

FREEDOM OF RELIGION

International and Chinese Law on Religious Freedom

During the Commission's 2016 reporting year, the Chinese government and Communist Party continued to violate the rights of Chinese citizens to religious freedom, which are guaranteed under Chinese and international law. Article 36 of China's Constitution guarantees "freedom of religious belief,"¹ providing state protection to "normal religious activities" but leaving "normal" undefined.² This article, nonetheless, prohibits discrimination based on religion and forbids state agencies, social organizations, and individuals from compelling citizens to believe or not believe in any religion.³ China has also signed⁴ and stated its intent to ratify⁵ the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which obligates China to refrain in good faith from acts that would defeat the treaty's purpose.⁶ Article 18 of the ICCPR upholds a person's right to religious belief individually or in community with others; it also prohibits coercion that impairs an individual's ability to freely hold or adopt a religion or belief.⁷ The Constitution allows limitations on religious practice that "disturbs public order, impairs the health of citizens, or interferes with the educational system of the state," and the ICCPR contains exceptions allowing states to impose some limitations on religious practice for public safety reasons.⁸ As this section documents, however, in practice, Party and government officials exercise broad discretion over religious practice, internal affairs, and interpretations of faith, often restricting particular religious practices based on Party interests. Such restrictions constitute state-sponsored religious discrimination as well as undue state influence on the right to believe freely.

Religious Affairs Regulation and Policy

The Chinese government's regulatory framework for religious affairs does not guarantee the religious freedom of Chinese citizens. The key regulation on religious affairs, the 2005 Regulations on Religious Affairs (RRA), requires religious groups to register with the government and report on their religious activities.⁹ Registration is a significant obstacle for some groups: officials may deny registration applications of groups they believe to be adverse to Party and government interests,¹⁰ and some groups refuse to register because they believe that the conditions associated with registration compromise principles of their faith.¹¹ Official recognition of groups falling outside the "main" religions—Buddhism, Catholicism, Islam, Taoism, and Protestantism—is limited.¹² Article 12 of the RRA requires religious activities to be conducted at registered sites by approved personnel,¹³ but scholars observe that officials may tolerate the religious activities of unregistered groups, especially if officials believe that the activities promote social or economic development interests.¹⁴ As this section documents, while unregistered religious and spiritual communities are particularly vulnerable to government harassment, detention, and other abuses, groups may be sanctioned regardless of registration status when officials view them as posing a challenge to government authority. Some religious groups and practices have been banned outright.¹⁵

The RRA provides limited protection for the “normal religious activities” of registered religious groups and authorizes state control over religious affairs.¹⁶ The government and Party primarily control religious affairs through a national agency under the State Council, the State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA), and lower level religious affairs bureaus.¹⁷ These government agencies control religious affairs through their effective authority over the “patriotic” religious associations representing the five “main” religions in China.¹⁸ The religious affairs bureaus work with the Party’s United Front Work Department (UFWD) to select religious leaders for the official associations.¹⁹ A series of legislative measures targeting “cults” in the summer of 2015²⁰ included an amendment to the PRC Criminal Law that extended the maximum sentence for violating Article 300 (“organizing and using a cult to undermine implementation of the law”)²¹ from 15 years to life in prison;²² as of August 2016, the Commission had not observed any sentence greater than 15 years solely for the violation of Article 300.

April 2016 National Conference on Religious Work

In April 2016, the Party and government convened the first National Conference on Religious Work in 15 years, signaling that officials aim to prioritize religious affairs. Chinese President and Communist Party General Secretary Xi Jinping designated religious affairs as an area of “special importance” and directed government and Party authorities to ensure that religious believers are “patriotic, preserve national unity, and serve the overall interests of the Chinese nation.”²³ Xi characterized religious groups as a “bridge” connecting the Party and government to religious believers, emphasizing that groups must therefore support the “leadership of the Party” and the Chinese political system.²⁴ In recent years, local patriotic organizations issued open letters stating that their ability to act as a “bridge” has been compromised as government policies have become more intolerant of their religious practices.²⁵

A key approach Xi identified for realizing these policy goals involved compelling believers to interpret religious doctrines in a way that adheres to “social harmony,” “progress,” and “traditional culture.”²⁶ Xi invoked the goal of “national rejuvenation” several times in his address and identified “overseas [religious] infiltration” and “religious extremism” as threats.²⁷

Officials continued a long-term policy of regulating religion as an instrument for promoting national unity and “social stability.”²⁸ Official rhetoric this past year characterized Buddhism and Taoism as embodying essential aspects of Chinese culture.²⁹ In contrast, official rhetoric emphasized the foreign origins of other religions, including Catholicism, Protestantism, and Islam, and highlighted their potential for “inciting separatism” and “social unrest.”³⁰ Official speeches and policies referred to the goal of bringing religions into alignment with Party interests as “sinicization,” which is linked in official rhetoric to the “national rejuvenation” campaign.³¹ In one indication this year that officials continue to view religious belief in general as competing with Party loyalty, in February

2016, the Communist Party expanded the long-standing ban on religious belief for Party members³² to include retired members.³³

Buddhism (Non-Tibetan) and Taoism

Despite official statements that Buddhism and Taoism exemplify Chinese values, authorities continued to exert political influence over the activities of non-Tibetan Buddhist and Taoist religious groups. [For information on Tibetan Buddhists, see Section V—Tibet.] As in past years,³⁴ this influence manifested in the form of extensive government regulation³⁵ and sponsorship of religious activity.³⁶ Officials indicated plans to continue such influence: shortly after the National Conference on Religious Work in April 2016, the president of the state-controlled Buddhist Association of China (BAC) called on members to work toward government and Party goals, including “joining with the nation’s legal regime to form a modern institutional system for Buddhism.”³⁷ Yang Shihua, a deputy secretary general of the state-sponsored Chinese Taoist Association, issued a statement saying that the government’s support of numerous Taoist religious institutions would allow for “cultivating an increasing number of patriotic and devout Taoist clergy.”³⁸

This past year, authorities continued to implement a 2012 central government directive calling for comprehensive monitoring and registration of Buddhist and Taoist sites, activities, and personnel.³⁹ In December 2015, the State Administration for Religious Affairs announced that it had published a comprehensive Internet database of registered Buddhist and Taoist religious venues and that it continues efforts to certify all Buddhist and Taoist venues.⁴⁰ The stated purpose for the database is to prevent donation-seeking by those “falsely claiming affiliation with either of the two religious denominations.”⁴¹ It is unclear whether the database may subject religious venues to increased scrutiny. This past year, believers practicing at unregistered venues reported feeling pressured to limit their activities for fear of government sanction.⁴²

This past year, authorities continued to characterize certain religious groups identifying with Buddhist and Taoist traditions as “cult organizations.” For instance, an article published in state media in March 2016 warned readers against cult organizations that “misappropriate the teachings of Buddhism and Taoism,” including Falun Gong and the Guangdong province-based Buddhist group Huazang Dharma.⁴³ [For more information, see Falun Gong in this section.] In October 2015, the Zhuhai Intermediate People’s Court in Zhuhai municipality, Guangdong, sentenced the leader of Huazang Dharma, Wu Zeheng, to life imprisonment, deprivation of political rights for life, and a fine⁴⁴ for violating Article 300 of the PRC Criminal Law (“organizing and using a cult to undermine implementation of the law”),⁴⁵ as well as fraud, rape, and producing and selling harmful and poisonous food.⁴⁶ The court also sentenced four other Huazang Dharma members to prison terms of up to four years and fines.⁴⁷ [For more information on Article 300 of the PRC Criminal Law, see Section II—Criminal Justice.]

