from the open exploration of theories and has enabled further exploration on China's religions along with meaningful discourse on religious studies.

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I was honored, as the director of the Center of Religion and Society Research at Eastern China Normal University, after several rounds of anonymous evaluation, to receive a grant for the only non-individual project among this series of research projects. Our project is entitled “Current Belief and the Religious Situation in the Yangtze Delta.” The core notion of our research is beliefs about the human-god relationship; we are covering this issue for the five major institutional religions and other folk beliefs in China, and we are also expanding to other related areas about belief and religion. Therefore, we are able to overcome a key shortcoming of previous studies of religion in China, which is relying either on institutional religions or folk beliefs. We use a broader methodological perspective to investigate contemporary China’s faith types and relationships.



Yangtze Delta

Our survey not only provides the context for patterns of practice for the five major religions in the Yangtze Delta, but also reveals their characteristics in relation to contemporary social identity. We compare the different religions to investigate their similarities and differences so as to better understand their complicated relationships.

Among this survey’s 3000 participants, 932 (31.1%) had explicit religious identification, the largest component being Buddhist (823, 27.43%); followed by Protestant (81, 2.7%); Catholic (9, 0.23%); and Daoist (7, 0.23%). Atheists comprised 1143 respondents (38.1%); casual Buddhists without explicit faith accounted for 17.83%; other faiths accounted for 0.7% (21 respondents); and 369 people claimed no particular faith (12.3%). (Li(ed.) 2012: *China Faith Research*. 2nd edition, Shanghai Renmin Publisher).

Our study shows that religious expression and faith in contemporary China are situated both within institutional religion and within the interaction of social change, economics, and politics beyond the existing religious institutions. They have constituted the variety of morphology of religious and faith constructions. Based on this foundation of religious practice at the social level, we are able to understand the logic of religious practice in China without the arbitrary limits of previous studies.

Based on this project, the Center of Religion and Society Research at Eastern China Normal University trained a group to start the Forum on the Chinese Religions and a website on the study of religions (www.chinabeliefs.org). We have edited the series, *Studies of Chinese Religions* (now three volumes), published articles including, “Believe But Not Identify: Sociological Explanation on Contemporary Chinese Faith,” and “Review of China’s Sociology of Faith.” We are trying to establish a sociological framework of faith studies based on new developments in global academics such as the concept of the sociology of spirituality.

Three years is not a long time, but our project has reached great depth. The intensive sharing of knowledge through discussion and brainstorming in the workshop has benefited every participant. Because of this, the lectures represent the academic credo of “religion has a context; methodology can come across contexts.” This credo requires every scholar and project investigator to go beyond the context of his or her religious belief to comprehend different levels of meanings and to build up fruitful research using universally-recognized, rigorous methods.

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Sixteen projects have been conducted as scheduled and have achieved important findings during the three-year Chinese Spirituality and Society program. Without a doubt, this is a marvelous beginning and a milestone in China's social science of religion. It is hoped that the deeper influence of religion in the contemporary changing society of China will gradually manifest the transcendental values of this series of research projects. As investigators for these projects, we deeply feel that the social scientific study of religion, as a universal scientific enterprise, has a consistent belief that started as early as Max Weber's value neutrality: the pursuit of scientific methods and universal academic norms. Based on this pursuit, we hope to comprehend religious issues in different countries, societies, and ideologies beyond parochial limits, and to push religious studies, sociology of religion, and social science of religion to a higher scholarly level.

A reflection on the three-year project

Zhidong Hao
University of Macau



Our project on Catholicism and its civic engagement in Hong Kong, Macau, Taipei, and Shanghai, for which I was lead investigator, has come to an end. We found varying levels of civic engagement of the Catholic Church in Hong Kong, Macau, Taipei, and Shanghai. Our research led us to classify civic engagement into two parts: civic services and civic activism (called civic action in Hong Kong). Civic services included services in areas such as education, health care, elderly care, etc. These areas are comprehensively developed in Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan, but quite immature in Shanghai. This is in stark contrast to Shanghai before 1949, when Catholic schools and health institutions were prevalent. But in contemporary Shanghai, these independent Catholic institutions are restricted. In terms of civic activism, the Catholic Church in Hong Kong has been particularly outspoken in democracy movements, while the Church's activism in Shanghai, Macau, and Taipei is more tacit. This lack of activism is understandable for mainland China, but we needed to explore reasons for this lack in Taipei and Macau.

