

Atlas of Religion in China

Social and Geographical Contexts

Fenggang Yang



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By

Fenggang Yang

with assistance from

J. E. E. Pettit



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Fenggang Yang

Center on Religion and Chinese Society

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Abbreviations

BAC	Buddhist Association of China	CSLS	Chinese Spiritual Life Survey
BAROC	Buddhist Association of the Republic of China	ECSLG	Ecumenical China Study Liaison Group
BCCCC	Bishops Conference of the Catholic Church in China	HCCC	Chinese Association of Confucius the Holy Sage
CCC	China Christian Council	NSCCC	National Seminary of the Catholic Church
CCP	Chinese Communist Party	NTC	New Testament Church
CCPA	China Catholic Patriotic Association	PLA	People's Liberation Army
CCYL	Chinese Communist Youth League	RAB	Religious Affairs Bureau
CGSS	China General Social Survey	SARA	State Administration of Religious Affairs
CPPCC	Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference	TSPM	Three-Self Patriotic Movement
		UFD	United Front Department (<i>Tongzhanbu</i> 统战部)

Introduction

This atlas provides a bird's-eye view of the religious landscape in China. It maps the officially registered venues of five major religions—Buddhism, Christianity (Protestant and Catholic), Daoism, and Islam—at the national, provincial, and county levels, and draws the contours of Confucianism, folk religion, and the Mao cult. It describes the main organizations, beliefs, and rituals of various religions, and the social and demographic characteristics of their respective believers. Putting various religions side by side in their social, political, and cultural contexts, this volume offers a comprehensive overview of religion in contemporary China.

Although religion can be studied in different academic disciplines, three broad approaches may be distinguished. The first approach is through theological or philosophical studies, which provide rational justification or criticism of certain beliefs and practices. The second approach is grounded in the humanities and interprets scriptures, commentaries, and other sacred texts. The third approach applies social scientific methods to empirical data, including historical records, fieldwork observations, and quantitative data from surveys and censuses. This volume follows this third approach. It is multidisciplinary, combining sociological and geographical studies of religious organizations and individuals. The analysis marries some economic concepts with Geographical Information System (GIS) research to analyze and visualize religious sites in China.

Definition and Classification of Religion

This atlas treats religion as a complex social institution comprising both beliefs and practices. Religion includes four elements: “(1) a belief in the supernatural; (2) a set of beliefs regarding life and the world; (3) a set of ritual practices; and (4) a distinct social organization or moral community.”¹ Some religions demonstrate a systematic development of beliefs, rituals, and organizations.² In other religions, one or more of the four elements may not

have developed in a systematic manner; this is often the case with so-called folk religions.

In the People's Republic of China, only five religions are officially recognized and legally allowed to operate. Among the five, only Daoism is native to China. Buddhism, Catholicism, Protestantism, and Islam are world religions that have existed in China for hundreds or thousands of years and have large numbers of believers. It must be noted that China treats Catholicism and Protestantism as two distinct religions. Orthodox Christianity existed in pre-Communist China and has revived in recent years in some locations, such as Heilongjiang, but has not been recognized as a legally permitted religion at the state level.³

In addition to practitioners of the five legally allowed religions, many people hold beliefs in certain supernatural beings or forces, engage in rituals and practices in reference to the supernatural, and form social relations with spiritual leaders and fellow believers. According to the definition of religion introduced above, their beliefs, practices, and social institutions are clearly religious. Therefore, we include them in our description and analysis in this volume. In his classic study of *Religion in Chinese Society*, C. K. Yang 杨庆堃 distinguishes two structural forms of religion, institutional religion and diffused religion. An institutional religion is separate from secular social institutions, while a diffused religion is merged with or embedded in secular institutions.⁴ Countering the claim frequently made around the turn of the twentieth century that the Chinese lack religion, C. K. Yang convincingly argues that diffused religion was pervasive in pre-Communist China. Under Communist rule, religious elements have been expunged from the state, the family, communities, and guilds, but folk religious beliefs and practices aligned with weak social organizations have shown resilience under religious suppression. The Mao personality cult, once a political religion or pseudo-religion, has now become part of folk religion in China.⁵ In this atlas, we provide descriptive contours of some major folk religious beliefs and practices.

1 F. Yang, *Religion in China*, 36.

2 J. C. Hemeyer (*Religion in America*, 17) writes that a “developed religion is an integrated system of beliefs, lifestyle, ritual activities, and social institutions by which individuals give meaning to (or find meaning in) their lives by orienting themselves to what they take to be holy, sacred, or of the highest value.” For the idea of a “complete” religion, see Yinger, *The Scientific Study of Religion*, 10.

3 Some Orthodox Christians have appealed to the authorities for legal recognition, and there are some Orthodox Christian churches in operation in Heilongjiang and Inner Mongolia, but the number is extremely small and they do not seem to be accounted for in the economic census that we have used for this atlas.

4 C. K. Yang, *Religion in Chinese Society*, 20.

5 Zuo, “Political Religion”; F. Yang, *Religion in China*, 139.

Finally, there is a third category of religious sects that maintain a high-tension relationship with society, culture, or the political order. These sects have been labeled as “evil cults” (*xiejiao* 邪教) by the Chinese authorities and are excluded from classifications of religion in official Chinese documents. Again, according to our academic definition of religion, these groups are either traditional religious sects or new religious movements and are thus included in our description and analysis.

Religious Markets

In recent decades, some sociologists and economists have applied economic concepts to analyze the dynamics of religious change in the United States, Europe, and other societies.⁶ The adoption of certain economic terms in a social scientific theory of religious change does not imply a vulgarization or commercialization of religion. Rather, these terms serve as analytical tools for describing some social aspects of religion. The idea of religious markets provides a useful way to conceive of the relationships that treat religion as a social institution. The institution of religion can be analyzed in terms of supply and demand, and the causes and consequences of religious change may often be explained in terms of a dynamic supply-demand equilibrium. Broadly speaking, the supply side includes religious organizations, venues, materials, services, and clergy, while the demand side includes religious adherents, who may also participate in the production of religious rituals, goods, and services.

Building on this theoretical development, I have adopted a political economy approach for analyzing the changing dynamics of religion in China under Communist rule and developed the triple market theory, the shortage economy theory, and the oligopoly theory.⁷ Whereas previous economic theories focused on supply-side explanations, my political economy approach emphasizes the importance of regulation, which may shape the supply side or the demand side, but often with unintended consequences. Under the restrictive and repressive regulations, the religious economy does not form a single market, but splits into three parallel and intertwined markets, which I have labeled the red, black, and gray markets. Red is the color of the Communist Party and thus the red market represents the religions sanctioned by the party-state and

includes the five legal (officially permitted) religious organizations, believers, and religious activities. The black market, on the other hand, comprises all illegal (officially banned) religious organizations, believers, and religious activities. The gray market of religion lies somewhere in between: it comprises all religious and spiritual organizations, practitioners, and activities with ambiguous legal status.⁸ Overall, religious supply is very low in China compared with most of the other countries, and the main reason for this shortage is the Communist party-state’s imposition of restrictions on religions. The increase in supply in recent decades lags behind the rapidly increasing demand for more religious venues, activities, and services.

Each of the three markets has its distinct characteristics and dynamics in relation to the state and society. In the first part of the atlas, we describe and analyze the three markets of religion at the national level. The second part of the atlas includes descriptions and analyses of the red-market religions province by province.

The Religious Landscape: The Importance of Space and Place

Religious venues are a major component of religious supply. Indeed, religious buildings may be considered the most tangible and visible component of religion. They often signify the prevalence or significance of religion in a given society in a given historical period. During the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), all religious venues were closed down. Although there is still a shortage of religious venues in China, in recent decades the numbers of temples, churches, and mosques have increased. Nowadays it is hard to ignore the towering mosques of Western China or the large-scale cathedrals in southeastern China (Photos 1, 2). Of course, there are other important components of the religious supply, including religious organizations, clergy, staff, artifacts, and so on. We will describe religious organizations and seminaries or religious academies whenever information is available. However, we have mapped the religious landscape largely on the basis of data that records religious sites associated with the five red-market religions.

The spatial dimension is essential for religion. However, it has been very much neglected by social scientists, with only a few exceptions.⁹ In the last several decades, the social scientific study of religion has been dominated by the individualistic approach, relying heavily on surveys

6 For a systematic theoretical construction applying economic terms to the sociological study of religion, see Stark and Finke, *Acts of Faith*.

7 F. Yang, *Religion in China*.

8 F. Yang, *Religion in China*, 86–87.

9 For a summary review, see Carroll, “Religion in Space.”



PHOTO 1 Mosque in Yanqi county (Xinjiang).
CREDIT: XUEGANG MA.



PHOTO 2 Three churches in Yishan, Cangnan county (Zhejiang).
CREDIT: SHIDANG OU.

of individual religiosity, which is commonly measured in terms of the three B's: religious belonging (identity or preference), beliefs (e.g., in God, the Bible), and behaviors (e.g., church attendance, prayer). Emile Durkheim, one of the founders of the social scientific study of religion, stressed the social nature of religion. Religion is a social institution with collective rituals and a moral community. However, in modern scholarship, only a minority of scholars have focused on congregations and communities or pursued the historical study of institutional differentiation.

Following Durkheim's distinction between the sacred and the profane, Mircea Eliade draws attention to sacred space, which is a social and cultural phenomenon constructed by rituals, symbols, and relationships. Through consecrating rituals, structured space becomes a sacred center around which people orient themselves.¹⁰ Thomas Tweed argues that religion is a fundamentally locative process of finding a place and moving across space.¹¹ Roger Stump clarifies the inherent spatiality of religious systems. Religious groups do not simply exist in space, but seek spatial realization of their beliefs.¹² Hence, the spatial dimension of religious practice deserves close examination. In cultural geography, Henri Lefebvre argues that space is a primary dimension of competition and conflict involving production, appropriation, and redefinition.¹³ Yi-Fu Tuan articulates the relationship between space and place, pointing out that space is an unorganized realm of motion, whereas place is the functional node in space; places become centers of values that people distinguish from the surrounding space by assigning meanings to them and forming emotional attachments to them.¹⁴ Jonathan Z. Smith further shows that sacred places often develop not in symbolic centers but on social and geographic peripheries, where they function politically to interrogate, disrupt, and escape the hegemonic power of the center.¹⁵ These theoretical advances have been extremely helpful in examining the displacement and re-emplacement of religion in modern and modernizing China.

Around the turn of the twentieth century, in their struggle to modernize China according to Enlightenment ideals, Chinese elites claimed that the Chinese had never been religious. Meanwhile, they worked with the state to appropriate Buddhist, Daoist, or folk-religious temples as sites for new schools incorporating a Westernized modern

curriculum. This movement, often called the *Miaochan xingxue* 庙产兴学, or "converting temple properties to establish schools," called for the destruction of traditional temples and the introduction of new schools of modern education.¹⁶ These same attitudes became radicalized in mainland China under Communist rule, especially during the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), when all temples, mosques, and churches were closed and all religious activities were banned. Many religious buildings were torn down, and the rest were converted for secular use as factories, public schools, government offices, or gathering halls of the Communist Party. Interestingly, religious eradication failed. Religion survived, and began to revive in the late 1970s. The surviving beliefs have sought embodiment in practice and in the emplacement of sacred space.

The Chinese Communist Party and state has established a complex institution to regulate religion.¹⁷ The major control apparatus for religious affairs is the United Front Department (*Tongzhanbu* 统战部, hereafter UFD) of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). The UFD is in charge of making religious policies and rallying religious leaders around the CCP. The daily administration of religious affairs is the task of the Religious Affairs Bureau (RAB); at the national level the bureau was renamed the State Administration of Religious Affairs (*Guojia zongjiao shiwuju* 国家宗教事务局, hereafter SARA). Its duties include processing requests for approval of the opening of temples, churches, and mosques; of special religious gatherings and activities; and of the appointment of leaders of religious associations. The SARA has sub-branches at the province, prefecture, and county levels, responsible for addressing religious affairs at each level.¹⁸ Meanwhile, the Ministry of Public Security (*Gonganbu* 公安部) deals with illegal religious activities and monitors some religious groups and active leaders, while the Ministry of State Security (*Guo'an bu* 国安部) monitors religious activities involved with foreigners. In 1999, a special "610 Office" (*610 bangongshi* 610 办公室) was created to monitor and suppress the so-called evil cults. The 610 Office has branches at various administrative levels. Instead of wiping out religions, however, these regulations have resulted in a complex religious field composed of legal and illegal activities and groups, as well as those of uncertain status.

10 Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*.

11 Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling*.

12 Stump, *The Geography of Religion*.

13 Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*.

14 Tuan, *Space and Place*.

15 J. Z. Smith, *To Take Place*.

16 See P. R. Katz's study of these events in his *Religion in China and Its Modern Fate*.

17 For more on the control apparatus for religious affairs, see Katz, *Religion in China and Its Modern Fate*, 65–84.

18 In spring 2018, the State Administration of Religious Affairs merged into UFD, and the lower level RAB is being merged into UFD at the provincial and municipal levels too.

Over the last several decades, the number of religious believers in China has continuously increased. Moreover, religious believers have strenuously contended with the party-state to reclaim religious sites, restore and construct buildings on traditional religious sites, and sometimes occupy state-owned or collectively owned spaces and construct new religious buildings. In short, the contention for space and place has been central in the religious revivals during the last several decades in China. In this atlas, we are able to offer an overall view of sacred places for the first time.

To put the religious sites in their social, political, and cultural contexts, we provide social and demographic profiles of adherents of each of the five religions recognized by the state in the first part of the atlas. We also sketch some of the characteristics of adherents of gray-market and black-market religions. In the second part, we present the demographic characteristics of the general population in each province, along with pertinent religious events. While the semi-legal and illegal groups are frequently mentioned in the second part, we have not mapped these groups because of the lack of geographical information.

Religious Organizations in the Economic Census of China

While administrative documents may record some rough estimates of the number of religious venues, little data has hitherto been available on the distribution of religious communities. Fortunately, through Dr. George Hong's introduction, Dr. Shuming Bao from the China Data Center at the University of Michigan approached me in 2009 with a dataset extracted from a 2004 Chinese Economic Census. The file includes 72,887 religious sites from all of China's 31 provinces and province-level regions and municipalities. From the outset, we knew this list certainly did not represent all religious sites in China. First, the economic census only listed a church, temple, or mosque if it was officially registered with the government. But there are many religious communities in China that cannot register or choose not to register with the government authorities. We have been in parts of China where unregistered groups certainly outnumber officially sanctioned ones. Second, given the economic focus of the census, it overlooked a great number of places whose annual income was too small to record. In some northwestern cities of China, such as Lanzhou, the census focused primarily on mosques that doubled as economic enterprises. When we visited the city in 2016, we discovered nearly three dozen churches not mentioned in the census, even though some

of them already existed when the economic census was conducted in 2004.

From the outset, we knew that the 2004 Economic Census would not give us a comprehensive overview of all religious sites in China. On the other hand, this data set did enable us to study the spatial distribution of religions in ways not previously possible. Previously, scholars were limited to conducting case studies and regional studies focusing on a single religion, and it was not possible to gain an accurate sense of large-scale developments in religion in contemporary China. This data set, however, gave us the name, location, leaders' names, relative size, and reported annual income of religious organizations throughout China. Furthermore, even though not all religious sites were included, all provinces were represented.

Initially, our team had little experience in the technologies needed to clean and verify the data. Beginning in 2010, I assembled a small team of graduate students to begin cleaning the data. We encountered many challenges along the way. First, there was a considerable amount of inconsistency in the way that geographic data, such as the names of cities, towns, and villages, was recorded in the census. In addition, there was much conflicting information in the data that needed further examination. The most common problem was that the name of a religious establishment indicated that it was located in one village while its address pointed to a different location. According to the name of site #19238, for example, it was a church in Zhangzhuang Village 张庄村 in Zengfumiao Town 增府庙乡 of Changge City 长葛市, but it was associated with an address in Niutang Village 牛堂村 of Changge City 长葛市. Nearly one-fifth of the sites included in this dataset needed to be examined on a case-by-case basis.

Finally, the administrative geography of China has been revised and changed since 2004. At the time of the census, many sites belonged to one administrative division but are now located in another one. Sometimes an address was misspelled, or it turned out that there were two villages with the same name in the same region. All of these inconsistencies made cleaning the census data tedious and time-consuming. After seven years of effort, we have developed the dataset for informative description and analysis, and the results are incorporated in this atlas.

An Overview of This Atlas

By early 2017, we had finally cleaned the data as much as possible. Where the census listed a specific address, we were able to pinpoint the corresponding site. Where the census listed only a village or township name, we were able to find coordinates for the administrative center of

that location. We estimate that at least 90 percent of the religious sites in the dataset are associated with points located within 5 km of the real site. We have recorded the coordinates for these points, as well as the names and addresses of the associated religious sites. These will be made publicly available in a data archive. We are confident that this list of sites and coordinates can serve as a benchmark for scholars who will continue to expand, refine, and correct the information gleaned from the dataset in the future.

There are other sources that include religious sites along with their coordinates, such as Google Maps, Google Earth, Baidu Map, and Gaode Map. At present, however, none of these online resources provides information on a greater number of religious sites than the 2004 economic census, nor do they provide more systematic information on the religious sites included in that census. Yet even in the 2004 Economic Census, underreporting appears to be a problem in many counties and provinces. The underreporting of religious sites in the 2004 census is most conspicuous in Beijing, Tianjin, and Hainan Province. Focusing on these three provinces, we experimented with various ways of collecting additional information on religious sites, including thorough searching of websites and books, contacting local residents, and on-site visits. The maps of Beijing, Tianjin, and Hainan Province reflect the more recent information we collected. However, due to the cost of these methods, we were not able to employ them in other areas before producing this atlas.

The distribution of religious sites associated with the five red-market religions in each province is visualized on a point map using five different colors. However, many religious sites associated with one or more religions may occupy identical or adjacent locations, making it difficult to recognize them on the map. We have tried to show the location of as many sites as possible by arranging the points in layers: on each map, the points depicting sites associated with the religion best represented on that map (i.e., the religion associated with the greatest number of sites in that province) form the bottom layer, and each successive layer contains the points associated with the next best represented religion on the map. Unfortunately, it is not possible to represent each and every site on the point map. To complement the point map, we have provided a bar graph and a frequency table with information on the number of sites associated with the five religions at the prefecture level. A pie chart shows the proportions of the five religions in each province. Some provincial maps also include one or more inset maps showing locations where there is a high density of sites associated with multiple religions.

In an effort to contextualize the distribution of religious sites in the 2004 economic census, we provide information on the sociodemographic characteristics of China's provinces and their counties and prefectures. Many of our observations draw on data collected in China's 2000 and 2010 Population Census. The two censuses provide key demographic characteristics at the county and province levels, including level of education, urbanization, immigration, age structure, sex ratio, and family structure. In addition, by utilizing information from two time points, we are able to depict demographic changes at the county level.

In order to better understand the social location of religious followers in China, we mainly consulted three kinds of survey data: the 2007 Chinese Spiritual Life Survey (CSLS), the 2010 China General Social Survey (CGSS), and the 2010 Chinese census. The CSLS, which yielded one of the best datasets available for studying religion in China, was conducted by Horizonkey Information and Consulting Co., Ltd. Focusing on the spiritual life of Chinese residents, this dataset includes information on people's religious life and spiritual pursuits. This survey used multistage probability sampling and included 7,021 respondents randomly selected from 56 locales in mainland China, including 3 metropolitan cities, 6 province-level capital cities, 11 prefecture-level cities, 16 county-level cities, and 20 administrative villages. In our analysis, we mainly relied on the CSLS 2007, unless otherwise noted.

The CGSS is one of the most prominent surveys of the Chinese population in mainland China. The project, launched jointly by Renmin University of China and the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, conducts multistage stratified national probability surveys. As a survey that was designed to survey general social values in China, the 2010 CGSS, conducted independently by Renmin University, included a Religion Module to investigate the religious life of Chinese people. We used the CGSS 2010 to complement the CSLS 2007. With a response rate of 73.2 percent, the 2010 CGSS surveyed 12,000 individuals randomly selected from 125 cities, townships, and villages, covering a wide range of administrative units across mainland China.

Relying on the 2007 CSLS, the 2010 CGSS, and the 2010 Chinese Population Census, we compared the sociodemographic characteristics of the religious population with that of the general population. Aiming to better understand the religious contours in China, we specifically compared the distribution of age, gender, educational attainment, and area of residence (urban or rural) of religious followers with the rest of the respondents in the survey sample. Because of the political significance

of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the Chinese Communist Youth League (CCYL), we also compared the proportion of the members of each organization in the religious population with the rest of the respondents in the surveys or in the general population. Even though the CCP and CCYL officially prohibit their members from believing in or practicing religion, in reality the majority of them do hold spiritual or religious beliefs and practices. To roughly estimate the proportion of CCP and CCYL members in the general population, we used data from the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China website and from Xinhua.net.¹⁹ As of 2009, which is close in time to the surveys of CSLS survey in 2007 and the 2010 CGSS, the number of CCP members was almost 78 million²⁰ and the number of CCYL members was about 75.5 million.²¹ According to the 2010 Population Census, about 17 percent of the total population of 1,339,724,852

were under age 14.²² Therefore, among the adult population aged 15 or above, 7 percent were CCP members and nearly 7 percent were CCYL members. Thus, 7 percent is the baseline reference for religious beliefs and practices of the CCP or CCYL members in the population.

Due to political restrictions and practical obstacles, it has been extremely difficult to collect or acquire data on religious organizations and individuals in China. By piecing together available census and survey data, supplemented with news sources and scholarly studies, we are able to present this description and visualization of the geographical location of religious sites and the social location of religious followers. I hope this first attempt will lead to more and better scholarly studies of religion in contemporary China.

19 State Council of the People's Republic of China, "The Number of Chinese Communist Party Members."

20 State Council of the People's Republic of China, "The Number of Chinese Communist Party Members Reached 77,995,000 by the End of 2009."

21 Xinhuanet, "The Number of Chinese Communist Youth League Members Reaches 75,439,000."

22 National Bureau of Statistics of China, "Communique ... on Major Figures of the 2010 Population Census [1] (No. 1)"; "Communique ... on Major Figures of the 2010 Population Census [1] (No. 2)."

PART 1

The Three Markets of Religion in China

∴

Introduction of Triple Markets

The triple market theory helps make sense of the complex religious situation in contemporary China.¹ It differentiates three types of religious organizations, individuals, and activities. The Communist party-state treats these three types of religions very differently, pursuing strategies ranging from co-option to eradication. In response to the varied control measures of the party-state, different types of religions have manifested different responsive patterns. Moreover, because both the control measures and religious groups have changed over time, some religious groups have shifted from one market to another. To observers, the red-market religions are readily visible, the gray-market religions are less visible because of their ambiguous legal status, and the black-market religions are least visible because of their underground nature. In order to present a fuller picture of the religious landscape in China today, in addition to the visible religious sites that have been officially approved, we must also take into account the less visible religions in the gray and black markets. The triple market theory helps to make invisible religions visible.

The red market in China comprises all legal (officially permitted) religious organizations, believers, and religious activities. After the CCP took power on the mainland in 1949, the newly founded People's Republic of China (PRC) sanctioned five religions—Buddhism, Daoism, Islam, Protestantism, and Catholicism—and established the so-called patriotic associations to control them.² During the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), all religious organizations were banned, religious venues were closed down, and religious activities were prohibited. Since 1979 the party-state has adopted a relatively more pragmatic religious policy permitting these associations to re-establish a limited number of temples, mosques, and churches. Although the officially approved religious groups under the patriotic associations have enjoyed an enlarged social space of freedom in the last several decades, the red market is not a free market. The party-state not only bars other religions from entering into this market, it also imposes many restrictions on the approved religious groups, such

as limiting the construction and renovation of religious buildings, limiting the frequency and size of religious activities, controlling the selection of clergy, demanding political loyalty in addition to religious piety, and so on.

The black market comprises all illegal (officially banned) religious organizations, believers, and religious activities that are conducted underground or in secrecy. Before 2000, the black market included all Protestant house churches, the underground Catholic Church, and new or traditional sects seen by the party-state as “counterrevolutionary organizations” or “evil cults.” A major segment of the black market was comprised of underground Catholics. When the PRC was founded, the anti-communist pope Pius XII prohibited any collaboration between Chinese Catholics and the Communist government and its organizations. The Chinese party-state responded by jailing many Catholic leaders. Since 1979, an underground Catholic Bishops Conference has operated parallel to the national association. Similarly, many indigenous Protestant churches initially refused to join the national church system. They resorted to gatherings at private homes, which is why they are often called “house churches” (*jiating jiaohui* 家庭教会). Since around 2000, the party-state has reduced its crackdowns on most of the house churches and underground Catholics, thus moving large parts of the black market into the gray market. However, some Catholic bishops and priests and some Protestant leaders have been treated as black-market offenders and have been jailed or pursued by police. Currently, the black market comprises about two dozen “evil cults” banned by the government. Some of them are heretical Christian groups, such as the Church of the Almighty God (*Quannengshen jiaohui* 全能神教会), also known as Eastern Lightning (*Dongfangshandian* 东方闪电), and the Three Ranks of Servants (*Sanban puren* 三班仆人). Others are new religions rooted in Chinese tradition or recently imported from other parts of the world, such as the True Buddha Sect (*Zhen fo zong* 真佛宗) and the Unification Church (统一教).

The gray market comprises all religious and spiritual organizations, practitioners, and activities with ambiguous legal status. These groups, individuals, and activities lie in a gray area of religious regulation and may be perceived as both legal and illegal, or neither legal nor illegal. The gray market is the key element of the triple-market model. It can be analyzed via two general categories: explicitly religious and implicitly religious phenomena. Explicitly religious phenomena include illegal activities conducted by

1 The triple market theory was first articulated in an article (F. Yang, “The Red, Black, and Gray Markets”) and was subsequently modified and incorporated into F. Yang, *Religion in China*.

2 For further analysis of the relationships between official religious organizations and the government, see Bays, “Chinese Protestant Christianity Today”; Madsen, *China's Catholics*, 25–49; Gladney, “Islam in China”; Yang and Wei, “The Bailin Buddhist Temple.”

legal religious organizations and individuals. For example, religious clergy of the official patriotic associations may venture out to proselytize at unapproved underground churches. Meanwhile, many groups in the gray market are sponsored by government officials, for either political or economic reasons. For example, many officials in local governments are eager to contribute to building Buddhist and Daoist temples because they wish to attract overseas Chinese investment and strengthen cultural ties with overseas Chinese. The Bureau of Tourism may renovate or construct some temples for the purpose of tourism while stationing staff dressed as priests in them to attend to tourists' religious expressions. Many villages and towns have revived popular practices, including building temples dedicated to ancestors, historic heroes, and immortals who have become tutelary gods.

Government restriction of religion influences the dynamics of the tripartite markets. The black market is a logical consequence of heavy regulation. When government tries to restrict and eliminate certain religious groups, a black market will emerge in spite of high costs to individuals. And there are always people who are willing to pay a higher price for their religion, even to the point of sacrificing one's life. A recent example is the Beijing Shouwang Church, where several house church leaders refused to join the official Protestant association and have been placed under house arrest since 2011. Further, when the red market of religion is restricted and the black market is suppressed, a gray market will emerge. When people cannot find satisfaction in the red market but are unwilling to risk black-market penalties, the gray market fills the gap. Moreover, the more restrictive and suppressive the regulations, the larger the gray market becomes.

Over time, religious groups may shift from one market to another. Many Qigong groups, operating under the name of "science of health," belonged to the gray market for most of the 1980s and 1990s. In 1999, however, Falun Gong 法轮功, a large Qigong group spreading throughout the country, launched a sit-in surrounding the headquarters

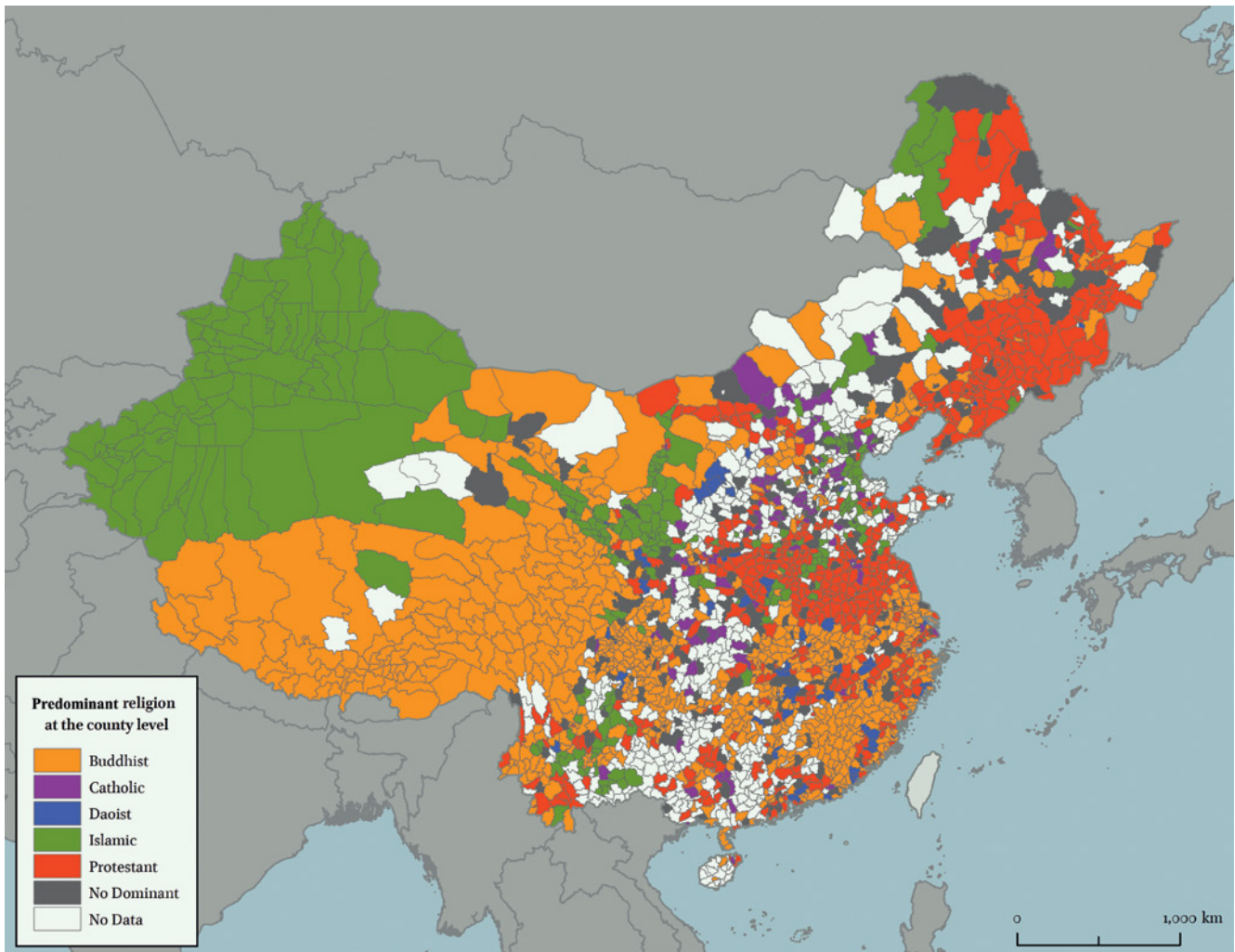
of the CCP. This event irritated the party-state, which ruthlessly suppressed Falun Gong and also disbanded all other Qigong sects, thus driving Qigong practices into the black market. Moreover, through policy adjustments and pressure, the Three-Self Patriotic Movement, the official Protestant association, has reached out and successfully convinced some house churches to be incorporated into the legal group. These churches moved from the gray market to the red market. They obtained legal status and more resources, but at the price of submitting to party-state scrutiny and control. Other market shifts are possible as well. A red-market group can shift to the black or gray market if its leaders decide to pursue more autonomy. For example, between 2013 and 2016, Zhejiang authorities carried out a campaign to remove crosses on church rooftops. Many defiant church leaders were punished, and some pastors were jailed. In response, many ministers within the official association dropped out and began to work with house churches or went underground.

The religious landscape in China is complex, extending over a vast land with diverse geographical terrain, local and ethnic cultures, and political and economic contexts. It is also subject to sudden changes, as China is in the process of rapid modernization. The descriptions of the three markets in the sections that follow can only provide a broad overview of major religious groups at the national level. The five red-market religions are presented in chronological order, according to the year in which the corresponding national association was established: Buddhism (1953), Islam (1953), Protestantism (1954), Daoism (1957), and Catholicism (1957). The gray-market religions vary widely and have fluid boundaries, and thus we could only describe a set of distinctive examples, including Confucianism, folk religion, house churches, underground Catholic churches, and the Mao cult. There is a lack of scholarly studies on the black-market religions, with the exception of Falun Gong. We have provided a profile of each of these religious groups based on the available published evidence.

The Red Market: Legal Religions

In the beginning of the twenty-first century, the government-approved sites of the five religions, as recorded in the 2004 Economic Census, show some interesting patterns of spatial distribution. Map 1 shows the predominant religion at the county level, which is the religion with the highest number of sites in each county. Islamic mosques are predominant in most counties in the northwest, and Buddhist temples in the southwest. This is not surprising, given that the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region and Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region are in the northwest and Xizang (Tibet) Autonomous Region in the southwest; these ethnic groups are traditionally

associated with these particular religions. Buddhism is also predominant in most of Qinghai, Gansu, Inner Mongolia, and many counties in south-central and south-east China. What is surprising, however, is that Protestant Christianity has become the predominant religion in central China between the Yellow River and the Huai River, in many counties along the Yangtze River, and also in most counties in the northeast. Catholicism is most prominent in many counties in Hebei, some counties of Inner Mongolia, Heilongjiang, and various counties in the middle. The distribution pattern of each religion is depicted in the following sections.



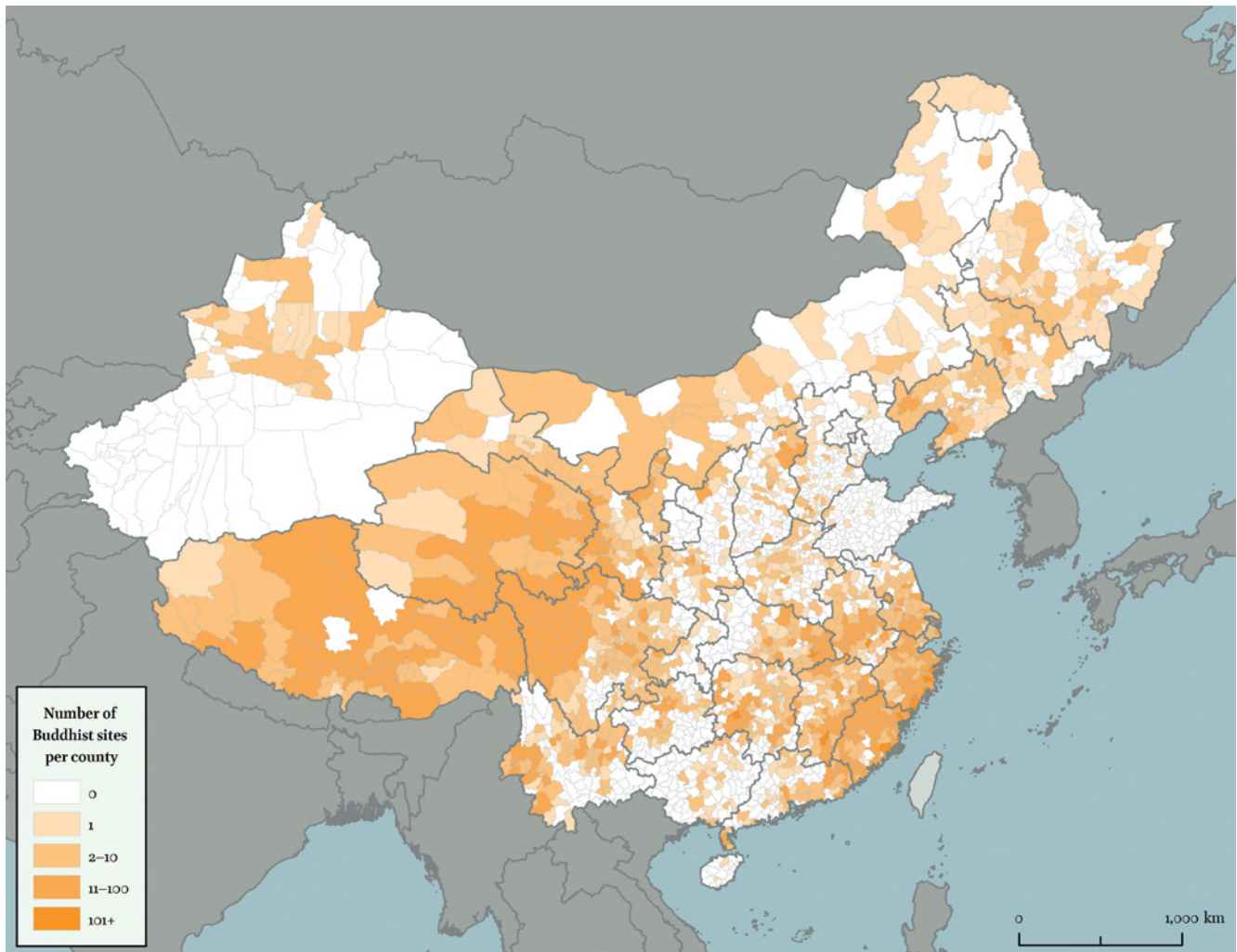
MAP 1 Predominant religion at the county level.

1. Buddhism

Buddhism, known as Fojiao 佛教 [Buddha teaching], has a history of about two thousand years in China. In 1953, Buddhists became the first religious group to be organized as an official, national association in the PRC. Many of the regional Buddhist clerical and lay organizations had already formed vast networks in China during the first half of the twentieth century. In the Republican era (1912–1949), especially in Shanghai, Buddhist associations made sharp distinctions between their religion and the “superstitions” of village temples. This new vision of Buddhism coincided with the new society envisioned by the Westernization projects launched by the Republican regime.¹ At the same time, Buddhist clerics and groups needed to organize to protect temples and other assets during a tumultuous period. They founded

multiple associations and competed for the recognition and resources of the government. Finally, the Buddhist Association of the Republic of China (*Zhonghua Fojiao hui* 中華佛教會, hereafter BAROC) became the official representative of Buddhism under the Guomindang (also known as the Kuomintang or Nationalist) regime.

In 1949, the BAROC moved to Taiwan along with the nationalist government. The CCP felt it necessary to have an official representative organ of Buddhism for its unofficial diplomacy. Meanwhile, some pro-communist Buddhists felt an urgent need to cooperate with the new regime, but most did not. In 1952, the Peace Conference of Asia and Pacific Regions was held in Beijing, during which Chinese monks joined Buddhists from eight countries in signing a call for international peace. This led the Communists to realize that Buddhism, as an influential world religion, could be utilized to endorse its foreign policy. With the support



MAP 2 Number of Buddhist sites per county.

1 Goossaert, “Republican Church Engineering.”

of the Communist Party, 20 Buddhists formed a preparatory committee in November 1952.² Subsequently, the inaugural meeting of the national Buddhist Association of China (*Zhongguo Fojiao xiehui* 中国佛教协会, hereafter BAC) was held from May 29 to June 3, 1953. While the BAC was never officially dismissed, even during the Cultural Revolution, it was hardly visible until it resurfaced in 1980.

According to official numbers from the current BAC website, there are about 33,000 Buddhist temples and monasteries and 240,000 Buddhist monks and nuns.³ There are higher concentrations of Buddhist temples located in southeast and southwest China, but they are scattered in most of the other counties throughout the country (Map 2).

BAC positions itself as a corporatist body representing Buddhist practitioners and their concerns to the government and assisting party and government leaders in implementing religious policies. Since 1980, a focus of BAC has been the propagation of “Humanist Buddhism” (*renjian fojiao* 人间佛教), which refers to an attempt to integrate Buddhist practices into everyday life and to serve both the Chinese people and the CCP regime. The association publishes four journals: *Fayin* 法音 [Dharma voice], *Foxue yanjiu* 佛学研究 [Buddhist research], *Fojiao wenhua* 佛教文化 [Buddhist culture], and *Zhongguo foxue* 中国佛学 [Chinese Buddhist studies]. These journals serve as venues for the scholarly study of Buddhism, discussions of Buddhist art and culture, and dogmatic discussions.⁴

The BAC is directed by the SARA. Local Buddhist associations at the county, prefecture, and province levels are linked by overlapping membership but not as chapters of a single association.⁵ For example, Xuecheng 学诚, the current president of the National Buddhist Association, is also the head of the Buddhist Association of Fujian Province. Many of the regional Buddhist associations support Buddhist academies, where monks and nuns receive training.

According to the national BAC in Beijing, there are 38 Buddhist academies (seminaries) in the country, not counting Tibetan Buddhist or Theravada academies. The coursework in these academies include courses in Buddhist philosophy and history, but these schools also require students to take courses in English, Chinese

philosophy, Indian philosophy, Western philosophy, law and political policies, and elementary computer science.⁶ Many of the Buddhist academies in China predate 1949. The Minnan Buddhist Academy, for example, was founded in 1925 at Nanputuo Temple 南普陀寺 in Fujian Province. Many monks graduated from the academy before the invasion of Japan in 1937, which forced the academy to close. The academy was reopened in 1986 and provides preparatory courses, an undergraduate program, and a master's degree program. To date, over one thousand monks and nuns have graduated from the academy (Photo 3).⁷

The two main branches of Buddhism in China are Han Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism (Map 3). There are also a number of Theravada Buddhist temples in Yunnan Province. Tibetan Buddhism is not only influential in the Tibet Autonomous Region of China and the surrounding Tibetan areas in other provinces, but also in other regions around the Himalayas, such as Bhutan and Nepal, as well as Mongolia. In recent years, Tibetan Buddhism has become popular in some metropolitan areas in the eastern parts of China. Buddhism spread to Tibet in the seventh century and incorporated some elements of a local religion, Bon. Tibetan Buddhism is composed of four major sects: Nyingma 宁玛, which is the oldest one, Kagyu 噶举, Sakya 萨迦, and Gelug 格鲁. Gelug (*Gelupai* 格鲁派) is also called “Yellow Hat.” Kagyu, which narrowly refers to the “Red Hat” sect, can sometimes be applied to all non-Gelug sects. The two most famous monks, the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama, who are believed to be incarnations of Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva and Amitābha Buddha, practice Gelug Buddhism. Most Tibetan monasteries are in western regions, such as Qinghai, Tibet, and western Sichuan (Photo 4). Some are in Inner Mongolia and the Northeast.

Temples identifying as Han Buddhist are found in most provinces. There are a variety of sects, although many that were historically prominent are now marginalized or have disappeared completely. One of the most common forms of Han Buddhism is the Pure Land lineage (*jingtu zong* 净土宗), which developed as early as the sixth century CE; it focuses on the veneration of Amitābha Buddha (*amituofo* 阿弥陀佛), who is thought to preside over a vast paradise in another universe in the west. Practitioners often feel compelled to honor Amitābha to advance their spiritual progress toward reincarnation in the western paradise. According to Pure Land Buddhism, the main

2 Welch, *Buddhism under Mao*, 472.

3 For more information, see Buddhist Association of China, “A Brief Introduction.”

4 For detailed information about these Buddhist journals, see Buddhist Association of China, “The Journals of the Buddhist Association of China.”

5 Ashiwa and Wank, “The Politics of a Reviving Buddhist Temple.”

6 Buddhist Academy of China, “Education and Teaching.”

7 For a brief history of the academy, see Minnan Buddhist Academy, “A Brief Introduction”; see also Travagnin, “The Impact of Politics on the Minnan Buddhist Institute.”



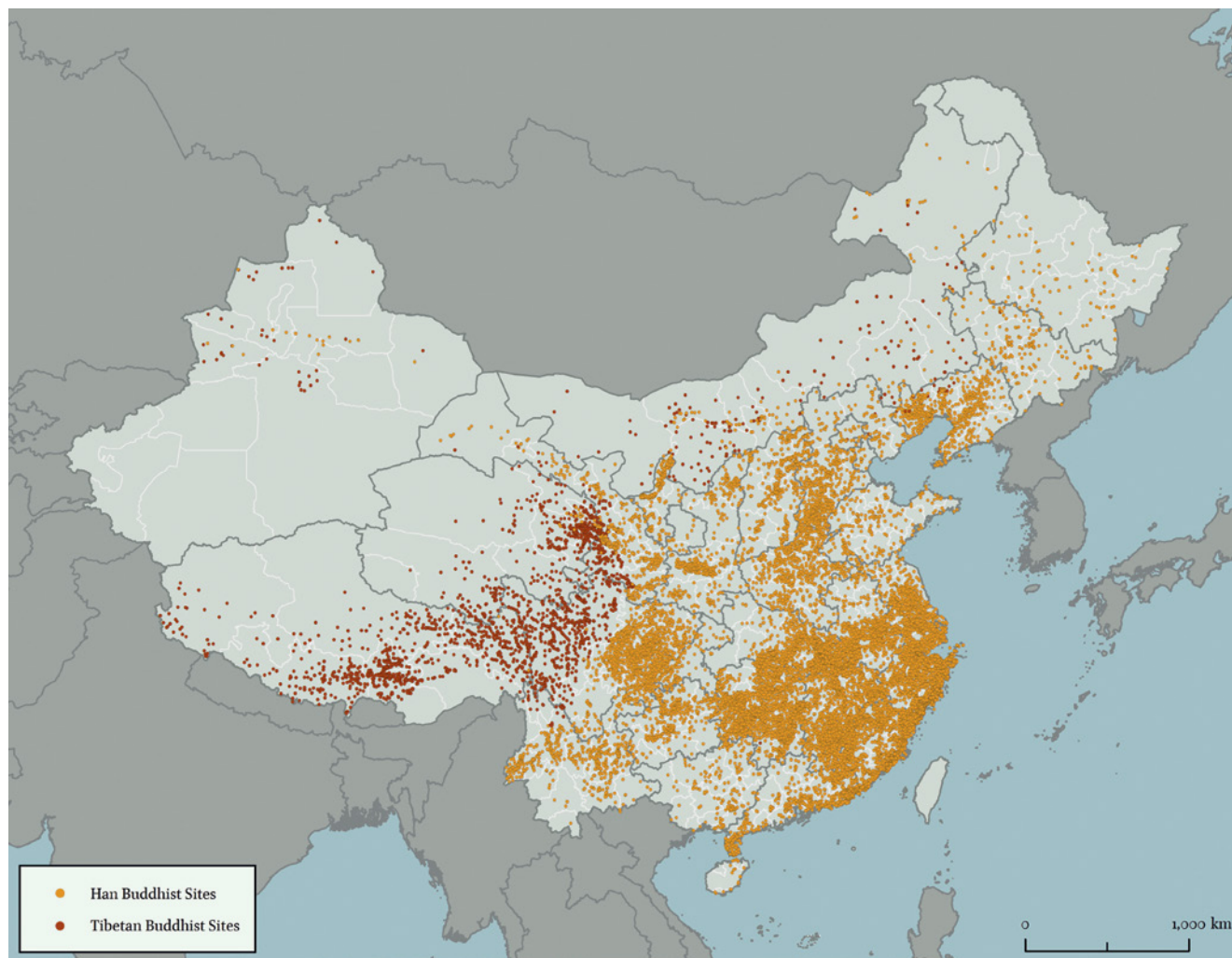
PHOTO 3 The inaugural transmission of second-tier ordinations at Famen Monastery in the fall of 2014.
CREDIT: ZHENCHAN SHI.

way to accumulate merits is to repeatedly recite the name of Amitābha (*nianfo* 念佛). Compared with the practices required by other Buddhist traditions, such as intense meditation, reciting Amitābha's name is often touted as an accessible and easier path for lay followers.

Another influential tradition of Han Buddhist sites is Chan, or Zen (*chanzong* 禅宗). The Chan tradition is attributed to Bodhidharma (*Putidamo* 菩提达摩), a Central Asian or Indian monk, who came to China and founded this practice in the sixth century. Chan Buddhism gained popularity off and on throughout imperial China, and often took on local characteristics in different parts of China. In general, Chan Buddhism emphasizes sudden awakening (*dunwu* 顿悟), a sudden insight into the Buddha-nature (*foxing* 佛性) of sentient beings or the void (*kong* 空) of all things that typically occurs under the instruction of a Buddhist master. A mythical and personal understanding of Buddha-nature or the void, instead of mere knowledge of sutras and doctrine, is a core element of Chan Buddhism. In dynastic China, Chan Buddhism was popularized among the educated elites, especially those who retired from, were forced out of, or

failed to obtain an imperial office, as reflected in their paintings, poetry, and various writings.

Despite the many different expressions of Buddhism in China, there are a few practices that are quite common throughout the country. Most practitioners of Buddhism incorporate some form of meditation into daily life and/or communal rituals. Meditation involves directed thought and reflection, and practitioners attempt to enter into a state of deep concentration and, with practice, arrive at a higher state of consciousness. Through meditation, a Buddhist practitioner trains the body and mind for spiritual enlightenment. Meditation is often cited as an important practice for following the Noble Eightfold Path (*bazhengdao* 八正道). First, meditation allows Buddhists to practice “right mindfulness.” During meditation, Buddhists become intentionally aware of their present ideas, feelings, and bodily actions. Second, meditation helps Buddhists develop “right concentration.” In the act of meditation, Buddhists cultivate clear and focused thought. Third, meditation helps Buddhists develop “right view,” which, in turn, strengthens one’s capacity for understanding and enlightenment. It is common for Buddhists



MAP 3 Location of Tibetan and Han Buddhist sites.

to meditate in a seated posture and to direct their attention toward a statue or other idol. The meditating Buddhist may contemplate personal experiences, reflect on selected teachings of the Buddha, or focus on breathing. The object of meditation that a Buddhist chooses depends on the specific goals of each meditation experience and the Buddhist tradition they follow.⁸ At local monasteries or Buddhist centers, masters advise students of Buddhism on the proper techniques, offer suggestions on meditation subjects, and share their own reflections on the Buddha's teachings.

Written scriptures also play an important part among clerical and lay Buddhist groups in China. Texts are sung during ceremonies and scriptures are distributed (often for free) among lay practitioners. Many different canons of Buddhist scriptures developed in China over the centuries. Many of these collections are based on early canons

developed in India and central Asia, which include the *vinaya* (monastic codes), *sūtras* (scriptures), and commentaries. These three parts of the canon are often referred to as the “three baskets” of the Buddha’s teachings. There are various canons in use among Han and Tibetan Buddhist organizations, which include translations of various sutras, as well as writings by significant commentators.⁹ Unlike the Bible or Qur’an, however, people rarely possess their own copies of a Buddhist canon. Not all lay practitioners have an interest in reading Buddhist scriptures. Those who do often refer to “morality books” (*shanshu* 善书). These are often scriptures revealed through a spirit-medium and written in vernacular languages, and they are often freely distributed at Chinese Buddhist temples.¹⁰ This was a popular practice of folk religion, and the mixing of Buddhism and folk religion was very common.

8 Greene, “Meditation, Repentance, and Visionary Experience,” 5.

9 J. Wu, “The Chinese Buddhist Canon,” 363.

10 G. Fisher, *From Comrades to Bodhisattvas*, 140.



PHOTO 4 A lecture at the Labrang Monastery (Gansu).
CREDIT: WEIJIAN DENG.

Another common feature of Buddhism in China is celebrations in honor of the birth of the historical Buddha, on the eighth day of the fourth month of the lunar calendar. Other common days for pilgrimage and gathering are the celebrations of the enlightenment of the Buddha (the eighth day of the twelfth month) and the passing of the Buddha into nirvana (the fifteenth day of the second month). Some Chinese Buddhists, however, celebrate all three events of the Buddha's life on a single day. This day, Buddha Day, is observed during the first full moon of the fourth month of the lunar calendar. To celebrate the life events of the Buddha, Chinese Buddhists visit local temples to offer flowers, fruits, incense, prayers, and donations. Buddhist temples also host local festivals, which may include fireworks, colored smoke displays, formal teachings, music, and dance. Across China, festivals vary in complexity and scale.

In some parts of China, Buddhist temples receive financial support from local officials to host large and elaborate festivals that attract visitors from around the country and the world. Since the end of the Cultural Revolution, the Chinese government has embraced Buddhist festivals as an opportunity to strengthen tourism and develop local

economies. It is common for local officials to play a role in promoting these festivals as celebrations of Chinese traditional culture.¹¹ Many festivals involve pilgrimages to regional mountain temples, especially the four sacred Buddhist mountains in China: Mount Wutai 五台山 in Shanxi, Mount Emei 峨眉山 in Sichuan, Mount Putuo 普陀山 in Zhejiang, and Mount Jiuhua 九华山 in Anhui.¹²

Many ideas about the supernatural are common among Buddhists in China. The first teacher of Buddhism, Shakyamuni (*shijiamoni* 释迦牟尼), is believed to have attained full enlightenment while meditating under a peepal tree (*puti shu* 菩提树). Buddhists believe that Buddhahood is attainable for all people. Any person can become a Buddha by nurturing the Buddha-nature that every human possesses. In this sense, all people are equal; all are capable of achieving enlightenment and transcendence. Upon reaching Buddhahood, a person ceases to exist in any spiritual or material form. It is common to hear Buddhist monks, nuns, and lay leaders exhort devotees to strive for enlightenment (*kaiwu* 开悟). One of the most

11 Ryan and Gu, "Constructionism and Culture in Research," 170.

12 Robson, "Buddhist Sacred Geography," 1383.

prominent ideas is the notion that sentient beings should model their thoughts and actions on the past Buddhas (*fotuo* 佛陀) and bodhisattvas (*pusa* 菩萨) who have lived at various times and places in the universe. While many Buddhists believe that all people have the potential to become a Buddha, most regard Buddhas and Bodhisattvas as spiritual beings like gods, spirits, or angels, who can be called upon for rescue from danger or for salvation from the suffering in this world and alleviation in the Pure Land of another world.

Most Buddhists in China also view the sum of a person's deeds and actions in this and in previous lives as determining their path of rebirth in future lives. This notion, called karma (*ye* 業), stems from the idea stressed by Buddhist philosophers that all phenomena are inherently empty (*kong* 空). Every cosmic process has its beginning and ending; nothing is eternal. Everything has its formation, existence, destruction, and emptiness, just as every human experiences the cycle of living, illness, and dying. The repeated cycle of living, dying, and rebirth is called *samsāra* (*lunhui* 轮回), and when a person achieves Buddhahood, he/she will be liberated from suffering and the repeating cycle of life. In general, good karma that a person has accumulated in past lifetimes will result in happiness in a person's present life; bad karma will bring suffering in the next life.

It is difficult to determine the number of Buddhists in China. The BAC and its affiliated temples and monasteries do not maintain membership lists, except for monks and nuns. Many believers may not engage in regular practices, and many people who burn incense sticks in temples may not be more than casual tourists. However, in surveys we may use two criteria to identify Buddhists: self-identification with Buddhism and a claim of "having taken refuge in the Three Jewels" (*guiyi sanbao* 皈依三宝), which is a ritual somewhat comparable to Christian baptism. Like baptism, taking refuge in the Three Jewels signifies a person's commitment to the Buddha, Dharma (teachings), and Sanga (community). Unlike baptism, which is a unique event, a Buddhist may take refuge with multiple masters at different temples. In the 2007 Chinese Spiritual Life Survey, about 18 percent of the respondents self-identified with Buddhism, which corresponded to about 200 million adults in China, a surprisingly large number compared with the BAC claim of about 100 million Buddhists. However, among the respondents with Buddhist identities, only about 9 percent said they had taken refuge. This indicates that 90 percent of the self-identified Buddhists are cultural Buddhists who do not have a religious commitment.

TABLE 1 *Demographic characteristics of Buddhists and others (%)*

	Buddhists	Others
Age group*		
16–59	88.7	90.8
60 or above	11.3	9.2
Gender***		
Male	40.3	49.2
Female	59.7	50.8
Educational attainment		
Middle school or below	61.7	61.8
High/vocational school	28.7	27.2
College or above (including some college)	9.6	11.0
Residential area		
Urban	37.7	36.8
Rural	62.3	63.3
Political affiliation**		
CCP	3.8	6.0
CCYL	10.3	10.6
Others	85.9	83.5
<i>Total number of cases</i>	<i>1,267</i>	<i>5,753</i>

Notes: (1) CCP: Chinese Communist Party. CCYL: Chinese Communist Youth League; (2) Numbers do not always add up to 100 due to rounding; (3) two-tailed *t*-test *** $p < .001$ ** $p < .01$ * $p < .05$.

Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of self-identified Buddhists in comparison with the others polled in the 2007 Chinese Spiritual Life Survey. Over 11 percent of Buddhists were 60 years old or older, which is a slightly larger proportion than that of the other respondents in the survey; this age difference is statistically significant at the .05 level. Women made up about 60 percent of Buddhists, significantly higher than the proportion of women among other respondents.

The educational levels of Buddhists were not significantly different from those of other respondents (Figure 1). Nearly 62 percent of Buddhists completed middle school or below, almost 29 percent graduated from high school or vocational school, and nearly 10 percent attended college or above.

China has been rapidly urbanized in the past decades.¹³ According to the 2010 Population Census, nearly half of the Chinese population lived in urban areas. The majority

13 State Information Center, "The Past and Future of Urbanization in China."

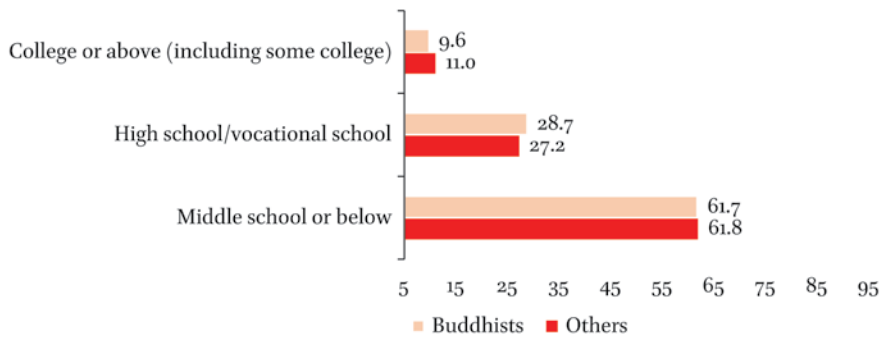


FIGURE 1
Educational attainment of
Buddhists and others (%).

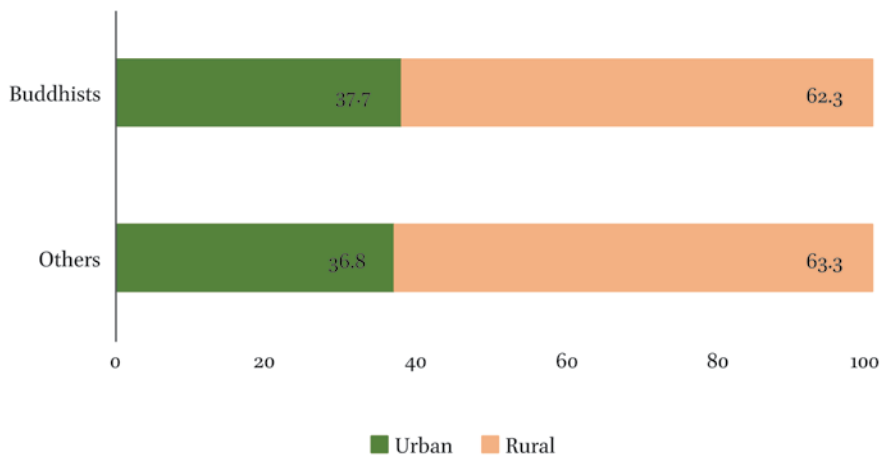


FIGURE 2
Residential area of Buddhists and others (%).

of Buddhists, however (62 percent), lived in rural areas (Figure 2).

Although both CCP and CCYL members are required to uphold atheism as the orthodox ideology, survey findings show that 3.8 percent of self-identified Buddhists were CCP members and 10.3 percent were CCYL members.

2. Islam

The Chinese National Islamic Association (*Zhongguo yisilanjiao xiehui* 中国伊斯兰教协会, or *Yixie* 伊协) was founded in Beijing in 1953 by a group of prominent Muslims, such as Burhan Shehidi 包尔汉·沙希迪. Unlike the other national associations, the Islamic Association was first categorized as an ethnic organization under the bureau of ethnic minority affairs. Ten of the 55 ethnic minorities officially recognized by the PRC, who receive various affirmative-action policy benefits, are considered as traditionally following Islam.¹⁴ Among them, Hui (回) and Uyghur (*Weiwu'er* 维吾尔) are the big two, with 10,586,087 and 10,069,346 people in 2010, respectively, followed by

the third largest group, Kazakhs (*Hasake* 哈萨克), with a population of 1,462,588. The other seven minority groups have significantly smaller populations, with about 621,500 Dongxiang (东乡), 130,607 Salar (*Sala* 撒拉), 51,069 Tajiks (*Tajike* 塔吉克), 20,074 Bonan (*Bao'an* 保安), 18,608 Kyrgyz (*Ke'erkezi* 柯尔克孜), 10,569 Uzbeks (*Wuzibieke* 乌兹别克), and 3,556 Tatars (*Tata'er* 塔塔尔).¹⁵

In 1959, the Islamic Association was moved to the bureau of religious affairs, although the bureau of ethnic minority affairs has continued to administer the ten ethnic minorities through the Islamic Association. Gradually, Islamic associations were established at lower administrative levels (e.g., province, prefecture, county). All of these associations are organizationally independent from each other. That is, the lower-level associations are not branches of the higher-level association. This vast network of Islamic associations has shaped local affairs by executing governmental policies. These associations serve as a bridge between the Chinese party-state and China's Muslim minorities, with the aim of promoting a harmonious relationship between Islam and socialism. The double administration by the bureau of religious affairs and the

14 For details, see China Islamic Association, "The Population of Muslims among Ethnic Minorities in China."

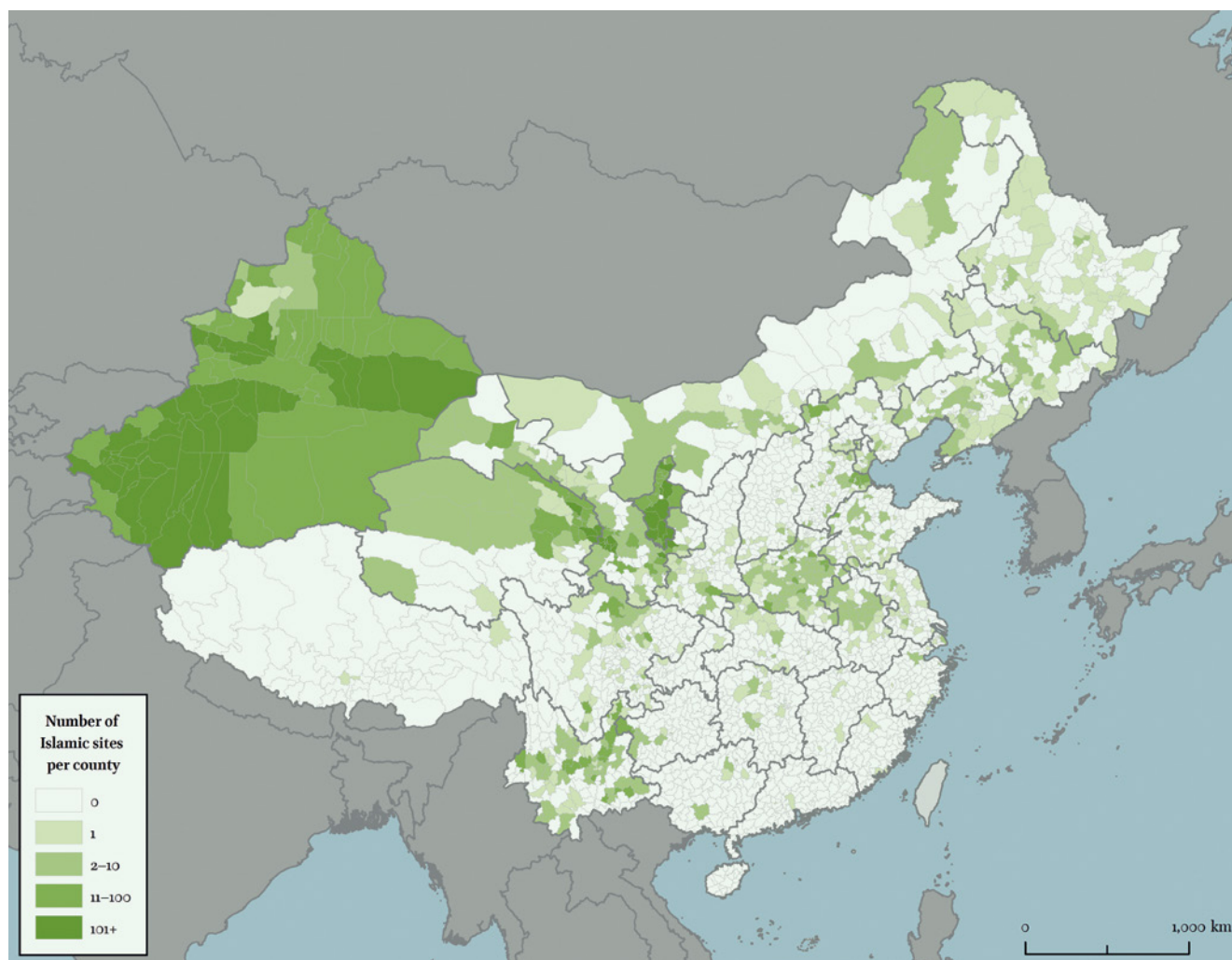
15 National Bureau of Statistics of the PRC, "Tabulation of the 2010 Population of the People's Republic of China."

bureau of ethnic minority affairs seem to have created advantages for Islam in China. The officially registered mosques listed in the 2004 Economic Census numbered 34,305, the largest number of sites associated with any of the five officially recognized religions, which accounts for 47 percent of all religious sites. While mosques are scattered widely throughout China, they are located primarily in the northwest, and Yunnan Province, with pockets of concentration in the north-central and northeast as well (Map 4). However, there are large areas of deserts in Xinjiang and the population density is low in many counties. Map 5 shows the location of Islamic mosques in the 2004 Economic Census.

The day-to-day tasks of Chinese Islamic associations mainly include the education of Muslims, research on Islam, and communicating with other Muslims in China and abroad. The national association has three sections in charge of these tasks. The Education Section (*jiaowubu* 教务部) holds competitions for giving sermons and

Qur'an recital contests; it also monitors the manufacture of halal goods and arranges visits of Muslim leaders within China. The International Section (*guojibu* 国际部) coordinates friendly communications with Muslims abroad. The association is also in charge of pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia (*majia chaojin* 麦加朝觐). There are a limited number of Chinese Muslims permitted to make the pilgrimage each year; any person who wants to go on the trip must first apply through the local Islamic association. The association holds training courses and arranges for transportation and lodging. The Cultural Research Section (*wenhua yanjiubu* 文化研究部) is in charge of publications on the history and culture of Islam. The association publishes a journal, *Chinese Muslim* (*Zhongguo muslim* 中国穆斯林), in both Chinese and Uyghur.

Like other religions in China, Islam is associated with national and regional education centers. The China Islamic Institute (*Zhongguo yisilanjiao jingxueyuan* 中国伊斯兰教经学院) is the national institute, and was founded by



MAP 4 Number of Islamic sites per county.



MAP 5 Location of Islamic sites.

the Chinese Islam Association in Beijing in 1955. The institute recruits students from all over China through national examinations and trains them to be future imams, referred to as *akhoond* (*ahong* 阿訇). Graduate students from this institute often take positions in the local, prefectural, and provincial offices of the SARA, or serve as lecturers at local Islamic institutes (Photo 5). Many students choose to continue their study abroad, in countries like Egypt, Malaysia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Syria. In China, female graduates can also serve as imams or teachers in Islamic academies. In fact, they have played an important role in educating Muslim girls, especially those in remote areas of China.¹⁶

The Islamic Institute also develops and offers senior college and vocational courses for aspiring clerics. Besides the study of the Qur'an in Arabic, students learn history, geography, politics, Chinese literature, and other subjects

in the social sciences.¹⁷ The institute was closed in 1966 at the start of the Cultural Revolution and was not reopened until November 1982. Since the 1980s, nine additional Islamic institutes have been established, such as Xinjiang Islamic Institute in Urumqi and Lanzhou Islamic Institute. The China Islamic Association has hosted many leaders from Muslim countries since 1979, such as Muammar Gaddafi, the former president of Libya, and played an important role in establishing friendly connections with the Chinese Muslim diaspora.¹⁸

Besides the 10 government-run institutes, independent Islamic academies have been established since the 1980s. One of the most respected independent Islamic academies is located in a village outside Dali 大理 in Yunnan

16 Armijo, "Islamic Education in China."

17 IslamiChina, "Islamic Education in China."

18 For more information, see China Islamic Association, "A Brief Introduction to the China Islamic Association." <http://www.chinaislam.net.cn/about/zbyx/about190.html>.



PHOTO 5 Imam Yiping Ma delivers a sermon at Huajuexiang Mosque (Xi'an).
CREDIT: XIN CUI.

Province, which was opened in 1991. Courses offered are similar to those in government-run institutes. Graduates from independent Islamic academies are often sent to villages needing teachers. Only a limited pool of these graduates can continue their studies overseas or become teachers at schools.¹⁹

It is uncertain when Islam was first introduced to China. Liu Chih, in his *Life of Muhammad*, writes that Islam entered China as early as the Sui Dynasty (581–618). According to Liu Chih, the prophet Muhammad 穆罕默德 (570–632) sent his maternal cousin Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, along with three other men, as an envoy to China.²⁰ On the other hand, Dai Kangsheng says that Sa'd's visit as a diplomatic envoy does not necessarily mean that Islam was propagated in China.²¹ He finds evidence of several envoys after Mohammad's lifetime, such as the one sent

by the third caliph, Uthman bin Affan (奥斯曼·伊本·阿凡), to the Tang emperor Gaozong in 651 CE. Another was sent during the Abbasid period to help fight alongside Chinese soldiers to quell a rebellion. In Dai's opinion, the later interactions mark the true beginning of Islam's propagation in the mid-eighth century. The Abbasid veterans settled after the war and intermarried with Chinese women. They became ancestors of many Chinese Muslims. Some historians think that trading routes to China, along the sea and the Silk Road, may have been the most important factor leading to the establishment of foreign Muslim enclaves and the practice of Islam in China.²²

There are several Muslim traditions operating in China. The four most common ones are Qadim (*Gedimu* 格底目), Ikhwani (*Yihewani* 依赫瓦尼), Xidao Tang 西道堂, and Menhuan 门宦. The majority of Chinese Muslims are Qadim Muslims, following Sunni doctrines. There is only a small proportion of Shi'i communities in China, mainly in northwestern China among the Tajik people who live in Tashkurgan County in the Xinjiang Autonomous Region.

19 Armijo, "Islamic Education in China"; Noor, Sikand, and van Bruinessen, *The Madrasa in Asia*.

20 Winters, *Mao or Muhammad*.

21 Kangsheng, "Research on the History of Chinese Islam in China Today."

22 Winters, *Mao or Muhammad*.

Qadim means “ancient” in Arabic. Qadim Muslims try to preserve traditional rules and rituals. They believe in following the orthodox teachings of Sunni Islam and the teachings of the Qur’an and emphasize principles of the Hadith and rituals.

Ikhwani is an interpretation of Islam popularized by Ma Wanfu 马万福 (1853–1934). There are now 10 clerics in Hezhou 河州 (*Linxia* 临夏, Gansu Province). The faction was not popular until the 1940s when it won support from local Muslims in Gansu, Qinghai, and Ningxia provinces. Ikhwani Muslims distinguish themselves by asserting their respect for the Qur’an, opposing all Chinese customs, and rejecting heresy. They oppose kneeling down to people on the grounds that Allah alone deserves worship. The Ikhwani faction is proud of their fidelity to the Qur’an but criticizes Qadim Muslims for being influenced by Chinese customs.

The Menhuan orders are prevalent in the northwest provinces of Gansu, Ningxia, and Qinghai. They include Muslims who follow Sufism, which first became prevalent in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when Arabic and Central Asian Sufis came to China through trading opportunities.²³ Sufism became popular among local people. Four prominent orders of the Menhuan movement include Khufiyya (*Hufiye* 虎夫耶), Jahriyya (*Zhehelinye* 哲赫林耶), Qadiriyya (*Kadilinye* 卡迪林耶), and Kubrawiyya (*Kubuerye* 库布尔耶). Most of the followers think that leaders (*jiaozhu* 教主) have the ability to guide believers to heaven, and a shrine or *qubba* (*gongbei* 拱北) is often built at their tombs.²⁴

The Xidao Tang group was founded by Ma Qixi 马启西 (1857–1914), who claimed independence from Menhuan in 1902 in Lintan 临潭, Gansu Province. The group is also known as “Study the Han Fraction” (*Han xuepai* 汉学派) for interpreting the scripture using Confucianism, as proposed by Liu Zhi 刘智 (1655–1745). In theological matters, the Xidao Tang group is similar to the Qadim Muslims, as it stresses the Qur’an and Five Pillars; organizationally, however, it is close to the Menhuan orders, especially with respect to the high prestige and power of order leaders.

In recent decades, Wahhabism (*Wahabi zhuyi* 瓦哈比主义), a conservative religious movement in Sunni Islam, has become visible in western China.²⁵ Wahhabism is named after its founder, Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, an eighteenth-century preacher who started a movement to abolish idolatrous practices like the worship of saints

and shrine and tomb visitation.²⁶ This reform movement began in Saudi Arabia and has spread worldwide over the past four decades.²⁷ Followers of Wahhabism reject that term in favor of the name Salafiyya. The movement is referred to as “fundamentalism” (*yuanjiaozhi zhuyi* 原教旨主义) in Chinese.²⁸ An important aim of the conservative movement is to implement Islamic law or *sharia*. *Sharia* defines the obligations of Muslims with regard to crime, politics, marriage contracts, trade, economics, hygiene, diet, and sexual intercourse. In modern societies, such as Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and Iran, *sharia* permeates law and policy. In other countries, it is used to legislate certain civil rights. As of 2013, more than 70 percent of Muslims supported making *sharia* the official law of the land in countries such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Iraq. There is less support for *sharia* among Muslims in Russia, Kazakhstan, and Azerbaijan.²⁹ The social consequences of this religious movement have been controversial. Some news sources have reported that Wahhabism has fueled riots in the western provinces of China.³⁰

Regardless of doctrinal affiliation, Muslims in China all understand that the Qur’an is a divine scripture revealed through the archangel Gabriel (Jibril) to Muhammad on multiple occasions during 610–632 CE. Over a period of 23 years, Muhammad heard the words of God from the Archangel Gabriel and memorized them precisely. The Qur’an was written in Arabic, the language in which it was believed to be revealed to Muhammad, and consists of 114 suras or chapters. The suras discuss Allah and his prophets, previous nations, the afterlife, codes of conduct, and how a reader can live a pious and righteous life in obedience to the commandments of Allah. Muslims read and consult the Qur’an for spiritual guidance and also recite verses from the Qur’an during the five daily prayers (*salat*). For many centuries, Chinese Muslims learned the teachings of the Qur’an predominately through oral tradition. Chinese Muslim leaders feared that a translation of the Qur’an from Arabic to Chinese would blaspheme the words of Allah. A full translation of the Qur’an into Chinese was not completed until 1927.³¹

23 China Culture, “Menhuan.”

24 Acharya, Gunaratna, and Wang, *Ethnic Identity and National Conflict in China*.

25 Tatlow, “A Model of Inclusion for Muslim Women.”

26 C. M. Blanchard, “The Islamic Traditions of Wahhabism and Salafiyya.”

27 Al-Sudairi, “Chinese Salafism and the Saudi Connection.”

28 G. Chen, *Handbook for A-hong in the New Period*.

29 Pew Research Center, “The World’s Muslims: Religion, Politics and Society.”

30 Netease, “Dangerous Signals about Conservatism”; Ifeng, “Believing in Wahabism Is a Form of Passive Resistance.”

31 Jin, “The Qur’an in China,” 99.

Many of the daily practices among the various Muslim communities in China also follow similar patterns. Like Muslims elsewhere in the world, Chinese Muslims are obliged to perform five basic religious acts in their lives, which are called the Five Pillars of Islam (*wuda tianming* 五大天命):

1) Testimony (*nian* 念; Arabic *shahādah*) includes the recitation of the statement, “I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except the One God, Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is the Servant and final Messenger of God.” The testimony is also recited during daily prayers.

2) Prayer (*li* 礼; Arabic *salāh*) is conducted five times throughout the day. During prayer, Muslims must be in a state of purity and must face in the direction of the Ka’bah (*Ke’erbai* 克尔白), the sacred center of the Islamic faith (see below). When praying, Muslims recite verses of the Qur’an and praise Allah using phrases such as “All the salutations, prayers, and good things are for Allah.”

3) Almsgiving (*ke* 课; Arabic *zakāt*) consists of taxes on certain types of wealth (gold, silver, and cash) that are collected each lunar year to be given to Muslims who are in need. Almsgiving is not expected from all members of Muslim society but is obligatory on those whose wealth exceeds a limit established by the prophet Muhammad.³²

4) Fasting (*zhai* 斋; Arabic *ṣawm*) is performed from dawn to dusk during Ramadan (*lamadan* 拉马丹 or *zhaijie yue* 斋戒月), the ninth month of the lunar year. During fasting, Muslims refrain from eating, sexual intercourse, and foul language. The fasting is a purification process tied to the worship of Allah, and it also reminds believers to consider their fellow Muslims in need. It is obligatory for all practicing adult Muslims to observe Ramadan, excluding those who are sick, elderly, pregnant, or menstruating. During Ramadan, Muslim men and women refrain from eating during daylight hours. They commonly eat a meal before sunrise, the *suhoor* (*fengzhai fan* 封斋饭), and a meal following sunset, the *iftar* (*kaijie fan* 开解饭). In some parts of China, party officials, public servants, and students are prohibited from fasting during Ramadan. In recent years, those who break the fasting ban have been fined, arrested, or imprisoned.³³

5) Muslims are expected to make a pilgrimage (*chao* 朝; Arabic *Hajj* 哈吉) to the sanctuary of Mecca in Saudi Arabia at least once in their lifetime if they are physically

and financially able to make the trip.³⁴ To perform the Hajj, one completes the ritual bath, enters a state of ritual purity, and dresses in white clothes. Men wear two garments: one covers the lower body and the other is a shawl worn on the shoulders.³⁵ The ability of Chinese Muslims to make the Hajj has historically depended on the quota set by Saudi Arabia, the restrictions set by the Chinese government, and the ability of individual Muslims to finance their journeys. During the Cultural Revolution, from 1964 to 1979, Chinese Muslims were prohibited from making the Hajj. The first group of Chinese Hajjis permitted to travel after the Cultural Revolution made their pilgrimage in October 1979.³⁶ Presently, all Chinese citizens who embark on the Hajj must register with officials and earn a spot on one of the trips organized by the Islamic Association of China. Making the Hajj can be costly due to transport expenses, guide costs, passport fees, and, in some parts of China, trip deposits.³⁷

Most Muslim communities also observe *jumu’ah* (*juli* 聚礼), or Friday prayer, which is a congregational prayer held on Fridays at midday. *Jumu’ah* is an occasion for Muslims to gather at local mosques, listen to the teachings of Islam, and join together to worship Allah. It is recommended that before attending *jumu’ah*, Muslim men and women take a shower or perform a ritual ablution and dress in clean clothes, and men wear perfume. The Friday prayer service typically includes two parts, a sermon and a communal prayer. During the sermon (*khutbah*), an imam (*yimamu* 伊玛目) or cleric (*ahong* 阿訇) provides religious guidance to the congregation and reads verses from the Qur’an or Hadith. Following the prayer, members of the congregation may choose to offer voluntary prayers. In some parts of China, women attend *jumu’ah* in separate mosques from men. In men-only mosques, *jumu’ah* is led by male imams. In women-only mosques, *jumu’ah* may be led by a male imam or a female spiritual leader.³⁸

Islam is a monotheistic religion. The word “Islam” itself means voluntary submission to worshipping the one god, Allah (Ala 阿拉). For Muslims, Allah is pre-eternal and perpetual, omniscient and omnipotent, unique and absolute. Muslims believe that the world was created by Allah’s will, and that the purpose of humans is to honor Allah. He is beyond comprehension by human intellect. “There is

³² Tarsin, *Being Muslim*.

³³ U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. 2015 *Annual Report*.

³⁴ G. Chen, *Handbook for A-hong in the New Period*.

³⁵ Tarsin, *Being Muslim*.

³⁶ Dillon, *China’s Muslim Hui Community*.

³⁷ Wong, “Wary of Islam, China Tightens a Vise of Rules.”

³⁸ Jaschok and Shui, *The History of Women’s Mosques in Chinese Islam*, 104.

nothing like him,” thus any visual representation of Allah is prohibited. Allah is understood by Muslims through his attributes, which are described in the Qur’an (*Gulan jing* 古兰经) and the Hadith (*shengxun* 圣训).

Survey data helps us gain a sense of the Muslim population in China. Table 2 shows demographic characteristics of self-identified Muslims and others according to the 2010 Chinese General Social Survey. The majority of Chinese Muslims are ethnic minorities. According to the Islamic Association of China, as of 2015, the 10 ethnic groups accounted for about 2 percent of the Chinese population, which corresponds to about 24 million people. However, many members of these 10 ethnic groups do not believe or practice Islam. On the other hand, a small number of Muslims are also found in other ethnic minority groups, such as Tibetans, Mongolians, and the Dai people in southwest China.³⁹

TABLE 2 Demographic characteristics of Muslims and others (%)

	Muslims	Others
Age group***		
16–59	87.5	79.0
60 or above	12.5	21.0
Gender**		
Male	43.8	51.5
Female	56.2	48.5
Educational attainment***		
Middle school or below	79.2	67.8
High/vocational school	12.7	18.4
College or above (including some college)	8.2	13.8
Residential area**		
Urban	63.1	56.0
Rural	36.9	44.1
Political affiliation		
CCP	6.4	11.7
CCYL	9.0	4.8
Others	84.6	83.5
Total number of cases	339	11,444

Notes: (1) Data source: China General Social Survey 2010; (2) CCP: Chinese Communist Party. CCYL: Chinese Communist Youth League; (3) Numbers do not always add up to 100 due to rounding; (4) two-tailed *t*-test ****p*<.001 ***p*<.01 **p*<.05.

39 Chinese Ethnicity and Religion, “Mongolians and Islam”; idem, “Walking Close to Tibetan Muslims in Shigatse”; idem, “The Dai Muslims.”

According to the SARA, the total number of Muslims was 21 million in 2010.⁴⁰

Self-identified Muslims tend to be significantly younger than the others, with 87.5 percent under age 60 and only 12.5 percent age 60 or older. In contrast, 79 percent of the others were under age 60 and 21 percent were age 60 or older. Women constituted a significantly greater proportion among Muslims than among the others (Figure 3), with 56.2 percent women.

The educational attainment of Muslims in China was significantly lower than the others; 79.2 percent attended middle school or lower, 12.7 percent completed high school or vocational school, and only 8.2 percent attended college.

The majority of Muslims, especially those in Xinjiang and Ningxia autonomous regions, live in rural areas. According to the 2010 CGSS, however, more than 63 percent of Muslims were urban residents (Figure 4). The high percentage of urban Muslims in the CGSS sample is probably



FIGURE 3 Gender distribution of Muslims and others (%).

40 State Administration for Religious Affairs, “Introduction to Religions in China.”

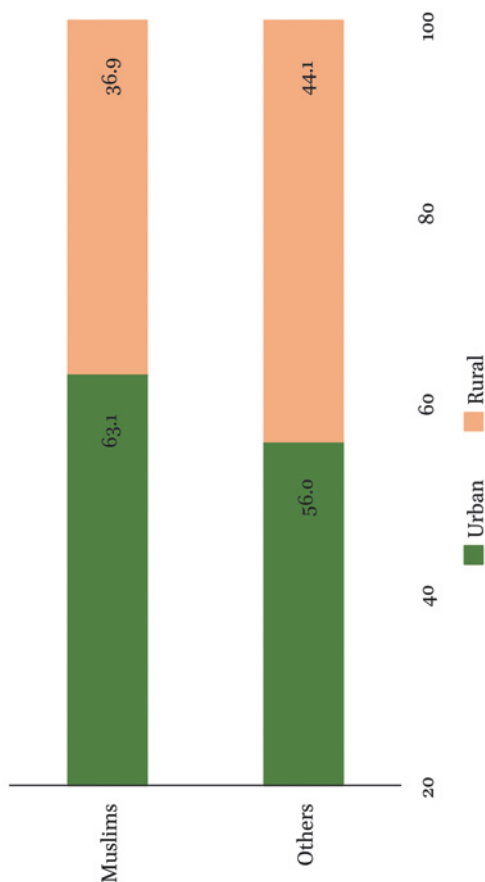


FIGURE 4 Residential area of Muslims and others (%).

due to the exclusion of Xinjiang and Ningxia from the sampling frame. This may also mean that outside the autonomous regions, the scattered communities of Muslims tend to live in urban areas.

The proportion of CCP members was lower among Chinese Muslims than among the others, at 6.4 percent versus 11.4 percent. However, 9 percent of Muslims claim to be CCYL members, which is higher than that of the others.

3. Protestantism

In China, Protestantism is known as *Jidujiao* 基督教 [Christianity], whereas Catholicism is known as *Tianzhujiao* 天主教 [Lord in heaven religion]; the two are seen as different religions. Informed scholars in China often use *Jidu zongjiao* 基督宗教 for all traditions of Christianity, and *Jidu xin jiao* 基督新教 for Protestantism in order to differentiate it from Catholicism. Protestant denominations have been banned by the Communist party-state since 1958, but in reality there are various Protestant groups, sects, networks, and traditions.

The Protestant mission to China began in 1807 when Anglo-Scottish missionary Robert Morrison (1782–1834) arrived in China. After the Opium Wars (1839–1842 and 1856–1860), hundreds or thousands of Protestant missionaries came from various countries and denominations. During the first half of the twentieth century, foreign missions played a key role in funding educational institutions, modern hospitals, and charity organizations. At the same time, several indigenous denominations and sects emerged. By 1949, there were between seven hundred thousand and one million Protestant Christians in China.

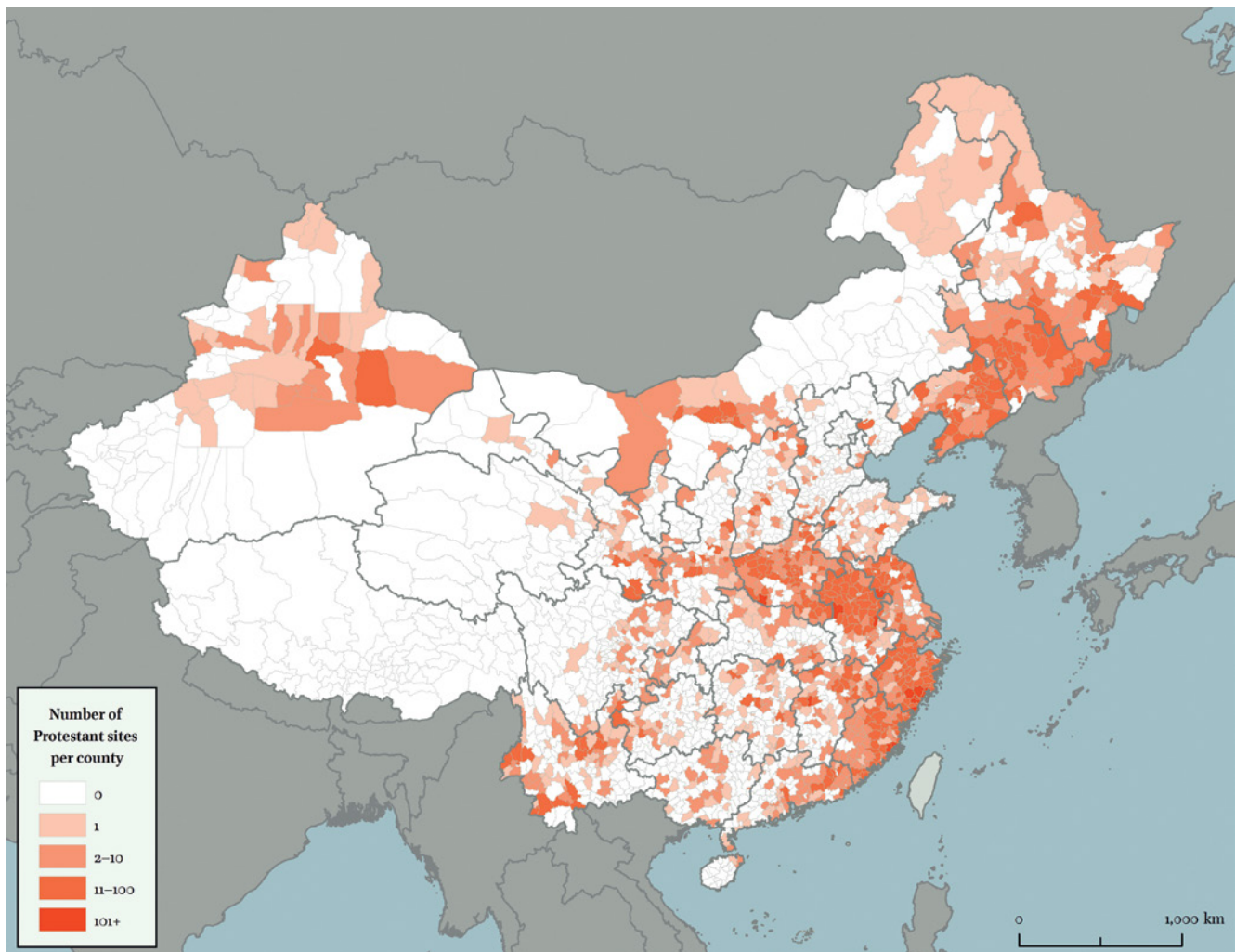
When the CCP United Front Department commissioned a small group of individuals in July 1950 to investigate the religious situation in China, a central concern was the presence of foreign missionaries. The institutions and churches that were receiving funding and subsidies from the United States and other Western countries were among the chief targets of these investigations. In part as a response to anti-Western sentiment, Chinese Protestant leaders underscored their independence from foreign missions. Working in cooperation with the CCP, Wu Yaozong 吴耀宗 (1893–1979), the head of Shanghai's Young Men's Christian Association, campaigned for patriotism and independence from foreign missions. Wu was instrumental in developing the movement based on the three-self principle—self-ruling (*zizhi* 自治), self-supporting (*ziyang* 自养), and self-propagating (*zichuan* 自传). The three-self principle was initially proposed in Shanghai during the late nineteenth century by foreign missionaries who understood that an indigenous expression of Christianity was essential for its successful evangelism. Upon the establishment of the PRC, the CCP perceived these ideas as useful means to mobilize Christians to send foreign missionaries away and cut off ties with Western missions and international organizations such as the World Council of Churches. In 1954, Wu's efforts to adapt Protestantism to the CCP social vision resulted in the creation of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement Committee (*Sanzi aiguo yundong weiyuanhui* 三自爱国运动委员会, hereafter TSPM). Thereafter, TSPM committees were established on the provincial, prefecture, and county levels. These TSPM associations are independent from each other in organization. That is, the lower-level committees are not branches of the higher-level committee. However, some individuals hold offices on multiple TSPM committees at different levels. Initially, the TSPM was a coalition of denominations and independent churches. In 1958, denominations were disbanded, and all Christians were conglomerated into “union services” (*lianhe libai* 联合礼拜) based on residence. The local TSPM committees became the single administrative organization of Protestants, managing church properties, assigning ministerial and clerical positions in churches,

and supervising preaching and ministries. Officially, the party-state designates the TSPM committee as the organization bridging between Christians and the party-state.

Like other religious associations, the TSPM ceased operations during the Cultural Revolution and was restored in 1980. In addition, the China Christian Council (*Zhongguo jidujiao xiehui* 中国基督教协会, hereafter CCC) was established in 1980 to give direction on doctrine, liturgy, and theological education. In reality, the TSPM Committee and the CCC have become intertwined and inseparable from each other, so much so that they are often referred to as *lianghui* 两会 [The two councils]. Since the 1950s, one of the most visible leaders of the TSPM, and then of the *lianghui*, was Ding Guangxun 丁光训 (1915–2012). Ding contributed to the CCC's successful effort to become a member of the World Council of Churches in 1991. Following the lead or instruction of the CCP, Ding advocated reconstructing theology and accommodating

to socialist society and Communist ideology in China.⁴¹ The TSPM and CCC claim that Chinese Protestantism has moved into a postdenominational era, which means that no denomination is legally recognized by the TSPM/CCC or by the party-state. In reality, some denominational traditions and organizational structures continue to exist in less visible ways within the TSPM/CCC.

Protestant leaders convene every five years for the National Congress of Delegates (*Quanguo daibiao dahui* 全国代表大会) to elect the leaders of CCC and TSPM. These two groups also jointly publish statistics about the church in China. As of 2017, the website of the two organizations claimed that there were 53,000 official churches, 70 percent of which were founded after 1979. The distribution of these churches may not be very different from the distribution of churches reflected in the 2004 Economic Census data (Map 6), with higher numbers in Henan, Anhui, Zhejiang, and north and northeast China. The website



MAP 6 Number of Protestant sites per county.

41 F. T. Ying, "The Church-State Relationship in Contemporary China."

also claimed that there were nearly 20 million Protestants, but provided no information on the geographical distribution of Christians. Asia Harvest, a Christian missionary organization, provided an estimate of the proportion of Christians in each province. Although the exact numbers may not be accurate, the general pattern of the uneven geographical distribution looks plausible: the proportion of Christians is highest in Henan, Anhui, and Zhejiang provinces, and relatively high in north and northeast China. Map 7 shows the location of Protestant churches throughout China.

A 2006 article stated that there were about 3,700 pastors and associate pastors in China, as compared to 36,000 lay workers.⁴² A recent report indicates that there has been an increase in the number of pastors: between 2007 and 2012, church communities hired an additional 1,057 pastors and 482 associate pastors. According to a SARA report from 2014, there were 48,000 people working for the church, but this number includes both pastors and elders of churches.⁴³ The number of churches, especially in China's southeast (see Photo 6), has risen rapidly, and the demand for ministers has increased demand for Christian educational institutions.

At present, there are 19 theological seminaries in China, all of which are under the supervision of the TSPM/CCC.⁴⁴ Of all China's Protestant seminaries, the largest is Nanjing Union Theological Seminary (*Jinling xiehe shenxueyuan* 金陵协和神学院), the flagship seminary of TSPM/CCC. Its predecessor was Nanking Theological Seminary (*Jinling shenxueyuan* 金陵神学院), which was founded with assistance from U.S. missionaries in 1917. In 1952, 10 other seminaries in East China, along with Nanking Theological Seminary, were incorporated as the Nanjing Union Theological Seminary. The seminary was reopened in 1981 after the Cultural Revolution. As of 2017, there are 22 full-time teachers and 310 full-time undergraduate and graduate students. The number of alumni is about 2,000, most of whom are working in churches throughout the country. There are four programs: a four-year undergraduate program, a three-year master's program, a part-time pastoral postgraduate program for pastors and church staff, and correspondence courses. The courses focus on biblical study, theological research, church history, and practical theology. To date, the Nanjing Union Theological

Seminary is the only one that has been allowed to employ foreign teachers.⁴⁵

The key tenets of Protestantism in China are similar to those of Protestant churches elsewhere in the world. Protestant Christians profess a faith in the Trinitarian God. For Chinese Protestants God is called *Shangdi* 上帝 or *Shen* 神. While some Chinese Protestants insist on using *Shangdi*, others insist on using *Shen*, and many Chinese Protestants use both interchangeably. God is the creator of the world and humankind. Humans, however, have been sinful and imperfect since the very first humans, Adam and Eve, disobeyed God.⁴⁶ According to Protestant teachings, Adam and Eve, seduced by Satan (*Sadan* 撒旦), disobeyed God's commands. By disobeying God's commands, Adam and Eve introduced a separation between the human world and the kingdom of God. Protestants maintain that God sent his only son, Jesus (*Yesu* 耶稣), to redeem the sinful through dying on the cross. Jesus is the Christ (*Jidu* 基督), the redeemer or savior, who was crucified and died, but resurrected on the third day. Following Jesus's ascension, the Holy Spirit (*Shengling* 圣灵) entered the followers of Jesus as a companion (*baohuishi* 保惠师). Protestant Christians believe in the Holy Trinity of God, that is, God the Father (*Shengfu* 圣父), God the Son (*Shengzi* 圣子), who is Jesus Christ, and God the Holy Spirit (*Shengling* 圣灵). Most Protestants seek to discover and follow God's will, and believe that God has a plan for every person. God's plan is revealed to humans through prayer and through reading the words of God in the Bible. Protestants believe individual believers are able to communicate directly with God to discern God's plan for them because the Holy Spirit is present within them. Protestants also consider it important for every Christian to spread the gospel (*fuyin* 福音) to others, in order to fulfill the Great Commission (*da shiming* 大使命) given by Jesus Christ to his followers before his ascension to heaven.