Catholicism

During the 2016 reporting year, the Chinese government and Communist Party continued efforts to control Chinese Catholic leadership and religious practice. The Chinese government continued to deny Catholics in China the freedom to be ministered to by bishops independently approved by the Holy See, which Catholics view as essential to their faith.⁴⁸ At the April 2016 National Conference on Religious Work, an official characterized the Holy See's competing control over Catholic church hierarchy as a “[problem] that need[s] to be urgently solved.”⁴⁹ At a February 2016 meeting of the two state-controlled Catholic organizations, the Catholic Patriotic Association (CPA) and the Bishops' Conference of the Catholic Church in China (BCCCC), leaders emphasized the importance of working toward “national rejuvenation” through the “sinicization” of church practice and doctrine.⁵⁰

The Chinese government continued to require that Catholic bishops be selected through the state-controlled national religious organizations.⁵¹ After the February meeting, CPA and BCCCC leaders reportedly said that they would continue to follow government guidance in ordaining bishops and to bring unregistered clergy into their organizations.⁵² According to the Hong Kong Diocese's Holy Spirit Study Center, there are approximately 99 active bishops in China, 29 of whom are not approved by the government and minister to the underground church.⁵³ After Pope Francis assumed the papacy in 2013, the Holy See and the Chinese government reportedly began a series of discussions regarding the system of bishop appointments in China.⁵⁴ In October 2015, shortly after one meeting in Beijing municipality, the Holy See approved the election of Tang Yuange,⁵⁵ who had been elected through a government-sponsored election in Chengdu municipality, Sichuan province, in May 2014.⁵⁶ In April 2016, Chinese and Holy See representatives formed a working group to discuss the selection and ordination of bishops in China;⁵⁷ as of July 2016, both sides reportedly acknowledged that talks were continuing.⁵⁸

At the local level, government actions restricting freedom of religion for Catholics varied:

- According to U.S.-based non-governmental organization ChinaAid, by the end of 2015 officials in **Zhejiang province** had authorized the demolition of over 20 churches and the removal of 1,500 crosses, targeting both Protestant and Catholic churches.⁵⁹ This state-sanctioned activity has taken place under the “Three Rectifications and One Demolition” campaign launched in 2014.⁶⁰ [For more information on the cross-removal campaign, see Protestantism in this section.]
- In **Sichuan province**, government officials reportedly required priests to submit reports on their understanding of “sinicization” and its relation to the church, according to an October 2015 Catholic news media report.⁶¹
- In **Hebei province**, where according to government figures, the community of Catholics was around 1 million as of 2010,⁶² Catholic news organizations reported that five underground Catholic priests went missing under suspicious circumstances in April 2016; authorities later released two of the priests.⁶³

The Commission did not observe any updates as to the status of the other three as of July 2016.

- Authorities in **Hebei** also have not given any information as to the whereabouts or condition of three underground Hebei bishops: Coadjutor Bishop Cui Tai of Xuanhua district, Zhangjiakou municipality (detained in August 2014);⁶⁴ Bishop Cosmas Shi Enxiang (missing since 2001; in February 2015 officials denied an unconfirmed report that he had passed away);⁶⁵ and Bishop James Su Zhimin of Baoding municipality (detained in 1996; last seen in public in 2003).⁶⁶ Family members of Bishop Su reportedly appealed to authorities for his release following a general amnesty granted to disabled elderly prisoners; following one appeal to a national-level official in January 2015, authorities subjected the family to several days of home confinement.⁶⁷

- In **Shanghai municipality**, Bishop Thaddeus Ma Daqin of the Diocese of Shanghai continued to be held under extralegal confinement at Sheshan seminary.⁶⁸ Authorities have restricted Ma's freedom of movement since his public resignation from the CPA during his ordination ceremony in July 2012⁶⁹ and reportedly shut down his microblogging account around May 2016.⁷⁰ In June 2016, Bishop Ma published a post on his personal blog stating that Christians should defer to national laws conflicting with religious doctrine and calling his "words and actions" toward the CPA a "mistake."⁷¹ Several Chinese Catholic believers and priests stated that they believed Bishop Ma posted these statements due to government pressure.⁷²

Falun Gong

The Commission noted reports of continued harassment and abuse of Falun Gong practitioners as part of a campaign launched in 1999;⁷³ this included official propaganda⁷⁴ and censorship⁷⁵ targeting the group, and harassment, arbitrary detention, abuse, and prosecution of individual practitioners.⁷⁶ The campaign has been directed by policies issued by top-level government and Party officials⁷⁷ and is overseen by the "610 Office," an extralegal, Party-run security apparatus with branches at provincial and local levels.⁷⁸

As in previous years, authorities continued to pressure Falun Gong practitioners to renounce their beliefs in a process termed "transformation through reeducation."⁷⁹ To this end, officials reportedly subjected practitioners to extreme physical and psychological coercion in prisons and in administrative detention facilities such as "legal education centers" and compulsory drug detoxification centers.⁸⁰ Human rights organizations⁸¹ and practitioners have documented coercive and violent practices against Falun Gong practitioners during custody, including electric shocks,⁸² sleep deprivation,⁸³ food deprivation,⁸⁴ forced feeding,⁸⁵ forced drug administration,⁸⁶ beatings,⁸⁷ sexual abuse,⁸⁸ and forcible commitment to psychiatric facilities.⁸⁹

Authorities also harassed, detained, and arrested those with associations with Falun Gong that ranged from social media activity to legal representation of practitioners. For example, in November 2015, the Ganyu District People's Court in Lianyungang municipi-

pality, Jiangsu province, reportedly tried Wang Dushan for “using the Internet to undermine national law,” a charge that his lawyer said does not exist in Chinese law.⁹⁰ According to family members, Wang’s father was a Falun Gong practitioner, but Wang himself had never practiced Falun Gong.⁹¹ He was living in Beijing municipality when authorities from his home district of Ganyu took him into custody on July 11, 2015.⁹² Wang had forwarded several pictures over social media, two of which included imagery and expressions associated with Falun Gong.⁹³

Lawyers defending Falun Gong practitioners continued to do so at great personal risk:

- The Ministry of Public Security reportedly harassed and threatened law professor **Zhang Zanning** following his representation of Falun Gong practitioner Wu Hongwei in November 2015.⁹⁴ The Ministry of Justice also investigated Zhang, reportedly due to his representation of multiple Falun Gong practitioners in court.⁹⁵
- Tianjin municipality police formally arrested prominent human rights lawyer **Wang Yu** on January 8, 2016, on suspicion of “subversion of state power.”⁹⁶ Shortly after being detained in July 2015, state media broadcast footage of Wang “verbally abusing” court officials while representing Falun Gong practitioners in a trial in April 2015.⁹⁷ Independent reports indicate that she was reacting to courtroom bailiffs after they physically assaulted her client and choked her co-counsel until he was close to suffocation.⁹⁸ Authorities reportedly released Wang on bail in early August 2016, coinciding with the airing of a prerecorded “confession” that members of the Chinese human rights community believe was coerced.⁹⁹
- Officials continued to subject **Gao Zhisheng**, who was among the first attorneys to represent Falun Gong practitioners, to harassment, restriction of movement, and denial of necessary medical treatment.¹⁰⁰ In 2006, authorities sentenced Gao to three years’ imprisonment, suspended for five years, for “inciting subversion of state power.”¹⁰¹ Authorities reportedly harassed and tortured him during his suspended sentence, which a Beijing court revoked in December 2011, ordering Gao to serve the original three-year sentence.¹⁰² During his detention and imprisonment, Gao was held in solitary confinement, given little food, and beaten, including with an electric baton.¹⁰³

Courts and public security officials also committed numerous violations of legal procedure in cases involving Falun Gong practitioners this reporting year. Defense lawyers were often unable to provide adequate defense for Falun Gong practitioners: authorities in some cases denied client meetings,¹⁰⁴ adequate notice of trial,¹⁰⁵ and adequate time and opportunity to present a defense during trial.¹⁰⁶ Authorities also have pressured families into dismissing independently hired attorneys.¹⁰⁷

International observers,¹⁰⁸ including the U.S. House of Representatives¹⁰⁹ and the European Parliament,¹¹⁰ expressed concern over reports that numerous organ transplantations in China have used the organs of detained prisoners, including Falun Gong practitioners.¹¹¹ In a November 2015 interview, Huang Jiefu, the chair-

man of the committee responsible for reforming China's organ procurement system, denied that the new system allowed the transplantation of organs from executed prisoners.¹¹² International medical professionals noted that such claims are impossible to verify given the lack of transparency¹¹³ and expressed skepticism of reforms¹¹⁴ raised by discrepancies in official data.¹¹⁵ [For more information on organ transplantation issues in China, see Section II—Criminal Justice.]

Islam

During the reporting year, regulations controlling the religious activities of Muslim believers remained in effect, while President Xi Jinping¹¹⁶ and state-sponsored Islamic leaders¹¹⁷ called for the “sinicization” of Islam. Continued government restrictions included regulating the confirmation of religious personnel¹¹⁸ and maintaining the national “patriotic” Islamic group’s responsibility for organizing Hajj pilgrimages for all Chinese Muslims.¹¹⁹ During a July 2016 visit to the Muslim community of the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, President Xi encouraged Muslims to practice their religion in conformity with Chinese society¹²⁰ and to resist extremist religious influence.¹²¹

Officials also made a number of statements against the popularization of practices and symbols associated with Islam.¹²² In one example, Ye Xiaowen, administrator of a state-affiliated political research institute and former State Administration for Religious Affairs director,¹²³ published a statement in state-sponsored media in May 2016 linking the popularization of halal products and Arabic street signs in certain regions to an “infiltration” of religious extremism.¹²⁴ Ye characterized such phenomena as “harboring an enormous threat to national unity and inciting ethnic antagonism, imperiling the present situation of stable solidarity, social harmony, and friendly relations between ethnic groups.”¹²⁵ At the national level, state-affiliated researchers campaigned against standardized regulations for the halal food industry, reportedly contributing to the abandonment of draft regulations in April 2016.¹²⁶ Concurrent to the statements and actions of officials and researchers, experts noted significant online commentary hostile to Islam, raising concerns about rising anti-Muslim sentiment in China.¹²⁷ In addition, overseas media reported that the November 2015 criminal detention of Ma Jun, an influential Salafi imam, indicated that the government was adopting a more restrictive attitude toward religious groups.¹²⁸ Ma reportedly had “close ties” to the government¹²⁹ and official media had featured him as a model of a moderate Islamic leader months before his detention.¹³⁰ [For information on official controls on Islam in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, see Section IV—Xinjiang.]

Protestantism

During the reporting year, Chinese government and Communist Party officials continued to prevent many Protestant Christians from worshipping freely, taking a range of actions that experts believed were connected to the national-level “sinicization” campaign.¹³¹ The government and Party continued to pressure a large

number of unregistered house church Protestants to join the two state-controlled organizations that manage Protestant religious practice—the Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM) and the Chinese Christian Council.¹³² Authorities in some areas, however, targeted existing members of the patriotic religious organizations, particularly in Wenzhou municipality, Zhejiang province,¹³³ a region with a high concentration of Protestants.¹³⁴

“Sinicization” of Christianity

As national-level officials called for the “sinicization” of several religions this past year, their rhetoric emphasized a need for believers to alter their beliefs and activities to align with the Chinese political system and culture.¹³⁵ Following the National Conference on Religious Work in April 2016,¹³⁶ Gao Feng, president of the state-sponsored Chinese Christian Council, stated that Chinese Christianity must “be persistent in developing in the direction of sinicization, and actively guide Christianity to be compatible with socialist society.”¹³⁷ One of the primary figures responsible for developing the theory of “sinicization,” government official and scholar Zhuo Xinping,¹³⁸ has elaborated that “sinicization” for Chinese Christians requires “endorsing the Chinese political system, conforming to Chinese society, and embodying Chinese culture.”¹³⁹ Zhuo asserted that Western values are “directly opposed to and a repudiation of China’s current political system” and as a result, Chinese Protestantism is in a position of conflicting political loyalties and commitments.¹⁴⁰

As a primary example of “sinicization” policy at the local level, experts pointed to the “Five Introductions and Five Transformations” (*wujin wuhua*) campaign ongoing in Zhejiang since 2015.¹⁴¹ The policy calls for “introducing” the following five concepts into churches: (1) laws and regulations, (2) health and medicine, (3) science, (4) charity, and (5) the promotion of social harmony; and for applying the following five “transformations”: (1) to assimilate religious practices to local settings, (2) to standardize church management, (3) to adapt theology to conform to Chinese culture, (4) to make finances transparent, and (5) to render church doctrines compatible with Chinese political values.¹⁴² One Wenzhou church leader believed that the campaign was aimed at circumscribing church social activities and gaining control over church management, finances, and doctrine.¹⁴³

CONTINUED CAMPAIGN AGAINST CHURCHES IN ZHEJIANG PROVINCE

In the past year, authorities in Zhejiang province continued to harass and closely monitor Christians. In one example, officials continued to implement a campaign launched in 2013 purportedly to address “illegal structures,” but which appeared to target Christian sites and crosses, many of which were state-approved.¹⁴⁴ As of September 2016, officials reportedly had removed more than 1,500 crosses (an estimated 90 percent of all church crosses in the province) and destroyed more than 20 churches.¹⁴⁵ Officials also appeared to have increased government presence within churches; officials in Pingyang county, Wenzhou municipality, reportedly monitored church gatherings in person so as to prevent discussion of cross removals or other government policies.¹⁴⁶ Other local govern-

ments in Zhejiang reportedly required churches to promote Party policies aligning doctrine with official ideology by displaying propaganda or allowing officials to speak during church services.¹⁴⁷