Therefore, we conducted a survey and in-depth interviews and found that the factors that influence levels of Catholic civic engagement in these four cities were a combination of political, cultural, and individual opportunities and choices. The Catholic Church in Shanghai is bound by political constraints, but why is there low civic engagement in Taiwan and Macau? We found that cultural factors play an important role in the civic engagement of the Catholic Church. Chinese culture emphasizes inner development, along with hierarchy and order, which are similar to Catholic culture. This may affect the civic engagement of the Catholic Church. The interpretation of the Vatican II Council in the four cities has also influenced the amount of civic activism. Surprisingly, recent social movements in Taiwan seem to have had little impact on the civic activism of the Catholic Church. We also took individual-level factors into consideration in our analysis. Indeed, we found that the clergy's attitude toward civic engagement, especially bishops, directly influenced the Church's civic engagement in that area. In the case of Hong Kong, this is a powerful explanatory factor that explains why the Church there outperforms those in the other three cities.

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Indeed, political, cultural, and individual factors are all important, and these three factors intertwine to influence the different levels of civic engagement of the Catholic Church in these four cities. Thus, we proposed an integrative model for political, cultural, and individual opportunity structures. In other words, political, cultural, and individual factors can provide opportunities for civic engagement, but they can also become constraints. These factors are in constant flux and mutually influence each other to determine the level of civic engagement. I believe this model will help explain the different levels of civic engagement of the Catholic Church in these four cities, as well as the civic engagement of other religions.

We are quite satisfied by this research outcome and its application. Of course, other than the effort of our team, we also benefited from many experts in the CSSP workshops and other colleagues. Particularly, Professor Fenggang Yang has given many constructive critiques to help our project.

Recently, the research network for the research in the sociology of religion has grown and matured. In contrast, the research in the other areas of sociology in China, such as the issues of race, gender, and class, do not have a mature research network. This is regrettable! Many scholars in these areas have made commendable individual achievements, but I would like to see more research networks similar to those in the sociology of religion. Maybe we need more leaders with passion and vision like Fenggang Yang.

In sum, I hope the field of the sociology of religion can continue to develop and play a positive role in the development of Chinese society.



Catholic Church in Macau



Catholic Church in Hong Kong



Catholic Church in Taipei



Catholic Church in Shanghai

Constructing Contemporary Chinese Christianity and Civic Community: A Study of Four Types of Churches in Beijing

Fuk-tsang Ying
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

The Results of the Project

With the generous support of the John Templeton Foundation, our project researchers were able to go to Beijing several times for field research. Our project studied contemporary Christianity in Beijing to explore the relationship between different types of churches and the civic community. Between 2011 and 2012, we conducted more than 50 in-depth interviews and observed dozens of religious activities among more than 30 churches; we generated about one million characters of research notes and diaries. We completed a project paper (English) and four journal articles (Chinese). Of the five papers, four have been submitted to and one has been accepted by academic journals. We are currently revising three papers. In addition, we have shared our research results in various courses in CUHK and plan to publicize the research findings at public lectures and forums in the future.



Visiting Faith-based Organization

The Benefit of the Workshops

We have benefited greatly from the workshops in at least four ways. First, most of the invited speakers in the workshops are renowned experts in the social scientific study of religion. With profundity and an easy-to-understand approach, the speakers helped us grasp the essence of the field. Second, the scholarly exchange and encouragement among the participants of the workshops helped improve the quality of our research. Third, the most valuable aspect of the workshops for our team was the opportunity to observe and participate in the religious activities of various local religious communities. We visited and observed different types of religious communities including Protestant churches, Catholic churches, and mosques. We also visited several faith-based social service organizations to explore how these religious organizations operate. The above mentioned field experiences provided us with first hand material and a comparative framework for the operation of religion in an open society. Fourth, the workshop specifically arranged lectures on journal article writing, which helped us understand the process and standards for submitting papers to international journals.