Protestant churches commonly hold worship services on Sundays. During these services, pastors deliver sermons, exegesis biblical verses, and lead congregational worship. Attendees are encouraged to reflect on God's teachings and spend time fellowshiping with other congregation members. Sunday services in China's urban Protestant churches are frequently unable to accommodate the crowds they draw. Many people have to stand or sit outside of the church and listen to the sermon and prayers through loudspeakers. The overcrowding is

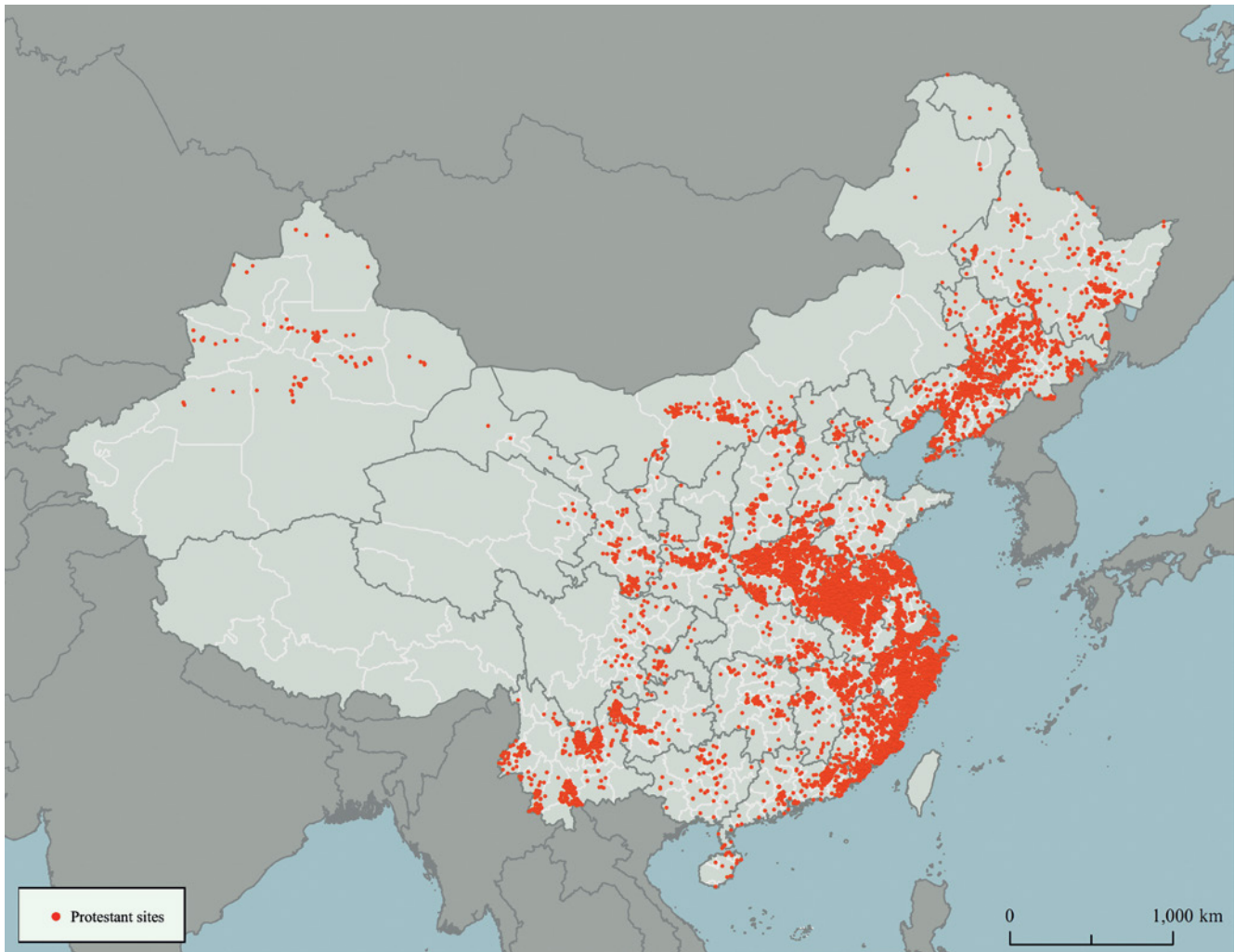
42 Gospel Times, "How Many Christians Are in China?"

43 State Administration for Religious Affairs, "Basic Condition of Religions in Our Country."

44 For details, see China Christian Council and Three-Self Patriotic Movement, "A Brief Introduction to TSPM and CCC."

45 For more information, see Nanjing Union Theological Seminary, "A Brief Introduction."

46 China Christian Council and Three-Self Patriotic Movement, "In the Beginning Was the Word"; idem, "Resurrection."



MAP 7 Percentage of Protestants per county (Asia Harvest data).

largely attributable to the shortage of Protestant churches and pastors. During the Cultural Revolution, Protestant churches were closed and Protestant pastors were imprisoned, executed, or banned from practicing their faith. Since the Cultural Revolution, Protestant churches have begun to reopen. Yet, the demand for Protestant services outstrips the supply of available worship spaces and of pastors currently registered to perform the services. To address this issue, some Protestant churches hold multiple services on Sundays or hold additional services on other days of the week.⁴⁷ Meanwhile, some Chinese Protestants insist on holding worship services on Saturday, the Sabbath.

Baptism (*xili* 洗礼) and Communion (*shengcan* 圣餐) are the two common rituals for Protestants. Baptism is the ritual during which a convert pronounces the faith; it may also be performed for an infant born to Christian parents.

Among Chinese Protestants, there are various forms of baptism, including full submersion, pouring water on the head, or sprinkling water on the head. Communion is partaking of bread and wine (or grape juice) during a worship service, as Jesus did with his disciples on the night before he died. The theological interpretation of Communion varies significantly among different Protestant traditions. While denominations are not officially allowed in China under TSPM/CCC, Protestant pastors and believers continue to follow various theological traditions. Some Chinese Christians have maintained a tradition of gathering for worship at believers' homes (*jiating chongbai* 家庭崇拜), which often includes a ritual of breaking bread (*bobing* 擘饼).

The Bible is the foundational text of Protestantism. The Bible is composed of two primary sections, the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament describes the origin of humankind, the first sin against God, and the subsequent relationship between humans and

47 F. Yang, "Lost in the Market," 429.



PHOTO 6 An October 2012 celebration to commemorate the completion of the Panshi Church, Hangzhou.
CREDIT: SIMON GAO.

God. The New Testament details the teachings, life, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The first complete Chinese Bible was published by missionary Robert Morrison and his coworkers in 1823. Following Morrison's version in classical Chinese (*wenyan wen* 文言文), missionaries and missionary organizations published a multitude of Chinese Bibles in local dialects. Currently, the most commonly used is the Chinese Union Version (*Heheben shengjing* 和合本圣经), which was first published in 1919. This vernacular Mandarin translation of the Bible preceded the vernacular movement (*baihuawen yundong* 白话文运动) in the larger society around that time.

For Protestants, the Bible is a potent source of religious knowledge and spiritual guidance. Bible study sessions provide opportunities for directed reading and discussion. During a Bible study session, a small group of Protestants gather to consider the significance of stories and lessons from the Bible. Some Chinese Protestant churches allow congregation members to convene Bible studies on their premises. In China, the Communist party-state rule is that children under the age of 18 are not permitted to participate in Bible study sessions. A church that hosts a Bible

study for minors could be cited for interfering with secular state education.⁴⁸ Likewise, Communist Party members are not allowed to organize Bible study sessions.⁴⁹ In reality, however, many churches do have Sunday schools for children and some Chinese Communist Party members have become converts.

According to the official figures released by the SARA, there were about 23 million protestants in China in 2010.⁵⁰ However, the World Christian Database estimates there were more than 100 million Protestants in China.⁵¹ The Pew Research Center's report on global Christianity estimated that there were 58 million Protestants in China in 2010. In surveys, only about 3 percent of respondents self-identified as Christians. If we look at specific Protestant beliefs or practices, however, the number of believers or followers doubles or triples. In the following discussion,

48 Potter, "Belief in Control."

49 Shambaugh, "Training China's Political Elite," 833.

50 State Administration for Religious Affairs, "Introduction to Religions in China."

51 See <http://www.worldchristiandatabase.org/wcd/>.

we present the basic characteristics of the respondents who had Christian identities based on the 2007 Chinese Spiritual Life Survey (Table 3).

The vast majority, 93 percent, of self-identified Protestant Christians were between the ages of 16 and 59. Only about 7.3 percent were 60 or older. This is not much different from the other respondents. Women accounted for almost 70 percent of Chinese Protestants, which is much higher than among the other respondents (Figure 5).

Survey results also show that the educational attainment of self-identified Protestants is not significantly different from that of the other respondents. As displayed in Figure 6, about 12 percent of Protestants had at least a college degree, 25 percent attended high school or vocational school, and 63.1 percent had at most a middle school education. Figure 7 shows that more than 68 percent of Protestants lived in rural areas, which is not statistically significant from the urban/rural distribution of the other respondents.

TABLE 3 Demographic characteristics of Protestants and others (%)

	Protestants	Others
Age group		
16–59	92.7	90.3
60 or above	7.3	9.7
Gender***		
Male	30.6	48.1
Female	69.4	51.9
Educational attainment		
Middle school or below	63.1	61.7
High/vocational school	25.0	27.5
College or above (including some college)	11.9	10.8
Residential area		
Urban	31.8	37.1
Rural	68.2	62.9
Political affiliation**		
CCP	0.2	5.7
CCYL	10.7	10.5
Others	89.1	83.7
<i>Total number of cases</i>	206	6,815

Notes: (1) CCP: Chinese Communist Party. CCYL: Chinese Communist Youth League; (2) Numbers do not always add up to 100 due to rounding; (3) two-tailed *t*-test ****p*<.001 ***p*<.01 **p*<.05.

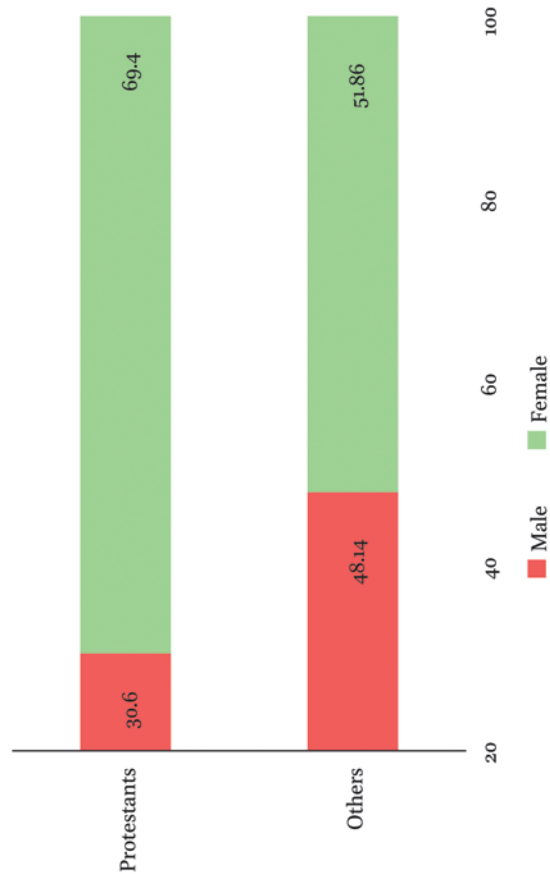


FIGURE 5 Gender distribution of Protestants and others (%).

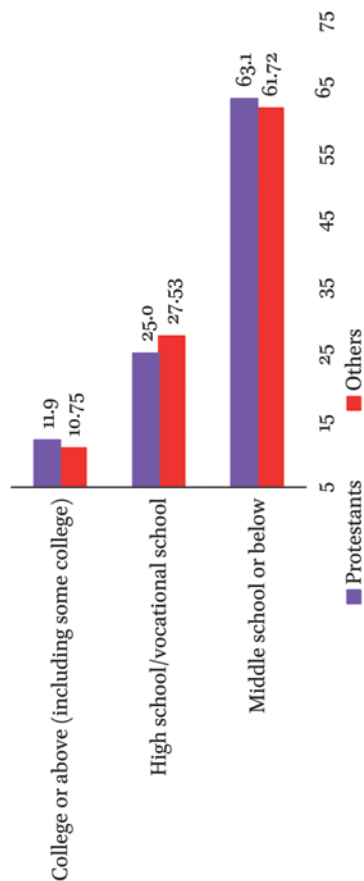


FIGURE 6 Educational attainment of Protestants and others (%).

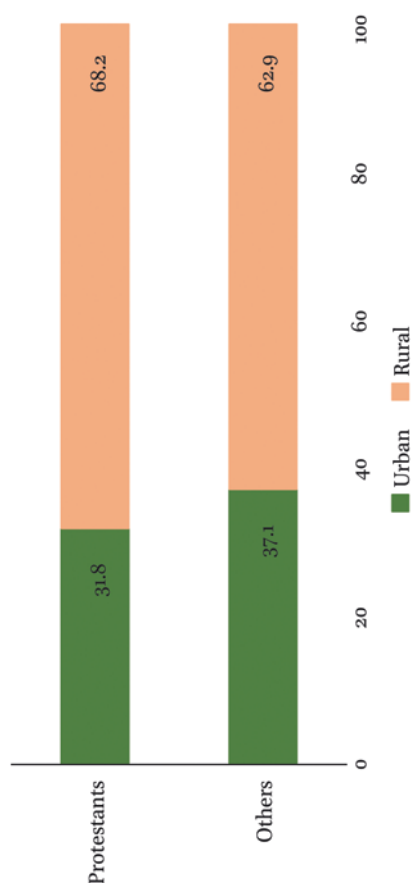


FIGURE 7 Residential area of Protestants and others (%).

Very few of the respondents with Protestant identities were members of the CCP. However, almost 11 percent of the respondents with Protestant identities were CCYL members, which is similar to the proportion of CCYL members among the other respondents.

4. Daoism

The Chinese Daoist Association was established in 1957. At the founding of the PRC, Daoist institutions were particularly weak due to guidelines developed by the Government Administration Council of the Central People's Government (*Zhonghua renmin gongheguo zhengwuyuan* 中华人民共和国政务院) in 1950. In an effort to alleviate problems related to land ownership, the council declared that all the land surrounding religious sites now belonged to the state. Since many Daoist institutions relied on rents from tenant farmers, these new guidelines meant the loss of a once lucrative source of revenue.⁵² The Upper

52 Welch, "The Chang T'ien Shih and Taoism in China," 192.

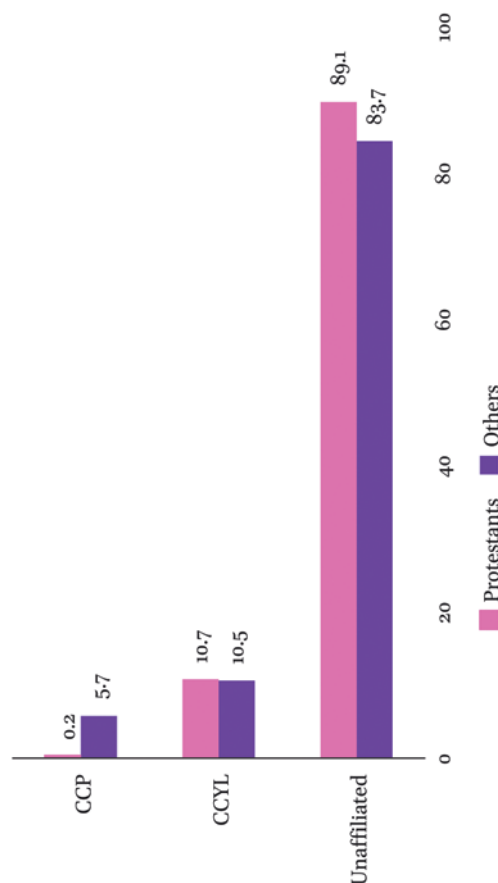


FIGURE 8 Political affiliation of Protestants and others (%).

Clarity's Celestial Master Bureau (*Shangqing tianshi fu* 上天师府) in Guixi 贵溪 (northeast Jiangxi), for example, collected 90,000 bushels of grain as rent in the early part of the twentieth century. The income of most temples during this period is unknown, but based on mid-century land records, some of the numbers must have been staggering. For example, the Baiyun Temple 白云观 of Beijing held over 5,800 *mu* 亩 (over 950 acres) throughout the greater Beijing area.⁵³

The individual who led the effort to form a Daoist association was Yue Chongdai 岳崇岱 (1888–1958, also known as Yue Yunfa 岳云发), the head priest of the Taiqing Temple 太清宫 in Shenyang, Liaoning Province. In the early summer of 1956, Yue contacted many of the top Daoist leaders throughout China asking them to support his proposed Chinese Daoist Association (*Zhongguo daojiao xiehui* 中国道教协会). Yue had risen to prominence nearly two decades earlier when he was elected as a permanent member of the Daoist Central Association (*Daojiao zonghui* 道教总会) of Shanghai in 1927. Just as

53 Y. Li, *Contemporary Taoism*, 45.



MAP 8 Number of Daoist sites per county.

Yue began contacting other top priests in the country, he was invited to reside in Beijing by the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (*Quanguo zhengzhi xieshang huiyi* 全国政协会议, hereafter CPPCC), the political arm that helps the CCP communicate with various mass organizations and ethnic groups. Yue met with the chair of the CPPCC, Zhou Enlai 周恩来 (1893–1976), on March 9, 1957. A little over a month later, on April 12, the first meeting of the National Daoist Association convened in Beijing. The meeting had the support of the vice chairman of the PRC, Zhu De 朱德 (1886–1976).

Like the other religious institutions, the Chinese Daoist Association re-emerged in 1979 after a 10-year hiatus. Today its stated purposes are to unite Chinese Daoists, promote love of Daoism, and contribute to a socialist society.⁵⁴ The association coordinates Daoist practices, controls the initiation of priests and nuns, publishes a monthly journal, *Chinese Daoism* (*Zhongguo daojiao* 中国

道教), and maintains Daoist cultural centers for religious and scholarly training. The Chinese Daoist Association is headquartered at the Baiyun Temple in Beijing. The association has over one hundred regional organizations at the provincial, city, and community levels, whose distribution in space corresponds to the distribution of Daoist temples (Map 8). Each association must be registered with the RAB at the correspondent level. Regional associations often provide training in liturgy and scripture, organize the repair and maintenance of temples and religious sites, and recruit new priests and register people who are qualified to perform rituals. The largest regional association is the Shanghai Daoist Association, which publishes its own journal, *Daoism in Shanghai* (*Shanghai Daojiao* 上海道教).

There has been a recent surge in the construction and expansion of Daoist academies, which are postsecondary schools where monks, nuns, and laypeople take courses related to Daoist studies. Chinese Daoist academies typically offer two programs of study: a concentrated study

54 Bokenkamp, "Daoism," 2189.



MAP 9 Location of Quanzhen and Zhengyi sites.

program and a continued study program. Students interested in the concentrated study program must receive a recommendation from the local Daoist organization and pass an admissions test. After completing the concentrated study program, students continue to take courses in the continued studies program. The curriculum of the Chinese Daoist Academies includes courses in religious studies, political studies, and cultural studies. Additionally, students complete courses on current political events, socialist education, Chinese history, English, and Daoist martial arts. Laypeople may enroll in selected courses through “life learning” programs, which focus on specific aspects of Daoism, such as Daoist philosophy, the history of Daoism, calligraphy, current events, and modern Chinese government.

Most academies and large Daoist institutions belong to the Quanzhen 全真 (Complete Perfection) lineage, which originated in northern China (Map 9). Quanzhen teachings trace the school’s origin to Wang Chongyang 王重阳 (1113–1170), a twelfth-century priest who lived in the

Zhongnan Mountains in Shaanxi Province. This school is Daoism’s monastic branch. Quanzhen priests reside in monasteries and abbeys and engage in ascetic practices (Photo 7). They must remain celibate and dress in religious garments. The Quanzhen lineage operates at least 25 large-scale monasteries throughout China that include training centers and sites of ordination.⁵⁵ Other Daoist orders belong to the Zhengyi 正一 (Orthodox Unity) tradition, which is nonmonastic and predominately located in southern China. Zhengyi priests may live in temples or stay with their families. The Zhengyi lineage regards Zhang Daoling 张道陵 (34–156), who was believed to have received revelation from Laozi in the mid-second century CE, as the first Celestial Master 天师.⁵⁶ Since medieval times, the designation of Celestial Master has been passed on generation after generation through Zhang’s descendants. The Zhengyi school embraces a body of scriptures

55 Goossaert, “Quanzhen.”

56 Kleeman, *Celestial Masters*.



PHOTO 7 Daoist acolytes gathering for the morning ritual at Tongbai Temple (Mount Tiantai).
CREDIT: XIANG FANG.

and writings called the Teaching of Orthodox Unity, which includes practices such as spiritual retreats, offering rituals, the use of talismans, and conferring certificates on lay ritual leaders across China. Certificates are divided into grades according to believers' knowledge of and experience with Daoist practice and rites.⁵⁷

In addition to Daoist priests, there are many lay Daoist associations that act as the primary intermediaries between local religious communities and Daoist temples. Lay associations are community-level religious organizations that are commonly led by local religious masters who are not ordained by the Chinese Daoist Association. The practices of lay associations vary widely across China. In general, lay associations serve four primary purposes. First, lay associations perform religious services, which can include Daoist liturgies and rituals. Second, lay associations organize and finance religious festivals and events, some of which can be complex and costly. For certain services and festivals, such as the *jiao* 醮, lay associations arrange for priests of nearby temples to visit and preside

over the religious ceremonies. Third, lay associations provide education and moral instruction to members of the community. Fourth, lay associations coordinate social services, charity, and socioreligious activities.⁵⁸ In China, lay associations function as important vehicles for the transmission of Daoist principles to Chinese local communities. Members of local communities who cannot travel to Daoist temples or academies learn about the Dao from local religious specialists and visiting priests.

Daoist rituals serve various purposes, such as thanksgiving, sacrifice, prayers for rain, exorcizing demons, communicating with deceased family members, and so on. These rituals are a combination of singing, chanting, recitation, and dancing. According to the general pattern of these rituals, the priests first place talismans around the altar to sanctify the space and prepare it for further actions. Then, priests burn talismans and offer incense, tea, wine, or other sacrifices, and invite transcendent beings to come down from heaven or rise up from the underworld. The priest announces his purposes to the divine beings

57 Y. Chen, "Zhengyi."

58 Goossaert, "Taoist Lay Associations."



PHOTO 8 The spring tea ceremony at Pinggu in Beijing's Lehe town.
CREDIT: ZHENG ZENG.

and asks their assistance. The ritual ends with a feast for the gods, at which time the priest expresses thanks and sends the deities on their way.⁵⁹

A key tool for Daoist rituals is the talisman, a slender object typically made of wood, metal, or paper. To transform it into a religiously powerful instrument, Daoist masters write characters, figures, signs, and symbols on the talisman. The characters that are inscribed on talismans usually concern ideas like *yin* and *yang*, fire, light, and so on. In terms of symbols, small circles represent stars, curves symbolize water, and spirals refer to clouds. In general, a talisman is a tool bearing cosmic force and having various functions. It is burned to create a sacred place or to invite gods. To keep themselves safe and avoid evil, Daoists carry talismans or place them at specific places in the home, such as over a door or beside a bed. Talismans may also be burned and the ashes mixed in a cup of water; a person can drink this talisman-infused water in order to cure sickness.⁶⁰ When conducting rituals, priests often

incorporate spells into their repertoire; this ritualistic language conveys the priest's wishes to deities. The spells usually end with a special phrase: *jiji ru lilin* 急急如律令 “promptly, promptly, in accordance with the statues and ordinances.”

Many Daoist practices, both rituals performed by priests and carried out by lay practitioners, involve various kinds of meditation that may be classified into two types. One type is commonly called *yangsheng* 养生, which involves a wide range of gymnastic and mental exercises intended to improve the state of the body and confer robust health and longevity on the meditator. The second type bears more religious significance, as the meditator aims at becoming immortal (仙 *xian*).⁶¹ Self-cultivation techniques for health and longevity are more popular (Photo 8). In the twentieth century, these techniques have become regarded by many practitioners as a scientific way of ensuring healthy life instead of a religious practice. These techniques include but are not limited to

59 Dean, “Daoist Ritual Today.”

60 Despeux, “Talismans and Diagrams.”

61 Goossaert, “Daoist in the Modern Chinese Self-Cultivation Market.”

(1) breathing exercises in which people inhale *qi* 氣 (vital air) and exhale its impure counterpart in a rhythmic way, in order to get rid of negative moods; (2) abstaining from grains (*bigu* 辟谷), which are replaced with *qi*, medicinal herbs, or fruits; (3) physical exercise and self-massage, which conduct the circulation of *qi* within the body in order to cure disease and prolong life; (4) drinking water infused with the ashes of specific talismans to heal disease; 5) clenching the fists to hold *qi* within the body and prevent it from leaking out.⁶²

These cultivation techniques are the preliminary and preparatory stages of advanced practices undertaken by Daoist masters. Most important is the cultivation of *nei-dan* 内丹, the inner alchemy. Nurturing the inner alchemy within the body is one of the ultimate goals for many Daoist believers, as it can make them more transcendent and unite them with the Dao, enabling them to become an immortal being. The practices of developing the inner alchemy are very abstract and metaphysical. They consist of building a foundation within the body, combining *yin-yang* visualization, ingesting medicines, and circulating fire energy throughout the body.

Daoist rituals are also performed in the local community. The local lineage or neighborhood can sponsor the priests, host the rites, and provide offerings. Daoism has developed alongside many of China's folk arts, such as music, dance, painting, and sculpture, which are common in residences and at festivals. Music is a key component of Daoist rituals, and some of its music is derived from folk songs since many priests are from the countryside. Daoist music is quickly becoming one of the most popular tools to attract potential adherents, and is often used to illustrate Daoist teachings. On the other hand, Daoist music has gradually diffused into other aspects of life, such as weddings, offerings to ancestors, and agricultural festivals.⁶³ Often, Daoist stories are incorporated into plays and public dramas, and many of these recitals, such as *shuochang* 说唱, are now an independent art form without a religious dimension.⁶⁴

Key among the teachings of Daoism is that humans strive to unite with the Dao 道, the central element of the Daoist system of beliefs. The term Dao, originally denoting a "way" or "path," is understood not as the "way" or order of human society, but rather as a metaphysical basis of the natural order itself. Dao—the life force of the universe—is formless and invisible. The Dao manifests in humans as *de* 德, often translated as virtue. In Daoist cosmogony, the Dao was present at the origins of the universe

and dispersed as *qi* 氣, and gradually congealed to form Daoist deities (*shen* 神). *Qi* is energy and matter; it is the basic building block of all things in the universe.⁶⁵ Many Daoists profess that humans can unite with the Dao by cultivating virtue. Many different paths are available to humans who seek to become transcendent. Transcendent beings possess various supernormal powers, such as the ability to fly and ascend to heaven.⁶⁶ If a Daoist lives a particularly virtuous life, he or she might also ascend to higher ranks in Daoism's vast pantheon. There are various traditions and sublineages within the religion that promise believers access to various levels of postmortem rank. As people ascend into the heavens, new gods have been added over time. In Daoism, deities live in divine places that humans cannot easily reach, such as floating islands in the eastern seas, as well as palaces in the sky. There are many stories of Daoist practitioners, including emperors, who attempted to reach these supernatural places.

Many of China's most famous Daoist sites are located on mountains that are viewed as heavenly places transposed to earth. Daoist practitioners seek out these mountains and caves, which are traditionally considered efficacious for the practice of self-cultivation. The most well-known Chinese mountains linked to Daoism are the Five Peaks (*wuyue* 五岳): Mount Tai 泰山 in Shandong, Mount Heng 衡山 in Hunan, Mount Hua 华山 in Shaanxi, Mount Heng 恒山 in Shanxi, and Mount Song 嵩山 in Henan. But there are dozens of peaks throughout China thought to be portals into Daoist realms called Grotto-Heavens (*dongtian* 洞天) and Blissful Lands (*fudi* 福地). The Grotto-Heavens are believed to contain scriptures and treasures, hidden by deities.

While the *Daodejing* 道德经 is perhaps the most famous Daoist scripture, Daoism has an open canon of scriptures; there are hundreds of divinely inspired texts detailing ways to practice and cultivate the Dao for an everlasting life. Daoism sees all existence, humans, and things to be part of Dao. The perfect human is a flawless microcosm of the cosmic whole whose bodily spirits are perfectly attuned to the larger whole, the macrocosm. There are gods and spirits in the body, each having names and functions. According to *Taipingjing* 太平经 (Scripture of great peace), these detailed descriptions are provided as support for meditation: visualizing the inner gods causes them to remain in their corporeal abodes and perform their functions, while their departure would result in illness and death. There are three main terms used to refer to the human body in Daoism. The first, "body" (*ti* 体), designates the physical frame as an ordered whole made of

62 Engelhardt, "Longevity Techniques and Chinese Medicine."

63 Yuzo and Liu, "Daoist Ritual Music."

64 Yuzo and Liu, "Daoist Ritual Music."

65 Bokenkamp, "Daoism," 2177.

66 Pregadio, *Encyclopedia of Taoism*, 1092.

interdependent parts. The second, “form” (*xing* 形), refers to the body as the counterpart and residence of spirit. The third, “spirit” (*shen* 神), denotes the whole human being, including its nonmaterial aspects like feeling and thinking. Daoists believe that what determines a person’s birth and death, or life span, is not any external force but the person herself. Dao is the beginning of everything, and associates with life.

It is hard to accurately estimate the number of Daoists in China, partially due to the lack of reliable sources of data. Also, the mixing of Daoist and folk religious rituals and beliefs makes it hard to distinguish Daoists from adherents of folk religion. According to the 2007 Chinese Spiritual Life Survey, only about 1 percent of the 7,021 respondents claimed Daoist identities, which corresponded to about 11 million Chinese adults in 2010. Nonetheless, the survey also shows that a much larger proportion of Chinese adults participate in one or more Daoist practices (Table 4).

Because of the very small number of self-identified Daoists in the survey, we cannot reliably assess the statistical significance of demographic differences between Daoists and the others. Tentatively, however, we see that

TABLE 4 Demographic characteristics of Daoists and others (%)

	Daoists	Others
Age group		
16–59	95.0	90.3
60 or above	5.0	9.7
Gender		
Male	43.9	47.7
Female	56.1	52.3
Educational attainment		
Middle school or below	64.9	61.7
High/vocational school	15.7	27.6
College or above (including some college)	19.4	10.7
Residential area*		
Urban	25.6	37.1
Rural	74.4	62.9
Political affiliation		
CCP	1.4	5.6
CCYL	17.7	10.4
Others	80.8	83.9
<i>Total number of cases</i>	87	6,934

Notes: (1) CCP: Chinese Communist Party. CCYL: Chinese Communist Youth League; (2) Numbers do not always add up to 100 due to rounding; (3) two-tailed *t*-test ****p*<.001 ***p*<.01 **p*<.05.

the vast majority of self-identified Daoists were between the ages of 16 and 59. Only about 5 percent were age 60 or older. Men comprised 44 percent of all Daoists. The overall educational attainment of Daoists tended to be slightly higher than the others, with about 19 percent college educated. And about three-quarters of them live in rural areas. Among the respondents with Daoist identities, less than 2 percent were CCP members. About 18 percent were CCYL members, much higher than among the other respondents or in the general population.

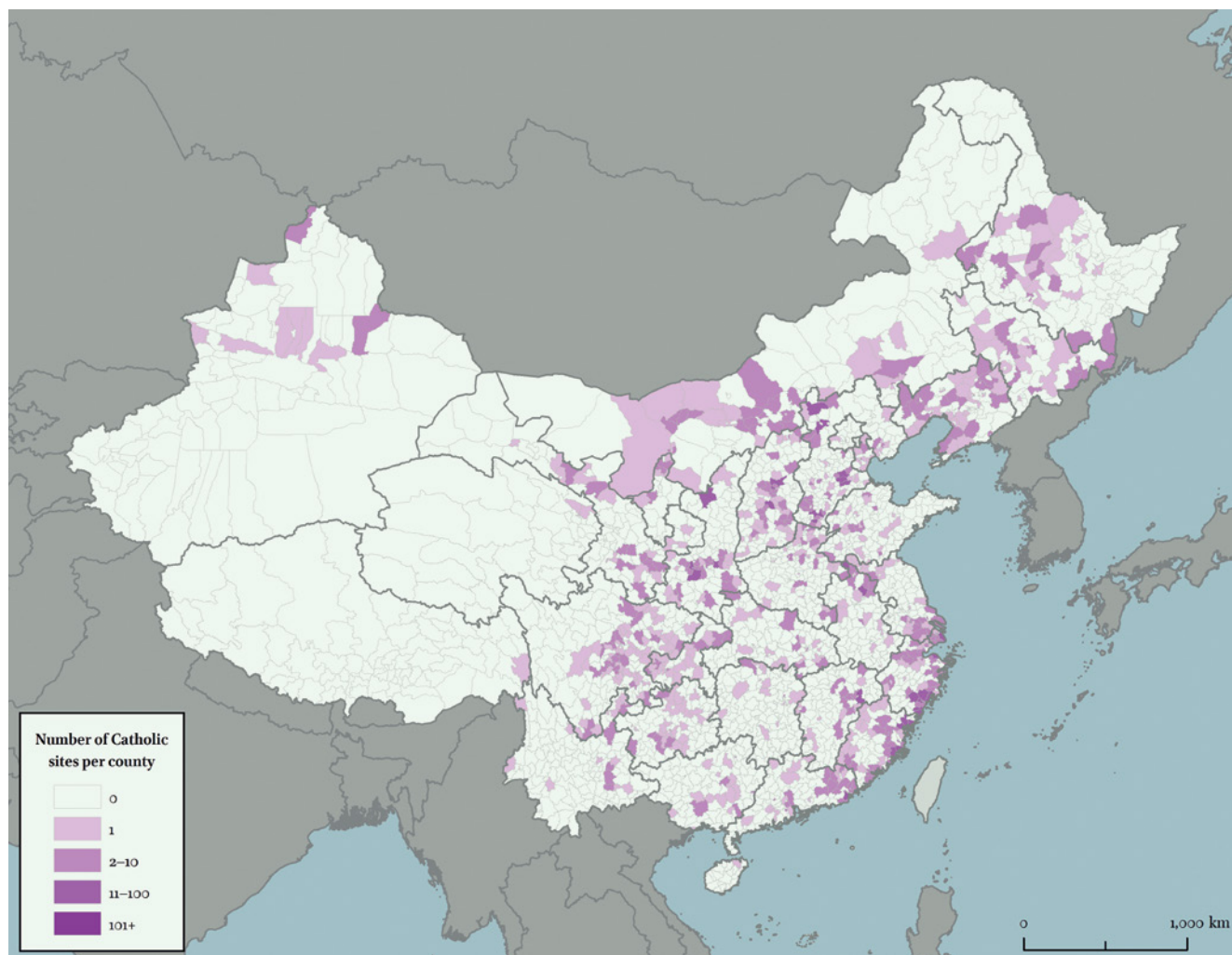
5. Catholicism

Catholicism is known as *Tianzhujiao* 天主教 in China, which literally means “Lord in Heaven religion.” Even though a Catholic presence in China can be traced back to the Yuan Dynasty (1260–1368), when the Franciscan monk Giovanni di Monte Corvino arrived in Beijing in 1293, it ended at the turn from the Yuan to the Ming Dynasty in 1368. More than two hundred years later, in 1583, Jesuit Matteo Ricci (1552–1610) arrived in China and succeeded in converting many Chinese to Catholicism. Ricci consciously chose *Tianzhu* as the term for God rather than other words like *Shangdi* 上帝 [High thearch] and *Tian* 天 [Heaven], which demonstrates that he understood the possible Daoist and Buddhist connotations of these names.⁶⁷

In the People’s Republic of China, a national association of Catholics was first established in 1957, the last of the five associations for officially recognized religions. At the time of the founding of the PRC, Pope Pius XII threatened to excommunicate clergy who cooperated with the Communist Party in China. Without the cooperation of the Catholic clergy, after many years of effort, the party-state managed to form the China Catholic Laypeople Patriotic Association (*Zhongguo tianzhujiao jiaoyou aiguoahui* 中国天主教教友爱国会) in 1957. Thereafter, China selected new bishops whose legitimacy was not recognized by the pope. In 1962, the association changed its name to the China Catholic Patriotic Association (*Zhongguo tianzhujiao aiguoahui* 中国天主教爱国会, hereafter CCPA). During the Cultural Revolution, the CCPA was disbanded and all churches were shut down.

In 1980, alongside the restored CCPA, Catholic leaders formed the Bishops Conference of the Catholic Church in China (*Zhongguo tianzhujiao zhujiaotuan* 中国天主教主教团, hereafter BCCCC) for theological and liturgical matters. The CCPA and BCCCC resemble the Protestant “two councils” and are often jointly called the “One Association

67 Oak, “Competing Chinese Names for God.”



MAP 10 Number of Catholic sites per county.

and One Conference” (*Yihui yituan* 一会一团). In principle, the BCCCC monitors religious affairs and the CCPA is responsible for meeting the church’s institutional need for clergy and churches. Yet institutional and doctrinal affairs can overlap in Chinese Catholicism.⁶⁸ One of the principal roles of the BCCCC is to monitor the education offered in the country’s 11 seminaries.⁶⁹ They are located in Beijing, Shenyang, Chengdu, Hohhot, Taiyuan, Jinan, Wuhan, Xi’an, and Jilin. The largest is the National Seminary of the Catholic Church (*Zhongguo tianzhujiao shenzhe xueyuan* 中国天主教神哲学院, hereafter NSCCC). Founded in 1983 in Beijing, the national seminary has a six-year undergraduate program. Coursework includes dogmatic theology, theology of ethics, canon law, and other theological classes; ontology, epistemology, history of Chinese philosophy, and other philosophical courses; and Latin, Chinese, politics, music, and other cultural courses. More than six

hundred students have graduated from the national seminary; half of these men have been ordained as priests in China and seven have been ordained as bishops.⁷⁰

There are 97 dioceses under the CCPA/BCCC, which are different from yet overlapping with the 137 dioceses designated by the Vatican in 1946. The two sets of overlapping dioceses are a cause of feuds between underground and aboveground Catholics. In 2004, according to the SARA, there were about 4,000 Catholic churches throughout the country.⁷¹ According to the 2004 Economic Census, Catholic churches have spread out throughout China, including Tibet, with high concentrations in North China, especially Hebei Province, and Southeast China, especially Fujian Province. There are also sizeable pockets near Shanghai and in Shaanxi Province (Maps 10 and 11).

68 Madsen, “Catholic Revival during the Reform Era.”

69 *Chinese Catholic Handbook*, 2–3.

70 For more information about the National Seminary, see NSCCC, “Introduction to the National Seminary of the Catholic Church in China.”

71 D. Zhang, “The Chinese Catholic Church’s Surveys.”



MAP 11 Location of Catholic sites.

The theology and devotional practices in China's Catholic churches are centered on the seven sacraments (*shengshi* 圣事): baptism (*shengxi* 圣洗), confirmation (*jianzhen* 坚振), confession (*gaojie* 告解), the Eucharist (*shengt* 圣体), anointing of the sick (*zhongfu* 终傅 or *bingren fuyou* 病人傅油), ordination (*shengyi* 圣秩 or *shenpin* 神品), and matrimony (*hunpei* 婚配). All Catholics must be baptized. When Catholics reach adulthood, they are confirmed into the church by bishops (*zhujiao* 主教), though in special cases the sacrament can be performed by priests (*siduo* 司铎). Confirmation is sometimes referred to as the anointment of the baptized, intended to reinforce their faith.

The most common Catholic ritual is the sacrament of the Eucharist, which is also referred to as the Lord's Supper (*zhu de yanxi* 主的宴席) or "breaking the bread" (*baibing* 掰饼), and is performed during Mass (*misa* 弥撒). Mass is divided into two parts: the Liturgy of the Word (*shengdao li* 圣道礼), which includes scripture readings, a homily, and prayer (*xinyou daoci* 信友祷词); and

the Liturgy of the Eucharist (*shengji li* 圣祭礼), which includes the Eucharistic prayer and the distribution of consecrated bread to the congregation. Historically, it has been debated whether Mass should be celebrated in Chinese or Latin. In 1615, the Roman Catholic Church permitted Chinese Catholics to conduct Mass in Chinese, but this was rarely done until recent times. It was not until 1989, for example, that the Chinese Catholic Diocese at Sheshan Cathedral 佘山天主堂 in Shanghai conducted its first mass in Chinese.

Catholics view prayer and the seven sacraments as the primary ways to receive blessings from God. Prayer refers to any communication addressed to God, and typically expresses praise, admiration, or love for God. During prayer, Catholics may read scripture and meditate (*moxiang* 默想). Catholics can pray to ask for blessings or mercy or to offer thanksgiving to God. Prayer is an important spiritual practice in Catholicism. Catholics often pray in the morning, in the evening, and before and after meals. The Catholic Church also encourages its followers to



PHOTO 9 A procession during a liturgical feast honoring the Virgin Mary in Zhangzhuang (Xingtai 邢台).
CREDIT: YANG LU.

make the sign of the cross before praying. Following the reforms of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), the Catholic liturgy has been adapted to suit Chinese society. The priest Andrew Chao (Yizhou Zhao 赵一舟, 1927–2015) was an expert in localizing liturgy and wrote a series of books, such as *Jiating liyi* 家庭礼仪 [Family rituals] to address the importance of prayer in everyday life. In recent times, church leaders have also encouraged parishioners to pray during the celebration of traditional Chinese festivals such as the Dragon Boat Festival (*duanwu jie* 端午节) and the Double Ninth Festival (*chongyang jie* 重阳节), during ancestor veneration, and also during important life events like birthdays, graduations, and housewarmings.⁷² In villages, it is very common to hold periodic processions, such as the November procession celebrating the Virgin Mary (Photo 9).

In many ways, the principal beliefs of Catholics resemble those of Protestant Christians. Catholicism is a monotheistic religion. Catholics believe that one God created the world and humankind. This God exists in

three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Father refers to the noncorporeal, heavenly form of God; the Son refers to Jesus Christ, the incarnate form of God; and the Holy Spirit refers to the divine will and spirit of God. Together, these three persons are called the Holy Trinity or the Blessed Trinity. The triadic personhood of God—or how one God can exist in three persons—is a central mystery of Catholic life and faith. Furthermore, the Bible plays a key role in Catholic liturgy and devotional life.⁷³ Currently, the most popular version among Chinese Catholics is the Studium Biblicum Version (*Sigao yiben* 思高译本).

Nevertheless, for many, Catholicism is perceived as a distinct and separate religion from Protestantism. For example, there is a strong emphasis in Catholic communities on the need to atone for one's sins before facing God's final judgment. This process involves faith, good works, and the sacraments of baptism and confession. Confession requires that Catholics admit their sins to God and ask for

⁷² Y. Zhao, *Family Rituals*, 77–107.

⁷³ Ren, *Basic Knowledge about Catholicism in China*, 144–146; Chinacath, “The Catholic Theology on the Bible.”

his forgiveness. A bishop or priest conducts the rite in a small room called a confessional (*gaojie shi* 告解室) and declares that a person's sins have been forgiven.

Throughout CCP rule, the pope, as the leader of the Roman Catholic Church, has been a controversial figure. The Chinese government does not permit Chinese citizens to maintain a “double loyalty,” meaning that Chinese Catholics cannot claim loyalty to their country and to the pope. For this reason, the Catholic Church in China is officially separate from the universal Catholic Church. In practice, however, many Chinese Catholics still recognize the pope as a figure of religious authority.⁷⁴ Historically, the Chinese government has been at odds with the Vatican. Chinese officials have often criticized the Vatican as an “imperialist force” interfering in China's internal affairs. Official Catholic churches in China were ordered to ordain new bishops without the consent of the Holy See. Since the 1980s, the relationship between the Chinese government and the Vatican has slowly improved, with each side making concessions. Most bishops have secretly sought and received recognition by the Holy See before or after their ordination in the Chinese Catholic church. On the other hand, the Chinese government, respecting Catholics' concern for sacramental integrity, allows Catholics to express their spiritual allegiance to the pope. Charters of both the CCPA and the BCCCC declare communion with the pope.⁷⁵ More recently, the Chinese government and the Vatican have opened discussions on how to resolve disagreements and establish diplomatic relations.⁷⁶

In the official Catholic churches, priests are ordained by bishops of the BCCC, but only some of these ordinations have been recognized by Roman Catholic church authorities.⁷⁷ In some cases, Chinese priests have been ordained with the approval of the bishops loyal to the pope. In other cases, Chinese priests have been ordained without the approval or with the expressed disapproval of the Vatican.

According to the SARA, as of 2010 there were more than 5.5 million Catholics in China.⁷⁸ Outside sources

estimated that there could be as many as 10 to 12 million Catholics in China. Survey data suggests that about two to four million adults were Catholics in China. While the absolute number of Catholics in China is certainly large, the respondents with Catholic identities contained in the survey datasets were too few to warrant a reliable analysis of the demographic characteristics of Chinese Catholics. Therefore, the following analysis, based on the 2007 Chinese Spiritual Life Survey (Table 5), is a rough sketch of the Catholic population in China.

As with followers of other religious traditions, the vast majority of Catholics fell into the 16–59 age group. Women accounted for 62 percent of Catholics, and 13.4 percent were college educated. The majority (55 percent) of Catholics lived in urban areas. Among the respondents with Catholic identities, about 20 percent belonged to the CCYL but less than 1 percent to the CCP.

TABLE 5 Demographic characteristics of Catholics and others (%)

	Catholics	Others
Age group		
16–59	95.6	90.4
60 or above	4.4	9.6
Gender		
Male	38.0	47.7
Female	62.0	52.3
Educational attainment		
Middle school or below	58.4	61.8
High/vocational school	28.2	27.5
College or above (including some college)	13.4	10.8
Residential area		
Urban	55.1	36.9
Rural	44.9	63.1
Political affiliation		
CCP	0.9	5.6
CCYL	20.3	10.5
Others	78.8	83.9
<i>Total number of cases</i>	24	6997

Notes: (1) CCP: Chinese Communist Party. CCYL: Chinese Communist Youth League; (2) Numbers do not always add up to 100 due to rounding; (3) two-tailed *t*-test ****p*<.001 ***p*<.01 **p*<.05.

74 Chu, “China and the Vatican.”

75 Madsen, “Catholic Revival during the Reform Era.”

76 Jucca, Lim, and Torode, “After Decades of Mistrust, Pope Pushes for Diplomatic Breakthrough with China.”

77 Wiest, “Sino-Vatican Relations under Pope Benedict XVI.”

78 State Administration for Religious Affairs, “Introduction to Religions in China.”

The Gray Market: Semi-Legal Religions

1. Confucianism

Confucianism is not officially classified as a religion in the PRC. However, the religious dimension of Confucianism and its religious elements are widely acknowledged by scholars and ordinary people. In recent years, some people have advocated for the party-state to recognize Confucianism as a religion, under the name *Ru jiao* 儒教 [Confucian religion]. Opponents of this position often emphasize Confucianism as a body of teachings, under the name *Ruxue* 儒学 (Confucian teachings). The core teachings of Confucius (Kongzi 孔子 551–479 BCE) and his followers Mengzi (孟子 372–289 BCE) and Xunzi (荀子 313–235 BCE) include the “three cardinal guides and the five constant virtues” (*sangang wuchang* 三纲五常). The three cardinal guides refer to the three key moral responsibilities of humans: a ruler must guide his/her subjects, a father must guide his children, and a husband must guide his wife. The five constant virtues are benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and fidelity (*ren yi li zhi xin* 仁义礼智信).¹

The founding thinkers of Confucianism did not have much to say about the supernatural world—gods, spirits, or life after death.² However, Confucius frequently mentioned Tian 天 [Heaven] and *tianyi* 天意 [Heaven's will] in his teachings. Tian appoints kings and teachers to govern and educate the masses. The king is chosen by Tian as a *tianzi* 天子 [Son of Tian] and entrusted with the mandate of Heaven (*tianming* 天命), and he carries out Heaven's will or plan in his governance of society.

In traditional times, the specialists of Confucianism were officials who organized and performed many of the state rituals, such as heaven worship ceremonies (*jitian dadian* 祭天大典).³ Over the centuries, Confucius temples became conspicuous sites for imperial rituals, and the worship of Confucius was incorporated into the legitimization of imperial rule.⁴ Emperors took on the role of the highest priest, offering sacrifices to Tian. For Confucius, collective worship rather than supplication was the goal of these sacrifices. The worship of heaven and Confucius

ended together with the Qing Dynasty in 1911. In the early Republican period, President Yuan Shikai (1859–1916) attempted to restore both the rituals and monarchy, which backfired. Not only did the restoration of monarchy fail, but Chinese intellectuals also mounted fierce attacks on Confucianism, blaming it for holding China back from modernization. Nevertheless, Confucianism remained influential in Chinese society.

When the People's Republic of China was founded, the CCP made a great effort to put an end to the worship of Confucius. During the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), mobs of Red Guards (*hongweibing* 红卫兵) destroyed nearly all Confucian temples. In the 1980s, however, Confucian temples began to be restored. In the twenty-first century, Confucianism has revived in various guises, including the establishment of research and teaching institutes at universities, the formation of associations for Confucian rituals, and the introduction of Confucian classics into schools. Since 2005, the study of Confucianism has been subsumed into China's new national learning or national studies (*guoxue* 国学) institutes at institutions such as Tsinghua University, Xiamen University, and Wuhan University, which began recruiting undergraduate and graduate students to study Confucian culture as national learning majors.⁵ The debate over whether Confucianism and national learning should be recognized as an independent discipline has stirred heated discussion. A report in 2015 stated that the Ministry of Education had decided to institute national learning as a major in many more universities. The most recent education minister, Yuan Guiren 袁贵仁, urged Chinese universities to introduce more textbooks that focus on China's culture and history.⁶

Chinese professionals have begun enrolling in national learning courses.⁷ The craze for reading classical books has led to a rapid increase in the number of old-style private schools (*sishu* 私塾), summer camps (*xialingying* 夏令营), weekend classes (*zhoumoban* 周末班), and kindergarten programs for reciting classical Chinese books. Every province in China except Tibet has at least one such semi-private organization (see Map 12).⁸ Many organiza-

1 Jordan, “The Canonical Books of Confucianism.”

2 S. Li 李申, *Confucian Teaching and Confucianism as a Religion*, 90.

3 S. Li 李申, *Confucian Teaching and Confucianism as a Religion*, 100–103.

4 Sun, *Confucianism as a World Religion*, 134.

5 Chen, “The National Studies Craze.”

6 Floracruz, “China Introduces ‘National Studies’ Textbooks For Government Employees.”

7 Chen, “The National Studies Craze.”

8 See the map at <http://www.aidujing.com/map/>.



MAP 12 Location of Confucian sites.

tions host programs that encourage children and parents to read traditional Chinese books together. They assert that reading to children is critical if they are to internalize or memorize classics, and can be beneficial even when a child is still in the womb. Some Chinese parents believe that reading and reciting can help train the brain and advance the academic abilities of children. Moreover, reading the classics is viewed as a way to cultivating children's temperament and character, teaching them how to distinguish right from wrong. These organizations also offer a number of courses relating to various facets of traditional Chinese culture, including canonical books, calligraphy, traditional music, arts, and sports. Recently, the China Confucius Foundation established a Confucian institute in the Juvenile Detention Center in Shandong Province, aiming to teach morality and law to young prisoners through the reading of Confucian classics.⁹ The China Confucius

9 Chinakongmiao, "Juvenile Prisoners Learning Confucian Classics."

Foundation promotes the establishment of Confucian institutes nationwide to spread traditional Chinese culture and cultivate a moral sense among Chinese people.

One of the most common signs of the rising status of Confucianism is the reading of Confucian classics in Chinese elementary schools. Some elementary schools require students to recite from the *Analects* (*Lunyu* 论语) for 10 minutes in the morning, noon, and evening. This is referred to as "children reading classics." President Xi Jinping has repeatedly iterated the importance of traditional Chinese culture,¹⁰ encouraging schools and universities to teach traditional Chinese culture through debate contests, speech contests, and essay competitions.¹¹ Likewise, Chinese parents have encouraged their children to read books on traditional Chinese culture. The hope

10 Renminwang, "Giving Up Tradition Is a Spiritual Suicide."

11 Chinakongmiao, "The Final Match of the First Confucian Debate Competition for High School Students."

is that these children will benefit from being exposed to national studies at an early age.¹²

In China today, there is an increasing number of Confucian “academies” (*shuyuan* 书院), or colleges where Confucian scholars study scriptures, debate academic and social issues, criticize policy and administration, and teach students. The history of the Confucian academy can be traced back to early medieval times. The activities of Confucian academies were restricted during late imperial China as emperors and powerful officials tried to tighten control over spaces where scholars could freely discuss and criticize political affairs. In the late Ming era, a large number of academies were dissolved following the demise of the Donglingdang 东林党, a political party of scholar-officials. In 1905, the imperial government abolished the traditional examination system for selecting officials (*keju zhidu* 科举制度) and ordered the remaining academies to emulate Western education systems.

Although Confucianism has been marginalized since the early twentieth century and attacked by several political movements, some contemporary scholars, and even top political officials, have tried to restore it to a position of importance. There has been an active effort to reestablish the Confucian academies. An example is the rebuilding of the Yangming Academy 阳明精舍, which was undertaken by Jiang Qing 蒋庆 in the 1990s. Jiang is a retired college professor who studied law, religion, and philosophy. He serves as a representative of Confucian scholars in contemporary China and is active in academic and social affairs. He has published a number of controversial books and articles calling for reform of the Chinese political system on the basis of Confucian principles. He calls this type of thinking “Political Confucianism.” Yangming Academy is located in Longchang Town 龙场镇, Guizhou Province, and occupies about 33 acres. This academy has become famous and attracted many visitors. In 2010, for example, 800 people visited the site, including government officials and scholars from China, Japan, and Canada. Most stayed for a short visit to participate in academic discussion or conduct research. The academy has also hosted several academic conferences on Confucianism.¹³

Another example of a contemporary Confucian academy is Yuandao Academy 原道书院, which was founded by Chen Ming 陈明, a philosophy professor at Capital Normal University in Beijing. Chen’s research focuses on the relationship between Confucianism and culture, civil society, and civil religion. He is the founding editor of a

journal titled *Yuandao* 原道, which is widely recognized in Chinese academic circles. Yuandao Academy was established in 2015 and has hosted a series of activities, such as the spring and fall memorial ceremonies for Confucius. In summer and winter the academy provides training courses for instructors teaching about traditional cultures. The academy sponsors quarterly academic conferences and offers monthly talks on Confucianism for the public.¹⁴

At present, two major official organizations have taken responsibility for the development of Confucianism and the protection of Confucius temples in mainland China. In 1984, the China Confucius Foundation (*Zhongguo kongzi jijinhui* 中国孔子基金会) was established. The foundation is registered as a nonprofit organization under the supervision of the Cultural Affairs Ministry (*Wenhua bu* 文化部). The goal of this foundation is to promote and spread Confucian thoughts and values at home and abroad by raising money from private sources as well as state funds. The Confucius Temple Protection Association of China (*Zhongguo kongmiao baohu xiehui* 中国孔庙保护协会) was formed in 1994 and registered with the Ministry of Civil Affairs of China (*Minzheng bu* 民政部). It is a national voluntary association that embraces scholarship on Confucianism as well as Confucius temples and Confucius academies and aims to preserve Confucius monumentary buildings, promote research on Confucianism, and build connections with Confucius temples and Confucian associations worldwide. The State Administration of Cultural Heritage (*Guojia wenwu ju* 国家文物局) supervises the activities of this association, which is in charge of 128 Confucius temples in mainland China (Map 12). Kong Deping 孔德平, the secretary of the Party Committee and director of the Qufu Tourism Administration, serves as the current president.¹⁵

There are also many nongovernment Confucian organizations. The Chinese Association of Confucius the Holy Sage (*Zhonghua kongshenghui* 中华孔圣会, hereafter HCCC) was established in 2015. Its primary aim is to spread and develop Confucianism as a religion. It was formed in Shenzhen by the Holy Confucian Hall (*Kongsheng tang* 孔圣堂) along with a number of other Confucian organizations. Its founding members include many well-known Confucian intellectuals in mainland China, such as Jiang Qing, Chen Ming, and Zhang Xianglong. The official doctrine of the HCCC regards Confucius as a holy sage. It explicitly claims that Confucius is not only a prominent scholar, but a source of holiness deserving of worship along with heaven and ancestors. HCCC has developed

12 Sohu, “Department of Education to Set a Discipline of Guoxue.”

13 X. Li, “The Struggle of a Confucian Intellectual in a Modern Society.”

14 M. Chen, “Yuandao Academy.”

15 Chinakongmiao, “About China Confucian Temple.”

an organizational structure. The Confucian Scholars Committee (*Rujia xuezhe weiyuanhui* 儒家学者委员会) is in charge of making important decisions and appointing personnel. The current president of this committee is Jiang Qing. The board of directors is responsible for daily administration and the director-general is Zhou Beichen. HCCC focuses on the construction of Confucian sites (*daochang* 道场) resembling Christian churches. These Confucian churches host weekly religious activities such as listening to a sermon, chanting Confucian scriptures, and singing religious songs. They also provide services for weddings and funerals and conduct ceremonies to worship heaven and Confucius and celebrate some traditional holidays. They also reach out to schools, communities, and companies to evangelize on behalf of Confucianism. An important ritual of this group is the quasi-baptismal rite called *guizong* 归宗 [Returning to one's own lineage]. After this ceremony, a practitioner officially becomes a member of the church.

There are two kinds of Confucian ritual practices that are most common in China today: personal devotions and formal ceremonies. Some formal ceremonies are held annually, such as the veneration on Confucius's birthday, September 28. This ceremony began as ancestor worship by the family of Confucius, but later expanded into a formal event involving government officials. Since 2005, the grand ceremony of the worship of Confucius in China has been a state event. The event commonly takes place in Qufu 曲阜, the birthplace of Confucius, and last about two weeks, from September 26 to October 10, and includes music, songs, dances, and rituals. Government officials, descendants of Confucius, Confucian scholars, Confucian followers, and students participate in the ceremony. In 2014, President Xi attended the International Conference in Commemoration of the 2,565th Anniversary of Confucius's Birth.¹⁶ The veneration of Confucius is primarily organized and conducted by the descendants of Confucius with the help of several associations related to Confucius's thought and Confucianism, including the World Federation of Confucius's Descendants (*Shijie kongzi houyi lianyi zonghui* 世界孔子后裔联谊总会), the Confucius Genealogy Compilation Committee (*Kongzishijiapu changtaihua xuxiu gongzuo xiehui* 孔子世家谱常态化续修工作协会), the Confucius Temple Protection Association of China (*Zhongguo kongmiao baohu xiehui* 中国孔庙保护协会), and the Qufu Federation of Confucius's Descendants (*Qufu kongzi houyi lianyihui* 曲阜孔子后裔联谊会).

16 Xinhuanet, "Xi Jinping Requires Improvement in the Party's Work on Religious Affairs in a New Situation."

When the ceremony of the veneration of Confucius became a state event, the government started participating in hosting the activities. Party-state officials invite descendants of Confucius and Confucian scholars in China and abroad to the ceremony.¹⁷ During the ceremony, musicians and dancers dress in Song and Ming Dynasty style, wearing yellow silk robes with dark blue waistbands and black hats. The most iconic part of this ritual is the ceremony of the presentation of three gifts (*sanxian li* 三献礼). The first gift is yellow silk, the second is incense, and the last is wine. When the gates of the temple open, the gifts are offered as a sacrifice to Confucius. All participants are required to wash their hands before bowing down in front of the incense table to offer incense.¹⁸

In recent years, many Confucian temples have been restored. At these temples, people sometimes burn incense sticks and pray to a tablet, statue, or portrait of Confucius (bowing or kneeling). Commonly, they make wishes to Confucius. Some write prayers on prayer cards that are hung in the trees or placed on special shelves within the temple yard.¹⁹ The frequency of the performance of these rituals varies greatly from temple to temple, and also according to the time of year. The most popular period is right before the highly competitive national university entrance examinations in early June. Students and their parents go to temples seeking blessings.²⁰

Another ritual practice related to Confucius or Confucianism is ancestor worship—the ritualized commemoration of, communication with, and sacrifice to one's deceased relatives.²¹ This practice is sometimes considered to be part of Chinese folk religion. Ancestor worship is an activity practiced by many Chinese people in the home, at temples, and at the graves of relatives. Filial piety (*xiao* 孝) and reverence (*jing* 敬) for parents and ancestors are two chief concerns of Confucian thought. Ancestor worship shows reverence for the elders and is a means of cultivating the virtue of filial piety. People commonly visit the graves of relatives at least once a year to show their respect. The most important time to visit is on Qingming 清明, also known as Tomb Sweeping Day, when family members clean ancestors' tombs and make offerings of

17 L. Wang, "The First Official Confucius-veneration Ritual after the Establishment of the PRC."

18 For more detailed information about the ceremony, see Cultural China, "The Grand Ceremony of Worship of Confucius"; Mack, "Celebration of Confucius' Birthday"; China.com, "What Is the Veneration of Confucius Like?"

19 Sun, *Confucianism as a World Religion*, 136–137.

20 Sun, *Confucianism as a World Religion*, 143.

21 Richey, "Confucianism."

TABLE 6 *Demographic characteristics of Confucians and others (%)*

	Confucians	Others
Age group		
16–59	99.7	90.4
60 or above	0.3	9.6
Gender		
Male	50.9	47.6
Female	49.1	52.4
Educational attainment**		
Middle school or below	27.6	61.9
High/vocational school	54.9	27.3
College or above (including some college)	17.5	10.8
Residential area		
Urban	47.3	36.9
Rural	52.7	63.1
Political affiliation***		
CCP	2.1	5.6
CCYL	56.6	10.3
Others	41.3	84.1
<i>Total number of cases</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>6,991</i>

Notes: (1) CCP: Chinese Communist Party. CCYL: Chinese Communist Youth League; (2) Numbers do not always add up to 100 due to rounding; (3) two-tailed *t*-test ****p*<.001 ***p*<.01 **p*<.05.

food, fruits, and wine. Family members also burn incense and paper money while kneeling before the grave to show respect. During ancestor worship, in the home or at the grave, parents or grandparents lead the ceremony, holding the incense and presenting gifts during the ritual.²²

Ancestor worship and other Confucian rituals were banned during the Cultural Revolution. The CCP viewed these practices as part of feudal superstition. Since the Cultural Revolution, temples and tablets dedicated to ancestors have been restored and renovated. Although the Chinese government does not encourage ancestor worship or any kind of religious practice, Confucianism and its rituals and practices have revived in Chinese society as a manifestation of Chinese traditional culture.²³

The influence of Confucianism persists in contemporary China. However, very few people self-identify as Confucians when responding to surveys. Although quantitative data on Confucians in China is scarce, data from the 2007 Chinese Spiritual Life Survey allows us to

estimate their numbers and outline the general demographic characteristics of Confucians in China. Due to the small size of the Confucian sample in the survey (Table 6), the findings presented here offer only a rough sketch of this population.

According to the 2007 CSLS, only about 0.4 percent of respondents indicated that they were Confucians, which corresponded to about 4.5 million adults in China in 2010.²⁴ Because of the very small number of Confucians in the sample, no statistical significance can be assigned to differences between Confucians and other respondents. Nevertheless, some of the percentages may be indicative of special characteristics of self-identified Confucians. Unlike followers of most other religions, females do not outnumber males among Confucians. The proportion of college-educated persons seems to be higher among Confucians than among the other respondents, and Confucians are more likely to live in urban areas. It is also noteworthy that 56.6 percent of the self-identified Confucians in the sample were CCYL members, a much higher proportion than among other religions.

2. Folk Religion

Folk religion refers to beliefs and practices that lie outside the more organized or institutionalized religions. These supernatural beliefs and practices were often diffused or embedded in other social institutions such as the family, the clan, the village, the city, the state, and the guild.²⁵ Unlike institutionalized religions in China such as Daoism and Buddhism, folk religion does not require professional clergy or “orthodox” knowledge about its ritual practices; the beliefs and practices are shared and performed by ordinary people. Because folk religion is embedded in the life of ordinary people, most people usually do not consider it to be religion. In traditional China, ancestor worship and local deity worship provided opportunities for clansmen and villagers to gather and engage in collective activities. Beliefs in gods, ancestors, and ghosts help to attach a feeling of awe and of respect for social norms and regulations. The ritual practices and activities of folk religion serve the important function of fostering solidarity and group cohesion.

After the founding of the PRC, folk religion was suppressed as part of the legacy of feudal superstitions. It survived in such an unfavorable environment by reducing its ritual content to a minimum. People were able to

22 G. Gardner, “Confucianism Worship & Practices.”

23 Page, “Why China Is Turning Back to Confucius.”

24 National Bureau of Statistics of China, “Statistical Communiqué on the Major Data of the Sixth Census.”

25 C. K. Yang, *Religion in Chinese Society*.

secretly conduct rituals in their homes and practice covertly.²⁶ When the reform era began in the late 1970s, folk religion gradually emerged from hiding. People started to re-enact rituals, rebuild temples, and reorganize temple fairs around religiously meaningful festivals.

Folk religious beliefs typically involve three categories of supernatural beings: ghosts, ancestors, and gods. All three of these are invested with moral authority, and they model (and are modeled by) the social and political structure.²⁷ For example, these supernatural beings are understood in hierarchical terms that mirror the organization of society. At the top are the mandarins, representing the emperor and the empire; they became gods after they died. Next come the family and the lineage, whose deceased members became the revered ancestors. Finally, strangers and outsiders, bandits and beggars, are reflected in the dangerous and despised ghosts. People show varying levels of respect to these beings according to their status in the hierarchy. Gods and ancestors are worshipped by way of remembering them, while ghosts are worshipped as a way of warding them off and protecting oneself from them.

Ghosts are often viewed as the souls of people who died in the wrong way or at the wrong time, for example, people who died from accidents, suicide, or war. These souls are ranked very low in the underworld system, and are believed to suffer from the tortures of the underworld, such as fire and coldness. Ghosts can only avoid these sufferings with the aid of their living relatives, if they have any. Relatives can help ghosts by hiring priests, often Daoists or Buddhists, who know how to communicate with the underworld officials and assist the ghosts as they endure their trials. Those ghosts who do not receive such help are unfortunately trapped in the world of the living because they do not have money or food for the underworld. These ghosts are believed to be dangerous. For example, ghosts who died from drowning remain in the water, but they can regain their freedom by drowning another victim to replace them.²⁸ According to folk religious beliefs, Buddhist monks or Daoist priests may conduct a releasing ritual to send the spirit of the dead person off to the other world (*chaodu wangling* 超度亡灵), so that the spirit will not become a vagrant ghost remaining in this world to disturb or harm living people.

The most conspicuous event centering on ghosts in China is the Ghost Festival on the fifteenth day of the seventh lunar month. On this day, people throughout the country feed vagrant ghosts. The Ghost Festival is

also known as Yulapen Festival (*yulanpen jie* 盂兰盆节) by Buddhists and Zhongyuan Festival (*zhongyuan jie* 中元节) by Daoists.²⁹ Buddhists and Daoists utilize different techniques in the celebration of the ghost festival, but they have one common goal: the salvation of ghosts.³⁰ In Chinese culture, the seventh lunar month is believed to be a time when ghosts and spirits are released from their usual torments in the underworld and allowed to wander the earth. On the evening of the Ghost Festival, different rituals are conducted according to whether the spirit is that of a vagrant ghost or a relative. For relatives, people will make lanterns and float them on the river to help their relative's spirit back home in the other world. The lanterns are usually shaped like lotus flowers and illuminated by electric light or candles. As for vagrant ghosts, in Chinese culture they are believed to be malevolent bringers of trouble. Thus, on the evening of the Ghost Festival, people will use firecrackers to ward off them. They also offer ghosts food and money to bribe them away.³¹ There are two types of ghosts: pitiful ones like beggars, and malevolent ones like bandits. The former should be treated with sympathy, the later with caution. Thus, the purpose of worship is to show sympathy to pitiful ghosts while propitiating the malevolent ghosts. Note that ghosts are ranked low in the underworld system: the offerings for ghosts are usually placed on tables outside of a house; they are never served in a house. It is believed that it is dangerous to invite vagrant ghosts to a house or have any contact with them.³²

Part of the impetus to feed ghosts stems from beliefs about life in the underworld, where all souls must go after death. The chthonic realm is a penal world dedicated to punishing wrongdoers. The living must make offerings or perform rituals in order to improve the condition of their ancestors in the underworld by alleviating their punishment. Good and evil deeds in this life determine the punishment and reward a ghost receives in the underworld during the next life.³³ Belief in these spiritual authorities does not distance ordinary people from worldly authority. Instead, it enhances the effectiveness of worldly government, for it impresses on people the idea that the order of morality and justice govern not only this world but also the world beyond. The idea of reincarnation has been reinforced by the Buddhist concept of karma, namely, that

26 Chau, *Miraculous Response*, 7.

27 Weller, *Unities and Diversities in Chinese Religion*, 23.

28 Weller, *Unities and Diversities in Chinese Religion*, 23.

29 Your Chinese Astrology, "Chinese Ghost Festival."

30 For a detailed introduction to the origins of ghost festivals in Buddhism and Daoism, and their celebration by ordinary people, see Teiser, *The Ghost Festival in Medieval China*.

31 K. Yu, "Making a Malefactor a Benefactor."

32 Wolf, *Religion and Ritual in Chinese Society*.

33 Katz, *Divine Justice*, 27.

one's present happiness or suffering may result from the good or evil deeds performed by the same soul in a previous life.

In China, the worship or veneration of ancestors is often centered on their gravesites, the tablets (*paiwei* 牌位) inscribed with their names, and the lineage recording book (*jiapu* 家谱) that lists the names of people belonging to different generations and describes lineage ties. The activities associated with the tablets of ancestors often take place in the household, or in the temple of the ancestors (*citang* 祠堂). Some households set up an altar bearing tablets inscribed with the names of deceased family members and ancestors. Family members, often led by males, worship their ancestors at the altar. This ritual practice echoes the two important concepts in traditional Chinese culture: solidarity and filial piety. People commemorate their ancestors on several occasions throughout the year, including daily worship, the Ghost Festival, and the first and fifteenth days of every month. Incense is often offered for ancestors in the incense pot at the altar. Most of the time, people prepare full meals or the favorite dishes of ancestors and serve them with bowls and chopsticks and rice, noodles, and wine as if they were living kinsmen. These behaviors show filial piety and respect to the deceased. After the ritual, the whole family shares the meal after the ancestors have been allowed to finish.³⁴

Another type of ancestor worship or veneration is paying visits to their gravesites (*shangfen* 上坟). People show respect for their ancestors by offering food, burning incense and paper money, and sweeping the tombs.³⁵ Also, there are some differences in ancestor worship or veneration between mainland China and Taiwan. It is more frequently practiced and also treated with much more gravity in Taiwan. Taiwanese people are more likely to believe in the existence of ancestral spirits. Nearly 73 percent of Taiwanese believe they can get ancestral blessings if they worship their ancestors at certain times, and almost 88 percent of people pray to ancestral spirits, according to the 2009 Taiwan Social Change Survey. In contrast, only 2.9 percent of mainland Chinese said they prayed to ancestral spirits for protection or a blessing, although 72.4 percent of them had visited ancestors' graves during the previous 12 months.³⁶ Yet, we cannot tell for sure whether people in mainland China or Taiwan are honoring the real spirits of their ancestors or simply memorializing the dead by conducting the ritual practices. Very

often, people cannot articulate why they perform these rituals, or why they perform them in a certain way. They do it because it is a Chinese tradition: "our ancestors did it this way."³⁷

The worship of local deities is another type of communal folk religion. In traditional Chinese folk religion, there are many gods. Different gods may affect different aspects of life, and they may have specialized areas of efficacious expertise.³⁸ For example, earth gods help to reinforce community boundaries and solidarity among villagers. Ferry gods and bridge gods are common in places where rivers, streams, and canals are numerous, and they protect people from dying by water. In general, gods are believed to uphold society's moral order.³⁹ Indeed, a whole judicial system can be derived from the belief that gods control all human affairs in this life and the next, including health and wealth. Some gods are believed to record the good and evil deeds of the living, some respond to prayers for intervention, and others administer justice in the underworld. These beliefs are reflected in sayings such as "the gods hover three feet above one's head" (*jutou sanchi you shenming* 举头三尺有神明) and "people do deeds under heaven's [watchful] eye" (*renzaizuo tianzaikan* 人在做天在看).⁴⁰ Building temples for gods is believed to be a way to please them. For each temple, there is always one principal god who has an established reputation for answering the prayers of worshippers. Sometimes people build a new temple for a newly recognized god, or associate the god with an existing temple. Very often, news of the miraculous ability of a god spreads quickly and attracts many people to worship that god.⁴¹ In this case, an individual form of folk religion drives the formation of a communal type of folk religion. For example, in a small village in Hebei Province, a spirit-medium was believed to be able to cure people in the name of the goddess Silkworm Mother (*Cangu nainai* 蚕姑奶奶). The believers then built a Silkworm Mother Temple as a way to express gratitude. The temple later on became a community temple that attracted visitors from nearby villages.⁴²

Some temples are built for deified historical figures or legendary heroes, such as individuals or groups who accomplished great deeds for the local community or even the nation. They may have helped in constructing dams,

34 Weller, *Unities and Diversities in Chinese Religion*.

35 China Highlights, "Qingming Festival."

36 Yang and Hu, "Mapping Chinese Folk Religion in Mainland China and Taiwan."

37 Weller, "Global Religious Changes and Civil Life In Two Chinese Societies."

38 Chau, *Miraculous Response*, 66.

39 Weller, *Unities and Diversities in Chinese Religion*.

40 Katz, *Divine Justice*.

41 C. K. Yang, *Religion in Chinese Society*.

42 L. Fan, "Popular Religion in Contemporary China."

defending the community against banditry and invaders, or bringing relief to a community plagued by a natural or man-made crisis. In a word, they have contributed greatly to the community good. The community builds them a temple or adds them into a pre-existing temple as a way of expressing gratitude. It is believed that a man of unusual virtue or ability would become, after death, a spirit of extraordinary prowess, capable of performing a variety of miracles. The deified hero can enter the daily life of ordinary people by responding to their prayers. The legends about how the deified hero has cured sickness, brought prosperity, or provided an heir in accord with people's requests are what keep the deified hero active in the life of ordinary people. Otherwise, the group memory of the magic of the hero would gradually fade away, and the hero would be forgotten.

Temple fairs (*miaohui* 庙会) are regular community gatherings to worship the principal god of that temple (Photo 10). They are particularly common in the countryside of north China. Villagers as a community hold a fair to express their gratitude to the god for his reputed efficaciousness in answering prayers or bringing miraculous benefits to the worshippers. A committee of local leaders is often in charge of holding the fair and raises funds from fellow villagers. Temple fairs are frequently held in winter, when farmers are not busy with farm work. They usually last for three to five days and attract thousands of visitors. The popularity of a temple is often closely related to the reputation of its principal god. During the fair, sacrificial rites are conducted in the temple and followed by several kinds of social activities inside and nearby the temple. The evening before the fair begins, the villagers worship the god in the temple by burning incense and offering a feast and lamp-oil money. A community play by a hired troupe is also part of the conventional worship, which is held on the stage inside the temple. Individual visitors burn incense and candles and kneel down in the temple as a way to express gratitude to the god. This kind of worship is better known as *huanyuan* 还愿. People make a wish before the god, vowing to come again to worship and offer sacrifice if the wish comes true. People can make various requests to the god, such as to cure an illness, illuminate a problem, bring good fortune to the family, or keep misfortune at bay.⁴³ Besides the religious worship, there are a number of temporary stalls where visitors can buy utensils, hardware, toys, food, farm tools, and other goods. There are also other forms of entertainment, such as peep shows, puppet shows, magic shows, acrobatic and

boxing performances, and also stalls for gambling and fortunetelling.

Apart from regular worship in the temple, religious observances are also held when the community is in crisis due to natural or human causes, such as droughts, floods, locust devastation, epidemics, looting, and destruction by civil war soldiers. For example, if the village suffers from a long drought, which is very common in northern China, villagers will offer sacrifices to gods that control rain, such as the dragon gods (*longwang* 龙王). The worship is often performed by villagers who carry the rain god through the streets to the accompaniment of religious music played by a group of Daoist and Buddhist musicians. Sometimes villagers may hire a troupe to give a play as a way to please the dragon gods in order to induce them to send some rain.

Folk religion is an all-encompassing category that includes many different locally varied beliefs and practices. Three major types of Chinese folk religion may be distinguished, namely, communal, sectarian, and individual folk religions.⁴⁴ Communal folk religion refers to beliefs and ritual activities based in the local community. It includes the worship of local deities such as the earth god (*tudi* 土地), the city god (*chenghuang* 城隍), the seafaring goddess Mazu 妈祖, ancestor worship, and some gods known only to the locals. Communal folk religion plays an important role in enhancing solidarity and collective cohesion.⁴⁵ Ancestor worship serves as an effective social bond for a kinship group. It creates a sense of the continuity in lineage that connects family or relatives beyond two or three generations. It is believed that those who had the same ancestors are trustworthy. Thus, people prefer to loan money to others with the same family name.⁴⁶ Meanwhile, worship of the local deity is an integral part of traditional community life (Photo 11). Temples serve as centers for communal religious life where people can gather for temple festivals, collective celebrations of other festival occasions, and mass religious observances during public crises.⁴⁷ In contemporary China, local temples can also provide a moral framework in which officials can be sanctioned for their performance.⁴⁸

43 Chau, *Miraculous Response*, 242.

44 Yang and Hu, "Mapping Chinese Folk Religion in Mainland China and Taiwan."

45 Yang and Hu, "Mapping Chinese Folk Religion in Mainland China and Taiwan."

46 Weller, "Global Religious Changes and Civil Life In Two Chinese Societies."

47 C. K. Yang, *Religion in Chinese Society*, 81.

48 Tsai, *Accountability without Democracy*.



PHOTO 10 Sending off the royal boat during a ceremony at Shumei Temple in Zhongshan Village (Haicang District of Xiamen).
CREDIT: HENRY LIU.

Sectarian folk religion includes an organizational structure beyond local boundaries, such as Yiguandao 一贯道 (Way of pervading unity), Bailianjiao 白莲教 (White lotus teaching), and Tiandijiao 天帝教 (Heavenly thearch teaching). Upon the founding of the PRC, sectarian folk religions were suppressed as counterrevolutionary organizations (*fandong huidaomen* 反动会道门).⁴⁹ Beginning in the 1980s, some sectarian folk religions have re-emerged in the name of Qigong, especially those that claim lineages. Since 1999, the sectarian Qigong have been banned as “evil cults” (*xiejiao* 邪教). The following paragraphs mainly introduce the beliefs and practices of individual and communal types of folk religion; Yiguandao is discussed in the section on black-market religions.

Of the three varieties of folk religion, individual folk religion is the least developed in its organization and belief system. It comprises supernatural beliefs and practices that are independent of any collectivity, including fortune-telling, palm reading, *fengshui* 风水, wearing

a red waist belt in one’s zodiac year of birth, worshipping the God of Wealth (*Caishen* 财神), hanging mirrors (*aicao* 艾草) at home or in the workplace, and wearing jade or gold. For example, some people may hire geomancers to locate a good business site, or change the location of doors and windows in order to benefit from good *fengshui*.⁵⁰ Individual folk religion also includes practices that are often not considered religious by ordinary people.

It is hard to estimate the number of folk religion adherents due to its unorganized nature. According to the 2007 Chinese Spiritual Life Survey, only 11.8 percent of the respondents self-identified with folk religion. However, the percentage of people who actually practiced it was rather high. About 51.9 percent of people had engaged in at least one kind of folk religious practice in the previous 12 months. About 30 percent of people would wear a red garment, ribbon, or belt in the zodiac year of birth; 18.2 percent had engaged in *fengshui* practices, and 9.8

49 Yang and Hu, “Mapping Chinese Folk Religion in Mainland China and Taiwan,” 508–509.

50 Yang and Hu, “Mapping Chinese Folk Religion in Mainland China and Taiwan,” 509.



PHOTO 11 The nine challenges presented during the Khorchi shaman's ordination, Tongning City, Inner Mongolia.
CREDIT: BAIGULA DAI.

percent participated in fortune-telling. Also, 24.4 percent of people believed in the existence of at least one kind of supernatural being, either ancestral spirits, ghosts, or the God of Wealth. The proportion varied according to the type of supernatural being. Only 5 percent of respondents believed with certainty in the existence of ghosts. By contrast, 16 percent fully believed in the existence of ancestral spirits. As for gods, as many as 10 percent of respondents were certain of the existence of Laotianye 老天爷 [God of Heaven].

In mainland China, females are more actively engaged in practicing folk religion and more likely to believe in the existence of supernatural beings, including ghosts, the God of Heaven, ancestral spirits, and the God of Wealth. Approximately 60 percent of the folk religion adherents who responded to the 2007 CSLS were adult females. They were also more likely to practice some individual form of folk religion practices. For example, females are more active in paying visits to temples or placing folk-religious objects in workplaces. No gender difference is found in terms of practicing *fengshui*. However, males are more actively engaged in ancestor worship than females in mainland

China, which is consistent with the teaching of the five constant virtues in traditional Chinese culture.

Besides the gender difference, older people and less educated people tend to engage more in the communal variety of folk religion practices, such as paying visits to temples. According to the 2007 Chinese Spiritual Life Survey data, those who believe in ancestral spirits and practice ancestor worship (Table 7), and those who believe in the God of Wealth (Table 8) are the most prevalent. The God of Wealth may not be the most prominent god in traditional folk religion. However, this god has gained popularity during the market transition in the economic era. The worshippers of the God of Wealth believe that the worship of this god will bring prosperity. Meanwhile, this god will watch their economic behaviors, rewarding the good and punishing the bad. The embodied form of this god varies, including the armed marshal or the cultured Mandarin official. The former type is often worshipped by soldiers, police, or triad members; the latter is commonly worshipped by bureaucrats and office workers.

According to the 2007 CSLS, about 18 percent of respondents were ancestor worshippers, which corresponded

TABLE 7 *Demographic characteristics of Ancestor Worshippers and others (%)*

	Ancestor Worshippers	Others
Age group**		
16–59	88.1	90.9
60 or above	11.9	9.1
Gender***		
Male	41.5	49.0
Female	58.5	51.0
Educational attainment***		
Middle school or below	65.3	61.0
High/vocational school	28.1	27.3
College or above (including some college)	6.6	11.7
Residential area***		
Urban	30.0	38.5
Rural	70.0	61.6
Political affiliation***		
CCP	3.7	6.0
CCYL	7.7	11.2
Others	88.7	82.8
<i>Total number of cases</i>	<i>1,278</i>	<i>5,743</i>

Notes: (1) CCP: Chinese Communist Party. CCYL: Chinese Communist Youth League; (2) Numbers do not always add up to 100 due to rounding; (3) two-tailed *t*-test ****p*<.001 ***p*<.01 **p*<.05.

to roughly 200 million adults in 2010. Approximately 22 percent of respondents believed in the existence of the God of Wealth or had images or statues of the God of Wealth at home or in the workplace. This corresponded to roughly 245 million adults in China in 2010. About 88 percent of ancestor worshippers were below the age of 60, as were more than 90 percent of believers in the God of Wealth.

In terms of educational attainment, around 65 percent of ancestor worshippers and believers in the God of Wealth had at most a middle school education, a proportion that is significantly higher than among other respondents. Among the ancestor worshippers, about 28 percent had a high school or vocational school education, and less than 7 percent went to college. Among those who believe in the God of Wealth, about 29 percent attended high school or vocational school, and 9.2 percent had a college education. A significantly higher proportion of ancestor worshippers and believers in the God of Wealth lived in

TABLE 8 *Demographic characteristics of God of wealth believers and others (%)*

	God of wealth believers	Others
Age group		
16–59	90.7	90.3
60 or above	9.3	9.7
Gender**		
Male	44.3	48.6
Female	55.8	51.4
Educational attainment		
Middle school or below	61.5	61.8
High/vocational school	29.3	26.9
College or above (including some college)	9.2	11.2
Residential area		
Urban	35.0	37.5
Rural	65.0	62.5
Political affiliation		
CCP	4.8	5.8
CCYL	11.0	10.4
Others	84.2	83.8
<i>Total number of cases</i>	<i>1,552</i>	<i>5,469</i>

Notes: (1) CCP: Chinese Communist Party. CCYL: Chinese Communist Youth League; (2) Numbers do not always add up to 100 due to rounding; (3) two-tailed *t*-test ****p*<.001 ***p*<.01 **p*<.05.

rural areas. Rural residents accounted for about 70 percent of ancestor worshippers and 65 percent of believers in the God of Wealth; these proportions are much higher than the proportion of rural residents in the general population. Among ancestor worshippers, about 4 percent were CCP members, and about 8 percent were members of the CCYL. Among believers in the God of Wealth, about 5 percent were members of the CCP, and about 11 percent were CCYL members.

3. House Churches

Protestant churches that are not affiliated with the Three-Self Patriotic Movement Committee and the Christian Council are usually called *jiating jiaohui* 家庭教会, which literally means “home churches” or “family churches” but is usually translated as “house churches” in English. These churches used to be limited to small gatherings at people’s

homes, but since around the year 2000 some large congregations with hundreds or even thousands of people have emerged, yet they have continued to self-identify as house churches. The party-state cracked down on house churches severely in the 1980s and 1990s, including jailing their leaders, confiscating properties, and dispersing gatherings of believers. In the new century, however, most house churches have been able to operate with only occasional interference from the authorities. They are no longer in the underground per se, as the police and other government agencies know about these house churches. However, they are not legal either, as they are not registered with the government nor the TSPM/CCC. They operate in the gray market of religion.

The origins of the house churches lie in the 1950s. The TSPM National Committee, which was formally established in 1954, included various denominations and independent churches. Many Protestant leaders who refused to join the TSPM were jailed. One such leader was Wang Mingdao 王明道 (1900–1991), who was the founding pastor of the Peking Christian Tabernacle 基督徒会堂, formed in 1935. Wang openly spoke against joining the TSPM. In an article he published in June 1955 in the church's magazine *Spiritual Food Quarterly* 灵食季刊, entitled "We Are for the Faith" (*Women shi weilie xinyang* 我们是为了信仰), he accused leaders of the TSPM as theological liberals who were actually nonbelievers, and declared that true Christians who upheld the fundamental beliefs of Christianity could not join the organization of nonbelievers. This refusal to join the TSPM has become the common ground of the house church movement in contemporary China. Wang Mingdao was jailed in August 1955 and released a year later after making a forced confession, which he later recanted. He was rearrested in 1958 and jailed until 1980. Other well-known leaders who refused to join the TSPM include Yuan Xiangchen 袁相忱 (Allen Yuan, 1914–2005) in Beijing, who was jailed between 1958 and 1979, and Lin Xiangao 林献羔 (Samuel Lamb, 1924–2013) in Guangzhou, who was jailed between 1955 and 1978. After they were released, they still refused to join the TSPM and held gatherings at their homes for Bible study and worship services, which were among the first urban house churches in the reform era.

In 1958, all denominations were disbanded and all Christians were ordered to participate in the union worship service (*lianhe libai* 联合礼拜) under the TSPM. In response, many Christians stopped attending church. Some of those Christians who retained the faith began gathering for worship at private homes or in the wilderness. During the Cultural Revolution, all churches were closed down, but house churches continued to grow as an underground

movement. After 1979, many Christians resurfaced to attend the churches that were reopened under TSPM committees, but many more refused to join the TSPM-affiliated churches and carried on the house church movement. In the 1980s and 1990s, along with the independent house churches in Beijing, Guangzhou, Shanghai, Fuzhou, and other big cities, house churches flourished in the rural areas. Several house church networks or prototype denominations emerged in Henan, Anhui, and Zhejiang. Amid persecution, they actively evangelized in many parts of China, including Heilongjiang Province in the northeast and Yunnan Province in the southwest.⁵¹ For example, the China Gospel Fellowship (*Zhonghua fuyin tuanqi* 中华福音团契), a Pentecostal-like church network founded in Henan Province in the 1980s, is said to have about two million followers today.⁵² Another example, Fangcheng Fellowship (*Fangcheng tuanqi* 方城团契), which also originated in Henan, has an estimated 10 million members.⁵³ In the 1990s and 2000s, many new house churches emerged in the cities and attracted many college students and young professionals. Normally they rent an apartment or business office and transform it into a place of worship. In many cases there are few formal relationships between these churches. Within the churches, the organizational networks are horizontal and church governance is more democratic than in the other types of churches. A good example is the Beijing Shouwang Church (*Shouwang jiaohui* 守望教会), which drew up its own charter and held three consecutive elder elections and member assemblies.⁵⁴ A more recent example is the Chengdu Early Rain Blessings Reform Church (*Qiuyu zhi fu guizheng jiaohui* 秋雨之福归正教会). Under the leadership of Pastor Wang Yi 王怡, this church has developed into a Presbyterian denomination with several other churches in Chengdu and elsewhere.⁵⁵

Some house churches would like to become legal without joining the TSPM. For example, the Beijing Shouwang Church submitted an application in 2005 to the RAB of the Haidian District of Beijing Municipality. However, the authorities insisted that the church had to join the TSPM, or its ministers had to be certified by the TSPM. Following the position articulated by Wang Mingdao in 1955, the Shouwang Church refused to compromise on the principle of not joining the TSPM. Thereafter, the authorities made multiple attempts to disband the church, including

51 Aikman, *Jesus in Beijing*.

52 Y. Liu, "Pentecostal-style Christians in the 'Galilee of China,'" 160.

53 Shaw, *Global Awakening*, 177.

54 Ying, Yuan, and Lau, "Striving to Build Civic Communities."

55 I. Johnson, *Souls of China*.

sending in police and other agents to stop worship services, evicting the congregation from its rented hall in an office building, and forcing the building's owner to forfeit the lease. In 2011, the church gathered donations and purchased halls in another office building, but the authorities ordered the real estate developer not to hand over the keys to the church. Having failed to secure a rental space or occupy the property they had purchased, church leaders called members to gather in a public plaza for Sunday worship services. The authorities responded by arresting house church leaders and sending hundreds of police to guard the plaza. The standoff started on April 10, 2011, and continues today. Senior pastor Jin Tianming 金天明 has been under de facto house arrest since then.

At present, most house churches continue to gather at people's houses or apartments. Many of the gatherings also move around to avoid harassment from the authorities or for the convenience of participants. When a house gathering grows too big for its physical facilities, it divides into two or more groups, just as living cells divide and grow. House churches thus have grown fast. For example, informed researchers and church leaders say that there are at least two to three thousand cell-like house churches in Beijing alone. Some of the small house churches have merged to form large congregations and subsequently moved into large halls in office buildings, such as the Beijing Shouwang Church and the Chengdu Early Rain Blessings Reformed Church.

There are many house church congregations as well as small-cell house churches in various cities throughout China. However, because of their semi-legal or illegal status, it is very difficult to know how many house churches exist and how many house church Christians are in China today. Thus we did not attempt to map house churches or profile the house church Christians in this atlas.

4. Underground Catholic Churches

Catholic churches outside the official system are often called "underground churches" (*dixia jiaohui* 地下教会). In the early 1950s, many Catholic clergy refused to collaborate with the Chinese Communist party-state and remained loyal to the Vatican. They operated secretly, even during the Cultural Revolution. In the era of "Reform and Opening Up" (*gaige kaifang* 改革开放), marked by an increase in economic and social exchanges with other countries, many Catholics resurfaced, but many others have refused to join the China Catholic Patriotic Association, as the Vatican disapproves of it. Meanwhile, in the beginning of the 1980s, Fan Xueyan 范学淹 (1907–1992),

an underground bishop, ordained new bishops without Vatican preapproval. After receiving a pardon from the Vatican, he organized the churches outside the CCPA and allowed them to establish clandestine seminaries and perform new ordinations without direct approval from the Holy See. In 1989, an underground Catholic Bishops Conference operated alongside the official CCPA/BCCCC. The party-state cracked down on the underground bishops and priests severely, including jailing, placing them under house arrest, or putting them in secret detention. Interestingly, it was reported that the underground bishops managed to hold a conference in a prison. Therefore, up until the end of the twentieth century, underground Catholics have remained in the black market of religion. However, in recent years, the suppression has become less severe and more sporadic, so that many underground clergy are able to conduct Mass and perform the sacraments with fewer disturbances by the authorities.

The underground churches' relations with the official churches are complicated and vary in different regions. In fact, most of the aboveground bishops have secretly sought and obtained the approval of the Holy See, even though the party-state disapproves of any organizational connection with the Vatican. Some bishops serve both the aboveground and underground churches. Therefore, significant segments of the red and black markets have turned gray, acquiring an ambiguous legal status.

In 2007, Pope Benedict XVI sent a letter to Catholics in the PRC urging reconciliation between the underground and aboveground churches.⁵⁶ One source of contention between the aboveground and underground churches is the demarcation of dioceses. In 1946, the Vatican established 137 dioceses in China, an arrangement that the underground churches continue to honor. However, the aboveground churches have redrawn diocese borders according to the administrative districts newly adjusted by the PRC. Since 1998, there have been 115 dioceses in the CCPA/BCCCC. The diocese boundaries of the underground and aboveground churches often overlap, and some regions are under the jurisdiction of two bishops. This has led to frequent chaos and constant conflict between the aboveground and underground churches.⁵⁷ Pope Benedict's letter was intended to reduce such conflicts. However, these territorial problems persist.

Since 2013, under the leadership of Pope Francis, the Vatican has made various efforts to improve its relationship with the PRC. The Vatican has expressed its

56 Benedict XVI, "Letter of the Holy Father."

57 S. Zhang, "The Challenges that China's Churches Face in a Changing Society."

willingness to transfer its diplomatic relations from the Republic of China in Taiwan to the People's Republic of China. The latest reports indicate that Beijing and the Vatican have moved closer in their negotiations over the procedure to select bishops. If this obstacle can be overcome, the PRC and the Vatican will establish a formal diplomatic relationship, which could mean the dissolution of the underground churches.