Many Protestants in Zhejiang defied or protested these measures, and officials reacted by increasing pressure on individuals; leaders of registered churches who defended churches against cross removals received especially harsh treatment. For example, in February 2016, authorities sentenced government-appointed pastors Bao Guohua and Xing Wenxiang of Jinhua municipality to 14 and 12 years in prison, respectively, on charges of “misappropriation of funds,” “gathering a crowd to disturb social order,” “illegal business activity,” and “concealing accounting and financial documents.”¹⁴⁸ In January 2016, Hangzhou municipal authorities detained Pastor Gu Yuese after he wrote two open letters in 2015 opposing the cross demolition campaign; he was released on bail in March 2016.¹⁴⁹ Prior to his detention, Gu had served as the leader of China’s largest government-sanctioned church and the head of the Zhejiang Province Christian Council.¹⁵⁰

Other local government actions against Protestant believers this past year included reported threats¹⁵¹ and a ban on religious activities, including prayer, in hospitals.¹⁵² Protestant believers reported that local Party officials also conducted investigations of Party members to identify whether they were Christians and organized groups to study Marxist religious views.¹⁵³

Officials also targeted those providing legal assistance to churches facing forced cross removal. For example, in August 2015, authorities detained lawyer Zhang Kai, who had provided legal counsel to over 100 churches in Wenzhou.¹⁵⁴ During his detention, authorities reportedly forced Zhang to give a televised “confession” of his crimes, which included “endangering state security.”¹⁵⁵ In March 2016, Zhang announced on social media that he had returned to his parents’ home in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region; he was reportedly released on bail pending investigation for one year.¹⁵⁶ [For more on televised confessions, see Section II—Criminal Justice.]

RESTRICTION OF PROTESTANT RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN OTHER PROVINCES

Authorities in other regions of China also restricted Protestant religious observance this past year. Government officials detained Protestant believers,¹⁵⁷ conducted raids on church buildings and gatherings,¹⁵⁸ and pressured landlords to evict churches from meeting spaces.¹⁵⁹ According to ChinaAid, churches in Guangdong province were hit especially hard, with numerous house churches subjected to government raids and many ultimately closed down.¹⁶⁰ In Guizhou province, the Guiyang municipal government designated one of the municipality’s largest unregistered house churches, Living Stone Church, as an “illegal social group.”¹⁶¹ Guiyang authorities detained Living Stone pastor Li Guozhi (also known as Yang Hua) and several others in December 2015 and arrested Li on the charge of “intentionally leaking state secrets” in January 2016; as of August 2016, Li still awaited trial at the Nanming District People’s Court in Guiyang.¹⁶² In August 2016, the Tianjin No. 2 Intermediate People’s Court tried and sentenced

Hu Shigen, an advocate for religious freedom and democracy¹⁶³ to seven years and six months' imprisonment.¹⁶⁴ Hu's friends believe that Hu was coerced into pleading guilty¹⁶⁵ to the charge of "subversion of state power."¹⁶⁶ Hu had led several underground churches¹⁶⁷ and state media reported that he had "used illegal religious activities as a platform" to promote subversion of the Chinese government and the socialist system.¹⁶⁸

Other Religious Communities

Religious communities that do not fall within China's five "main" religions continue to exist in China; some enjoy official support, while others face suppression from authorities. For example, despite lacking formal recognition at the national level,¹⁶⁹ some Eastern Orthodox Christian communities are recognized at the local level.¹⁷⁰ In Harbin municipality, Heilongjiang province, the Eastern Orthodox community is led by a Chinese priest who was ordained by the Russian Orthodox Church in October 2015 with the tacit approval of the Chinese government.¹⁷¹ In contrast, authorities in Kaifeng municipality, Henan province, reportedly shut down a Jewish educational center, banned foreign Jewish tour groups from visiting the city, destroyed a well used by local Jewish believers for ritual bathing, and placed community members under surveillance.¹⁷² The Chinese government also maintained its official policy of allowing some foreign religious communities to hold religious services for foreign nationals.¹⁷³

Notes to Section II—Freedom of Religion

¹PRC Constitution, issued 4 December 82, amended 12 April 88, 29 March 83, 15 March 99, 14 March 04, art. 36.

²*Ibid.*, art. 36; Liu Peng, “Crisis of Faith,” *China Security*, Vol. 4, No. 4 (Autumn 2008), 30.

³PRC Constitution, issued 4 December 82, amended 12 April 88, 29 March 83, 15 March 99, 14 March 04, art. 36.

⁴International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), adopted by UN General Assembly resolution 2200A (XXI) of 16 December 66, entry into force 23 March 76; United Nations Treaty Collection, Chapter IV, Human Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, last visited 28 July 16. China has signed but not ratified the ICCPR.

⁵State Council Information Office, “Progress in China’s Human Rights in 2012,” reprinted in *Xinhua*, 14 May 13, chap. VI; Permanent Mission of the People’s Republic of China to the UN, “Aide Memoire,” reprinted in *United Nations*, 13 April 06, para. IV; State Council, European Council, Prime Minister’s Office of Sweden, and European Commission, “Joint Statement of the 12th China-EU Summit,” reprinted in *Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, 30 November 09, para. 8. Upon presenting its candidacy for the 2013 UN Human Rights Council elections, China reportedly promised to “further protect civil and political rights,” although it did not specifically state intent to ratify the ICCPR. UN General Assembly, Sixty-Eighth Session, Item 115(c) of the Preliminary List, Elections To Fill Vacancies in the Subsidiary Organs and Other Elections: Election of Fourteen Members of the Human Rights Council, Note Verbale Dated 5 June 2013 from the Permanent Mission of China to the United Nations Addressed to the President of the General Assembly, A/68/90, 6 June 13.

⁶United Nations Conference on the Law of Treaties, “Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties,” adopted 22 May 69, entry into force 27 January 80, arts. 18, 26.

⁷International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, adopted by UN General Assembly resolution 2200A (XXI) on 16 December 66, entry into force 23 March 76, art. 18.

⁸PRC Constitution, issued 4 December 82, amended 12 April 88, 29 March 83, 15 March 99, 14 March 04, art. 36; International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, adopted by UN General Assembly resolution 2200A (XXI) on 16 December 66, entry into force 23 March 76, art. 18.

⁹State Council, Regulations on Religious Affairs [Zongjiao shiwu tiaoli], issued 30 November 04, effective 1 March 05, arts. 6, 8, 13–16, 27. See, e.g., art. 6 (requiring religious organizations to register in accordance with the Regulations on the Management of the Registration of Social Organizations); art. 8 (requiring an application to the State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA) to establish an institute for religious learning); arts. 13–16 (imposing an application procedure to register venues for religious activity); art. 27 (requiring the appointment of religious personnel to be reported to the religious affairs bureau at or above the county level and requiring reporting the succession of Tibetan living Buddhas for approval of the religious affairs bureau at the level of a city divided into districts or higher, and requiring reporting for the record the appointment of Catholic bishops to SARA).

¹⁰See, e.g., Liu Peng, “How To Treat House Churches: A Review of the Beijing Shouwang Church Incident,” *Pu Shi Institute for Social Sciences*, 16 February 12. Shouwang Church repeatedly applied for registration and was denied by the local state agency in charge of religious affairs.