The Contribution of our Project to the Study of Chinese Religion and Society

Regarding our research approach, individual liberalism is the mainstream perspective in the study of Chinese Christianity and civil society, while the communitarian approach is underdeveloped. Our study springs from an attempt to address several theses from the communitarian approach. In terms of the subjects of our research, we tried to classify and compare different types of Chinese Christianity. Chinese Christianity has experienced diverse developments due to the market economy, urbanization, and varying degrees of regulation by the state. Even the house church is too diverse to be treated as a singular type of unit of analysis. Lastly, we have examined and revised several classical social scientific concepts in the context of China, e.g., Putnam's civic community and Tonnies' *Gesellschaft* and *Gemeinschaft*.



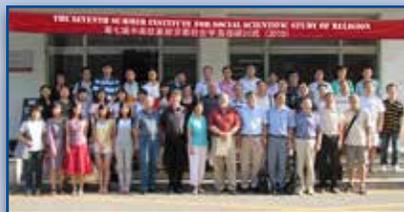
A Church in Beijing

The John Templeton Foundation and the Center on Religion and Chinese Society at Purdue University have significantly pushed forward research on Chinese religion and society. The CSSP has engaged in the production of knowledge beneficial to humanity, breaking down the monopoly, and more importantly, dismantling the bondage of religious research under ideological dogmatism.

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Reflection on the Summer Institute for the Social Scientific Study of Religion

WU Xiaoqun
Henan University



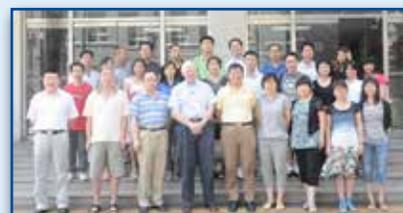
2010 Summer Institute Group Photo

During 2010 and 2012, I participated in the Summer Institute for the Social Scientific Study of Religion organized by the Center on Religion and Chinese Society at Purdue University. After three years' systematic training, I can see I have improved greatly in the field of sociology of religion.

The summer institutes, which have been held for one-two weeks in the summer for the past three years, included lectures, seminars, discussions, and writing training. In the morning, there were lectures delivered by different invited lecturers along with Chinese translation. In the afternoon, discussions and presentations were made by the participants; in the evenings, there was writing training and self-study. During the weekends, participants visited religious sites. The invited lecturers were renowned scholars of sociology of religion from China, the United States, and Europe. I enjoyed participating in all the activities in the summer institute as I learned a lot of new information and knowledge from the invited lecturers and other participants. Gradually, I found some common phenomena in the lectures given in the summer institutes.

The lecturers were from different regions and backgrounds, but they all emphasized the scientific nature of the research methods. Other than employing quantitative methods, they also paid a lot of attention to how to minimize data biases during research design, and not to over-interpret results. Even for commonsensical hypotheses, they followed the standard scientific procedure to obtain an explanation. One of the lecturers explained that human beings all have their own subjectivity, and the aim of scientific study is to avoid as much as possible this subjectivity. I respect greatly this kind of scientific attitude and think that this should be the most important character of an academic researcher.

The professors shared another commonality, which was their emphasis on the history of their discipline. Before they explained their research topic, they always introduced the perspectives, opinions, and achievements of other scholars on the same topic, showing that they have profound knowledge of their field, broad academic vision, and rigorous academic attitude. However, in our country, some researchers woefully despise others' achievements and unnecessarily replicated previous studies.



2011 Summer Institute Group Photo

For complex phenomena and issues, the lecturers usually used the approach of generalization or typology to study them. Their research is concise and theoretically strong. But many of our Chinese scholars are not good at applying this approach; as a result, the logic of their articles is not clear. I highly recommend and urge other colleagues to adopt this methodology in their research.

During the three years, the invited lecturers from all countries systematically explained the current research in the sociology of religion; they shared with us their research plans. During this process, I learned to appreciate different academic traditions and styles. I also acquired a deeper understanding of the basic knowledge, questions, stances, and methodology of sociology of religion. My academic horizon has been broadened, and the workshops have boosted my academic confidence. Compared with other colleagues, I am very lucky to be able to learn all these new things. With such beneficial experiences, I received a grant for the project "Efficacy: the Keyword to Understanding and Describing Chinese Folk Religion" by the National Education Department in 2010, and again I received a grant for a key national project, "Fieldwork

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Study of the Relationship Between Chinese Folk Religion and Grass Roots Organizations,” which is also the first key project on this topic in the field of sociology of religion.