5. Mao Cult

The Mao cult refers to both the personality cult of Mao expressed in political form and the worship of Mao as a god in a form of Chinese traditional folk religion. Mao Zedong 毛泽东 (1893–1976) was the supreme leader of the CCP from 1935 until his death in 1976. He is popularly known as Chairman Mao (*Mao zhuxi* 毛主席) because he held the position of chairman (*zhuxi* 主席) of the CCP Center since the 1940s and became the first chairman of the PRC, an office that is usually mistranslated as “president” in English. In the 1940s and 1950s, Chairman Mao was depicted in Communist media as a wise statesman, an astute military leader, and a great teacher, in a fashion similar to the representations of Lenin in the early 1920s Soviet Union. After the founding of the PRC, Mao was popularly deified as the Great Savior of the People (*renmin de dajiuxing* 人民的大救星). In the 1960s, he was glorified as the Great Teacher (*weida de daoshi* 伟大的导师), the Great Leader (*weida de lingxiu* 伟大的领袖), the Great Supreme Commander (*weida de tongshuai* 伟大的统帅), and the Great Helmsman (*weida de duoshou* 伟大的舵手). Hundreds of millions of Chinese people appeared to be genuinely venerating Mao as a great teacher, statesman, strategist, philosopher, poet, national hero, and liberator of the people. Statues and paintings of Mao depicting him as a strong, healthy, ageless superman appeared in public places and private households throughout the country (Photo 12).

Beginning in 1964, *Quotations from Chairman Mao* (*Mao zhuxi yulu* 毛主席语录), popularly known as the “Little Red Book” because of its size and red cover, was widely distributed. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) increasingly used the book in meetings to bolster Mao's personality cult. The army became the driving force behind the campaign to study Mao's *Quotations*. During the 1960s, soldiers, workers, and farmers were required to gather and study Mao's sayings frequently. Schools began the day by chanting in unison “Long live Chairman Mao” (*Mao zhuxi wansui* 毛主席万岁). With such intense, ritualized attention to Mao's words, the little red books became magical

tokens, fetishized objects of power.⁵⁸ Soldiers, workers, farmers, teachers, students, and people of all walks of life often gathered to study Mao's quotations, danced to express loyalty toward Mao, and even made daily morning invocations and evening confessions in front of Mao's statue or portrait. There were two repeated propaganda campaigns during Mao's time: the “Three Loyalties” (*sanzhongyu* 三忠于) and the “Four Boundlesses” (*siwuxian* 四无限), namely boundless worship of, boundless love for, boundless belief in, and boundless loyalty to Chairman Mao, Mao Zedong Thought, and Mao's proletarian revolution route. During the Cultural Revolution, many school-age youths became Red Guards (*hongweibing* 红卫兵), who were zealots of the Mao personality cult. After Mao's death in 1976, a mausoleum was built in the middle of the Tiananmen Square and his embalmed body was placed in a crystal sarcophagus. Tiananmen Square has thus replaced the adjacent Imperial Palace of the Forbidden City as the metaphorical center of China, a shrine to the great leader of the new China and his ideas and authority.⁵⁹

In the era of reform that began in the late 1970s, the CCP abolished many of the practices of the personality cult, but continues to uphold Mao's thought as part of the official ideology. Meanwhile, the political personality cult has evolved into folk religious beliefs and practices among the masses of people.⁶⁰ Nowadays, the popular worship of Mao can be categorized into two types: collective rituals and individual devotions. The objects, rituals, rhetorics, and spaces used in Mao's time have been reappropriated by ordinary people for obtaining personal blessings or curing diseases. Many rural families follow the custom of posting portraits of Chairman Mao on the wall in the house as a way to position him above other deities.⁶¹

A folk religious temple in Mianyang, Sichuan Province, was destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. In 1995, the Hong'en Temple 红恩寺 [Red benevolence temple] was constructed on the site of the old temple. Initially the temple builders, an elderly couple, simply wanted to provide a temple for the traditional deities. Then, the wife told people, she had a dream in 2006, in which Mao appeared and told her that he was in need of a shelter. Hence she began to raise money to build a statue of Mao. This temple houses not only statues of traditional Chinese folk deities such as bodhisattvas and the God of Wealth, but also statues of Chairman Mao, Premier Zhou Enlai

58 Zuo, “Political Religion.”

59 Calhoun, “Tiananmen, Television and the Public Sphere.”

60 Chau, “Modalities of Doing Religion and Ritual Polytopy”; Frolic, *Mao's People*, 80.

61 Ministry of Tofu, “World Press Photo Winner.”



PHOTO 12
A statue of Mao Zedong at Taiqing
Temple (Lanzhou, Gansu).
CREDIT: NAILA ALTHAGAFI.

周恩来, and Marshal Zhu De 朱德, who were the top three leaders of the CCP from the founding of the PRC until their death in the 1970s. The temple also has poster portraits of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin hanging on the wall, along with other deities. On the door frame of the main hall dedicated to Chairman Mao, an inscription reads, “The true dragon heaven’s son, fight for common wealth for all under heaven, long live Chairman Mao.”⁶² The golden statue of Mao was covered in red cloth, with a red sun rising above his head to symbolize the cosmic

power that legitimizes Mao’s superior being and leadership. The pilgrims who come to visit this temple include locals as well as travelers from other provinces, old and young people, businessmen as well as farmers.

Mao worshippers express their devotion in various ways. Besides Mao temples and commemoration rituals, many also worship Mao’s statue or portrait or wear Mao badges and charms. According to the 2007 Chinese Spiritual Life Survey, about 11 percent of respondents had a statue or portrait of Mao at home, and more than 3 percent of respondents had worn Mao badges or charms in the past year, corresponding to 127 million and 37 million

62 M. Zhu, “‘Is It Respectful to Build Such a Statue for Mao?’.”

TABLE 9 *Demographic characteristics of people keeping a statue or portrait of Mao at home and others (%)*

	Statue/portrait of Mao at home	Others
Age group***		
16–59	84.0	91.2
60 or above	16.0	8.8
Gender		
Male	46.9	47.7
Female	53.1	52.3
Educational attainment**		
Middle school or below	65.9	61.2
High/vocational school	26.3	27.6
College or above (including some college)	7.8	11.2
Residential area***		
Urban	22.0	38.9
Rural	78.0	61.2
Political affiliation***		
CCP	7.1	5.4
CCYL	18.7	9.5
Others	74.3	85.1
<i>Total number of cases</i>	<i>804</i>	<i>6,217</i>

Notes: (1) CCP: Chinese Communist Party. CCYL: Chinese Communist Youth League; (2) Numbers do not always add up to 100 due to rounding; (3) two-tailed *t*-test ****p*<.001 ***p*<.01 **p*<.05.

Chinese adults, respectively.⁶³ The demographic characteristics of Mao worshippers are summarized in Tables 9 and 10.

Among persons who kept a Mao image at home, 16 percent were age 60 or older; the proportion of elderly persons was even higher among those who wore a Mao-related accessory, at 27.6 percent; by contrast, only 9 percent of other

TABLE 10 *Demographic characteristics of people wearing Mao-related accessories and others (%)*

	Wearing Mao-related accessories	Others
Age group***		
16–59	72.4	91.0
60 or above	27.6	9.0
Gender		
Male	45.9	47.7
Female	54.1	52.3
Educational attainment**		
Middle school or below	68.3	61.5
High/vocational school	28.4	27.4
College or above (including some college)	3.3	11.0
Residential area***		
Urban	7.2	37.9
Rural	92.8	62.1
Political affiliation***		
CCP	13.0	5.3
CCYL	20.1	10.2
Others	66.9	84.5
<i>Total number of cases</i>	<i>233</i>	<i>6,788</i>

Notes: (1) CCP: Chinese Communist Party. CCYL: Chinese Communist Youth League; (2) Numbers do not always add up to 100 due to rounding; (3) two-tailed *t*-test ****p*<.001 ***p*<.01 **p*<.05.

respondents were age 60 or older. Persons who engaged in these Mao-related practices were also more likely to be less educated than the other respondents, and more likely to live in rural areas. The gender difference between Mao worshippers and the other respondents is not statistically significant. Not surprisingly, there are significantly more CCP and CCYL members among the Mao worshippers.

63 National Bureau of Statistics of China, "Statistical Communiqué on the Major Data of the Sixth Census."

The Black Market: Illegal Religions

In the 1950s, the PRC banned religious groups outside the five recognized religions as reactionary organizations (*fandong huidaomen* 反动会道门). Some religious groups that formed later were labeled as counterrevolutionary organizations (*fangeming zuzhi* 反革命组织). Although all religions outside the associations of the five officially recognized religions are considered illegal, most of them have actually existed and operated in the gray market of legally ambiguous religions. Since the 1990s, however, the Ministry of Public Security has maintained a list of a select number of illegal religious groups that have been designated as “evil cults” (*xiejiao* 邪教). These groups have been targets of systematic and severe crackdowns.

The so-called evil cults operate under conditions of explicit illegality and are therefore regarded as comprising the black market of religion in China. This section contains brief descriptions of many religious groups on the official list of evil cults. In our presentation, we strive to overcome three limitations. The first is a lack of scholarship on these groups, many of whom are documented only in media coverage or in informal, anecdotal accounts in magazines or on the internet. Where possible, we reference scholarly sources in our descriptions. In some cases, however, little or no information is available in the scholarly record, and even informal descriptions may be unavailable in English. In those cases, we draw from internet sources, including those written in Chinese from Baidu and Baike. In the following account, we risk describing the religious groups imperfectly in the hope that presenting these descriptions in an academic outlet will stimulate more scholarly research as well as ongoing critical discussion.

The second limitation relates to the risks inherent in categorizing and describing politically and socially marginalized groups. We sometimes use names of religious groups that were coined not by the groups themselves but by their antagonists. For instance, the so-called Shouters (*Huhan pai* 呼喊派) are a diffuse array of practitioners who have been lumped together by government officials who speak publicly about their actions. The term “Shouters” is, in fact, regarded as pejorative by many to whom the label is applied. Here we use “Shouters” not to reify their existence as a homogenous religious group or network but to identify a political category of people who are collectively affected by statements and regulations directed at “Shouters.” As such, we recognize the political implications of these terms, yet hope to divorce them from pejorative value judgements leveled at the people from

the outside. Moreover, given the social scientific nature of this atlas, we do not assess the theological orthodoxy or heresy of black-market sects related to Christianity. Other Christians inside and outside China may regard some groups as heretical and some as orthodox. Because the “Shouters” were the first group designated as a counterrevolutionary group or an evil cult since the end of the Cultural Revolution, and also because several later groups were splinter groups from the early “Shouters,” they will be described first below, followed by the other groups in alphabetical order.

A third limitation is the necessarily incomplete nature of this account. There are more religious groups that operate illegally than those listed here, and the religious groups that we do describe are, in reality, often divided into multiple networks with differences that are meaningful and important to insiders. It is for this reason that we use the political category of *xiejiao* as a starting point. We intend the following descriptions to be exploratory and phenomenological rather than exhaustive or conclusive.

1. The Shouters (*Huhan pai* 呼喊派)

The Shouters have a complicated and contested history. The term has been associated with the Local Church (*Difang Jiaohui* 地方教会 or *zhaohui* 召会) movement led by Watchman Nee (Ni Tuosheng 倪柝声, 1903–1972) and Witness Lee (Li Changshou 李常受, 1905–1997), which follows what they understand to be the New Testament practice of having one church per city. However, the Local Church congregations have actively distanced themselves from the Shouters and the actions attributed to them. Witness Lee advocated “calling on the name of the Lord Jesus” during the worship gathering, which the followers believe is following the Bible (e.g., Romans 10:13).¹ “Shouters” is actually a pejorative term derived by changing “callers” (*huqiu* 呼求) to “shouters” (*huhan* 呼喊) to create an impression of being disruptive to social order. The pejorative label has been applied by the party-state with the support of the TSPM to various groups that may or may not be closely following the teachings of Witness Lee.

As soon as churches began to reopen for worship services in 1979, the TSPM was restored and began to establish local committees. However, as described above in the

¹ Lee, *The Subjective Truths in the Holy Scriptures*, 58.

section on the house churches, many Christians viewed TSPM as compromised in faith and no more than a tool of party-state control, and thus resisted it. When two representatives of the Zhejiang Province TSPM committee went to Dongyang County 东阳县 to set up a local TSPM committee, several hundred local Christians staged a peaceful demonstration, in fact a three-day outdoor prayer meeting near the place of the TSPM meeting, on February 14–16, 1982. Soon after the clash between TSPM officials and those Christians, the police raided their meeting places and detained many people in Dongyang and the neighboring Yiwu County 义乌市.² Thereafter, the provincial and national TSPM committees reported to the authorities that it was the “Shouters Sect” (*Huhan pai* 呼喊派) that instigated the mass confrontation in Dongyang and Yiwu and that the sect followed heretical teachings of Witness Lee.³

Witness Lee, a close coworker with Watchman Nee in China in the 1930s and 1940s, was sent by Nee and other coworkers to Taiwan in 1949 to continue the ministry there; he migrated to the United States in 1962, founded the Living Stream Ministry in 1965 to publish Watchman Nee’s books and Witness Lee’s expositions of the Bible, and established a number of Local Churches in various places in the United States. Since the late 1970s, however, amid the anti-cult frenzy in the United States, Witness Lee and the Local Church have been criticized by anti-cult organizations for heretical teachings, authoritarian rule, and deviant practices.⁴ Even though these wrongful criticisms were refuted immediately by Lee and his followers, and later denounced by evangelical institutions such as Fuller Theological Seminary and *Christianity Today* magazine in 2006,⁵ the stigmatizing accusation of cultic heresy was adopted by the TSPM officials to justify the suppression of uncompliant Christians in Dongyang and Yiwu.

In 1983, the party-state officially labeled the “Shouters Sect” as a counterrevolutionary and heretical sect and began to crack down on the uncompliant Christians in Zhejiang and elsewhere who refused to join the TSPM. Many people were arrested and sentenced to prison terms. Two young men of the Local Churches in Dongyang and Yiwu were even sentenced to death or life imprisonment; they were released after serving more than 10 years in prison.

In 1995, the authorities adopted a new term, *xiejiao* 邪教 [evil cult], for the Shouters and other unruly religious sects.⁶ Some other black-market religious groups, such as the All Scope Church and the Established King movement, have adopted some of the teaching materials of Witness Lee but deviated in some aspects of beliefs and practices. However, the Shouters Sect label has been loosely applied to various groups throughout China. On the other hand, many Local Church congregations that deliberately follow Witness Lee’s teachings and practices⁷ have been operating in the gray market with only occasional harassment from the police.

2. All Scope Church (*Quanfanwei jiaohui* 全范围教会)

The All Scope Church has been categorized as a splinter sect originating from the Shouters.⁸ It was founded by Peter Xu Yongze 徐永泽 in the 1980s and has been reported under many English names: the All Range Church, the Total Scope Church, or the Born Again Movement;⁹ the Criers or the Word of Life Church;¹⁰ and the Crying Faction or the Holistic Church.¹¹

Xu began preaching in Henan Province in 1968, during the heyday of the Cultural Revolution when all religions were banned.¹² By the early 1980s, his group of followers was experiencing rapid growth. Their influence was expanding into other provinces including Sichuan, which became a major hub of the group. Xu was arrested and sentenced to forced labor camp in 1982, but he escaped and continued preaching. By 1988, the All Scope Church comprised over 3,000 churches, and Peter Xu had gained such popularity that he met with Billy Graham when the American evangelist visited China. Xu was imprisoned again between 1988 and 1991 and between 1997 and 2000. After his release in 2000, Xu left China for his own safety and settled in the United States. The church declined over the following years, but Xu himself continued to receive international attention from evangelicals. For instance, the American evangelical magazine *Christianity Today* ran

2 Chinese Christian Research Centre, *China Prayer Letter*, June 1982; Y. Huang, “The Clash Between Religious Freedom and Political Persecution.”

3 Jiang, “An Investigative Report on the Shouters.”

4 Spiritual Counterfeits Project, *The God-Men*.

5 Christianity Today, “Loose Cult Talk.”

6 Goossaert and Palmer, *The Religious Question in Modern China*.

7 For a brief introduction to the major beliefs and distinct practices of the Local Church, see J. Hu, “Spirituality and Spiritual Practice: Is the Local Church Pentecostal?”

8 Irons, “Chinese New Religions.”

9 Ma, “Police Crack Down on Underground ‘Religion.’”

10 Wesley, “Is the Chinese Church Predominantly Pentecostal?”

11 Amnesty International, *People’s Republic of China*.

12 Wesley, “Is the Chinese Church Predominantly Pentecostal?”

a story on the All Scope Church in 1998 in which they dismissed claims that the group was heretical.¹³

Followers of the All Scope Church emphasize that repentance and rebirth through Jesus Christ is the only means of obtaining eternal life.¹⁴ Believers have been labeled as charismatic due to their demonstrative worship services and have come under scrutiny for encouraging followers to cry frequently during worship (earning the nickname “the criers”). However, the group has also been characterized as noncharismatic on the basis of conversations with sect members.¹⁵ Although the All Scope Church emphasizes healing and the power of the Holy Spirit, they only rarely speak in tongues and do not practice prophecy. The church has a seven-point mission strategy that stresses evangelism, fellowship, perseverance in suffering, and the worldliness and illegitimacy of the TSPM.¹⁶

This church also has an intimate relationship with the South China Church (*Huanan jiaohui* 华南教会), which was established in 1990 by Gong Shengliang 龚胜亮, one of the core leaders of the All Scope Church.¹⁷ The mission of the South China Church was to establish a new kingdom of God. Followers believe in Christianizing the entire nation and culture. Part of that vision includes the controversial goal of overthrowing the party-state.

3. Church of the Almighty God (*Quannengshen jiaohui* 全能神教会)

The Church of the Almighty God is a Christianity-inspired sect that originated in the 1980s in northern China. It is also known as Eastern Lightning (*Dongfang shandian* 东方闪电), a name taken from Matthew 24:27: “For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.”¹⁸ Followers believe that Jesus’s most recent earthly incarnation was in the form of a Chinese woman with the surname Deng. The Church of the Almighty God has generated political tension by equating the Chinese government with the “dragon” in the New Testament book of Revelation. Its members have also been implicated in

a number of violent crimes, including kidnapping and murder. The Church of the Almighty God maintains a website where users can watch videos, purchase books, and chat online with a practitioner.¹⁹

The Church of the Almighty God includes the Bible in its canon along with its own sacred text, *The Word Appeared in Flesh* (*Hua zai roushen xianxian* 话在肉身显现). Followers believe this text records words uttered by the female Christ, and they regard it as authoritative.

The church’s texts present history as a series of epochs, “God’s six-thousand-year management plan,” in which God was revealed to humans in different ways.²⁰ In the first epoch, the Age of the Law, God (Jehovah) guided the children of Israel through the prophet Moses. In the second epoch, the Age of Grace, God (incarnated as Jesus Christ) died for the sins of humanity. Nevertheless, humankind remained sinful. In the final epoch, the Age of the Kingdom, God (now known as Almighty God and revealed through the female Christ) has returned to earth to help humans attain perfection. The sect’s three-era cosmology—as well as its equation of the Chinese Communist Party with the great red dragon of Revelation—is not new, but resembles that of some other heretical sects.²¹

The Church of the Almighty God has a hierarchical structure in which local leaders report to subregional and regional leaders, who in turn report to an inspector.²² At all levels and among the laity, followers are strongly encouraged to proselytize, a fact that has led to the rapid growth of the sect throughout China’s rural north. The founder of the Church of the Almighty God is reported to have moved to the United States.²³ A small group of followers in New York State manages the sect’s finances.²⁴

4. Cold Water Sect (*Lengshui jiao* 冷水教)

The group known as the Cold Water Sect was founded in 1988 by Huang Huanting 黄焕听 in Reshui Township 热水镇, Heping County 和平县, in northern Guangdong Province.²⁵ Huang was 70 years old when the movement was founded. It is said that she suffered from schizophrenia and came to believe in God while ill. After her

13 Morgan, “A Tale of China’s Two Churches.”

14 Wesley, “Is the Chinese Church Predominantly Pentecostal?”

15 Wesley, “Is the Chinese Church Predominantly Pentecostal?” 238.

16 Wesley, “Is the Chinese Church Predominantly Pentecostal?” 237.

17 Information for this section was obtained from Cnhubei.com, “Churches in South China.”

18 Xi, *Redeemed by Fire*, 226–227.

19 <http://www.holyspiritspeaks.org>.

20 Church of the Almighty God, “About Us.”

21 Dunn, “‘Cult,’ Church, and the CCP,” 101.

22 Dunn, “‘Cult,’ Church, and the CCP,” 101–102.

23 Aikman, *Jesus in Beijing*, 243.

24 Dunn, “‘Cult,’ Church, and the CCP,” 102.

25 Information for this description was obtained from Baidu Baike, “Cold Water Sect.”

recovery, she started preaching to others in Heping County. From there, the movement gained traction and spread to Lianping County 连平县 and other regions near Jiangxi Province until the movement had grown to more than 1,000 followers, with three churches and more than 10 gathering places. In 1991, however, the movement's growth was halted after a police crackdown in Daping Township 大坪镇 in Lianping County.

Followers of the Cold Water Sect believe that cold water is the blood of Father God (*Tian'aba* 天阿爸) and therefore has supernatural power. Cold water, they believe, has the potential to heal physical illness. The sick person needs no medication; simply drinking cold water is enough to cure disease. Furthermore, crops need no pesticides. An application of cold water is believed to keep pests at bay.

Worship is held on Sundays. Upon first meeting, believers consume a bowl of cold water. Followers are then reported to open the Bible and begin reading an arbitrarily selected page. They scan the pages until coming to the word "water," at which point they stop and read the entire page, believing they have been directed to do so by the Holy Spirit.

5. Dami Evangelism Association (*Dami xuanjiaohui* 达米宣教会)

The Dami Evangelism Association is a South Korean religious movement founded in the late 1980s by Li Changlin 李长林 (Korean: Lee Jang Rim 이장림). The movement first spread to mainland China in the early 1990s. Li prophesied that Christ would return on October 28, 1992, taking true believers into heaven and ushering in seven years of calamities for those left on earth. Christ would return again in 1999, issue a final judgment on the world, and bring about the end of human history in the year 2000.²⁶ Missionaries recruited thousands of followers among ethnic Koreans living in China, and the movement had gained an estimated 100,000 followers worldwide by 1992.²⁷ New recruits participated in midnight worship services and training sessions designed to prepare them for the coming apocalypse. Many followers engaged in self-destructive behavior leading up to October 28; one man fasted until he died from malnutrition, and four other followers committed suicide in anticipation of the rapture.²⁸ On October 28, 1992, as followers turned up outside of a Dami Mission church in Seoul, they were met by riot

police, emergency vehicles, and journalists. A few minutes after midnight, a boy shouted from a nearby window, "Nothing's happening!"²⁹

After the prophecies failed, many members felt cheated. Li Changlin had already been arrested and imprisoned for defrauding followers before October 28, 1992, and he eventually disbanded the group. Nevertheless, the Chinese government has maintained a ban against the group, presumably to ward off any future mass suicides. In the aftermath of the failed prophecies, Han Wan Sang, a professor of social policy at Seoul National University, tried to make sense of the fact that so many Koreans—even well-educated people—had joined the sect. He ventured that Koreans were "troubled by a lack of progress in improving ties with North Korea and uncertainty over the domestic political situation."³⁰

6. Disciples Sect (*Mentu hui* 门徒会)

The Disciples Sect, also known as the Narrow Gate in the Wilderness *Kuangye Zhaimen* 旷野窄门, is an apocalyptic sect founded by Ji Sanbao 季三保 (1940–1997), a farmer from Shaanxi Province.³¹ After the Shouters began to attract persecution in 1982, Ji Sanbao established his own religious movement. In 1989, he appointed 12 disciples and proclaimed that he had been appointed as a prophet embodiment (*tishen* 替身) by God.³² His group grew rapidly and by 1995 claimed more than a quarter million followers across 14 provinces.³³ However, the sect began to attract attention from the authorities, and many followers were jailed or assigned to labor camps. In September 2016, several Mentu Hui members were jailed on charges of illegally collecting money, organizing an illegal group, and causing the death of followers.³⁴

The activities of Mentu Hui are well organized, and it spreads its doctrines and attracts followers through effective management. For the country as a whole, Mentu Hui set up seven levels of agencies, including the federation, general assemblies, big branches, small branches, big points, small points, and gathering points. The levels recall the organization of the country's civil administration.

26 Watanabe, "No Doomsday Rapture for S. Korea Sect."

27 Irons, "Chinese New Religions."

28 Watanabe, "No Doomsday Rapture for S. Korea Sect."

29 Watanabe, "No Doomsday Rapture for S. Korea Sect."

30 Watanabe, "Apocalyptic Movement Stirs Social Crisis in South Korea."

31 Xi, *Redeemed by Fire*, 223.

32 Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China*, 195–196.

33 Chang, *Falun Gong*, 148.

34 Carsten, "China Jails Members of Banned 'Cult' Amid Religion Crackdown."

Every level has corresponding leaders and an activity stronghold.

Mentu Hui associates itself with the legal religion of Christianity and claims that its followers are Christians. It connects Western Christians with local prophets as a means of interpreting the Bible. However, Mentu Hui forbids its followers from entering any churches.³⁵ Its meetings are held out in the open. Like many similar groups, Mentu Hui was founded with an “extremely tight internal organization,”³⁶ centered around Ji Sanbao and the 12 disciples whom he appointed. Followers would cite the words of the Bible to emphasize that the achievement of Christianity’s redemption via the Chinese people was inevitable. In the Chinese version of the Bible, for instance, “Sinim” is translated as Qin 秦, an ancient name for a Chinese state in the northwestern part of China. By 221 BCE, Qin had emerged as the dominant power in the region and unified China. Ji Sanbao is said to have been born in Shaanxi Province, the initial location of Qin. This local saint seems to have appealed to people who have little knowledge of Christianity.

7. Established King (*Beili Wang* 被立王)

Established King was founded by Wu Yangming 吴扬明, who was born in Anhui Province in 1945. Wu Yangming’s involvement with the Shouters led to an early arrest and imprisonment.³⁷ After his release, Wu began gathering materials from the Shouters in Henan Province and soon founded his own sect in Anhui Province. Wu focused on the Gospel of Luke and its references to anointing, declaring himself to be the Established King. The name “Established King” or “Anointed King” was inspired by the second chapter of the Gospel of Luke, in which Jesus is depicted as the anointed king.³⁸ Wu’s leadership was strict, forbidding members to enter other churches, sing hymns, or leave meetings early. Wu was arrested in 1995 on charges including rape and fraud and was later convicted and executed.

When joining Established King, followers receive “soul names” and their birth names are discarded. Followers are asked to obey strict rules, including waking at 5:30 a.m. to pray, limiting their diet to two meals a day with at most two dishes per meal, rejecting fruits and snacks, and

avoiding personal luxuries such as makeup and television. Followers also attend secret meetings every five to seven days. They also contribute money to the leaders for organizational purposes. Wu was later accused of embezzling this money.

Foundational texts of the Established King sect are often sourced from the Local Church movement, including writings of Witness Lee. In Wu’s own contribution to this literature, he argues that only by joining Established King could someone be saved from the impending apocalypse. He also claims that the CCP itself is evil, and that Wu himself will overthrow the CCP and establish a kingdom of God on earth.

Followers of Established King consider Wu Yangming as their Father King. In 1993, Wu established 16 power authorities under him: Lord Mother (*zhumu* 主母), Fine Gold (*jingjin* 精金), Pearl (*zhenzhu* 珍珠), Sincerity (*zhencheng* 真诚), Devotion (*fengxian* 奉献), Rose (*meigui* 玫瑰), Anticipation (*panwang* 盼望), Happiness (*kaixin* 开心), New Heart (*xinxin* 新心), Kindness (*liangshan* 良善), Sapphire (*lanbao shi* 蓝宝石), Sacrifice (*xianshen* 献身), Dedication (*zhuanxin* 专心), Marvel (*qiaomiao* 巧妙), Praise (*songyang* 颂扬), and Evergreen (*changqing* 长青). Under each leader, two people called *fengchai* 奉差 are assigned to assist recruitment efforts. These two individuals wear uniforms and go out to preach to new believers.

8. Falun Gong (法轮功)

Falun Gong (Practices of the dharma wheel) is a meditative practice and a set of moral and spiritual teachings that emerged in China in the early 1990s. Although Falun Gong initially enjoyed favorable recognition from the authorities, the practice was officially banned shortly after a protest demonstration in 1999. A subsequent campaign against Falun Gong resulted in thousands of arrests that attracted international attention from human rights organizations. Today, Falun Gong practitioners can be found worldwide. The founder, Li Hongzhi 李洪志 (b. 1951), now resides in the United States.

Falun Gong’s origins lie in China’s Qigong movement, which emerged in the late 1980s and the 1990s along with numerous meditative practices based on the discovery and manipulation of *qi* 气 energy. In May 1992, Li Hongzhi declared himself to be a Qigong master and delivered a series of public lectures at a middle school in Changchun.³⁹ These initial lectures precipitated a remarkably rapid ascent into public life as Li traveled to dozens of cities

35 Irons, “Chinese New Religions.”

36 Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China*, 195.

37 Irons, “Chinese New Religions.” Except where otherwise noted, information for this section was obtained from Baidu Baike, “Established King.”

38 Kupfer, “Saints, Secrets, and Salvation.”

39 Penny, *The Religion of Falun Gong*, 37.

across China—most of them provincial capitals.⁴⁰ The movement's success, however, would attract suspicion from the authorities in the ensuing years. Tensions between Falun Gong and the authorities grew until the movement staged a protest in 1999 demanding legal recognition. The same year, Chinese authorities launched a nationwide crackdown, arresting thousands of practitioners and blocking access to Falun Gong–related websites hosted outside China. Media reports estimated that as many as 2,000 deaths were attributed to the government's actions against Falun Gong.⁴¹ The crackdown decimated the movement, reducing the number of followers from perhaps as many as 40 million to less than 1 million.⁴² The U.S. Department of State reported that half of all inmates in China's labor re-education camps may have been Falun Gong practitioners.⁴³

Like other Qigong movements, Falun Gong teachings emphasize health and spiritual enlightenment. Many practitioners consider Li to be a Buddha or a divine being superior to the Buddha and Jesus, and followers expect to attain a higher state of being through practicing Falun Gong. In pamphlets made available by the movement, meditation techniques emphasize the wheel (*lun*) of the dharma (*fa*), which “is expected to bring about a positive personal development but also to renew society, in particular current society in mainland China.”⁴⁴ Li's own writings, *Zhuan Falun* 转法轮 and *China Falun Gong* 中国法轮功, are regarded as sacred scriptures by some followers.

J. Tong's organizational analysis of Falun Gong focuses on a key paradox: official Chinese accounts characterize the movement as highly organized, with a hierarchical authority structure and efficient communication networks.⁴⁵

On the other hand, Falun Gong's own sources depict the movement as loosely organized, spontaneously maintained, and disinterested in financial profit. The divergence arises from each group's motivation: the central government's interest in suppressing Falun Gong relies on the legal position that the organization operates in a politically subversive manner. Conversely, the movement's ability to deflect political attacks rests on its self-presentation as a band of volunteers whose protests are spontaneous acts by sincere practitioners rather than centrally planned acts of defiance. Tong's analysis reveals that although the movement may not have been as organizationally sophisticated as the central government claimed, it did have an organizational structure, as shown below.⁴⁶

9. Guanyin Method (*Guanyin famen* 观音法门)

The Guanyin Method, also known as the Immeasurable Light Meditation Center and the Way of Sound Contemplation, was founded in 1986 in Taiwan.⁴⁷ In 1992, the Guanyin Method was introduced to mainland China and spread freely for several years until 1995, when Chinese authorities labeled it a “cult organization.” The Guanyin Method claims that its membership had reached 500,000 followers by 1999.⁴⁸ Ching Hai 青海, the founder and spiritual teacher of the Guanyin Method, claims that the practice is “an eternal universal law” that is the “best, easiest, and quickest” way to reach enlightenment.⁴⁹ Her teachings borrow concepts and ideas from other major world religions. According to Ching Hai, the Guanyin Method is “like the way of the universe,” which “has existed since the

Administrative level	Falun Gong organization	Officer's title
National capital	Falun Dafa Research Society (Beijing)	President, Vice-president
Province/region/municipality	Main stations (39)	Main station chief
City/district	Branch stations	Branch station chief
County, urban district	Guidance stations (19,000)	Guidance station chief
Village clusters/ housing blocks/ work units	Practice sites (28,000)	
Groups of individuals	Study groups	
Individual	Practitioners	

40 Penny, *The Religion of Falun Gong*, 38.

41 For example, see Jacobs, “China Still Presses Crusade against Falun Gong.”

42 Irons, “Chinese New Religions.”

43 U.S. Department of State, “International Religious Freedom Report 2008.”

44 Pye, “Religions in East Asia,” 498.

45 Tong, “An Organizational Analysis of the Falun Gong.”

46 Adapted from Tong, “An Organizational Analysis of the Falun Gong,” 643.

47 Thornton, “Manufacturing Dissent in Transnational China.”

48 Thornton, “Manufacturing Dissent in Transnational China.”

49 Ching Hai, *Master's Words*; idem, *Quan Yin Method Is the Easiest Way to God*.

beginning of time when the universe was first formed.”⁵⁰ She regards it as “a universal law that people must follow if we want to get back to the Origin, back to our true Self, back to the Kingdom of God or our Buddha nature.”

The Guanyin Method accepts people from diverse religious backgrounds and does not require an official change of one’s religious affiliation. Its method mainly involves meditation. It also advocates a vegetarian lifestyle: new followers are taught to stop eating animal products for ten days per month and to meditate for half an hour per day.⁵¹ Ching Hai also borrowed the Five Precepts from Buddhism, requiring followers refrain from taking the life of sentient beings, speaking what is not true, taking what is not offered, sexual misconduct, and the use of alcohol.⁵² Apart from incorporating teachings from other religious traditions, Ching Hai lays claim to her own spiritual authority within the Guanyin Method. In her book *The Key of Immediate Enlightenment*, she writes that followers will be elevated if they recite her name.⁵³

Ching Hai is regarded as the Supreme Master of the Guanyin Method. Behind this organization, there is a corporate entity named Supreme Master Ching Hai International. According to Thornton, Supreme Master Ching Hai International started as a business enterprise that has now expanded its operations to include a global network. Ching Hai has been portrayed as a “tireless publicity seeker.”⁵⁴ However, several financial scandals were exposed when the Supreme Master Ching Hai made great attempts to garner transnational support for herself.⁵⁵

10. Lingling Sect (*Lingling jiao* 灵灵教)

Lingling Sect was established in 1985 by Hua Xuehe 华雪和 in Muyang County 沭阳县, Jiangsu Province and the followers refer to Huaiyin in Jiangsu as “Eastern Jerusalem.”⁵⁶ Hua was born in 1940. In 1979, he joined the True Jesus Church 真耶稣教会, an indigenous Chinese Pentecostal sect that originated in the 1910s. In the same year he started to preach in Jiangsu, then went to Henan Province to continue his preaching. In 1985, he established

the Lingling Sect. By 1990, the sect had spread into 13 provinces including Henan, Shandong, Anhui, and Hubei, with 29 communication locations and followers reportedly totaling near 15,000. In 1990, Hua was arrested and sent to labor camp for three years. Hua Xuehe died in 2000. However, the movement survived his death. In 2013 and 2014 there were reported cases in Shangdong where core leaders of the Lingling Sect were sentenced to jail.

The Lingling Sect has adopted certain teachings from the True Jesus Church. It emphasizes speaking in tongues, miraculous healing of illnesses, and exorcising demons. Hua Xuehe differed from the True Jesus Church in that he claimed to be enlightened by God and directly received messages from the Holy Spirit. He also claimed that his name was only one character different from Jehovah (*Yehehua* 耶和華), and he preferred to be called “Jesus the second” or Father Hua. The core teaching of Lingling is that only by completely following Hua and becoming detached from worldly attractions such as material wealth and romantic or familial love can one be saved. Followers of the Lingling Sect believe that the end of the world is nigh, and that the only way to be saved from the apocalypse is to join the group.

At worship meetings, followers sing songs and practice holy dances. In fact, one speculation about the origin of the group’s name is that when praying, followers would visibly shake and shout “Ling 灵! Ling! Ling!” to indicate that they were becoming filled with the spirit. These meetings take place in secret, with times and locations frequently changed to avoid government detection. When not engaged in worship, followers spread the message about the coming end of the world.

Hua Xuehe claimed that he was the reincarnation of Jesus and was the chief leader of the Lingling Sect. Below him were major priests (*da jisi* 大祭司), minor priests (*xiao jisi* 小祭司), two olives (*er langan* 二橄榄), four living beings (*si huowu* 四活物), 12 followers (*shier mentu* 十二门徒), 24 elders (*ershisi zhanglao* 二十四长老), a chief commander (*zuozhen zongzhahui* 坐镇总指挥), and a general (*lingbing dayuanshuai* 领兵大元帅). It is said that Hua Xuehe grouped his followers into geographically defined dioceses called *fang* 方, with every *fang* containing some *dian* 点 (places). Each *fang* includes several thousand people with regional leaders who are rewarded or punished according to their performance.

11. Lord God Sect (*Zhushen jiao* 主神教)

The founder of the Lord God Sect is Liu Jiaguo 刘家国 (b. 1964), who was one of the core members of the

50 Ching Hai, *Master’s Words*.

51 G. Young, “God Inc.”

52 Ching Hai, *Quan Yin—The Five Precepts*.

53 Chan, “Cult Branches Spread Worldwide.”

54 Guzmán, “Immaterial Girl.”

55 Thornton, “Manufacturing Dissent in Transnational China.”

56 Except where otherwise noted, information for this section was obtained from Baidu Baike, “Lingling Sect.”

Established King Sect. The beliefs and structure of the Lord God Sect are similar to those of the Established King Sect.⁵⁷ After joining Established King in 1989, Liu Jiaguo was assigned to preach in Hunan Province in 1991. He was arrested by the police. After his release, Liu continued his religious activity using different names to avoid detection. In 1993 Liu had a conflict with Wu Yangming, the founder of the Established King Sect. After Wu shouted at him in public, Liu took materials from the Established King Sect and started the Lord God Sect in Hunan, claiming that he was the Lord God. After Wu's death, Liu claimed that the Established King was the Father and the Lord God was the Son. Since the Father had died, followers must believe in the Son, i.e., they must join the Lord God Sect. Starting in 1995, the Lord God Sect trained leaders in Xiangxiang 湘乡, Hunan Province, and used the locale as a base as it spread across the nation. By 1998, the sect was believed to have more than 10,000 followers in 23 provinces.

The basic principle of the Lord God Sect is that the Lord God is the reincarnation of Jesus whose mission is to save the world and judge the people. His relationship to the people should resemble an emperor's relationship to his subjects. Followers must obey rules and regulations in front of the Lord God. To signify their complete devotion to their leader, believers are given new names (soul names) upon joining the sect. They hope to establish a kingdom of God on earth, claiming that the government is corrupt and will be replaced.

The organizational structure of the Lord God Sect is strict and hierarchical, with eight levels in total. At the top is Lord God Liu Jiaguo. On the second level is *zaishang zhu* 在上主 [Lord on high], a group comprised of six people selected by Liu. The third level contains the Four Living Beings (*sihuo wu* 四活物). The fourth level is known as the Seven Angels, each of whom is in charge of a specific geographical region. The fifth level is the *quanbing* 权柄 [Authority], who serve at the local level. The Lord God has identified 22 provincial *quanbing*. In the sect's materials, the Lord God states that the *quanbing* represent the power of the military, and each has the prestige and authority of a general. On the sixth level are the *tonggong* 同工 (coworkers), who serve in specific areas of development. The seventh level is comprised of the Host Families (*jiedai jiating* 接待家庭) who accommodate preachers when they travel out of town and host religious gatherings. The eighth level constitutes the rank-and-file followers.

57 Except where otherwise noted, information for this section was obtained from Baidu Baike, "Lord God Sect."

12. New Testament Church (*Xinyue jiaohui* 新约教会)

The New Testament Church (NTC) is a Taiwan-based religious group founded by Hong Kong actress Jiang Duanyi 江端仪 in the 1960s.⁵⁸ The actress, known to her followers as Sister Kong, starred in a string of films in the 1950s before retiring for health reasons. In the late 1950s, Kong converted to Protestant Christianity, after which she embarked on a missionary journey throughout Southeast Asia.⁵⁹ In 1965, Kong met Elijah Hong in Taiwan. Hong, along with a group of his followers, had left the Assemblies of God and set out on a journey into south Taiwan. They encountered a mountain—later known to the group as Mount Zion 锡安山—and decided to wait at that particular site until God would reveal a prophet to them. Elijah Hong has declared that God has forsaken the original Mount Zion in Israel and has chosen the new Mount Zion in Taiwan as his home.⁶⁰ NTC theology, which emphasizes the actualization of God's judgment through natural disasters, believes that Mount Zion will be the site of God's eventual tribulation judgment on the world.⁶¹ The NTC tends to attract the attention of authorities, as their teachings cause followers to distrust all secular authorities and give total allegiance to the sect.

Sister Kong arrived two years later and was accepted by the group as God's prophet. Kong, however, died shortly after arriving at Mount Zion. She bequeathed the ministry to her daughter Ruth, but after a protracted leadership struggle, Elijah Hong seized control of the group, which he continues to lead.⁶²

Today, the movement is headquartered on the holy Mount Zion in Taiwan, God's new chosen home and the site of his future tribulation judgment. Since its founding, the group has inspired some offshoots, such as the Complete Gospel Propagation Group of Jesus Christ's Blood and Water under an NTC recruit named Zo Kun 左坤.⁶³

The New Testament Church has over 29 separate branches in Taiwan. Although the group is banned in mainland China, there are followers in over 20 cities

58 Irons, "Chinese New Religions"; Farrelly, "Taiwan: Mount Zion and Typhoon Morakot."

59 Or returned to Southeast Asia; see Farrelly, "Taiwan: Mount Zion and Typhoon Morakot."

60 Farrelly, "The New Testament Church and Mount Zion in Taiwan."

61 Farrelly, "The New Testament Church and Mount Zion in Taiwan," 183.

62 Also Zhang Lidu; see Irons, "Chinese New Religions."

63 Irons, "Chinese New Religions."

and provinces.⁶⁴ Elsewhere NTC members reside in the Offshoots of Zion, which have been described as “a modest international network of consecrated lands, primarily in Asia and the Pacific, which, like Mount Zion, are regarded as sacred.”⁶⁵

13. Three Ranks of Servants (*Sanban puren pai* 三班仆人派)

The Three Ranks of Servants is an apocalyptic sect that originated in the 1980s. Followers originally believed that the world would end in a series of disasters. Most sources list the founder as Xu Shuangfu 徐双富 (1946–2006),⁶⁶ who converted to Christianity as a child and joined a group of wandering evangelists at the end of the Cultural Revolution. In the late 1970s, Xu was arrested at least six times on charges of beguiling his believers with false ideas. In 1980, Xu took part in a coalition of anti-TSPM preachers in Henan Province but fled into rural Shaanxi Province after the suppression of the Shouters in 1982.⁶⁷ By the mid-1990s, Xu had established a network that spread across many provinces. His trademark, according to his critics, was “the remission of sins through lashes”: believers were subjected to 40 lashes for sins against the community. Such practices echoed older practices of the Catholic Confraternity of the Passion (Kuhui 苦会), as well as the Daoist practice of *zibo* 自搏 (self-slapping) and the Buddhist practice of *zipu* 自撲 (self-beating).⁶⁸ Xu predicted that Christ would return to the world and eliminate nonbelievers in 1989 and later in 1993, but he did not predict Christ’s return a third time.⁶⁹ Huo Congguang 霍从光 was another important leader in this movement; he apparently made several predictions about the apocalypse, saying that the end of the world would occur in 2000, and that it would be preceded by seven disasters.⁷⁰

Practitioners of the Three Ranks sect are literally divided into three ranks of servants, with the sect’s leader serving as God’s chief servant. Xu Shuangfu governed his followers harshly, controlling all aspects of members’ lives through lashings imposed on the disobedient.⁷¹ During

the sect’s peak, it attracted more than a million followers and competed with Eastern Lightning for followers. Some members of the Three Ranks of Servants were implicated in the murders of several Eastern Lightning followers. As a result, dozens of members were jailed and many of them were sentenced to death. The sect’s numbers seem to have declined since a nationwide crackdown on cults in 2004 and 2005 and the execution of Xu Shuangfu himself in November 2006.⁷² However, followers of the Three Ranks sect remain active in some places. For example, in late 2017, there was a court case against some members of the sect in Yunnan.

14. True Buddha Sect (*Zhen fo zong* 真佛宗)

The True Buddha Sect was founded by Sheng-Yen Lu 卢胜彦 in 1975 in Taiwan and spread to the United States in 1982. Lu was once a Christian and active at a Presbyterian church in Gaoxiong 高雄 and taught Sunday school.⁷³ In 1969, accompanied by his mother, who was a believer in traditional folk religion, Lu had an extraordinary experience at a folk religious temple where he had a vision of seeing three *pusa* (boddhisattva) and receiving a gift from the Jade Emperor, the supreme God in Daoism and folk religion. Thereafter, he began to publish articles and books about religions and his personal extraordinary experiences, which attracted many followers. In 1975, he formally established Lingxian zong 灵仙宗 [Immortal Sect], integrating beliefs and practices of folk religion, Buddhism, and Daoism. After he migrated to the United States and settled in Seattle in 1982, following intense interactions with Tibetan Buddhist leaders, he rebranded Lingxian zong as the True Buddha Sect (*zhen fo zong* 真佛宗). In numerous books he has published, Lu claims himself to be a “fully enlightened Buddha,” and he is known by his followers as “Living Buddha Lian-sheng.” Today, the True Buddha Sect has established chapters of various sizes across the globe, and its head temple is located in Redmond, Washington.⁷⁴

Purposefully syncretizing elements from different major religions, Sheng-Yen Lu argues that his teaching amalgamates different “paths to achieve control over one’s birth and death in the most efficient way possible.” While taking concepts and ideas from other religious traditions,

64 Irons, “Chinese New Religions.”

65 Farrelly, “The New Testament Church and Mount Zion in Taiwan,” 183.

66 Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China*, 201.

67 Xi, *Redeemed by Fire*, 224–225.

68 Mungello, *Spirit and Flesh in Shandong*, 80–81.

69 Kahn, “Violence Taints Religion’s Solace for China’s Poor.”

70 J. T. Lee, “Christianity in Contemporary China.”

71 Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China*.

72 Kahn, “China Executes at Least 12 Members of a Secret Christian Sect.”

73 Melton, “The Affirmation of Charismatic Authority.”

74 Ng, *Lotus Blossoms: A Collection of Studies of the True Buddha Sect*.

the True Buddha Sect teaches its followers to “take refuge in the Living Buddha Grand Master Lian-Sheng” and “accept Master Lu as the incarnation of Padmakumara.” Only then can its followers proceed to the next steps for self-cultivation though body and mind cultivation practices.⁷⁵ In 1995, the True Buddha School was labeled a “cult organization” by the Chinese authorities.

15. World Elijah Association (*Shijie yiliya fuyin xuanjiaohui* 世界以利亚福音宣教会)

Established by a Korean named Piao Minghu 朴鸣呼 in 1980, the World Elijah Association entered China in 1993 and has followers in 11 provinces. The group was founded when its leader, Piao Minghu, proclaimed himself to be the last prophet, Elijah. He prophesied that the world would end in the year 2000, after which Piao would reign on earth as God. When the movement spread to northeast China in the early 1990s, followers were known to sequester themselves in villages without modern conveniences such as television and radio. Piao's villages were united in what seemed like a distinct political organization, known as the “Stone Nation,” complete with a flag, a constitution, and a national anthem. The group attracted attention from the Chinese authorities and was declared an illegal “cult” in 1996.⁷⁶

16. Yiguandao (一贯道)

Yiguandao, variously translated as “the way of pervading unity” or “the persistent way,” is a Chinese sect whose religious roots stretch back to antiquity, but the group only acquired its current name in 1905.⁷⁷ The sect remained marginal during its first decades, then grew to include a few thousand followers in Shandong Province by 1930. By the late 1940s, Yiguandao had become the largest sect in China apart from the world religions, claiming millions of followers and spreading across the Chinese mainland. After extreme state suppression on the mainland, Yiguandao spread to Taiwan. It was suppressed in Taiwan for decades but was legalized in the late 1980s and remains popular today.⁷⁸ The ascendancy of Yiguandao has been

called “one of the greatest sectarian success stories in China’s history.”⁷⁹

As a movement, Yiguandao traces its history back to the Xiantiandao 先天道 movement, emerging as its own unique tradition in the late nineteenth century. In the 1930s, Yiguandao was a local sect with a relatively small number of followers. However, under the leadership of Zhang Guangbi 张光壁 (1889–1947)—a leader who proclaimed himself the eighteenth patriarch of the movement after a brief succession crisis—Yiguandao spread across the Chinese mainland. After the Communist revolution, Yiguandao was banned as an illegal sect. The Communist party-state created an exhibition condemning Yiguandao in Beijing in 1951, and in 1952 the party released a film with the sarcastic title, *The Way of Persistently Harming People* (*Yiguan hairen dao*). During those years, the movement spread to Taiwan where it was initially treated with suspicion but later flourished as important businesspeople joined its ranks.⁸⁰ Today, Yiguandao is an international religious movement with over a dozen lineages and global headquarters in both Taiwan and Los Angeles.⁸¹ Interestingly, the movement has spread back to mainland China through international channels. Although it was the target of widespread government repression in the 1970s, recent years have seen a cooling of tensions between the Chinese government and Yiguandao, whose leaders now seek to cooperate with Chinese government officials and nongovernmental organizations.⁸²

Although Yiguandao exists today in multiple lineages on multiple continents, its common core of teachings focuses on the existence of the universe as a cyclical pattern of creation and destruction. The heavens and earth are born and reborn during epochs that last thousands of years. Only one being—the Eternal Mother 无生老母, who is the only deity in the Yiguandao tradition—survives the destructive cycles. The Eternal Mother is said to have 1.6 billion Buddha children (*fozi* 佛子) or “origin children” (*yuanzi* 原子) who, at some point during each epoch, leave the Eternal Mother’s side and descend to earth, forgetting their divine origin. The evangelistic urgency in Yiguandao is the need to awaken the Eternal Mother’s Buddha children before the coming apocalypse.

75 Tam, “A Study of the True Buddha Sect’s Religious Experience.”

76 Information for this section was obtained from Baidu Baike, “World Elijah Association.”

77 Lu, *The Transformation of Yiguan Dao in Taiwan*.

78 Lu and Lang, “Impact of the State on the Evolution of a Sect.”

79 Lu, *The Transformation of Yiguan Dao in Taiwan*, 21.

80 Lu, *The Transformation of Yiguan Dao in Taiwan*, 58–59.

81 Lu, *The Transformation of Yiguan Dao in Taiwan*, 5.

82 Munro and Spiegel, *Detained in China and Tibet*; Zhuo, “Relationship Between Religion and State in the People’s Republic of China”; Billioud and Thoraval, *The Sage and the People*.

PART 2

Provinces

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North China 华北地区



MAP 13 Subregional map of North China.

1. Beijing 北京

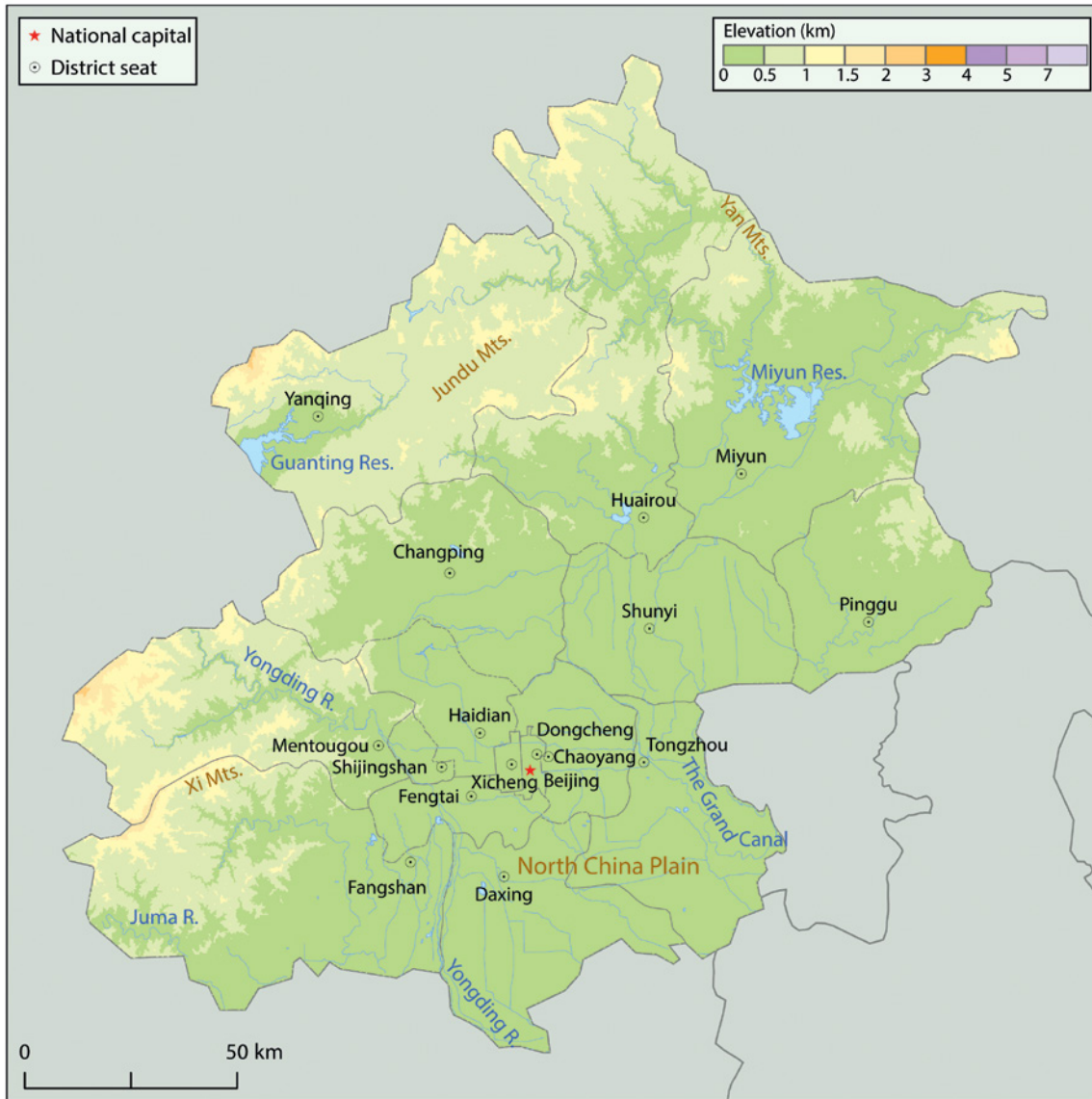
Land area: 16,800 km²

Population: 19,612,368

Topography

Beijing is the capital of the People's Republic of China and the nation's political, cultural, and educational center. It

is one of the four municipalities under the direct control of the central government, meaning that it is a province-level administrative division. The municipality includes 16 districts with a total population of 19 million people. Located on the North China Plain, Beijing is surrounded by Hebei Province, with a small part of the city bordering Tianjin City in the southeast (Map 14). The city proper has a low and flat terrain with an elevation generally



MAP 14 Beijing: Topography.

40–60 meters above sea level and is buffered on the northwest by the Jundu Mountains 军都山, which cover Yanqing District 延庆区 and Huairou District 怀柔区, and on the west by the Xi Mountains 西山. Beijing has humid and hot summers and cold and dry winters; its average daily temperature varies from -3.7°C in January to 26.2°C in July.

Beijing has long been a trading hub in China. The city is the northern terminus of both the Grand Canal 京杭大运河, which leads to Hangzhou in Zhejiang Province, and the South–North Water Transfer Project, which brings water from the Yangtze River basin. The recent economic boom in China has transformed this municipality into one of the most developed cities in the world. This transformation is best symbolized by the concentration of corporate headquarters and high-end shopping precincts in eastern Beijing. The electronics and computer-related industries of Beijing have also grown rapidly in the past

decades. Zhongguancun 中关村 in Haidian 海淀 is known as China's Silicon Valley.

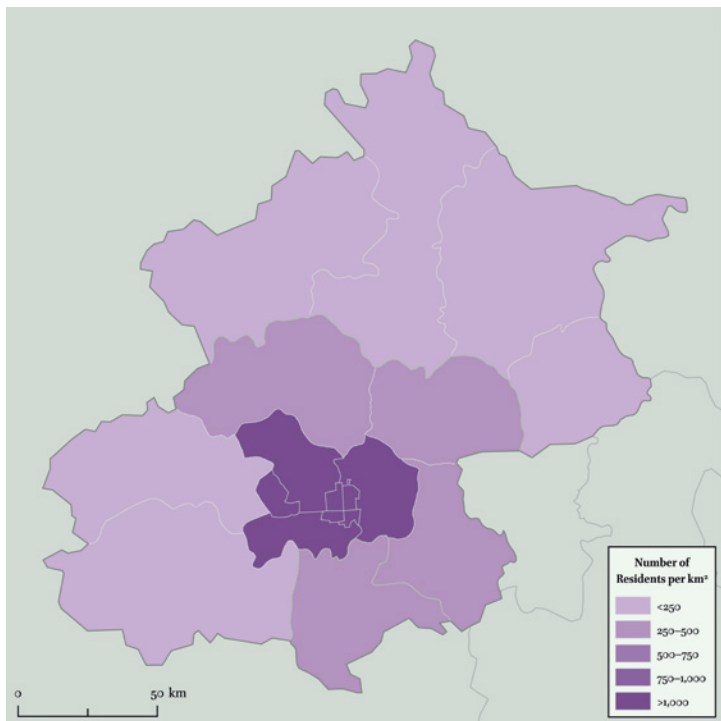
Demography

Beijing's population density is very high (Maps 15–16). On average, there were 4,275 residents per square kilometer in 2010. The population is not evenly distributed, however, most people live in the central part of the city or in the districts that immediately surround the heart of the city, such as Xicheng District 西城, Dongcheng District 东城, Haidian District 海淀, and Chaoyang District 朝阳. Yanqing District and Huairou District are less populous. The total population rose 45 percent between 2000 and 2010, from 13,569,194 to 19,612,368. Immigrants mostly reside in the districts surrounding Central Beijing; Dongcheng and Xicheng have fewer immigrants (Maps 17–18).

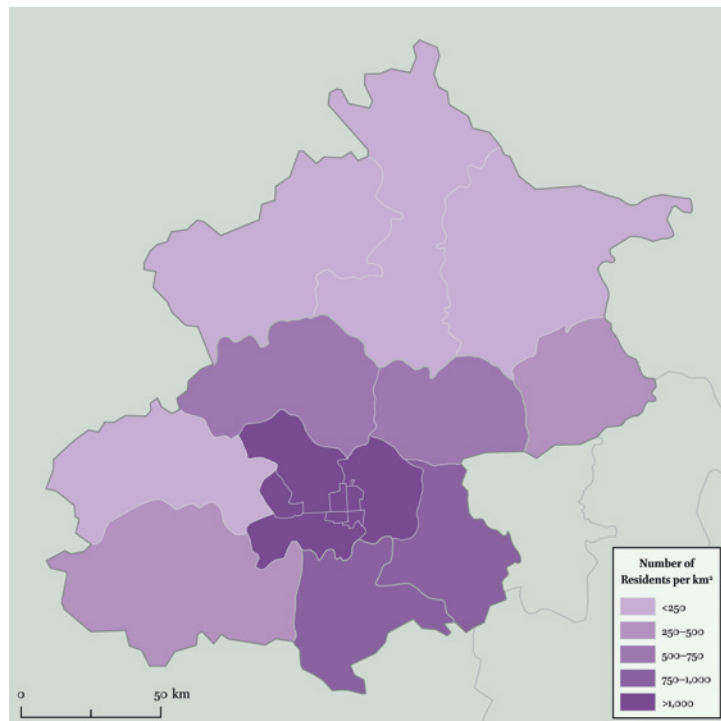
There have been significant changes in education and urbanization. The percentage of people holding college

degrees increased significantly, rising from 12.5 percent in 2000 to 26.9 percent in 2010. The proportion of urban residents increased from 66.9 percent in 2000 to 80 percent in 2010. The proportion of people over 60 years old increased slightly from 12.9 to 13.8 percent between 2000 and 2010. The central part of Beijing, Xicheng and Dongcheng, has a somewhat larger proportion of residents over 60, about 16.8 percent, while in districts like Changping 昌平 and Daxing

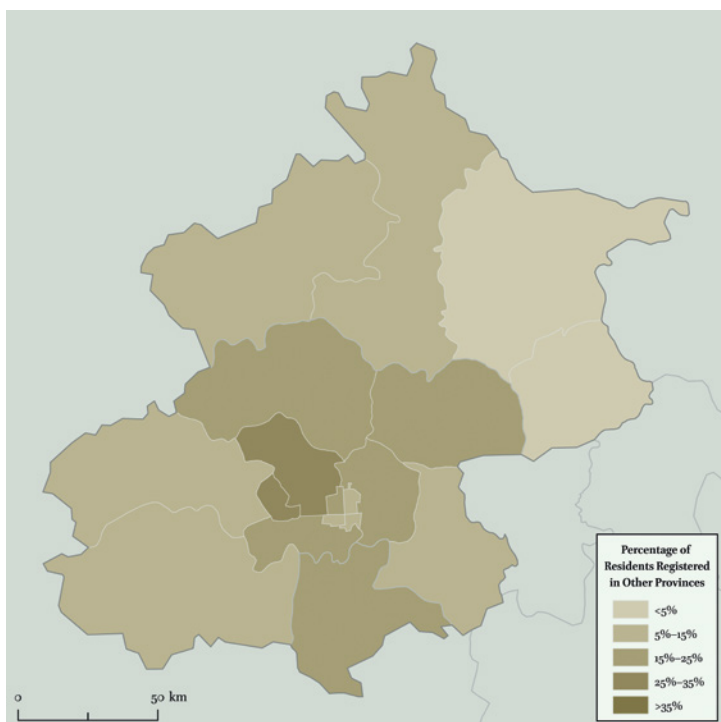
大兴 the proportion is lower, about 9.5 percent. There has been a corresponding decrease in the percentage of younger people between ages 15 and 34, from 49.9 percent in 2000 to 45.5 percent in 2010. The percentage of one-generation households increased from 29.6 percent in 2000 to 46.8 percent in 2010. The average family size has shrunk from 2.9 persons to 2.5 over the same period.



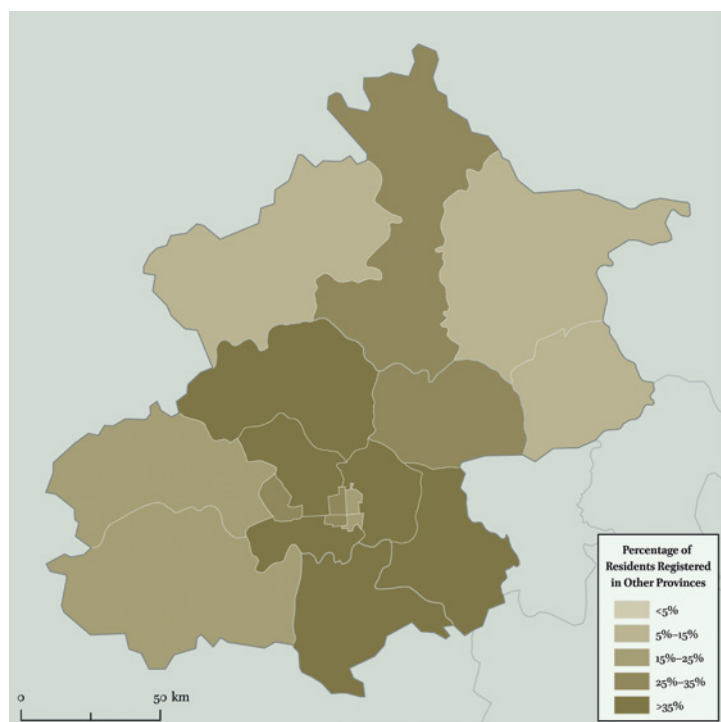
MAP 15 Beijing: Population density in 2000.



MAP 16 Beijing: Population density in 2010.

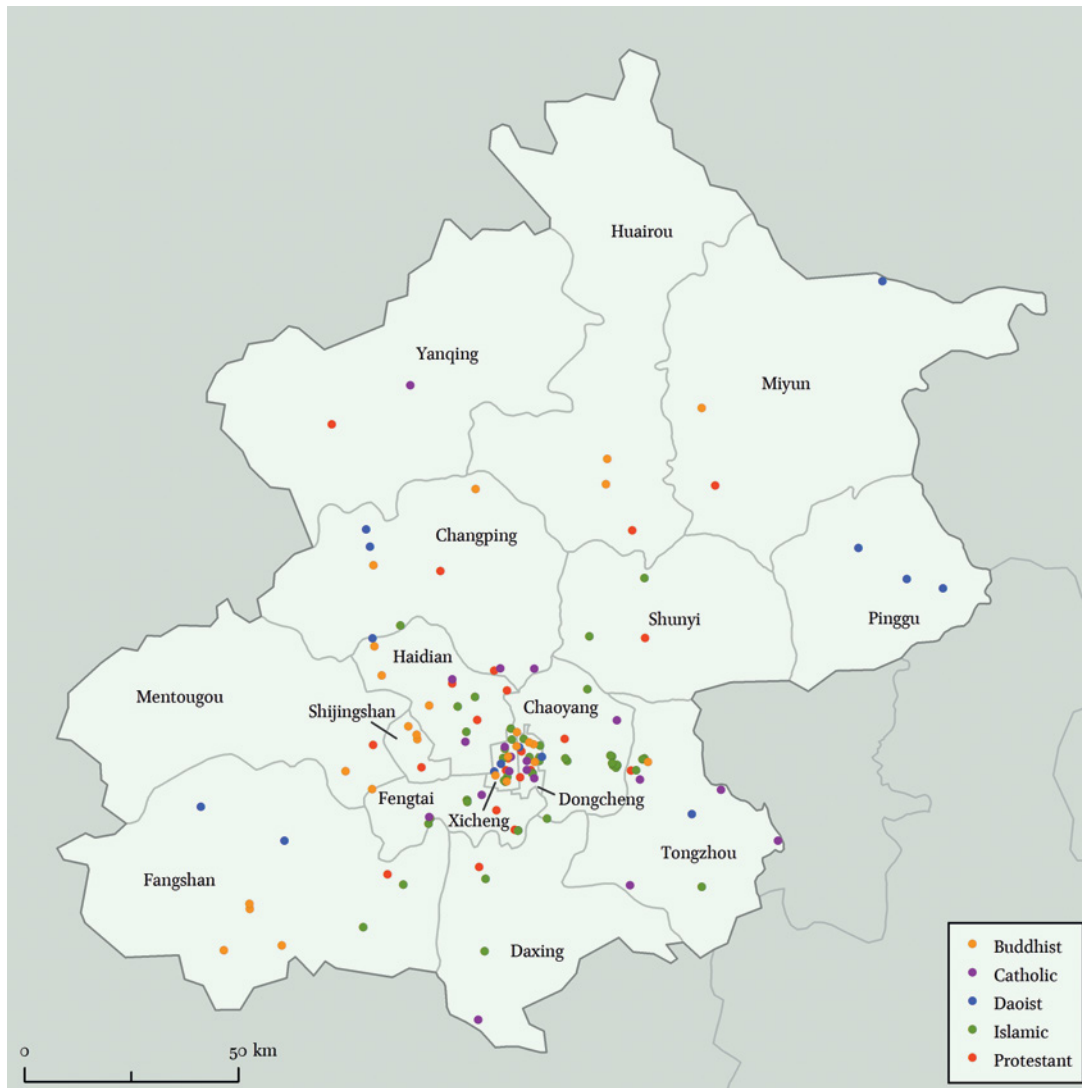


MAP 17 Beijing: Immigration in 2000.



MAP 18 Beijing: Immigration in 2010.

Key Religious Facts



MAP 19 Beijing: Religious sites.

The 2004 Economic Census recorded very few religious sites in Beijing. The reasons for this conspicuous underreporting of sites remain unclear. We made some effort to collect information on additional religious venues in order to produce Map 19 and Figure 9. In fact, Beijing has a great variety of religions, including Buddhism, Catholicism, Protestantism, Islam, and Daoism. Four of the five national associations are headquartered in Beijing (the headquarters of the Protestant TSPM is in Shanghai). The same four religions also have their top-level educational institutions in Beijing: the Buddhist Academy of China (*Zhongguo foxueyuan* 中国佛学院), the Daoist Academy of China (*Zhongguo daojiaoxueyuan* 中国道教学院), the China Islamic Institute (*Zhongguo yisilanjiao jingxueyuan* 中国伊斯兰教经学院), and the National Seminary of the

Catholic Church in China (*Zhongguo tianzhujiao shenzhe xueyuan* 中国天主教神哲学院) (The top-level Protestant Nanjing Union Theological Seminary [*Jinling xiehe shenxueyuan* 金陵协和神学院] is in Nanjing).

Many of the temples, mosques, and churches in Beijing conduct regular religious events. Yonghe Temple 雍和宫, also known as the Yonghe Lamasery, is a temple and monastery of the Gelug school of Tibetan Buddhism. The architecture and interior décor combine Han Chinese and Tibetan styles. The building originally served as an official residence for court eunuchs during the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911); later it became an important center of Lama Buddhism in the capital and housed large numbers of monks from Tibet and Mongolia. Today it is both a functioning temple and a highly popular tourist attraction in

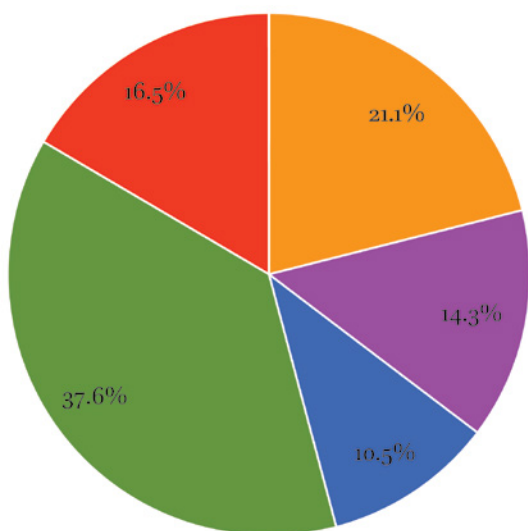
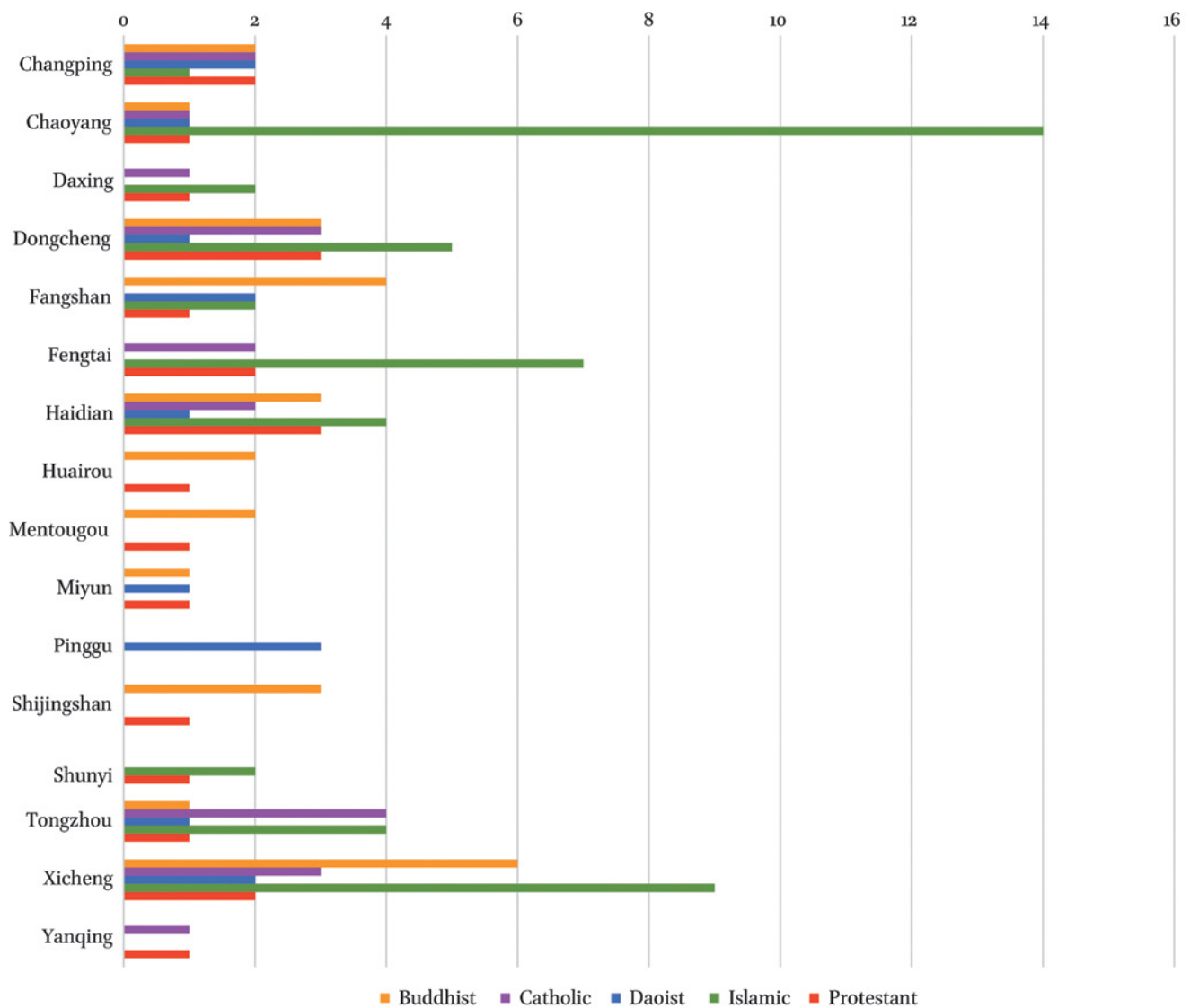


FIGURE 9 Beijing: Distribution of religious sites by district.

the city. On the first day of the Spring Festival in 2016, it received over 70,000 visitors.¹

There are many Buddhist temples and monasteries in Beijing Municipality, and many of them have had a long history and a close relationship with politics (Photo 13). In recent years, Longquan si 龙泉寺 (Dragon Spring Temple) in northwestern Beijing has attracted media attention for its large number of college-educated monks and for inventing and deploying a robot monk. The abbot Xuecheng 学诚 became the president of the Buddhist Association of China in 2015. He is known for his skillful use of social media (Sina Weibo) to spread Buddhist teachings. His postings are simultaneously translated into multiple languages. He also frequently travels abroad and has founded a number of temples in Europe.

¹ China.org, “Nearly 40 Thousand People Visit the Yonghe Lama Temple.”



PHOTO 13 A woman praying at Fayuan Temple (Beijing).
CREDIT: AKSHAY MEHTA

Christianity in China's capital city not only has historical significance but also appears prominently in contemporary international headlines. Beijing was the first place in China to be visited by Roman Catholic missionaries. An archdiocese was established in the city as early as 1307, but it dissolved when the Yuan Dynasty ended in 1368. Near the end of the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644), Matteo Ricci and other Jesuits conducted successful missions in Beijing and the surrounding areas. In 1690, during the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911), the Beijing diocese was re-established; it was promoted to a metropolitan archdiocese in 1946. In 2007, the Reverend Joseph Li Shan was appointed by the Chinese authorities as the bishop of Beijing diocese. The appointment was reported also in the official newspaper of the Vatican, signaling the pope's implicit approval of the new bishop.²

Beijing is home to a number of large Protestant churches under the state-sanctioned Three-Self Patriotic Movement Committee (TSPM) and the China Christian Council (CCC), including the well-known Haidian Church, Gangwasi Church, and Xuanwumen Church, all

of which are megachurches with thousands of people in attendance each week. Meanwhile, there have been many house churches, which are unregistered Protestant congregations independent of the TSPM and CCC. Some of the house churches have become large congregations, such as the Shouwang Church 守望教会, which comprised about 1,000 attendants at its peak. The church's founding pastor, Jin Tianming, started a Bible study group in 1993. By 2005, he had organized multiple Bible study and fellowship groups; these groups merged into a congregation that conducted worship services in a rented office building in Haidian District. During the 2008 Beijing Olympics, continuous raiding and evictions disturbed their meetings. In November 2009, the congregation was evicted from its rented hall and the authorities blocked the church from renting another large hall for Sunday worship. In 2011, Shouwang purchased halls in another office building in Haidian District, but the authorities prevented the real estate developer from delivering the keys to the church. In response, Shouwang leaders called members to hold outdoor Sunday services in the Zhongguancun Plaza 中关村广场. However, on the day of the first planned service, April 10, 2011, Beijing police

2 I. Fisher, "Vatican Signals Approval of New Beijing Bishop."

sent around 4,500 officers to seal off the plaza and prevented the church members, who numbered around 500, from congregating.³ Since then, Shouwang's senior pastor has been under de facto house arrest at his apartment and police have guarded the plaza every Sunday morning.

The center of China's Daoist institutions is Baiyun Temple 白云观, which was founded in the eighth century. For centuries, Baiyun Temple was staffed with official Daoist clergy who played a major role in the imperial rituals. In addition to its administrative and political importance, Baiyun Temple is also a monastic institution. The Niujie Mosque 牛街礼拜寺, erected in 996, is the oldest and largest mosque in Beijing, capable of holding more

than a thousand worshippers. The architecture style is a mixture of Islamic and Han elements.

Mount Miaofeng 妙峰山 in western Beijing is a site of worship in Daoism and folk religion. The annual temple fair in the first half of the fourth month of the lunar calendar attracts tens of thousands of people with its parades of gods, opera and kungfu performances, and other activities of worship and celebration. The history of the temple fair can be traced back to the seventeenth century near the end of the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644). Since then many folk religious organizations have formed in the surrounding area. In recent years, the local government has supported the revival of the temple fair for economic and cultural reasons. In 2008, the Mount Miaofeng temple fair



MAP 20 Tianjin: Topography.

³ Davison, "Chinese Christianity Will Not Be Crushed."

was recognized by the Chinese government as a national site of intangible cultural heritage.⁴

2. Tianjin 天津

Land area: 11,305 km²
Population: 12,938,693

Topography

Tianjin is located to the southeast of Beijing, at the north-eastern extremity of the North China Plain (Map 20). Tianjin is one of the four municipalities directly under the central government and has jurisdiction over 16 districts. The terrain in Tianjin is generally low and flat. The Yan Mountains 燕山 intrude into northern Tianjin, making it hilly in the far north. The Hai River 海河 flows through Tianjin and enters Bohai Bay 渤海湾.

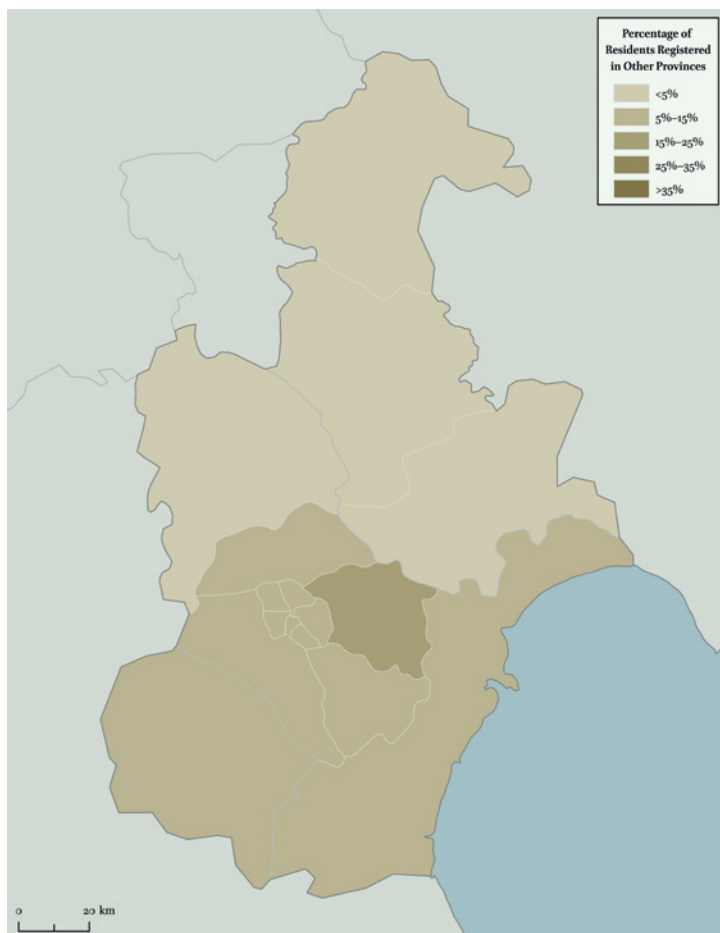
Tianjin is an economic center of North China—its most important manufacturing base as well as its leading port. Binhai New Area 滨海新区 has been a focus of economic development and is home to distinct industrial clusters

of heavy machinery, chemicals, and shipbuilding. Tianjin is also a city of great historical and cultural significance. Concessions set up by Western countries have cultivated the distinctive features of the city proper, integrating the modern with the ancient, the West with the East.

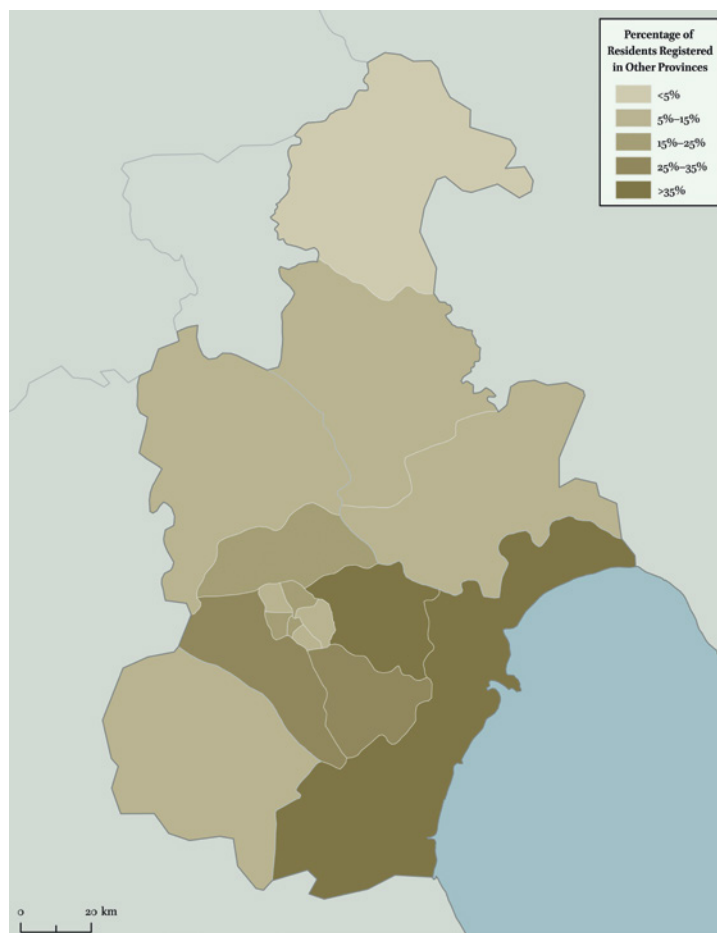
Demography

Tianjin's population is not evenly distributed: more people live in the six districts in the central part of the municipality, such as Heping 和平, Nankai 南开, and Hedong 河东, and the surrounding districts, such as Beichen 北辰, Xiqing 西青, and Binhai 滨海. The total population rose from 9,848,731 in 2000 to 12,938,693 in 2010, a 30.3 percent increase. The growth in population is largely due to immigration: the number of people moving into Tianjin increased 53 times over the same period, from 55,885 to 2,991,501 (Maps 21–22).

The percentage of urban residents increased slightly from 73.1 percent in 2000 to 77.6 percent in 2010. The percentage of the population with at least a college degree rose from 8.7 percent to 17.4 percent over the same period, while the national average was 3.3 percent in 2000

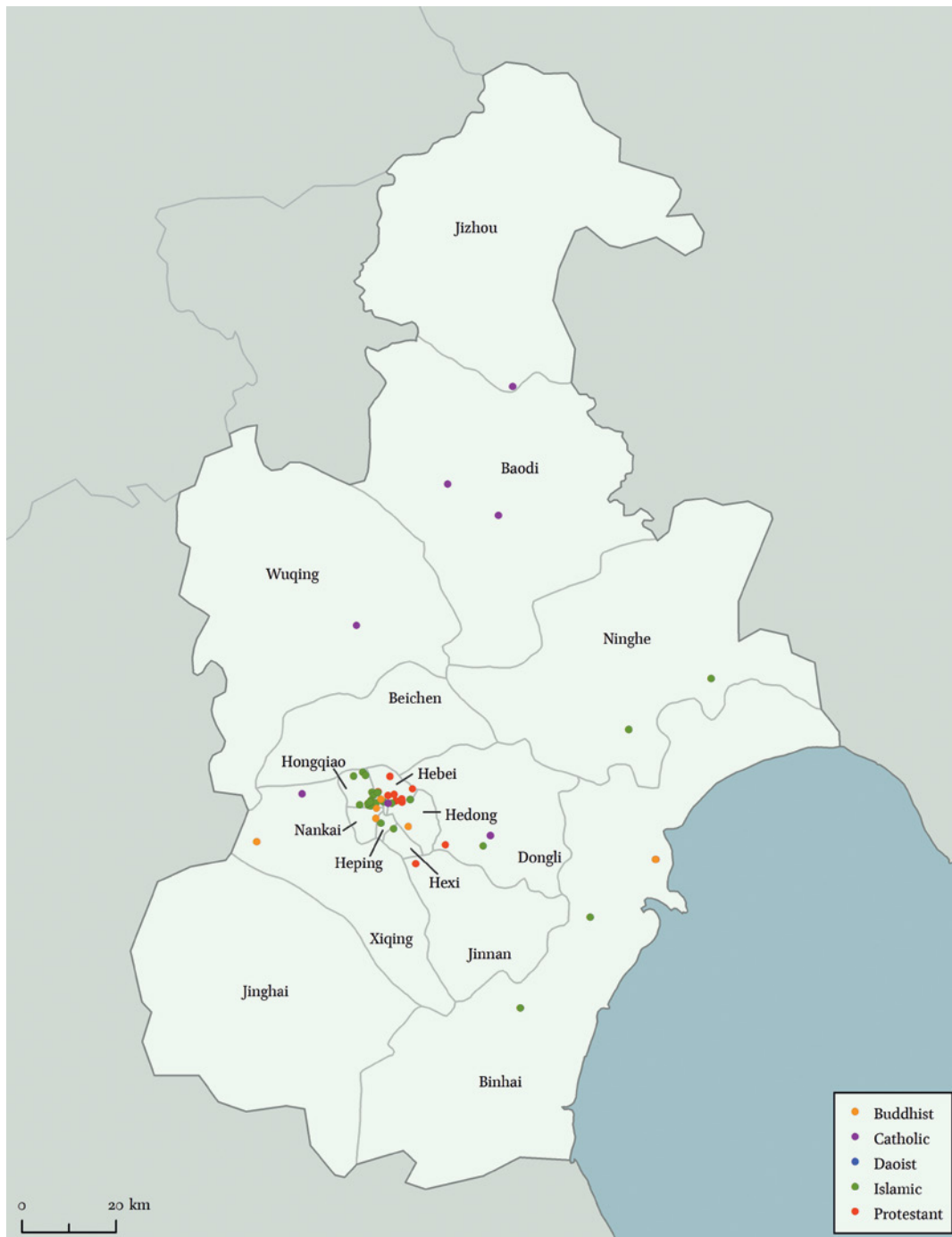


MAP 21 Tianjin: Immigration in 2000.



MAP 22 Tianjin: Immigration in 2010.

4 I. Johnson, *The Souls of China*.



MAP 23 Tianjin: Religious sites.

and 7.6 percent in 2010. The proportion of the elderly population, people aged 60 and above, rose slightly from 12 percent in 2000 to 13.7 percent in 2010. There has been a significant increase in one-generation households, from 23.0 percent in 2010 to 36.2 percent in 2010. Districts with a high proportion of immigrants, such as Binhai, Xiqing, and Ninghe 宁河, have a much higher percentage of one-generation households, about 43.5 percent in 2010. Meanwhile, the average family size shrank from 3.1 persons to 2.8 over the decade.

Key Religious Facts

As was the case in Beijing, the 2004 Economic Census listed very few religious sites in Tianjin. To compensate for this underreporting, we used multiple methods to collect additional information. The religious landscape of Tianjin appears to have a concentration of diverse religions in the downtown districts, but very few in the rural counties (Map 23 and Figure 10).

Tianjin is the center of Mazu culture in northern China. The Mazu Temple, known as Tianhou Temple 天后宫

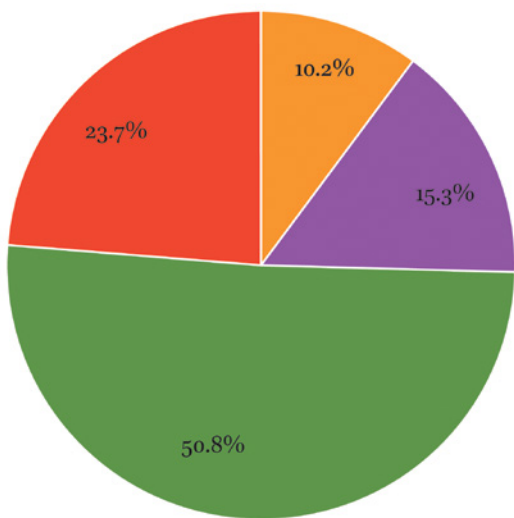
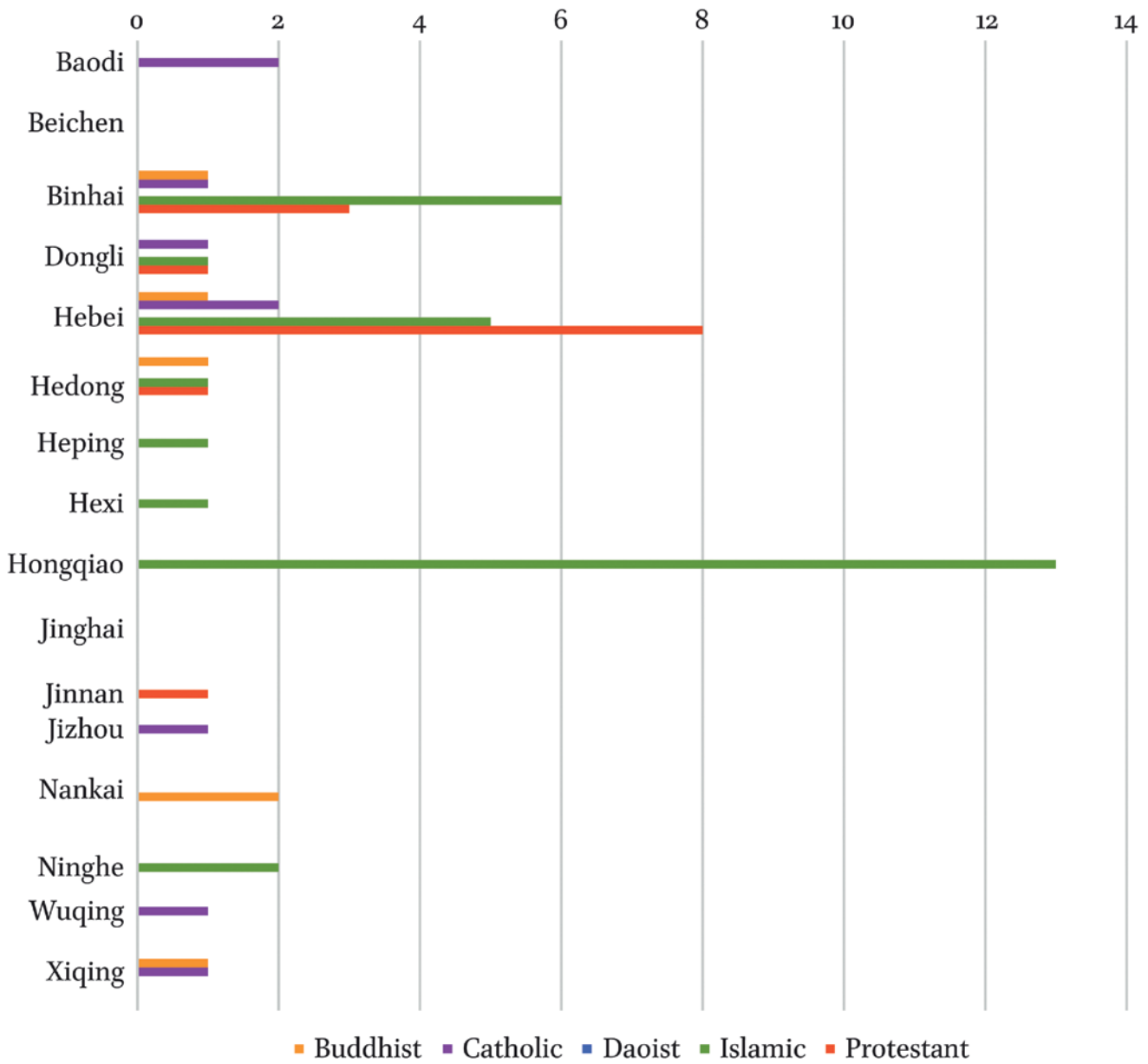


FIGURE 10 Tianjin: Distribution of religious sites by district.

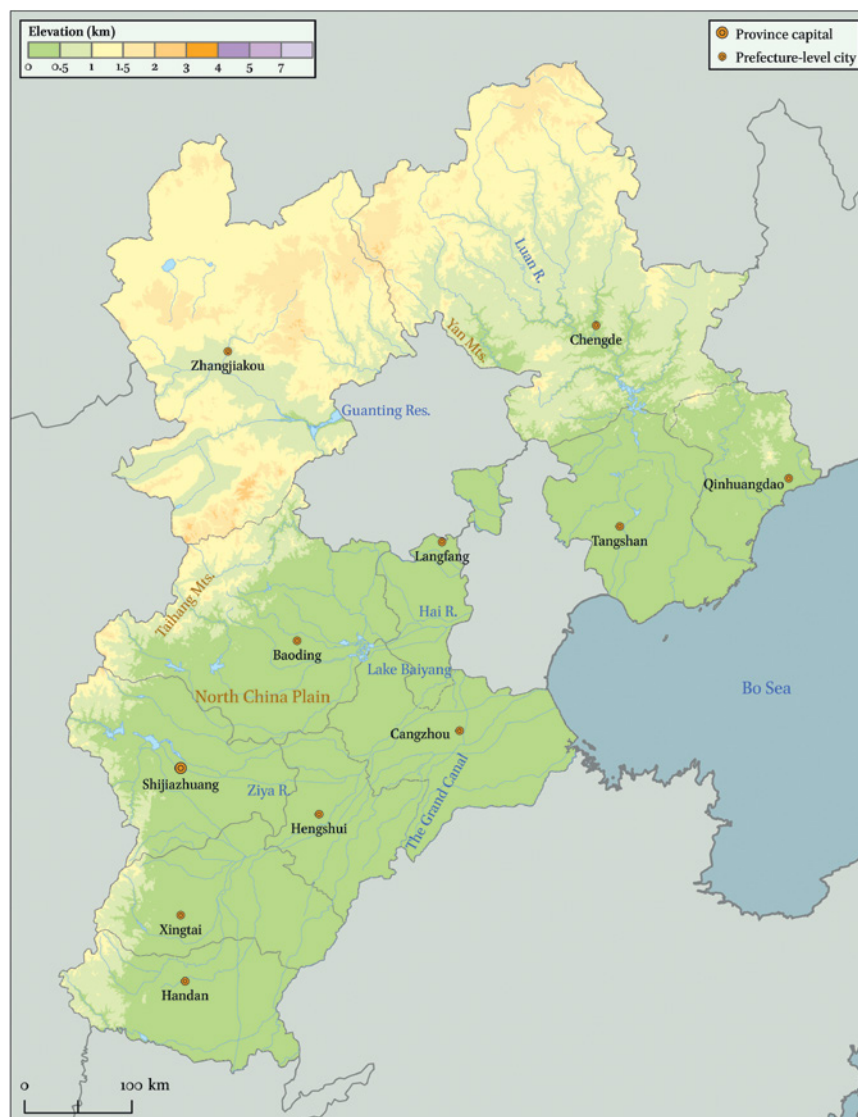
[Queen of Heaven Palace] and popularly referred to as the Niangniang Palace 娘娘宫, was first built during the Yuan Dynasty (1260–1368) in 1326. It was dedicated to the sea goddess Mazu, to whom seafarers leaving Tianjin’s ports prayed for safe passage. In 2016 Tianjin saw the opening of the Mazu Cultural Park, which boasts the largest statue of Mazu in the world.