¹¹Neil Connor, “China’s Catholics: ‘Rome May Betray Us, but I Won’t Join a Church Which Is Controlled by the Communist Party,’” *Telegraph*, 4 April 16; Emily Rauhala, “Christians in China Feel Full Force of Authorities’ Repression,” *Washington Post*, 23 December 15. See also Qiao Nong, *ChinaAid*, “Church in Huaqiu Township, Tongzi County, Guizhou Lost Lawsuit Against Land Bureau, Church To Be Seized” [Guizhou tongzi huaqiu zhen jiaohui gao guotuju baisu, jiaotang jiang bei moshou], 4 January 16; Qiao Nong, *ChinaAid*, “Shenzhen’s Huaqiao City Church Forced To Relocate, Contract for Renting Another Site Broken” [Shenzhen huaqiao cheng jiaohui bei bi qian, ling zu changdi zai bei huiyue], 23 December 15; Richard Madsen, *China’s Catholics* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998), 37–38.

¹²State Council Information Office, “The Situation of Religious Freedom in China” [Zhongguo de zongjiao xinyang ziyou zhuangkuang], October 1997, sec. I. The central government has referred to the five religions as China’s “main religions,” stating that the religions citizens “mainly” follow are Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Catholicism, and Protestantism. Henan Province People’s Congress Standing Committee, *Henan Province Regulations on Religious Affairs* [Henan sheng zongjiao shiwu tiaoli], issued 30 July 05, effective 1 January 06, art. 2; Shaanxi Province People’s Congress Standing Committee, *Shaanxi Province Regulations on Religious Affairs* [Shaanxi sheng zongjiao shiwu tiaoli], issued 23 September 00, amended 30 July 08, art. 2. Some local regulations on religious affairs define “religion” to mean only these five religions. See, e.g., Zhejiang Province Ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee, *Zhejiang Province Measures for the Management of Registration of Venues for Folk Belief Activity* [Zhejiang sheng minjian xinyang huodong changsuo dengji bianhao guanli banfa], issued 19 October 14, effective 1 January 15; Taizhou Municipality Bureau of Ethnic and Religious Affairs, *Circular Concerning the 2016 Launch of Registration Work of Venues for Folk Belief Activity* [Guanyu kaizhan 2016 minjian xinyang huodong changsuo dengji bianhao gongzuo de tongzhi], issued 13 April 16; Hunan Province Religious Affairs Committee, *Hunan Province Measures for the Management of Registration of Venues for Folk Belief Activity* [Hunan sheng minjian xinyang huodong changsuo dengji guanli banfa], issued and effective 20 August 09; Shaoxing Municipality Bureau of Ethnic and Religious Affairs, *Shaoxing Municipality Implementing Plan for Registration of Venues for Folk Belief Activity* [Shaoxing shi minjian xinyang huodong changsuo dengji bianhao gongzuo shishi fang’an], issued 14 May 15; Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Institute for World Religions, “State Administration for Religious Affairs Convenes Expert Scholars’ Forum on Folk Beliefs” [Guojia zongjiao shiwuju zhakai minjian xinyang xuezheng zhuotanhui], 21 March 16. See also Vincent Goossaert and David A. Palmer, *The Religious Question in Mod-*

ern China (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 343, 346. There is limited official tolerance outside this framework for ethnic minority and “folk” religious practices. See, e.g., Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region People’s Government General Office, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region Implementing Measures for the Management of Venues for Religious Activity [Neimenggu zizhiqu zongjiao huodong changsuo guanli shishi banfa], issued 23 November 95, art. 2; State Council Information Office, “The Situation of Religious Freedom in Xinjiang” [Xinjiang de zongjiao xinyang ziyou zhuangkuang], reprinted in Xinhua, 2 June 16, secs. 1, 3. The Orthodox Christian church has also been recognized to varying degrees at the local government level. See also discussion in this section on Other Religious Communities.

¹³State Council, Regulations on Religious Affairs [Zongjiao shiwu tiaoli], issued 30 November 04, effective 1 March 05, art. 12.

¹⁴Tim Oakes and Donald S. Sutton, “Introduction,” in *Faiths on Display: Religion, Tourism, and the Chinese State* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010), 15–17; Richard Madsen, “Church State Relations in China—Consequences for the Catholic Church,” *Religions and Christianity in Today’s China*, Vol. 5 (2015), 66.

¹⁵Maria Hsia Chang, *Falun Gong: The End of Days* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 9, 144–53; Vincent Goossaert and David A. Palmer, *The Religious Question in Modern China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 339.

¹⁶State Council, Regulations on Religious Affairs [Zongjiao shiwu tiaoli], issued 30 November 04, effective 1 March 05. The Regulations on Religious Affairs (RRA) contains provisions authorizing official intervention into religious practices, beliefs, and organization, e.g., Article 6 (requiring “religious groups” to register with the government); Article 7 (providing official guidelines for the content and distribution of religious publications); Article 8 (requiring institutions for religious education to apply for government approval); Article 11 (requiring the religious pilgrimage to be organized through the national religious body of Islam); Article 12 (requiring religious activities to be held at state-approved sites); Article 17 (requiring sites for religious activities to set up management organizations and exercise democratic management); Article 18 (requiring sites for religious activities to set up particular management systems for personnel, finance, accounting, sanitation, etc.); and Article 27 (subjecting religious personnel to qualification by a religious body).

¹⁷Vincent Goossaert and David A. Palmer, *The Religious Question in Modern China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 153–54, 346–48.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 153. The “patriotic” religious associations are state-controlled institutions that represent the five “main” religions of China: the Buddhist Association of China; the China Islamic Association; the China Taoist Association; the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association and the National Conference of Bishops (an organization led by Catholic clergy); and the Three-Self (for “self-governing, self-financing, and self-propagating”) Patriotic Movement and the Chinese Christian Council (the latter two organizations have overlapping membership and represent Protestants). Although nominally independent, the “patriotic” religious associations are effectively under the authority of the State Council’s agency for religious affairs.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 154.

²⁰CECC, 2015 Annual Report, 8 October 15, 120.

²¹PRC Criminal Law [Zhonghua renmin gongheguo xing fa], passed 1 July 79, amended 14 March 97, effective 1 October 97, amended 25 December 99, 31 August 01, 29 December 01, 28 December 02, 28 February 05, 29 June 06, 28 February 09, 25 February 11, 29 August 15, effective 1 November 15, art. 300.

²²National People’s Congress Standing Committee, PRC Criminal Law Amendment (Nine) [Zhonghua renmin gongheguo xing fa xiuzheng’an (jiu)], issued 29 August 15, effective 1 November 15, item 33; “China Focus: China Adopts Amendments to Criminal Law,” Xinhua, 29 August 15; Dui Hua Foundation, “China Mulls Harsher Penalties for Protesters, ‘Cults’, Fewer Capital Crimes,” *Dui Hua Human Rights Journal*, 6 August 15. See also CECC, 2015 Annual Report, 8 October 15, 120.

²³“Xi Jinping: Comprehensively Improve the Level of Religious Work Under the New Situation” [Xi jinpings: quanmian tigao xin xingshi xia zongjiao gongzuo shuiping], Xinhua, 23 April 16.