My doctoral training is in ethnology and I specialized in Chinese folk religion. Ethnology in China has developed from folklore studies, but until now, the scholars in the field have not reached a consensus on whether they should study folk religion using the humanities or the social scientific approach. Most scholars in the field collect and classify folklore materials and see this as great academic research. This thinking applies to other disciplines in China as well.



2012 Summer Institute Group Photo

The inspiration and thinking I gained from the summer institutes helped me realize that the road for China’s sociology of religion is a long and arduous one. I conduct folklore research and folk religion study; my field overlaps with sociology of religion. Based on my experience, folklore studies and the study of folk religion face several issues. First, researchers in these areas appear unable to propose valuable research questions in China’s fast changing society, showing that they lack scientific understanding of their research subjects and cannot grasp the theoretical frameworks to use in explaining modern society. Second, the academic standards are not consistent; violation of the standards is common during field work and article writing. Third, they lack a self-consciousness to develop the theories. Many studies do not reflect on or discuss the theory they are using but focus on mere descriptive facts. Yet I believe these issues will gradually be resolved with the further development of sociology of religion in China.

Chinese Pentecostal/Charismatic Movements

The international symposium, “Global ReOrient: Chinese Pentecostal/Charismatic Movements in the Global East,” was held at Purdue University on October 30-31, 2013. Sixteen renowned and emerging scholars from the U.S., Asia, and Europe presented their papers on Chinese Pentecostal/charismatic movements and churches in mainland China, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, and North America. About 50 participants attended the symposium, including researchers from Indianapolis, Chicago, California, and Canada, who traveled to Purdue University specifically for the symposium. The symposium was organized by the Center on Religion and Chinese Society and co-sponsored by the College of Liberal Arts, International Programs, Religious Studies Program, Asian Studies Program, and American Studies Program at Purdue University. Dr. Irwin Weiser, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, made welcome remarks to the participants.

“How many Chinese Christians are Pentecostal or charismatic?” This was the question raised by Professor Fenggang Yang in his opening remarks. He briefly introduced the rapid growth of Christianity among the Chinese in the world, and pointed out that while there have been many scholarly studies of Pentecostalism in the Global South, there has been a lack of scholarly research on Christianity in the “Global East,” where both the economy and Christianity have been growing rapidly. He expressed the hope that this symposium would call attention to the need for scholarly study of Chinese Christianity in general and Chinese Pentecostal/charismatic movements in particular.

Professor Allan Anderson of the University of Birmingham, a renowned expert on Pentecostalism in Asia and elsewhere in the world, spoke about the challenges, theories, and methods of researching Chinese Pentecostalism. Then Professor Daniel Bays of Calvin College, a renowned historian of Chinese Christianity, assessed the appropriateness of using the term “Pentecostal” in describing Chinese Christianity, suggesting that scholars should be cautious and selective when applying this term. Professor Gordon Melton from Baylor

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University, a renowned scholar of religions in the United States, who in recent years has done extensive research on Chinese religions, examined the interactions of American Pentecostal missionaries and Chinese Christians in the early 20th century and analyzed the characteristics of Chinese Christian Pentecostalism.

Professor Donald Miller of the University of Southern California, a renowned sociologist who has organized a massive program that includes multiple projects to study global Pentecostalism, pointed out that Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity has been a major force for Christian growth in the contemporary world. He summarized some common characteristics of Pentecostal/charismatic churches. Applying his concept of the “New Paradigm Churches,” he examined the characteristics of China’s rural and urban house church movements. He also invited Zhang Kai, a Chinese lawyer and currently a visiting scholar at our Center, to share his experiences of defending persecuted Christians in China.

Professor Hsing-Kuang Chao from Taiwan and Dr. Kim-Kuang Chan from Hong Kong, both well-known scholars of Christianity in Chinese societies, presented a survey of Christianity in Taiwan and a case study of a charismatic mega-church in Singapore, respectively. Professor Karrie Koesel of the University of Oregon, an active and emerging scholar, presented her study of charismatic churches in the government-sanctioned “patriotic association.” Several researchers examined various aspects of the True Jesus Church. Others presented case studies of Pentecostal/charismatic churches in various Chinese societies and communities, an analysis of the Local Church led by Watchman Nee and Witness Lee, and a description of Catholic charismatic practices in mainland China. Finally, Dr. Joy Tong, co-organizer of this symposium and an affiliated Research Fellow of our center, presented a case study of a Chinese charismatic church in the United States, analyzing the social and cultural factors connected to the leadership role of the woman pastor.