Zailijiao 在理教 or Lijiao 理教 [Way of the abiding principle] is a religious sect that originated in Tianjin during the seventeenth century, gained widespread adherence throughout northern and central China during the latter decades of the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911), and became one of the largest and most well-developed religious sects during the Republican era (1911–1949). Zailijiao attracted

followers by promoting abstinence from alcohol, tobacco, and opium as well as treating drug addiction. After 1949, the Chinese Communist party-state effectively eradicated Zailijiao along with other religious sects on the mainland.⁵

Tianjin is the childhood home of Buddhist master Hongyi 弘一 (1880–1942), formerly Li Shutong 李叔同. As a multitasking artist, poet, actor, musician, and teacher, Li Shutong became a key intellectual in political movements to modernize China, but at age 38 he made a radical decision to abandon his worldly success and begin a monastic life under the Dharma name Yongyi. He is highly esteemed as a great Buddhist practitioner and teacher, and his simple and clean calligraphic style has become synonymous with modern Han Buddhism.⁶

The Western concessions that cultivated the distinctive features of Tianjin also left a religious legacy of Christianity and anti-Christian riots. Following the Convention of Beijing 北京条约 between the Qing Empire and the United Kingdom, France, and Russia, Catholic and Protestant missionaries arrived in Tianjin. In 1869, the first Catholic church was built. A year later, however, on June 21, 1870, anti-foreign sentiment erupted in a violent riot known as the Tianjin Massacre. Rumors of sexual perversion and mistreatment of orphans among both foreign and Chinese Catholics in Tianjin led a local mob to kill at least 19 foreigners, including the French consul, several French merchants, two Catholic priests, and 10 Catholic nuns, as well as dozens of Chinese Christians. Similar



MAP 24
Hebei: Topography.

5 Palmer, "Chinese Redemptive Societies and Salvationist Religion"; DuBois, *The Sacred Village*.

6 Birnbaum, "Two Turns in the Life of Master Hongyi."

incidents of anti-foreign and anti-Christian violence occurred throughout China over the following decades, culminating in the Boxer Rebellion (1899–1901).⁷

In recent years, the Vatican, underground Catholics, and the CCPA have engaged in negotiations. In 2007, Pope Benedict XVI sent a letter to China's Catholics. The letter stressed the "duty of union" with all the members of the "ecclesial community," emphasizing that it is this lack of unity that is the "greatest danger" to the Church.⁸ The pope's words reflect the fact that tension occurs not only between the government and the underground congregations, but also between the Vatican and underground Catholics, and between state-sanctioned organizations and the underground Catholics. The members of the underground Catholic church, who have chosen to remain faithful to the pontiff, were urged to reconcile with the CCPA, and through it with the Communist government. Xikai Cathedral 西开天主教堂 in Tianjin, which accommodates up to 1,500 people, can be seen as a physical locus of tensions in the church. In August 2007, it was reported

that underground Catholic bishop Stephen Li Side 李思德 had been ordered by security officers to join the CCPA. In July 2008, most priests in the Tianjin Diocese of the official church "pledged obedience" to Bishop Li Side. Meanwhile, more members of the underground church began attending Mass at the official Xikai Cathedral.⁹

3. Hebei 河北

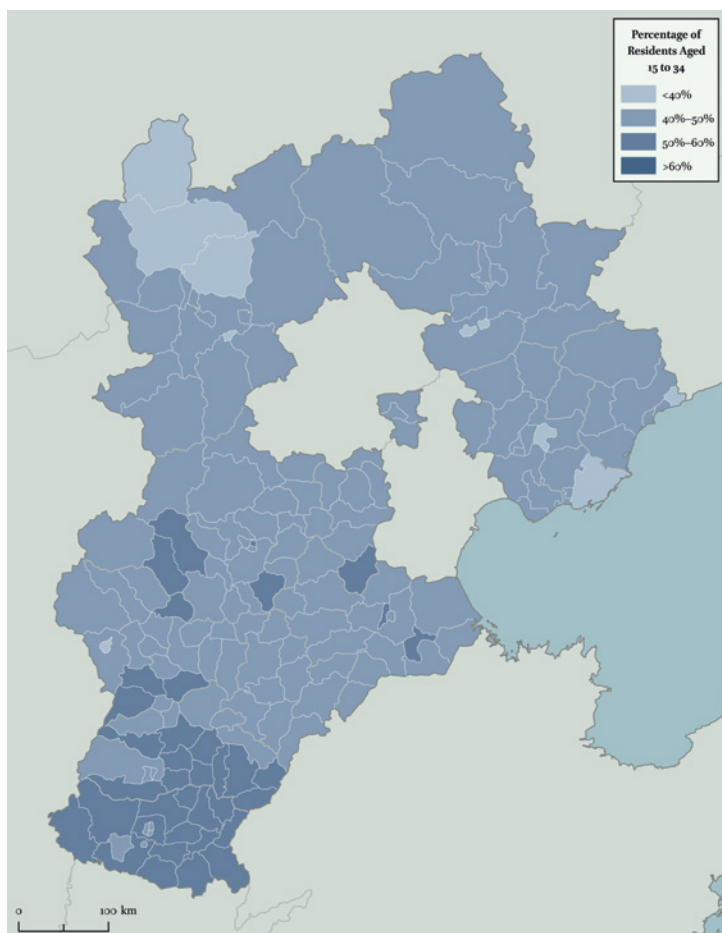
Land area: 187,700 km²

Population: 71,854,210

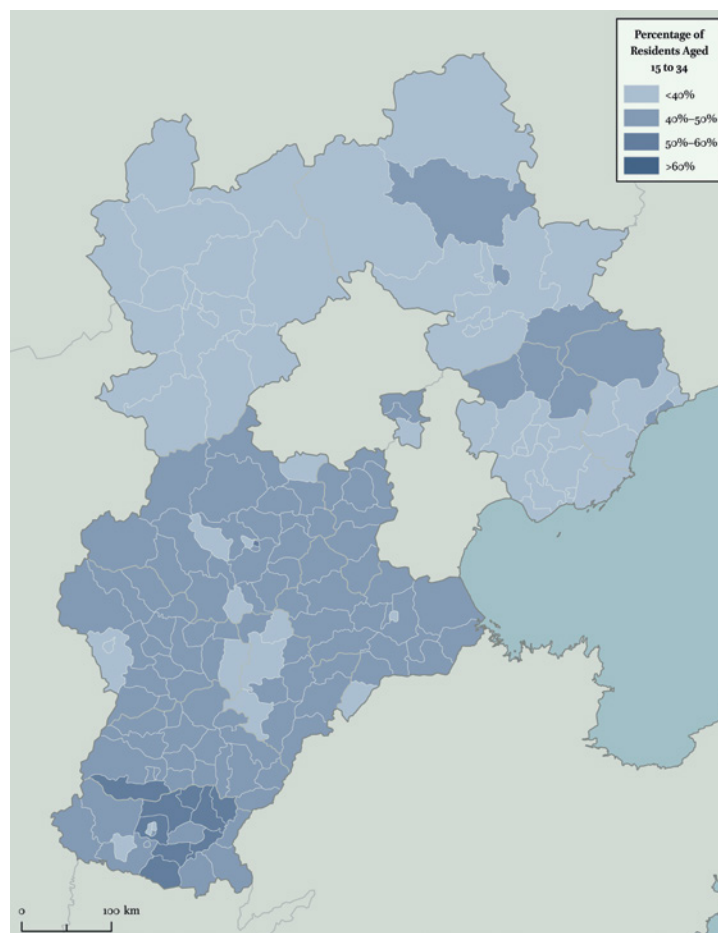
Capital: Shijiazhuang 石家庄

Topography

Hebei is located in the northeast part of China and surrounds Beijing and Tianjin municipalities. The name Hebei means "north of the river," in reference to the Yellow River. The province is divided into 11 prefectures, including 47 urban districts, 20 county-level cities, 105 counties.



MAP 25 Hebei: Young population in 2000.



MAP 26 Hebei: Young population in 2010.

⁷ Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China*, 76.

⁸ Galitzin, "Benedict + CPA = Prison for Fr. Wang."

⁹ European Country of Origin Information Network, "Refugee Review Tribunal Australia."

Ethnic minorities compose 4.2 percent of the total population; most of the minority population is Manchu (72 percent) or Hui (19 percent). Ethnic minorities are dispersed throughout the province and the majority live in rural areas.

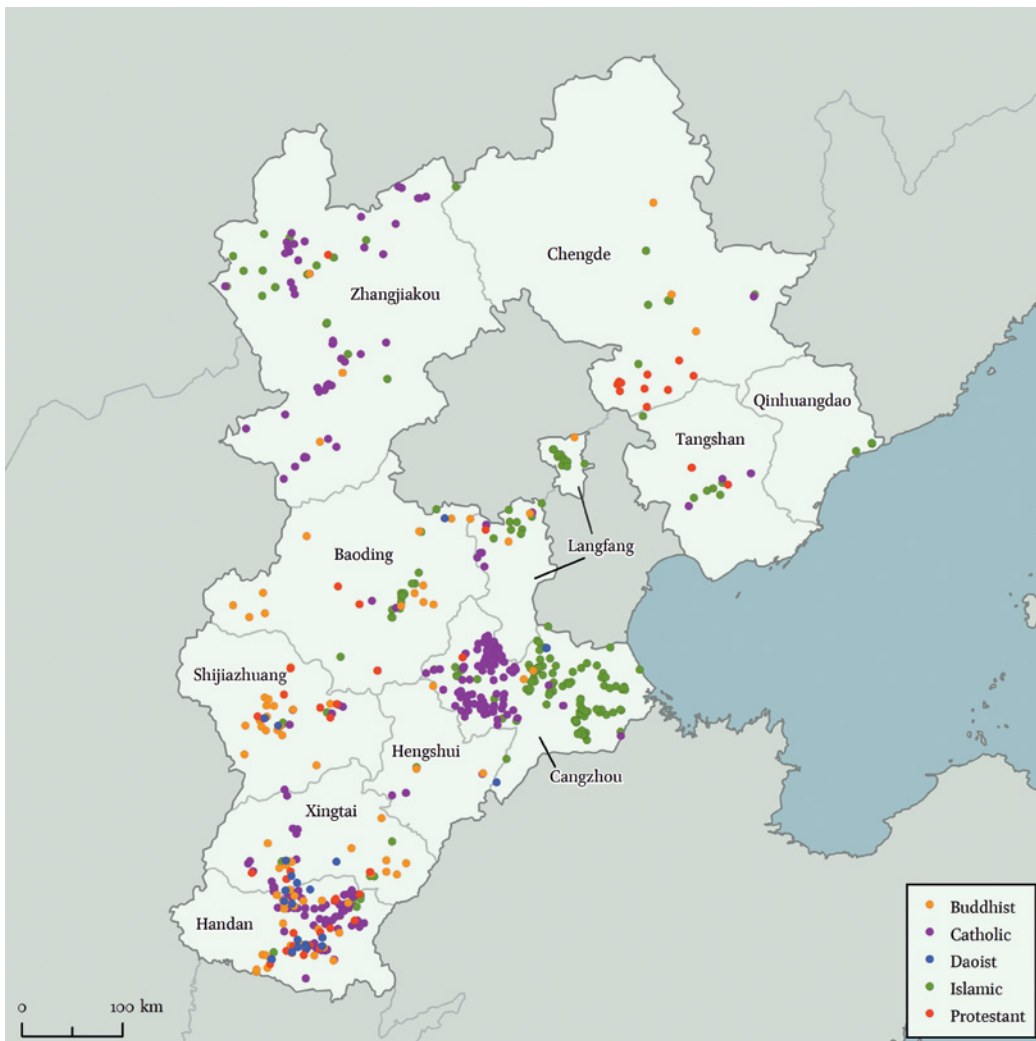
Most of the major cities and economic development zones are located in the southwestern part of Hebei, which is part of the North China Plain 华北平原 (Map 24). The northern half of the province is covered by the Yan Mountains 燕山 in the north and the Taihang Mountains 太行山 in the west. Hebei is well connected to surrounding regions by its waterways. To the east is the Bo Sea 渤海. The Hai River 海河 system in the south and the Luan River 滦河 system in the northeast run throughout the province. Hebei has a long history as an agricultural province, with a large population active in the agriculture, forestry, and animal husbandry sectors. Its main agricultural products include wheat, maize, and millet, and a large proportion of the yield feeds Beijing and Tianjin. In recent decades, Hebei's economy has largely been driven by iron and steel

manufacturing, and it is known as an industrial base and transportation hub for its giant neighbors.

Demography

Hebei is the sixth-largest province in China. Its population increased from 66,684,419 in 2000 to 71,854,210 in 2010, a rise of 7.8 percent. The central and southern parts of the province, mostly covered by the North China Plain, are much more populated than the regions of the Taihang Mountains and Yan Mountains in the west and north. Population density in the southern part has reached more than 2,000 people per square kilometer, while the northern part contains fewer than 100 people per square kilometer. Immigration from other provinces has risen by 17 percent over the decade, from 1,201,283 in 2000 to 1,404,673 in 2010.

Between 2000 and 2010, the level of urbanization grew significantly and the nonagricultural population increased from 27 to 43 percent. The percentage of people with a college degree or higher rose from 2.5 percent in 2000



MAP 27 Hebei: Religious sites.

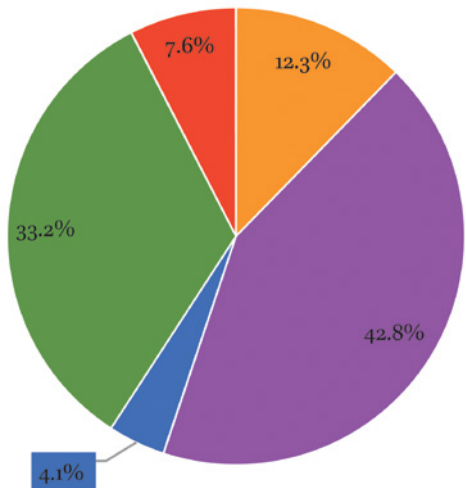
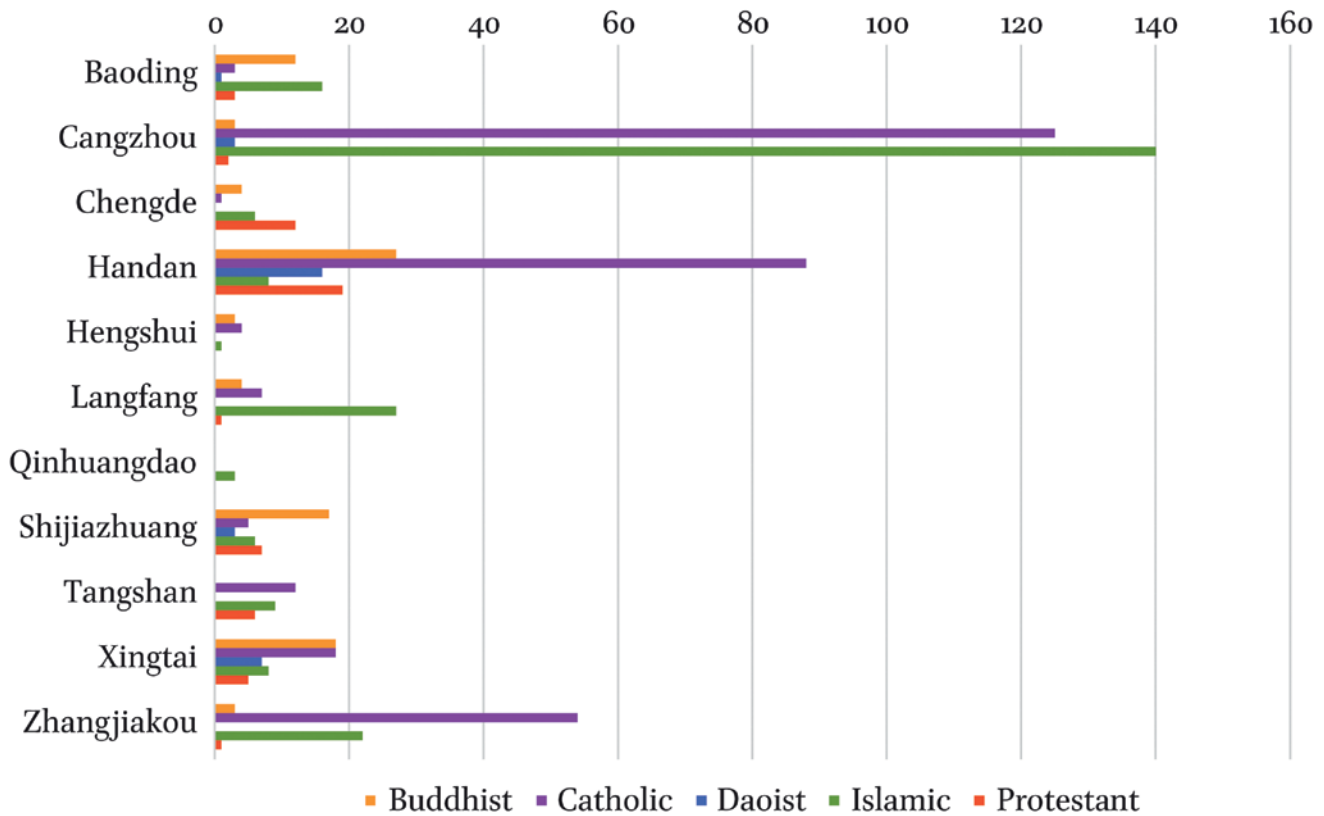


FIGURE 11 Hebei: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.

to 7 percent in 2010. One-generation households have become more common. As of 2010, Zhangjiakou prefecture 张家口市 had a high percentage of one-generation households compared with the rest of the province. In many of its counties 40 percent of households were one-generation households.

There is a noticeable disparity between north and south in the percentage of young people between ages 15 and 34. The southern part of Hebei had a higher percentage of young population compared with the northern part, and the percentage of young population dropped

between 2000 and 2010 in most counties (Maps 25–26). Meanwhile, the percentage of people aged 60 and above in the province as a whole increased from 10.4 per cent in 2000 to 13.3 percent in 2010.

Key Religious Facts

Hebei has been the center for a diverse range of major religions, especially Catholicism, Islam, and Buddhism (Map 27 and Figure 11). Protestant churches are fewer and dispersed around the province. Hebei was once the center of Catholicism in China, a legacy of Matteo Ricci and his fellow Jesuits who led successful missions in Beijing and the surrounding areas. Today Catholicism has continued to operate in a resilient manner: not only are there a large number of registered churches in the province—323 of Hebei’s 744 official religious sites in the 2004 economic census are Catholic churches (Photo 14)—but there are also a significant number of underground Catholics. There are particularly high concentrations of Catholic churches in western Cangzhou 沧州 and eastern Handan 邯郸. Many Catholic churches are located in Baoding 保定 as well, but few appeared in the 2004 Economic Census, perhaps because many of them have stayed underground. Since underground Catholics in China still seek direct communion with the Vatican, underground clergy and believers are often reported as missing or imprisoned. In February 2015, Bishop Shi Enxiang 师恩祥, a well-known



PHOTO 14 A church at Xiwanzi, one of the sites of the 2022 Winter Olympics.
CREDIT: XIAOXIONG ZHOU

figure in the underground Catholic circle in China, passed away after having been imprisoned for a total of 51 years. Shi was ordained to the priesthood by the Vatican in 1947. In 1957, he was sentenced to life imprisonment for refusing to join the CCPA. Following his release in 1980, he was named the diocesan bishop by the Vatican in 1982. In 2001, he was reported missing and was later confirmed to have been detained by the authorities, and he died in prison.

Buddhism remains one of the major religions in Hebei. Both Han and Tibetan Buddhism are present in the province. The Chengde Mountain Resort 承德避暑山庄 built by and for the Qing emperors in northern Hebei includes a number of temples and pagodas in the Tibetan tradition. Modeled after the Potala Palace in Lhasa, the Putuo Zongsheng Temple 普陀宗乘寺, one of the temples in the resort, is often referred to as “Little Potala.” Han Buddhism has also been thriving in Hebei over the past two decades. The Bailin Temple 柏林禅寺 near the provincial capital of Shijiazhuang houses more than 150 monks and the Buddhism Academy of Hebei. Numerous Buddhist temples have also been restored, rebuilt, and reopened in Hebei in the past decade.

There are also high concentration of Islamic mosques in Cangzhou, some areas of Baoding, Langfang 廊坊, Tangshan 唐山, and Zhangjiakou. Dachang Hui Autonomous County 大厂回族自治县 in Langfang, established in 1955, is a special case among China’s minority autonomous regions, as it has created an industry based on its Muslim heritage. In 2004, the local government began developing Dachang as a producer of halal food; the value of the county’s annual livestock production had reached 695 million yuan per year and accounted for 70.2 percent of the total agricultural output of the prefecture. Soon, Dachang was supplying halal beef to the multinational fast-food giant McDonald’s and halal lamb to many of China’s hot-pot restaurants.¹⁰ This is an example of the role played by religion in China’s process of globalization and modernization as ethnic minority groups enter national and international economies.

Various folk religions are also practiced in Hebei. Zhuolu 涿鹿 in Hebei is widely regarded as one of the cradles of Chinese civilization. According to legend, Chinese

10 Hou and Xu, “Local Government in Dachang County of Hubei Province Taking Measures to Manage the Halal Food Market.”

civilization was born here and spread outward.¹¹ The three legendary primogenitors—the Yellow Emperor 黄帝, his rival Chi You 蚩尤, and the Yan Emperor 炎帝—all lived, farmed, and fought in the area about 5,000 years ago. In 2006, the *People's Daily*, the official newspaper of the Communist Party, announced Zhuolu to be the origin of Chinese civilization. Since then, large-scale ancestor worship ceremonies have been held in Zhuolu each year with high-ranking officials from the mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao in attendance, as part of the strategy to strengthen the “harmonious society.” In recent years, China saw a revival of traditional forms of worship as

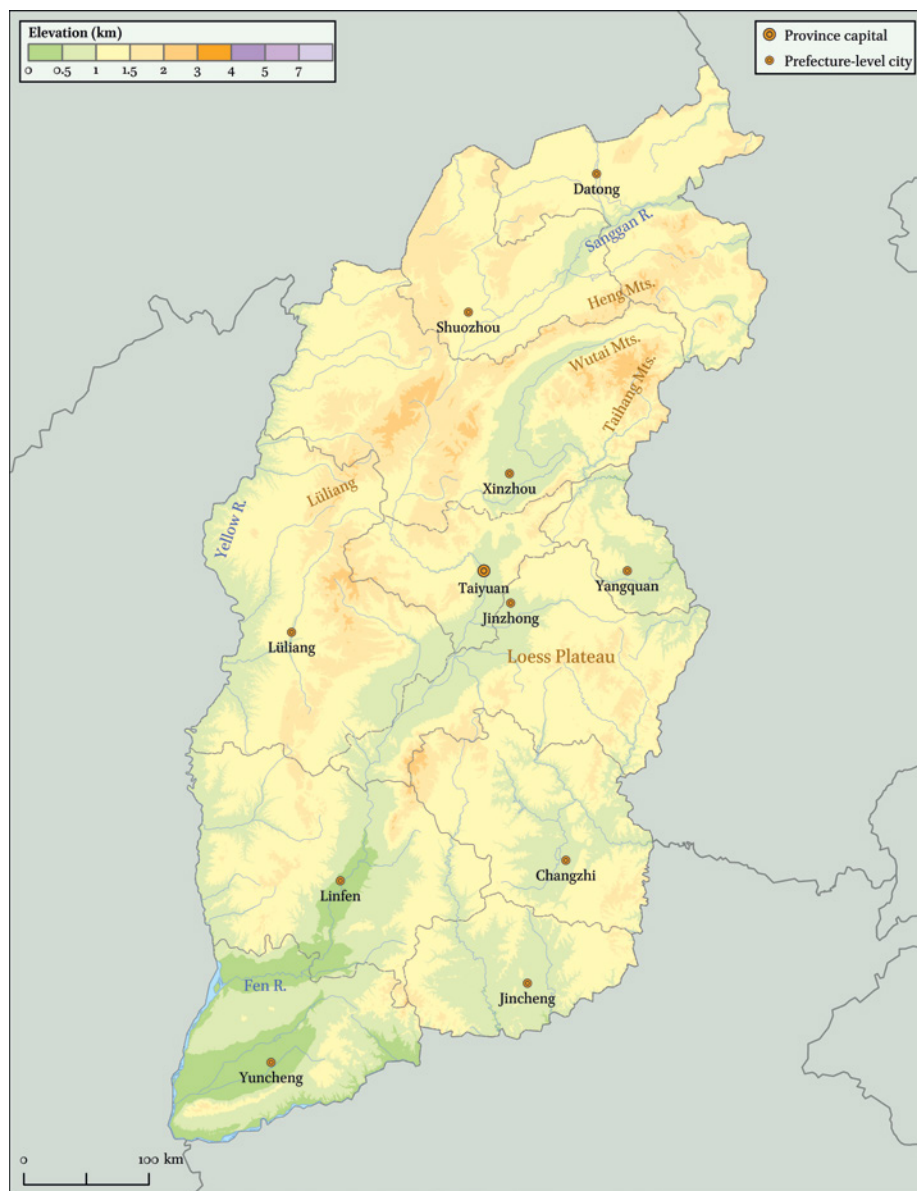
President Xi Jinping openly stated that he hoped China’s “traditional cultures” or faiths would help fill the void that has allowed corruption to flourish.¹² Subsequently, more occasions of large-scale ancestor and Confucius worship began to be reported in official media.¹³

4. Shanxi 山西

Land area: 156,300 km²

Population: 35,712,101

Capital: Taiyuan 太原

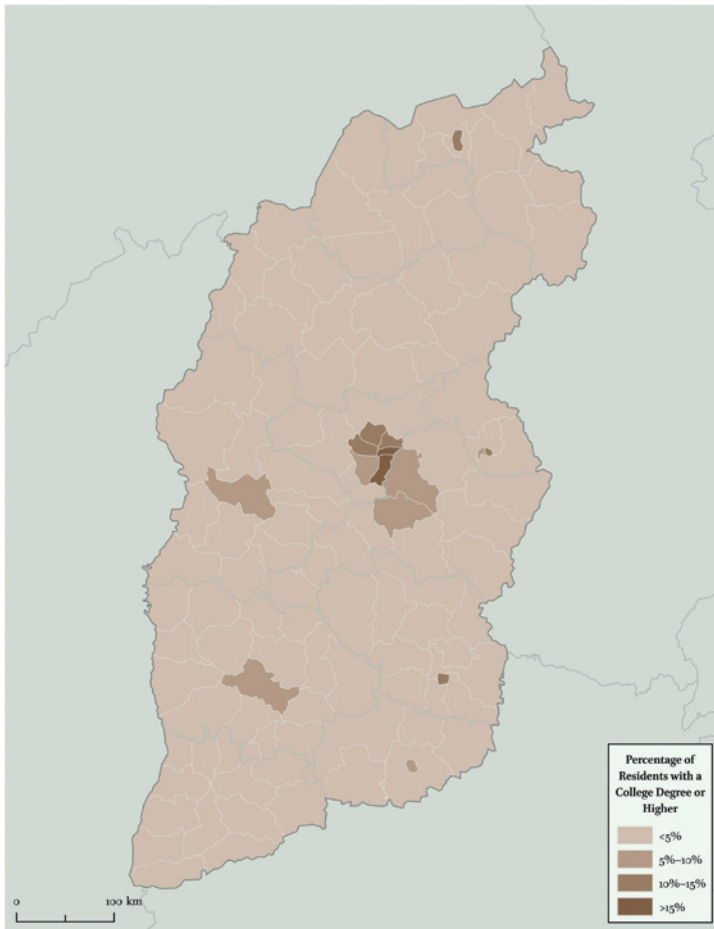


MAP 28 Shanxi: Topography.

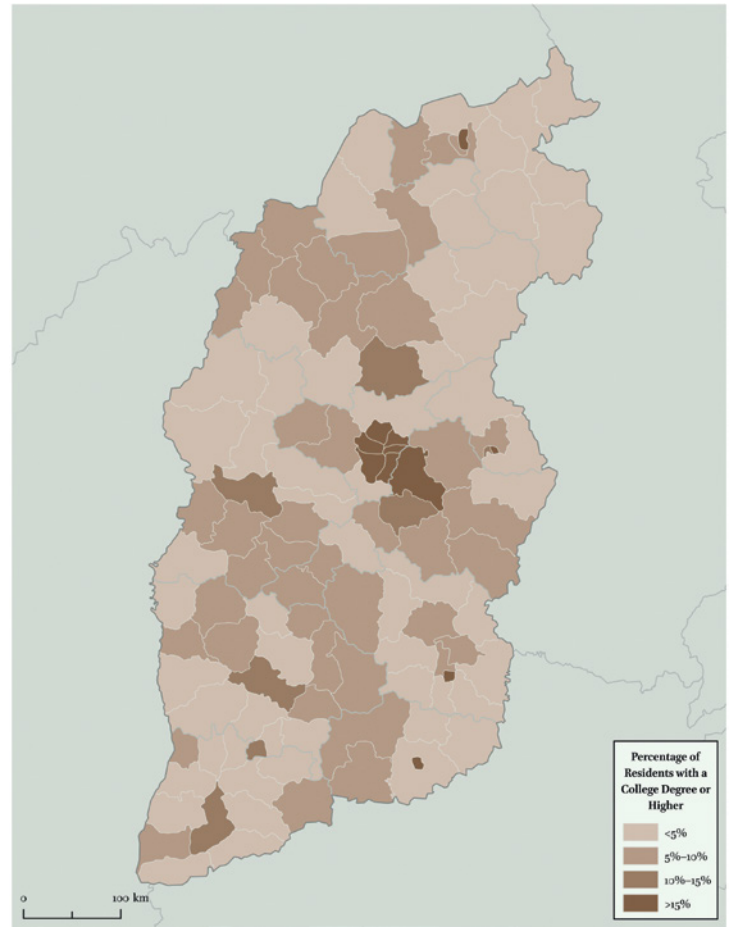
11 Demattè, “The Chinese Jade Age Between Antiquarianism and Archaeology.”

12 Lim and Blanchard, “Xi Jinping Hopes Traditional Faiths Can Fill Moral Void in China.”

13 CCTV, “Ancestor Worship Ceremony Held in Hebei.”



MAP 29 Shanxi: Education in 2000.



MAP 30 Shanxi: Education in 2010.

Topography

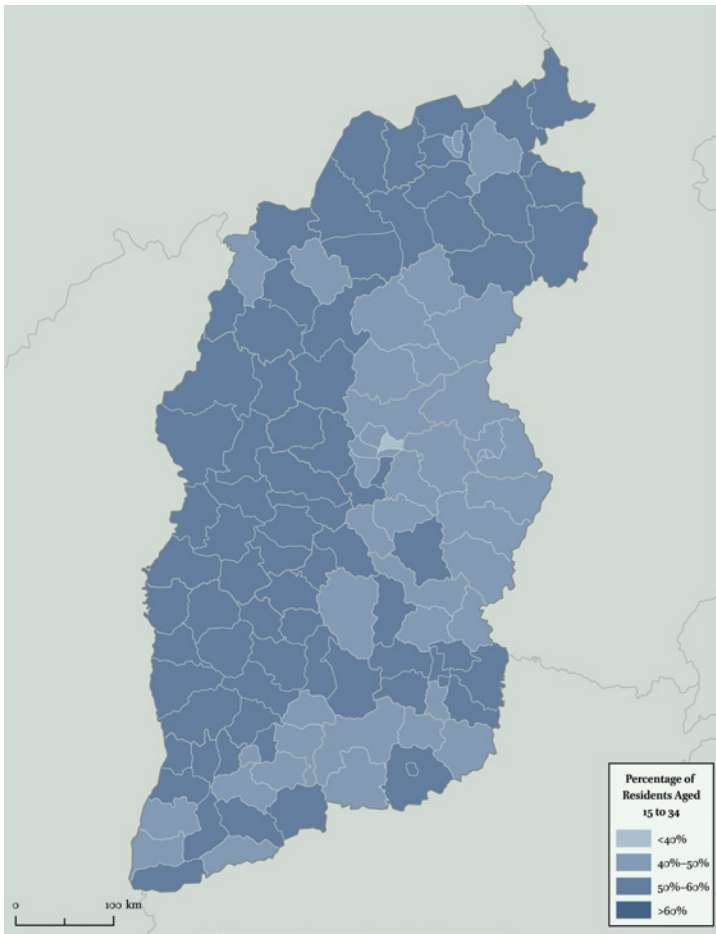
Shanxi is a province in central China whose name means “west of the mountain,” in reference to the Taihang Mountains 太行山. Shanxi is divided into 11 prefectures, including 23 urban districts, 11 county-level cities, and 85 counties.

Shanxi is situated on the eastern edge of the Loess Plateau 黄土高原, and the majority of its terrain is mountainous and hilly (Map 28). The Taihang Mountains lie along the northeastern boundary and the Lüliang Mountains 吕梁山 are the main range in the west. The Fen River 汾水 cuts a series of valleys through the mountains. The land surface of Shanxi is covered with a thick layer of loess, which causes sandstorms. Geographic disadvantages have limited Shanxi’s economic and agricultural development in comparison to many other provinces. However, the province is rich in coal and contains a great variety of coal and minerals spread across a wide area. The coal deposits in Shanxi account for one-third of the nation’s total, making the province a leading supplier of coal in China.

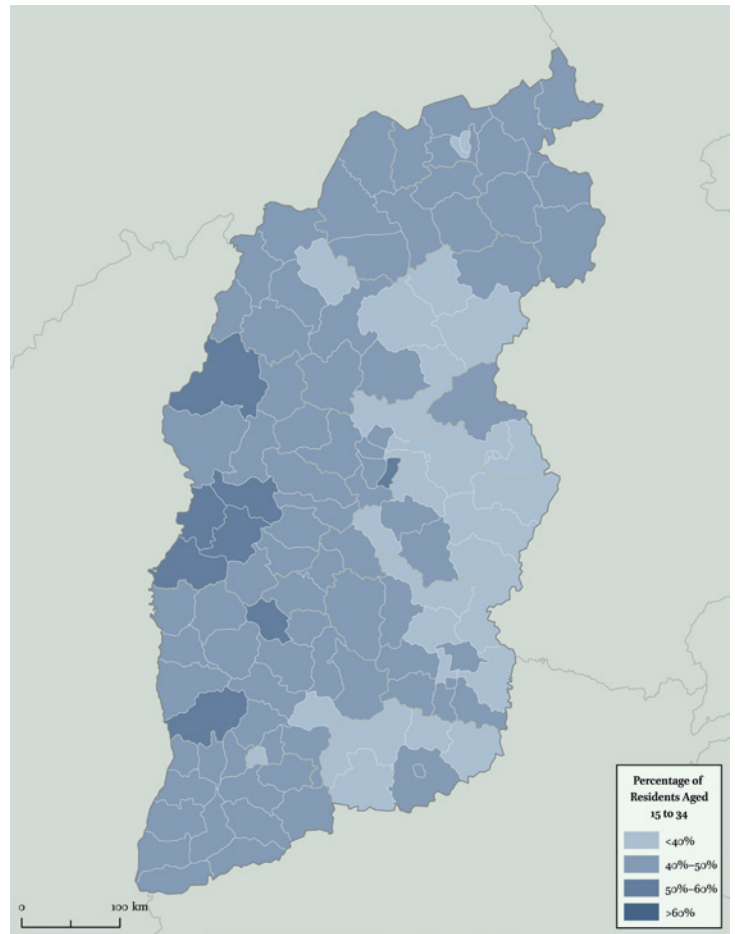
Demography

Shanxi had a total population of 32,471,242 in 2000 and 35,712,101 in 2010, an increase of 10 percent. Its population density increased from 350 persons per square kilometer in 2000 to 418 in 2010. The majority of the population resides in the central part of Shanxi, along the Fen River. The number of immigrants from other provinces rose from 792,110 in 2000 to 931,653 in 2010, an increase of 17.6 percent. Nevertheless, the percentage of immigrants in the population in 2010 was lower than the national average (4 percent). Most immigrants live in the capital city of Taiyuan, but also in Datong 大同 and Jinzhong 晋中.

Between 2000 and 2010, the province changed greatly in terms of urbanization, education, and family structure. The percentage of the population with a college degree or higher rose from 3 percent in 2000 to 7 percent in 2010 (Maps 29–30). The percentage of people registered as nonagricultural increased from 31 percent in 2000 to 42 percent in 2010. The average number of persons in a family shrank from 3.6 percent in 2000 to 3.2 in 2010, while the proportion of one-generation households increased



MAP 31 Shanxi: Young population in 2000.



MAP 32 Shanxi: Young population in 2010.

from 19 percent in 2000 to 28 percent in 2010. The infant sex ratio decreased slightly between 2000 and 2010, from 113 males per 100 females to 111.

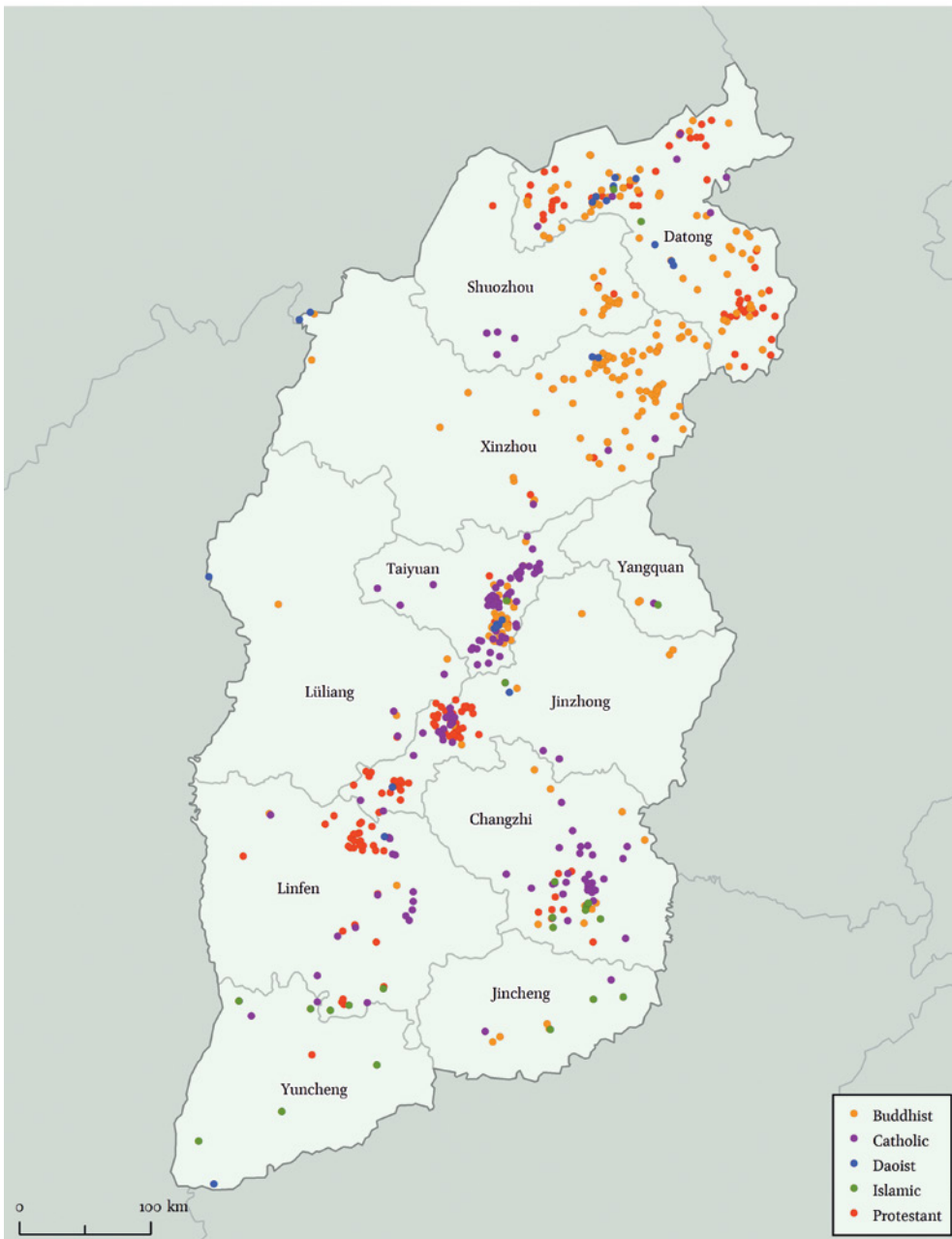
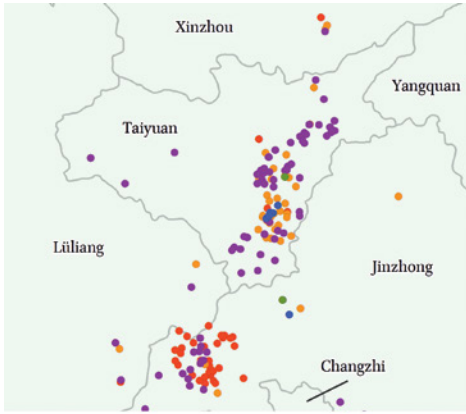
The proportion of the elderly population (people aged 60 and over) in Shanxi has increased between 2000 and 2010. The percentage of elderly residents tends to be higher in the eastern part of the province, near Yangquan 阳泉 and Jinzhong (15.6 percent) and lower in the western part, around Lüliang and Linfen 临汾 (12.2 percent). A similar disparity between the western and eastern parts of the province can also be found in the percentage of young population. Despite an overall decline in the percentage of people between ages 15 and 34 from 2000 to 2010, the proportion of younger persons was higher in the western part than in the eastern part (Maps 31–32). Lishi District 离石区 in Lüliang and Xiaodian District 小店区 in Taiyuan had a strikingly high percentage of young population, around 60 percent.

Key Religious Facts

The religious landscape of Shanxi shows that Buddhist temples are concentrated in Datong and eastern Xinzhou 忻州. Some Islamic mosques are in southern prefectures

(Map 33 and Figure 12). Protestant churches are concentrated in northern Linfen, southwestern Jinzhong, and some places in Datong in the north. There are high concentrations of Catholic churches in Taiyuan, the southwestern area of Jinzhong, central Changzhi 长治, and some places in Linfen.

As an inland province, Shanxi contains many historical sites associated with various world religions. It is one of the first places where Buddhism was introduced into China. As early as the Eastern Han Dynasty (25 CE–220 CE), Kāśyapamātanga 迦叶摩腾 and Dharmaratna 竺法兰, two eminent Indian monks, went to Mount Wutai 五台山, located in northwestern Xinzhou, and built the monastery now called Xianfa Temple 显法寺, which is one of the oldest Buddhist temples in China. For hundreds of years, Mount Wutai has played an important role as a destination for Buddhist pilgrims. In July 2016, representatives of Chamsham Temple 湛山精舍, where the Buddhist Association of Canada is located, visited Xianfa Temple. Venerable Master Sing Hung 性空长老, the founder of Chamsham, along with the vice chairman of the Shanxi Buddhist Association and the chairman of the Mount Wutai Buddhist Association, led the ritual of offering



MAP 33 Shanxi: Religious sites.

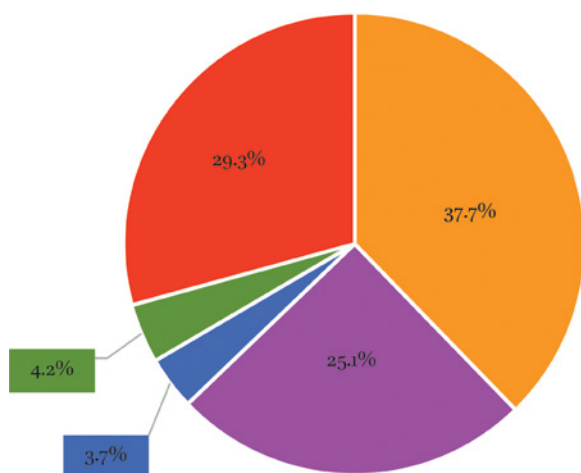
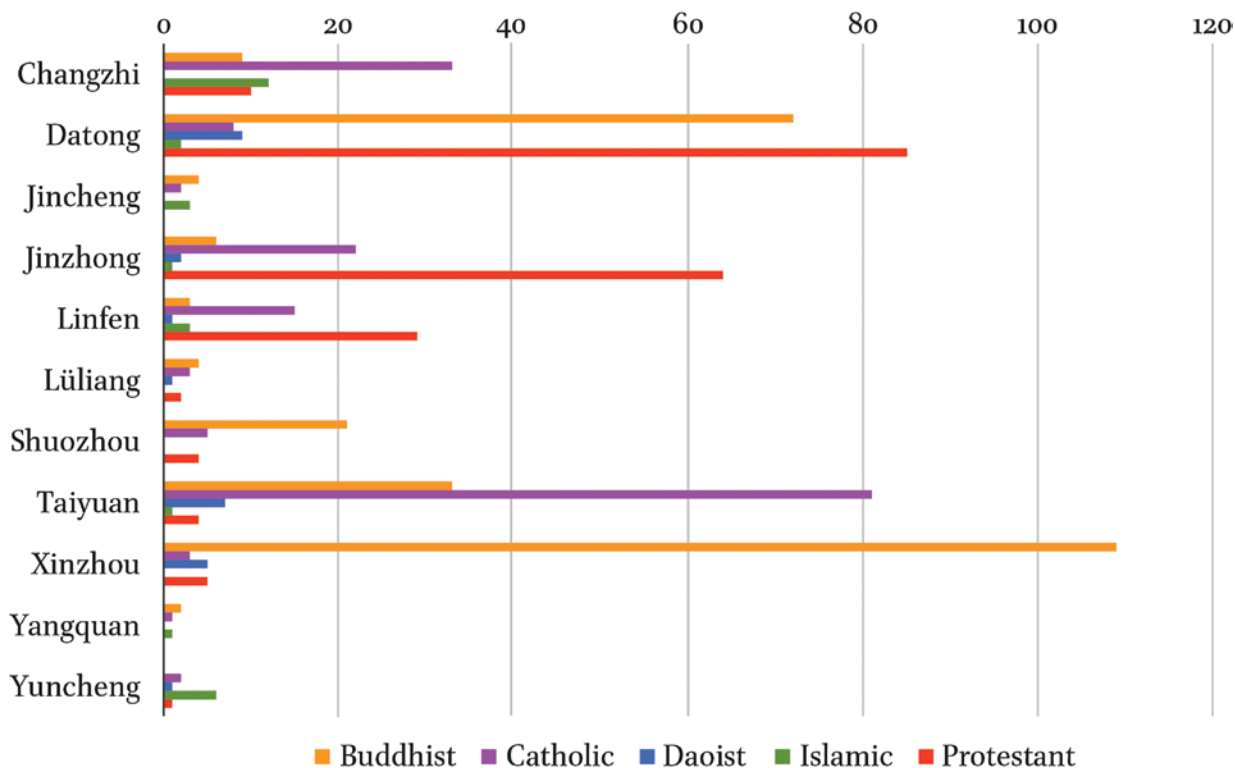


FIGURE 12 Shanxi: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.

incense, which is taken as a significant gesture symbolizing the strengthening of the religious relationship between the two temples.

Liuhe Village 六合村 to the west of Taiyuan City is known as the largest Catholic village in China. Catholicism reached the village as early as the seventeenth century.¹⁴ During the Cultural Revolution, many church buildings were destroyed and many religious practices were suppressed, but all were revived in the 1980s. Starting from 2000, the village established an annual tradition of

exchanging Christmas presents in response to the central government's reform-era slogan "culture sets the stage, economy sings the opera" (*wenhua datai jingji changxi* 文化搭台 经济唱戏).¹⁵

The history of Muslims in Shanxi dates back to the Tang Dynasty (618–907). During the Yuan Dynasty (1260–1368), many Muslims in the Mongolian army were stationed in Shanxi. In the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644), Muslims from Shaanxi, Gansu, and Ningxia migrated and settled in Shanxi. Today, Muslims in Shanxi are mainly of Hui ethnicity and they are scattered all over the province. In Taiyuan, there are some famous Hui communities, for example along Nanshi Street and Nanhai Street.¹⁶

The worship of Guan Yu 关羽 (?–219 CE) may have started in Shanxi. Guan Yu, also known as Guangong 关公, was born in Yuncheng 运城 in southern Shanxi. He was a loyal general devoted to Liu Bei 刘备 (161–223), who was from the royal lineage of the Han Dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE) and a contender for the rule of the empire. Guan Yu was deified during the Sui Dynasty (581–618) for his loyalty, righteousness, and bravery. The Temple of Guan Yu in Xiezhou 解州 of Yuncheng City 运城市 was initially built in the Sui Dynasty. Guan Yu is regarded as the patron god of well-regarded Jin merchants 晋商 (Shanxi business people), who

14 Harrison, "The Missionary's Curse" and Other Tales, 197–198.

15 Faith Weekly, "Proselytizing in A Rural Commodities Fair."

16 Shanxi China, "Culture of Religious [sic]."

worship him for the purpose of building and maintaining an honest corporate culture.¹⁷ He is worshipped throughout China and in overseas Chinese communities as well.

5. Inner Mongolia 内蒙古

Land area: 1,183,000 km²

Population: 24,706,321

Capital: Hohhot 呼和浩特

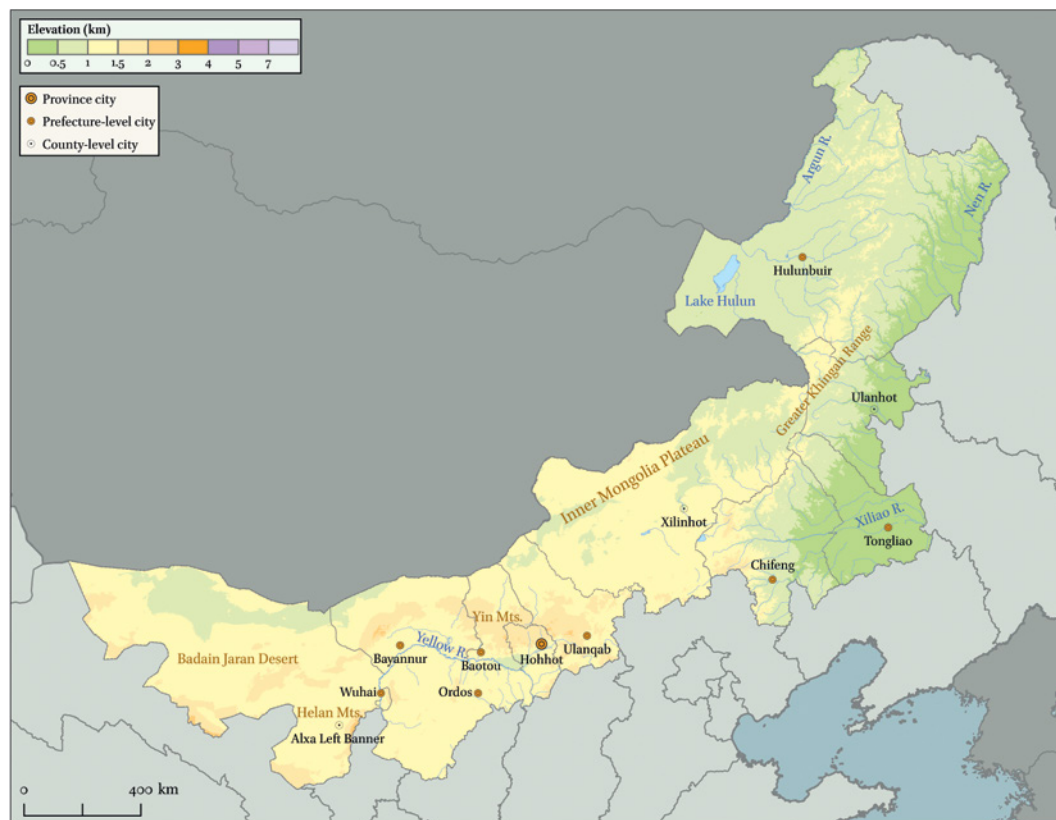
Topography

Inner Mongolia (*Neimenggu* 内蒙古), officially the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, is situated along the northern border of China with Mongolia and Russia. It contains 9 prefectures and three prefecture-level leagues (*meng* 盟), including 22 urban districts, 11 county-level cities, 17 counties, and 52 county-level banners (*qi* 旗). Mongols account for 20.5 percent of the total population. Inner Mongolia lies essentially on the Inner Mongolia Plateau 内蒙古高原 at around 1,200 meters above sea level (Map 34). In the east, the plateau is covered by extensive grassland. The Gobi Desert 戈壁沙漠, the Helan Mountains 贺

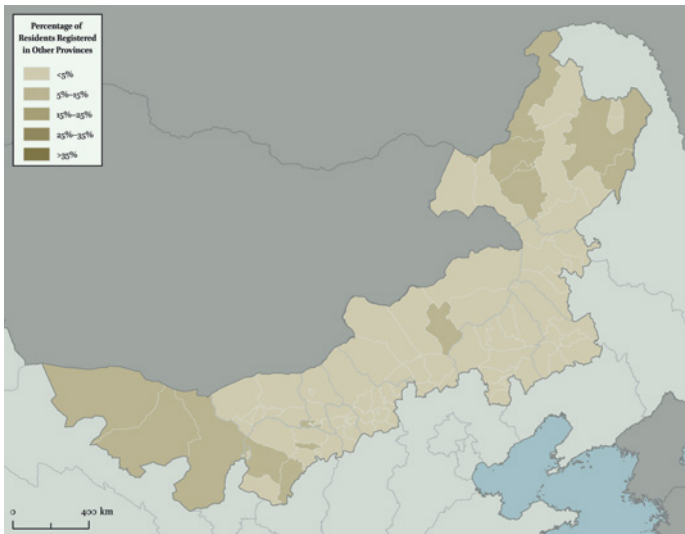
兰山, and the sand dunes of the Badain Jaran Desert 巴丹吉林沙漠 form the western part. The eastern edge of Inner Mongolia is dominated by the Greater Khingan Range 大兴安岭. The region is bitterly cold in winter and warm in summer, with an average annual temperature between -1°C and 10°C . Snowstorms are a common threat in winter. Containing one-third of China's grassland, Inner Mongolia is China's largest livestock producer. The capital city, Hohhot, is renowned as the "Hometown of Milk" because the two largest companies supplying dairy products in China, Mengniu 蒙牛 Dairy and the Yili 伊利 Group, are headquartered there.

Demography

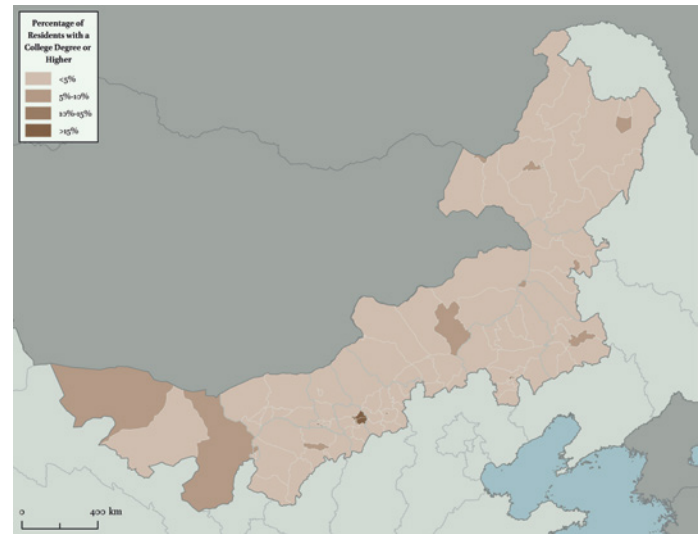
The population of Inner Mongolia is concentrated in two areas, both in the southern part of the province. One area includes the southeastern counties of Tongliao 通辽 and Chifeng 赤峰, which are adjacent to Liaoning 辽宁 Province. The other area is in the Hetao Plain 河套平原 in the west, where the major cities of Hohhot, Baotou 包头, and Ordos 鄂尔多斯 are located. The northern area bordering Mongolia is mainly desert and grassland and is sparsely populated. In general, the total population



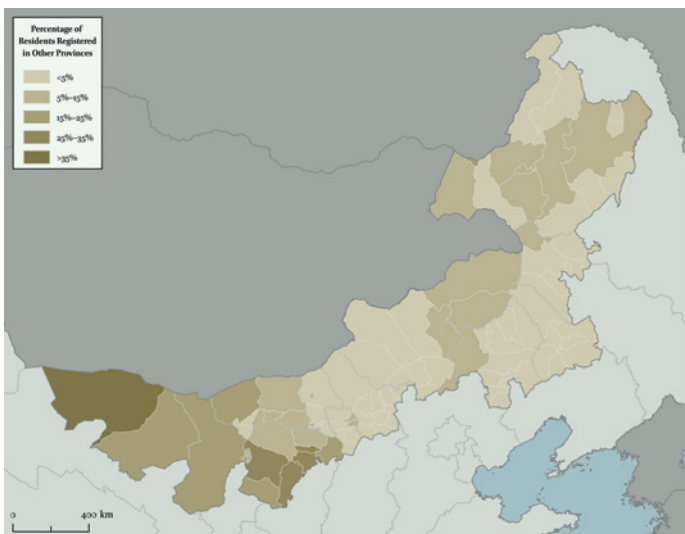
MAP 34 Inner Mongolia: Topography.



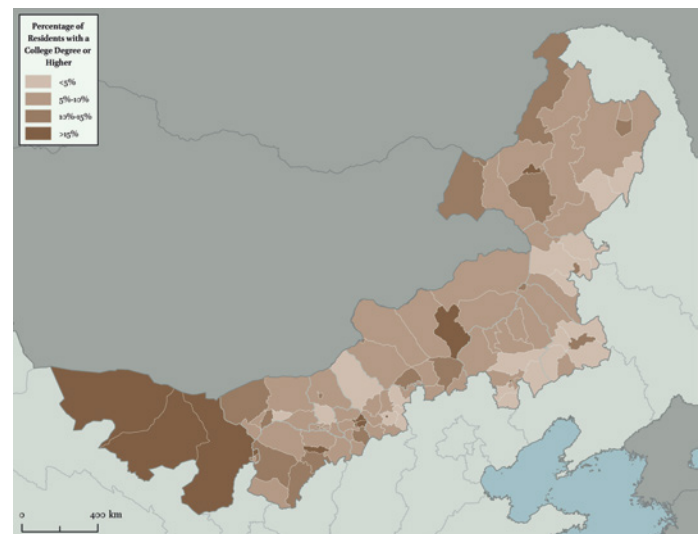
MAP 35 Inner Mongolia: Immigration in 2000.



MAP 37 Inner Mongolia: Education in 2000.



MAP 36 Inner Mongolia: Immigration in 2010.



MAP 38 Inner Mongolia: Education in 2010.

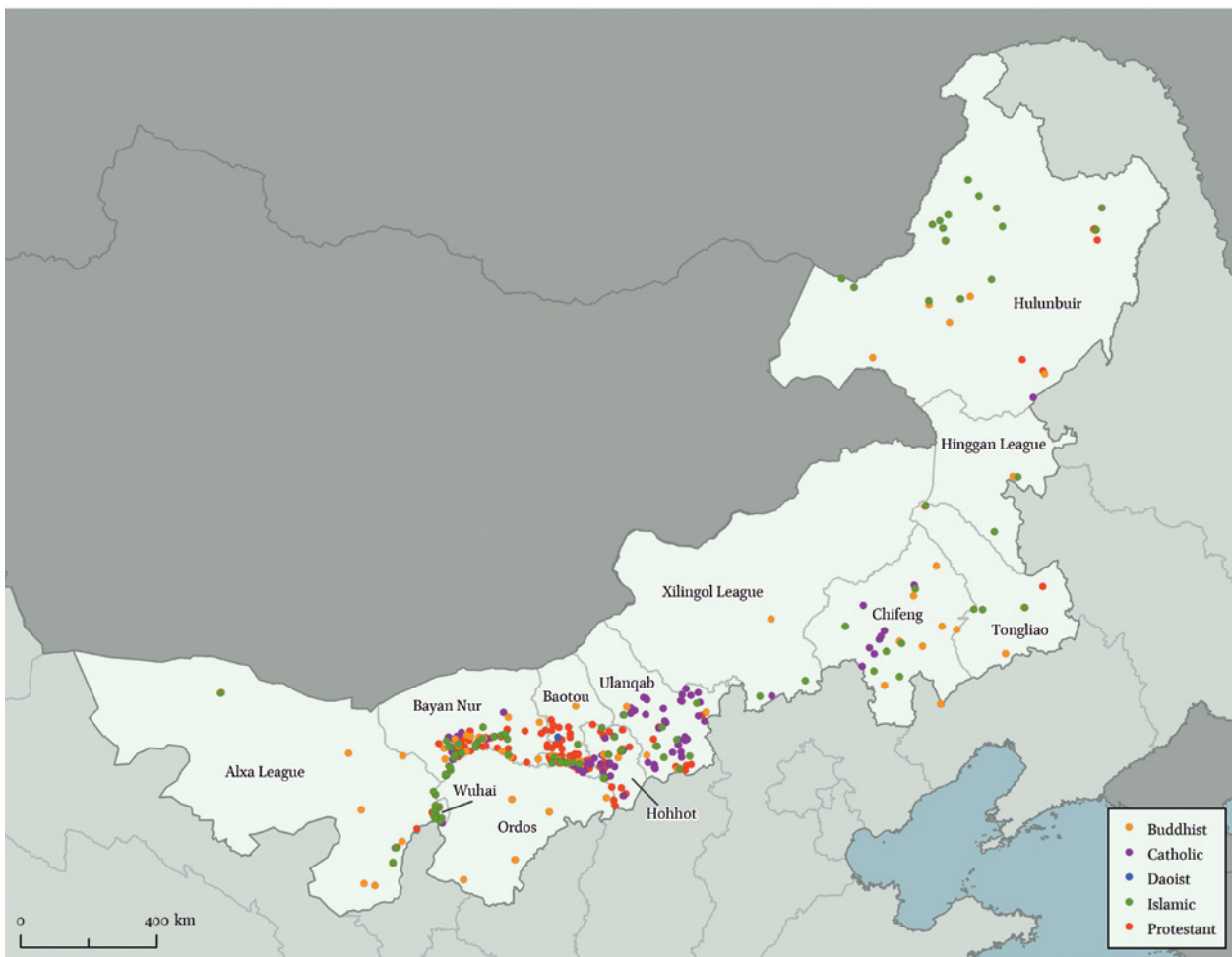
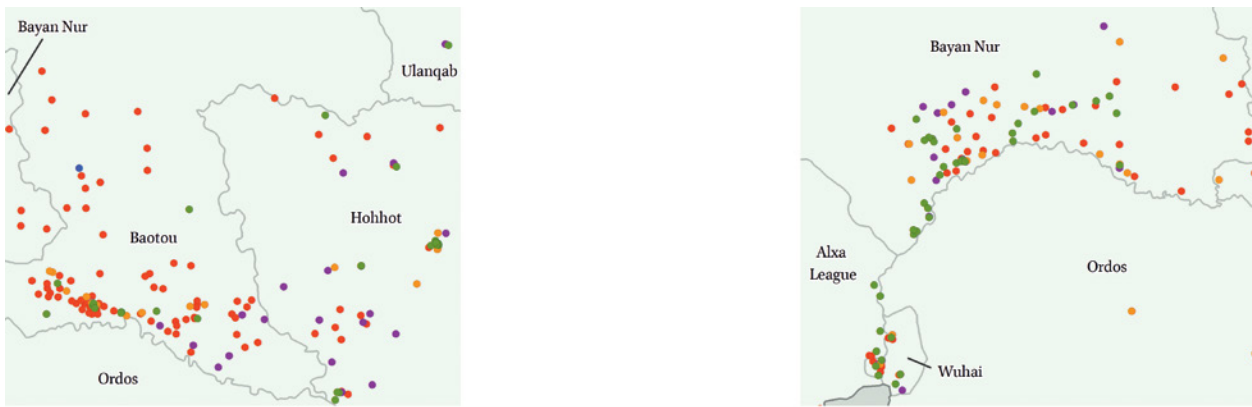
rose a little more than 6 percent between 2000 and 2010. The number of immigrants from other provinces was 1,225,488 in 2000 and increased by 18 percent to 1,444,181 in 2010. Immigrants are concentrated in counties in western and northeastern areas of Inner Mongolia (Maps 37–38).

The urbanization rate of Inner Mongolia is relatively low compared with other provinces: the proportion of urban residents in the population was 34 percent in 2000 and 37 percent in 2010. Nonetheless, as in other provinces, higher education has become more common: the number of people with at least a college education rose by 184 percent from 2000 to 2010 (Maps 37–38). As of 2010, college-educated people comprised more than 5 percent of the local population in most counties. The western counties

and major metropolises have a higher proportion of college graduates.

Key Religious Facts

Although the 2004 Economic Census indicated that Protestant churches made up 38 percent of the total number of religious sites in Inner Mongolia, the religious makeup of the province is far more diverse, including Tibetan and Han Buddhism, Daoism, Catholicism, Protestantism, and shamanism or folk religions (Map 39 and Figure 13). The religious landscape of Inner Mongolia shows a concentration and diversity of multiple religions in the center, including Huhhot, the capital, as well as Bayan Nur 巴彦淖尔, Baotou, and Ulanqab 乌兰察布, where there are numerous Protestant and Catholic



MAP 39 Inner Mongolia: Religious sites.

churches, Buddhist temples, and Islamic mosques. There are also some Catholic churches in Chifeng, and a good number of mosques in Hulun Buir 呼伦贝尔 in the east and Wuhai 乌海 in the southwest.

During the recent religious growth in Inner Mongolia, Protestant communities seem to have been the most effective in building local ties and organizations. Although Christianity remains a minor religion, its roots in Inner

Mongolia date back to the Nestorians.¹⁸ In 1956, the TSPM Committee was established in two cities, Baotou and Hohhot, but the number of registered Protestants was only around 12,000. By 1988, however, the total number of Christians under the TSPM had risen to 71,000. In March 2000, the Chinese Protestant magazine *Tianfeng* 天风

18 Halbertsma, *Early Christian Remains of Inner Mongolia*, 109.

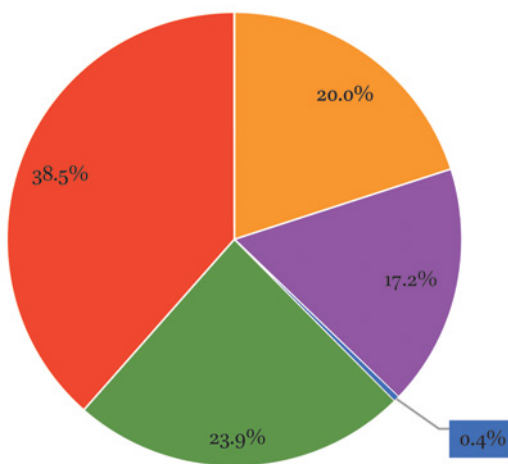
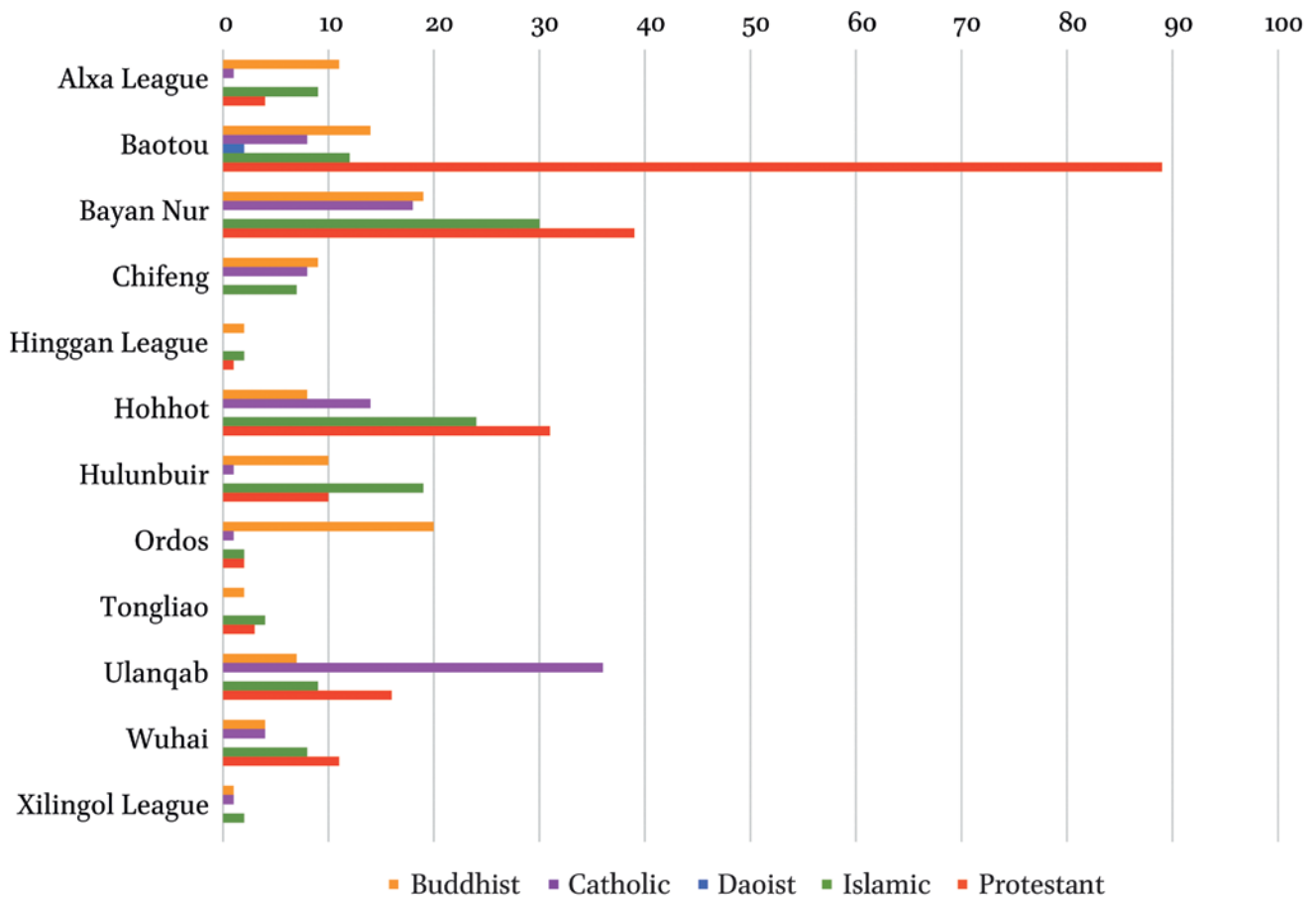


FIGURE 13 Inner Mongolia: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.

reported 160,000 Christians and 962 registered churches and meeting points in Inner Mongolia.¹⁹

In addition to officially approved TSPM churches, underground Christian sects exist as well, including the Jesus

Family 耶穌家庭, a Chinese Pentecostal communitarian church originated in Shandong in 1927. Jesus Family churches are primarily located in rural and semirural areas, where members lead a shared life, inspired by the life of the apostles in the biblical book of Acts, and are known for their utopian pursuit of Christian communalism. In 1949, there were over one hundred of these communities throughout China, numbering thousands of people. The Jesus Family was dismantled in 1952 and its leader died in prison. A great number of followers still remain in Inner Mongolia, where the Jesus Family was introduced in the 1930s in Wuyuan 五原. Back then, Han Chinese nurses and doctors utilized their medical skills and learned Mongolian, thus attracting local members into the church community.²⁰

According to a survey conducted in 2004, around 80 percent of the population in Inner Mongolia practices the worship of *aobao* 敖包 (Photo 15).²¹ *Aobao* refers to

19 Compass Direct, "China: Christians Neglected in Inner Mongolia."

20 Anderson and Tang, *Asian and Pentecostal*; C. Liu, "A Note on Independent Churches in Suiyuan District"; Xi, *Redeemed by Fire*, 76–78; Link, Madsen, and Pickowicz, *Restless China*.

21 Yang and Lang, *Social Scientific Studies of Religion in China*, 185.



PHOTO 15 Khorchin Mongols worship aobao to keep the grassland and its people safe.
CREDIT: BAIGULA DAI

stone structures that serve as altars for sacrifice and are associated with a form of shamanism related to the worship of nature that has existed in the grassland and forests of Inner Mongolia for centuries.²² It is an integral part of Mongolian culture that also includes some elements of Tibetan Buddhism. Since the 1980s, many *aobao* have attracted tourists from both within and outside China. However, the popularization of local worship had ecological consequences, as tourism began to cause grassland degradation.²³ At the same time, the popularity of *aobao* tourism also attracted official attention. In 2014, the first comprehensive survey of *aobao* was conducted

by the Chinese Association for Mongol Studies, the Inner Mongolia Folklore Society, Uxin Banner 乌审旗, and the government of Ordos. A ceremony was held in Uxin Banner in 2016 to announce the first 27 officially recognized *aobao*.²⁴ Many suggest that this survey represents another step taken by the government, in the name of cultural preservation, to gain control over collective actions and all ideological matters.²⁵

22 Q. Wang, "Ovoo Worship and Shaman Culture."

23 Le et al., "Grassland Degradation caused by Tourism Activities in Hulunbuir, Inner Mongolia, China," 121–137.

24 Xinhuanet, "The First List of 72 Famous Ovoo in Inner Mongolia Is Released."

25 Chung, Lai, and Xia, "Mounting Challenges to Governance in China"; Cai, "Power Structure and Regime Resilience: Contentious Politics in China."

Northeast China 东北地区



MAP 40 Subregional map of Northeast China.

6. Liaoning 辽宁

Land area: 145,900 km²

Population: 43,746,323

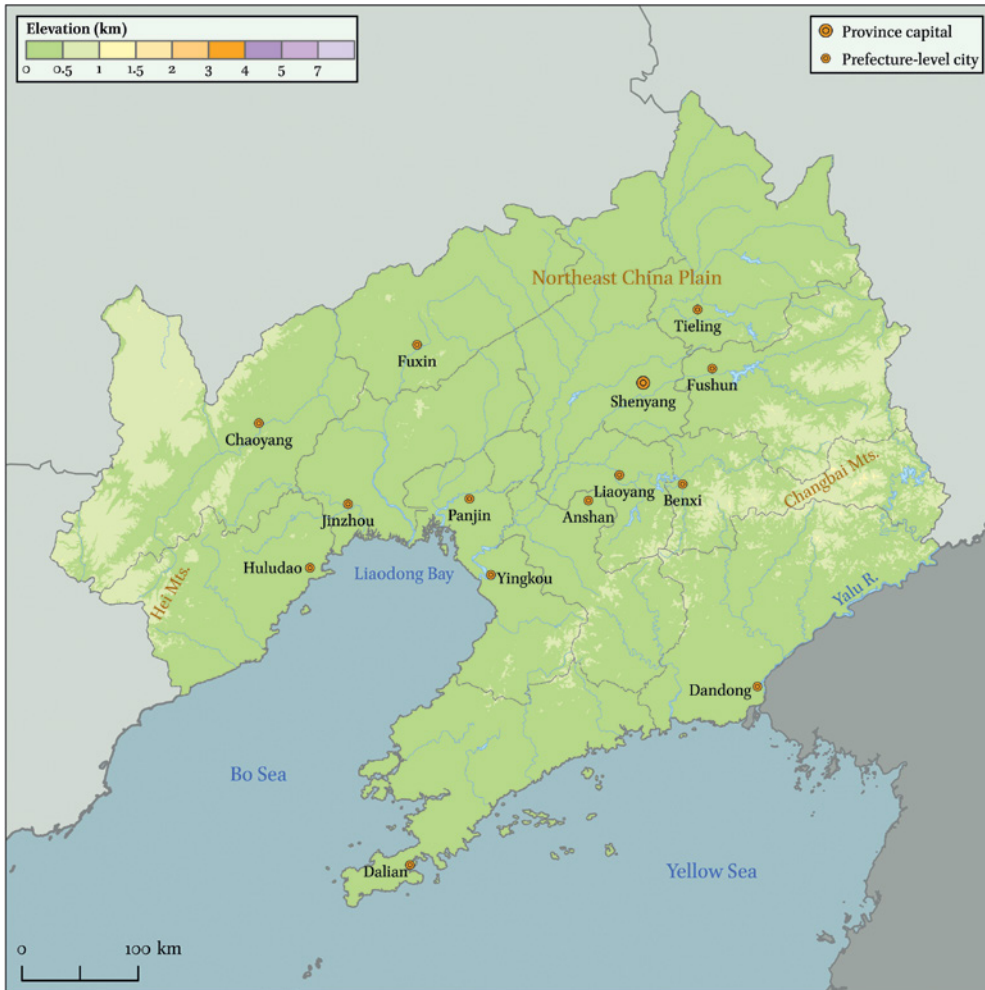
Capital: Shenyang 沈阳

Topography

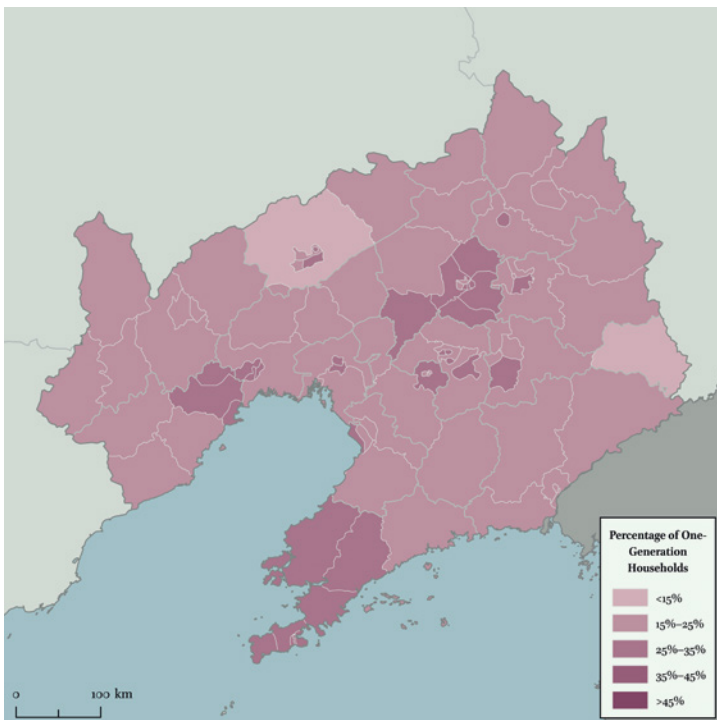
Liaoning is the southernmost province in northeast China, facing North Korea across the Yalu River 鸭绿江.

The province consists of 14 prefectures, including 59 urban districts, 16 county-level cities, and 25 counties. Among its total population of 43.7 million, ethnic minorities make up a little over 15 percent. The major ethnic minorities are Manchu, Mongol, Hui, and Korean 朝鲜族.

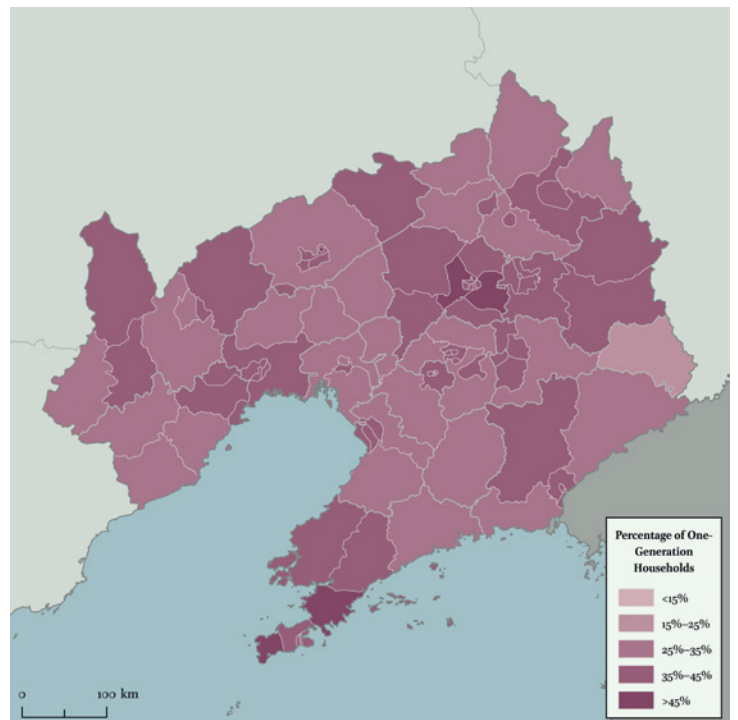
The terrain of Liaoning is high in the west and east and low in the central area and southern peninsula (Map 41). The flat and low-lying Northeast Plain 东北平原 dominates the middle region, with the Changbai Mountains



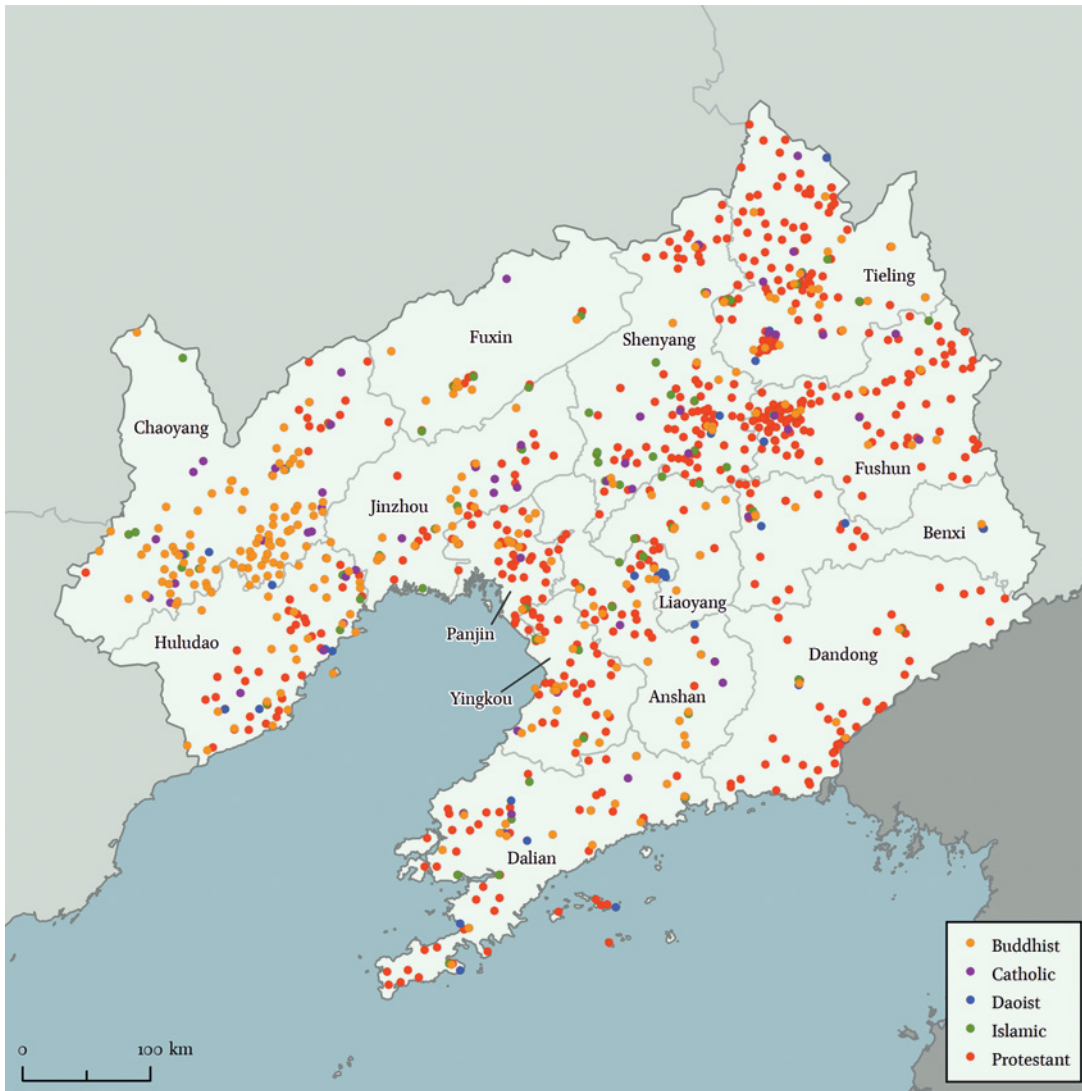
MAP 41 Liaoning: Topography.



MAP 42 Liaoning: One-generation households in 2000.



MAP 43 Liaoning: One-generation households in 2010.



MAP 44 Liaoning: Religious sites.

长白山 to the east. The Liaodong Peninsula 辽东半岛 is situated between the Bo Sea 渤海 and the Yellow Sea 黄海 and is surrounded by islands.

Liaoning has the largest provincial economy of Northeast China. The province has been involved in industrial development since the 1890s, with a focus on heavy industry and raw materials. Anshan 鞍山 is one of the largest iron and steel bases in China. On the southern coast, Dalian 大连 is one of the most developed cities in the province and a financial, shipping, and logistics center in northern China.

Demography

Some key demographic factors changed in Liaoning between 2000 and 2010. The percentage of urban residents rose from 45.9 percent to 50.8 percent. There has been a significant rise in the number of people with a college

education. In 2000, in most counties less than 5 percent of residents had a college education, but by 2010 the number of college graduates had doubled in most counties. In 2000, there was not a single county where the ratio of university graduates exceeded 20 percent, but by 2010 many of the metropolitan areas had surpassed this number.

In terms of family structure, the percentage of one-generation households increased substantially throughout the province. In 2000, 10 to 30 percent of the households in most counties comprised a single generation, and in no county was the proportion above 40 percent (Map 42). However, by 2010 one-generation households formed more than 30 percent of families in the majority of counties (Map 43). In a few urban areas, the proportion was more than 40 percent. This may be due to the strict implementation of the one-child policy, which was in effect until 2016. Under that policy, employees of state-owned

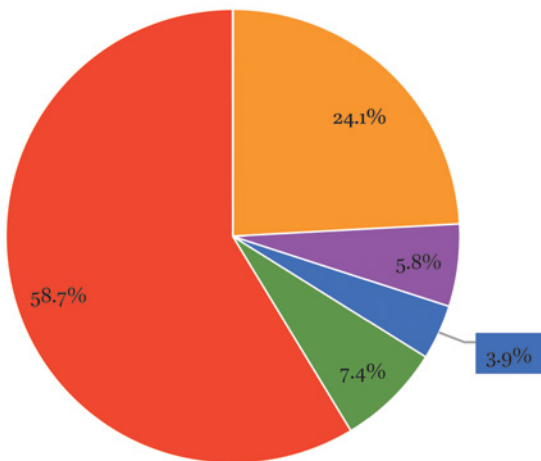
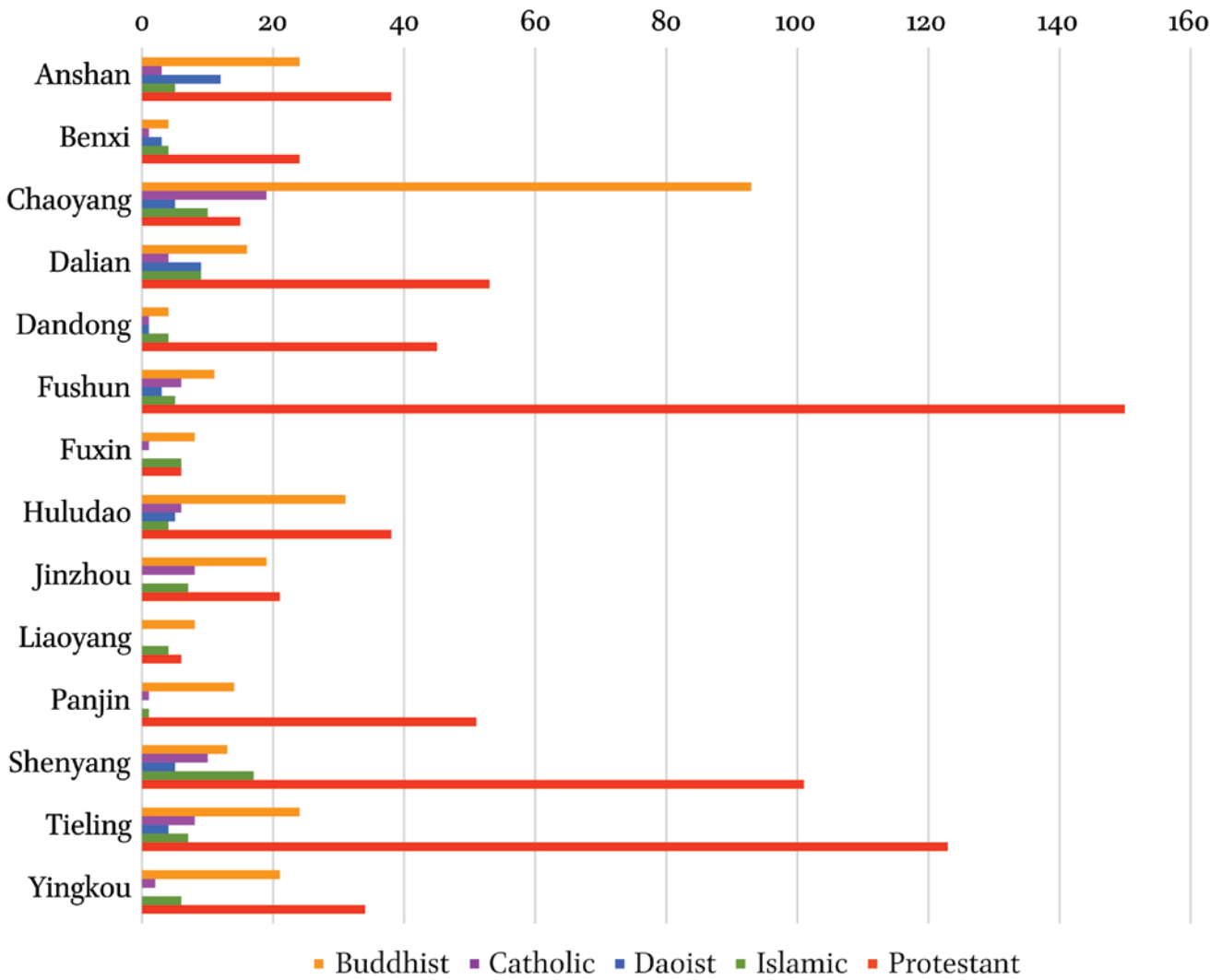


FIGURE 14 Liaoning: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.

In Liaoning, state companies have employed a large proportion of the local labor force, and thus the policy has been more rigorously enforced in this province.¹

Key Religious Facts

The religious landscape of Liaoning shows a predominance of Protestant churches in most of the prefectures except Chaoyang Prefecture 朝阳市 in the west, which has some concentration of Buddhist temples (Map 44 and Figure 14). Catholic churches and Islamic mosques are located mostly in the central prefectures, with a few Daoist temples scattered around. Most of the Muslim population in Liaoning resides in Shenyang (Photo 16). In addition to the five legally permitted religions, Liaoning people engage

enterprises or government agencies would be fired if they violated the one-child policy. Therefore, employees in the public sector conformed to the one-child policy more often than those working in the private sector or farmers.

¹ Caixin Media, "Hard Choices for Family Planners and Parents"; Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, "China: The 'One Child Policy' in Liaoning province (1982–November 2002)."



PHOTO 16 Muslims celebrate the holiday of Eid al-Fitr, which marks the end of the month-long fast during the month of Ramadan, at Shenyang's South Mosque.

CREDIT: LEI YANG

in various forms of folk religion that originated in Mongolia and Korea, which share a border with the province.

Liaoning has the largest population of Manchu people in China, who mainly dwell in Kuandian Manchu Autonomous County 宽甸满族自治县 in eastern Dandong Prefecture 丹东市, a region that borders North Korea. Since the 1980s, ethnic minorities have gained much more room for self-expression and there have been many attempts to restore Manchurian ethnic culture, including establishing Manchu-language schools and reviving Manchu rituals. Many obsolete cultural attributes that are significant for legitimizing an ethnic group in China have been adapted by the group to reinforce the previously weakened Manchu identity. For instance, in 2015, Shenyang Music Conservatory established the first music program in the province-level intangible cultural heritage project and conducted fieldwork in Kuandian to observe

Manchurian shamanic rituals. The use of certain mystical numbers is a noted feature of Manchu shamanic ritual and plays an important role in structuring musical patterns and musical performances in correspondence with cultural patterns and behavior.² The rediscovery of these numbers represents an institutional effort to highlight ethnic distinctions and to compete for cultural and social resources.

Protestant churches have reopened since 1979 under the TSPM, and many house churches have also emerged. Meanwhile, many heretical sects, labeled by the party-state as “evil cults,” remain underground in the countryside. One of these is the Disciples Sect (*Mentu hui* 门徒会), introduced into Liaoning in the 1990s, which has spread mainly in the rural areas. In 2016, the Liaoning

2 L. Li, “Mystical Numbers and Manchu Traditional Music.”

government published a series of articles in the local evening newspaper that referred to the teachings of Mentuhui as “brainwashing” and urged people to recognize the harmful nature of this organization and prevent anyone from believing in this “evil cult.”³

The history of the Catholic Church in Liaoning predates the founding of the PRC. In 1957, a bishop from Liaoning was elected as the chairman of the CCPA. It is estimated that the number of Catholics in the province was about 100,000 in 2000.⁴ Moreover, Tibetan Buddhism, which entered the province several centuries ago, is still being practiced today. The largest Tibetan Buddhist monastery in Liaoning, Duanying Temple 端应寺, known as Gegen Sume 葛根苏木 among Mongols, was built in the seventeenth century. Located in Fuxin Mongolian Autonomous County 阜新蒙古族自治县 in Fuxin Prefecture in northwest, this monastery holds regular religious activities and is adjusting its services to accommodate Han Buddhists.⁵

7. Jilin 吉林

Land area: 187,400 km²

Population: 27,452,815

Capital: Changchun 长春

Topography

Jilin lies in the central part of northeast China and consists of 9 prefectures, including 21 urban districts, 20 county-level cities, and 19 counties. Ethnic minorities account for almost 8 percent of the total population, which includes a large number of Koreans. Indeed, over half of China's entire Korean population reside in the province. The western part of Jilin is part of the Northeast China Plain and is home to the province's agricultural sector. Jilin is a major producer of various grains such as rice, corn, and sorghum. The provincial capital, Changchun, is located on the edge of the plain and is surrounded by the Dahei Mountains 大黑山. Changchun and its surrounding areas are highly industrialized. Changchun is one of China's largest automobile manufacturing bases.

The terrain south and southeast of Changchun is quite treacherous and includes several mountains, among

which are the Changbai Mountains extending from west to east (Map 45). The Yalu River separates Jilin from North Korea. Jilin features long, cold winters with temperatures averaging -17°C in January. The rivers are frozen for about five months of the year.