²⁴*Ibid.*

²⁵Zhejiang Province Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association and Zhejiang Province Chinese Catholic Religious Affairs Committee, “Statement Strongly Urging the Immediate Cessation of Cross Removals” [Guanyu qianglie yaoqiu liji tingzhi chaichu jiaotang shizijia de baogao], 5 July 15, reprinted in ChinaAid, 29 July 15; Zhejiang Province Chinese Christian Council, “Open Letter to the Zhejiang Province Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau” [Zhi zhejiang sheng minzu zongjiao shiwu weiyuanhui de gongkai xin], 10 July 15.

²⁶“Xi Jinping: Comprehensively Improve the Level of Religious Work Under the New Situation” [Xi jinpings: quanmian tigao xin xingshi xia zongjiao gongzuo shuiping], Xinhua, 23 April 16. Authorities often use “social harmony” in official rhetoric to refer to containment of domestic instability, while Chinese cultural values are often emphasized in the official discourse of “national rejuvenation,” which argues that a distinctly “Chinese” form of national power will restore China to its historical supremacy. China scholars note that the “national rejuvenation” discourse legitimizes the current political system while discrediting Western liberal democratic values by linking them to perceptions of foreign influence. See, e.g., Jinghan Zeng, *The Chinese Communist Party’s Capacity To Rule: Ideology, Legitimacy and Party Cohesion* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), sec. 5.3.3.

²⁷“Xi Jinping: Comprehensively Improve the Level of Religious Work Under the New Situation” [Xi jinpings: quanmian tigao xin xingshi xia zongjiao gongzuo shuiping], Xinhua, 23 April 16.

²⁸Chinese Communist Party Central Committee, “The Basic Viewpoint and Policy on the Religious Question During China’s Socialist Period” [Guanyu woguo shehui zhuyi shiqi zongjiao wenti de jiben guandian he jiben zhengce], reprinted in China Ethnicity and Religion Net, 31

March 82; Chinese Communist Party Central Committee, “Document 6: On Some Problems Concerning Further Improving Work on Religion,” 5 February 91, translated in Asia Watch Committee, “Freedom of Religion in China,” January 1992, 35–42. See also Vincent Goossaert and David A. Palmer, *The Religious Question in Modern China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 325; State Council, Regulations on Religious Affairs [Zongjiao shiwu tiaoli], issued 30 November 04, effective 1 March 05, art. 3. The RRA states that “Religious groups, sites for religious activities and religious citizens shall . . . safeguard unification of the country, unity of all nationalities, and stability of society.”

²⁹Xi Jinping, “Speech by H. E. Xi Jinping President of the People’s Republic of China at UNESCO Headquarters,” reprinted in Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 28 March 14; Yang Shihua and Zhao Lixiu, Chinese Taoist Association “Buddhist, Taoist Communities Study the Spirit of the National Conference on Religious Work: Seminar Highlights” [Fojiao, daojiao jie xuexi quanguo zongjiao gongzuo huiyi jingshen yantaoban jiaoliu gao xuandeng], May 2016. See also Tim Oakes and Donald S. Sutton, “Introduction,” in *Faiths on Display: Religion, Tourism, and the Chinese State* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010) 1–25; Xue Cheng, Buddhist Association of China, “President Xue Cheng: Speech to the Committee on Buddhist Affairs of the Ninth Conference of the Buddhist Association of China” [Xue cheng huizhang: zai zhongguo fojiao xiehui di jiu jie lishihui hanchuan fojiao jiaowu jiaofeng weiyuanhui shang de jianghua], 9 April 16.

³⁰For the association between Christianity, foreign influence, and social unrest, see Willy Lam, “Xi’s Obsession With ‘Cultural Renaissance’ Raises Fears of Another Cultural Revolution,” Jamestown Foundation, China Brief, Vol. 16, Issue 3, 8 February 16, 4. See also the discussion in this section on Catholicism and Protestantism. For the association between Islam, foreign influence, and social unrest, see “Ye Xiaowen: Warning Against the ‘Extremism’ Underlying Religious ‘Expansion’” [Ye xiaowen: jingti zongjiao “fanhua” houmian de “jiduanhua”], Huanqiu Net, 7 May 16.

³¹Willy Lam, “Xi’s Obsession With ‘Cultural Renaissance’ Raises Fears of Another Cultural Revolution,” Jamestown Foundation, China Brief, Vol. 16, No. 3, 8 February 16, 4. For more on the “national rejuvenation” campaign, see Zheng Wang, “Not Rising, but Rejuvenating: The ‘Chinese Dream,’” *The Diplomat*, 5 February 13. See also Jinghan Zeng, *The Chinese Communist Party’s Capacity To Rule: Ideology, Legitimacy and Party Cohesion* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), sec. 5.3.3.

³²Zhu Weiqun, “Communist Party Members Cannot Be Religious Believers” [Gongchandang yuan buneng xinyang zongjiao], Seeking Truth, 15 December 11.

³³“Party Organization Department: Comprehensively Improving Work on Retired Cadres” [Zhongzhubu: quanmian zhuohao li tuixiu ganbu gongzuo], Xinhua, 4 February 16.

³⁴Lawrence C. Reardon, “The Party Giveth, and the Party Taketh Away: Chinese Enigmatic Attitudes Towards Religion,” in *Religious Transformation in Modern Asia: A Transnational Movement*, ed. David W. Kim (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 34.

³⁵State Council, Regulations on Religious Affairs [Zongjiao shiwu tiaoli], issued 30 November 04, effective 1 March 05, arts. 6, 8, 13–15, 27. See, e.g., RRA, art. 6 (requiring religious organizations to register in accordance with the Regulations on the Management of the Registration of Social Organizations); art. 8 (requiring an application to the State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA) to establish an institute for religious learning); arts. 13–15 (imposing an application procedure to register venues for religious activity); and art. 27 (requiring the appointment of religious personnel to be reported to the religious affairs bureau at or above the county level and requiring reporting the succession of living Buddhas for approval to governments at the level of a city divided into districts or higher, and requiring reporting for the record the appointment of Catholic bishops to SARA). For measures regulating Taoist religious activity, see, e.g., Chinese Taoist Association, Measures for the Management of Taoist Temples [Daojiao gongguan guanli banfa], issued 23 June 10, amended 29 June 15, reprinted in State Administration for Religious Affairs, 15 October 15; Chinese Taoist Association, Measures for the Appointment of Key Religious Personnel in Taoist Temples [Daojiao gongguan zhuyao jiaozhi renzhi banfa], issued 23 June 10, amended 29 June 15, reprinted in State Administration for Religious Affairs, 15 October 15. For measures regulating Buddhist religious activity, see, e.g., Buddhist Association of China, Measures for the Appointment of the Heads of Theravada Buddhist Monasteries [Nanchuan fojiao siyuan zhuchi renzhi banfa], issued 3 November 11, reprinted in State Administration for Religious Affairs, 21 December 11; Buddhist Association of China, National Measures for the Management of Monastic Vows in Chinese Buddhist Monasteries [Quanguo hanchuan fojiao siyuan chuanshou santan dajie guanli banfa], issued 3 November 11, reprinted in State Administration for Religious Affairs, 21 December 11. See also Yang Siqi, “Life in Purgatory: Buddhism Is Growing in China, but Remains in Legal Limbo,” *Time*, 16 March 16.