The special evening program of the first day showed a video collection of visual, musical, and performing arts of Chinese Pentecostals around the world, compiled and edited by a Purdue graduate student Pamela Sari. Pastor Bobby Chaw, one of the founding leaders of the City Harvest Church in Singapore, showed an introduction video of this megachurch, discussed its historical development, and answered questions from the participants.

During the reflection and conclusion session, several senior scholars commented that this was one of the best organized conferences they had attended, and this was probably the first conference in the world focusing on Chinese Pentecostal/charismatic movements. The participants expressed the hope that a collected volume of the papers would be published. They also urged the Center on Religion and Chinese Society to continue to organize this kind of symposium in the future.



Gordon Melton



Group Photo



Daniel Bays



Allan Anderson



Don Miller

Global China Forum



A Spatial Analysis of the Religious Sites in Shanghai

SUN Xiulin, *Associate Professor of Sociology, Shanghai University* (September 9, 2013)

A spatial analysis has been widely used in the social scientific study in recent years. This lecture discussed the change in religious sites in Shanghai in the last century by employing GIS and spatial analysis, and explored further the application of the market theory of religion in China.



Faith diplomacy and U.S.-China relations

George Hong, *Professor of History, Purdue University Calumet* (September 14, 2013)

Faith diplomacy might become the foundation of the re-normalization of U.S.-China relations. This lecture first defined the meaning and denotation of faith diplomacy and then introduced the research trend in faith diplomacy. Next, it discussed the necessity of faith during the construction of U.S.-China relations. Then the lecture proposed the possibilities of faith diplomacy. Lastly, the lecture proposed the methods of transforming faith diplomacy into reality through academic engagement in order to push further the diplomacy between the U.S. and China.



Buddha Possession: Witchcraft as Spiritual Capital

XIA Changqi, *Associate Professor of Sociology, Wuban University* (September 23, 2013)

Buddha possession was once a popular traditional witchcraft in the Han-Yangtze River Plains. Through a set of rituals, many spiritual forces would possess and speak through a Zuzi to cure diseases and ward off disasters. The case study was based in a village in the Han-Yangtze River Plains where the researcher observed and studied the witchcraft activity, Buddha possession, of a village in this area, and attempted to depict the use of witchcraft as a form of spiritual capital in the construction of a rural community.



Different Gods Dance Together: A Study of Religion in a Southern China Village

LIAO Yang, *Professor of Sociology, South China Agriculture University* (September 30, 2013)

After Christianity was introduced into China in the modern era, local religions and foreign religions started to conflict with and accommodate to each other. This study used the case of the rise and decline of three rural Catholic churches in Jinxiu county, Guangxi to discuss the history and current situation of the encounter of the divine and profane, the conflict and coexistence of different gods, and the interaction among Han, Zhuang, Hmong people, and their religious practices.



Confucianism Is Not a Religion

BI Geng, *Associate Professor of College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Huazhong Agriculture University* (October 14, 2013)

In modern times, some scholars have promoted the religionization of the traditional Confucianism because of the invasion of Christianity as the representative religion of western culture. They suggested that Confucianism should become a new religion. Through historical interpretation and comparative analysis, this study traced the history of Confucian culture to analyze its basic content. Then the study analyzed and compared the fundamental differences and distinctions between Confucianism and religion, and finally concluded that Confucianism is not a religion.



Render Unto Caesar and Unto God: Social Conflict and Religion Through the Lens of the American Civil Rights Movement

LI Qiong, Associate Professor of Social and Public Administration School, East China University of Science and Technology (October 21, 2013)

This study analyzed the religious factors in the civil rights movement through the lenses of religious values and identity, the function of civic organizations, religion and rationality, and separation of church and state to examine the research paradigm in the relationship between religion and social conflict. The study claimed that a religious network structure provides a positive function for social conflict, and religious participation promotes organized civil participation in modern society. Religious freedom and rights to a certain degree play the role of a safety valve in social stability.