Demography

Most of Jilin's population is evenly distributed across the central and western parts of the province, with higher concentrations in Changchun and Siping 四平 than in other cities. Fewer people live in the northeastern area, especially near the Changbai Mountains. The total population in Jilin rose to 27,452,815 in 2010, a small 2.4 percent increase from 10 years earlier. The number of people immigrating from other provinces decreased significantly in this period, from 635,675 to 456,499. In fact, the slow population growth and the decrease in immigration reflect the deepening economic regression in Jilin along with the other two northeastern provinces, Liaoning and Heilongjiang. These provinces were heavy industrial bases in the period of the central planning economy but have encountered severe difficulties in the transition toward a market economy.⁶ It is widely reported in Chinese news media that people, especially the younger generations, have moved away to look for better job opportunities.⁷

Similar to the other northeastern provinces, Jilin shows the characteristics of an industrial society. First, the number of people with a college degree doubled from 1,321,871 in 2000 to 2,715,172 a decade later. Meanwhile, the proportion of elderly people increased significantly from 9.4 percent in 2000 to 13.2 percent in 2010 (Maps 46–47). In 2000, the percentage of elderly people in most counties was between 8 to 12 percent of the total population, rising to 12 to 16 percent in 2010. The number of elderly people was quite low in parts of northern Jilin, most notably in counties in the Songyuan 松原 prefecture. Only a few counties near the border had an elderly population greater than 12 percent. In some southern counties such as Yanji 延吉 and Helong 和龙, more than 16 percent of local people were more than 60 years old. The average family size in Jilin has been shrinking in recent years, decreasing from 3.3 persons to 2.9 between 2000 and 2010.

Key Religious Facts

Protestant churches are predominant in Jilin and are especially concentrated in its central and eastern prefectures

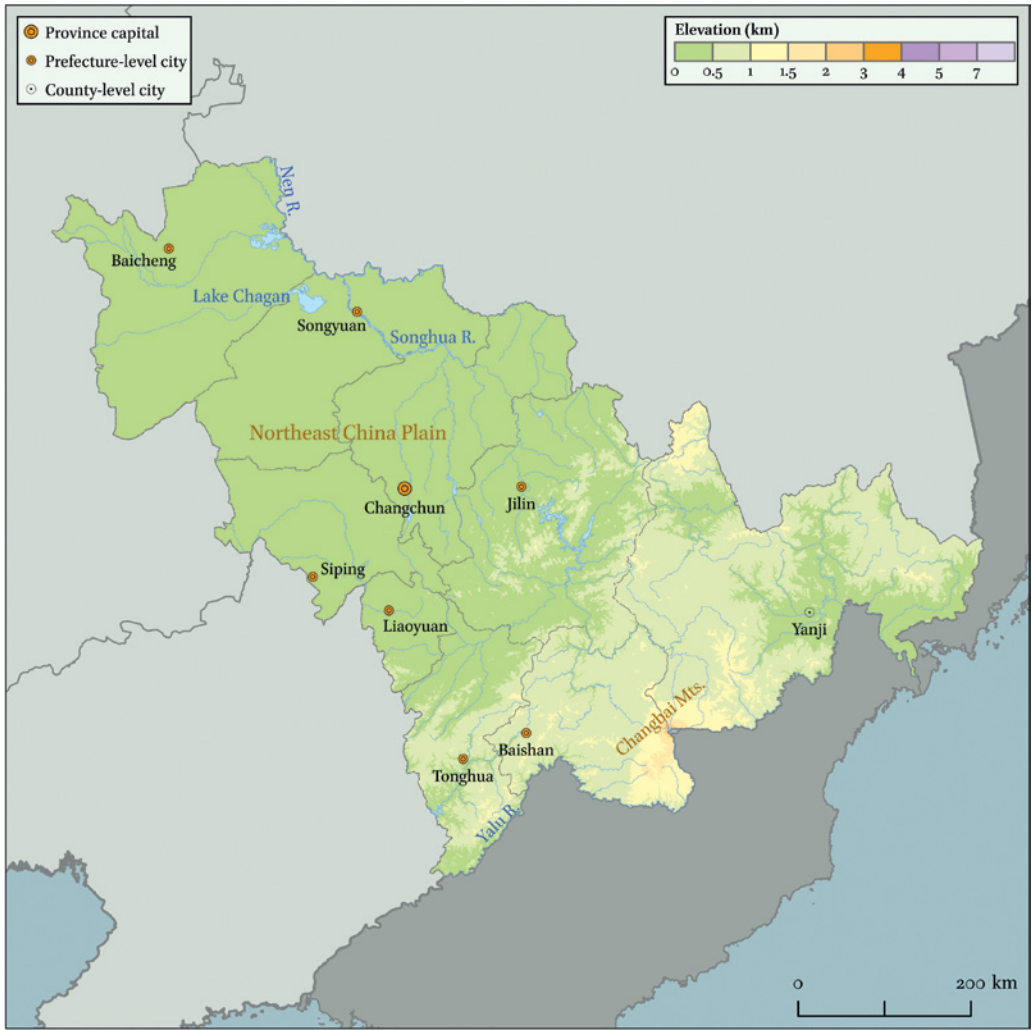
3 Liaoning Pindao, “The Disciple Sect Is Deceptive”; Kaifengliaoning, “Still Haunting—Be Alert to the Disciple Sect”; Liaoning Pindao, “A Way to Save the Followers of the Disciple Sect.”

4 Liu and Leung, “Organizational Revivalism.”

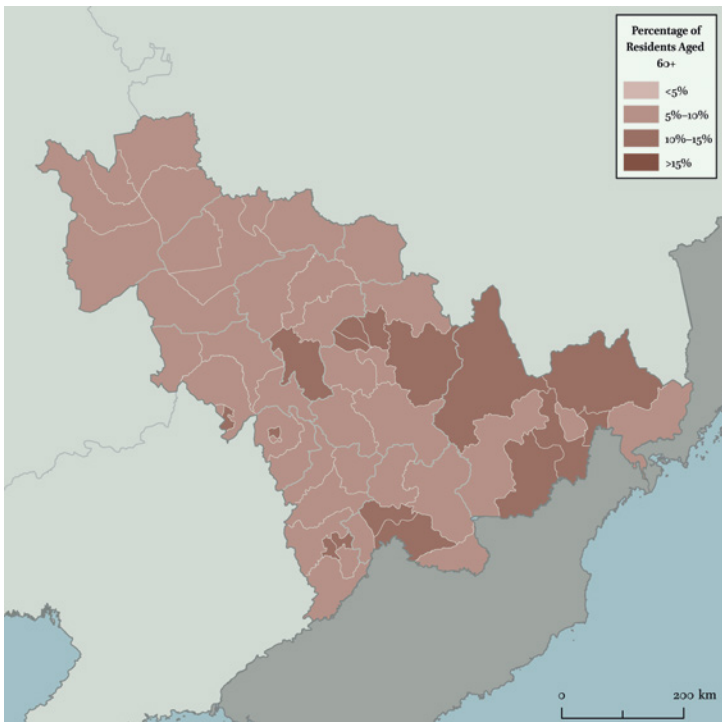
5 Erhimbayar, “Mongolian Buddhist Monasteries in Present-day Northeastern China.”

6 J. Zhang, “The Transformation of the Chinese Economy”; Economist, “The North-East Back in the Cold.”

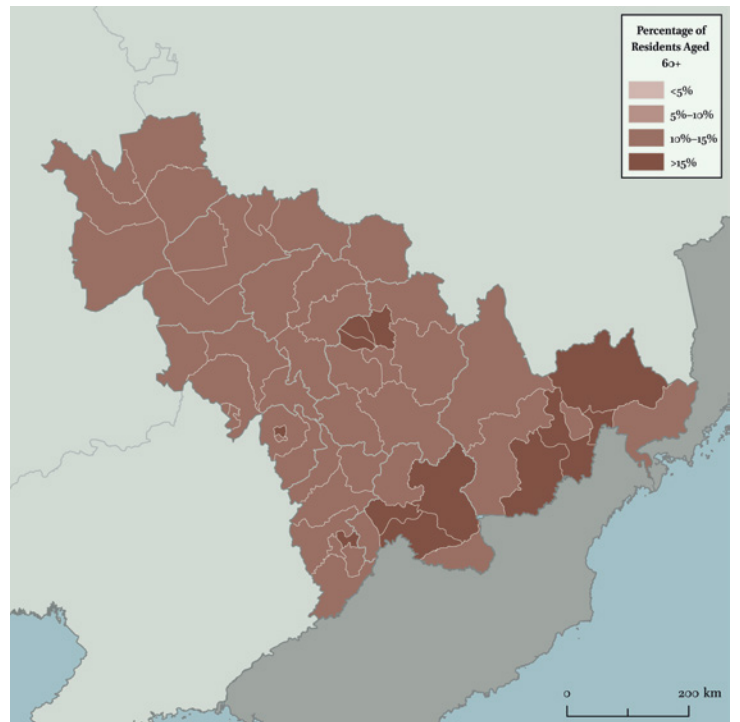
7 X. Sun, “Population Decline in Northeast China.”



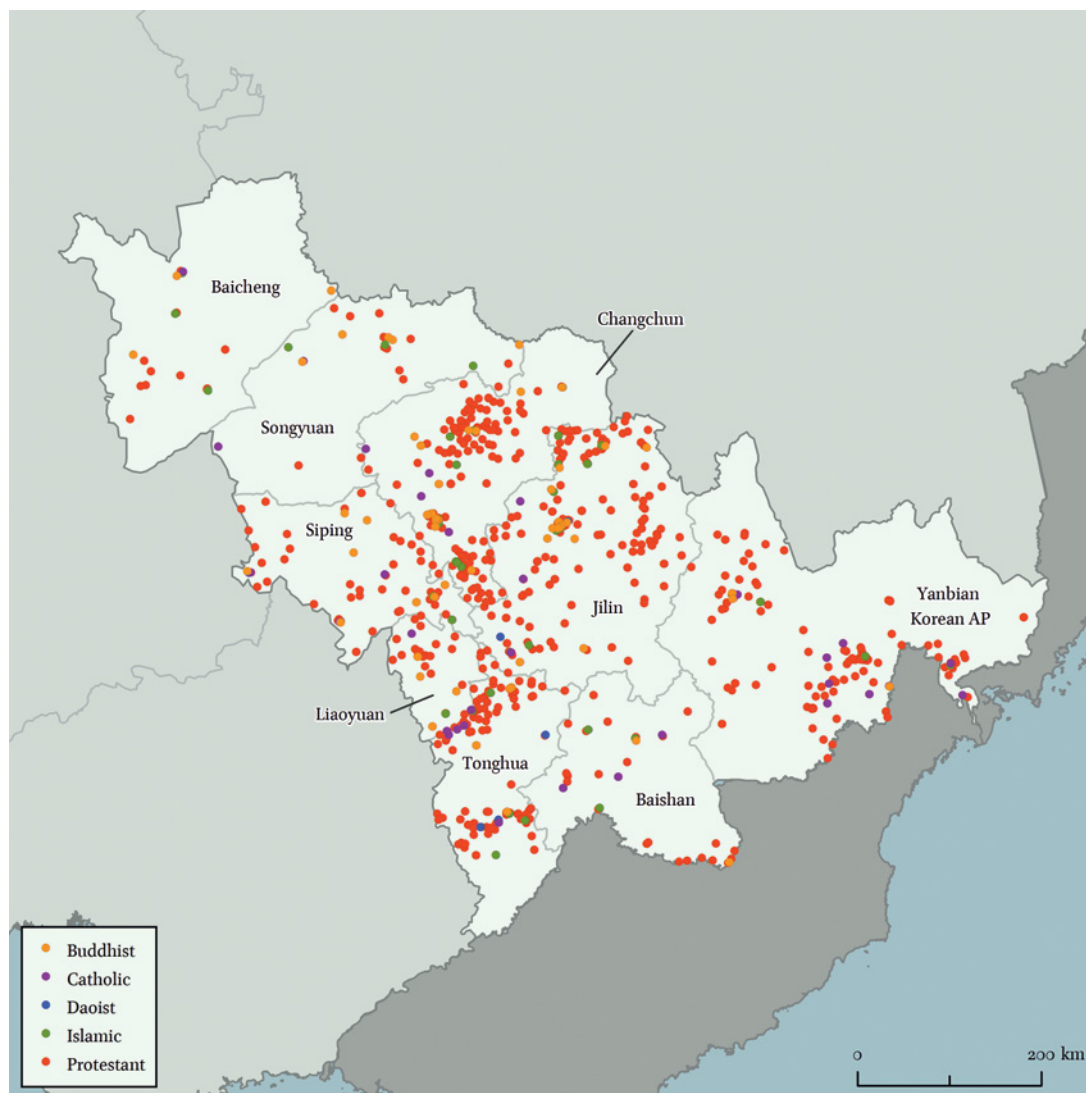
MAP 45 Jilin: Topography.



MAP 46 Jilin: Elderly population in 2000.



MAP 47 Jilin: Elderly population in 2010.



MAP 48 Jilin: Religious sites.

(Map 48 and Figure 15). Buddhist temples, Catholic churches, and Islamic mosques are scattered around in the province, with a very few Daoist sites here and there. According to other information provided by the provincial religious bureau, currently about 856,000 people are Buddhist believers, most of whom are followers of Chan and Pure Land traditions; the number of Daoist believers is much smaller, a little more than 100,000. The Catholic population is around 67,000, and the registered Protestant churches have 768,000 members.⁸

Jilin's close proximity to North Korea has caused tensions with regard to religious communities. In May 2016, the body of a Chinese priest who had provided assistance to North Korean defectors was found near the Jilin–North Korea border. Human rights groups argued that secret

agents from North Korea were likely responsible for the priest's death. The priest, Han Choong-ryul 韩忠烈, was a Chinese citizen of ethnic Korean origin. He had served as a priest at Changbai Church 长白教会 and was well known as a supporter of North Korean defectors once they reached the border.⁹ In 2017, more than 60 South Korean Christians in Jilin were expelled from China after they were found by local governments to be helping North Korean defectors. Local officials claimed that these expelled Christians were engaged in illegal religious activities, whereas one of these expelled missionaries argued that it was their contact with the defectors that

8 Jilin Religious Bureau, "Ethnic Groups in Jilin."

9 Guyjoco, "Chinese Priest Who Supported North Korean Defectors Found Dead."

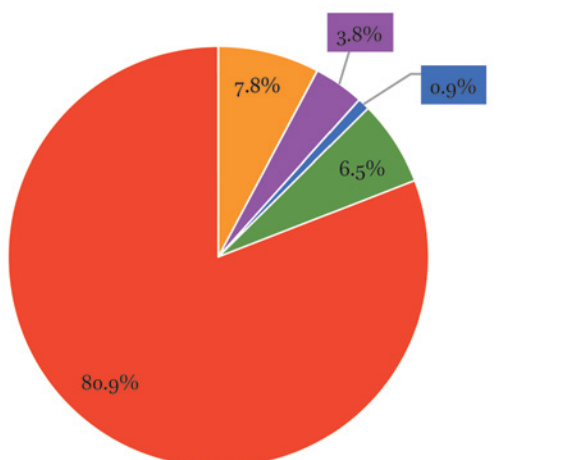
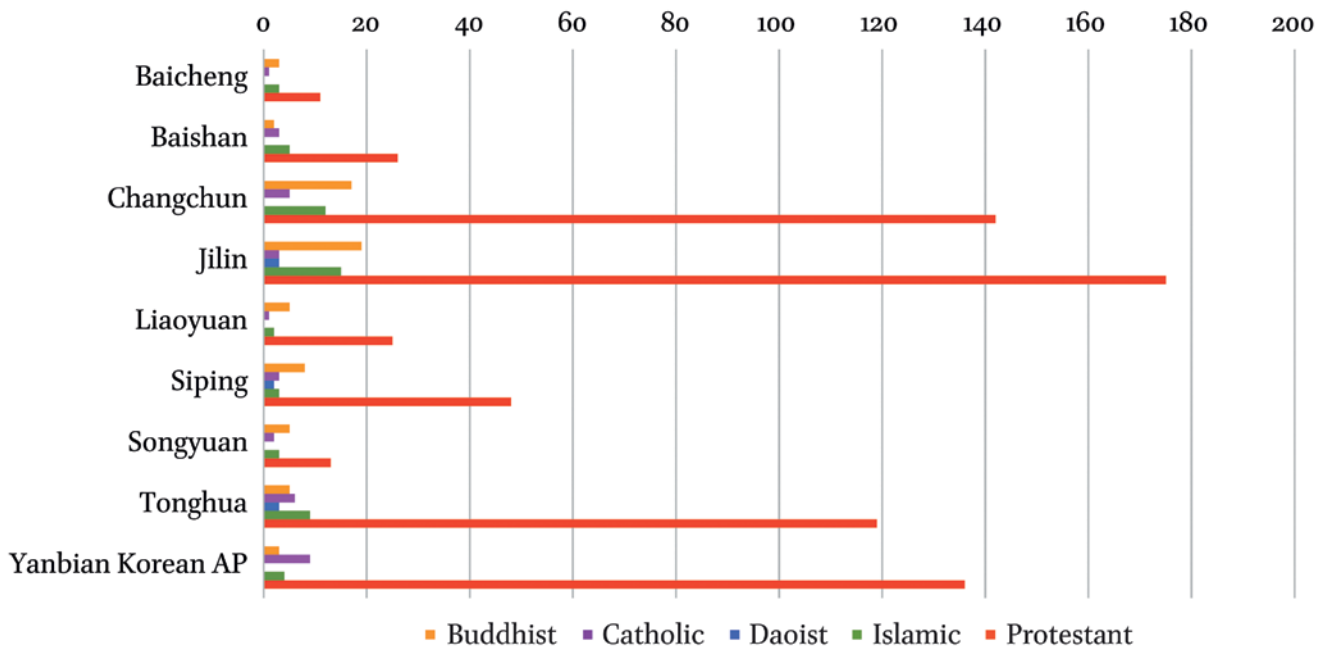


FIGURE 15 Jilin: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.

precipitated their expelling.¹⁰ According to the 2008 report of the U.S. Congressional-Executive Commission on China,¹¹ the central government ordered provincial religious affairs bureaus to investigate religious communities for signs of involvement with foreigners. Those churches in the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture 延边朝鲜族自治州 in Jilin province that were found to have ties to South Koreans or other foreign nationals were shut down.

Jilin is one of the most ethnically diverse provinces in China, as evidenced by the provincial government's

sanctioning of folk religions, most notably shamanistic temples.¹² In 2006, the first Shaman Museum 萨满文化博物馆 opened in Changchun.¹³ There are two ways to become a shaman in Jilin. One is by divine choosing, the other by clan selection. Shamanism in Jilin is growing and thriving as part of the local heritage.¹⁴

8. Heilongjiang 黑龙江

Land area: 454,000 km²
 Population: 38,313,991
 Capital: Harbin 哈尔滨

Topography

Heilongjiang is the northernmost province of China. It takes its name from the Heilong Jiang 黑龙江 [Black Dragon River], which is also known as the Amur River. The Heilong River and the Ussuri River 乌苏里江 form the border between Heilongjiang and Russia. The province is divided into 13 prefectures, including 65 urban districts, 19 county-level cities, and 44 counties. Ethnic minorities comprise 3.5 percent of the total population, including several ethnic groups that originated in this area: Daur 达斡尔族, Xibe 锡伯族, Oroqen 鄂伦春族, Hezhe 赫哲族.

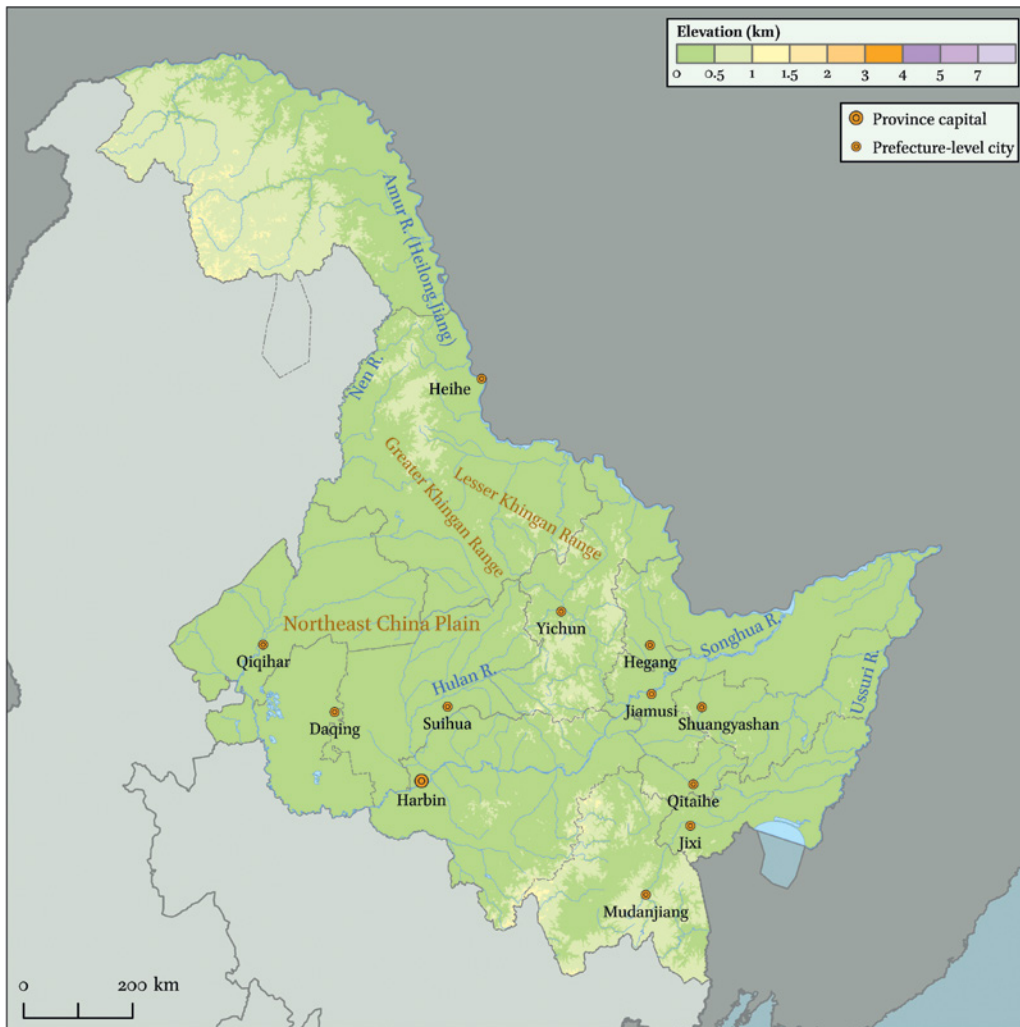
10 Farley, "Christians Expelled from China for Helping North Korean Defectors."

11 Congressional-Executive Commission on China, 2008 Annual Report.

12 Z. Zhang, *Magic in China*.

13 Xinhuanet, "A Shaman Museum Founded."

14 Xinhuanet, "A Young Heir to a Shaman."



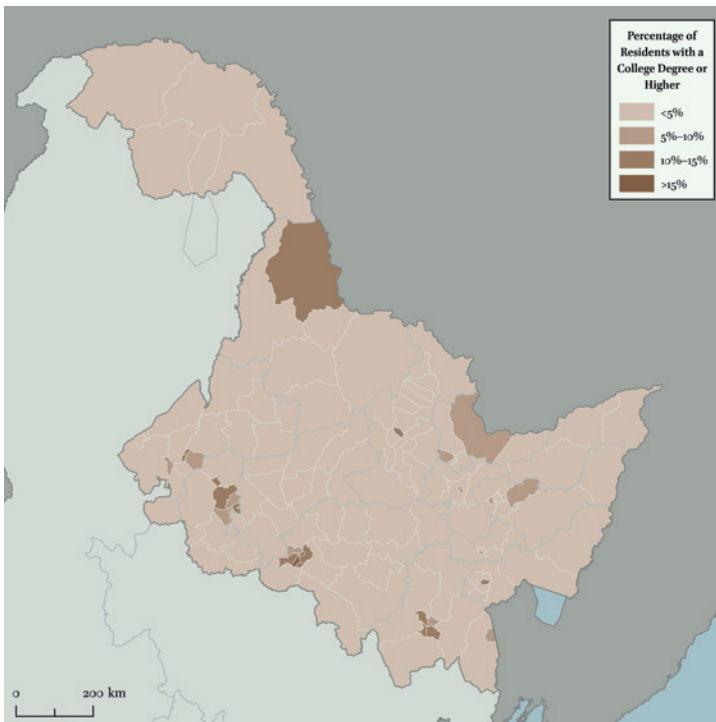
MAP 49 Heilongjiang: Topography.

Heilongjiang is a land of varied topography (Map 49). The central part is dominated by the Greater and Lesser Khingan Range 大小兴安岭. The western part of the province is part of the Northeast China Plain and has a low and flat terrain. Heilongjiang is rich in water resources. Major rivers include the Nen River 嫩江 and the Songhua River 松花江, which run across the province from south to north. Winters in Heilongjiang are long and bitterly cold, lasting five to eight months with average temperatures of -31°C to -15°C in January. Summers are short and warm, with average temperatures of 18°C to 23°C in July. Lying on the famous “black soil zone,” Heilongjiang is China’s largest soybean producer and one of the most important grain production centers. Heilongjiang is also rich in mineral resources and contains China’s largest oil field, Daqing Oil Field 大庆油田. Much of Heilongjiang’s industry is based on petrochemicals and equipment manufacturing.

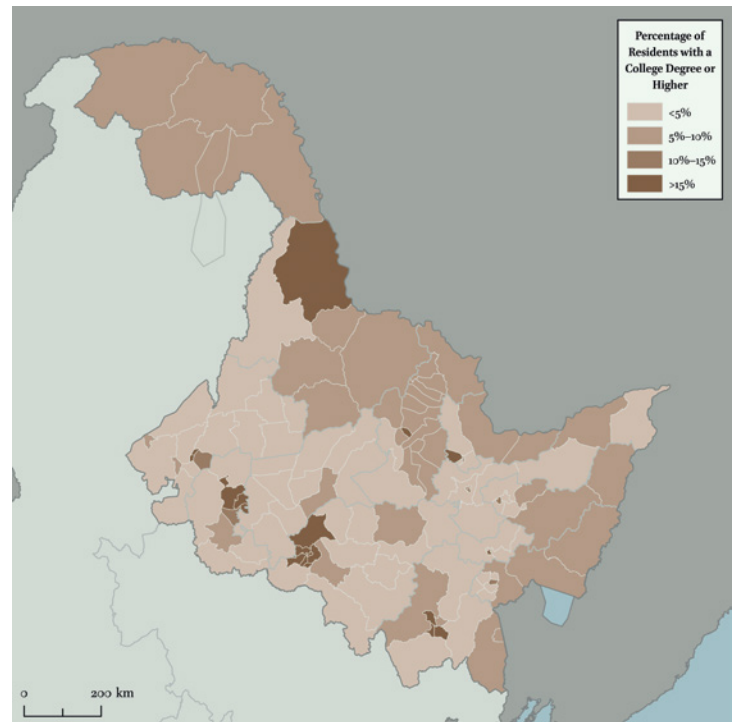
Demography

Heilongjiang’s population is not evenly distributed. More people live in the southern part of the province, either near the provincial capital, Harbin, or near other major cities like Daqing 大庆 and Mudanjiang 牡丹江. The total population of the province rose slightly from 36,237,576 in 2000 to 38,313,991 in 2010, a 5.7 percent increase. In the meantime, the size of the immigrant population decreased dramatically from 1,407,081 to 506,397 over the same period, suggesting that Heilongjiang has become less attractive to immigrants.

From 2000 to 2010, the number of people who received at least a college education doubled from 1.7 million to 3.5 million (Maps 50–51). The percentage of urban residents increased from 46.8 percent to 49.3 percent during this decade. The proportion of elderly people in Heilongjiang is on the rise; people aged 60 or older increased from 9 percent of the population in 2000 to 13 percent in 2010.



MAP 50 Heilongjiang: Education in 2000.



MAP 51 Heilongjiang: Education in 2010.

The sex ratio decreased from 104.5 males per 100 females in 2000 to 102.9 in 2010. Heilongjiang is one of the provinces whose sex ratio was close to normal.¹⁵

The average family size has become smaller. In 2000, the average family size in most counties was greater than three persons. Only in the counties of Yichun 宜春 and Daxinganling 大兴安岭 did the number drop below three. In 2010, a number of counties in the southern cities still had an average family size above three, but in most counties, in the middle and northern areas, the average dropped below three.

Key Religious Facts

The religious landscape of Heilongjiang shows a predominance of Protestant churches, especially concentrated in Harbin, Qitaihe 七台河, and Jixi 鸡西 prefectures, but also along the Heilongjiang River and border (Map 52 and Figure 16). There are good numbers of Catholic churches in Qiqihar 齐齐哈尔, the southwestern area of Heihe, and the southeast area of Mudanjiang. Islamic mosques and Buddhist temples are scattered around the whole province, with a few Daoist temples here and there.

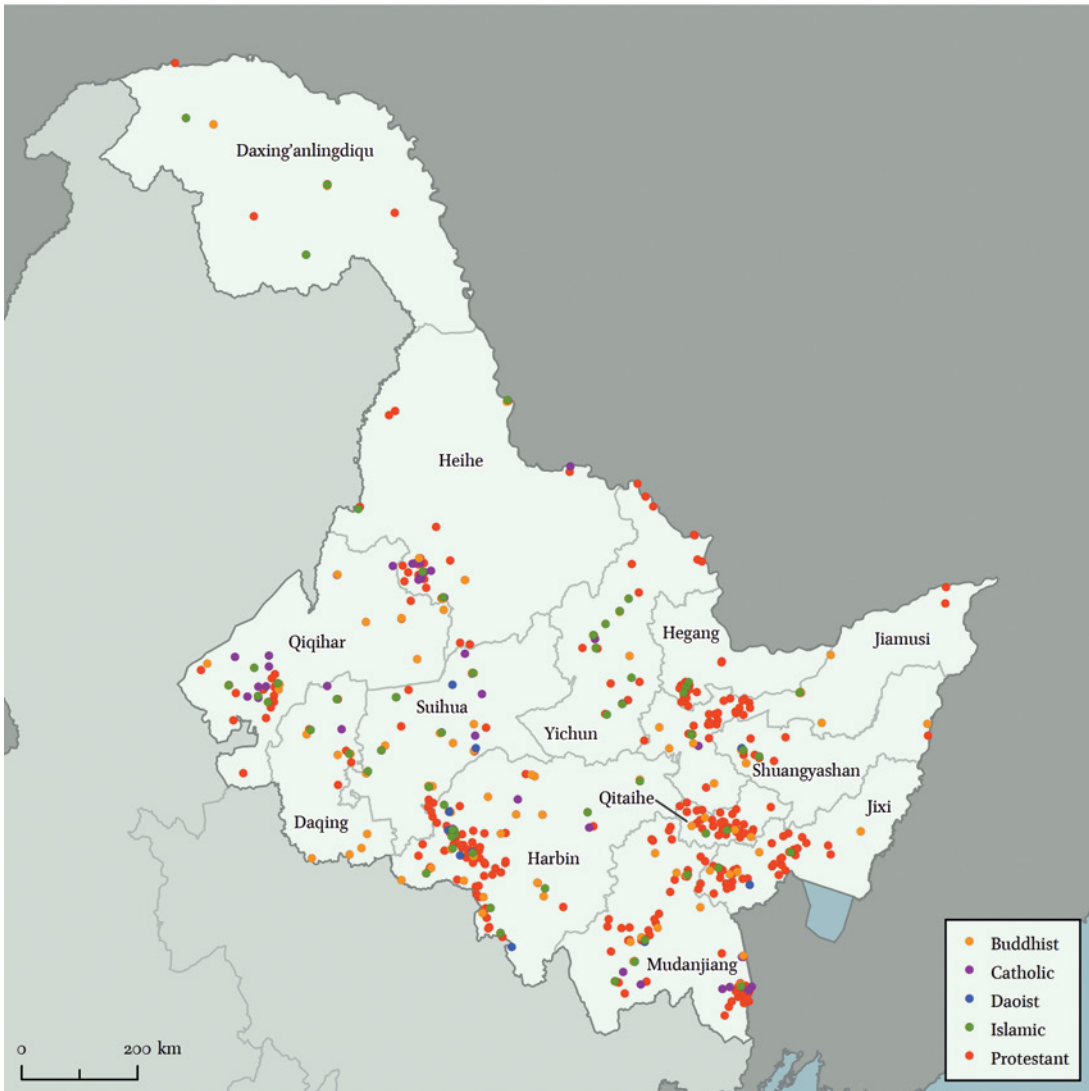
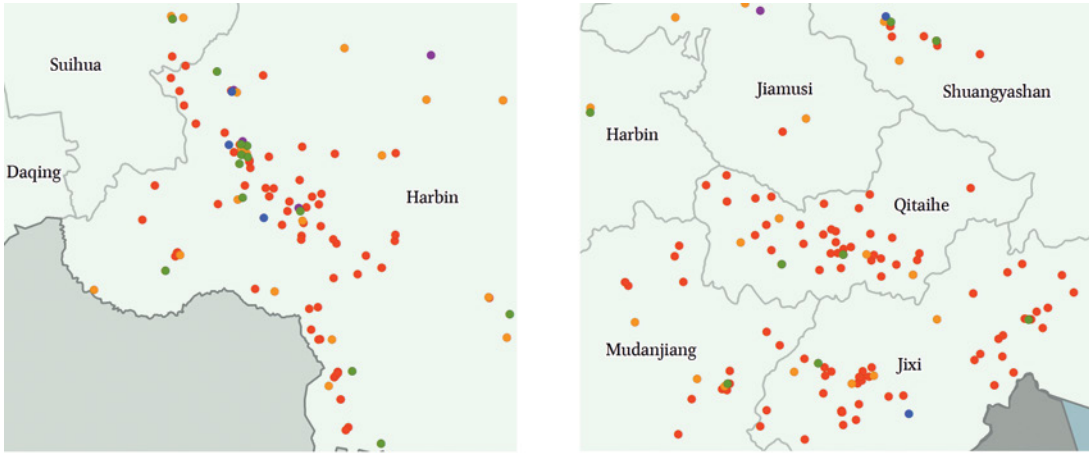
Heilongjiang's common border with Russia makes it a strategic region for transnational connectivity—not only political and economic, but also religious. The Sino-Russian wars in the seventeenth century during the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911) resulted in territorial concessions to Russia as well as Russian cultural influence. Harbin features much neo-classical architecture and is a center of Orthodox Christianity. The Peking Church Mission, the earliest foreign mission organized by the Russian state, spread Orthodox Christianity to China and Mongolia and made an important contribution to the establishment of Sino-Russian diplomatic relations.¹⁶

Although relations were interrupted during the Communist Revolution, the mutual interest between China and Russia has prompted a renewal of religious-diplomatic ties. In May 2013, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia visited China for the first time and met with Chinese president Xi Jinping. He also met with Wang Zuoan 王作安, director of China's State Administration of Religious Affairs, who held a reception in honor of the primate of the Russian Orthodox Church.¹⁷ Later, Patriarch Kirill visited Heilongjiang, where he met with the vice governor of the province, Sun Yongbo 孙

15 S. Li et al., "Imbalanced Sex Ratio at Birth and Female Child Survival in China," 28; Lai, "Sex Ratio at Birth and Infant Mortality Rate in China."

16 Maiyer, "Russian Orthodox Missions to the East."

17 Russian Orthodox Church, "His Holiness Patriarch Kirill Completes His Visit To China."



MAP 52 Heilongjiang: Religious sites.

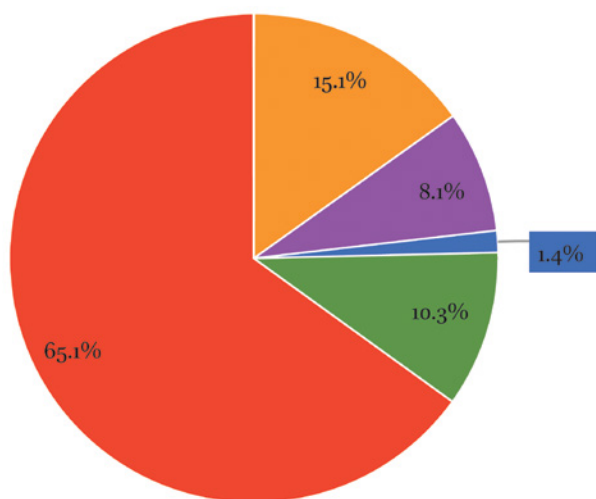
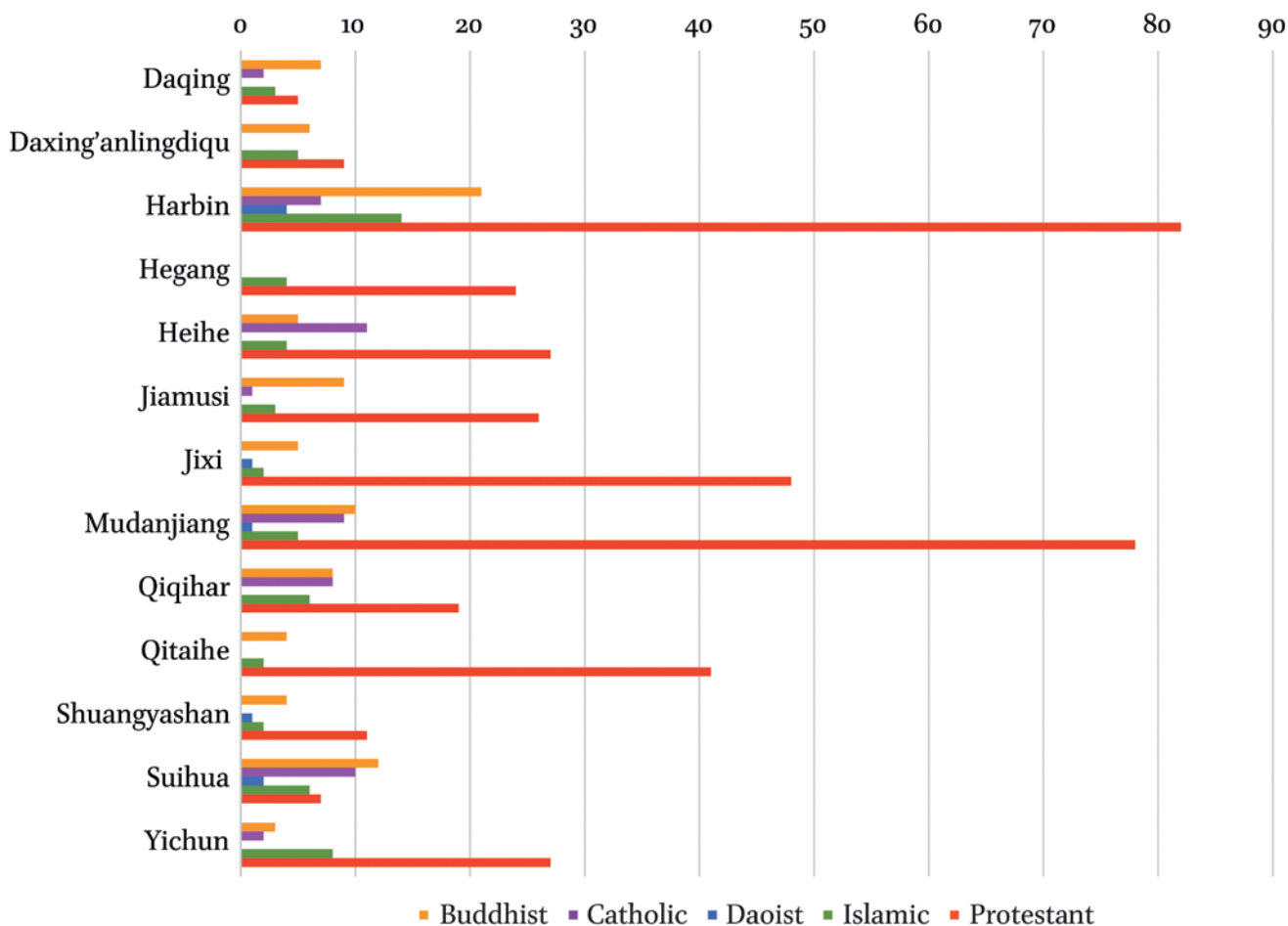


FIGURE 16 Heilongjiang: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.

永波, and celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the Church of the Protection of the Mother of God in Harbin 哈尔滨圣母帡幪教堂. This was a remarkable move, as Orthodoxy is not yet an officially sanctioned religion in China at the national level. At the meeting it was agreed that two Chinese Orthodox monks would travel to Russia to

prepare for ordination and then return to China to serve the church. Patriarch Kirill stated that his China visit was aimed at “further strengthening the friendly relations between China and Russia.”¹⁸ The timing of this visit was interesting, as less than two months earlier President Xi had paid a visit to Russia, during which Russian president Vladimir Putin remarked that they were working together to shape a new, more just world order, ensure peace and security, and defend basic principles of international law.¹⁹ This cooperation was best symbolized by the 2015 ordination of Shi Yu 施余, a former banker who studied in a seminary in Russia. He became the first Chinese priest ordained by the Russian Orthodox Church to be given official standing in China, and was appointed to serve the Church of the Protection of the Mother of God in Harbin.²⁰

18 Z. Yu, “Orthodox Church Sees Opportunities in China.”
 19 Z. Yu, “Orthodox Church Sees Opportunities in China.”
 20 Z. Yu, “Orthodox Church Sees Opportunities in China.”

East China 华东地区



MAP 53 Subregional map of East China.

9. Shanghai 上海

Land area: 6,341 km²

Population: 23,019,196

Topography

Shanghai is one of the four municipalities of China directly controlled by the central government. It is also an

international commercial, cultural, and communication center. Situated at the junction of the Yangtze River 长江 and the Huangpu River 黄浦江, Shanghai is composed of a peninsula and many surrounding islands (Map 54). Chongming Island 崇明岛 in northern Shanghai is the second-largest island in mainland China. Downtown Shanghai is bisected by the Huangpu River. Puxi 浦西, on the west bank of the Huangpu River, is the historical



MAP 54
Shanghai: Topography.

center of the city while Pudong 浦东, the central financial district, has developed in recent decades on the east bank. Shanghai is further divided into 16 districts.

Located at the heart of the Yangtze Delta, Shanghai serves as China's major trading port and the gateway to inland China. The city has attracted a large amount of foreign investment, and many multinational companies are headquartered in the metropolis. This municipality is also one of China's main industrial centers, with the country's largest steelmaker, Baosteel Group, and its extensive shipyards.

Demography

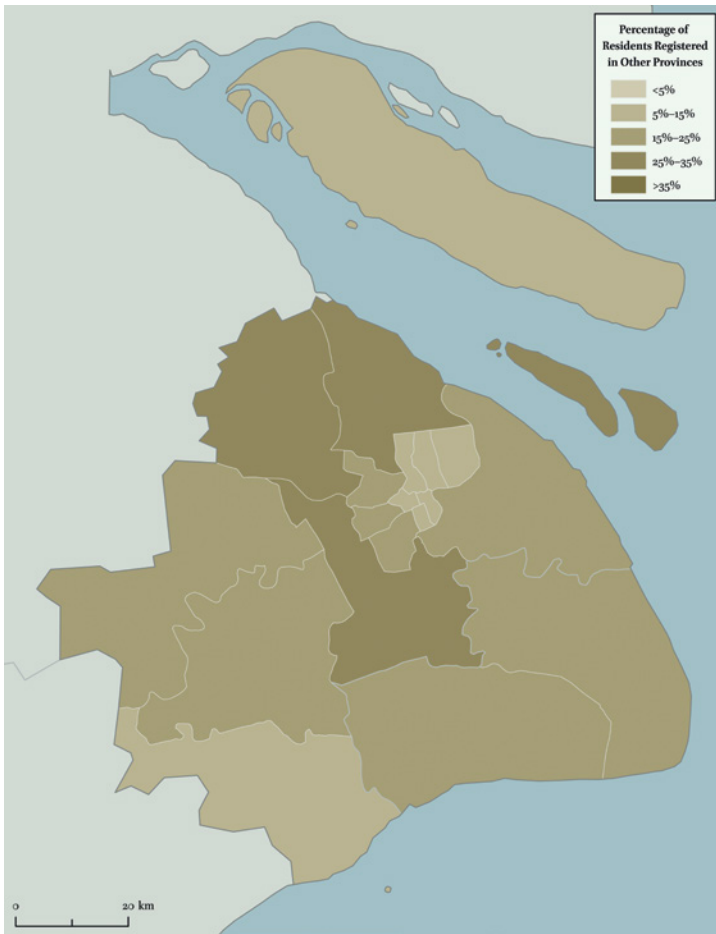
The total population of Shanghai rose by 40 percent to 23,019,196 in 2010. The huge and rapidly growing population is an impetus to local economic development,¹ but

also places a considerable strain on resources and the environment.² The population size has increased rapidly, particularly in Songjiang 松江 District, where it grew by 146.8 percent between 2000 and 2010. The population density of Shanghai is extremely high in the downtown area. The Yangtze River Delta Region (Shanghai, Jiangsu, and Zhejiang) has become the most popular destination for interprovincial immigrants, superseding the Pearl River Delta region in Guangdong. During 2000–2010, the total number of people who had relocated in Shanghai increased by 632.7 percent (Maps 55–56). Most immigrants are from the neighboring provinces of Anhui 安徽, Jiangsu 江苏, and Henan 河南.³ Many settled in districts on the outskirts of the city, such as Jiading 嘉定, Songjiang, and

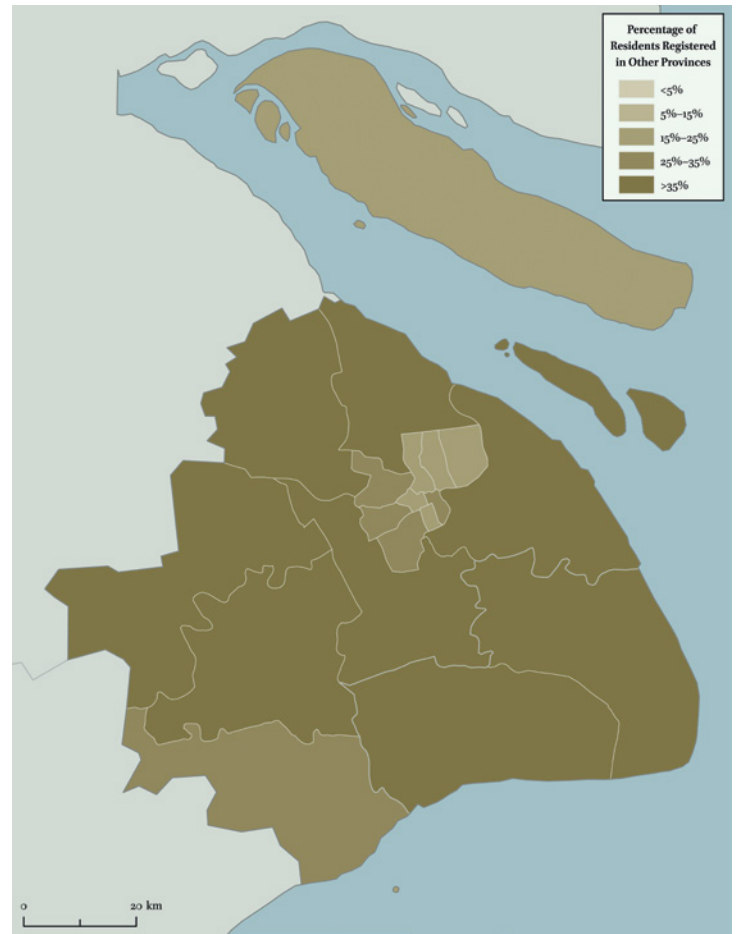
1 G. Wang, "Population Growth and Sustainable Urban Development in Shanghai."

2 Wu et al., "Analysis of Population Evolvement."

3 Z. Huang, X. Gao, and X. Zhu, "An Analysis of the Historical Change of Immigrants' Spatial Distribution in Shanghai."



MAP 55 Shanghai: Immigration in 2000.



MAP 56 Shanghai: Immigration in 2010.

Qingpu 青浦, and by 2010, immigrants constituted more than half of the total population in these districts.

The overall level of education has risen greatly. The proportion of the population with a college degree or higher climbed from 11 percent in 2000 to 23 percent in 2010 (Maps 57–58). In most districts west of Huangpu River the proportion of college-educated residents had reached 30 percent by 2010. However, in Chongming District and Qingpu District the proportion remained low (7 percent and 9.1 percent respectively). It is interesting to note that the number of people from Shanghai studying or working abroad increased by 172 percent between 2000 and 2010, from 42,801 to 116,597.

Key Religious Facts

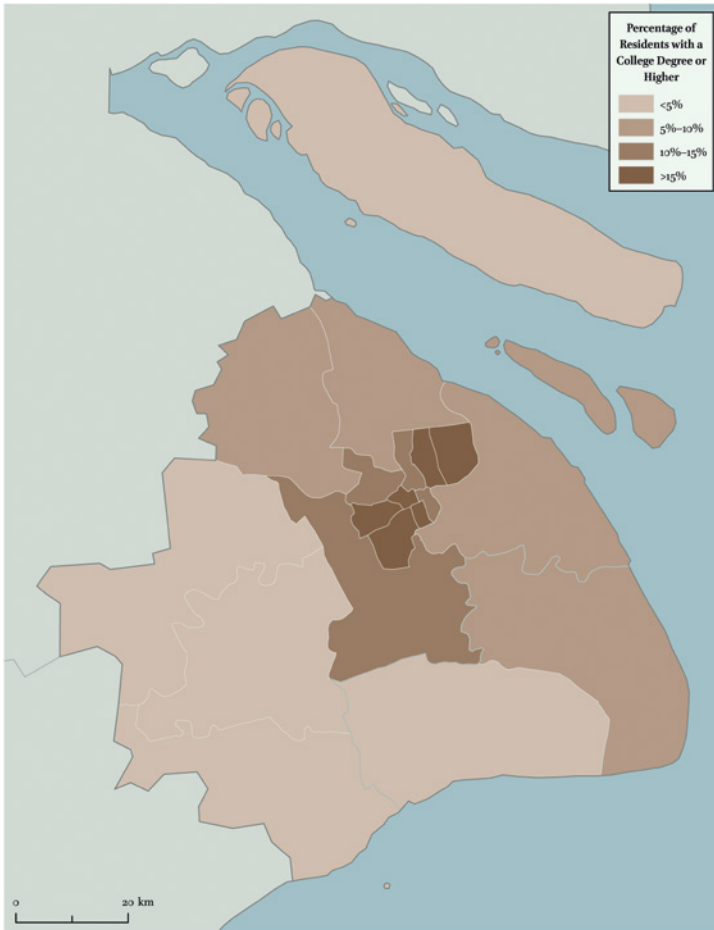
As in the case of Beijing and Tianjin, the 2004 Economic Census included only a few of the known religious sites in Shanghai, and thus we had to collect additional data to produce Map 59 and Figure 17. Shanghai is one of China's most diverse religious marketplaces, partly due to its historical status as an important port during imperial times, and partly due to its being a former treaty port. In the

mid-nineteenth century, under British military threat, the Qing government granted access to Shanghai to Western countries seeking wider markets in China. The city quickly gained importance as China's center of foreign trade and generally served as the link between China and the world not only for commerce but also for Christian organizations.⁴

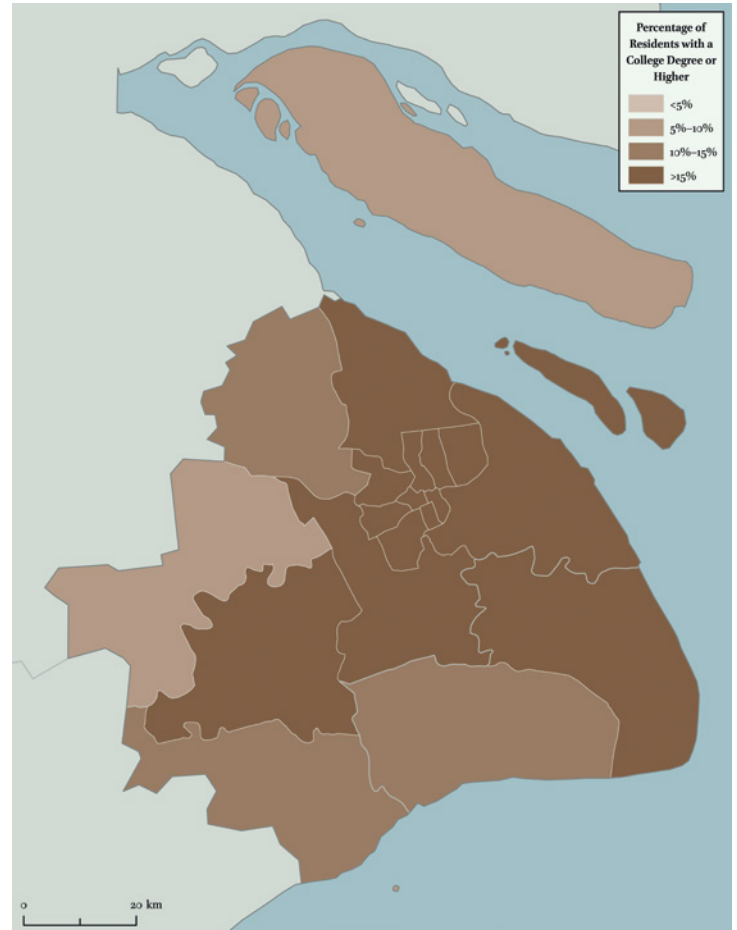
Nearly 2,000 Buddhist temples were located in Shanghai before the founding of the People's Republic of China, but that number has been substantially reduced. Among the Buddhist temples open for religious activities, the best known is the Jade Buddha Temple 玉佛寺 in Jing'an District 静安区. There are several Daoist temples in the city, including the well-known City God Temple 城隍庙 in Huangpu District 黄浦区, a major temple of the Zhengyi 正一 [Orthodox Unity] school of Daoism.

In the first half of the twentieth century, Shanghai became an important center for Christian missionary organizations and some indigenous Christian movements,

4 Bickers and Jackson, *Treaty Ports in Modern China*, 29–30; Wasserstrom, *Global Shanghai, 1850–2010*, 80.



MAP 57 Shanghai: Education in 2000.



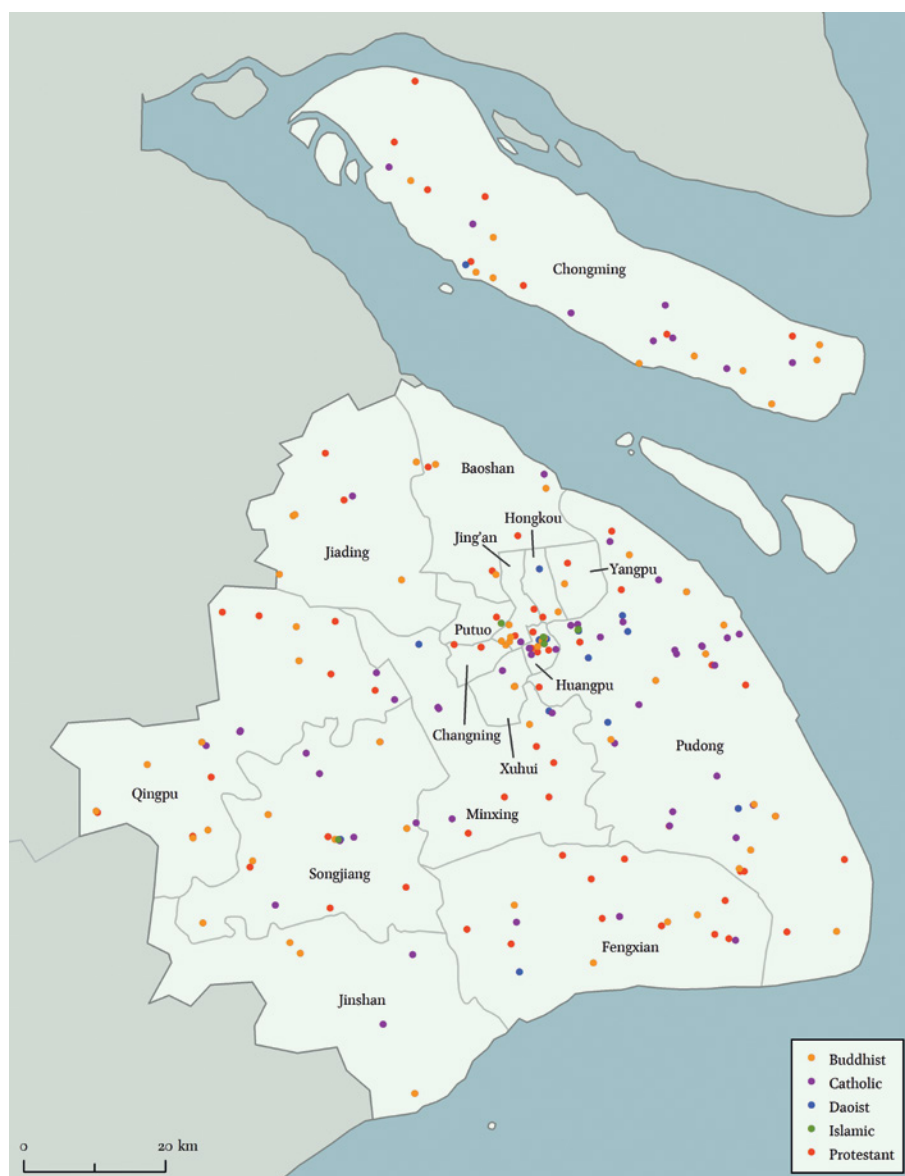
MAP 58 Shanghai: Education in 2010.

such as the Little Flock churches founded and led by Watchman Nee (Ni Tuosheng 倪柝声, 1903–1972). Meanwhile, Shanghai became the Chinese headquarters of the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) and the Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA). In the 1930s and 1940s, many YMCA and YWCA activists and some church leaders became openly sympathetic to the Communist revolution and some even clandestinely joined the Communists. These “progressive” Christians became leaders of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement in the People’s Republic of China. The Protestant national committee of the TSPM maintains its headquarters in Shanghai, whereas the national associations of the other four religions have their headquarters in Beijing. Currently, there are more than 100 approved Protestant churches. Meanwhile, house churches are numerous, including Shanghai Wanbang Mission Church 上海万邦宣教教会, once the largest house church in Shanghai, which had 1,200 members in the late 2000s and drew about 2,000 worshippers to Sunday services. In 2009, the Shanghai authorities pressured the church to join the TSPM Committee. Church leaders refused, however, and

subsequently its members divided into small groups for worship and fellowship gatherings.

In the 1940s, Sheshan Basilica 佘山天主教堂, or the National Shrine and Minor Basilica of Our Lady of Sheshan 佘山进教之佑圣母大殿, was the largest Catholic cathedral in the Far East. For Catholics, May is the month that is dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and it is the peak season for pilgrimages to Sheshan. In 2007, around 11,000 Catholics visited Sheshan in early May, but in 2008 that number dwindled to 5,000. The authorities restricted attendance in 2008, fearing social unrest after the protests in Tibet in that year. Also in 2008, tensions were heightened when Pope Benedict XVI issued a prayer letter expressing the hope that Chinese Catholics would be allowed to freely express their faith and allegiance to him.

The Sheshan Catholic Seminary 佘山修道院 was established in October 1982, when the Shanghai Diocese borrowed the Zhongshan Chapel 中山圣堂 of Sheshan Basilica. In 2012 Thaddeus Ma Daqin 马达钦 was appointed as the assistant bishop by the Chinese authorities and, with the approval of the Holy See, as the auxiliary bishop. At his episcopal ordination mass on July 7, 2012, Bishop Ma



MAP 59 Shanghai: Religious sites.

surprisingly announced his resignation from the Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association. At the end of the mass he was taken to Sheshan Seminary, where he has remained in confinement. After the government-approved bishop Jin Luxian 金鲁贤 (Aloysius Jin Luxian, S. J. 1916–2013) died in 2013 and the underground bishop Fan Zhongliang 范忠良 (Joseph Vei Zong Leong, S. J. 1918–2014) died in 2014, Ma became the bishop of Shanghai Diocese.

Muslims have migrated to and settled in Shanghai for over 700 years and the city's first mosque was built in 1295. In modern China, the Chinese Muslim Federation was formed in Shanghai in 1925. In the following decades Islamic institutions in Shanghai have striven to integrate into local culture while maintaining their own religious preferences. Mosques for women are a peculiar

phenomenon in China, as male and female Muslims generally share a mosque equipped with gender-segregated rooms.⁵ Mosques exclusively for women were developed during the late Qing Dynasty (1644–1911). The practice of appointing female imams quickly spread within China's Muslim communities. There are no reliable statistics on the total number of women's mosques in China. In Shanghai, Xiaotaoyuan Female Mosque 小桃园女清真寺 was originally constructed in 1932 as the Qingzhen Kunning Tongde Female School 清真坤宁同德女学 (Muslim Kunning Tongde Female School), sponsored by a women's Islamic society (*Kunning tongde* 坤宁同德). In

5 Jaschok and Shui, *The History of Women's Mosques in Chinese Islam*, 18–19.

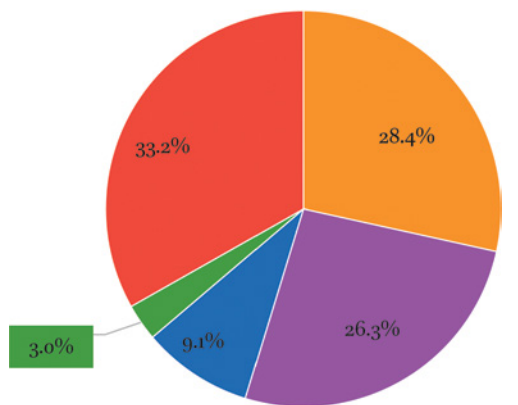
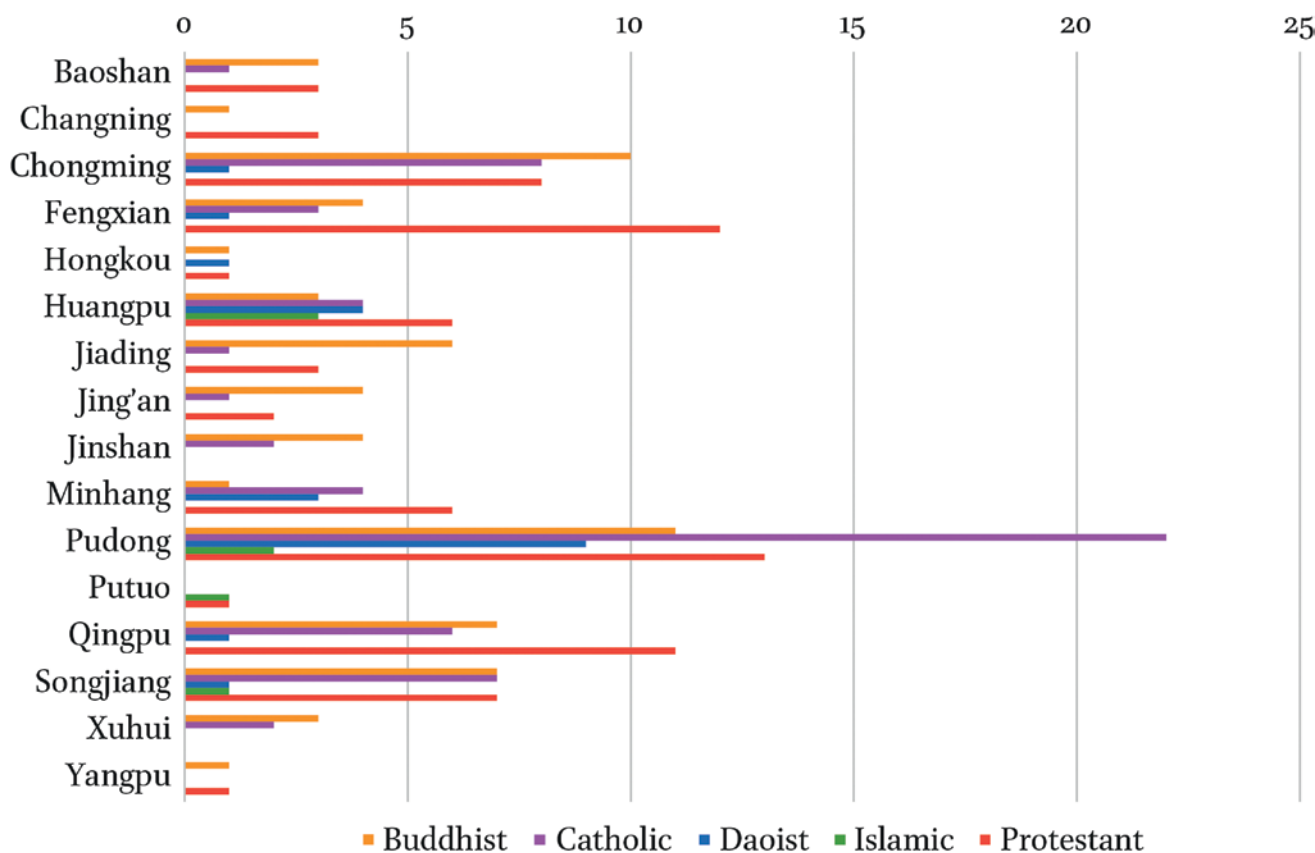


FIGURE 17 Shanghai: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.

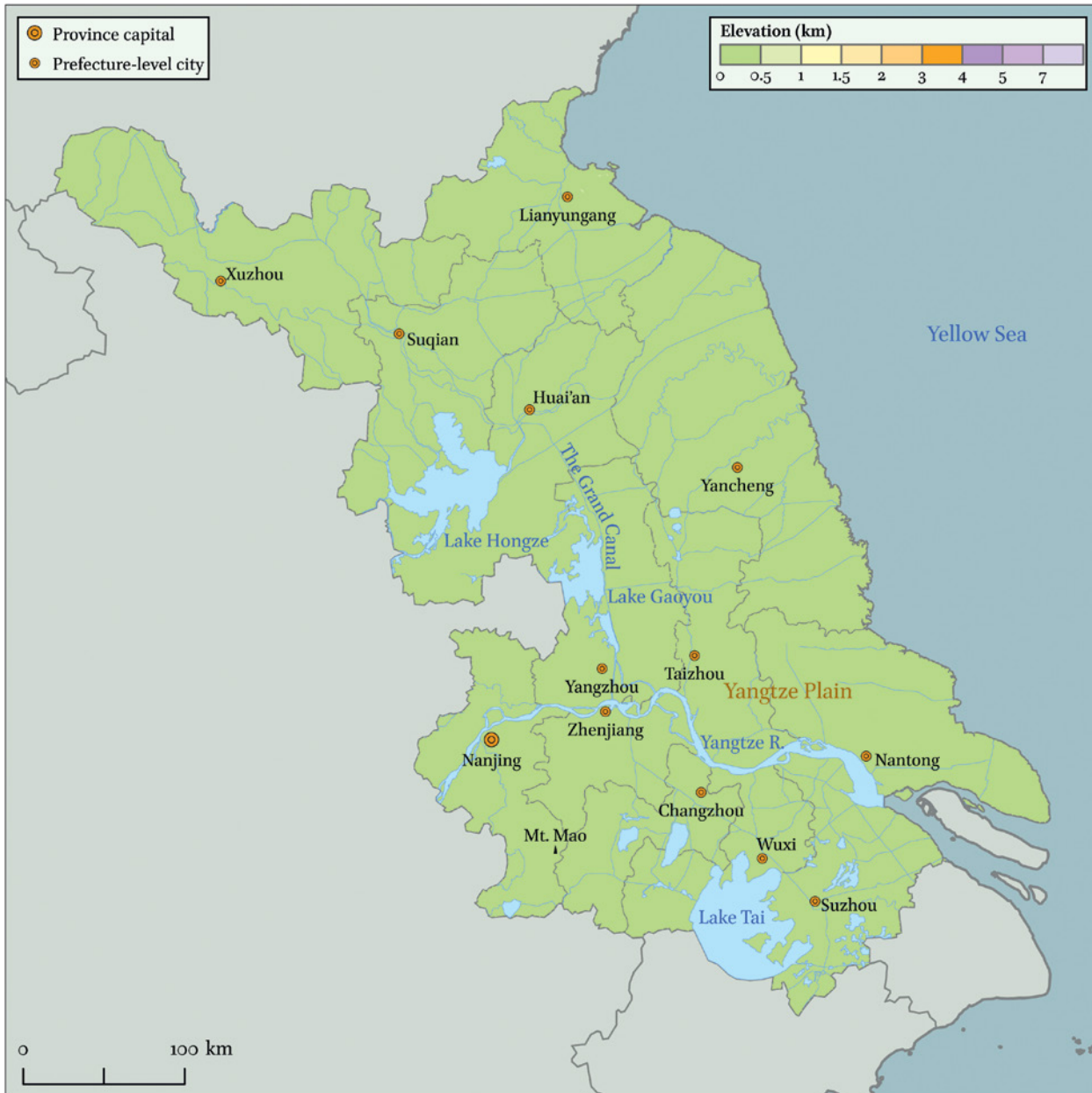
1956 it was moved to Xiaotaoyuan Street during an urban development project and renamed Xiaotaoyuan Mosque, but the building served as the office for the municipal ethnic committee. In 1993, it was taken over by the Shanghai Islamic Association and reopened as a religious site in 1995. In 2010, during the Shanghai Expo, the mosque was renovated and became a popular tourist attraction due to its institutional uniqueness.

10. Jiangsu 江苏

Land area: 102,600 km²
 Population: 78,660,941
 Capital: Nanjing 南京

Topography

Located on the eastern coast of China, Jiangsu is the second-smallest province in China in terms of land area. There are 13 prefectures, including 55 urban districts, 22 county-level cities, and 19 counties. Most of Jiangsu lies on very flat and low-lying plains and stands no more than 50 meters above sea level (Map 60). Mount Yuntai 云台山, near the city of Lianyungang 连云港 in the north, is the highest point in this province, with an altitude of 625 meters. Jiangsu is known as the “land of water” for its dense network of waterways. The Yangtze River cuts through the southern part of the province and empties into the East China Sea at Nantong 南通. Jiangsu is also bisected by the Grand Canal which traverses 718 km of the province from north to south. Jiangsu is dotted with nearly three hundred lakes of all kinds, including two of the five largest freshwater lakes in China, Tai Lake 太湖 and Hongze Lake 洪泽湖.



MAP 60 Jiangsu: Topography.

Jiangsu is an economically advanced and dynamic province, with the highest GDP per capita of all Chinese provinces. In recent decades, Jiangsu has developed light industries such as textiles and food processing. Substantial investments in the province's irrigation system have bolstered its agricultural output of rice, wheat, and silk.

Demography

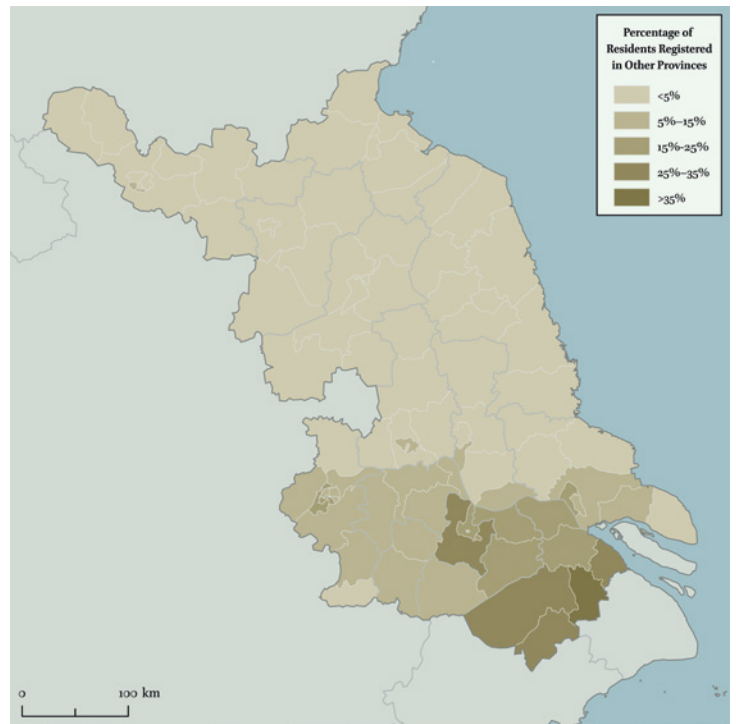
The total population of Jiangsu has increased slightly between 2000 and 2010, from 73,043,577 to 78,660,941. During the same decade, the number of people who used to live in Jiangsu but went abroad increased by 300 percent. South Jiangsu, especially those cities near Shanghai,

such as Wuxi 无锡 and Suzhou 苏州, is far more developed than the rest of the province. The low-lying plains have resulted in a high population density across the province as a whole, greater than 100 persons per square kilometer. In the southern part of the province the ratio exceeds 500 persons per square kilometer. Prefectures in the South (e.g., Nanjiang, Wuxi, Suzhou, and Changzhou 常州) have more immigrants, while the immigrant population in the north hovers around the national average (Maps 61–62).

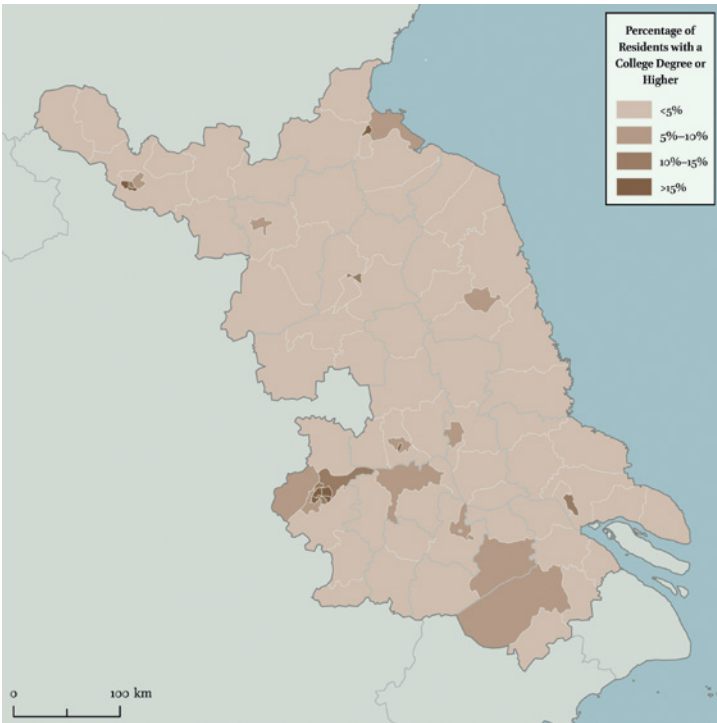
There was a great increase in the percentage of the population with at least a college education during 2000–2010 (Maps 63–64). In 2000, the proportion of college-educated



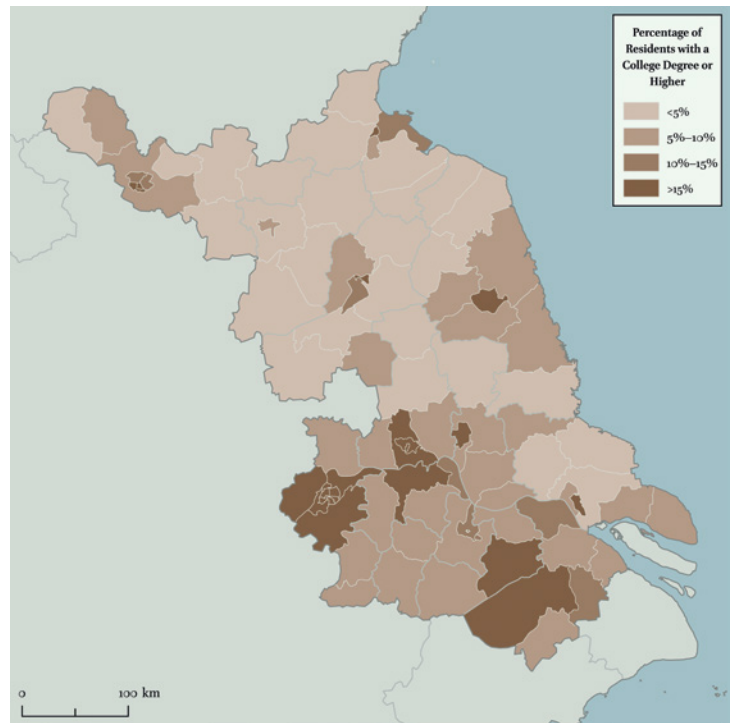
MAP 61 Jiangsu: Immigration in 2000.



MAP 62 Jiangsu: Immigration in 2010.



MAP 63 Jiangsu: Education in 2000.

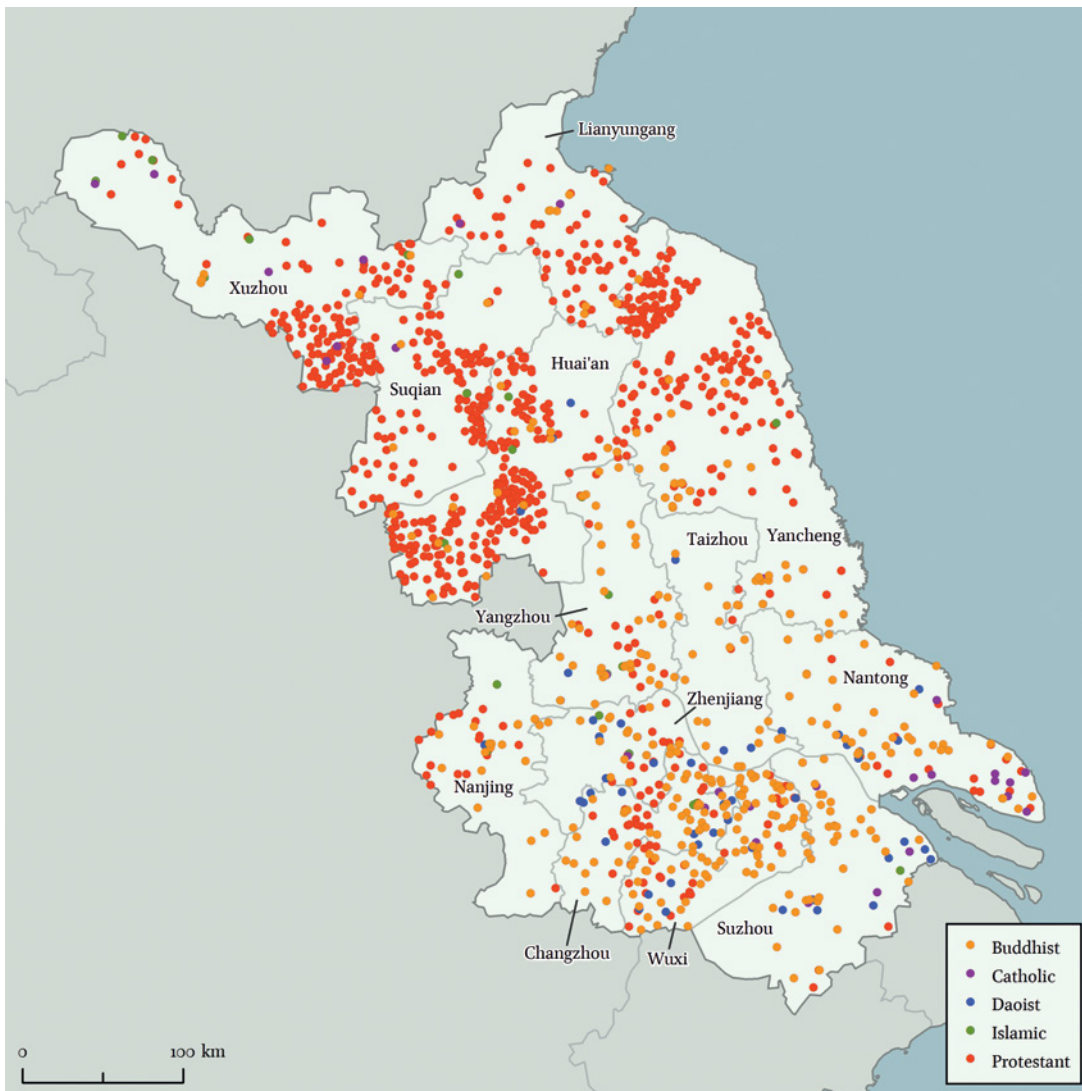


MAP 64 Jiangsu: Education in 2010.

people in the province as a whole was not very different from the national average. Ten years later, however, the proportion of well-educated persons in the southern part of the province had risen much more quickly than the national average.

Key Religious Facts

The differences in the demographic composition of northern and southern Jiangsu are reflected by the prominence of Protestant and Catholic churches in the north, and largely Buddhist and Daoist sites in the south



MAP 65 Jiangsu: Religious sites.

(Map 65 and Figure 18). Nanjing, in the southwest of the province, is quite diverse and its religious communities have a high level of national visibility. The Confucius Temple in Nanjing (*Nanjing fuzimiao* 南京夫子庙) is one of the most popular Confucius temples in China, partly because it stands alongside the Imperial Academy and the Examination Hall, an area where several prominent literati families who produced many renowned Confucian scholars in the medieval era once resided.

Among Christians, Nanjing is famous as a center of study and learning (Photo 17). The Nanjing Union Theological Seminary 金陵协和神学院 is the flagship Protestant seminary in China. In 2012, it held a special event to celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of its founding and to dedicate its current campus, located outside the city proper. Although the current seminary was formed in 1952, it has a longer history that precedes Communist rule. The seminary was originally founded in 1911 as Nanking

Bible Training School 金陵圣经学校, an interdenominational institute. In 1912, it became the Nanking Theological Seminary. Historically, the seminary emphasized interdenominational and theological openness, as well as church indigenization. In the 1950s, after all the missionaries left China, various denominational seminaries merged to form the Union Theological Seminary. Ding Guangxun 丁光训 (also known as K. H. Ting, 1915–2012), an Anglican bishop, was appointed the president of the seminary at an exceptionally young age.⁶

Nanjing's recent civic development has been riven by some tensions growing out of the city's religious past. In March 2011, the local government began constructing a subway and proposed to remove 200 of the so-called French parasol trees (*Faguo wutong* 法国梧桐), a famous symbol of Nanjing. After the trees on Taiping North Road

6 Wickeri, *Reconstructing Christianity in China*.

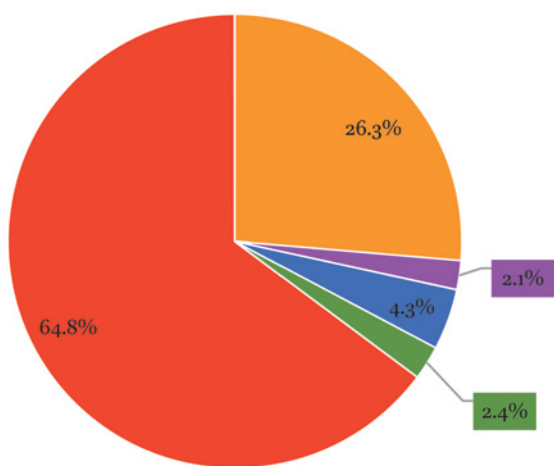
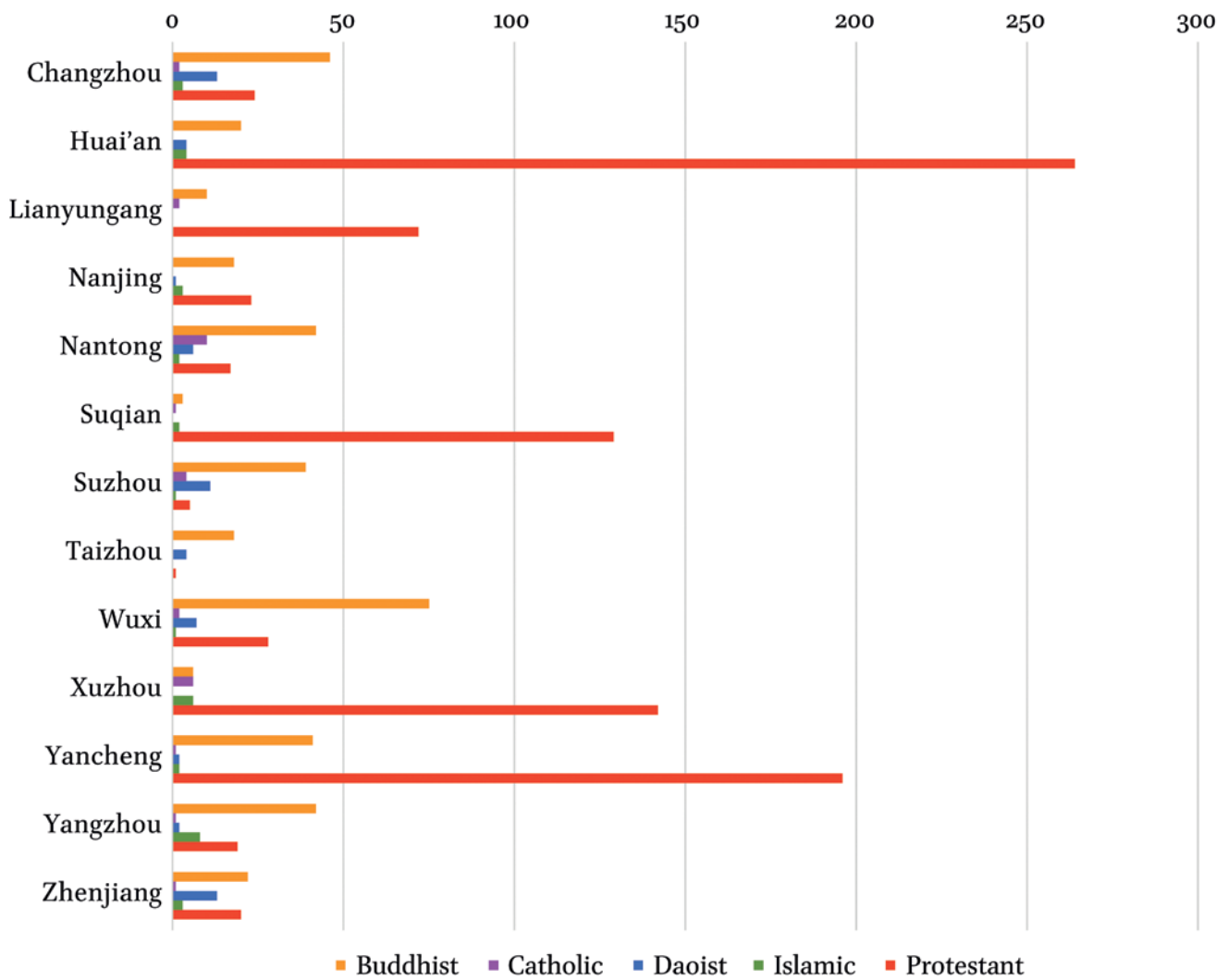


FIGURE 18 Jiangsu: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.

太平北路 were dug up, citizens rose up to protect the city's cultural heritage by tying green ribbons to trees along the pavement. Most notably, the poster for this campaign used the symbol of a crucifix, indicating the impact of Christianity on this event. These trees were

initially planted in 1872 by a French missionary, which perhaps explains both their popular name, "French phoenix trees," and the involvement of the church.⁷ This event received much public attention and even elicited political sympathy from Taiwan, becoming a topic for cross-strait debates.⁸ As a result of public pressure, the construction plan was abandoned.

In Jiangsu Province, there are over one thousand Buddhist temples and monasteries, seven officially approved Buddhist academies, and more than 2,500 monks and nuns. Buddhist communities in Nanjing have also garnered media attention for their preservation of cultural artifacts. Between 2007 and 2010, archaeologists from the Nanjing Municipal Institute of Archaeology, aided by other Chinese experts, excavated a stone crypt buried beneath the Grand Bao'en Temple 大报恩寺 in Nanjing, which was originally constructed by the Yongle Emperor

7 Global Times, "Trees Fell Subway."

8 LaFraniere, "A Grass-Roots Fight to Save a 'Supertree.'"



PHOTO 17 A 79-year-old calligrapher copies his Bible at night (Xuzhou, Jiangsu).
CREDIT: LING WANG

of the Ming Dynasty during 1412–1431. The crypt contained a 1,000-year-old Buddhist *stupa* 塔 holding the remains of a skull that, according to accompanying inscriptions, belonged to the historical Buddha. The archaeological discoveries have increased the appeal of Buddhist sites in Nanjing's burgeoning tourist industry.⁹

Immigrants to Jiangsu have also become small yet influential voices in the province. Once a busy trading center in Eurasia, Jiangsu preserves legends of Marco Polo as well as of Muslim leaders who preached and resided there, including Puhaddin 普哈丁, a sixteenth-generation descendant of the Islamic prophet Muhammad, who came to China in the thirteenth century and helped build the Fairy Crane Mosque 仙鹤寺. Despite these transnational Islamic connections, Muslims in Jiangsu remain a small minority, comprising 0.2 percent of the population; many of them live in the ethnic township of Tangling 唐菱.¹⁰ In 2013, *Oriental Daily* reported that more than

two hundred Muslims in Feng County 丰县 occupied the county government building, demanding an explanation and compensation following village officials' seizure of 5 million RMB from them. Local authorities sent about 5,000 armed police to clear the situation and keep the villagers away. Muslims from neighboring provinces, including Shandong and Anhui, came to support the Muslims in Jiangsu, which resulted in a riot. Within China, the news was censored.¹¹

11. Zhejiang 浙江

Land area: 105,391 km²
Population: 54,426,891
Capital: Hangzhou 杭州

9 Museum of Unnatural Mystery, "The Seven Wonders of the Medieval World."

10 Jiangsu Minzu Zongjiao, "Introduction to Ethnic Minorities."

11 Xiridongfang, "People from Hui Ethnic Group Who Criticize Corrupted Officials Are Persecuted by Police in Jiangsu Province."



MAP 66 Zhejiang: Topography.

Topography

Zhejiang is an eastern coastal province of China nestled between Shanghai to its northeast, Fujian 福建 to the south, Jiangxi 江西 to the southwest, Anhui to the northwest, and Jiangsu to the north. The province is divided into 11 prefectures and includes 37 urban districts, 19 county-level cities, and 33 counties. Most of Zhejiang is covered by low-lying mountains, which extend northeast from the southwestern corner of the province (Map 66). The entire province is covered with streams and lakes, and many empty into the East China Sea, such as the Qiantang River 钱塘江. Many of China's most famous lakes (e.g., the West Lake of Hangzhou, the East Lake of Shaoxing 绍兴, and the South Lake of Jiaxing 嘉兴) are located along Zhejiang's northeastern coast. There are also thousands of islands off the east coast of Zhejiang; the largest are the Zhoushan Islands 舟山群岛, which have a developed religious tourist industry near Mount Putuo's 普陀山 Guanyin Temple network.

Temperatures average between 15°C and 19°C and rarely dip below freezing in winter; summer months are usually mild. Zhejiang's subtropical climate, however, makes coastal regions susceptible to typhoons,

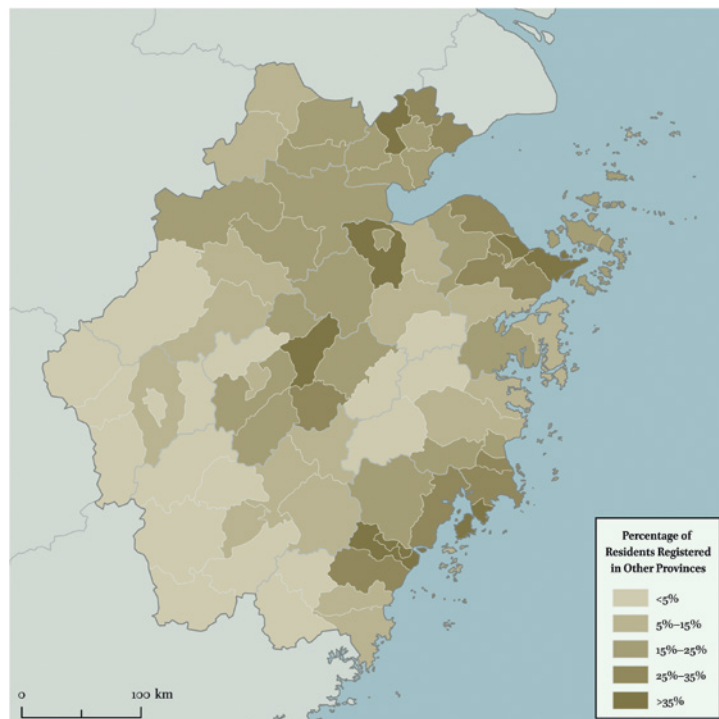
although long droughts may occur in the summer months as well. The extensive valleys and basins, along with the province's ample rainfall (150 cm per year) and warm climate, make it ideal for crop production. Zhejiang is well known for its production of hemp, corn, wheat, silk, tea, and citrus fruits. In recent decades, Zhejiang has also witnessed massive industrial development, especially in electronics, textiles, chemicals, food, and construction materials. Forests cover nearly 60 percent of the province, and some species of trees (e.g., pine, cedar, tortoise bamboo) are extensively harvested for timber.

Demography

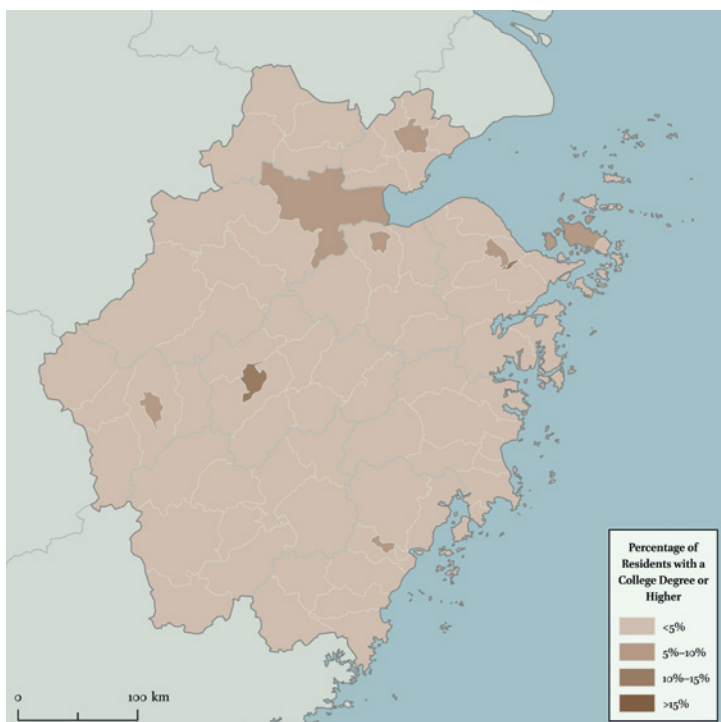
The majority of the province's urban areas are located in valleys and basins nestled between the mountainous regions. Between 2000 and 2010 the total population of Zhejiang rose by 18.5 percent, from 45,930,651 to 54,426,891. One reason for this jump was the number of people who moved in from other provinces, which increased 580.1 percent in this period (from 1,737,432 in 2000 to 11,823,977 in 2010), with immigrants concentrating in Hangzhou, Wenzhou 温州, Ningbo 宁波, Shaoxing,



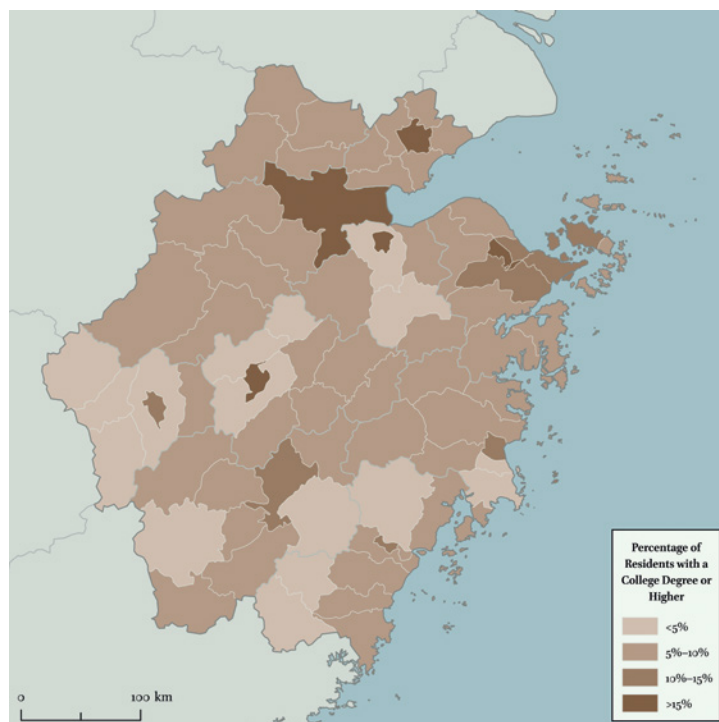
MAP 67 Zhejiang: Immigration in 2000.