³⁶Buddhist Association of China, Buddhist Association of China Charter [Zhongguo fojiao xiehui zhangcheng], issued 21 April 15. The charter for the Buddhist Association of China states that it is funded in part by the government. See also Yang Shihua and Zhao Lixiu, Chinese Taoist Association, “Buddhist, Taoist Communities Study the Spirit of the National Conference on Religious Work: Seminar Highlights” [Fojiao, daojiao jie xuexi quanguo zongjiao gongzuo huiyi jingshen yantaoban jiaoliu gao xuandeng], 8 June 16.

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³⁸Yang Shihua and Zhao Lixiu, Chinese Taoist Association, “Buddhist, Taoist Communities Study the Spirit of the National Conference on Religious Work: Seminar Highlights” [Fojiao, daojiao jie xuexi quanguo zongjiao gongzuo huiyi jingshen yantaoban jiaoliu gao xuandeng], 8 June 16.

³⁹State Administration for Religious Affairs et al., *Opinion Regarding Issues Related to the Management of Buddhist Monasteries and Taoist Temples* [Guanyu chuli sheji fojiao simiao, daojiao gongguan guanli youguan wenti de yijian], issued 8 October 12.

⁴⁰Xu Wei, “Religious Venue List Completed,” *China Daily*, 19 December 15.

⁴¹*Ibid.*

⁴²Yang Siqi, “Life in Purgatory: Buddhism Is Growing in China, but Remains in Legal Limbo,” *Time*, 16 March 16.

⁴³Henan Province Anti-Cult Association, “The Allure of Cult Organizations and How To Protect Oneself” [Xiejiao de mihuoxing ji fangfan cuoshi], reprinted in *Xinhua*, 29 March 16.

⁴⁴Wei Meng, “Wu Zeheng, Leader of Evil Cult ‘Huazang Dharma’ Sentenced to Life Imprisonment by Court of First Instance” [Xiejiao zuzhi “huazang zongmen” toumu wu zeheng yishen bei panchu wuqi tuxing], *Xinhua*, 31 October 15.

⁴⁵PRC Criminal Law [Zhonghua renmin gongheguo xing fa], passed 1 July 79, amended 14 March 97, effective 1 October 97, amended 25 December 99, 31 August 01, 29 December 01, 28 December 02, 28 February 05, 29 June 06, 28 February 09, 25 February 11, 29 August 15, effective 1 November 15, art. 300.

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⁴⁷*Ibid.*

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⁴⁹Kou Jie, “Meeting Calls for Religions With Chinese Characteristics,” *Global Times*, 25 April 16.

⁵⁰State Administration for Religious Affairs, “Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association and Bishops’ Conference of the Catholic Church in China Convene Coalition Leadership Meeting To Study 2016 Work Implementation” [Zhongguo tianzhujiao yihui yituan zhaokai fuzeren lianxi huiyi yanjiu bushu 2016 nian gongzuo], 29 February 16.

⁵¹State Council, *Regulations on Religious Affairs* [Zongjiao shiwu tiaoli], issued 30 November 04, effective 1 March 05, art. 27.

⁵²“China Church Officials Endorse Government Plans for 2016,” *Union of Catholic Asian News*, 2 March 16. See also State Administration for Religious Affairs, “Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association and Bishops’ Conference of the Catholic Church in China Convene Coalition Leadership Meeting To Study 2016 Work Implementation” [Zhongguo tianzhujiao yihui yituan zhaokai fuzeren lianxi huiyi yanjiu bushu 2016 nian gongzuo], 29 February 16.

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⁵⁴Victor Gaeten, “The Pope and the Politburo: The Vatican’s Chinese Diplomacy,” *Foreign Affairs*, 24 March 16.

⁵⁵“Vatican Approves China’s Elected Bishop Candidate,” *Union of Catholic Asian News*, 28 April 16.

⁵⁶Gerard O’Connell, “Bishop Candidates Elected for Two Catholic Dioceses in Central China,” *America*, 1 May 15.

⁵⁷Lisa Jucca et al., “After Decades of Mistrust, Pope Pushes for Diplomatic Breakthrough With China,” *Reuters*, 14 July 16.

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⁶⁰Lawrence C. Reardon, “The Party Giveth, and the Party Taketh Away: Chinese Enigmatic Attitudes Towards Religion,” in *Religious Transformation in Modern Asia: A Transnational Movement*, ed. David W. Kim (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 39; ChinaAid, “2015 Annual Report: Chinese Government Persecution of Christians and Churches in China January–December 2015,” March 2016, sec. II(ii).

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⁶⁴“Chinese Catholics Appeal for Release of Long-Imprisoned Bishop,” *Union of Catholic Asian News*, 1 September 15; Bernardo Cervellera, “Two Chinese Bishop Martyrs Recognised as ‘Illustrious Unknown’ for 2011,” *Asia News*, 30 December 11.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*; Michael Forsythe, “Questions Rise on Fate of Chinese Bishop,” *New York Times*, 13 February 15. For more information on Bishop Cosmas Shi Enxiang, see the Commission’s Political Prisoner Database record 2004-05378.

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⁶⁸“Chinese Bishop’s Weibo Account Blocked, Movement Restricted,” *Union of Catholic Asian News*, 3 May 16; John Sudworth, “China’s Detained Bishop Ma ‘Given Political Lessons,’” *BBC*, 24 December 13. See also CECC, 2013 Annual Report, 10 October 13, 88–89; CECC, 2014 Annual Report, 9 October 14, 92; CECC, 2015 Annual Report, 8 October 15, 122. For more informa-

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⁷⁵GreatFire.org, "Censorship of Falungong in China," last visited 3 August 16.

⁷⁶"Minghui Human Rights Reports 2015: Nearly 20,000 Incidents of Citizens Targeted in 2015 for Their Faith in Falun Gong," Clear Wisdom, 9 May 16. Based on data collected by the Falun Gong practitioner website Clear Wisdom, there were at least 19,095 incidents of harassment, being taken into custody, or detainment for belief in Falun Gong. "158 Newly Reported Cases of Falun Gong Practitioners Sentenced for Their Faith," Clear Wisdom, 22 May 16. Data collected by Clear Wisdom documents 158 Falun Gong practitioners sentenced to prison in China between November 2015 and April 2016. More than 90 percent were reportedly tried without an open trial, among other alleged violations of legal procedure. Courts imposed sentences between 3 months and 10 years as well as heavy fines.

⁷⁷The General Office of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council Issue a Circular Calling for Strict Observance of Policy Demarcation Lines and for Promoting the Conversion and Extrication of the Great Majority of Falun Gong Practitioners," Xinhua, 24 August 99, reprinted and translated in China Law and Government, Vol. 32, No. 5 (September–October 1999), 52–55; "Decision of the Ministry of Civil Affairs of the People's Republic of China Concerning the Banning of the Research Society of Falun Dafa," Xinhua, 22 July 99, reprinted and translated in Chinese Law and Government, Vol. 32, No. 5 (September–October 1999), 31; "Notice of the Ministry of Public Security of the People's Republic of China," Xinhua, 22 July 99, reprinted and translated in Chinese Law and Government, Vol. 32, No. 5 (September–October 1999), 31–32; "Resolutely Implement the Central Government's Decisions; Abide by State Laws in Exemplary Fashion: Talk Given to Reporters by the Person in Charge of the Department of Organization of the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) Central Committee," People's Daily, 23 July 99, reprinted and translated in Chinese Law and Government, Vol. 32, No. 5 (September–October 1999), 46–50. See also Ming Xia and Shiping Hua, "Guest Editors' Introduction," Chinese Law and Government, Vol. 32, No. 5 (September–October 1999), 5–13; Human Rights Watch, "Dangerous Meditation: China's Campaign Against Falungong," January 2002, sec. 3; "2,024 More People Sign Petitions Supporting Prosecution of Jiang Zemin," Epoch Times, 19 June 16; Amnesty International, "China: 'Changing the Soup but Not the Medicine?': Abolishing Re-Education Through Labour in China," 17 December 13, 14; The Origins and Long-Term Consequences of the Communist Party's Campaign Against Falun Gong, Hearing of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, 18 December 12, Testimony of Sarah Cook, Senior Research Analyst for East Asia, Freedom House.