The Boundary Between Caesar and God

ZHANG Kai, Attorney in the Beijing Yijia Law Office (November 11, 2013)

“To Caesar the things that are Caesar’s; and to God, the things that are God’s” is considered the theoretical foundation of the separation of state and church in western civilization. The nation of China recognizes the principle of the separation of state and religion, but is often criticized for violating religious freedom. This lecture is based on a study of China’s constitution, combined with an analysis of policies, administrative rules, and patterns of the application of the justice system, to understand the state-religion relationship in China. Under this model, the convenience of administration has led to negative outcomes and inevitable conflicts between the state and religion.



A Discussion on the Christian Fellowship Among Students in North America: An Example of a Scholar Fellowship in a Chinese Church in Washington D.C.

LIU Yong, Associate Professor of Politics, Yangzhou University (November 18, 2013)

Through participatory observation, phenomenological description, multi-disciplinary discussion, and in-depth interviews, this research studied a Christian fellowship of international students at a Chinese church in Washington D.C. to depict the fellowship life of Chinese Christians and seekers. It attempted to explain the possible approaches of conversion and the multiple overlapping conditions based on blood relationship, culture, politics, value, and identity.



The change and transformation of Ningbo's New Year's Customs in Shanghai

LI Jian, Associate Professor of the College of Social Science, Shanghai University (November 25, 2013)

Ningbo migrants in Shanghai are numerous and active, and they brought their new year’s customs into early modern Shanghai. Based on oral history materials, this study explored the vertical and horizontal temporal evolution of the New Year’s customs among Ningbo migrants in Shanghai and attempted to analyze the religious factors in the New Year’s customs of Ningbo migrants.

CENTER ON RELIGION AND CHINESE SOCIETY

Center's Staff and Visiting Scholars



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Alice Wang, Joanne He, Fenggang Yang, George Hong, Mrs. Hong (from left to right)

A Grateful Heart

LI Qiong

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On September 1st, 2013, I arrived in the United States with my four year old daughter and my 71 year old mother, who was in late stage cancer. Time flies! Now it is one year already. I sat on the grass beside the Wabash River not far from Purdue University, and my mind was filled with gratefulness thinking about this trip. Being grateful is a feeling, and it is also an attitude toward life. I am grateful as I am healthy, satisfied, and relaxed: grateful to others for their generosity, warmth, and responsibility. I am very thankful for all the good things I have received in my life and the achievement in my academic research in 2013.



Amazing Grace

The third day after I arrived, Professor Fenggang Yang and Juan He invited us to attend Pleasant Streams Fellowship, a fellowship organized for Chinese visiting scholars. It must be God's grace. On that day, the talk was by a Purdue professor on the relationship between science and Christianity. He talked about some intriguing and amazing links between cancer treatment and Christian theology and mentioned that a pharmaceutical company affiliated with Purdue is testing a cancer medication. After that, I immediately

googled the information and contacted Doctor Harb, who works at the Indiana University cancer research center located in Lafayette. He replied very soon, and we made an appointment to meet with each other. After learning of our situation and diagnosis, he earnestly invited my mother to join a new lung cancer treatment experiment. In the following twice-per-week treatments, Dr Harb and his colleague gave us immense encouragement along with love, “Trust yourself; trust me.”; “We won’t give up!” Unfortunately, my mother’s white blood cell count dropped dramatically after four weeks’ treatment, so couldn’t take the experimental drugs. Dr. Harb didn’t give up. Instead, he helped us apply for the best targeted cancer therapy drug in the world, Tavceva, from a charitable organization. The drug, which was 760 RMB per pill (the patient must take one pill per day), was delivered to us every month. He also helped us apply for a drug that improves the immune system. Today, my mother is living with cancer, and she has a thankful heart and an optimistic attitude.

For the last five years, my life has been revolving around hospital, home, and school. I am thankful for this adverse environment which has helped me learn to be tough. To me, adversity is a lesson that is teaching me to work hard, to persevere, and to be forgiving; it is also a touchstone to appreciate true friendship; it is a fortune as it has helped enrich my spiritual life when I experienced it.

Advancing the awareness and paradigm in the research of sociology of religion

In order to cultivate more research scholars in the field of the social science of religion, the Center on Religion and Chinese Society at Purdue University has provided a lot of opportunities for Chinese scholars to come to the United States. In the past year, I audited several courses in sociology of religion and social statistics. At the same time, I completed a National Social Science Academy funded project and gave two academic lectures at the Center.