MAP 68 Zhejiang: Immigration in 2010.



MAP 69 Zhejiang: Education in 2000.

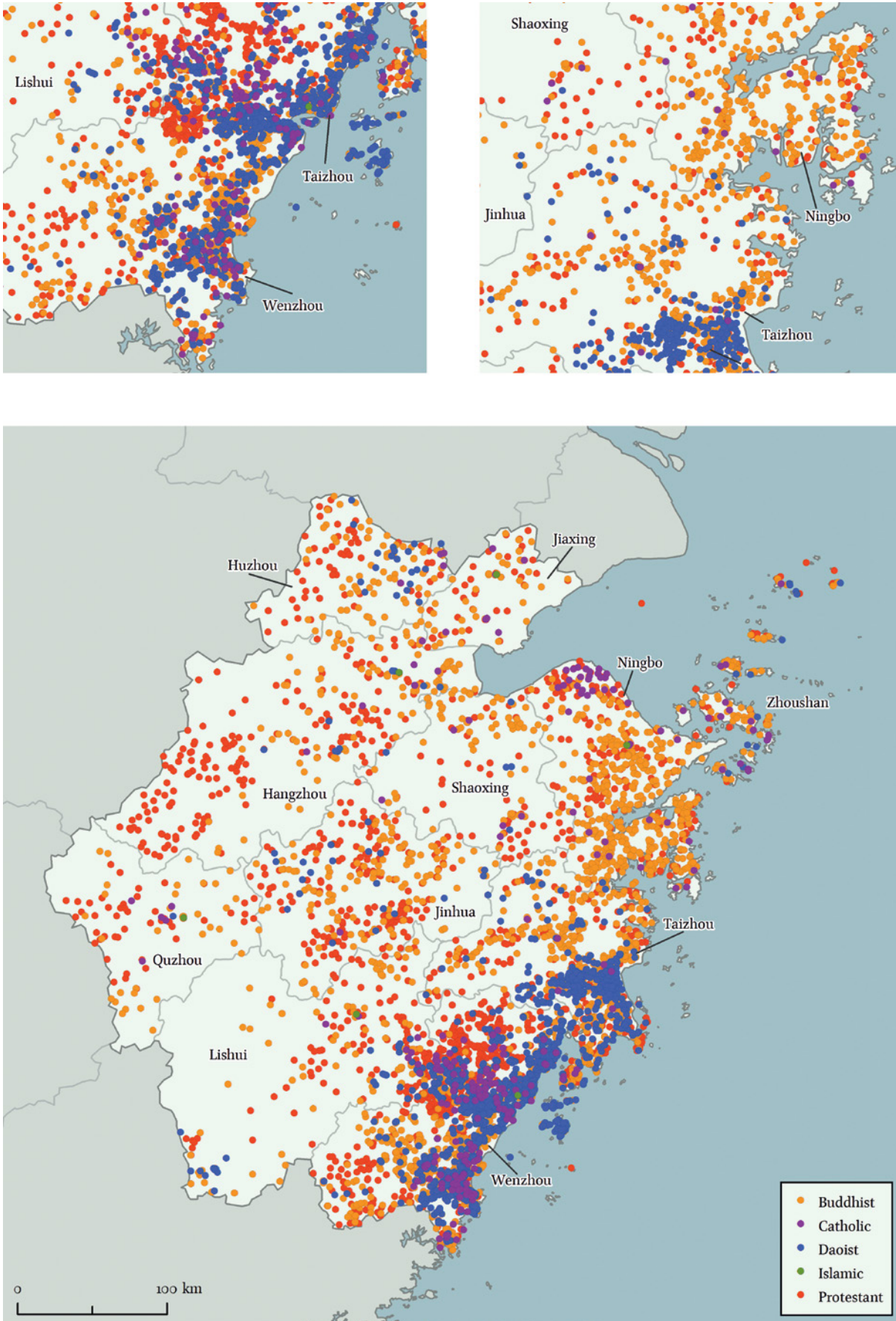


MAP 70 Zhejiang: Education in 2010.

and Jiaxing (Maps 67–68). Over the decade, Zhejiang experienced rapid development in industrialization, thus resulting in a great demand for labor. The percentage of immigrants among laborers in the manufacturing and construction industry was about 75.7 percent in

2010.¹² The influx of workers has led to a rapid growth in the number of collective households (*jiti hu* 集体户), or households whose members are not related to each other.

12 J. Zhang, "A Study of the Immigrants in Zhejiang Province."



MAP 71 Zhejiang: Religious sites.

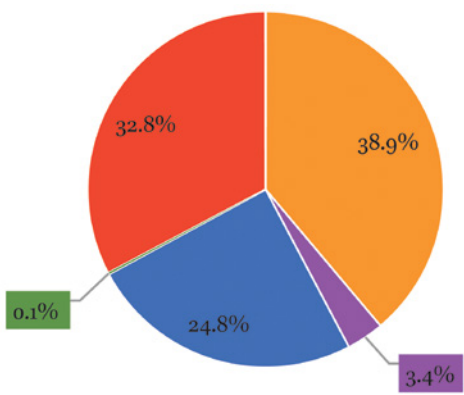
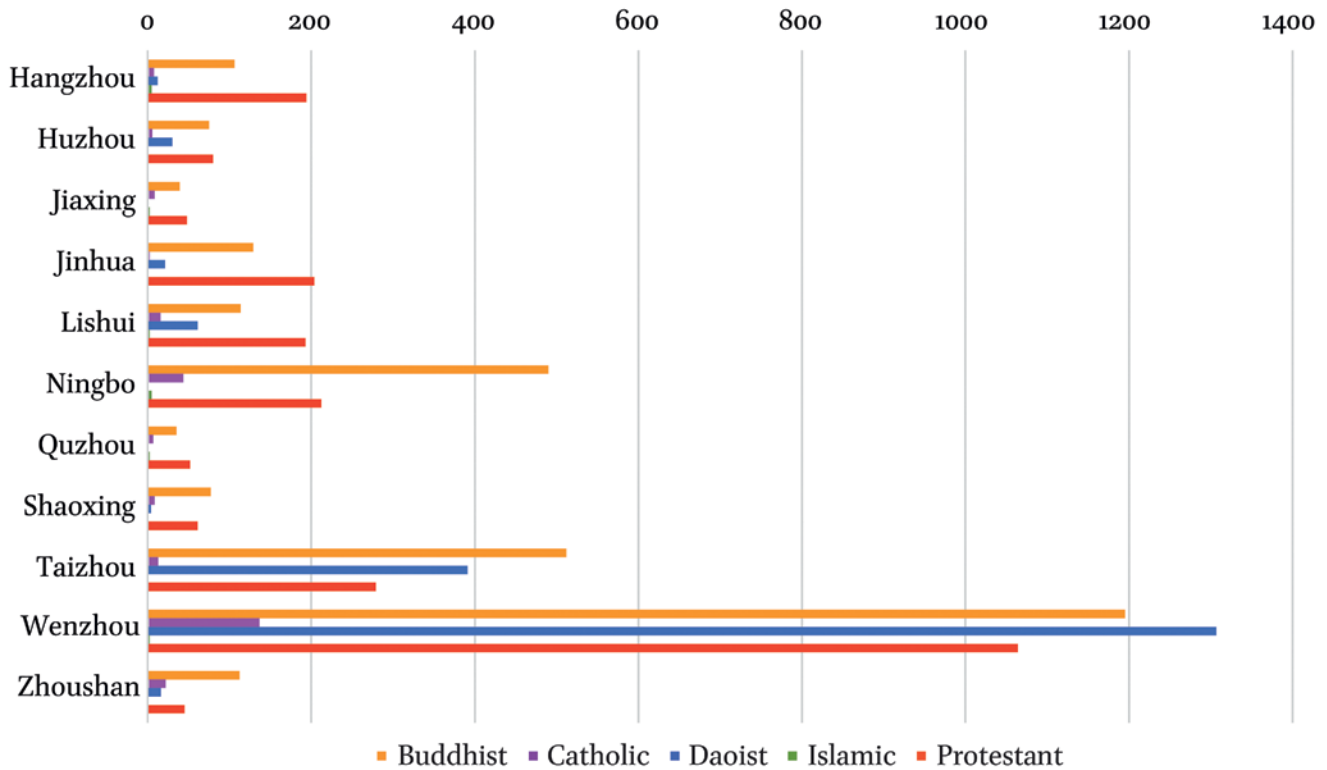


FIGURE 19 Zhejiang: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.

The number of collective households in 2000 was 652,753 and rose over the following decade to 1,206,094, an 84 percent increase. The sex ratio in collective households decreased modestly from 147.8 men per 100 women in 2000 to 141.2 in 2010, which reflects an increase in the proportion of immigrant workers in the service industries, where female employees are preferred.¹³

Ningbo, Wenzhou, Zhoushan, and Taizhou 台州 are important commercial ports. Between 2000 and 2010, there was a significant increase in the number of people moving to these industrial zones. These areas also tended to have a lower proportion of people aged 60 and above. In

particular, in Wenzhou, the percentage of people aged 60 and above was around 8 percent in 2010, while the national average was 13.2 percent. Wenzhou has become a well-developed economic zone that attracts a younger population.

Yet, the rapid economic development has not led to a corresponding improvement in education (Maps 69–70). In 2000, the proportion of people with at least a junior college degree was low in the vast majority of counties in Zhejiang, except for its capital city, Hangzhou. Although the proportion of people with college education increased overall, the spatial distribution of the well-educated population did not change much over the next 10 years. The proportion of one-generation households in Zhejiang remained well above the national average over the same decade. In 2000 the figure in Zhejiang was 32.5 percent when the national average proportion of one-generation households was only 20.6 percent; it rose to 48 percent in 2010, when the national average reached 31.4 percent.

Key Religious Facts

The religious landscape of Zhejiang shows a great diversity of multiple religions along the coast, including many Daoist temples, Catholic and Protestant churches, and Buddhist temples (Map 71 and Figure 19). Buddhist temples are many throughout the province. Daoist temples are mainly concentrated in the southeast, where local

13 J. Zhang, “A Study of the Immigrants in Zhejiang Province.”



PHOTO 18 A Daoist procession at Huangdaxian Temple (Jinhua, Zhejiang).
CREDIT: HU ZHANG

communities have vibrant initiation rituals and extensive network relations between temple branches (Photo 18).

Buddhism flourished in Zhejiang in medieval times. The Tiantai School 天台宗, the first indigenous Chinese Buddhist sect, was founded by the monk Zhiyi 智顛 (538–598) while residing in Guoqing Temple 國清寺 on Tiantai Mountain 天台山. The Tiantai School regards

the *Lotus Sutra* as the highest teaching in Buddhism and developed its distinct meditation practice. Influential historical figures in other indigenous Chinese Buddhist sects, such as the Pureland and Chan, came from Zhejiang as well. Putuo Mountain, one of the Zhoushan Islands off the east coast, is one of the four sacred mountains of Chinese Buddhism and is home to a number of temples



PHOTO 19 A Christian ordination ceremony (Cangnan County, Zhejiang).
CREDIT: SHIDANG OU

and monasteries dedicated to Guanyin 观音 (bodhisattva Avalokitesvara). It attracts millions of pilgrims and visitors each year.

In modern times, the most prominent and politically active Buddhist monk, Taixu 太虚 (1890–1947), was born and received Buddhist education in Zhejiang. He called for Buddhism to adapt to the modern world and support China's modernization efforts and also influenced the rise of humanist Buddhism (*renjian fojiao* 人间佛教). Since 1979, hundreds of Buddhist monasteries have been reopened or newly constructed, some of which are well-known in China and beyond, including Lingyin Temple 灵隐寺 in Hangzhou, Puji Temple 普济寺 in Zhoushan, Guoqing Temple in Taizhou, Jiangxin Temple 江心寺 in Wenzhou, and Xuedou Temple 雪窦寺 in Ningbo. In recent years, Tibetan Buddhism has become popular among some Buddhists in Zhejiang, which is frequently visited by

itinerary rinpoches (Tibetan Buddhist teachers). To curtail these visits, the Zhejiang Buddhist Association sent a circular to Buddhist organizations within Zhejiang in December 2016.¹⁴

In 2006, the Chinese government sponsored the first World Buddhism Forum, which was held on April 13–18 in Hangzhou and Zhoushan in Zhejiang. The current leader of China, CCP General Secretary Xi Jinping, was the top official in Zhejiang at that time. More than a thousand people from 37 countries and regions attended the conference. Since then, three more World Buddhism Forums have been held in Jiangsu, Hong Kong, and Taiwan; they were billed as exercises of China's soft power and as

14 TCHR, "China's Buddhist Supervisory Body Announces Explicit Restrictions on Tibetan Buddhism."

cultural capital for strengthening relations with Taiwan, Hong Kong, and neighboring Asian countries that share the Buddhist heritage. In 2017, the Zhejiang Ethnic and Religious Affairs Commission made it a policy to encourage Zhejiang Buddhists to travel to the West, i.e., Europe and Americas, to spread Buddhism and plant Buddhist temples.¹⁵

Christianity is vibrant in Zhejiang (Photo 19). In the last quarter century, Wenzhou City, dubbed “China’s Jerusalem,” has become the largest urban Christian center in China.¹⁶ In recent decades migrants from Wenzhou have also established many Christian churches in European countries and the Middle East. The 2004 economic census lists 2,699 Protestant and Catholic churches in Zhejiang, and probably many additional churches were built between 2004 and 2014. Between 2014 and 2016, however, the Zhejiang government carried out a campaign to remove crosses from church rooftops throughout the province. On April 28, 2014, the Sanjiang Church 三江教堂, a magnificent building in a hillside suburb right outside Wenzhou City, was bulldozed to the ground. In the preceding weeks, hundreds and sometimes thousands of people camped out inside and outside the church day and night, singing and preaching, petitioning the authorities to spare the sanctuary, which could seat 3,000 people, and the enormous cross on the roof that was visible miles away. The demolition of the Sanjiang Church marks the determination of Zhejiang authorities in their campaign. The Zhejiang authorities justified the campaign in the name of landscape beautification, referring to their program as “three rectifications and one demolition” (*san gai yi chai* 三改一拆): remodeling old residential districts, old factory districts, and old villages enclosed in newly urbanized districts, and demolishing illegal structures. Many Christians rose up to defend the cross, and physical clashes between Christians and the demolition forces occurred at many church sites. Pastor Gu Yuese 顾约瑟, then the senior pastor of Chongyi Church 崇一堂 in Hangzhou, once the largest church in China, and the president of the Zhejiang Provincial Christian Council 浙江省基督教协会, openly opposed removing crosses from churches. However, he was stripped of his positions at the church and on the Christian Council, arrested, and charged with embezzlement of church funds. Several other pastors were detained or arrested as well. Moreover, a defense lawyer for the affected churches, Zhang Kai

张凯, was placed in secret detention for six months. Nevertheless, by early 2016, when the campaign was quietly terminated, no more than a third of the churches had lost their rooftop crosses.

According to the census of 2010, the Hui population in Zhejiang amounted to 38,192, mainly distributed in Hangzhou, Ningbo, Jiaxing, and Yiwu 义乌. As trade with Southeast Asia and the Arabic world has increased, the local Muslim communities have prospered. In Yiwu, about half the city’s Muslims are thought to be from overseas, with many from Arab countries. In August 2012, a 25 million yuan (USD 14.4 million) mosque, Yiwu Mosque 义乌清真寺, received its final touches. Accommodating Chinese, Arab, and South Asian Muslim residents and visitors, this mosque is a demonstration of the diversity and scale of the Muslim population in Zhejiang. The rise of this community is linked to the wholesale markets in Yiwu, said to be the largest of their kind in the world; over the last decade they have attracted growing numbers of Arab and South Asian traders who buy items to ship abroad. This movement has in turn attracted Chinese Muslims, mostly Hui people and members of the Turkic Uighur minority, to work in restaurants and as store assistants or interpreters, turning this city southwest of Shanghai into a key center for Islam in eastern China. According to the mosque’s imam, it is an organic blend between commerce and religious life.¹⁷

12. Anhui 安徽

Land area: 139,700 km²

Population: 59,500,468

Capital: Hefei 合肥

Topography

Anhui Province has 16 prefectures, including 44 urban districts, 6 county-level cities, and 44 counties. The northern and southern parts of Anhui are topographically quite distinct (Map 72). The northern half of the province is very flat and densely populated. The areas surrounding the cities of Huaibei 淮北, Suzhou 宿州, and Bozhou 亳州 are part of the North China Plain, while Huainan 淮南 and Bengbu 蚌埠 fall within the Huai River 淮河 watershed. Moving southward, however, the terrain becomes uneven, with ranges of peaks like the Dabie Mountains 大别山 in the south-central region, and the Huang Mountains 黄山 and Jiuhua Mountains 九华山 in the far south. Anhui’s

15 Zhejiangsheng Minzongwei, “Zhejiangsheng Minzongwei Actively Promotes Buddhists to Go Abroad to Spread China’s Excellent Traditional Culture.”

16 Cao, *Constructing China’s Jerusalem*.

17 Bardsley, “Yiwu is the ‘Fastest Growing Muslim Community’ in China.”



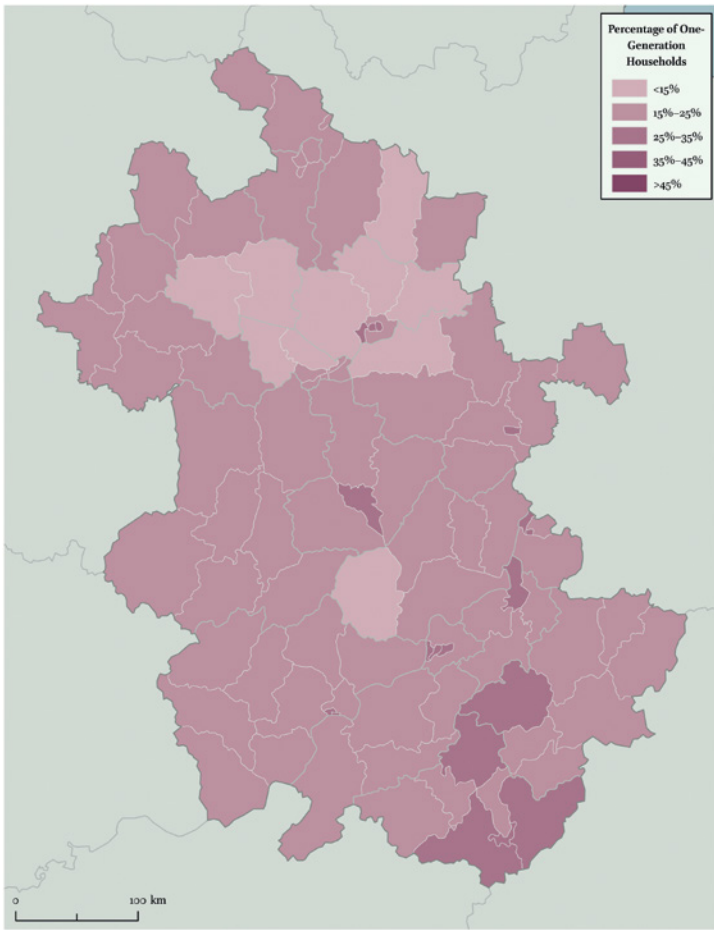
southern cities are buttressed by these two mountain ranges, which also form a vast valley through which the Yangtze River runs. Both the northern and southern parts of the province have many lakes; Lake Chao 巢湖 is the largest lake in the province and also one of the five largest freshwater lakes in China.

The differences between the topography of northern and southern Anhui are reflected in its climate. The north is more temperate and has more distinct seasons. The annual precipitation of Anhui varies from 750 millimeters to 1,700 millimeters, with frequent floods and droughts. In the southern part of Anhui, especially in hilly areas such as the Huang Mountains and Dabie Mountains, summers are hot and rainy. Agriculture in Anhui varies according

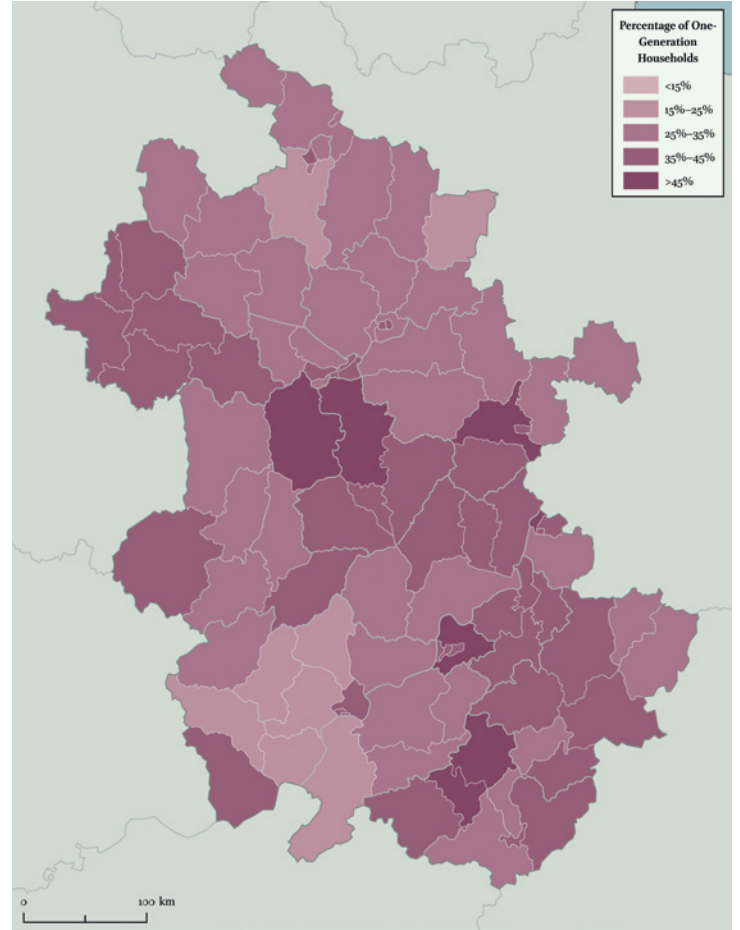
to regional climate. North of the Huai River wheat and sweet potatoes are grown, while farmers in the areas further south grow rice and wheat. The natural resources of Anhui include iron in Ma'anshan 马鞍山, coal in Huainan, and copper in Tongling 铜陵.

Demography

Anhui is a province with a high population density. The total population of Anhui increased slightly from 58,999,948 in 2000 to 59,500,468 in 2010. The northern part of Anhui is more populous than the southern part. In 2000 and 2010, northern Anhui had a higher percentage of population between the ages of 15 and 34. The southern cities, such as Chizhou 池州 and Hefei, had a relatively



MAP 73 Anhui: One-generation households in 2000.



MAP 74 Anhui: One-generation households in 2010.

high percentage of people aged 60 and above—more than 16 percent in 2010, which was higher than the national average of 13.2 percent.

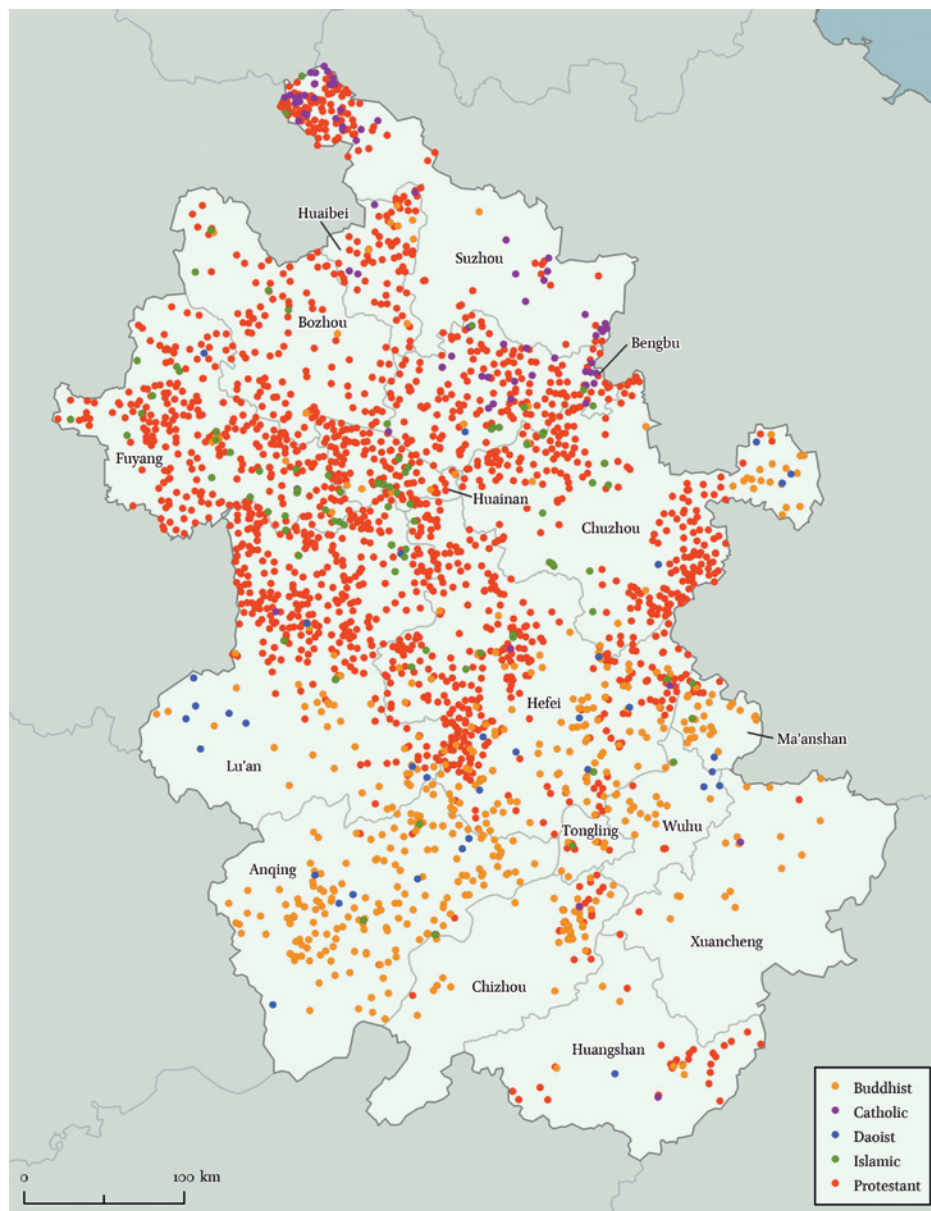
The northern and southern regions of Anhui, however, differ little with regard to urbanization and family structure. Hefei remained the most urban area. The overall family structure of the province, on the other hand, changed greatly over the decade. The percentage of one-generation households in Anhui Province was 20.7 percent in 2000 and rose to 35.7 percent in 2010 (Maps 73–74).

The number of people who migrated out of the province was 230,116 in 2000 and rose sharply to 16,110,419 in 2010. Males were more likely to leave the province than females, resulting in a significant decrease in the overall sex ratio in Anhui from 106.57 males per 100 females in 2000 to 103.39 in 2010. However, the infant sex ratio remained seriously imbalanced over the decade. Among infants under one year old, the ratio was 122.7 males to 100 females in 2000 and 122.5 in 2010—much higher than the national average of 115 in both years.

Key Religious Facts

The north/south division in Anhui is also manifested in the distribution of religious sites (Map 75 and Figure 20). Protestant churches are widespread across the north while Buddhist temples predominate in the southern part of the province. While Daoist temples are scattered across the southern part, a good number of Islamic mosques dot northwest-central prefectures. Catholic churches are concentrated in Bengbu and the northernmost counties. In addition to the government-approved churches, house churches have been widespread and active in Anhui, and some of them have spread Christianity to many other provinces. The Anhui government has made multiple attempts to incorporate house churches into the Three-Self Patriotic Committee, but most house churches have resisted these efforts.¹⁸

18 China Aid, “Anhui House Churches Forced to Register Information with Local Bureau of Religion.”



MAP 75
Anhui: Religious sites.

Many Buddhist temples in Anhui are renowned historical attractions. The Jiuhua Mountains are one of the four sacred mountains of Buddhism, famous for their rich landscape and the ancient temples dedicated to Ksitigarbha (Chinese: *Dizang* 地藏), the bodhisattva who is the protector of beings in hell according to Mahayana Buddhism. Jiuhua attracts millions of Buddhist pilgrims annually. Commercialization has become a common phenomenon in relation to Buddhist sacred mountains. In September 2012, an initial public offering was planned for

the Jiuhua Mountains, along with other Buddhist sacred mountains, on the Shanghai Stock Exchange.¹⁹ However, many people opposed the idea of commercializing the sacred mountains, and the SARA has made attempts to curb it.

The revival of China's traditional religions is also evident at Daoist sites, where masters are combining the Daoist idea of *yangsheng* 养生 (nourishing and cultivating

19 L. Lin, "Pure Lands? China's Sacred Mountain IPO Wave."

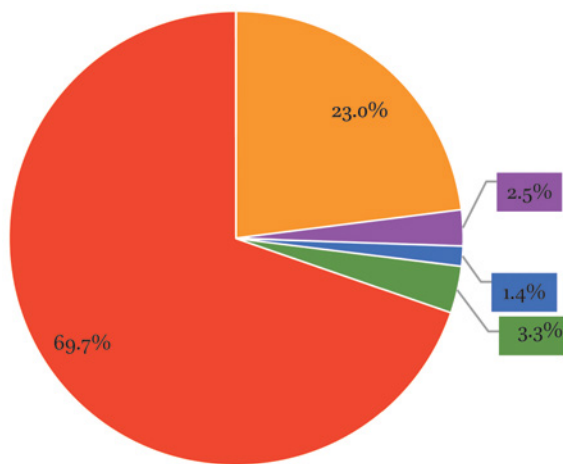
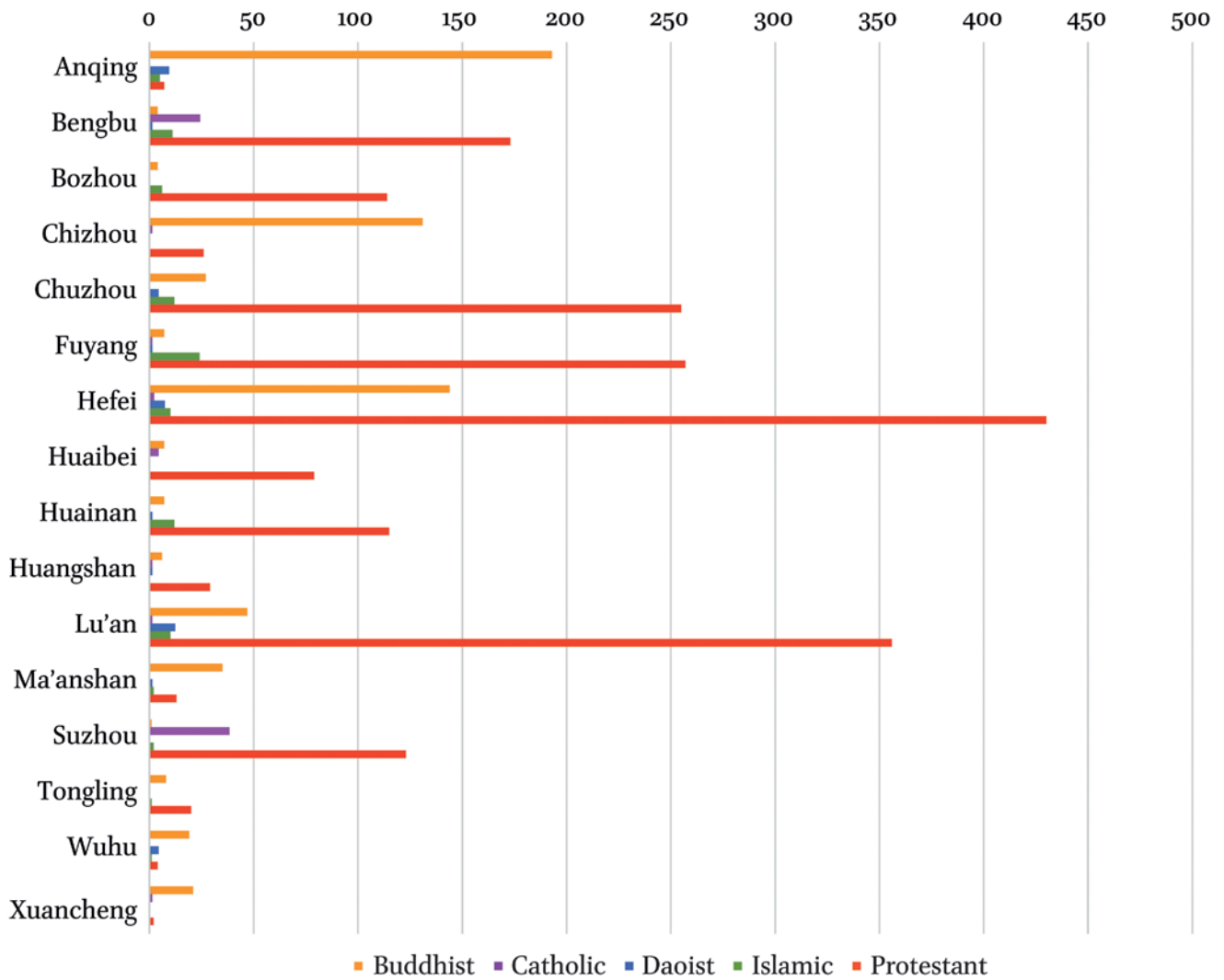
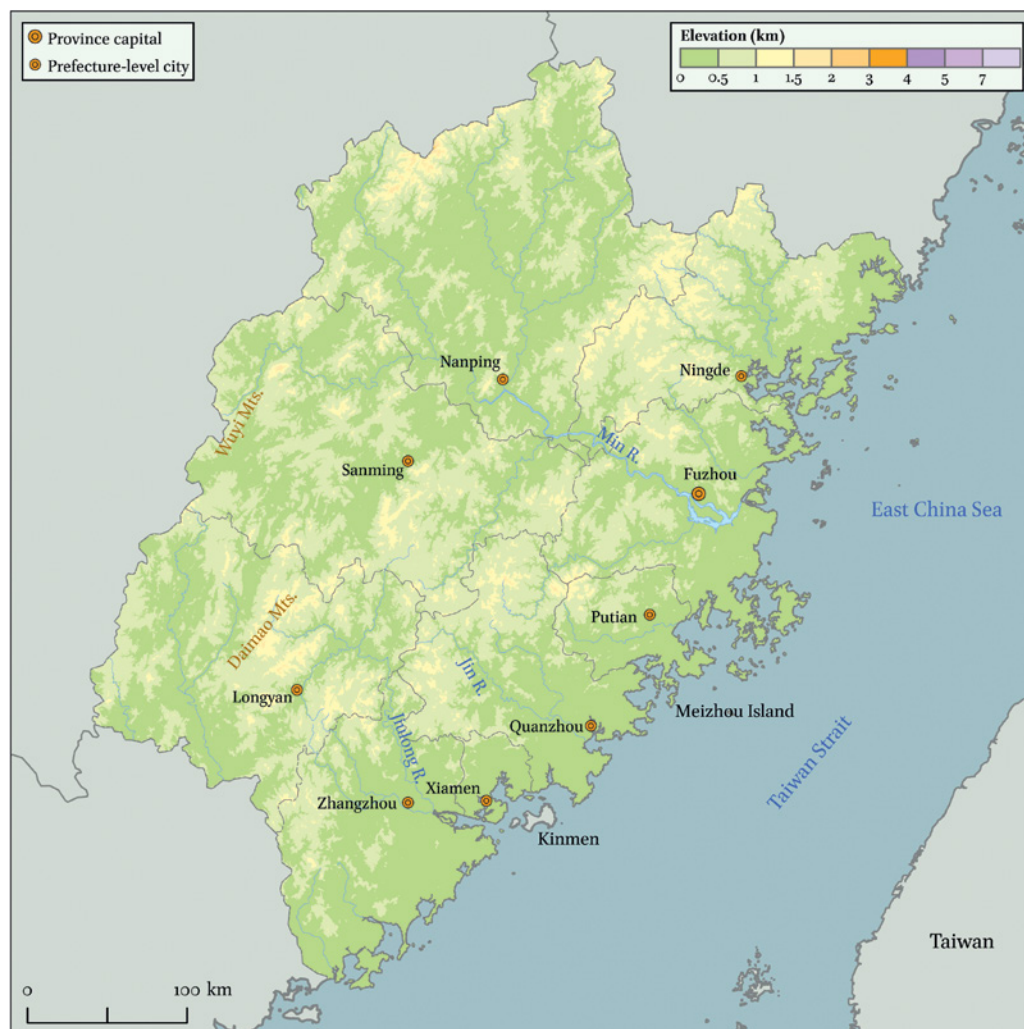


FIGURE 20 Anhui: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.

life) with modern notions of health and exercise. In October 2014, at Mount Qiyun 齐云山 in southern Anhui, for instance, an international convention on *yangsheng* practices drew over 10,000 participants from around the world. The success and popularity of the event prompted organizers to hold the conference for a second time in 2015.²⁰

20 Yang and Hu, "A Conference for Promoting Outdoor Walking to be Held in October."



MAP 76 Fujian: Topography.

13. Fujian 福建

Land area: 121,300 km²

Population: 36,894,216

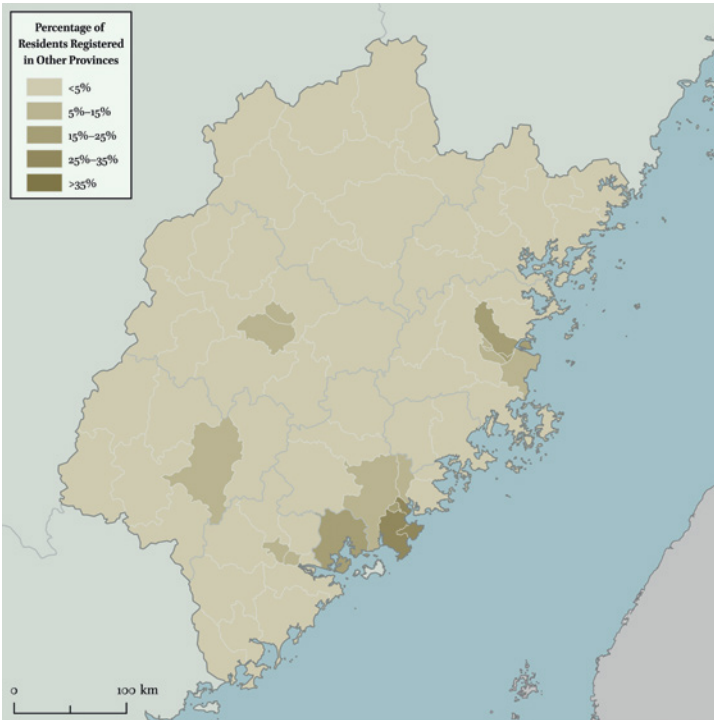
Capital: Fuzhou 福州

Topography

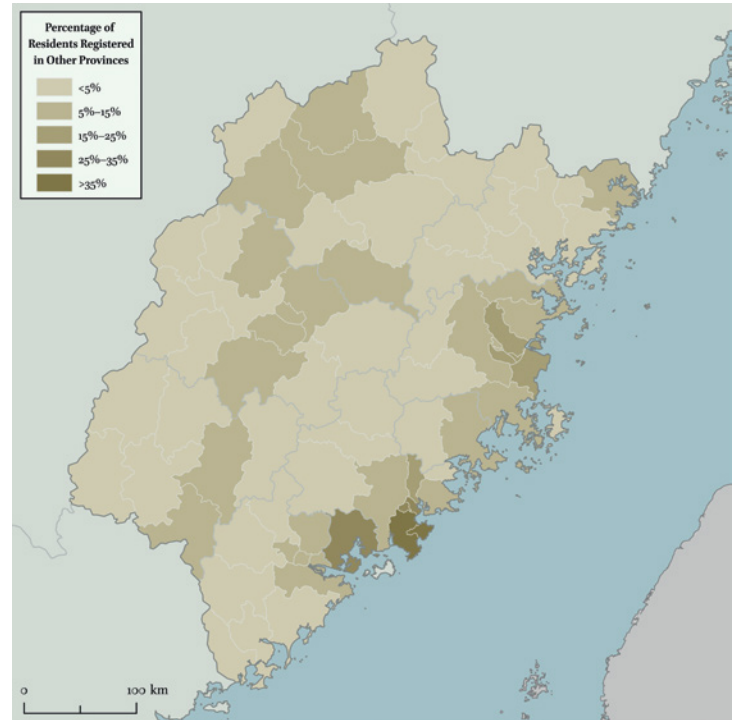
Fujian is located on the southeast coast of China, with extremely mountainous regions in most parts of the province (Map 76). This made land travel within the province and between Fujian and its neighboring provinces difficult in the past. However, in recent years, highways and railroads have substantially eased land travel. The Min River 闽江 cuts through northern and central Fujian, and the Jin River 晋江 and the Jiulong River 九龙江 are in the southern region. Fujian has a rugged coastline with many bays and islands. The coastal climate of Fujian produces a moderate climate with abundant rainfall. To the west of the province, Fujian is separated from

Jiangxi 江西 by the Wuyi Mountains 武夷山. To the east, Taiwan is across the Taiwan Strait. Kimon 金门 Island outside Xiamen 厦门 has been under the control of the Republic of China on Taiwan. Fujian has 9 prefectures, including 29 urban districts, 12 county-level cities, and 44 counties. The largest ethnic minority in Fujian is She 畬族; 90 percent of the She people (708,651 as of 2010) live in Fujian Province. There are also large numbers of Hui, Tujia 土家, Miao 苗 (Hmong), and Zhuang 壮.

Fujian is among the most affluent provinces in China and its economy is highly dependent on imports and exports. Farmland in Fujian is sparse, with rice, sweet potatoes, and wheat as the main food crops, and sugarcane and rapeseed as the main cash crops. The industries of Fujian include petrochemicals, machinery, electronics, tea production, and clothing manufacture. Over the past decades, Fuzhou has formed a close economic relationship with Taiwan and many countries. Foreign multinational companies such as Cisco and Walmart have set up



MAP 77 Fujian: Immigration in 2000.



MAP 78 Fujian: Immigration in 2010.

bases in Fujian. Investment from overseas Fujianese and Taiwanese also plays an important role in Fujian's economic development.

Demography

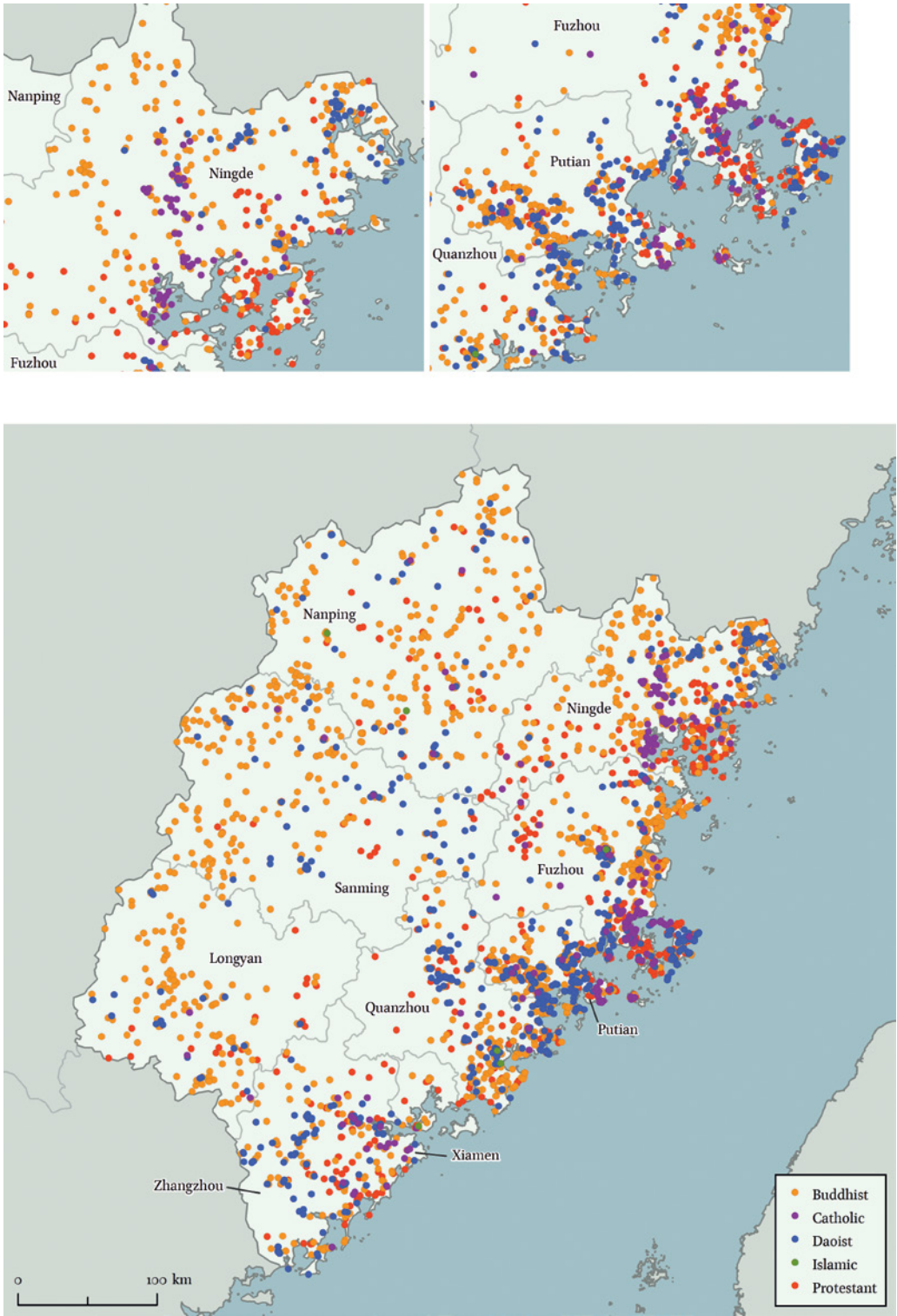
The population of Fujian increased over 8 percent from 2000 to 2010. Most of the increase occurred in coastal areas, such as the provincial capital Fuzhou, and other cities like Xiamen and Quanzhou 泉州. The number of immigrants from other provinces increased by 160 percent between 2000 and 2010, accounting for 4.7 percent of the total population in 2000 and 7 percent in 2010 (Maps 77–78).²¹

Between 2000 and 2010, urbanization and education in Fujian have been greatly improved. The percentage of people with at least a college degree rose from 3 percent in 2000 to 7 percent in 2010. Likewise, the proportion of people registered as nonagricultural rose from 42 percent in 2000 to 52 percent in 2010. There was only a slight decrease in average family size in the same decade, from 3.6 persons in 2000 to 3.0 in 2010. The number of people

who study or work abroad more than doubled, rising from 133,373 in 2000 to 368,038 in 2010.

The proportion of elderly people in Fujian is also increasing. The percentage of people who were over 60 years old rose from 10 percent in 2000 to 12.8 percent in 2010. The coastal areas had a relatively low proportion of elderly residents and a high percentage of persons under age 35. In particular, Xiamen witnessed a rapid increase in the proportion of people between ages 15 and 34. In 2000, Quanzhou was the city with highest proportion of young people. In 2010, Xiamen ranked first. However, the sex ratio among newborns in 2000 was 120 males per 100 females and remained high in 2010, while the national average was 115 in both. In 2000, in some counties the infant sex ratio reached 150, jumping to 176 in 2010. Generally speaking, the sex ratio was more balanced in areas with a higher level of education. Surprisingly, the sex ratio in some well-developed areas in Fujian, with a highly urbanized and well-educated population, remained very much unbalanced. For example, the infant sex ratio in Datian County 大田县 of Sanming Prefecture 三明市 in 2010 was 164, and 178 in Anxi County 安溪县 of Quanzhou Prefecture. Fujian people from these areas seem to cling to some traditional

21 Minnan Wang, "In Ranking of Cities of Fujian Province, the GDP per Capita of Zhangzhou City Is Third-Last."



MAP 79 Fujian: Religious sites.

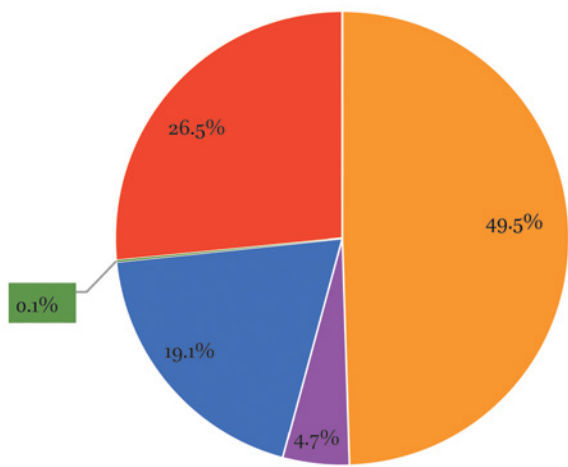
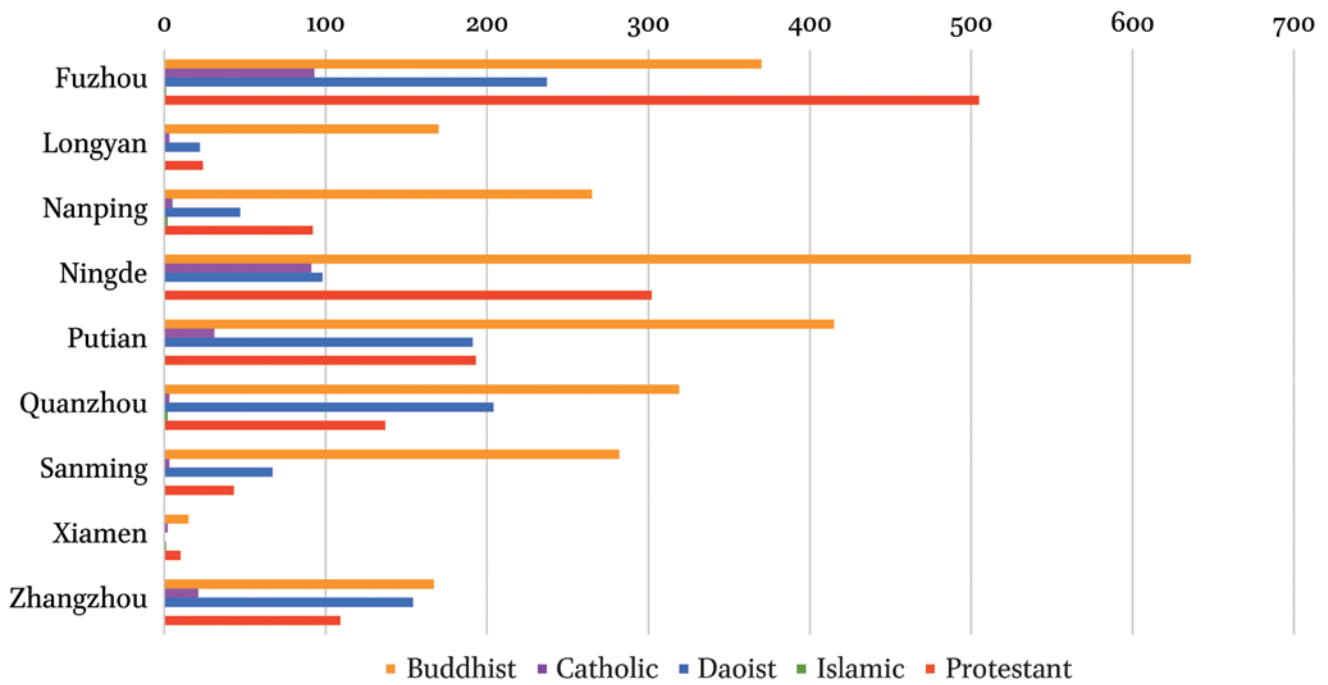


FIGURE 21 Fujian: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.

values, such as patriarchal ideals, amid the rapid pace of industrialization.²²

Key Religious Facts

Fujian has had a long history of diverse religions and maintains religious ties with many traditions around the world. Quanzhou is an ancient port where traders brought various religions from faraway places, including Islam, Zoroastrianism, and so on. The Meizhou 湄洲 Island near

Putian 莆田 is believed to be the birthplace of Goddess Mazu 妈祖, who is also known as Tianhou 天后 [Queen of Heaven]. The Mazu Temple on this island attracts pilgrims from Fujian, Taiwan, and diasporic Chinese in Southeast Asia and around the world.

The religious landscape of Fujian shows a high level of diversity along the coast, including many Buddhist and Daoist temples as well as Catholic and Protestant churches (Map 79 and Figure 21). In addition, Buddhism is predominant in the northern and western prefectures. Currently there are three religious colleges in Fujian, namely Fujian Buddhist Academy (*Fujian Foxue yuan* 福建佛学院), Fujian Theological Seminary (*Fujian shenxue yuan* 福建神学院), and Minnan Buddhist Academy (*Minnan Foxueyuan* 闽南佛学院), with more than 600 students altogether. The religious colleges are living cultural centers that negotiate the forces of capitalism and nationalism, while also celebrating local cultural difference.²³

Given its trade-based economy and attractiveness to international investors, its tradition of emigration, and its coastal location, Fujian is famous for its connections to South and Southeast Asia and the larger world. At the same time, the role of local religions creates a network for the local as well as for the transregional and transnational, in which particular forms of culture are preserved and

22 S. Li, "Imbalanced sex ratio at birth and comprehensive intervention in China."

23 Dean and Zheng, *Ritual Alliances of the Putian Plain*, vol. 1, 219–228.



PHOTO 20 A church in Fuzhou (Fujian) that stands amid a significant urban transformation.
CREDIT: MICHEL CHAMBON

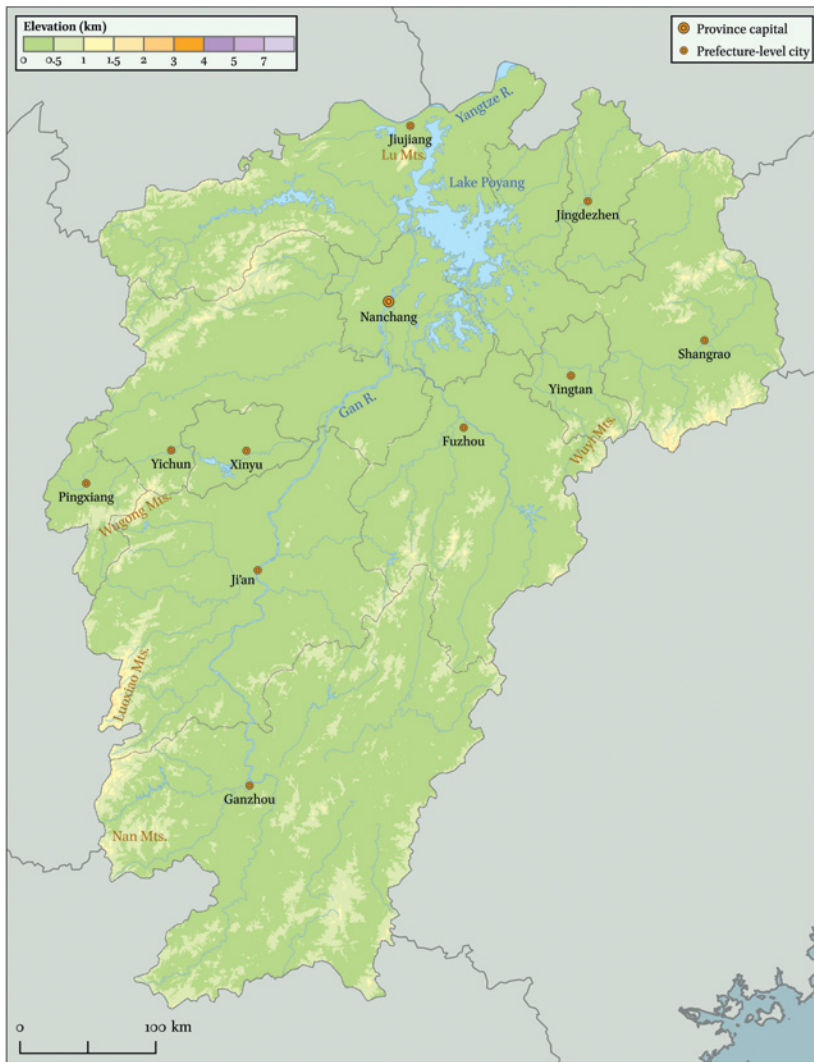
exchanged through emigrants in global trading networks. In 2004, the American Fujian Taoist United Association (*Meiguo Fujian daojiao lianhehui* 美国福建道教联合会) was founded in Brooklyn, New York. In 2011, the American Taoist United Association (*Meiguo daojiao lianhehui* 美国道教联合会) was established in New York. Both of these associations were led by Fujian immigrants. In November 2016, Fujian announced that it would build the Straits Daoist College (*Haixia daojiao xueyuan* 海峡道教学院), which will be open to national enrollment.²⁴ This institution was approved by the State Administration of Religious Affairs in July 2016, which offers four-year bachelor degrees and three-year college diplomas. This shows how local religions can become the medium for multiple temporalities and powers alternative to the state, and how local

24 Xinhuanet, "Daoist Academy to Be Opened in Fujian Province."

religions benefited from the province's continuous attention to and support for religious groups and institutions.²⁵

As a coastal province with historical connections to the larger world, Fujian is where many South and Southeast Asian immigrants choose to work and live, and their religions play a part in the demographic and religious landscape of Fujian too. In August 2014, a concession was made to Anglophone Filipino Catholics in Xiamen: after negotiations, the Philippine Consulate General in Xiamen announced that the Roman Catholic Diocese of Xiamen had agreed to hold additional English-language liturgical services in the evening at Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Church (*Xiamen meigui shengmu tang* 厦门玫瑰圣母堂). All of these new communities are creating an environment in which church communities are responding to the rapid transformation of cities in Fujian (Photo 20).

25 Dean, "The Daoist Difference."



MAP 80
Jiangxi: Topography.

14. Jiangxi 江西

Land area: 167,000 km²

Population: 44,567,475

Capital: Nanchang 南昌

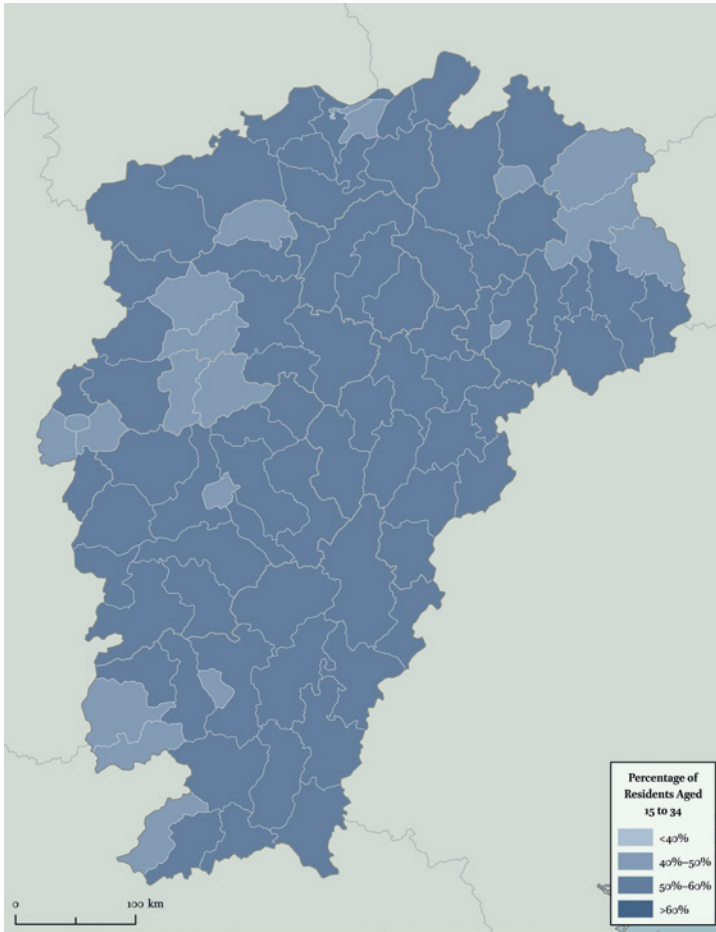
Topography

Jiangxi is an inland province in southeast China on the middle reaches of the Yangtze River. The Gan River 赣江 crosses from north to south (Map 80). The province is divided into 11 prefectures, including 25 urban districts, 11 county-level cities, and 64 counties. Nearly 4 percent of Jiangxi's total population is comprised of ethnic minorities, including She, Hui, and Mongol. Jiangxi is surrounded by mountains on the west, south, and east and is dotted with numerous lakes, including Lake Poyang 鄱阳湖, the largest freshwater lake in China.

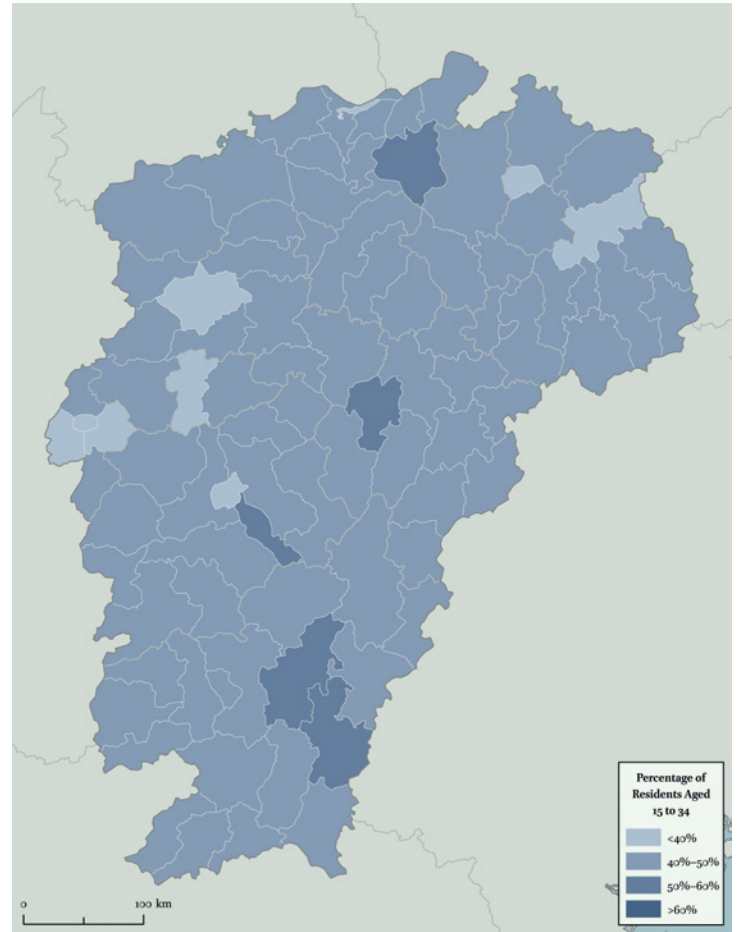
Jiangxi is a relatively poor province. Agriculture plays an important part in its economy, with rice, cotton, and rapeseed being the dominant crops. The province is rich in mineral resources and consequently metallurgy is the pillar industry. Jiangxi is moderately populous, with 100–500 people per square kilometer in most of its cities. The capital city Nanchang is the most populous. The total population of Jiangxi increased from 40,397,598 in 2000 to 44,567,797 in 2010. Interestingly, during the same decade the number of people arriving from other provinces shrank from 755,405 to 599,942, a decrease of 20 percent, implying that Jiangxi has become less attractive to immigrants.

Demography

People between ages 15 and 34 comprised 62.1 percent of the population in 2000 and 55.7 percent in 2010, when



MAP 81 Jiangxi: Young population in 2000.



MAP 82 Jiangxi: Young population in 2010.

the national average was 48.1 percent (Maps 81–82). It is worth noting that Nanchang, a relatively well-developed city, did not have a notably high proportion of young people. Instead, younger people in Yudu County 于都县 in Ganzhou Prefecture 赣州市 and Duchang County 都昌县 in Jiujiang Prefecture 九江市 formed as much as 60 percent of the population. The percentage of elderly persons increased slightly in 2000–2010, from 9.4 percent to 11.6 percent. The overall sex ratio remained stable over that decade, with 120 males per 100 females in both 2000 and 2010.

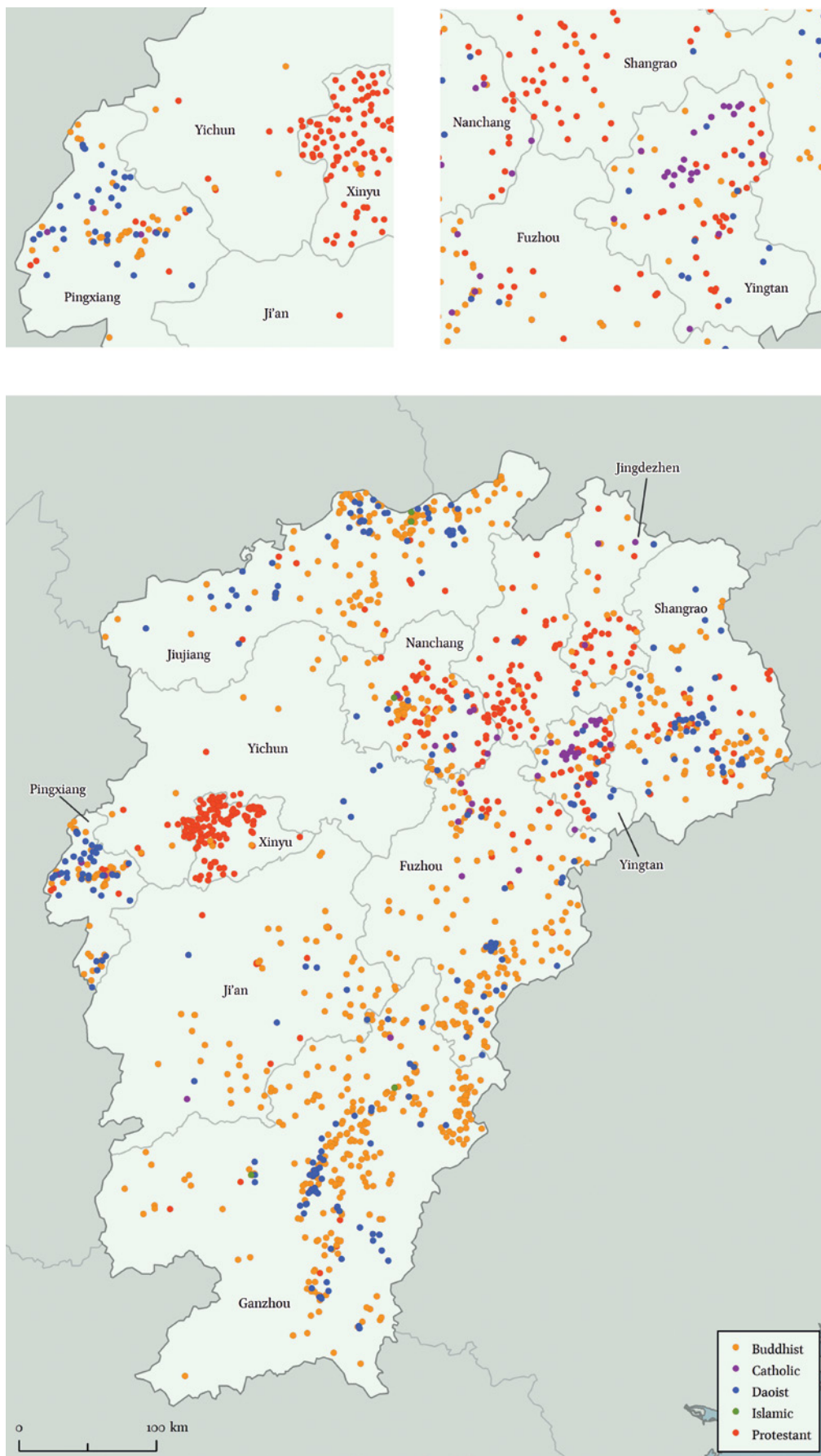
Over the decade, urbanization increased greatly.²⁶ The proportion of the population registered as nonagricultural jumped from 26 percent in 2000 to 42 percent a decade later. The percentage of people with a college degree or above increased significantly, from 2 percent in 2000 to 6 percent in 2010, which was still below the national average of 7.6 percent.

26 X. Wu, “Research on Coordinative Development of Urbanization, Industrialization and Agricultural Modernization in Central Region of China.”

Key Religious Facts

The religious landscape of Jiangxi shows the predominance of Buddhism. Protestant churches are concentrated in Xinyu 新余, Nanchang, western Shangrao 上饶, and Yingtan 鹰潭 (Photo 21) but nearly invisible in the south and northwest (Map 83 and Figure 22). Daoist temples are concentrated in Pingxiang 萍乡 in the west, Shangrao in the east, northern Jiujiang, and central Ganzhou. There are a good number of Catholic churches in Yingtan. Nanchang in the north became the administrative and educational center for Christianity in the province, as both the Jiangxi TSPM and the seminary are in Nanchang. In 2001, after much effort, the provincial TSPM purchased a small hill in Nanchang and built the Grace Hill Church 恩典堂, which is the only church directly led by the Jiangxi Christian Council.

The central and southern parts of the province are known as a bedrock of Daoist institutions in China. In particular, prior to the twentieth century Mount Longhu 龙虎山 had long been the major center for networks of Daoist priests. However, in recent years, the name Longhu has gradually become associated with entertaining



MAP 83 Jiangxi: Religious sites.

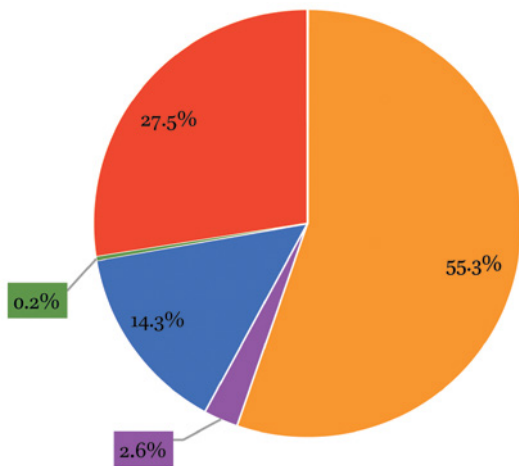
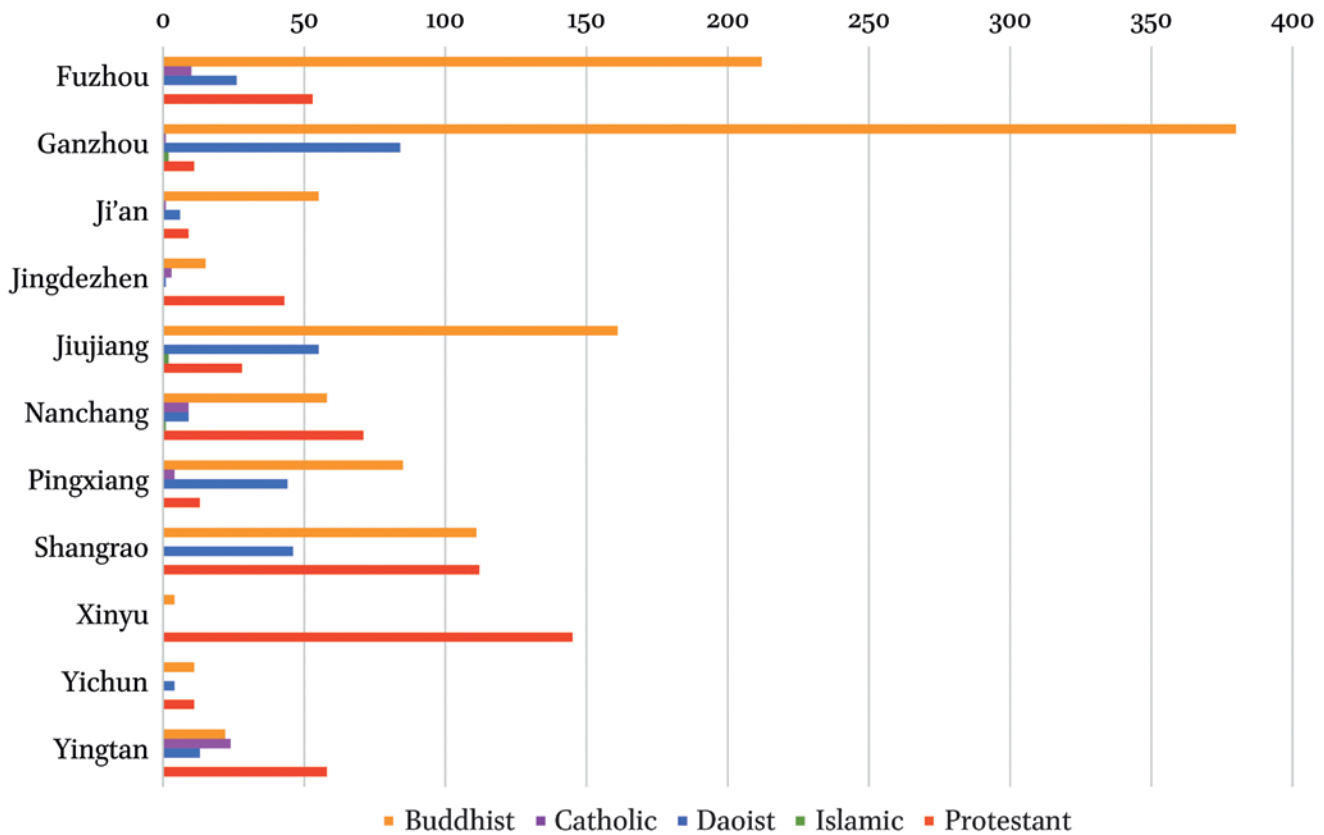


FIGURE 22 Jiangxi: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.

displays of strength. In April 2016, the local television station launched a martial arts program named China Hall of Dragons and Tigers (*Zhongguo longhubang* 中国龙虎榜) in Shangqing Town 上清镇, featuring Daoism as the guiding philosophy. The opening reception was attended by leaders of national and local Daoist associations.²⁷ Furthermore, as the current regime is keen on utilizing

traditional religions to “fill the moral void” in China,²⁸ the popularization of Daoist notions helps to create a cultural and political homogeneity desired by officials.²⁹

Similarly, Buddhism in Jiangxi has been actively engaging with the rapidly changing society. In 2013, the Jiangxi Buddhist Academy (*Jiangxi Foxueyuan* 江西佛学院) launched a hotline for psychological mindfulness (*zhengnian xinli rexian* 正念心理热线). The academy did so out of concern for the overflow of “negative energies” (*funengliang* 负能量) in society due to the stress that people experience in work and life. It features counselors who are trained by Buddhist masters from the academy’s faculty of psychology. According to the academy, the practice combines Buddhism and psychology to bring the Dharma into the world and to serve the interests of the community. The hotline operates every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 7:00 to 9:00 pm and is free for the public. However, callers are prohibited from talking about issues concerning politics and national security.³⁰

27 Xinlangtiyu, “A Free-Fight Competition in China and the Daoist Martial Arts.”

28 Lim and Blanchard, “Xi Jinping Hopes Traditional Faiths Can Fill Moral Void in China.”

29 Keightley, “The Religious Commitment”; Cohen, “Being Chinese.”

30 Putizhixia, “Jiangxi Buddhist Academy Opening a Hotline.”



PHOTO 21 Qingni Church in Boyang County, northern Jiangxi.
CREDIT: SHIDANG OU

15. Shandong 山东

Land area: 153,800 km²

Population: 95,792,719

Capital: Jinan 济南

Topography

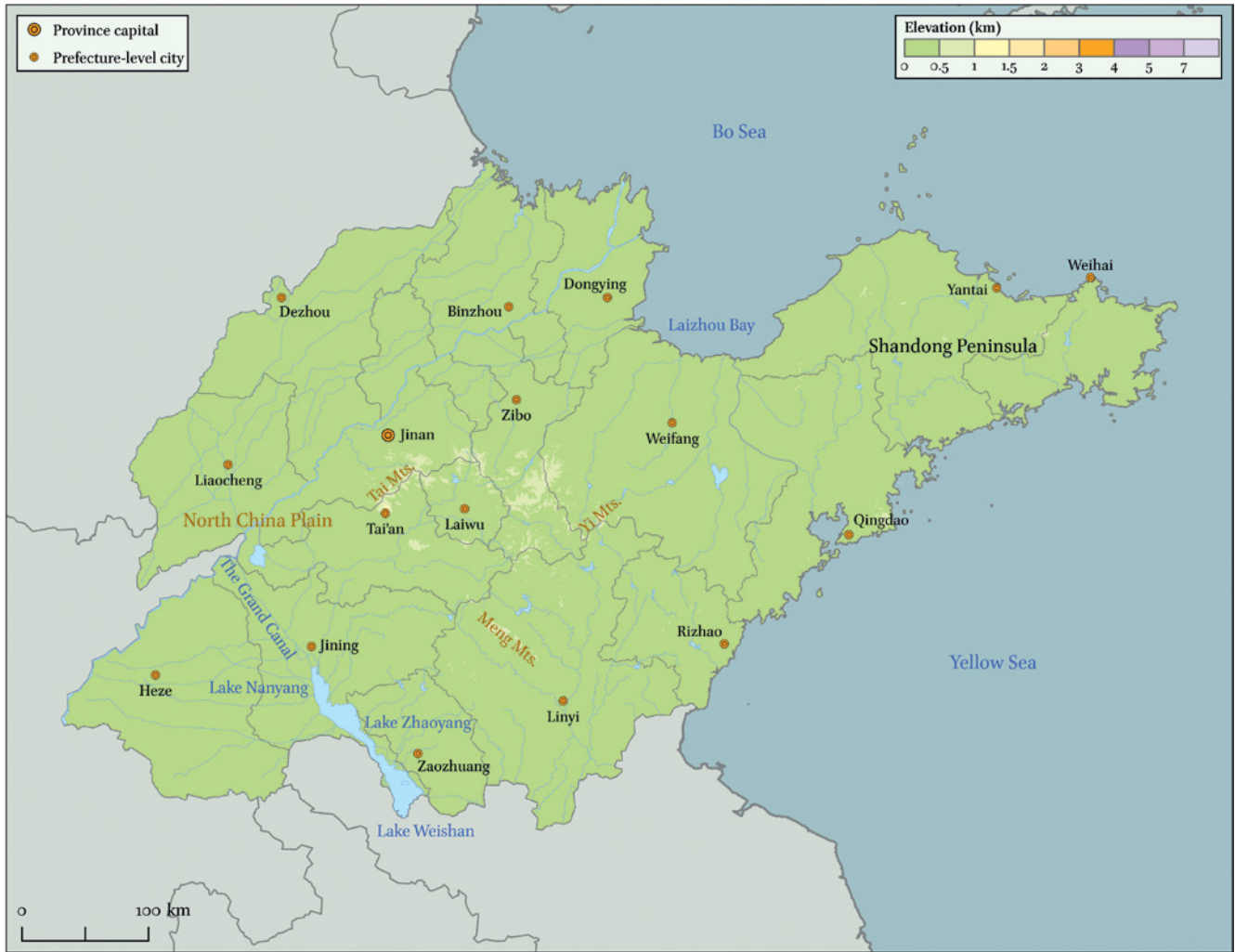
Shandong is a northern coastal province of China, governing 17 prefectures, including 55 urban districts, 26 county-level cities, and 56 counties. Over 99 percent of Shandong's population is Han Chinese. There are small pockets of Hui and Manchu living in the province. The terrain in Shandong is elevated in the middle and low all around (Map 84). The North China Plain occupies the northwestern, western, and southwestern parts of the province, while the center of the province is dominated by several mountains. Mount Tai 泰山 has been considered a holy mountain for millennia. Shandong Peninsula 山东半岛 extends into the sea in the east, separating the Bo Sea and the Yellow Sea.

Shandong is endowed with abundant agricultural and marine resources. Thus, this province has developed a

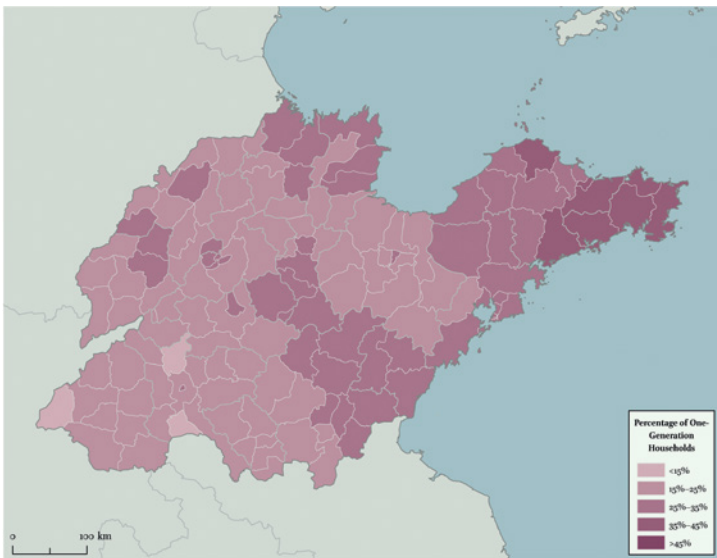
strong food manufacturing industry, supplying crops, vegetables, fruits, meat, and seafood. Yantai 烟台 is an especially important supplier of agricultural products, particularly apples, peanuts, and vegetables. Due to its rich oil and coal deposits, Shandong also has thriving mining and energy industries.

Demography

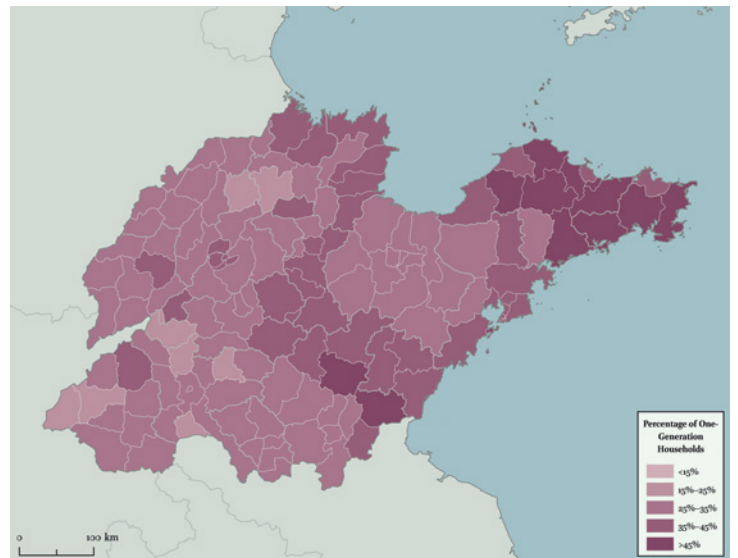
Shandong is very populous, and there is no significant difference in population density between its western plains and the hilly coastal area in the east. The total population increased from 89,971,789 in 2000 to 95,792,719 in 2010. Meanwhile there was a very dramatic increase in the number of people who immigrated to the province, from 1,033,213 in 2000 to 12,676,583 in 2010. About half of its residents resided in urban areas in 2010. The family size decreased slightly from 3.2 persons in 2000 to 3.0 in 2010, and the proportion of one-generation households increased significantly from 24.8 percent in 2000 to 34.1 percent in 2010 (Maps 85–86).



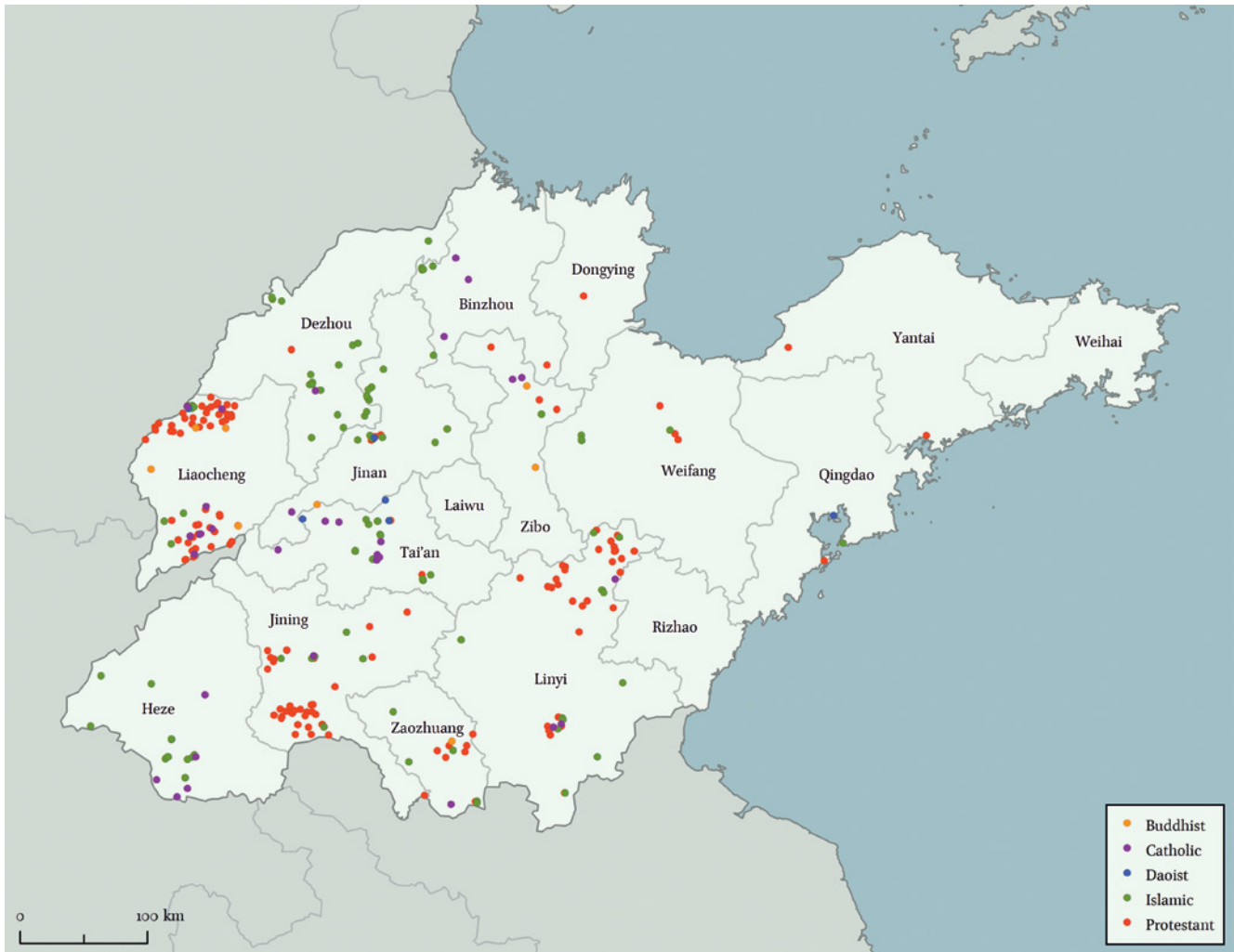
MAP 84 Shandong: Topography.



MAP 85 Shandong: One-generation households in 2000.



MAP 86 Shandong: One-generation households in 2010.



MAP 87 Shandong: Religious sites.

Key Religious Facts

Shandong has a mixture of Buddhist, Catholic, Islamic, and Protestant sites in the western and central part of the province, with an overall predominance of Protestantism (Map 87 and Figure 23). Despite the relative lack of Daoist sites, Shandong is famous for many places of high antiquity that have a deep association with the religion. Mount Lao 崂山 near Qingdao 青岛 City is arguably one of China's most famous Daoist sites, a major monastery of the Quanzhen 全真 [Complete Reality] school of Daoism. In 2008, the local administration began to hold large events at Taiqing Temple 太清宫 on Mount Lao. These events included the first World Forum of Daodejing 道德经, which was sponsored by the China Daoist Association, supervised by the China Religious Culture Communication Association, and cohosted by the *Journal of China Religion*, the Shandong Daoist Association, and the Qingdao Mount Lao Daoist Forum Committee. According to the local *Qingdao Times*, this forum was aimed at transmitting the “virtuous

traditional culture of China” and promoting the positive functions of Daoism for social and economic progress.³¹ The event featured lectures by Daoist masters and exhibitions of Daoist culture. Medical experts were present to advise seniors on how to live a healthier life according to a Daoist philosophy.³² The forum was held again in 2010 and 2016 with similar themes, which demonstrates official support for Daoism at the local, provincial, and central government levels.³³

Qingdao was among the first five treaty ports opened for trade after the Opium Wars, which left numerous architectural and religious legacies.³⁴ The year 2011 marked

31 Qingdao Xinwenwang, “Conference for Advocating Daoist Health Practices to be Held.”

32 Qingdao Xinwenwang, “Conference for Advocating Daoist Health Practices to be Held.”

33 Xinhuanet, “Laoshan Debate to be Hold in Qingdao City.”

34 Bickers and Jackson, *Treaty Ports in Modern China*.

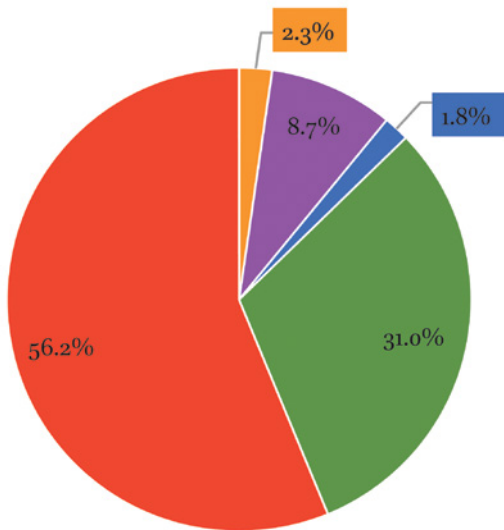
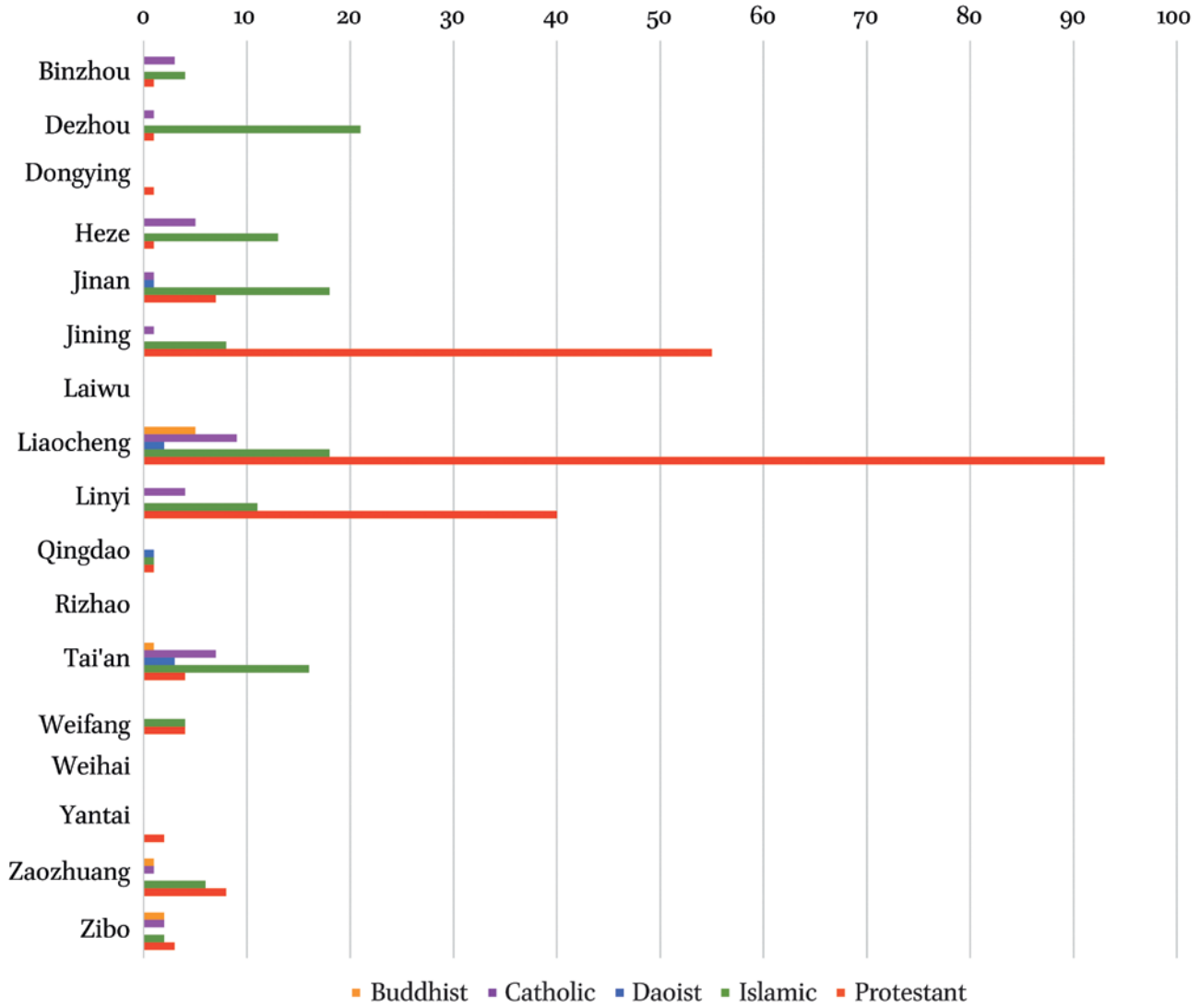


FIGURE 23 Shandong: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.

the 120th anniversary of the establishment of Qingdao City, and Jiangsu Road Christian Church 江苏路基督教堂 also celebrated its 100th birthday with a newly restored organ. This church was initially built by the Germans who took possession of Qingdao in 1898.³⁵ On the other hand, Shandong witnessed many anti-Christian mob attacks and was the birthplace of the xenophobic Boxer Rebellion in 1899–1901. Moreover, there have been a large number of Christian churches in Shandong. In fact, Shandong was home to some indigenous Christian sects, such as the Jesus Family 耶稣家庭, which promoted a communal and ascetic life inspired by the Bible and began in 1927 in the rural village of Mazhuang 马庄 in Tai'an 泰安, spreading to various parts of China in the 1930s and 1940s.³⁶ Although

35 M. Johnson, "Qingdao—German Concession."

36 Tao, *China's Christian Utopia: The Jesus Family (1921–1951)*.

communal life has been banned by the Communist party-state, the Jesus Family's Pentecostal practices have been revived and have spread widely in China in recent years. There were also a number of active congregations, for example in Yantai and Qingdao in the 1930s and 1940s, that were part of the Local Church 地方教會 movement founded by Watchman Nee 倪柝声.

One religious phenomenon not captured on the map of sites in Shandong associated with official religions, based on the 2004 Economic Census, is Confucianism. Qufu 曲阜 is the birthplace of Confucius and has been developed into a cultural and tourist center in recent years. The Communist party-state has been building up Qufu and marketing it as "the Holy City of the East" 东方圣城, devoted specifically to Confucianism. The revival of Confucianism has been accompanied by a rise of anti-Christian sentiment. According to the *Qufu*

Gazette there were at least 8,000 registered Protestants living in the city, and probably thousands of unregistered Christians.³⁷ In 2010, 10 PhD students studying Confucianism around the country launched a campaign to halt the construction of a Christian church in Qufu, insisting that a church should not be built so close to the Confucius Temple.³⁸ In 2016, a member of the Political Consultation Conference 政协 in Qufu called for a ban on churches in the entire city of Qufu.³⁹

37 Lodge, "China: Call for Churches to be Banned in City of Confucius' Birth."

38 Global Times, "Scholars Call for a Ban on Churches in Confucius' Hometown."

39 Lodge, "China: Call for Churches to be Banned in City of Confucius's Birth"; Beech, "Expansion of Christian Church in the Birthplace of Confucius Creates Controversy in China."

South-Central China 中南地区



MAP 88 Subregional map of South-Central China.