⁷⁸Sarah Cook and Leeshai Lemish, "The 610 Office: Policing the Chinese Spirit," Jamestown Foundation, China Brief, Vol. 11, Issue 17, 16 September 11; CECC, 2012 Annual Report, 10 October 12, 82.

⁷⁹Falun Dafa Information Center, "Overview of Persecution," 9 April 15. See, e.g., Bengbu Municipal Law and Politics Committee, "Bengbu Municipality Mobilizes Launch of Anti-Cult Public Opinion and Propaganda Work" [Bengbu shi jizhong kaizhan fan xiejiao yulun xuanchuan gongzuo], Anhui Chang'an Net, 18 May 16. See also "Communist Party Calls for Increased Efforts To 'Transform' Falun Gong Practitioners as Part of Three-Year Campaign," Congressional-Executive Commission on China, 22 March 11.

⁸⁰"Minghui Human Rights Report: Nearly 20,000 Incidents of Citizens Targeted in 2015 for Their Faith in Falun Gong," Clear Wisdom, 9 May 16; Amnesty International, "China: 'Changing the Soup but Not the Medicine?': Abolishing Re-Education Through Labour in China," 17 December 13, 9, 18–25; Chinese Human Rights Defenders, "Civil Society Information Submission to the Committee against Torture for the Review of the Fifth Periodic Report of China (CAT/C/CHN/5): Specific Information on the Implementation of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment," 9 February 15, para. 11.

⁸¹Chinese Human Rights Defenders, "Civil Society Information Submission to the Committee against Torture for the Review of the Fifth Periodic Report of China (CAT/C/CHN/5): Specific Information on the Implementation of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment," 9 February 15, para. 11; Amnesty International,

“China: ‘Changing the Soup but Not the Medicine’: Abolishing Re-Education Through Labour in China,” 17 December 13.

⁸²Leo Timm, “Man Killed in Chinese Jail Now Joined in Death by Younger Brother,” *Epoch Times*, 4 May 16; Amnesty International, “China: ‘Changing the Soup but Not the Medicine’: Abolishing Re-Education Through Labour in China,” 17 December 13, 20.

⁸³“Overcoming Sleep Deprivation at a Brainwashing Center,” *Clear Wisdom*, 8 March 16; Amnesty International, “China: ‘Changing the Soup but Not the Medicine’: Abolishing Re-Education Through Labour in China,” 17 December 13, 20.

⁸⁴“CCP Torture Method: ‘Hunger Therapy,’” *Clear Wisdom*, 2 March 16.

⁸⁵Leo Timm, “Chinese Practitioners of Falun Gong Tell Harrowing Accounts of Brutality by Mainland Regime,” *Epoch Times*, 16 May 16; Amnesty International, “China: ‘Changing the Soup but Not the Medicine’: Abolishing Re-Education Through Labour in China,” 17 December 13, 20.

⁸⁶“Woman, 63, Dies After Abuse and Forced Drug Injections Wreaked Havoc on Her Health,” *Clear Wisdom*, 19 May 16; Amnesty International, “China: ‘Changing the Soup but Not the Medicine’: Abolishing Re-Education Through Labour in China,” 17 December 13, 20, 22, 30, 31.

⁸⁷“Lawyers Highlight Police Beating of Handicapped Practitioner,” *Clear Wisdom*, 16 January 15; Amnesty International, “China: ‘Changing the Soup but Not the Medicine’: Abolishing Re-Education Through Labour in China,” 17 December 13, 20.

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¹⁶⁶Wang Yeshe, “Court of First Instance Announces Verdict in Subversion of State Power Case Concerning Hu Shigen, Defendant Sentenced to Seven Years and Six Months’ Imprisonment” [Hu shigen dianfu guojia zhengquan an yishen dangting xuanpan beigaoren bei panxing qi nian ban], Xinhua, 3 August 16.

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¹⁶⁸Wang Yeshe, “Court of First Instance Announces Verdict in Subversion of State Power Case Concerning Hu Shigen, Defendant Sentenced to Seven Years and Six Months’ Imprisonment” [Hu shigen dianfu guojia zhengquan an yishen dangting xuanpan beigaoren bei panxing qi nian ban], Xinhua, 3 August 16.

¹⁶⁹State Council Information Office, “The Situation of Religious Freedom in China” [Zhongguo de zongjiao xinyang ziyou zhuangkuang], October 1997, sec. I. The central government has referred to the five religions as China’s “main religions,” stating that the religions citizens “mainly” follow are Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Catholicism, and Protestantism. Henan People’s Congress, Henan Province Regulations on Religious Affairs [Henan sheng zongjiao shiwu tiaoli], issued 30 July 05, effective 1 January 06, art. 2; Shaanxi Province People’s Congress Standing Committee, Shaanxi Province Regulations on Religious Affairs [Shaanxi sheng zongjiao shiwu tiaoli], issued 23 September 00, amended 30 July 08, art. 2. Some local regulations on religious affairs define “religion” to mean only these five religions.

¹⁷⁰See, e.g., Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region People’s Government General Office, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region Implementing Measures for the Management of Venues for Religious Activity [Neimenggu zizhiqu zongjiao huodong changsuo guanli shishi banfa], issued 23 January 95, art. 2; State Council Information Office, “The Situation of Religious Freedom in Xinjiang” [Xinjiang de zongjiao xinyang ziyou zhuangkuang], reprinted in Xinhua, 2 June 16, secs. 1, 3.

¹⁷¹Hannah Gardner, “Ordination of Russian Orthodox Priest in China Sign of Warming Ties Amid U.S. Tensions,” USA Today, 22 October 15.

¹⁷²Sam Kestenbaum, “Is China Cracking Down on Jewish Community in Kaifeng?” Forward, 3 May 16; Anson Laytner, “Jewish Troubles in Kaifeng, China,” Times of Israel, The Blogs, 28 April 16.

¹⁷³State Council, Provisions on the Management of Religious Activities of Foreigners Within the PRC [Zhonghua renmin gongheguo jingnei waiguoren zongjiao huodong guanli guiding], issued and effective 31 January 94, art. 4; State Administration for Religious Affairs, Implementing Details of Rules for the Provisions on the Management of Religious Activities of For-

eigners Within the PRC [Zhonghua renmin gongheguo jingnei waiguoren zongjiao huodong guanli guiding shishi xize], issued 26 September 00, amended 29 November 10, effective 1 January 11, arts. 7, 17(5).