“Seminar on Sociology of Religion” is a graduate course taught by Professor Fenggang Yang to discuss the relationship between religion and social phenomenon, treating religion as a social fact and institution. In this course, I gradually found an awareness of the question and a new paradigm for sociology of religion through reading the classics including Émile Durkheim’s *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, Max Weber’s *The Sociology of Religion*, Rodney Stark and Roger Finke’s *Acts of Faith: Explaining the Human Side of Religion*, Peter Berger’s *Religious America, Secular Europe?: A Theme and Variations*, and Fenggang Yang’s *Religion in China: Survival and Revival Under Communist Rule*. Based on this foundation, the class focused on empirical questions including the paradigm conflicts, fundamentalism, pluralism and nationalism, and the future of sociology of religion. With the in-depth discussion in the class, I was able to clarify my thoughts and contemplate on future research.

In the past decade, I have been studying social conflict. In 2013, I was fortunate to become a senior research fellow in the Center to study the relationship between religion and social conflict. I am very thankful to Professor Fenggang Yang for introducing me to the field of sociology of religion. Professor Yang suggested that I explore my topic through the lenses of America’s civil rights movement. After a few month’s literature review, a primary project, “Render Unto Caesar and Unto God: Social Conflict and Religion Through the Lenses of the American Civil Rights Movement” was formulated. This study tries to find the logic for the use of religious factors in the civil rights movement through the study of religious pluralism, the role of the African American church in the social movement, and the participation of African Americans in the civil rights movement. I also analyzed the religious factors in the civil rights movement through the study of religious identity, the organizational function of the African American church, religion and rationality, and the separation of church and state. The study concluded that a religious network structure has a positive function in social conflict, and the participation of religion is beneficial for organized civic movements in modern society. Religious freedom rights are a safety valve to a certain degree, and the development of religion is an expression of social pluralism. This paradigm shift signifies a new stage of my academic life. I would like to express my appreciation for the help of Professor Fenggang Yang and LI Xiangping.

Website:

<http://www.purdue.edu/crcs>

This website has been developed into a center of information and resources on Chinese religion, spirituality, and society. It includes an archive of government documents, scholarly articles, and short essays on Chinese spirituality, religion, and society.

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Some of the Activities and Media Appearances in July-December 2013

- July 7, *South China Morning Post Magazine* publishes a report of Cult Crackdown in China, which includes an interview with Fenggang Yang.
- August 10-12, Fenggang Yang participated in the annual meeting of the Association for the Sociology of Religion in New York City and presented a paper on “The Plausibility of Religions among Chinese Students in Beijing.”
- August 20-25, Fenggang Yang participated in the Sixth Chinese Theological Forum on “Christian Faith and Ideological Trends in Contemporary China” at Oxford University, England. Chinese Intellectuals of liberalism, new left, new Confucian, and Christianity signed the “Oxford Consensuses.”
- September 7, *Journal and Courier* publishes a feature article of an interview with Fenggang Yang “Find Him where Faith Meets Science: Purdue Sociology Professor Elected President of Society for the Scientific Study of Religion.”
- October 4-6, Fenggang Yang participated in the 25th National Catholic China Conference “The American Catholic Church and China in an Era of Globalization” at Loyola University Chicago.
- October 7-9, Fenggang Yang participated in the Symposium of “Making the Invisible Visible” at the University of Padova, Italy, and gave a keynote presentation on Chinese immigrants adhesive identities..
- October 15, Fenggang Yang led a group of Chinese visiting scholars at CRCs to visit the Indiana State Prison.
- October 18, New York Times publishes an interview with Fenggang Yang on the “The ‘Oxford Consensuses’ and Public Trust in China.” The Chinese translation was published in New York Times China on October 23.
- October 30-31, International Symposium of “Global ReOrient: Chinese Pentecostal/Charismatic Movements in the Global East” was held at Purdue. *Journal and Courier* publishes on October 26 a feature article about Chinese Charismatics and the symposium.
- November 8-10, Fenggang Yang participated in the annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion in Boston and presented a paper on “Religious Freedom and Pluralism: A Social Scientific Research Agenda.”
- November 19, Fenggang Yang gave a presentation on the social scientific study of religion in China at Purdue President’s residence as part of a series of “Westwood Colloquia.”
- December 13-14, Fenggang Yang participated in the Conference of “Christianity and Freedom” in Rome and presented on Christianity in China. Pope Francis received the about 50 participants in a private audience on October 14.