16. Henan 河南

Land area: 167,000 km²

Population: 94,029,939

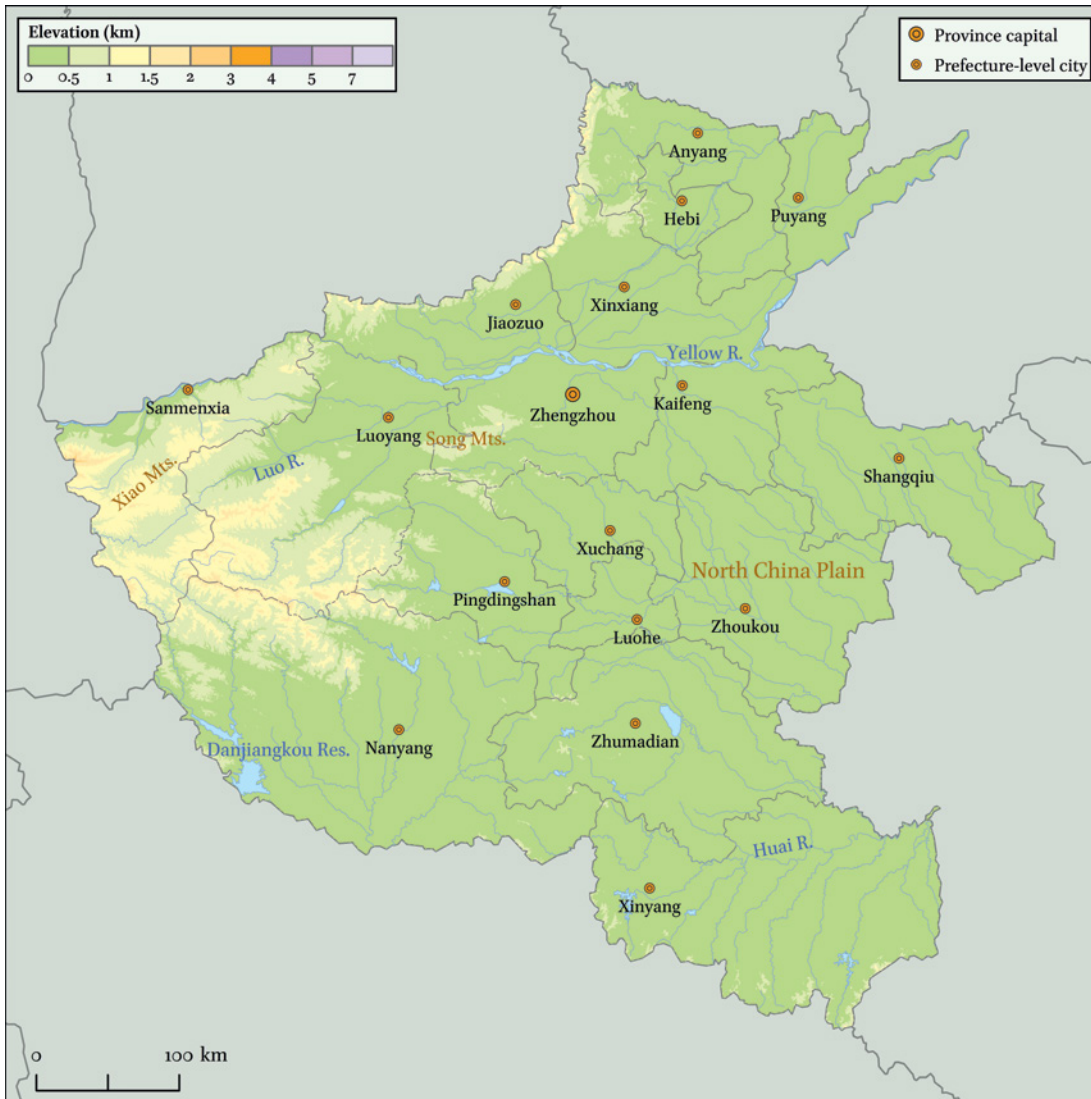
Capital: Zhengzhou 郑州

Topography

Henan province is at the very center of China, both culturally and physically. The province consists of 17 prefectures,

including 52 urban districts, 21 county-level cities, and 85 counties. With 94 million residents, Henan is the fourth most populous province in the country and also has a diverse ethnic population of Hui, Mongol, and Manchu people. Ethnic minorities comprise 1.2 percent of the total population.

Western and eastern Henan have vastly different topographies (Map 89). The eastern part of the province belongs to the North China Plain while the western part



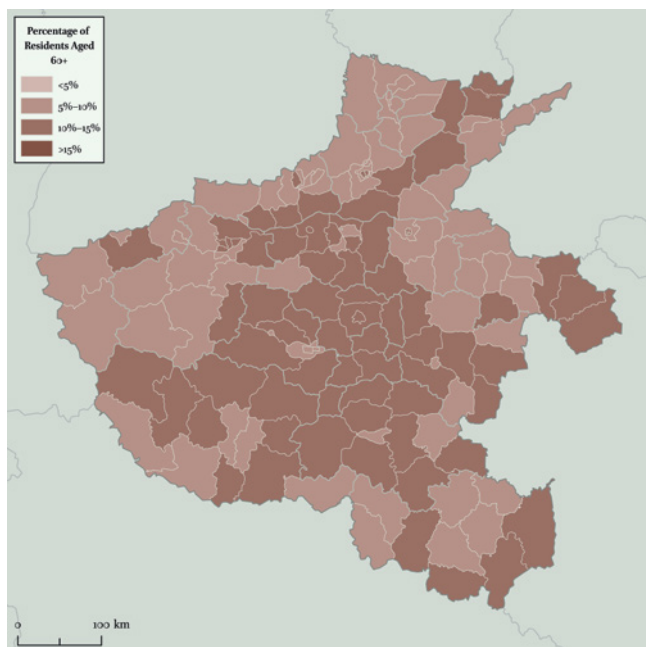
MAP 89 Henan: Topography.

of the province is covered with mountains. Two of China's most iconic rivers flow through Henan: the Yellow River in the north and the Huai River in the southeast. Henan is also home to Mount Song 嵩山, which lies southwest of Zhengzhou, the capital of the province. Mount Song is famous as the site of the Buddhist Shaolin Temple 少林寺 and the Daoist Zhongyue Temple 中岳庙 [Central Mount Temple].

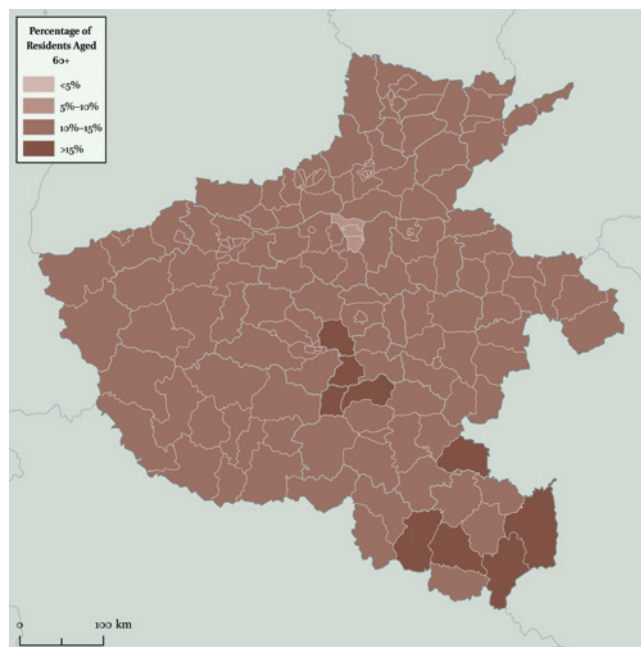
Henan's economy is essentially agricultural, yielding abundant products such as grain, wheat, rapeseed, and a large number of livestock, and its food processing industry is well developed. Ninety percent of the ingredients used by Chinese McDonald's and KFC restaurants come from Henan. The province is also rich in a wide variety of minerals and natural resources, and thus equipment manufacturing is another leading industry in Henan.

Demography

Henan has a large population, which increased 3 percent between 2000 and 2010, from 91,236,854 to 94,029,939. The proportion of urban residents increased slightly from 17 percent in 2000 to 20 percent in 2010. People holding a college degree formed only 3 percent of the total population in 2000, doubling to 6 percent in 2010, and were concentrated in the major cities of Zhengzhou, Kaifeng 开封, and Nanyang 南阳. The sex ratio was 106.46 males per 100 females in 2000 and dropped to 102.05 in 2010. The average family size decreased slightly from 3.7 persons to 3.5 during the same decade. The percentage of elderly residents rose from 10 percent to 13 percent (Maps 90–91).



MAP 90 Henan: Elderly population in 2000.



MAP 91 Henan: Elderly population in 2010.

Key Religious Facts

Henan Province has one of the largest Christian populations in China (Map 92 and Figure 24).¹ Protestant churches are clearly predominant throughout the province. Nanyang Prefecture, and sometimes the entire province of Henan, is referred to as “the Galilee of China” because of its high number of Christians and their evangelistic efforts throughout the nation.² In the 1960s, Henan was singled out, along with Zhejiang and Inner Mongolia, as an experimental zone for an anti-religion campaign by the Communist Party. According to government estimates, the number of Protestant Christians dropped from 120,000 in 1949 to 78,000 in 1965 (one year before the Cultural Revolution). In reality, however, many Christians kept their faith and went underground. Since the 1970s, several house church networks have developed in Henan and spread to many other provinces. The largest is probably the Fangcheng Fellowship 方城团契, which claims to have about 10 million believers.³ An evangelist from this area, Li Tian'en 李天恩 (1928–2016), after being released from prison and labor camps, led revivals in the 1970s.⁴ Zhang Rongliang 张荣亮, Li's disciple and the current

leader of the Fangcheng Fellowship, has also been arrested and imprisoned multiple times.⁵

Henan Province has the fourth-largest Hui population in China, after Ningxia 宁夏, Gansu 甘肃, and Xinjiang 新疆. The Hui population makes up 1 percent of the total population of Henan and is concentrated in Zhengzhou, Kaifeng 开封, and Luoyang 洛阳.⁶ The origin of the Hui population in Henan can be dated back to the Tang Dynasty (618–907); their number increased during the Song Dynasty (960–1279), mostly due to the settlement of overseas businessmen, as well as farmers.⁷

While Buddhist temples are scattered around the whole province, Daoist temples are mostly found in western prefectures (Photo 22). Some of the most famous Buddhist sites are located in Henan, most notably the Shaolin Temple, which is renowned for its *kung fu* monks. This Chan monastery was originally built in the fifth century, and its martial arts tradition is believed to stem from the seventeenth century.⁸ Under the leadership of Shi Yongxin 释永信, the abbot of Shaolin Monastery, Shaolin has been transformed from a poor and relatively unknown outpost

1 Miller, *Chinese Religions in Contemporary Societies*, 186.

2 Hattaway, *Henan: The Galilee of China*.

3 Lambert, *China's Christian Millions*, 66.

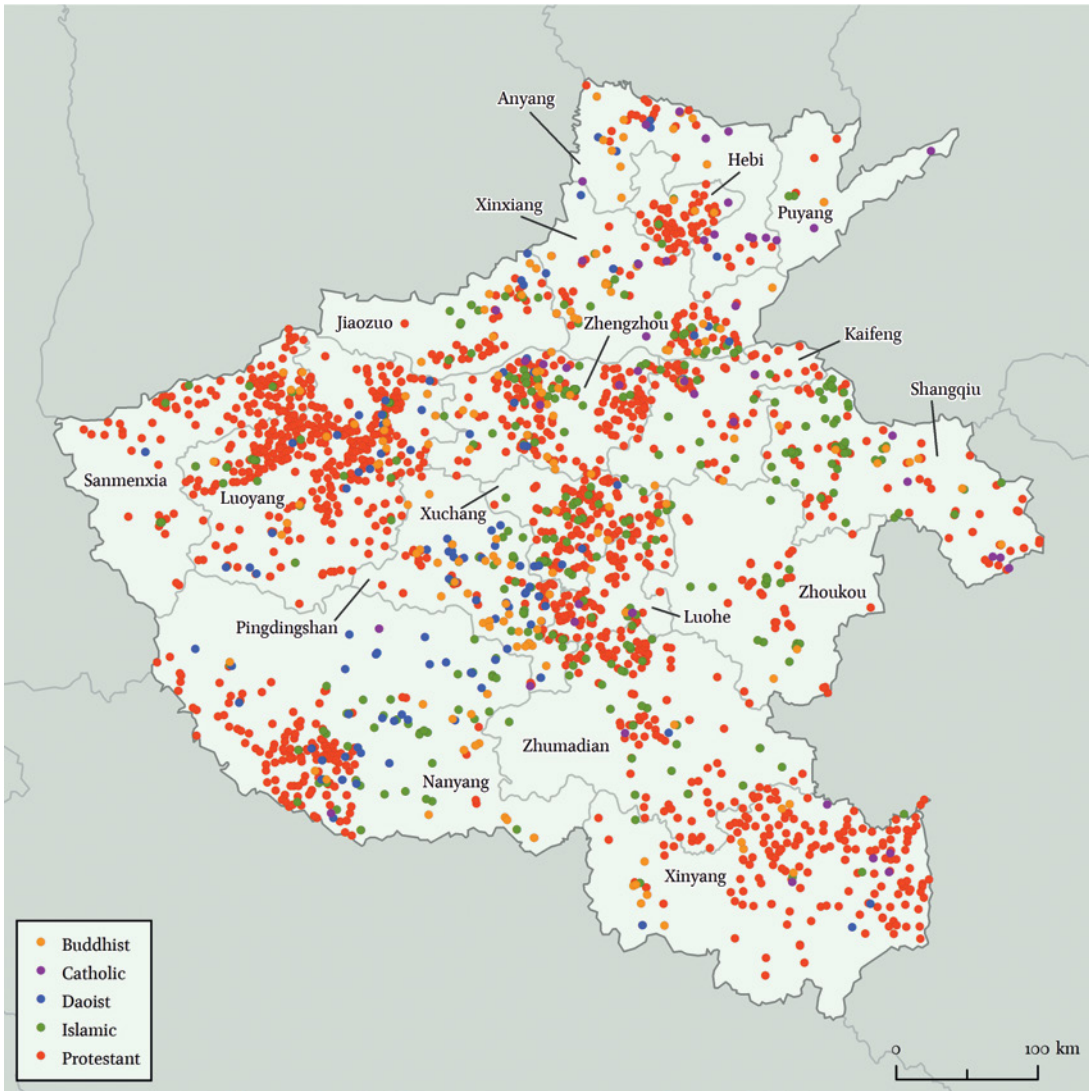
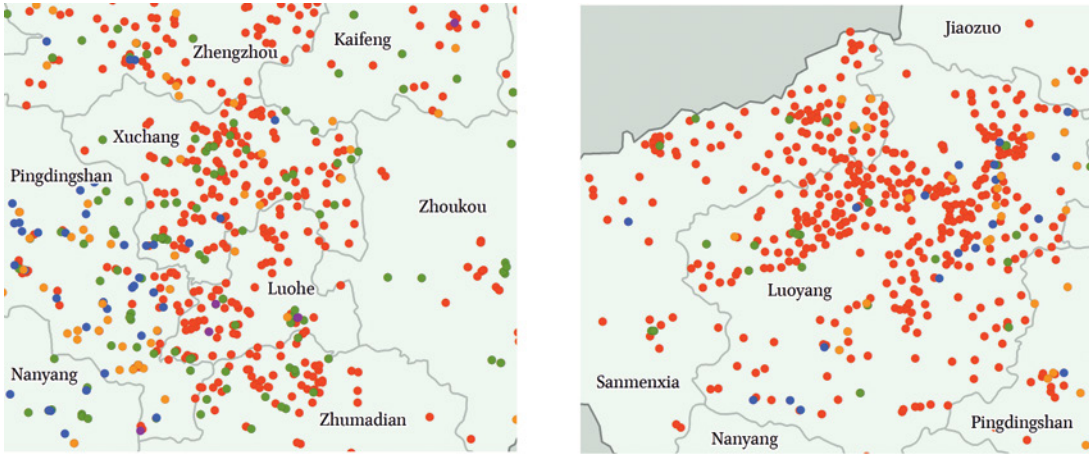
4 Bach and Zhu, *The Underground Church*.

5 Asia News, “Henan Court Sentences One of China's Most Prominent Christian Leaders to Seven Years in Prison.”

6 Top China Travel, “Muslims in Henan.”

7 H. Gao, “Do You Really Understand the Hui Ethnic Group in Henan Province?”

8 Shahar, *The Shaolin Monastery*.



MAP 92 Henan: Religious sites.

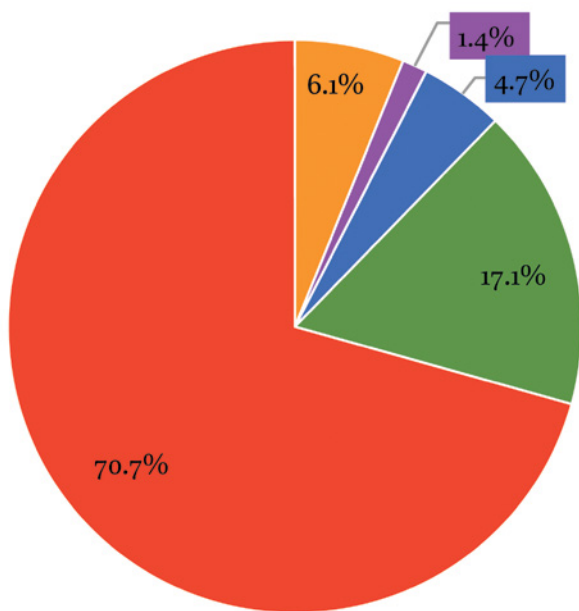
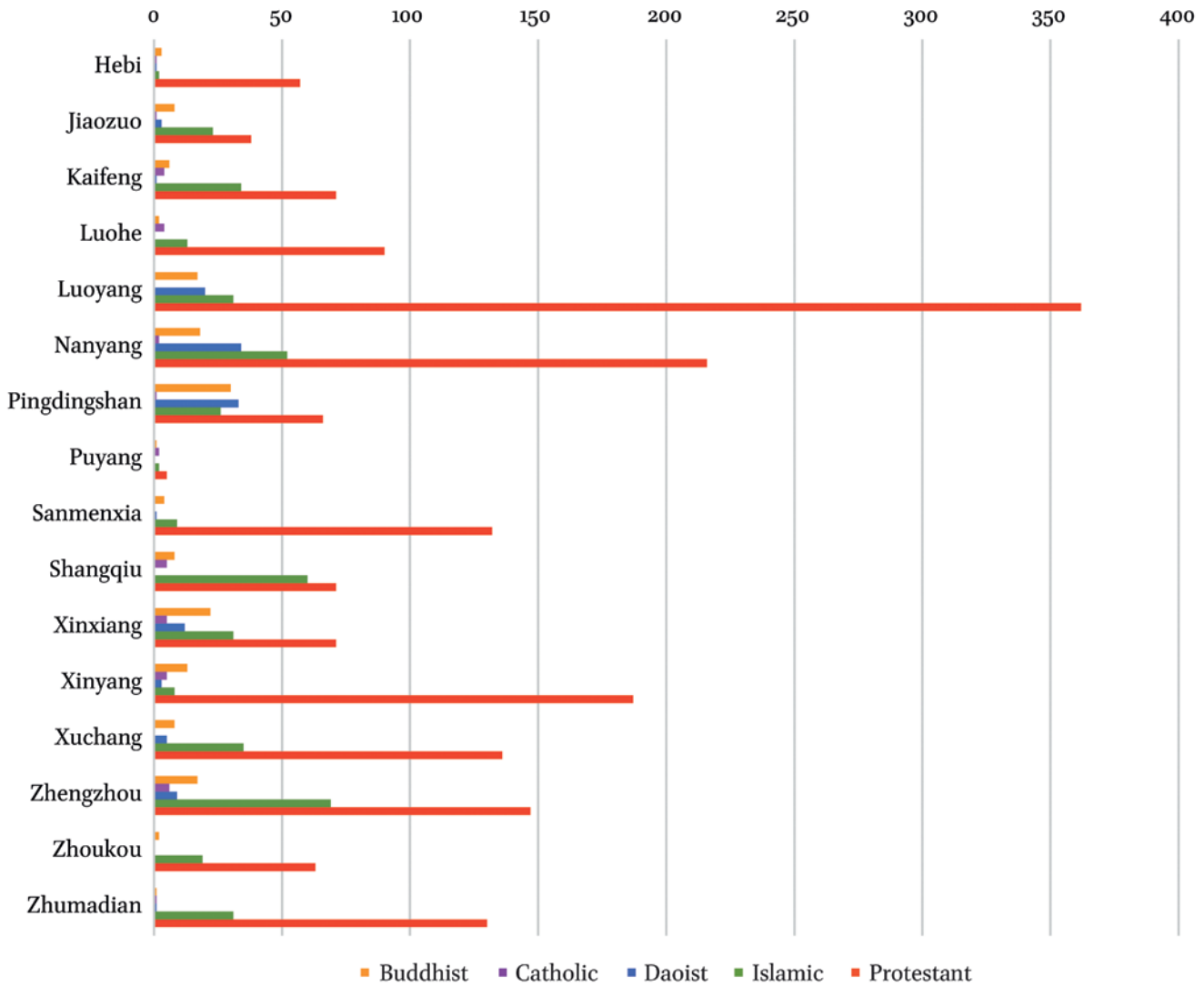


FIGURE 24 Henan: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.

into a global brand. Yongxin thus became known as the “CEO monk.”⁹ In recent years, some scandalous accusations have been filed against him.¹⁰

Henan is also famous for the descendants of Jews in Kaifeng. Jews may have arrived in China as early as 92 BCE. During the Song Dynasty (960–1279), there is good evidence for the presence of Jews in Kaifeng, at that time the capital city. However, the descendants of the original Jewish population in Kaifeng have intermarried for

9 Beam, “The Rise and Fall of Shaolin’s CEO Monk.” Beam suggested that Shi Yongxin had purchased land in Australia, intending to build a Shaolin Village where Australians and international tourists could learn about Chan Buddhism and the temple’s famed warrior monks, with a four-star hotel and a 27-hole golf course, at a cost of more than \$270 million.

10 Tonkin, “CEO Monk”; Souhuxinwen, “Eight Issues Unsolved after 126 Days’ Investigation of the Case of Shi Yongxin.”



PHOTO 22 Yangtai Temple in Jiyuan City (Henan).
CREDIT: LINJI WEI

many generations and have lost most of the traditional Jewish practices. In the 1980s, the Sino-Judaic Institute was founded by an international group of scholars to research the history of the Jewish communities in China.¹¹ Up to 1,000 residents in Kaifeng are of Jewish ancestry, but only a small number of individuals participate in Jewish activities.¹² In 2015, Shavei Israel, the Jerusalem-based nonprofit organization that assists lost and hidden Jews worldwide to reconnect with their heritage, appointed an Israeli sinologist as its new emissary to the Kaifeng Jewish community.¹³

17. Hubei 湖北

Land area: 185,900 km²

Population: 57,237,727

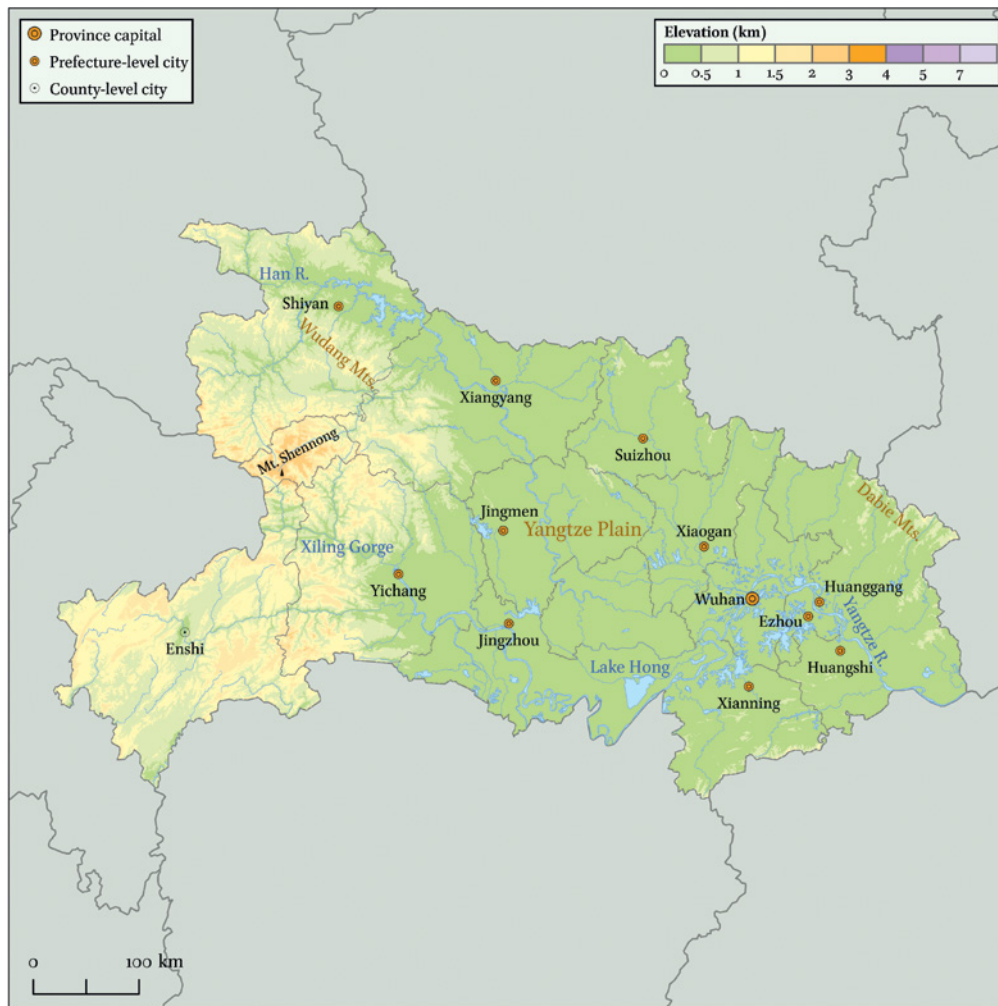
Capital: Wuhan 武汉

- 11 Pollack, "Detailed History of Kaifeng Jews."
- 12 Elazar, "Are There Really Jews in China?"; Braun, "China Virtual Jewish History Tour."
- 13 Jewocity, "Ancient Chinese Jewish Community of Kaifeng Gets New Emissary."

Topography

Hubei Province is located on the middle reaches of the Yangtze River in the central part of China. Its name is derived from its location to the north of Lake Dongting 洞庭湖. Hubei has 13 prefectures, including 39 urban districts, 24 county-level cities, and 37 counties. Ethnic minorities make up a little over 4 percent of the total population and they are mainly distributed in southwestern Hubei, including Tujia, Miao, Hui, and Dong 侗.

The terrain of Hubei descends from the mountains surrounding the province on three sides to the lowlands in the southeast areas, the Yangtze Plain (Map 93). Some of China's most famous religious sites are located in Hubei, including those in the Wudang Mountains 武当山 in the northwestern part of the province, and the Dabie Mountains 大别山 and Mufu Mountains 幕府山 to the east. The numerous waterways of Hubei have earned it the nickname "Thoroughfare of Nine Provinces" (*Jiusheng Tongqu* 九省通衢). Its river systems, most notably the Yangtze River and its tributary the Han River 汉江, flow into lakes in the eastern part of the province, the largest of which is Lake Hong 洪湖. The rivers and lakes of Hubei have given rise to a well-developed agriculture and fishery. The river systems have also made Hubei the hydropower



MAP 93 Hubei: Topography.

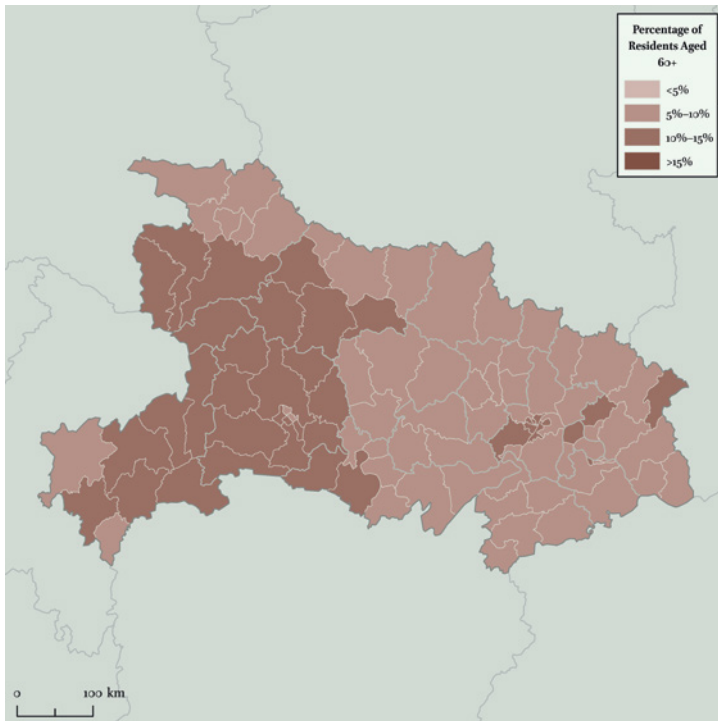
base of China. Its facilities include the famous Three Gorges Project 三峡工程, located in the Yichang 宜昌 area. Hubei has a seasonal climate with burning hot summers and chilly winters.

Demography

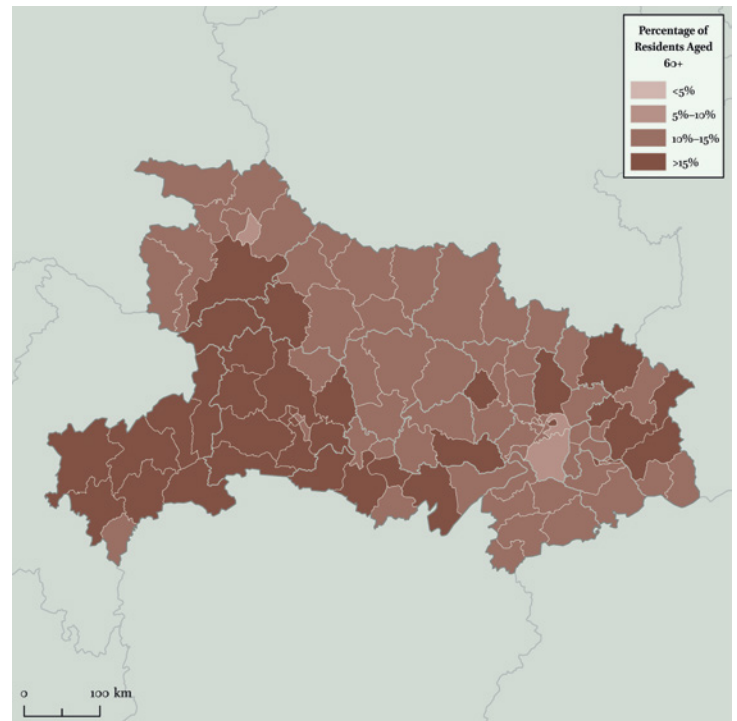
Unlike most provinces that experienced population growth, the total population of Hubei decreased from 59,508,870 in 2000 to 57,237,727 in 2010, a 4 percent decline. The number of immigrants from other provinces also decreased from 1,629,131 in 2000 to 1,013,612 a decade later, a significant drop. Nonetheless, urbanization and education made substantial progress. The urban population grew to 31 percent in 2010 from 27 percent in 2000. The proportion of people with at least a college degree increased from 4 percent in 2000 to 10 percent in 2010. The average family size decreased from 3.5 persons in 2000 to 3.2 in 2010. In the same decade, the percentage of elderly persons in the general population increased from 9 percent to 14 percent.

Although Hubei attracted fewer immigrants from other provinces, scholars have taken note of the internal migration within the province.¹⁴ People moved from rural areas to cities, and from western areas to eastern regions that were more prosperous. The internal migration led to varying levels of aging among the counties. The percentage of elderly people increased in almost all counties, but especially in the western mountainous areas because of the outflow of young people (Maps 94–95). The sex ratio remains unbalanced in Hubei, especially in the populous eastern areas. The infant sex ratio was higher than 120 males per 100 females in most eastern counties. However, in central-west areas, the ratio was below 110. This spatial distribution of sex ratios changed little between 2000 and 2010.

14 Goldstein, Goldstein, and Gu, "Determinants of Permanent and Temporary Mobility in Hubei Province, PRC"; X. Yang, "Determinants of Migration Intentions in Hubei Province, China."



MAP 94 Hubei: Elderly population in 2000.



MAP 95 Hubei: Elderly population in 2010.

Key Religious Facts

The religious landscape of Hubei is predominantly composed of Buddhist temples as well as Daoist temples, especially in the eastern and southern prefectures (Map 96 and Figure 25). There are good numbers of Protestant churches in southern Xianning 咸宁, Wuhan, south-eastern Jingzhou 荆州, and northwestern Shiyan 十堰. Catholic churches are more likely to be found in central and eastern prefectures. There are a notable number of mosques in the northwestern tip as well as in the central prefectures of Xiangyang 襄阳 and Jingmen 荆门.

The official description of Hubei characterizes the province as “Chan in the East and Dao in the West” (*Dongchan xidao* 东禅西道).¹⁵ One of the most famous clusters of temples in Hubei is located in the Wudang Mountains in northwestern Hubei, which cover over 312 square kilometers and rise above the region with their main summit at a height of 1,612 meters above sea level. In the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644), Wudang was considered one of China’s most spiritual peaks, especially in connection with the development of late imperial Daoism.¹⁶ Wudang martial arts have become famous for their distinct styles. This

incidentally feeds into the current emphasis on the “soft power” of the state, as the upright, honest, loyal virtues associated with the martial arts are considered instrumental for domestic nation-building as well as cultivating China’s international image.¹⁷ Therefore, martial arts are often the showcase of Chinese culture at events and classes overseas. In October 2016, the Centre de Culture Chinoise in Paris organized the first Wudang martial arts and well-being festival, inviting Wudang martial arts masters and representatives from the Wudang Mountains Tourism Economic Zone 武当山旅游经济特区 to attend.¹⁸ Chinese-language media covered this event with great enthusiasm.¹⁹ The media narratives emphasized that social harmony could be attained through Daoist practices of well-being. This position was reinforced by President Xi Jinping’s 2013 talk on how Daoism as a traditional religion could fill the moral void and promote social harmony in China.²⁰

15 Ethnic and Religious Affairs Commission of Hubei Province, “Basic Information about Religions in Hubei Province.”

16 De Bruyn, “Wudang Shan: The Origins of a Major Center of Modern Taoism”; Lagerwey, “The Pilgrimage to Wu-tang Shan.”

17 Foster, “Xi Jinping’s Soft Power Martial Arts Cultural Trope.”

18 Zhongguo Qiaowang, “The First Festival for Wudang Taiji and Health Practices in France.”

19 Zhongguo Qiaowang, “The First Festival for Wudang Taiji and Health Practices in France.”

20 Lim and Blanchard, “Xi Jinping Hopes Traditional Faiths Can Fill Moral Void in China.”

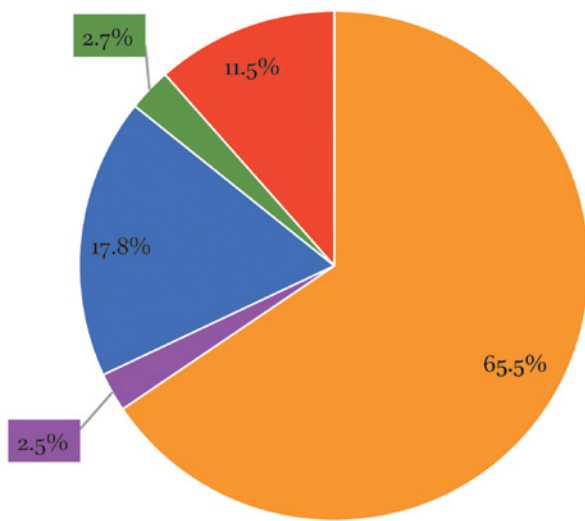
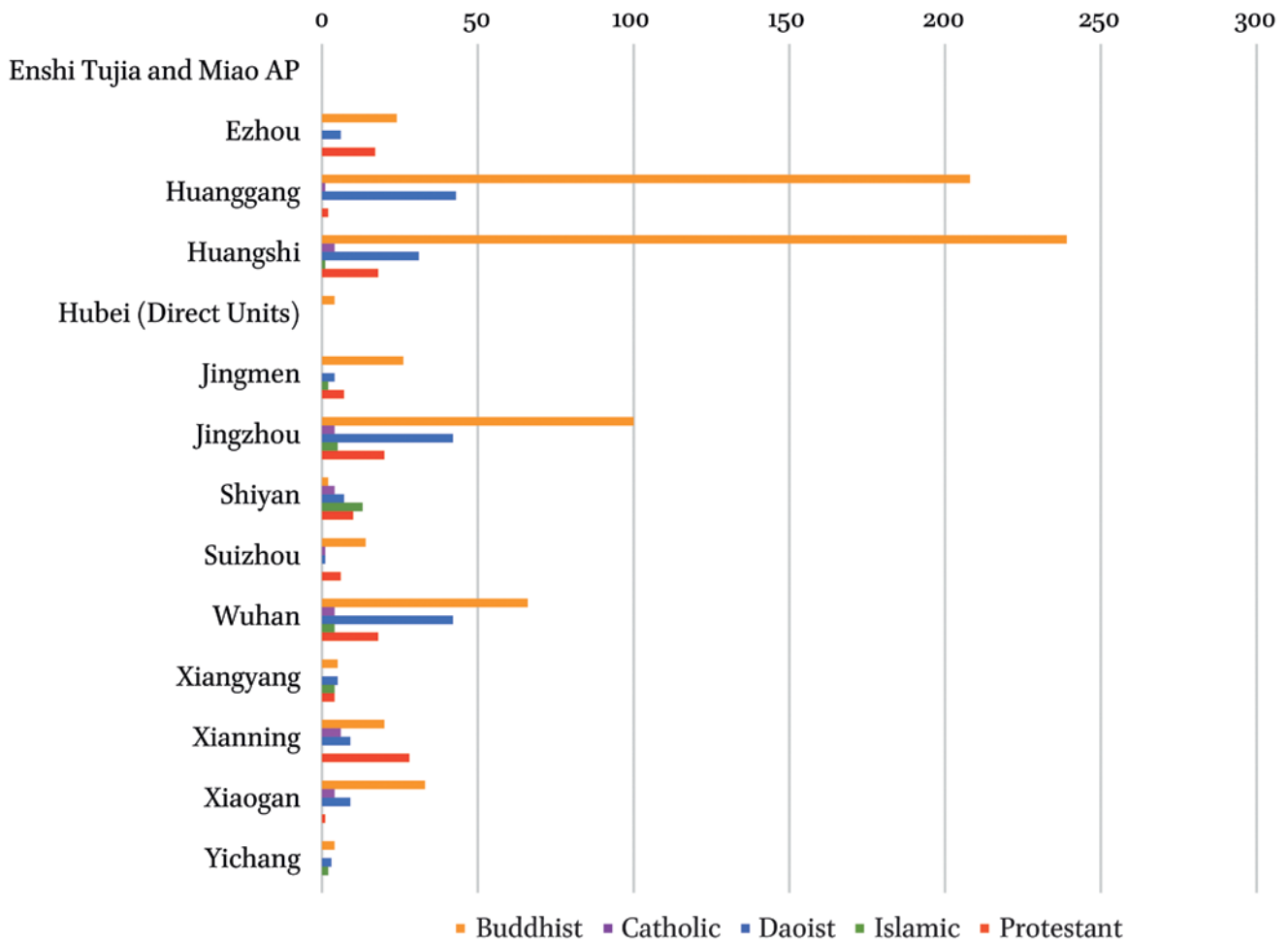


FIGURE 25 Hubei: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.

Hubei is the birthplace of Shennong 神农, who is also known as the Yan Emperor 炎帝. According to legend, Emperor Yan was the god of agriculture and herbal medicine.²¹ The Chinese Han people have called themselves the descendants of the Emperors Yan and Huang for about 5,000 years. The birthplace of Emperor Yan is believed to be in Suizhou 随州, Hubei, and since 2009 Chinese descendants around the world have come to Suizhou in May each year, seeking their roots and paying homage to the primogenitor. On May 21, 2017, about 10,000 Chinese came to attend the grand ceremony at the Suizhou Emperor Yan Shennong’s birthplace, offering incense and laying wreaths.²²

21 Hubei Government, “Cultural History of Hubei”; Strom, “Shennong: The God-King of Chinese Medicine and Agriculture.”
 22 China News, “A Memorial Festival For Yan Emperor in Suizhou, Hubei.”

18. Hunan 湖南

Land area: 210,000 km²

Population: 65,700,762

Capital: Changsha 长沙

Topography

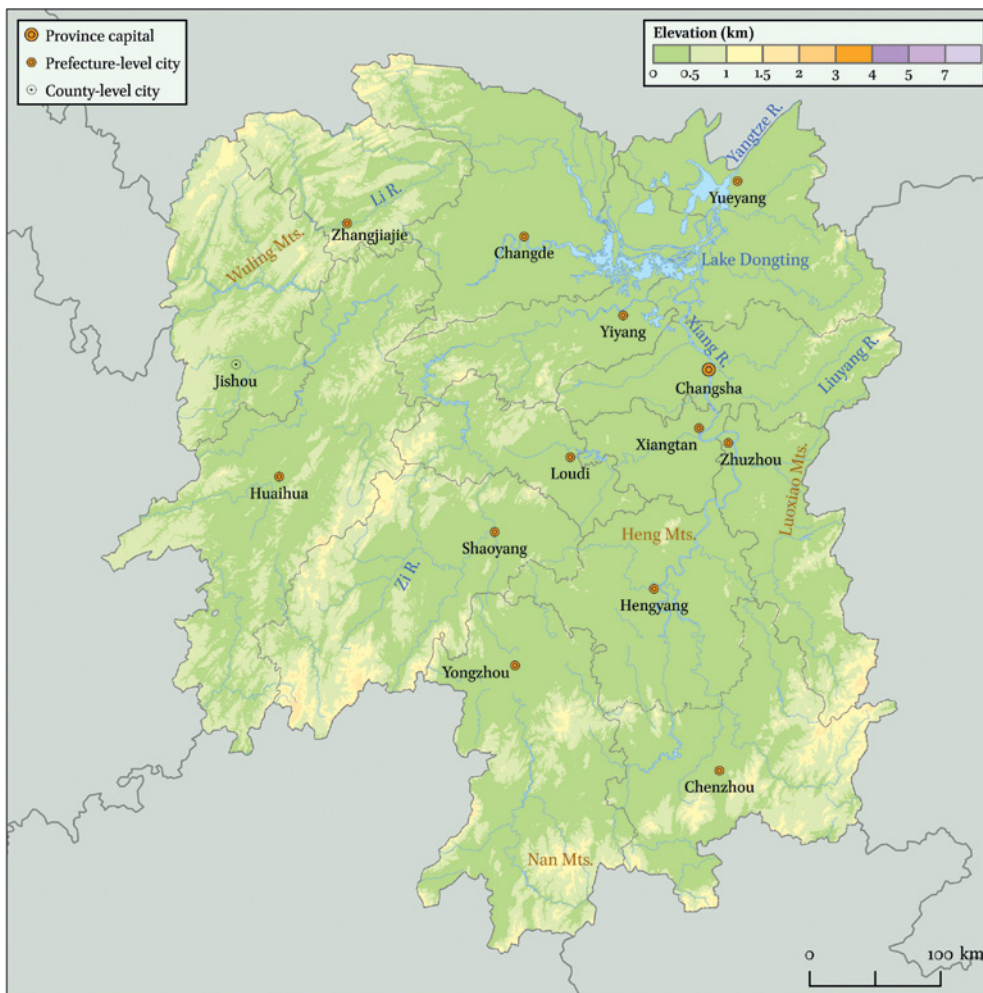
Hunan's name literally means "south of the lake," which refers to Lake Dongting. This province lies in south-central China and comprises 14 prefectures, including 35 urban districts, 17 county-level cities, and 70 counties. In the western and southern parts of the province live people of the ethnic minorities of Tujia, Miao, Dong, and Yao, who make up nearly 10 percent of the total population in Hunan.

Hunan is surrounded by mountains and hills in the east, west, and south (Map 97). Lake Dongting in north Hunan is the largest lake in the province and the second largest freshwater lake in China. Several rivers, including

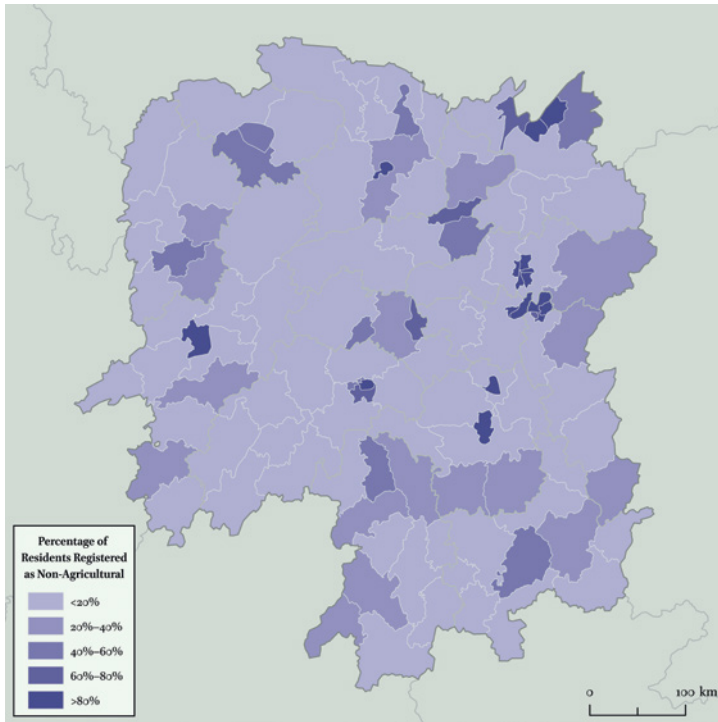
the Xiang River 湘江, Zi River 资水, and the Li River 澧水, all converge at Lake Dongting. Agriculture is a major contributor to Hunan's economy, especially in the area surrounding Lake Dongting. The province ranks first in rice production in China and second in tea cultivation. Thanks to its large deposits of nonferrous and nonmetallic minerals, mining, machinery, and electronics production play important roles in Hunan's economy. In recent years, the entertainment industry has become well developed in Hunan. The great success of the Hunan Broadcasting System has helped the province to expand its national influence.

Demography

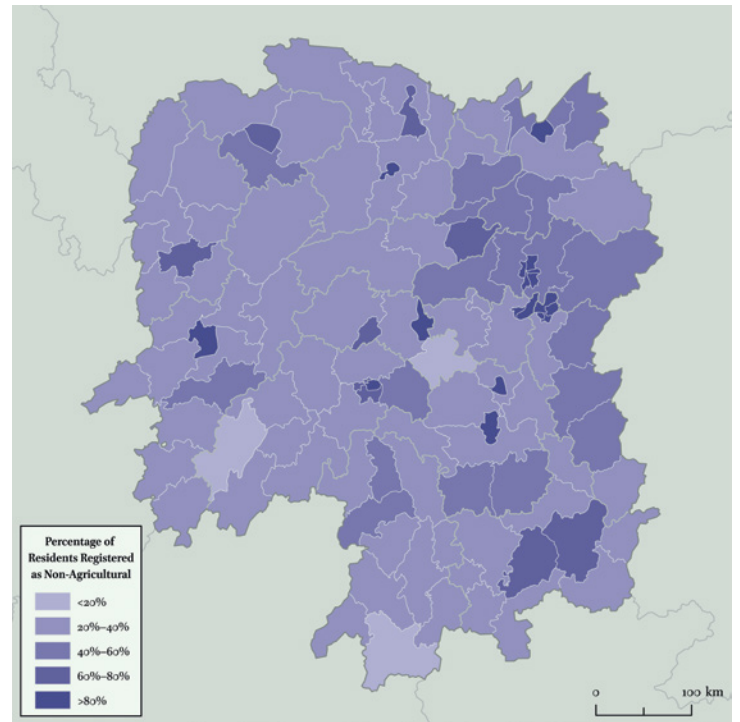
The total population increased from 63,274,173 in 2000 to 65,700,762 in 2010, a small growth of 4 percent. Immigrants comprised only about 1 percent of the total population in 2010. The population density is very high in the cities in the northern and central areas of Hunan, but low in the



MAP 97 Hunan: Topography.



MAP 98 Hunan: Urbanization in 2000.



MAP 99 Hunan: Urbanization in 2010.

western and southern mountain areas. The percentage of people registered as urban residents grew from 19.5 percent in 2000 to 23.2 percent in 2010 (Maps 98–99). While urbanization was slow, Hunan is a leading province in terms of population growth in towns.²³ The major engine of Hunan's urbanization is the Changsha-Zhuzhou 株洲-Xiangtan 湘潭 City and Town Cluster (*Changzhutan chengzhenqun* 长株潭城镇群), which is the political and economic core of the province. The average family size decreased slightly from 3.5 persons to 3.3 during this period. The proportion of the population with at least a college education increased by a factor of two and a half between 2000 and 2010, from 2.9 percent to 7.5 percent.

Key Religious Facts

According to the 2004 Economic Census, Buddhist monasteries comprise the majority of religious sites in Hunan, while a considerable number of Daoist sites are spread over the eastern part of the province as well as in northwestern Huaihua 怀化 (Map 100 and Figure 26). Protestant churches are scattered around the province, with some concentrations in Loudi 娄底, eastern Hengyang 衡阳, and southern Zhangjiajie 张家界.

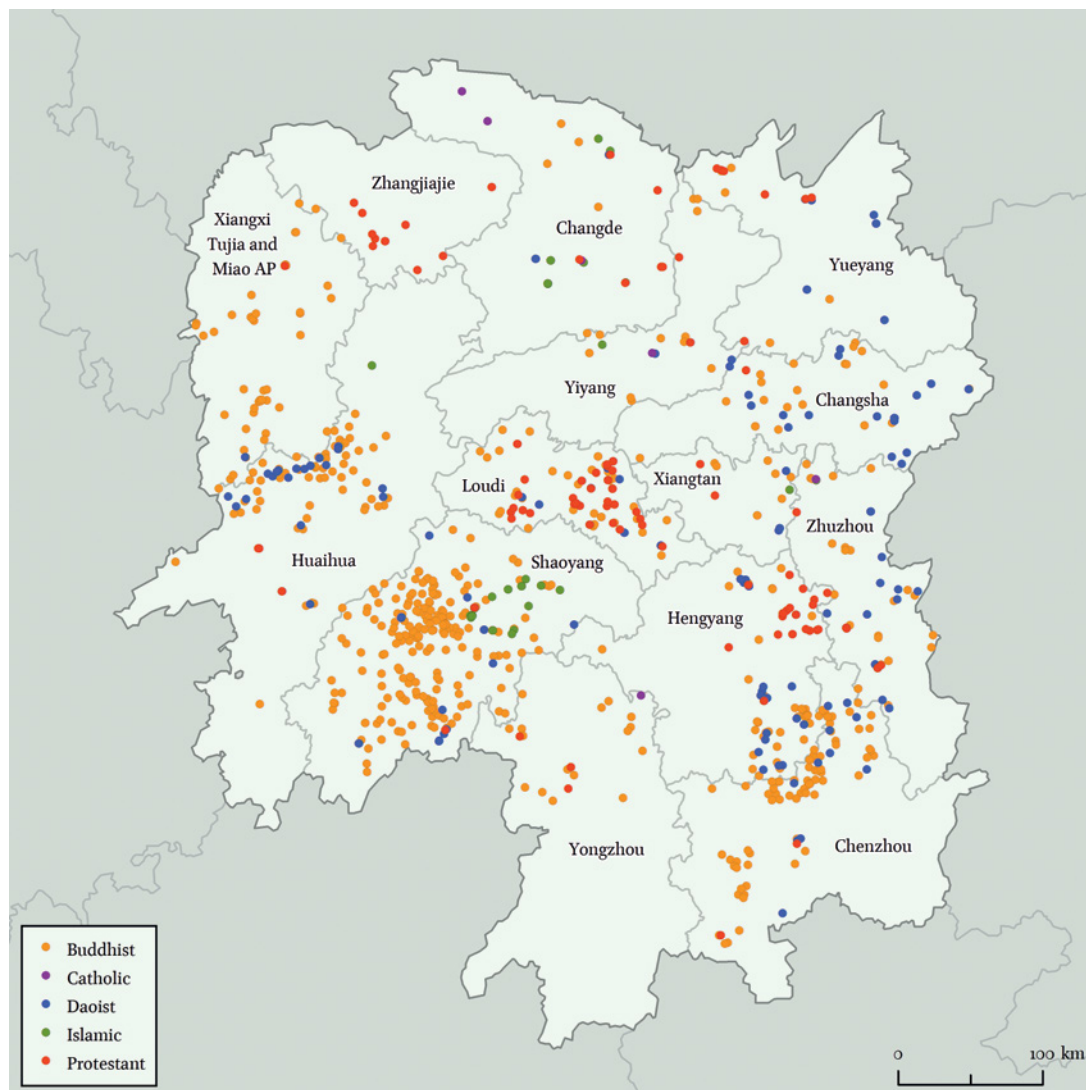
23 Zhang, Legates, and Zhao, *Understanding China's Urbanization*, 294.

Hunan has temple associations throughout the province that organize communal gatherings throughout the year (see Photo 23). Some of Hunan's Buddhist associations are among the oldest in China. These groups have played a vital role in the past century to respond to the changing political climate. During the Japanese invasion in World War II, Buddhists in Hunan established the Nanyue Buddhist Association for Saving the Nation 南岳佛教救国会, whose name was later changed to the Nanyue Buddhist and Daoist Society for Disaster Relief 南岳佛道赈灾会.²⁴ In November 2016, the Nanyue area celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of the Buddhist Association of Nanyue 南岳佛教协会. According to the official rhetoric, the patriotic actions of Buddhists in Hunan date back to the War of Resistance against Japan in the 1930s, and its charity works since the 1980s are considered to exemplify the continuity of Nanyue Buddhists' patriotic character.²⁵ Similarly, Daoist institutions have also been quite successful. In 2011, the International Daoism Forum took place in the Hengshan Mountains 衡山, attracting 500 scholars from 21 countries and regions.²⁶ The state

24 Yu, *Buddhism, War, and Nationalism*, 144.

25 Xinlang, "The Sixtieth Anniversary of the Nanyue Buddhist Association."

26 Y. Li, "Taoist Forum Looks at Environment."



MAP 100 Hunan: Religious sites.

media regarded this event as a recognition of the growing Daoist influence in modern China; the Daoist emphasis on nature and ecology is considered important for the contemporary world.²⁷

Hunan has the largest population of Uyghurs outside of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Fengshu 枫树 is home to thousands of Uyghurs whose ancestors moved from eastern Xinjiang and settled here more than 600 years ago.²⁸ However, they have lost many of their distinct ethnic features and the Uyghur language. Nevertheless, the

government has helped to expand the mosque and encouraged Uyghur language teaching in the local schools.

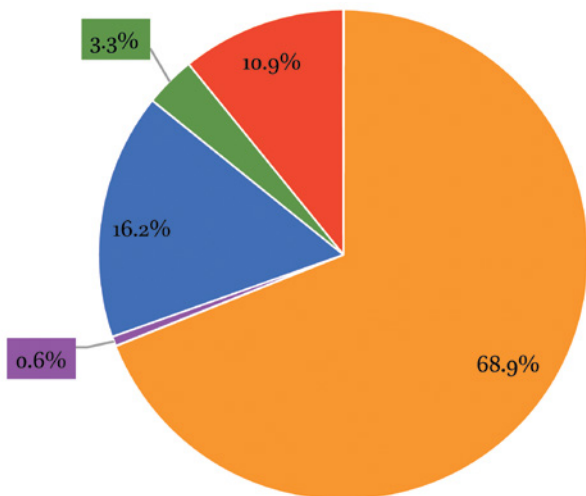
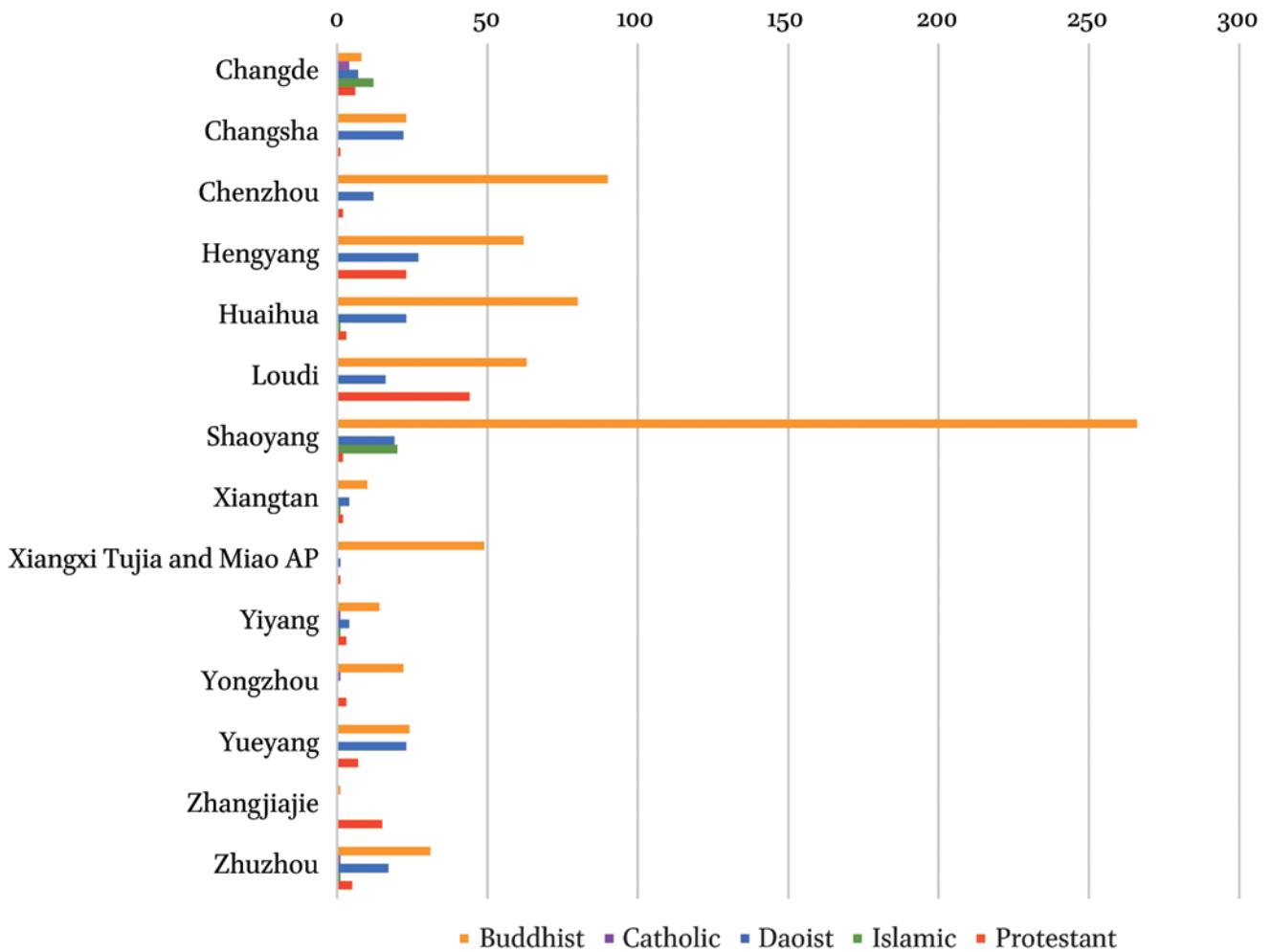
Mao Zedong 毛泽东 (1893–1976), the supreme leader of the Chinese Communist Party for more than four decades, was born in Shaoshan 韶山 in Hunan. In 2013, the local government spent over 1.9 billion yuan (about \$312 million) to restore Mao's former residence, renovate the local museum, and construct a nearby memorial plaza.²⁹

Christianity in Hunan has a long history and there were many churches in the province before the formation of the PRC. Since 1979, the TSPM has helped to restore or build anew more than 1,000 churches. In February 2017, around the Chinese New Year's holiday, a 15-hectare theme park

27 Miller, Yu, and Van der Veer, *Religion and Ecological Sustainability in China*, 160.

28 J. Huang, "Central China Town Tries to Revive 600-year-old Islamic Tradition."

29 Ho and Young, "Chairman Mao's Everyman Makeover."



opened to the public in Changsha; it features an 80-meter tall Christian church, the Hunan Bible College, and the office buildings of the Hunan TSPM and Christian Council. Some Mao admirers expressed strong objections to the theme park on social media, demanding the removal of the cross on the rooftop of the church, which was taller than the statue of Mao Zedong, and the suppression of Christian growth in order to protect orthodox Maoism.³⁰

FIGURE 26 Hunan: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.

30 Tatlow, "A Monument to Jesus in the City of Mao."



PHOTO 23 A village feast at Wulong Temple in Yangletian (Yingjiang Township, Dao County, Hunan).
CREDIT: CHENGWEI ZHOU

19. Guangdong 广东

Land area: 180,000 km²

Population: 104,320,459

Capital: Guangzhou 广州

Topography

Bordering on the South China Sea 南海, Guangdong forms a significant part of China's south and southeastern coastlines. Guangdong is divided into 21 prefectures, including 60 urban districts, 20 county-level cities, and 39 counties. Ethnic minorities include the Zhuang, Yao, and Tujia, accounting for 2 percent of the total population.

The terrain of Guangdong slopes from north to south and is covered by mountains and hills (Map 101). The Nan Mountains 南岭 extend along the boundary with Hunan in the north, while the Jiulian Mountains 九连山 and Lianhua Mountains 莲花山 buffer the eastern parts of the province. The southern coast is mostly level territory. The Pearl River 珠江 is the largest river in Guangdong,

and its mouth forms the Pearl River Delta 珠江三角洲, one of China's key economic zones. Guangdong has a long and jagged coastline with numerous offshore islands. Guangdong has a tropical climate with an annual average temperature around 19°C.

Bordering Hong Kong and Macau, Guangdong attracts large amounts of overseas capital. Guangdong's light industry comprises over half of its total industrial output, including electronics, automobile parts, and clothing. The Pearl River Delta, which embraces the metropolises of Shenzhen 深圳, Zhuhai 珠海, and Guangzhou, the capital of the province, has highly developed manufacturing and service industries. Shenzhen and Zhuhai are two special economic zones designated by the central government for attracting foreign investment, learning new technologies, and generating employment opportunities.³¹ The GDP of Guangdong was about

31 Wong and Chu, "Export Processing Zones and Special Economic Zones as Generators of Economic Development."



MAP 101 Guangdong: Topography.

\$610 billion in 2010, the largest among China's provinces.³² Guangdong leads the nation in the production of soybeans, sugarcane, silk, and fruits. The Leizhou Peninsula 雷州半岛 in Guangdong's southwest produces tropical goods like rubber and coffee. All of these industries and agriculture have attracted a large number of immigrants from other provinces, resulting in a massive population boom.³³ The number of immigrants from other provinces rose more than threefold between 2000 and 2010 (Maps 102–103).

Demography

In general, Guangdong is a very populous province. The total population of Guangdong rose from 85,225,007 in 2000 to 104,320,459 in 2010, a dramatic increase of 22 percent. Three separate areas along the coast are major population centers: the Pearl River Delta in the middle, a cluster of cities around Shantou 汕头 in the east, and some western counties in Maoming 茂名.

The increased accessibility of higher education is evident. Individuals with at least a college education formed less than 4 percent of the total population in 2000, but increased to about 9 percent in 2010. The overall sex ratio became less balanced, increasing from 103.7 males per 100 females to 109.0 during this decade. Meanwhile, the sex ratio among newborns decreased from 131 to 120. The average family size decreased from 3.7 persons in 2000 to 3.1 in 2010.

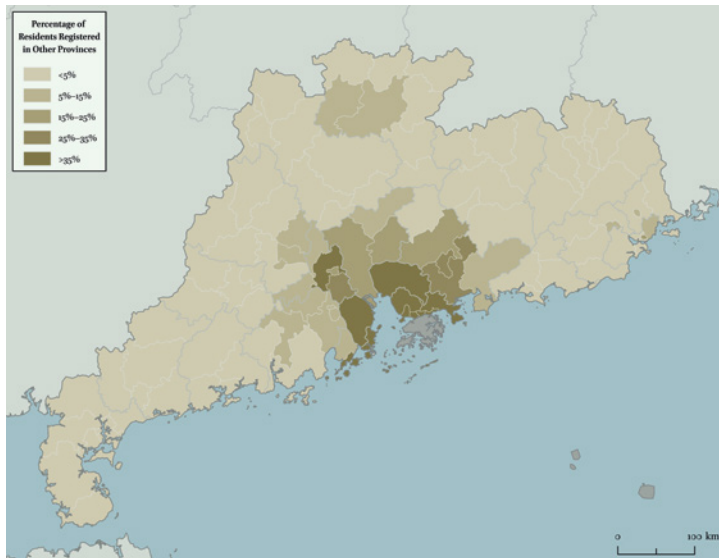
Key Religious Facts

The religious landscape of Guangdong shows that Buddhist temples are scattered around the province, with high concentrations in the eastern prefectures of Meizhou 梅州, Chaozhou 潮州, and Shantou 汕头 (Map 104 and Figure 27). There are also a good number of Catholic and Protestant churches in Shantou, Chaozhou, Meizhou, Guangzhou, and Foshan 佛山. Daoist temples are more likely to be found in Guangzhou, Huizhou 惠州, and Dongguan 东莞.

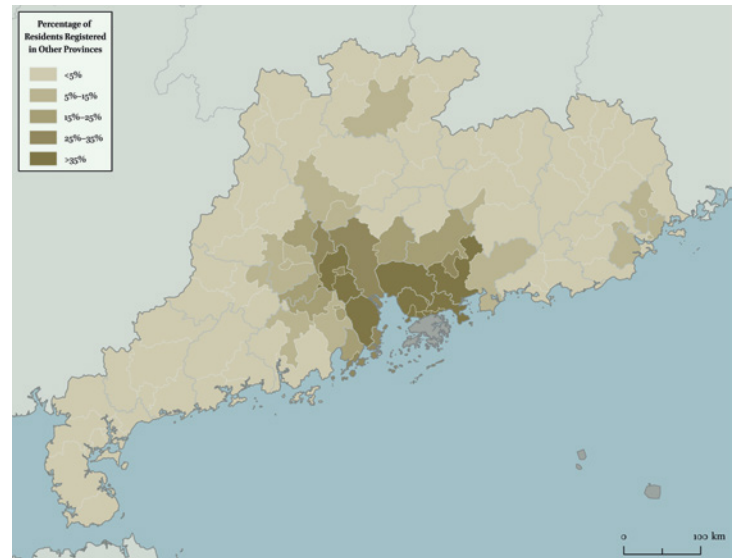
Guangdong was one of the coastal provinces visited by many missionaries in the past. Indeed, in modern times, Catholic and Protestant missionaries first entered

32 People's Daily, "GDP of 31 Provinces in China Released."

33 C. C. Fan, "Migration in a Socialist Transitional Economy."



MAP 102 Guangdong: Immigration in 2000.



MAP 103 Guangdong: Immigration in 2010.

China through Guangdong. In recent decades, however, Christian growth in Guangdong seems slower than in many other provinces. Today, Christians in Guangdong maintain close links with Christians in Hong Kong, Macau, southeast Asia, and the West. In August 2014, the Shenzhen Christian Church held a celebration of thanksgiving at Shenzhen Stadium. This event was led by an overseas Chinese Christian worship team, and thousands of people attended the event. This celebration should not be seen as an endorsement of the status quo, but rather as a critical remembrance of the troubled past of Christian churches vis-à-vis the state.³⁴

Ancestral worship remains a key element in the social and cultural life of Guangdong.³⁵ At the same time, Guangdong's connection to Special Administrative Regions, including Hong Kong and Macau, and to foreign countries have made it a hotspot for religious activities. As a trading hub between China and the Middle East, the province has a large number of Jewish residents and many Jewish business travelers pass through this busy city. In order to meet their religious needs, Chabad of Shenzhen was established in February 2006. The rabbis who set up this Chabad moved to China from an Israeli Chabad village. Today Chabad of Shenzhen is a branch of Chabad of Hong Kong, which operates in major cities of political or

trading significance in China including Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu 成都, Shenzhen, Kunming 昆明, and Yiwu.³⁶

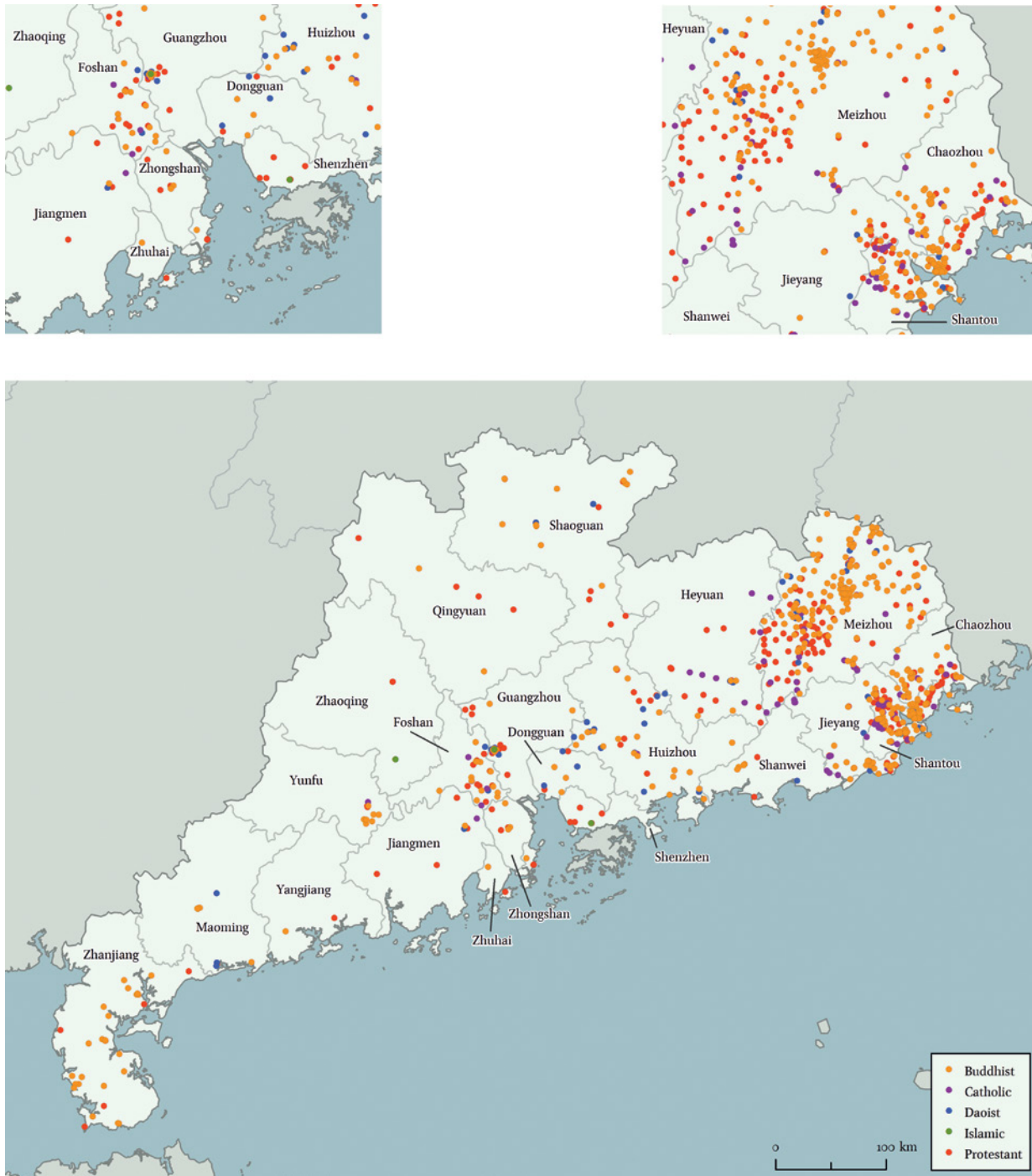
Sometimes functioning as the bridge between Hong Kong and inland China, Guangdong often accommodates new religious organizations from across the border. In 2008, Kongshengtang 孔圣堂, a temple dedicated to the worship of Confucius, was established in Shenzhen by Zhang Hua 张华, president of Hong Kong-based Samwo International Group, and his friend Zhou Beichen 周北辰, a disciple of contemporary Confucian philosopher Jiang Qing 蒋庆. The group has ties with Tu Weiming 杜维明, a prominent Confucian scholar retired from Harvard University, and with Tang En-Jia 汤恩佳, the president of Hong Kong Confucian Academy. Kongshengtang is also supported and financed by the local chamber of commerce. As such, Kongshengtang holds high social visibility and commercial interest. This is part of the Confucian revival of filial values in Chinese cultural and spiritual life. The leaders of the revival seek to apply Confucianism to solve economic, political, and spiritual problems that have been caused or exacerbated by Western ideas such as capitalism, democracy, and Christianity. While never directly challenging the Communist Party, they have expressed the desire to remove Marxism and replace it with Confucianism in the educational and political systems.³⁷

34 Entwistle, "Faith in China"; ChinaSource, "Shenzhen Christian Church Holds Celebration of Thanksgiving to Commemorate Thirtieth Anniversary of Worship Reinstatement."

35 Z. Chen, "High Level of Ritualization: the Creation of Folk Religions in Lingnan during Ming and Qing Period."

36 Jewish Times Asia, "Guangzhou and Shenzhen Chabad Communities."

37 Payette, "Shenzhen's Kongshengtang," 19–24.



MAP 104 Guangdong: Religious sites.

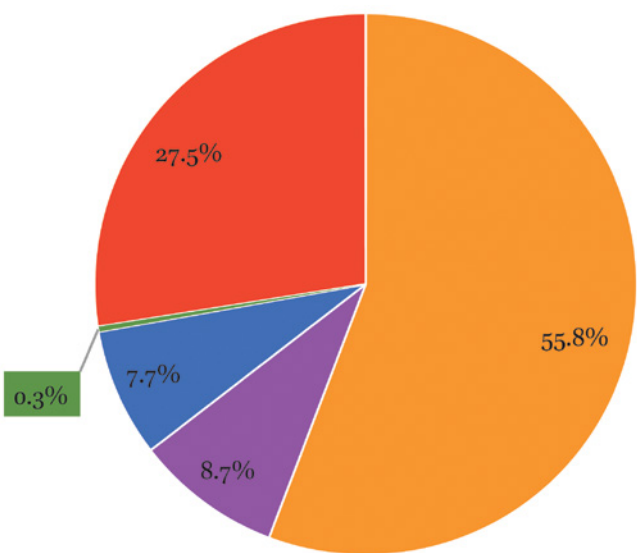
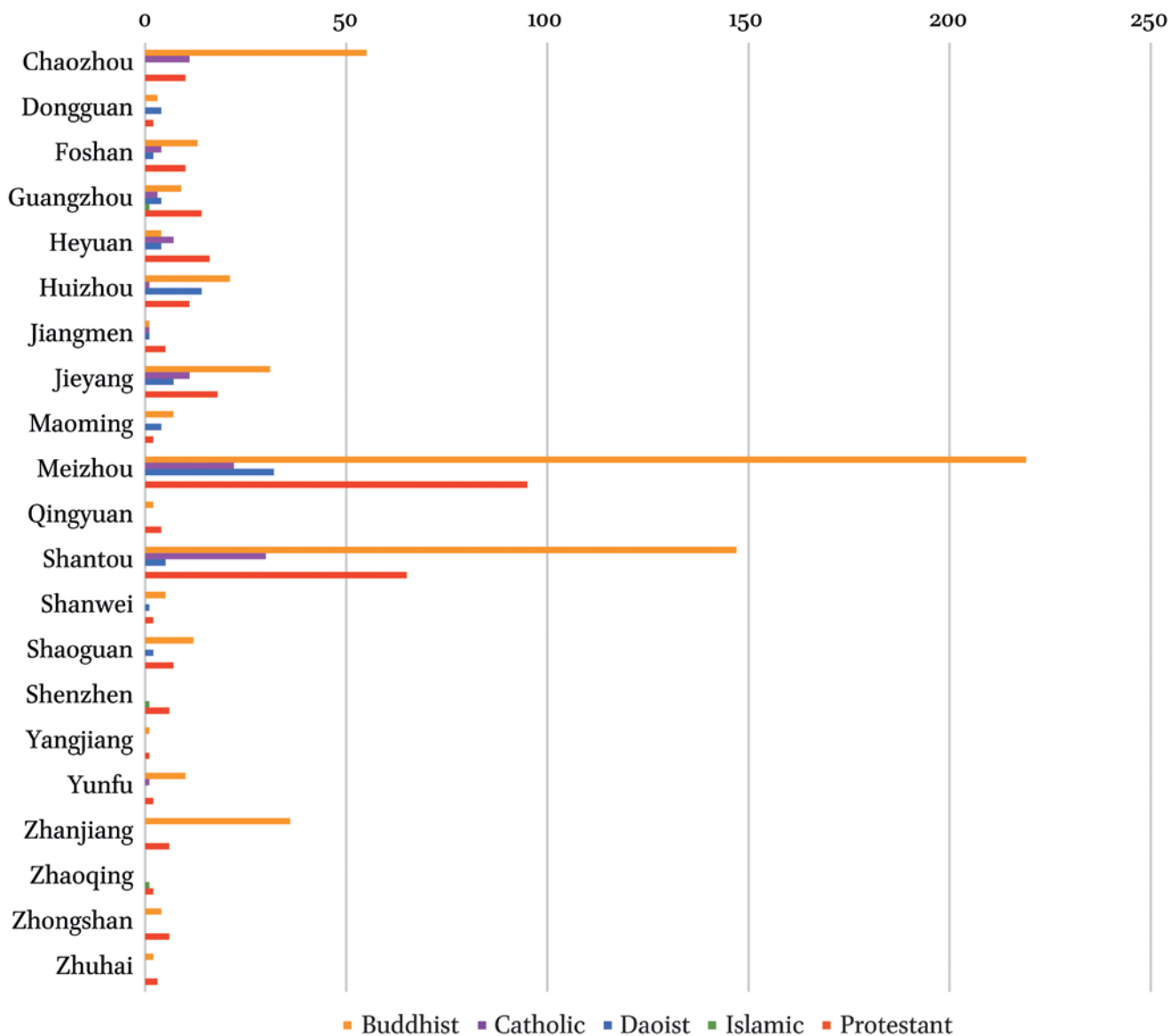


FIGURE 27 Guangdong: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.

20. Guangxi 广西

Land area: 236,000 km²

Population: 46,023,761

Capital: Nanning 南宁

Topography

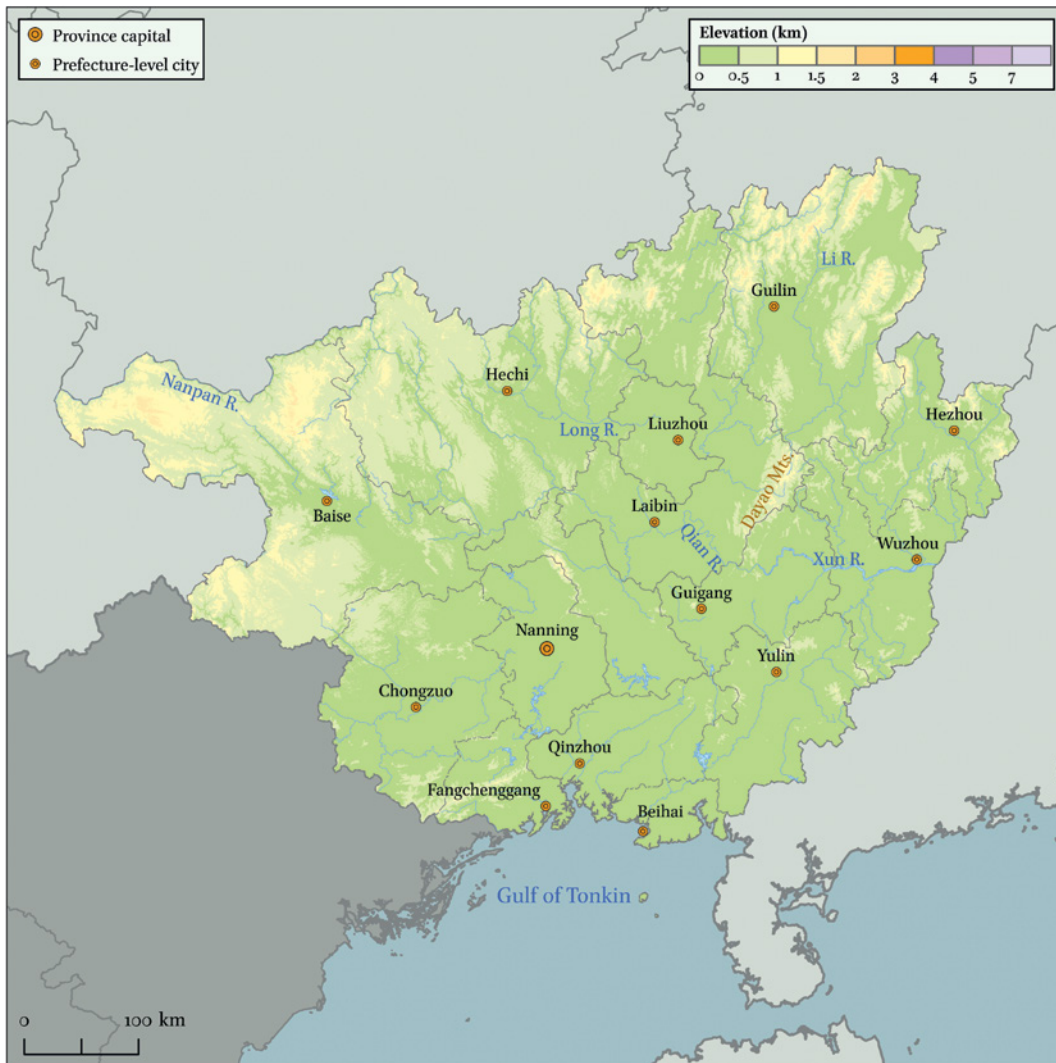
Guangxi, officially the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, is located in south China and borders Vietnam. Guangxi is divided into 14 prefectures, including 40 urban districts, 7 county-level cities, and 64 counties. Ethnic minorities make up over 37 percent of the total population in Guangxi, with over 14 million Zhuang people, accounting for 85.4 percent of the Zhuang population in all of China. Other ethnic minorities include Dong, Miao, Yao, Yi 彝, and Hui.

The land of Guangxi is full of mountains and hills (Map 105). Terrain in the province slopes from north to

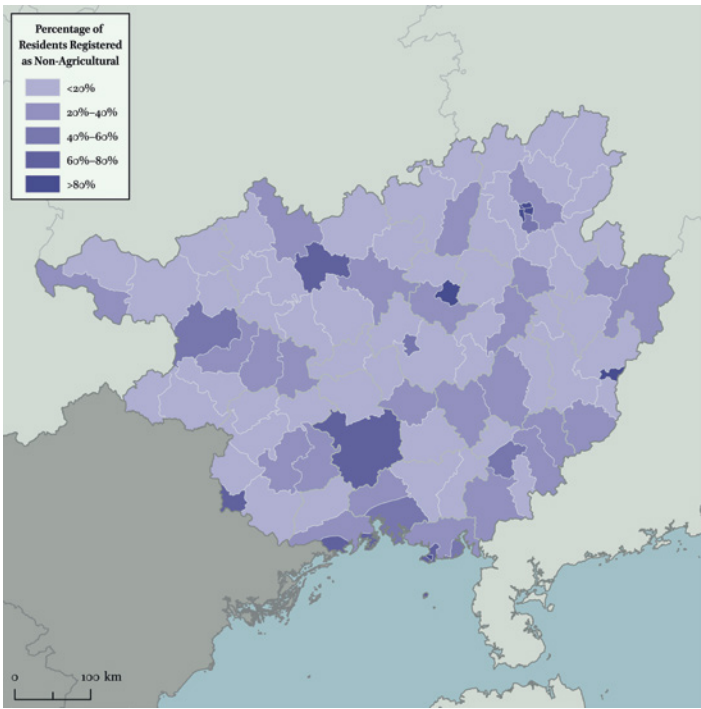
south. The population of Guangxi is evenly distributed in the central, northern, and southern counties. The northwestern counties are close to the Yungui Plateau 云贵高原. In the south, Guangxi has a short coastline on the Gulf of Tonkin 北部湾 [Beibu Wan]. Guangxi has a monsoon climate with long, hot summers and occasionally cold winters. The rich water resources and plentiful rainfall have benefited Guangxi's agricultural development, which includes the production of sugarcane. Half of China's sugar is grown in Guangxi.

Demography

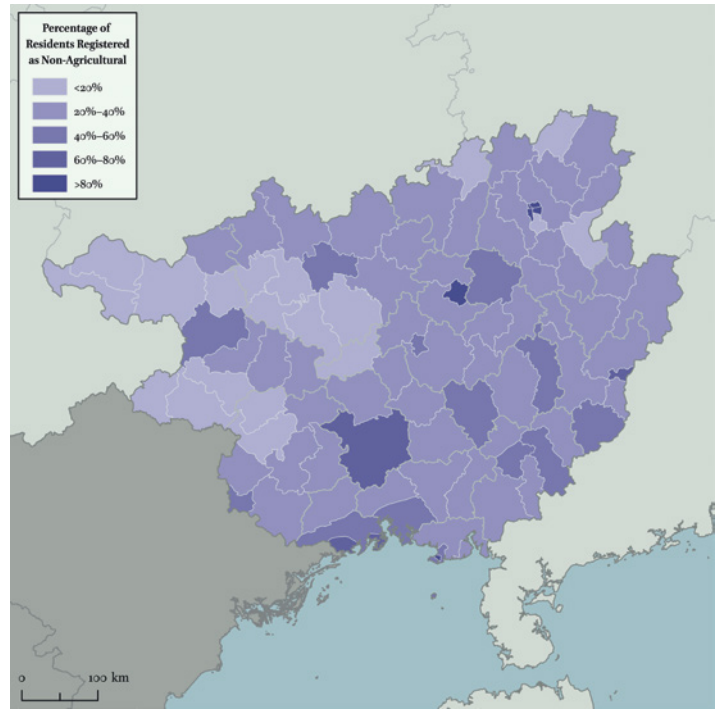
The total population of Guangxi increased slightly from 43,854,538 in 2000 to 46,023,761 in 2010. The number of immigrants from other provinces dropped by 41 percent to 841,806 between 2000 and 2010. This may be due to the languishing economy of Guangxi, compared with



MAP 105 Guangxi: Topography.



MAP 106 Guangxi: Urbanization in 2000.



MAP 107 Guangxi: Urbanization in 2010.



MAP 108 Guangxi: Religious sites.

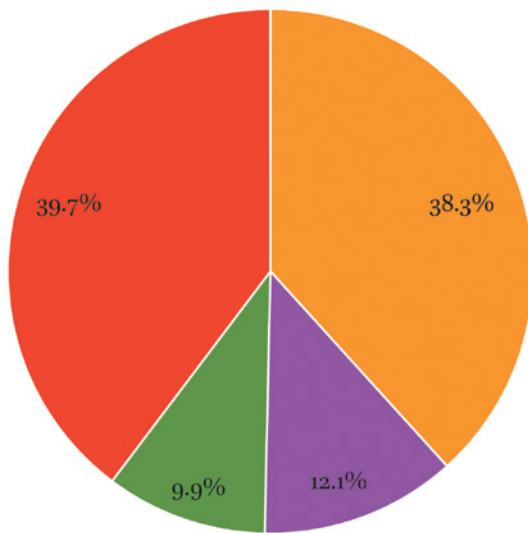
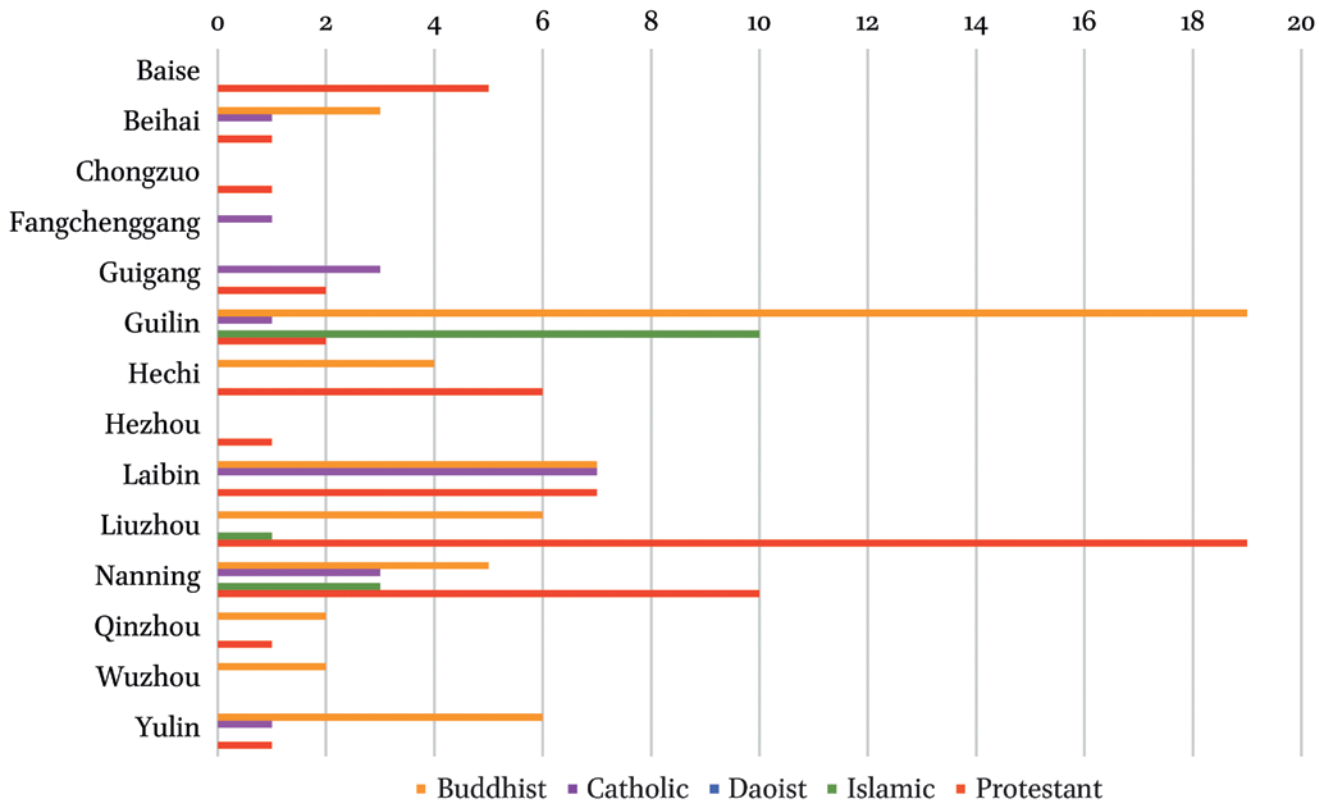


FIGURE 28 Guangxi: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.

other provinces, and its lack of manufacturing industry.³⁸ The percentage of people registered as urban residents changed in most counties during the decade 2000–2010 (Maps 106–107).

The proportion of elderly people in most counties ranged between 8 percent and 12 percent in 2000; by 2010

this range had increased to between 12 percent and 18 percent in most counties.

Key Religious Facts

As a region with pronounced ethnic minorities, Guangxi accommodates great religious diversity. Buddhism and Protestantism flourish in various areas, and significant numbers of Catholic churches and Islamic mosques are present. According to official statistics released in 2016, there were 700,000 religious believers in Guangxi, including 450,000 Buddhists, 10,000 Daoists, 37,000 Muslims, 71,000 Catholics, and 130,000 Protestants (Map 108 and Figure 28).³⁹

Han Buddhist sites comprise 29 percent of all the religious sites in Guangxi. In 2016, the Guangxi Buddhist Association 广西佛教协会 announced the first issuing of Buddhist clergy certificates to 233 Buddhist clergy in Guangxi.⁴⁰ Some view this new regulation as a response to incidents of fake “living Buddhas” and fraudulent monks.⁴¹

38 Guo, Gui, and Guo, *Multiregional Economic Development in China*, 38.

39 “Guangxi Diqingwang, “Religions.”

40 Global Buddhism, “Guangxi Buddhist Association Issued Clergy Certificates.”

41 Kaiman, “In China, The State Decides Who Can Come Back from the Dead.”

The Zhuang group mostly practices its traditional religion, Buluotuo 布洛陀, which appears to consist of traditional ancestor worship beliefs and practices reconstructed in recent years.⁴² In April 2016, 10,000 members of various ethnic groups participated in a Buluotuo ancestral ceremony in Tianyang 田阳 as part of the Guangxi Buluotuo Ethnic Cultural Festival.⁴³ The Guangxi government also invited ethnic representatives from Taiwan to participate in the festival, demonstrating a continuing official endeavor.

There are 3,2319 Hui people living in Guangxi, mainly distributed in Guilin 桂林, Liuzhou 柳州, and Nanning Prefectures. Hui people started to settle in Guangxi during the Song Dynasty (960–1279). In the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing Dynasty (1644–1911), more Hui people from Hubei, Hunan, Guangdong, and Yunnan 云南 moved to Guangxi.⁴⁴

21. Hainan 海南

Land area: 34,000 km²

Population: 8,671,485

Capital: Haikou 海口

Topography

Hainan is a province at the southern tip of China. In 1988 it separated from Guangdong Province and formed 4 prefectures, including 8 urban districts, 5 county-level cities, and 10 counties. Ethnic minorities make up 16.4 percent of the total population, including Li 黎, Miao, and Hui. The main island is mostly plains, with the Limu Mountains 黎母山 and Wuzhi Mountains 五指山 in the center (Map 109). The Qiongzhou Strait 琼州海峡 separates Hainan from the Leizhou Peninsula of Guangdong. To the south are the Nansha (Spratly) Islands 南沙群岛, the Zhongsha Islands 中沙群岛, the Xisha Islands 西沙群岛, and Zengmu Shoal 曾母暗沙. Hainan enjoys a tropical climate with little annual temperature differentiation; temperatures average between 22°C to 27°C with high humidity.

Hainan's tropical climate makes the province an important source of palm oil, tropical fruit, rubber, and fish. Plenty of beautiful beaches, lush forested areas, and other tropical scenery attracts tourists every year. Tourism has been the main economic driver in the province since the late 1990s. Many new hotels, restaurants,

apartments, and other tourist facilities have been built since then. The real estate market of Hainan has also boomed as many people from mainland China, drawn by the clean air and beautiful environment, purchase houses on the island. In recent decades, the government has increased its infrastructure investment and developed the tourism industry, both of which have made Hainan's economy more promising and more attractive to immigrants.⁴⁵

Demography

While this province includes hundreds of islands in the South China Sea, most residents live in the provincial capital, Haikou, on the northeast side of the island. The total population increased from 7,559,035 in 2000 to 8,671,485 in 2010, a 15 percent increase. The number of immigrants from other provinces doubled from 272,322 in 2000 to 588,463 in 2010. Urbanization is evident in the counties along the east coast. The proportion of people with a college education increased from 3 percent of the total population in 2000 to 8 percent a decade later; most of the well-educated residents are concentrated in Haikou and Sanya 三亚, the two major cities on the island (Maps 110–111). Average family size decreased from 4.1 persons to 3.5 over the same period. Unlike other provinces, where a rising elderly population is common, the percentage of persons aged 60 or above remained around 10 percent in Hainan.

Key Religious Facts

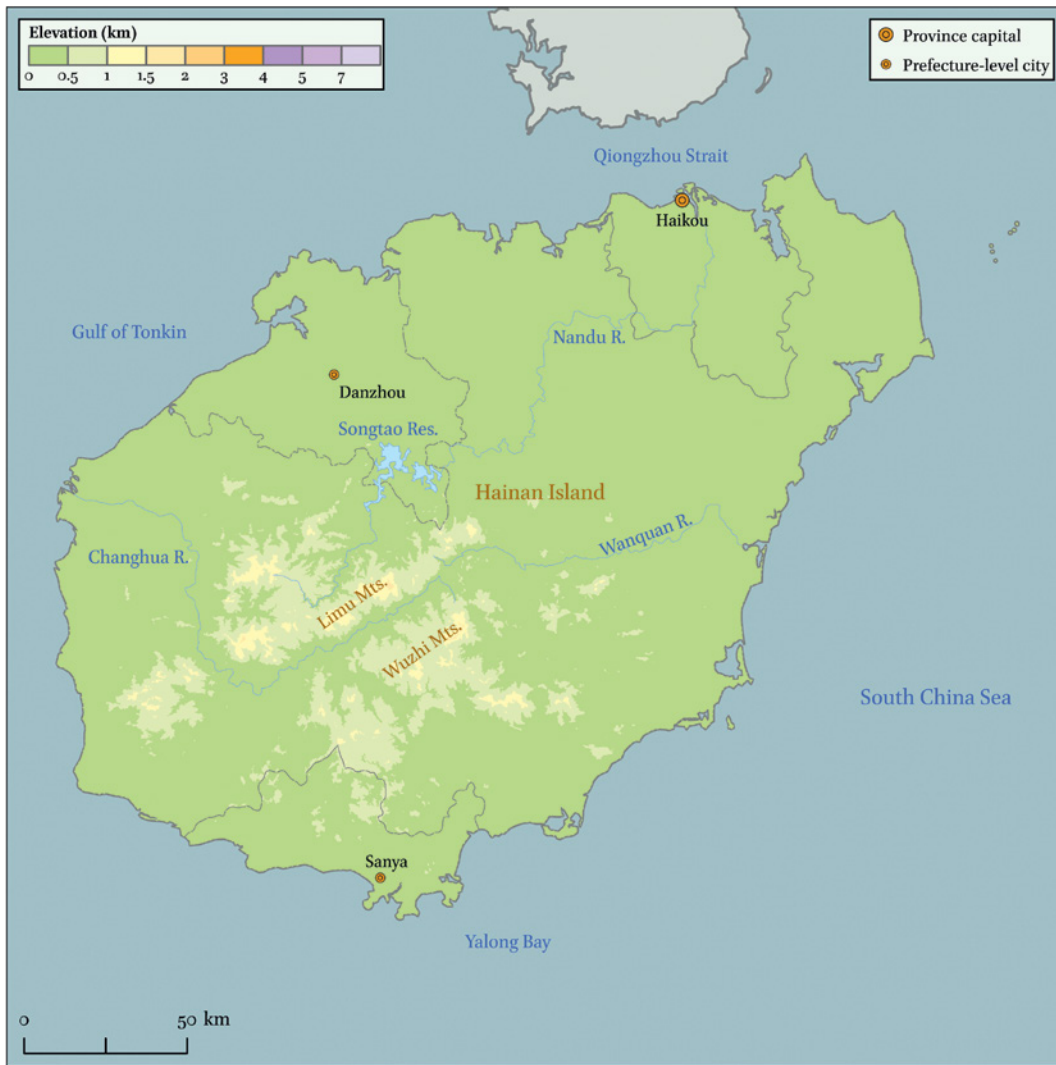
The 2004 Economic Census lists only two religious sites in Hainan. However, we were able to identify a few more religious venues through multiple methods (Map 112 and Figure 29). Even though it is the smallest province in China, Hainan's unique coastal location and its connection to various islands has fostered a diverse religious ecology with strong ties to the rest of the world. In recent times, Hainan has been a significant locus of Protestant activity. Charlie Soong 宋耀如 (1863–1918), a well-known Protestant evangelist, was born in northeastern Hainan. At the age of 15, he sailed with his uncle to Boston in the United States. After coming back to China, Soong became a Methodist minister, a successful businessman, and a generous supporter of Sun Yat-sen's Republican Revolution. His sons and daughters were active in the Republican government. His son, T. V. Soong 宋子文 (1894–1971), served in various roles in the government and was the premier under President Chiang Kai-shek 蒋介石 (1887–1975) in the

42 Shi, *A Study on the Butuoluo Faith among the Zhuang Ethnic Group*.

43 Renminwang, "An Attractive Heritage Festival Celebrating Buluotuo Folk Culture in Baise City."

44 Yisilan Zhichuang, "The History of the Hui Ethnic Group in Guangxi."

45 China Daily, "Railway Ferry Services across Qiongzhou Straits Begins"; China.org, "China in Key Position to Attract Medical Tourists."



MAP 109 Hainan: Topography.

mid-1940s. One of his daughters, Soong Ching-ling 宋庆龄 (1893–1981), married Sun Yat-sen, and another, Soong Meiling 宋美龄 (1897–2003), married Chiang Kai-shek. Today Christianity in Hainan continues to grow with tenacity. In 2013, the Christian Council in Hainan began offering courses and training on divinity, pastorship, and hymns.⁴⁶ Furthermore, in 2013 alone, more than 10 house churches were raided, which shows that the number of Christians in Hainan is remarkable considering the small size of the province.⁴⁷

Given the importance of tourism in the province's economy, religion is in the process of being commercialized. Nanshan Temple 南山寺, a grand Buddhist temple located in Sanya, is an example. The temple was built in

1988 as part of an area known as the Nanshan Buddhist Cultural Zone, a tourist site featuring a huge statue of the Guanyin of the South Sea.⁴⁸

As the largest ethnic minority population in Hainan, Li people comprised 14.6 percent of the total population in 2010. Li people practice ancestor worship and believe in spirits of heaven, land, the moon, the sun, water, rocks, trees, and mountains, which are not very different from those in Daoism (Photo 24).⁴⁹ After the Li people were introduced to Daoism in the Tang Dynasty (618–907), Daoist influence grew gradually and has become a mainstream religious belief among this minority.⁵⁰

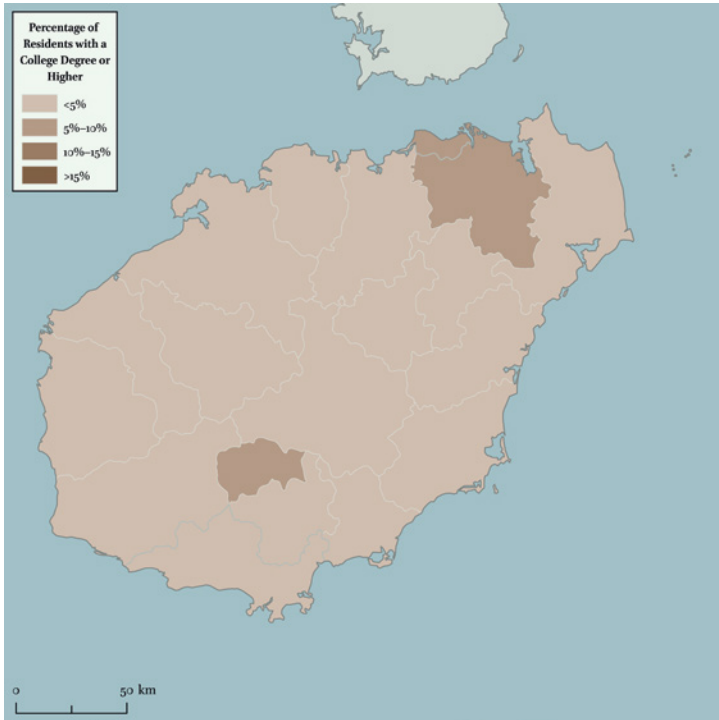
46 Gospel Times, "A Theology Training Center in Hainan Province Been Operating for One Year."

47 Radio Free Asia, "Authorities Continue to Suppress Christians in Hainan."

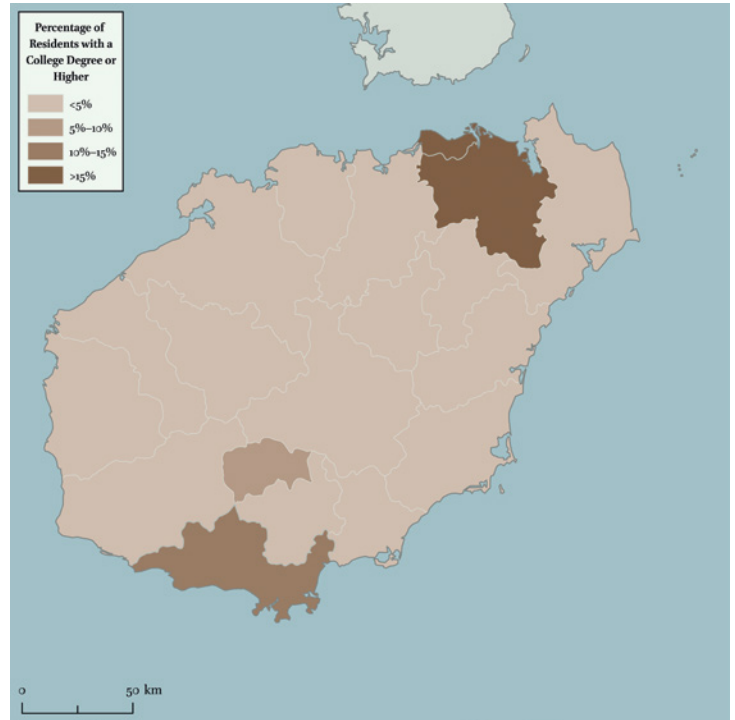
48 Economist, "Zen and the Art of Moneymaking."

49 Facts and Details, "Li Minority: Their History, Religion and Festivals."

50 China Taoism, "The Spread and Indigenization of Daoism in the area of Li Ethnic Group, Hainan."



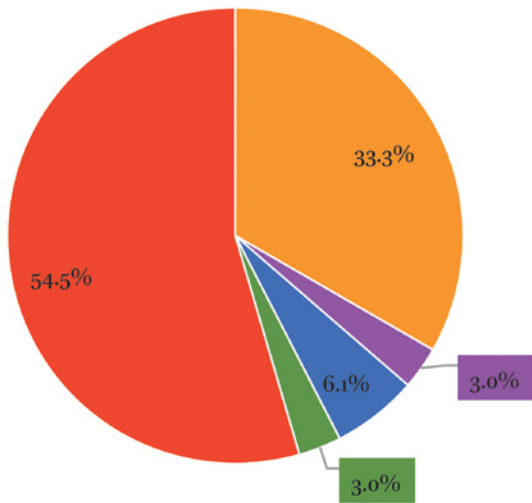
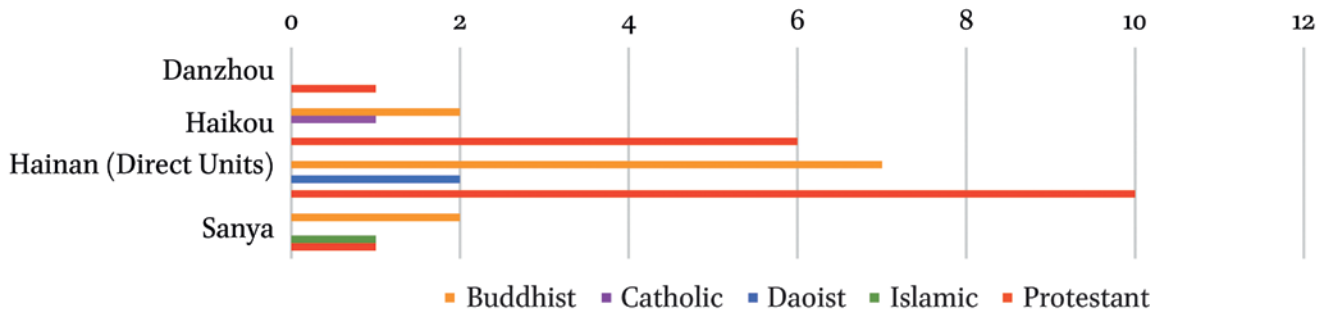
MAP 110 Hainan: Education in 2000.



MAP 111 Hainan: Education in 2010.



MAP 112 Hainan: Religious sites.



There are five key Muslim tomb sites on Hainan Island, including Huixin Village 回新村 near Fenghuang Township 凤凰乡 of Sanya City. The navy requisitioned the area and planned to build a training base. When authorities attempted to demolish the tombs, which date back over a thousand years, the Hui villagers appealed to the government to recognize their ancestral claim to the land and rejected a proposal by the navy to move the tombs to another location. In March 2009, villagers staged a round-the-clock vigil to protect the bones of their Muslim ancestors.⁵¹

FIGURE 29 Hainan: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.



PHOTO 24 A public sacrifice in Yongxing Town (Haikou City, Hainan).
CREDIT: YIWEN JI

51 Li, "Protest Over Muslim Tombs."

Southwest China 西南地区



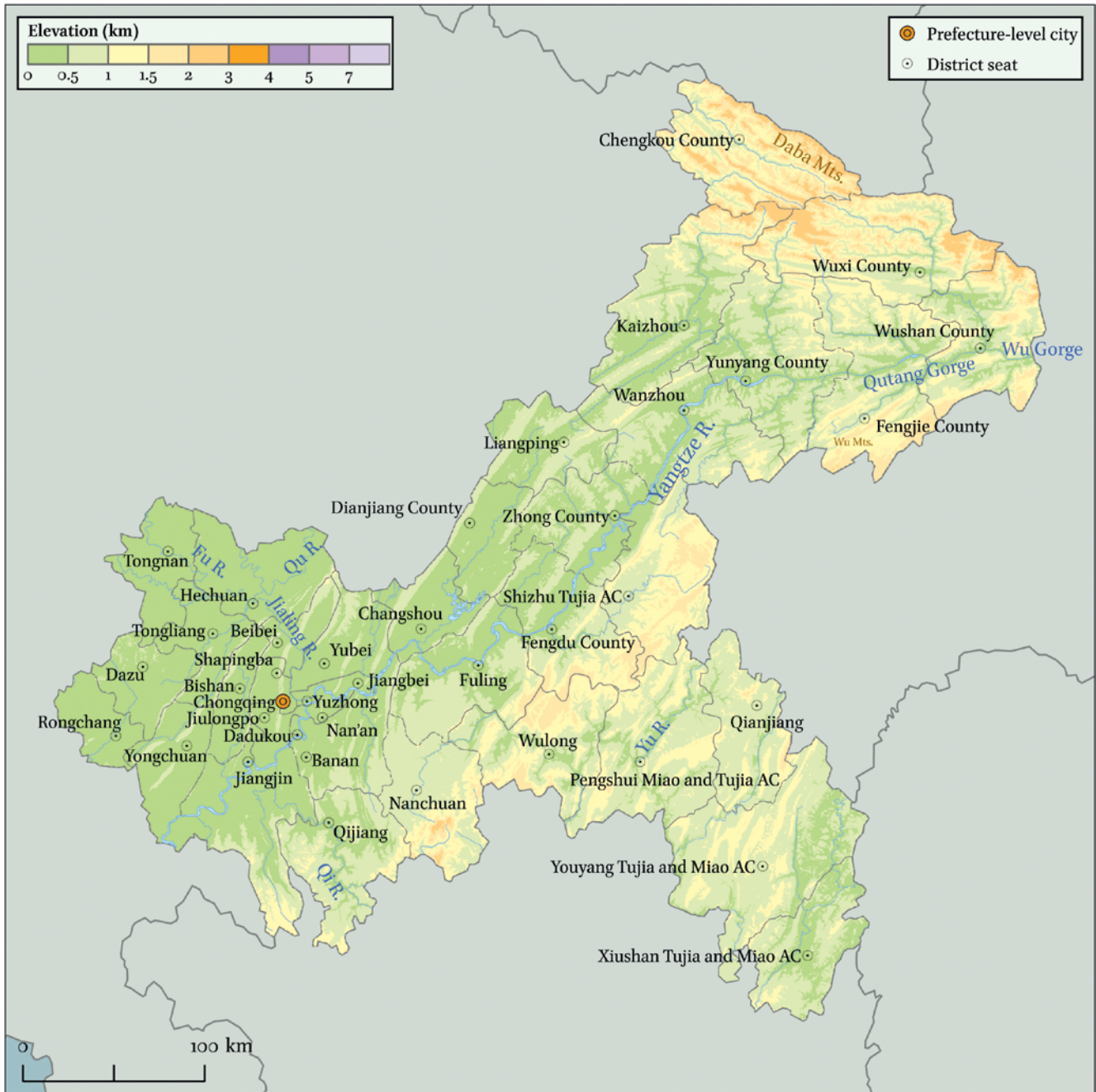
MAP 113 Subregional map of Southwest China.

22. Chongqing 重庆

Land area: 82,300 km²
 Population: 28,846,170

Topography

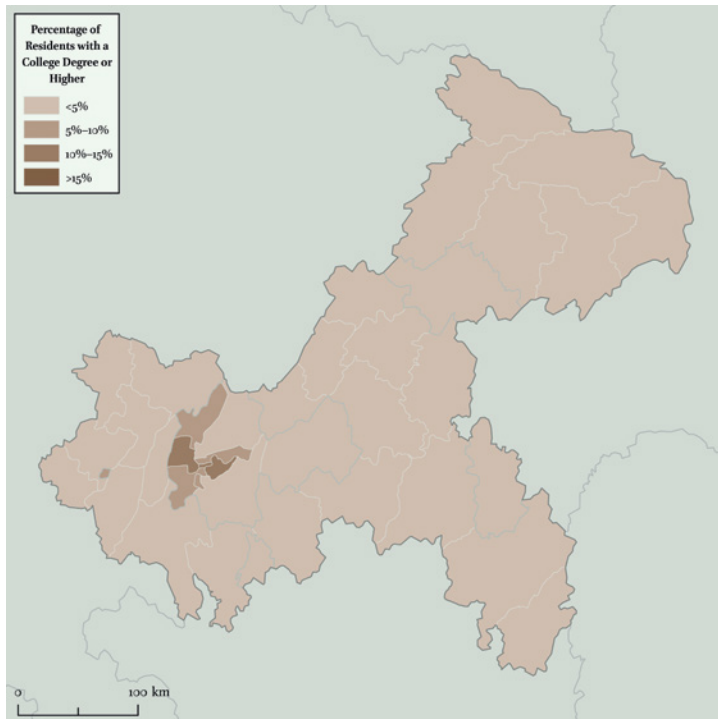
Chongqing became a municipality under the direct control of the central government in 1997, separating from Sichuan 四川. Situated on the upper reaches of the Yangtze River in southwest China, Chongqing municipality governs 26 urban districts and 12 counties. The municipality



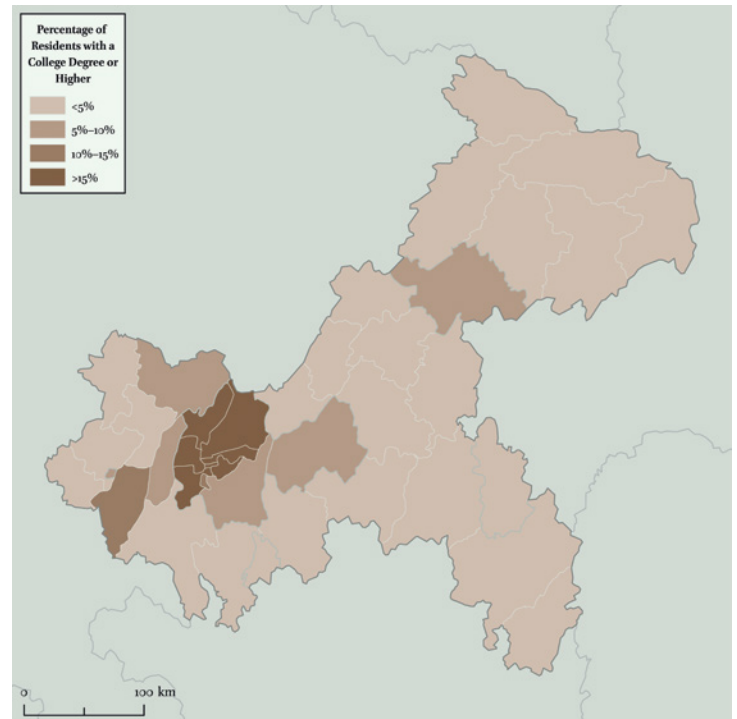
MAP 114 Chongqing: Topography.

is surrounded by mountains and hills, including the Daba Mountains 大巴山 and the Wu Mountains 巫山 in the northeast corner of the province (Map 114). The whole area slopes down from the east toward the Yangtze River valley, with sharp rises and falls; it is crisscrossed by rivers, with the Yangtze River running through the whole province from southwest to northeast. The Chongqing city proper is located in the southwestern part of the municipality. In the northeast, the Yangtze River cuts through the Wu Mountains at three places, forming the well-known Three Gorges.

Known as one of the “three furnaces” of the Yangtze River, Chongqing has long, hot, and humid summers, with highs of 33°C–34°C in July and August. This municipality is the largest comprehensive industrial base in southwest China. Five backbone industries are well developed, including automobile and motorcycle production, chemical and pharmaceutical manufacturing, construction and building material, food, and tourism. Today, Chongqing is developing its high-tech industries of information technology, bioengineering, and environmental protection. Mineral resources such as coal, natural gas, manganese,



MAP 115 Chongqing: Education in 2000.



MAP 116 Chongqing: Education in 2010.

mercury, aluminum, and strontium are plentiful in this area. Situated at the confluence of the Yangtze and Jialing Rivers 嘉陵江, Chongqing City is a key transportation hub for river, rail, and air transportation in southwest China.

Demography

Despite the hilly terrain of the whole municipality, Chongqing is very densely populated, with an average of 1,069 people per square kilometer. The most populous area is Yuzhong 渝中 District, with more than 19,500 people per square kilometer. The total population of Chongqing shrank nearly 6 percent from 2000 to 2010. Given that the municipality is one of the main regions supplying peasant workers to the labor force of east coast cities, the decrease in population is not surprising. A large number of peasants migrate out of Chongqing for temporary employment.¹

The percentage of people who completed college nearly doubled, rising from 3.0 percent in 2000 to 7.7 percent in 2010 (Maps 115–116). Meanwhile, the proportion of urban residents increased from 35.3 percent in 2000 to 51.5 percent in 2010. The percentage of one-generation households increased from 23.9 in 2000 to 41.4 percent in 2010, and the average family size shrank from 3.2 persons in 2000 to 2.7 in 2010.

1 Wangyixinwen, "The Number of Emigrants in Major Provinces."

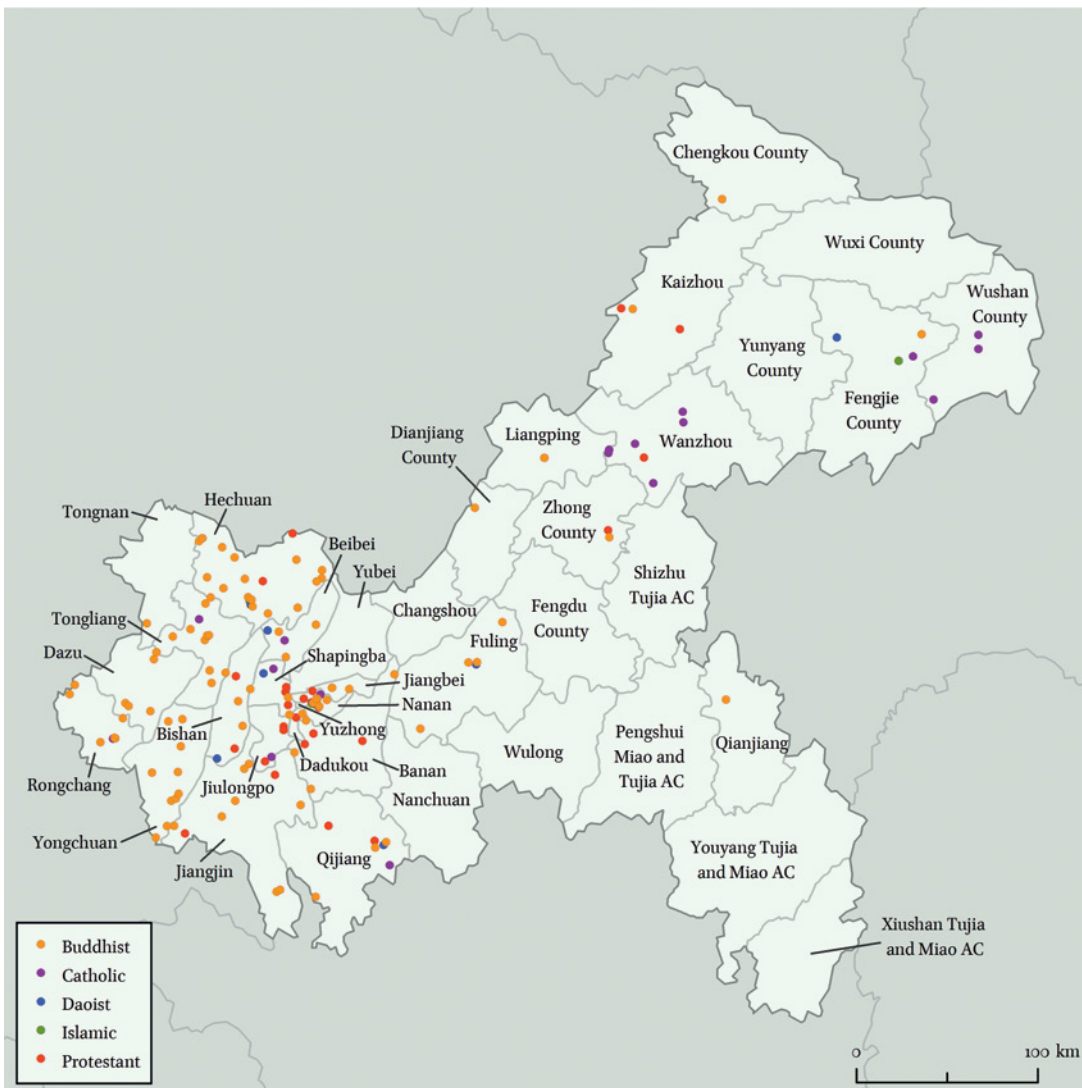
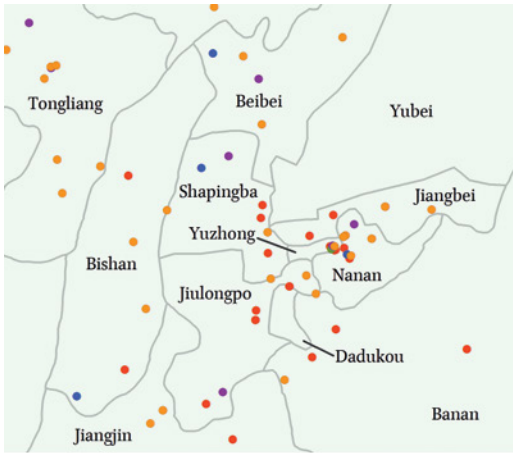
Key Religious Facts

In Chongqing's religious landscape (Map 117 and Figure 30), Buddhism is predominant, although there are a good number of Protestant churches in Chongqing City proper and a few notable Catholic churches in the northeastern prefectures. Some prefectures in the southeast did not report any religious sites in the 2004 Economic Census; this probably reflects underreporting instead of the absence of religious sites.

In February 2016, Huayan Temple 华岩寺 in Chongqing introduced the first Buddhist charity app in China for use on mobile phones. The project was initiated by Abbot Daojian 道见 and facilitated by the Huayan Foundation for Education and Culture 华严文化教育基金会. The app allows users to listen to sutra recitations, take a virtual temple tour, communicate with fellow Buddhist followers around the country, and participate in Huayan's charity events.² The rapid renaissance of Buddhism in contemporary China has brought with it a new growth in Buddhist-run and Buddhist-inspired charities, and the government has tolerated and in some cases supported such growth.³

2 Ifeng, "Chongqing Huayan Temple Launches the First Domestic Buddhist Charity App."

3 Laliberté, "Buddhist Revival under State Watch"; Ashiwa, "Positioning Religion in Modernity: State and Buddhism in China."



MAP 117 Chongqing: Religious sites.

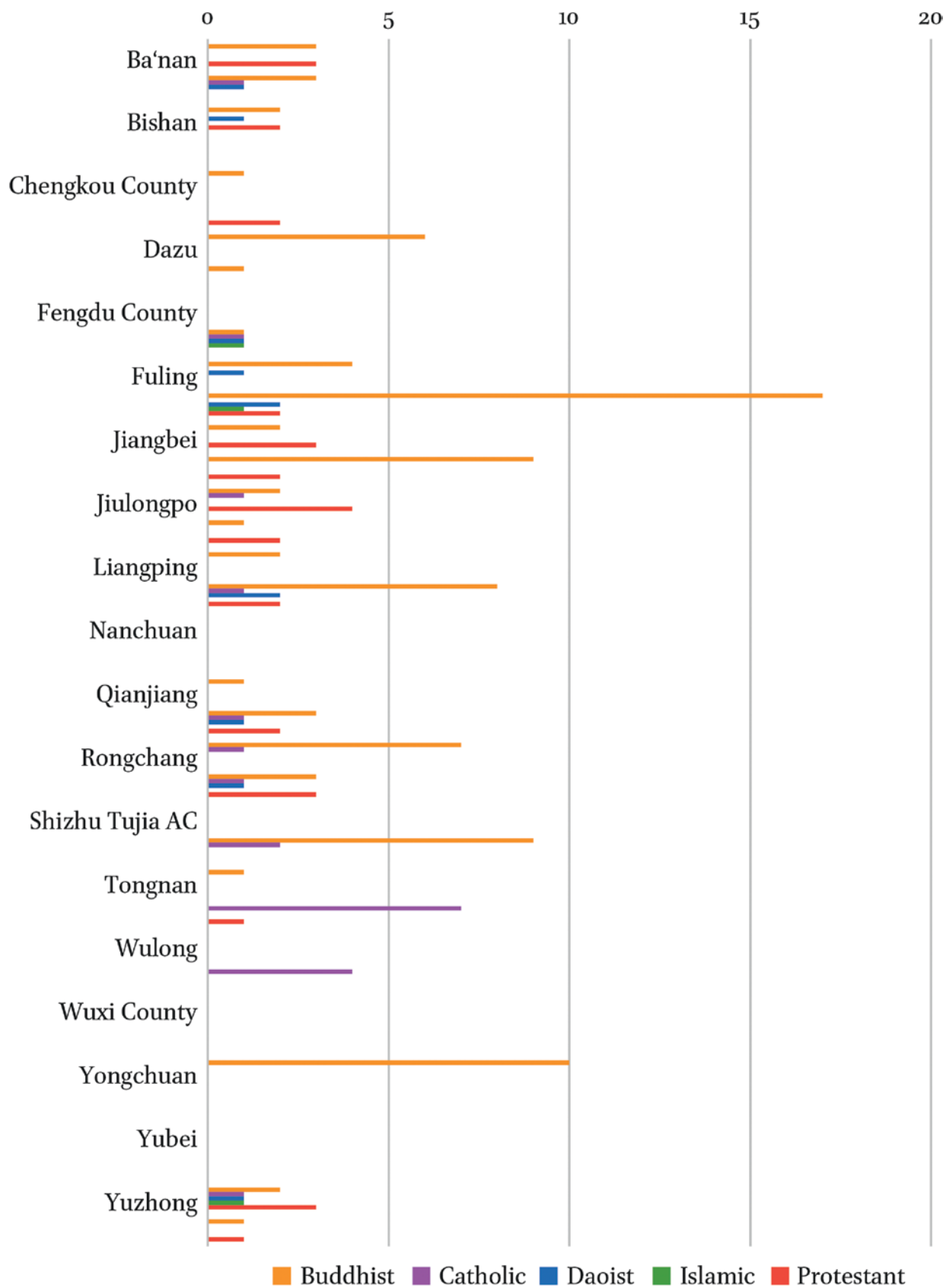


FIGURE 30 Chongqing: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.

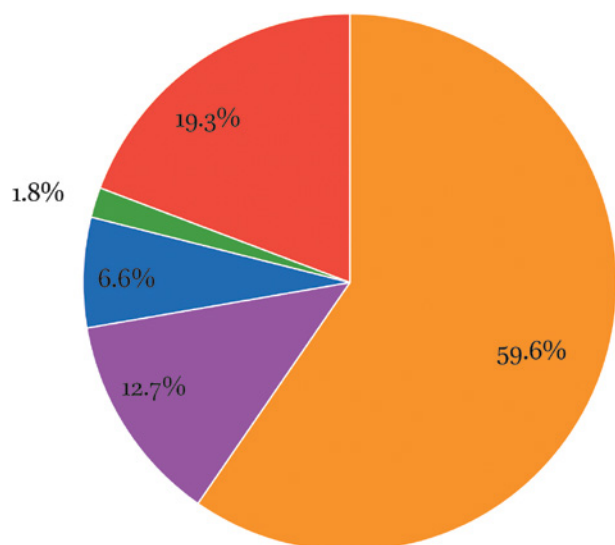


FIGURE 30
Chongqing: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.



PHOTO 25 An entryway to a Chairman Mao shrine (Xiushan Ethnic Autonomous County, Chongqing).
CREDIT: HUANGJUNYAN XU.

In addition, these activities have enhanced cooperation across the Taiwan Strait.⁴

“Red tourism” is an emerging new form of pseudo-religious cultural tourism in China (Photo 25). It refers to organized trips that are constructed as political pilgrimages and emphasize visiting national sacred places, such as the birthplace and residence of past communist leaders, battlefields, and revolutionary martyrs’ cemeteries and memorials, in order to learn about the nation’s revolutionary history and to boost national pride. Hongyan Village 红岩村 in Chongqing is one such destination, where tourists can commemorate the martyrdom of Communists who were killed by Guomindang authorities in the late 1940s. Today tourists swarm the village’s museums and the local government has staged a play dramatizing historical events. Revolutionary narratives usually impress upon visitors the heroes’ deaths and the victorious battles in which they gave their lives.⁵

23. Sichuan 四川

Land area: 485,000 km²
Population: 80,417,528
Capital: Chengdu 成都

Topography

Located in the southwestern part of China, Sichuan is the fifth-largest province in the country and occupies an important position on the upper reaches of the Yangtze River, serving as a critical intersection in the southwest region. There are 21 prefectures, including 49 urban districts, 15 county-level cities, and 119 counties. Ethnic minorities comprise 6 percent of the total population, including Tibetan, Yi, Qiang 羌, and Naxi 纳西 people. Known as “the province of abundance,” Sichuan is endowed with a favorable natural environment, rich specialty products, and an ample labor force. This province has the strongest economy in western China, thanks to agriculture and the aerospace and military industries.

Sichuan consists of two geographically distinct regions (Map 118). Major cities are located in the fertile Sichuan Basin 四川盆地 in the east. The western part of Sichuan comprises numerous mountain ranges that form the eastern edge of the Tibetan Plateau. Major mountains are the Min Mountains 岷山 in the north and the Daxue

Mountains 大雪山 in the middle. Sichuan literally means “four rivers” in Chinese and refers to the Jialing River the Tuo River 沱江, the Yalong River 雅砻江, and the Jinsha River 金沙江. The extreme variation in Sichuan’s topography is matched by distinct climates. The eastern lowlands are characterized by warm and hot summers, while the western part of Sichuan has a typical plateau climate, with long winters, cool summers, and lots of sunshine.

Demography

The overall population density of Sichuan reflects the geography of the province: the Sichuan Basin in the east is far more populous than the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau 青藏高原 in the west. The distribution of population has not changed much since 2000. Population density is very high in the cities of Chengdu, Neijiang 内江, and Suining 遂宁, while in the west it is very low. The total population of Sichuan in 2000 was 82,348,296, which declined by 2.3 percent to 80,417,528 in 2010.

One of the significant shifts in Sichuan society is the increasing proportion of elderly persons in the population, which may be the consequence of a rise in the number of young people who have emigrated to other provinces for employment.⁶ The proportion of people aged 60 years old and above has increased greatly from 10.7 percent in 2000 to 15 percent in 2010 (Maps 119–120). Places with a substantially high proportion of elderly people tend to be well-developed cities, such as Chengdu, and also those adjacent to Chongqing, like Guang’an 广安 and Dazhou 达州.

Family structure in Sichuan has also experienced significant changes. The proportion of one-generation families increased dramatically between 2000 and 2010. In the three ethnic minority autonomous prefectures that comprise the western part of Sichuan, the average family size is relatively large, with five or more members per family.

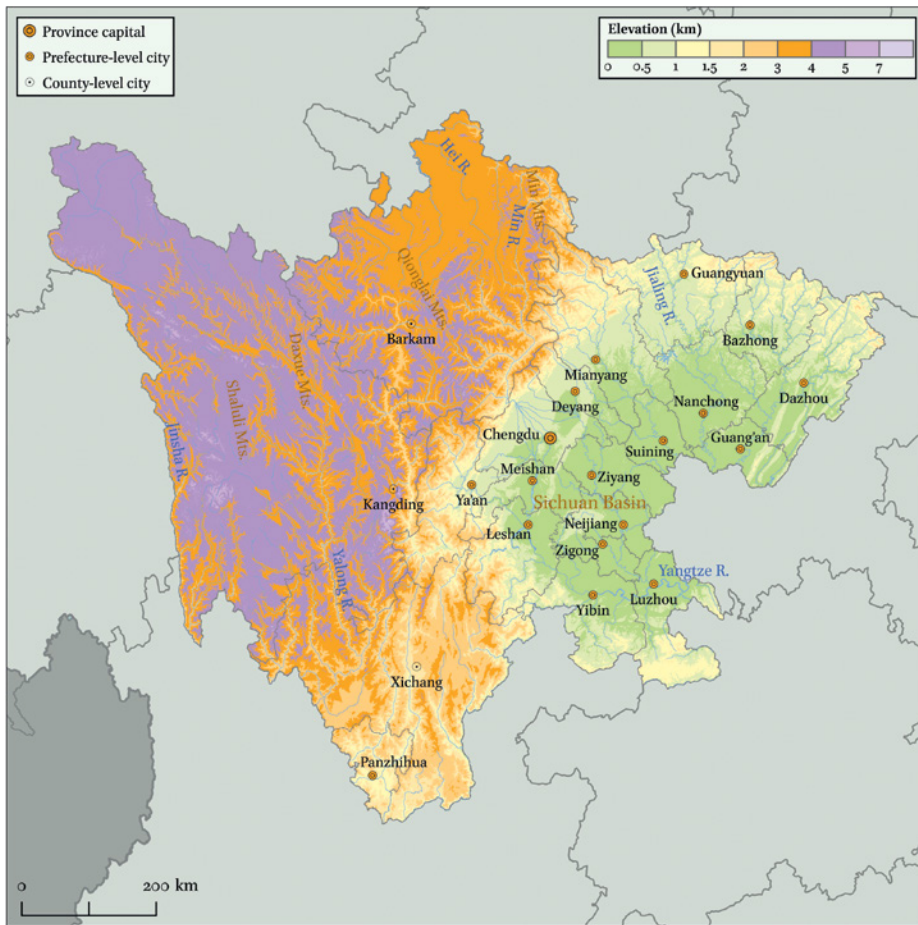
Key Religious Facts

The predominant religion in Sichuan is Buddhism. Buddhist temples are concentrated in the western part of the province as well as in the Sichuan Basin. In fact, the Sichuan Basin has a high degree of religious diversity, including Buddhist and Daoist temples, Catholic and Protestant churches, and Islamic mosques (Map 121 and Figure 31). There is also a concentration of mosques in Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture 凉山彝族自治州 in the south, and some mosques in the counties in the north.

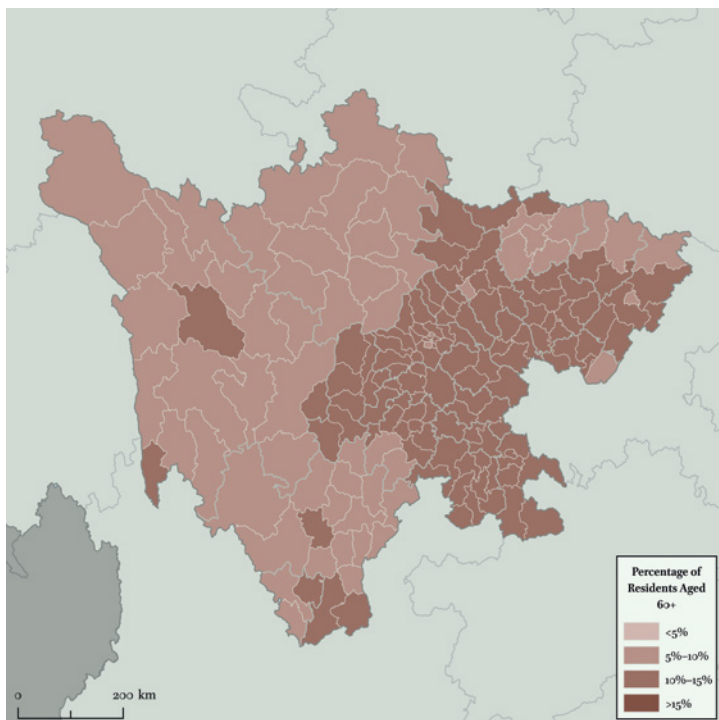
4 Laliberté, “Buddhist Revival under State Watch”; idem, “Buddhist for the Human Realm’ and Taiwanese Democracy”; Madsen, *Democracy’s Dharma*, 76.

5 Takayama, “Red Tourism in China.”

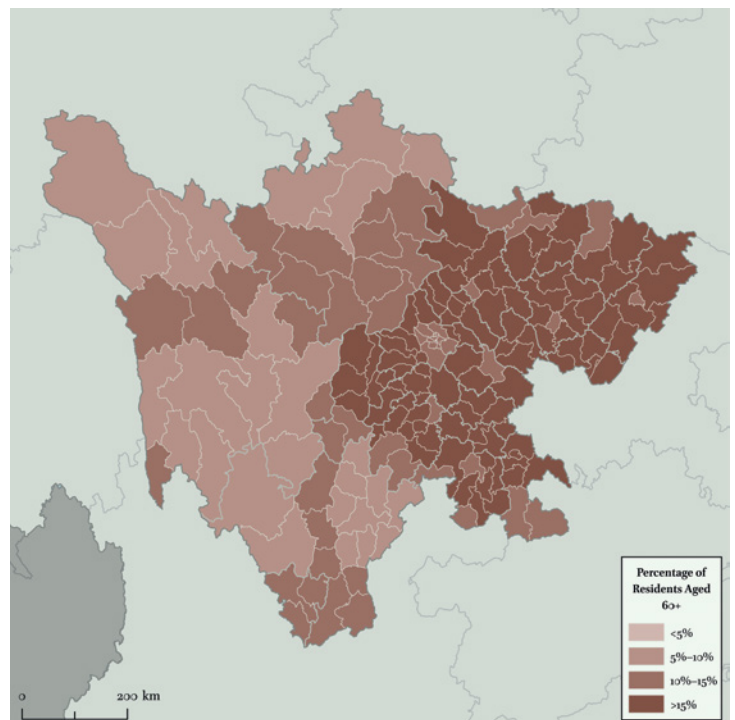
6 Liang, Li, and Ma, “Changing Patterns of the Floating Population in China.”



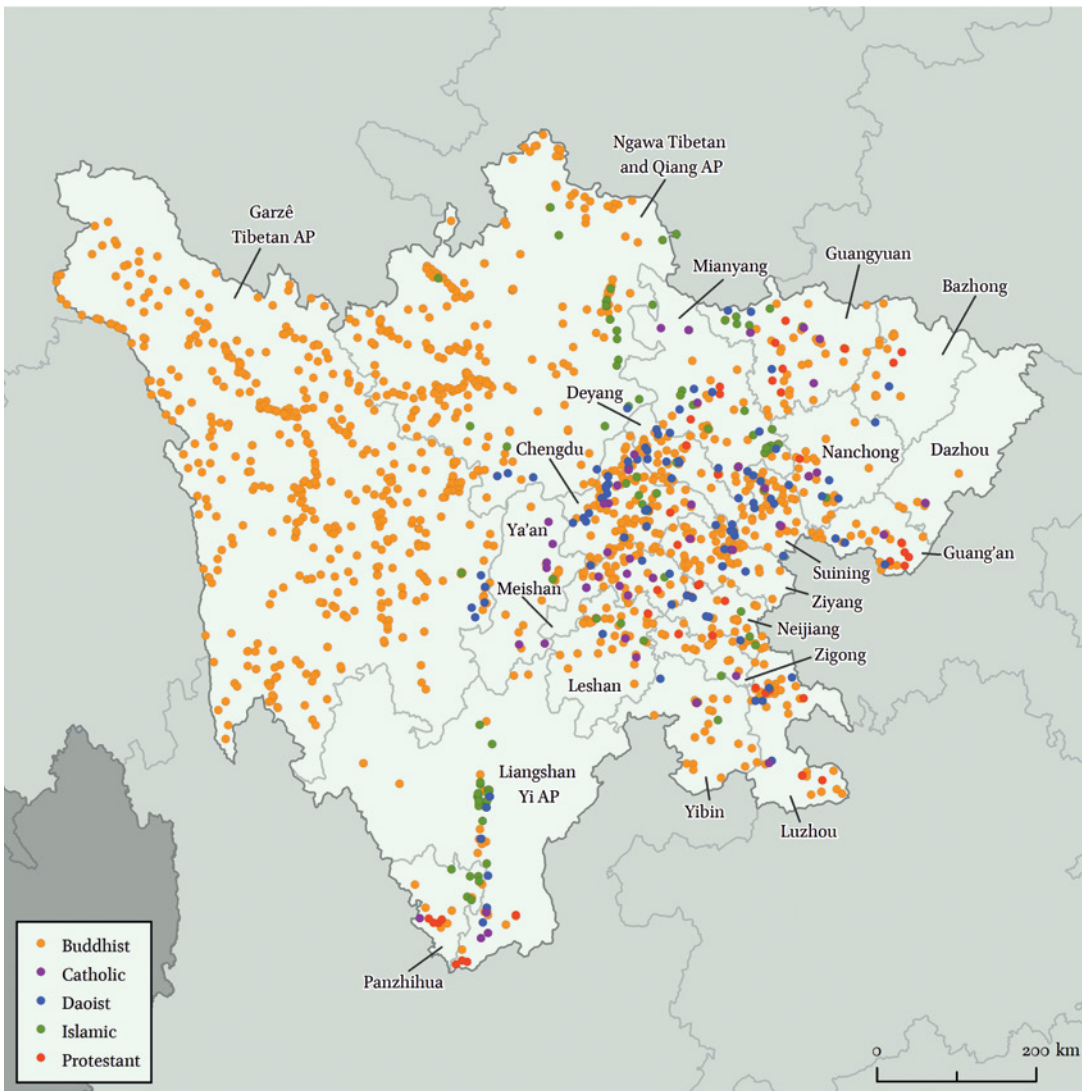
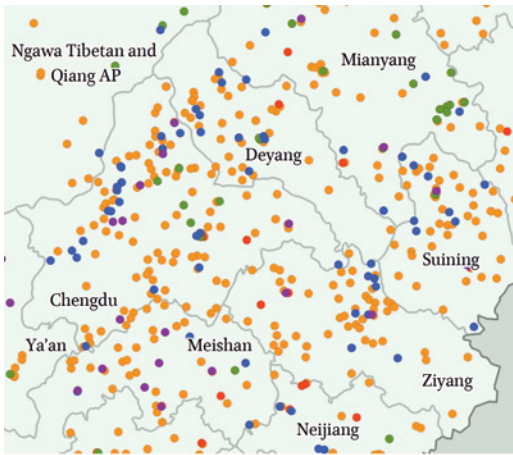
MAP 118 Sichuan: Topography.



MAP 119 Sichuan: Elderly population in 2000.



MAP 120 Sichuan: Elderly population in 2010.



MAP 121 Sichuan: Religious sites.

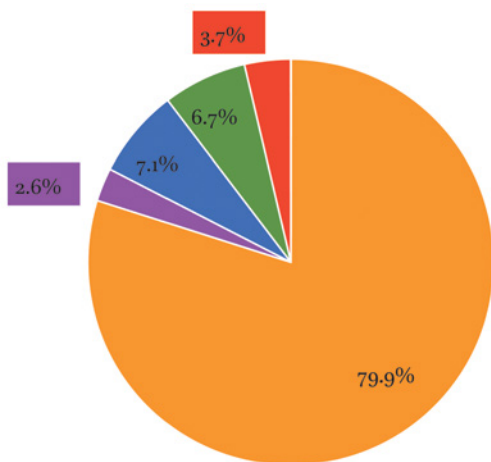
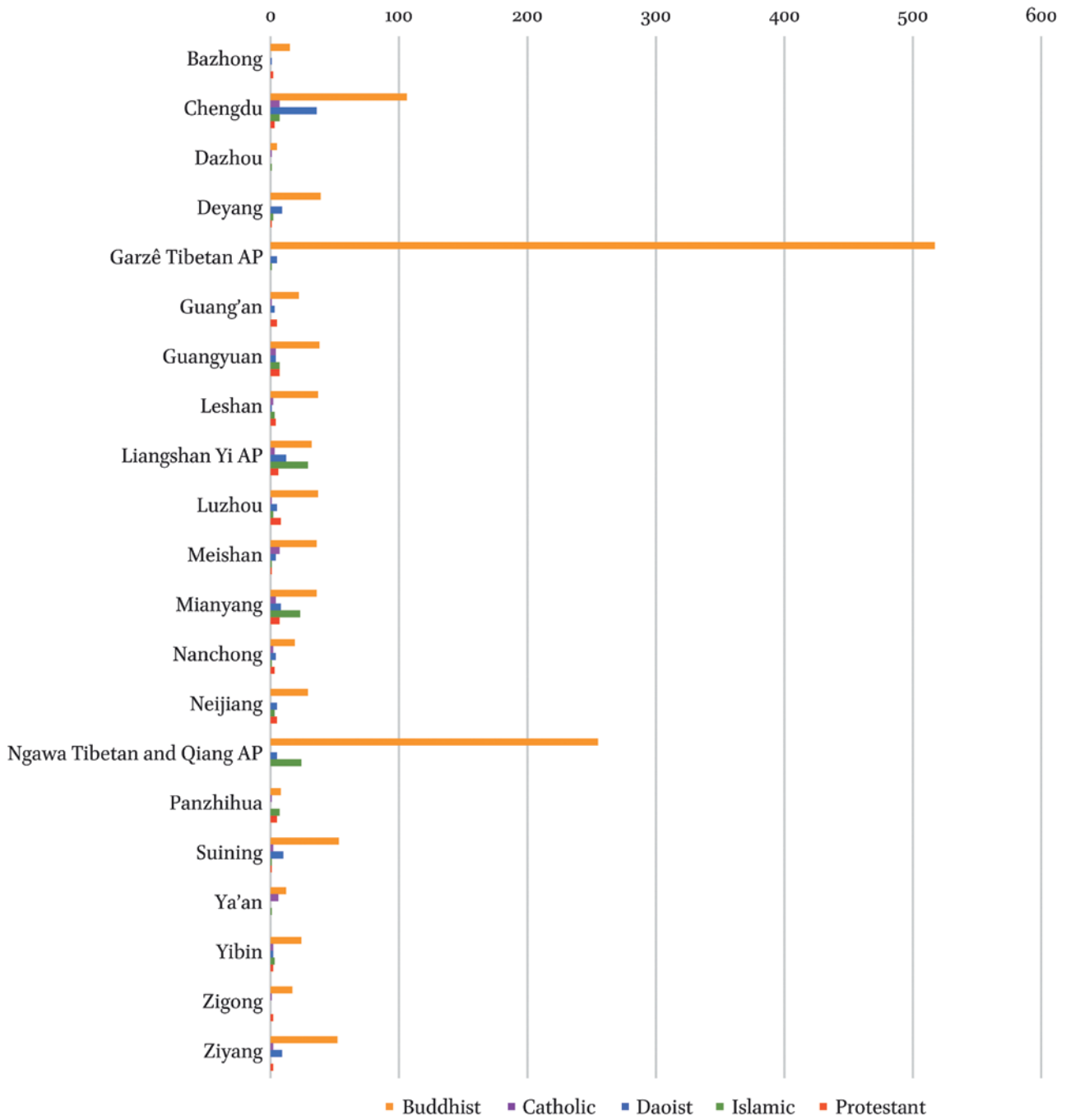


FIGURE 31
Sichuan: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.



PHOTO 26 Wuming Buddhist Academy (Garze Tibet Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan).
CREDIT: PENG LIANG.

Protestant and Catholic churches are also found in the southern and northern prefectures.

According to the 2004 Economic Census, 1,413 of Sichuan's 1,856 official religious sites were registered as Buddhist. Given the fact that the western part of Sichuan includes many Tibetans, many of the province's Buddhist sites belong to Tibetan Buddhism. Kirti Monastery 格尔登寺, the largest Gelug school temple, is one of the most famous Tibetan Buddhist monasteries located in western Sichuan. The temple was formerly known as the "cave temple," and it served as the headquarters for the Red Army (the forerunner of the People's Liberation Army) during the Long March (October 1934–October 1935), a military retreat led by the Communist Party to evade the pursuing Kuomintang (Chinese Nationalist Party) army. Given the tensions between Tibetans and the government, Buddhist monasteries have increasingly become sites of resistance and protests.⁷ In March 2015, Tibetan monk Lobsang Tsering of Kirti Monastery protested against the Chinese government's religious policies concerning the Dalai Lama 达赖喇嘛, the exiled Tibetan spiritual leader. He held up a portrait of the Dalai Lama and threw prayer leaflets before the police arrived and arrested him. Lobsang was released

from custody in August 2015 after being detained for two months. Other Buddhist institutions in Sichuan also share the sentiment of resistance against state suppression. The Seda Larung Buddhist Institute (Wumin Foyuan 五明佛院, the Buddhist Institute of the Five Sciences), a world-renowned center for the study of Tibetan Buddhism, was established to provide an ecumenical training in Tibetan Buddhism (Photo 26). It has been a major tourist attraction since the 1980s. The government has periodically torn down the dormitories of the institute in an attempt to regulate and contain it.

Sichuan is also an important base of Han Buddhism where a number of historical and famous Buddhist temples have been situated. Wenshuyuan 文殊院, an influential temple with a history of about 1,400 years, is one example. This temple covers an area of about 82 mu 亩 (about 13.5 acres). The relics of the Buddha and Xuanzang 玄奘 kept in this temple have been an attraction for Buddhist followers throughout the country.⁸

Christianity entered Sichuan in 1868 through the work of British missionaries, and the first church in the province was founded in 1881. Foreign missionaries contributed to the development of education and medical care. In

⁷ W. W. Smith, Jr., *Tibet's Last Stand?*, 26.

⁸ Chengdu Buddhism, "Buddhist Temples in Chengdu."



PHOTO 27 Nuns from Wushun Catholic Church assist after the Wenchuan earthquake in 2008.
CREDIT: XIAOXIONG ZHOU

1910, for example, West China Union University 华西协和大学 was established as a mission school, the predecessor of the medical college at Sichuan University.⁹ Churches have played important roles during recent natural disasters in the province (Photo 27).

One of the largest and most resilient house churches is in Sichuan. Early Rain Reformed Church (*Qiuyu zhifu* 秋雨之福归正教会) was established in Chengdu in 2005. Self-identified as a house church that refuses to join the TSPM, the church has been pressured by the authorities to dissolve. However, under the leadership of Pastor Wang Yi 王怡, the church has persisted and grown. In 2008, the

church filed a lawsuit against the Religious Affairs Bureau for illegally shutting down the church.¹⁰ In recent years, several other house churches in Chengdu have joined Early Rain Reformed Church to form the Presbytery of West China Reformed Churches, which has established a seminary and a day school and founded a college of liberal arts. The church has social service ministries for the relief of earthquake victims, families of jailed political prisoners, and petitioners (*fangmin* 访民) whose family members suffered injustices.¹¹

9 Y. Wang 王怡, "A Brief Historical Account of Christianity in Sichuan Province."

10 Human Rights in China, "Chengdu House Church Files First Suit in China against Government Religious Authority."

11 I. Johnson, *The Souls of China*.

24. Guizhou 贵州

Land area: 176,000 km²

Population: 34,748,556

Capital: Guiyang 贵阳

Topography

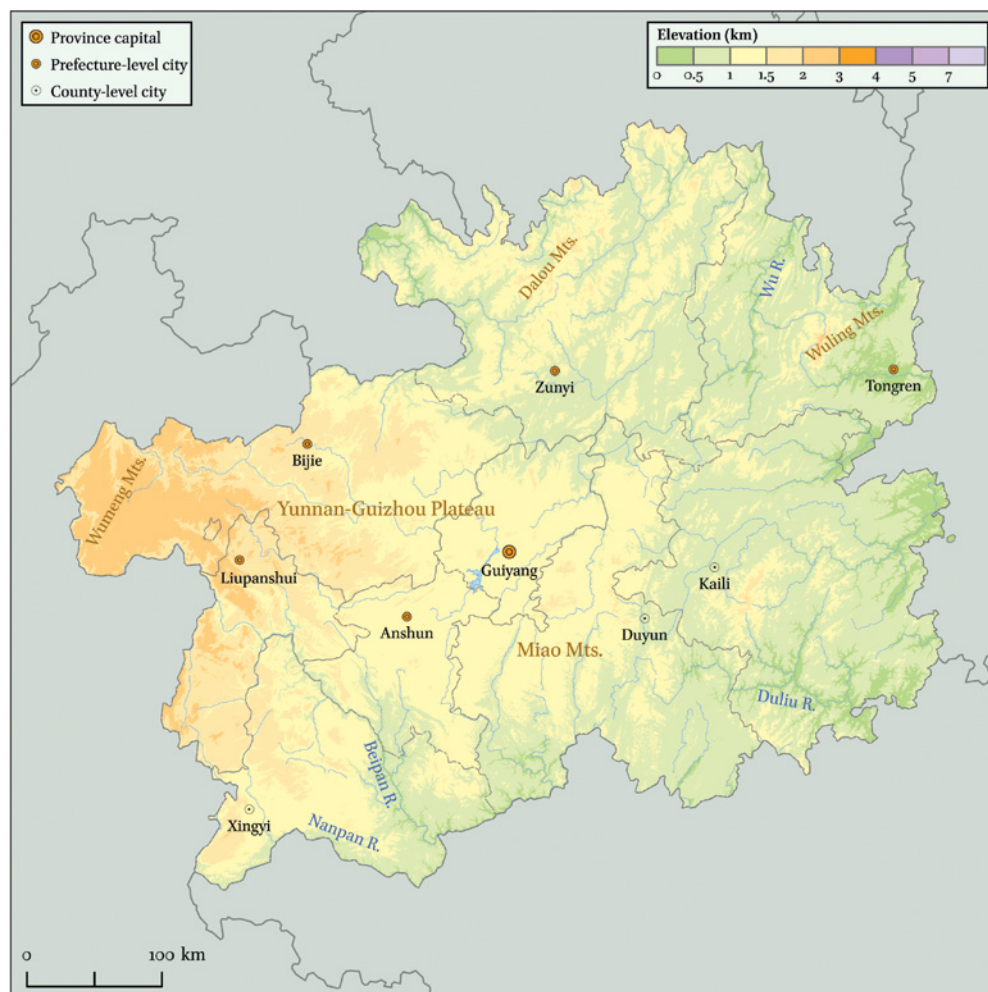
Guizhou province is comprised of 9 prefectures, including 15 urban districts, 8 county-level cities, and 65 counties. Guizhou features a rugged karst topography with numerous precipitous peaks, deep valleys, caves, and underground rivers (Map 122). The western and central parts of Guizhou, which are part of the Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau 云贵高原, have a high altitude of 2,000 meters above sea level in average, while the eastern part of the province gradually slopes downward. The Wuling Mountains 武陵山 in the northeastern part of the province are a key natural preserve of China. In the central part of the province, the Miao Mountains 苗岭 sit between the Yangtze River system and the Pearl River system. The province's major

rivers all have broad upstreams but narrow downstreams and thus become excellent sources of hydropower. The climate in most regions of Guizhou is mild and wet. Rainfall is ample and annual temperatures range between 14°C and 18°C.

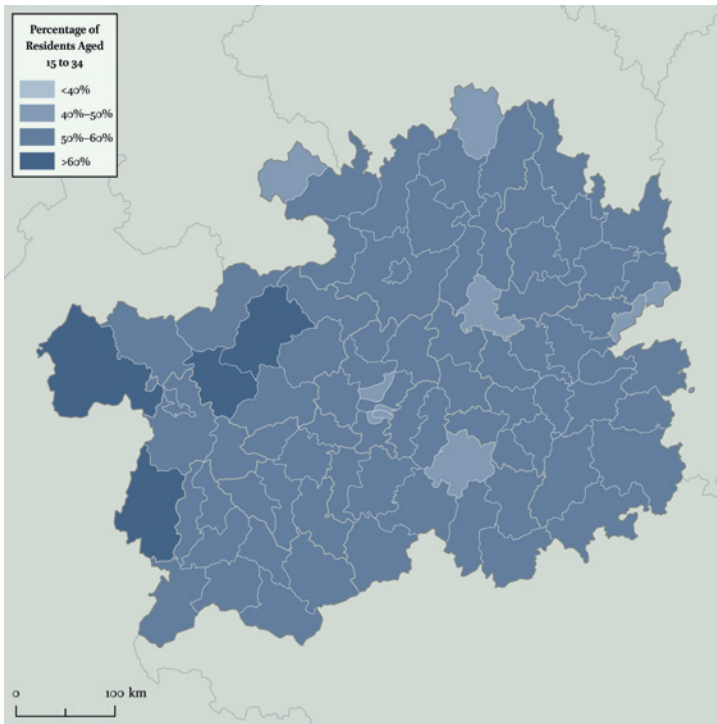
Although economically underdeveloped, Guizhou is rich in natural, cultural, and environmental resources. The province boasts nearly four thousand species of wild flora and about one thousand species of wild fauna, making it an important center of biological diversity in the nation. Guizhou is also one of the nation's four regions with abundant herbs for Chinese medicine.

Demography

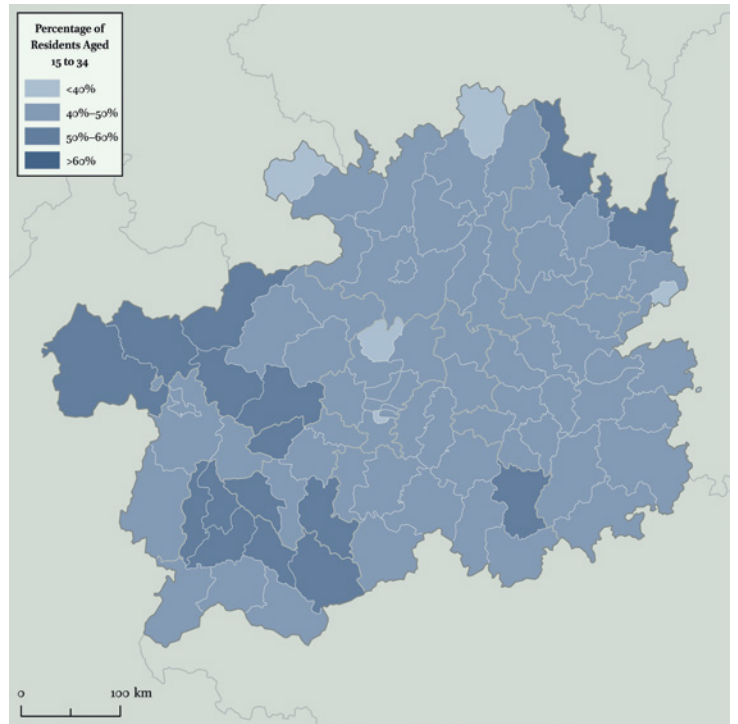
The total population was 34,748,556 in 2010, of which 36 percent belonged to ethnic minority groups. Forty-two percent of the Miao (Hmong) people in China, 50 percent of China's Dong people, 88 percent of Bouyei 布依 people, and 90 percent of Gelao 仡佬 people live in south-central Guizhou.



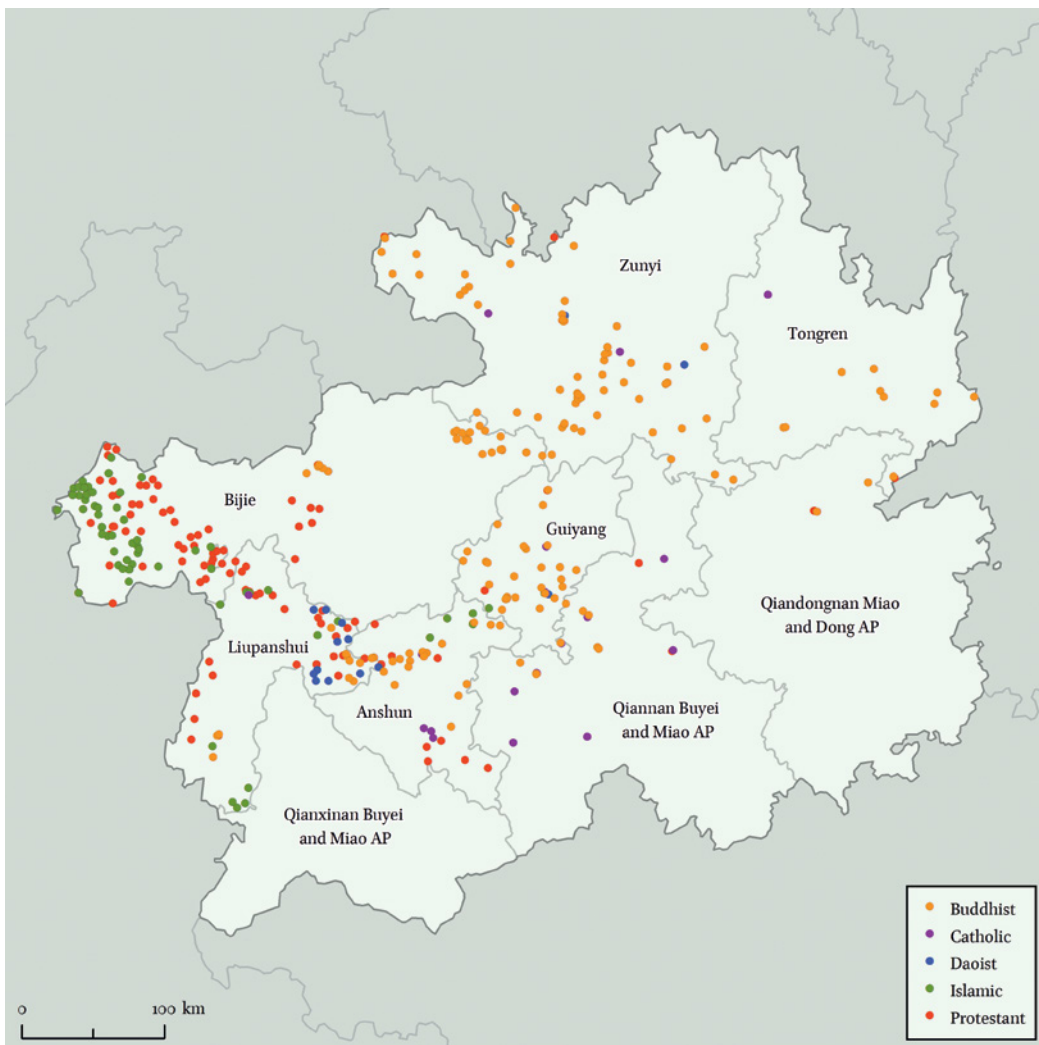
MAP 122
Guizhou: Topography.



MAP 123 Guizhou: Young population in 2000.



MAP 124 Guizhou: Young population in 2010.



MAP 125 Guizhou: Religious sites.

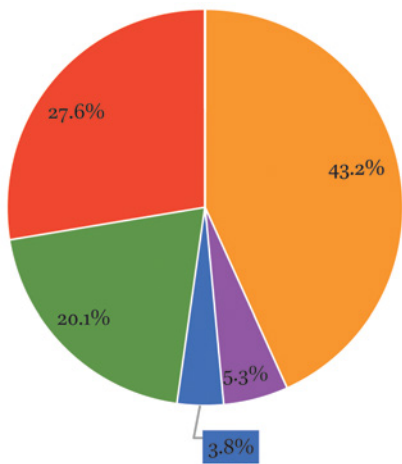
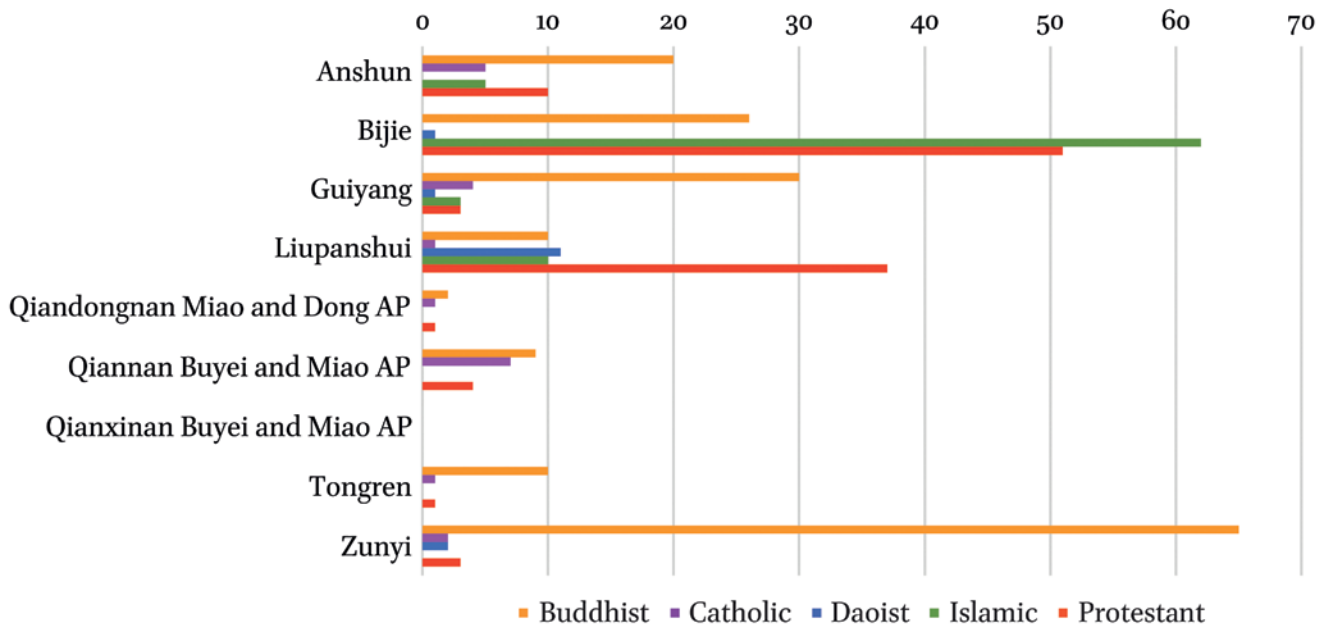


FIGURE 32
Guizhou: Distribution
of religious sites by
prefecture.

Guizhou’s population is not evenly distributed. More people live in the southeast part of the province than in the western and central parts. The total population of Guizhou decreased slightly by 1.4 percent between 2000 and 2010 due to emigration to other provinces. From 2000 to 2010, education and urbanization in Guizhou improved moderately. The percentage of people who received at least a college education rose from 1.8 percent to 4.8 percent, which is significantly lower than the national average. In 2000, only 23.1 percent of the population was registered as nonagricultural, while by 2010, 30.8 percent of the total population were listed as urban residents. Despite the increase, the level of urbanization did not reach the national average, which was 45.7 percent in 2010.

The proportion of elderly persons in the general population increased significantly from 9.6 percent in 2000 to

13.5 percent in 2010, while the proportion of people between ages 15 and 34 decreased from 63.9 percent to 52.2 percent, suggesting that many young people left Guizhou to seek work in other provinces (Maps 123–124). More male than female youths moved out to seek employment, mainly in coastal provinces.¹²

Family structure has also changed greatly over the decade. The percentage of one-generation households nearly doubled, rising from 17.7 in 2000 to 32.5 in 2010. Correspondingly, the family size became smaller. The average family size decreased from 3.7 persons in 2000 to 3.2 in 2010. However, the sex ratio among infants under one year old increased from 114.4 males per 100 females in 2000 to 123.7 in 2010.

Key Religious Facts

The religious landscape of Guizhou shows a predominance of Buddhist temples in most of the prefectures except Bijie 毕节, where there are large numbers of Islamic mosques and Protestant churches. In the western prefectures of Liupanshui 六盘水 and Anshun 安顺, there is a mix of Buddhist and Daoist temples, Protestant and Catholic churches, and Islamic mosques (Map 125 and Figure 32). Buddhist temples (Photo 28) are found throughout central Guizhou, while Islamic mosques and Christian churches are found in the west. A small number of Catholic churches are located in the southwestern and northern parts of the province. Meanwhile, in the ethnic

12 Liang, Li, and Ma, “Changing Patterns of the Floating Population in China.”



PHOTO 28 Monk on Mount Fanjing, Guizhou.
CREDIT: CHAOQING HE.

minority autonomous prefectures in the south and east, different ethnic groups have maintained their traditional religions, even though they are not reflected in the 2004 Economic Census.

Guizhou has long been trapped in poverty and underdevelopment, with both a nominal GDP and a GDP per capita below the national average.¹³ Poverty relief has been a major concern of the government. In recent years, religious groups in Guizhou have begun a campaign entitled “Five Religions Work Together to Help the World in Five Ways” (*wuzhu renjian, wujiao tongxing* 五助人间、五教同行), aiming to address the issue of poverty through improvements in schooling, medical service, and elderly care.¹⁴

25. Yunnan 云南

Land area: 394,000 km²
Population: 45,966,766
Capital: Kunming 昆明

Topography

Yunnan Province in the southwest corner of China borders on Vietnam, Laos, and Burma. It consists of 16 prefectures,

including 13 urban districts, 14 county-level cities, and 102 counties. Ethnic minorities in Yunnan account for about 33 percent of its total population, including Yi, Bai 白, Hani 哈尼, Zhuang, Dai 傣, Lisu 傈僳, and Miao (Hmong) people. The terrain gradually slopes from the northwest to the southeast, with a series of high mountain chains spreading across the province (Map 126). Several mountains dominate the northwestern part of Yunnan. To the south and east, the province is part of the Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau. Rivers flowing through the deep valleys between the mountains include the Jinsha River in the northeast, and the Lancang River 澜沧江 and the Nu River 怒江 in the northwest. Lakes such as Lake Dian 滇池 and Lake Er 洱海 dot the province. Yunnan enjoys warm winters and temperate summers, with slight seasonal differences. A wide range of agriculture is practiced in Yunnan, including farming, forestry, animal husbandry, and tobacco production.

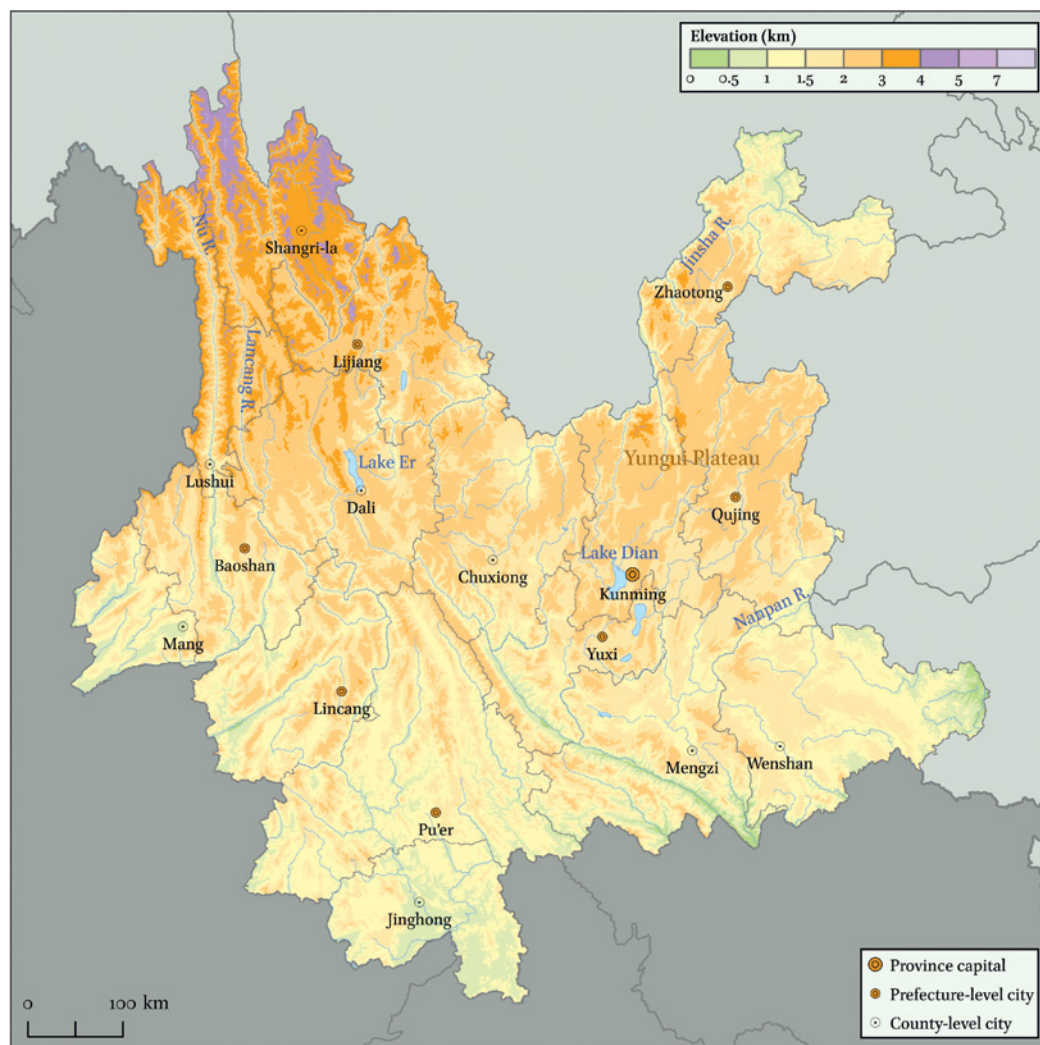
Demography

Yunnan's northeast areas in the Hengduan Mountains 横断山脉 and the border regions in the west and south have few residents. Its eastern and central regions, part of the Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau, are more populous. The total population in Yunnan increased by 9 percent between 2000 and 2010, from 42,360,089 to 45,966,766.

In 2000, only 2 percent of the population had completed a college education. The ratio increased to 5.7 percent a decade later. There are higher proportions of well-educated people in the cities of Kunming, Pu'er 普洱,

¹³ PR Newswire, “China’s Rural Guizhou Province to Address Poverty with Culture Diversity and Tourism.”

¹⁴ Z. Jiang, “Religious Groups in Guizhou Province Encouraged to Help Poverty Reduction.”



MAP 126 Yunnan: Topography.

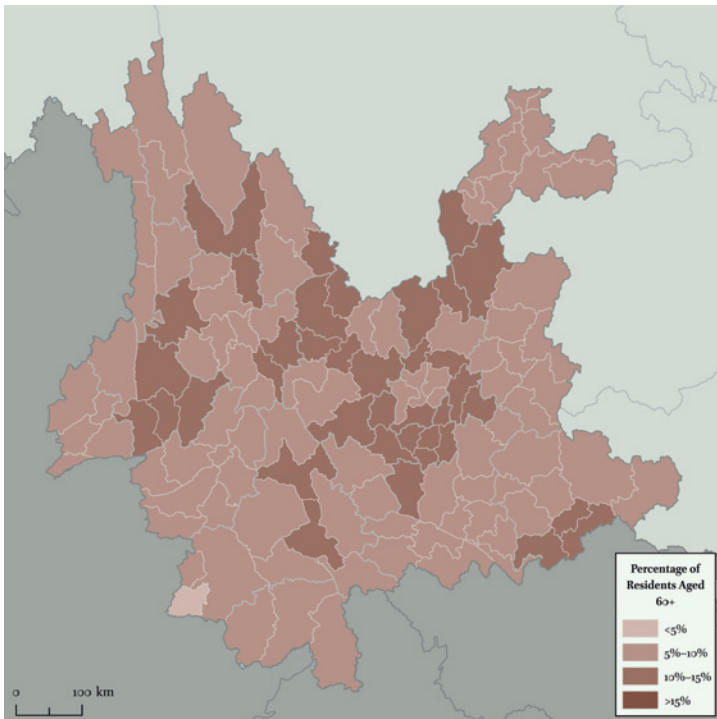
and Chuxiong 楚雄. However, Yunnan is one of China's relatively underdeveloped provinces and faces some challenging social issues. Yunnan is a key channel of illicit drug trafficking from the "Golden Triangle" in Southeast Asia to other provinces, and a major site of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.¹⁵ Moreover, rural poverty reduction is a serious task for the local government.¹⁶ Between 2000 and 2010, the proportion of aged people increased in the central counties but remained stable in the east, west, and south (Maps 127–128).

Key Religious Facts

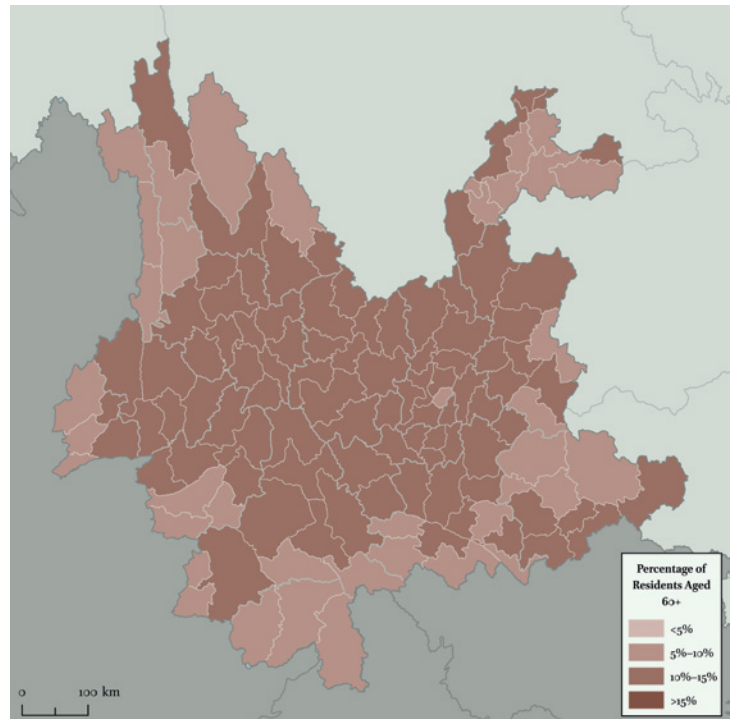
The religious landscape of Yunnan shows a diversity of religions and some regional concentrations. In fact, Kunming, Chuxiong 楚雄, and Zhaotong 昭通 have high degrees of religious diversity, with good numbers of Protestant churches, Buddhist temples, and Islamic mosques (Map 129 and Figure 33). Protestant churches are particularly concentrated in Pu'er in the south, Kunming and Chuxiong Yi Autonomous Prefecture 楚雄彝族自治州 in the north-central region, and Zhaotong in the north-east. There are also some Protestant churches in Dehong Dai and Jingpo Autonomous Prefecture 德宏傣族景颇族自治州 in the far west. Baoshan 保山 in western Yunnan has a concentration of Daoist temples. There are also a good number of Daoist temples in eastern Chuxiong. Buddhist temples are concentrated in the southwestern and north-central prefectures. Catholic churches are scattered in various places, with clusters in Kunming, Qujing

15 Lu et al., "The Changing Face of HIV in China," 609–611.

16 Donaldson, "Tourism, Development and Poverty Reduction in Guizhou and Yunnan"; Glaubien et al., "Persistent Poverty in Rural China: Where, Why, and How to Escape?"



MAP 127 Yunnan: Elderly population in 2000.



MAP 128 Yunnan: Elderly population in 2010.

曲靖, and Hong He Hani and Yi Autonomous Prefecture 红河哈尼族彝族自治州. According to one recent official report, there were about 4.3 million religious believers in Yunnan, among which Buddhists formed the largest group, consisting of around 2.8 million followers. Muslims and Protestants ranked second and third in number, respectively. The total number of Muslims was estimated to be 640,000 and that of Protestants 580,000, but the latter figure probably included only people belonging to officially sanctioned churches. Daoism and Catholicism had relatively small numbers of believers.¹⁷

There are 26 ethnic minority groups in Yunnan. Due to the province's identification with the site of the legendary Shangri-La 香格里拉—a lost paradise in many outsiders' imaginaries—ethnic tourism has flourished in Yunnan. Ethnic tourism since the 1980s has made Yunnan a showcase of China's ethnicities (Photo 29).¹⁸ Indeed, in 2001 the government changed the name of Zhongdian 中甸 County 中甸县 to Shangri-La and in 2014 reorganized it as Shangri-La City. At the same time, different ethnic groups within the province are striving to negotiate their own cultural identity, historical memory, and collective belonging in the context of globalization.

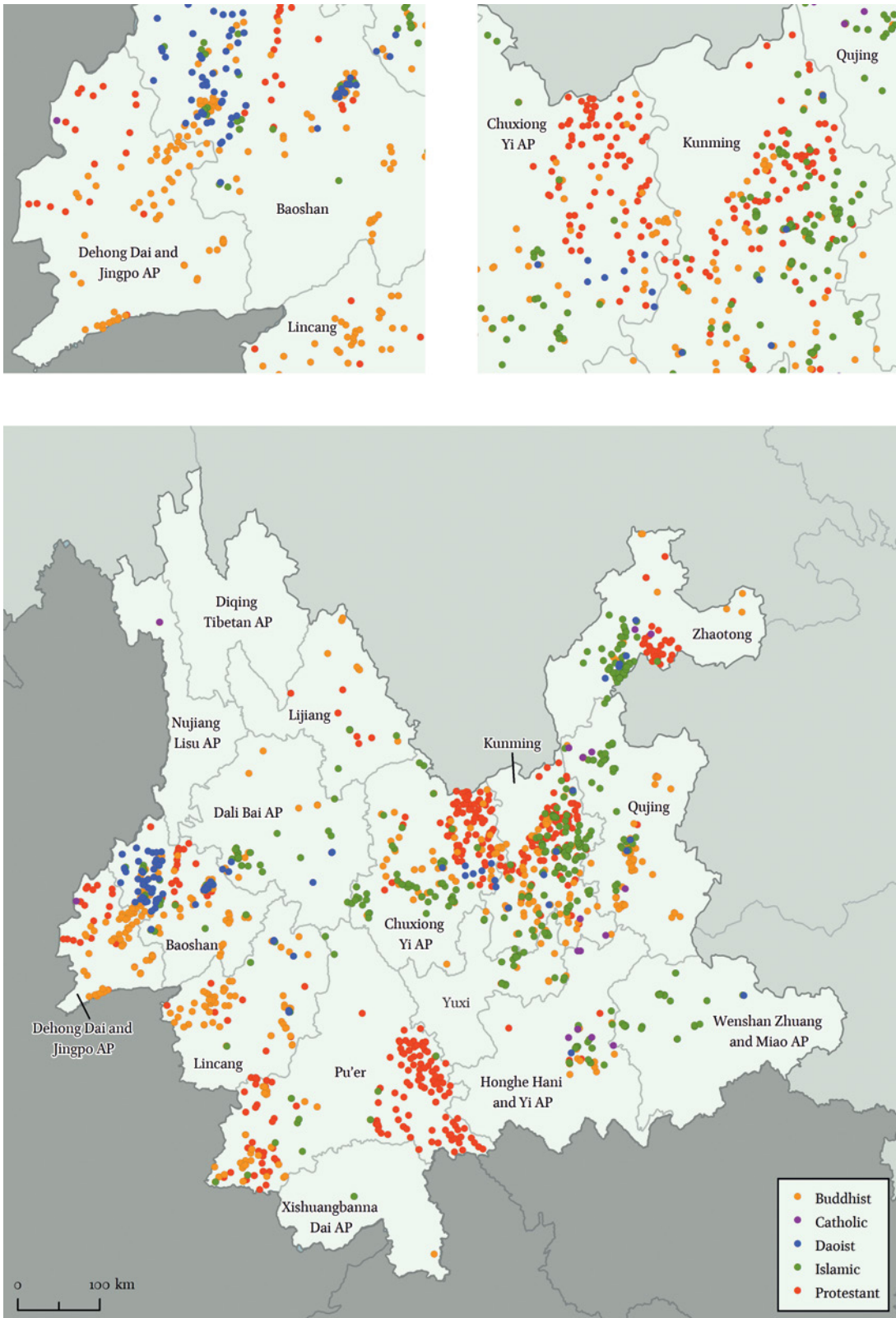
The history of Yunnan's Hui Muslims can be traced back to a thousand years or so ago. The Muslim presence vastly increased with the arrival of Kublai Khan's armies in 1253. In later dynasties, the Hui people began to integrate with others while maintaining a distinctive religious identity. In 1975, during the Cultural Revolution, when all religious activities were prohibited by the authorities and mosques were closed down, Yunnan Muslims continued to pray secretly at home. Conflict escalated when the Maoists criticized the conservative Muslims and compelled them to eat pork as a sign of identification with and loyalty to the party-state. The incident culminated in a massacre perpetrated by troops against the Muslims, resulting in the death of about 1,600 Hui in Shadian 沙甸 and Najiaying 纳家营 and the destruction of 4,400 houses.¹⁹ In light of the historical conflicts, the reconstruction of Najiaying Mosque in 2001 represents an official endeavor to ease ethnic-religious tensions. As the largest mosque in Yunnan, Najiaying Mosque has become a tourist attraction.

Roman Catholicism was brought to Yunnan during the late Ming Dynasty (1368–1644) and the early Qing Dynasty (1644–1911). In Cizhong 茨中, a small village in Diqing Tibetan Prefecture 迪庆藏族自治州, some local residents

17 Yunnannet, "Major Characteristics of Religions in Yunan."

18 Hillman, "Paradise under Construction."

19 McCarthy, "If Allah Wills It"; Israeli, "A New Wave of Muslim Revivalism in China"; Xian Wang, "Islamic Religiosity," 1; Rong, Gönül, and Xiaoyan, *Hui Muslims in China*, 69.



MAP 129 Yunnan: Religious sites.

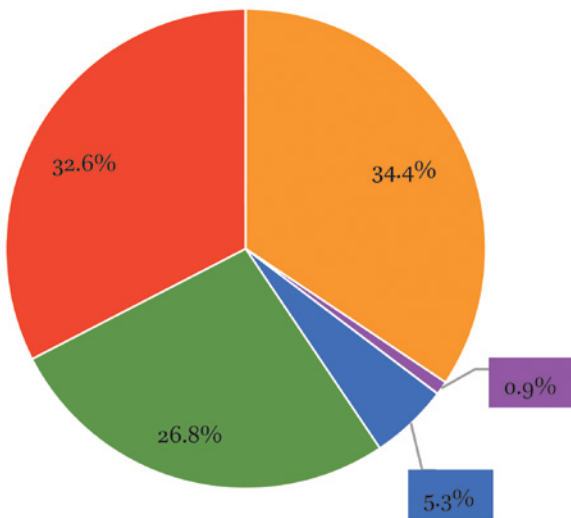
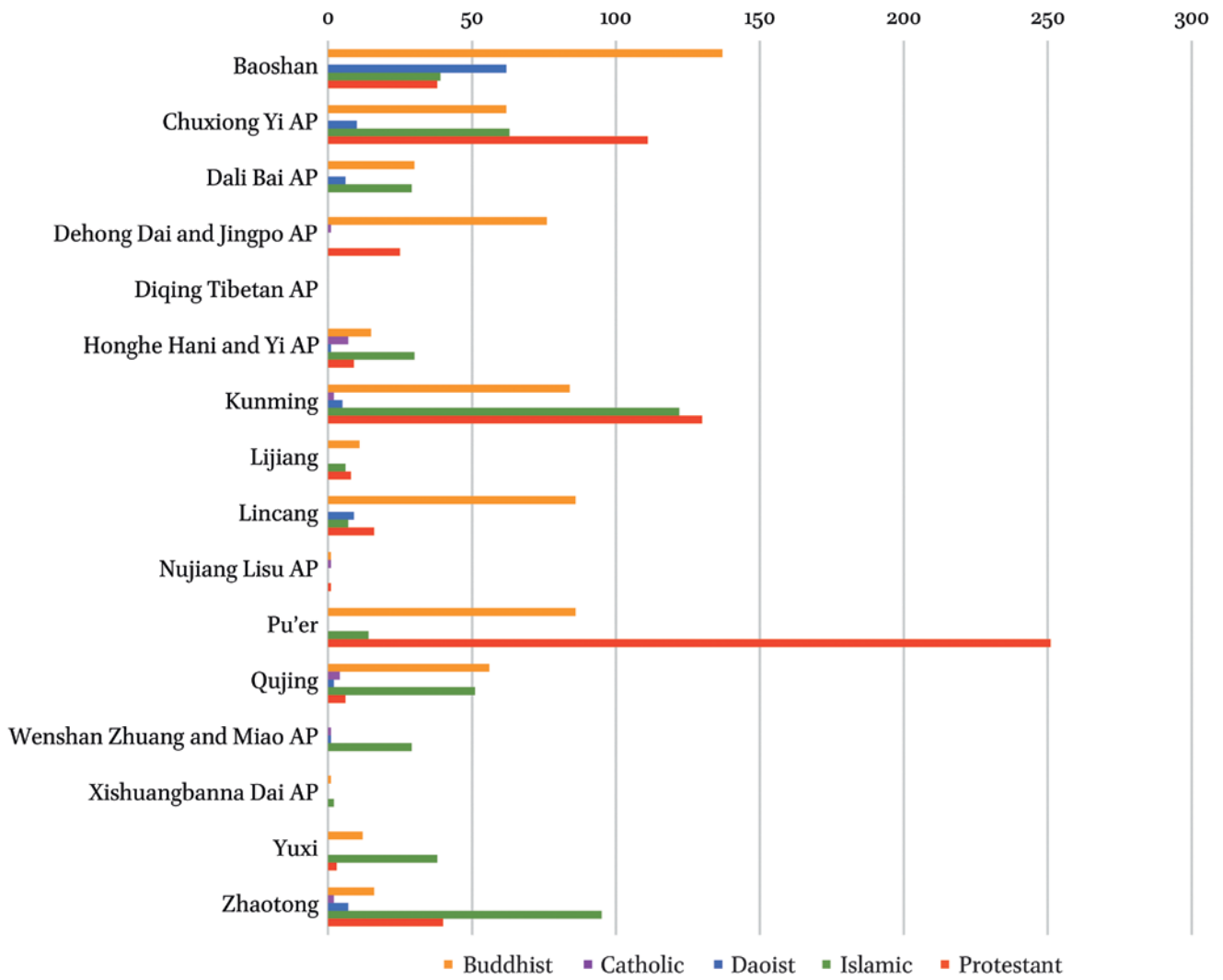


FIGURE 33 Yunnan: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.

converted to Catholicism around one hundred years ago and began to adopt Christian names, gradually forsaking the Tibetan names given by lamas. *China Daily*, the official state news outlet, claimed in a report on Cizhong that “Christianity and Buddhism are similar in terms of advocating good deeds” and that “they differ only in forms.”²⁰ This official remark seems to gloss over the tensions and conflicts that have persisted.²¹

20 *China Daily*, “Catholicism Flourishes in Tibetan Village.”

21 Lim, “Negotiating ‘Foreignness,’ Localizing Faith.”



PHOTO 29 A ceremony performed by members of the Jingpo ethnic group (Kachang Town, Yingjiang County, Yunnan).
CREDIT: PENG LI.

26. Xizang 西藏 (Tibet)

Land area: 1,228,400 km²

Population: 3,002,166

Capital: Lhasa 拉萨

Topography

The Tibet Autonomous Region, called Xizang or Tibet for short, is in southwestern China and ranks second among China's provinces in total area. There are, however, only 3 million residents, making it the least densely populated province in China. Xizang is divided into 7 prefectures, which are subdivided into a total of 68 counties and 5 urban districts. More than 90 percent of residents are Tibetans.

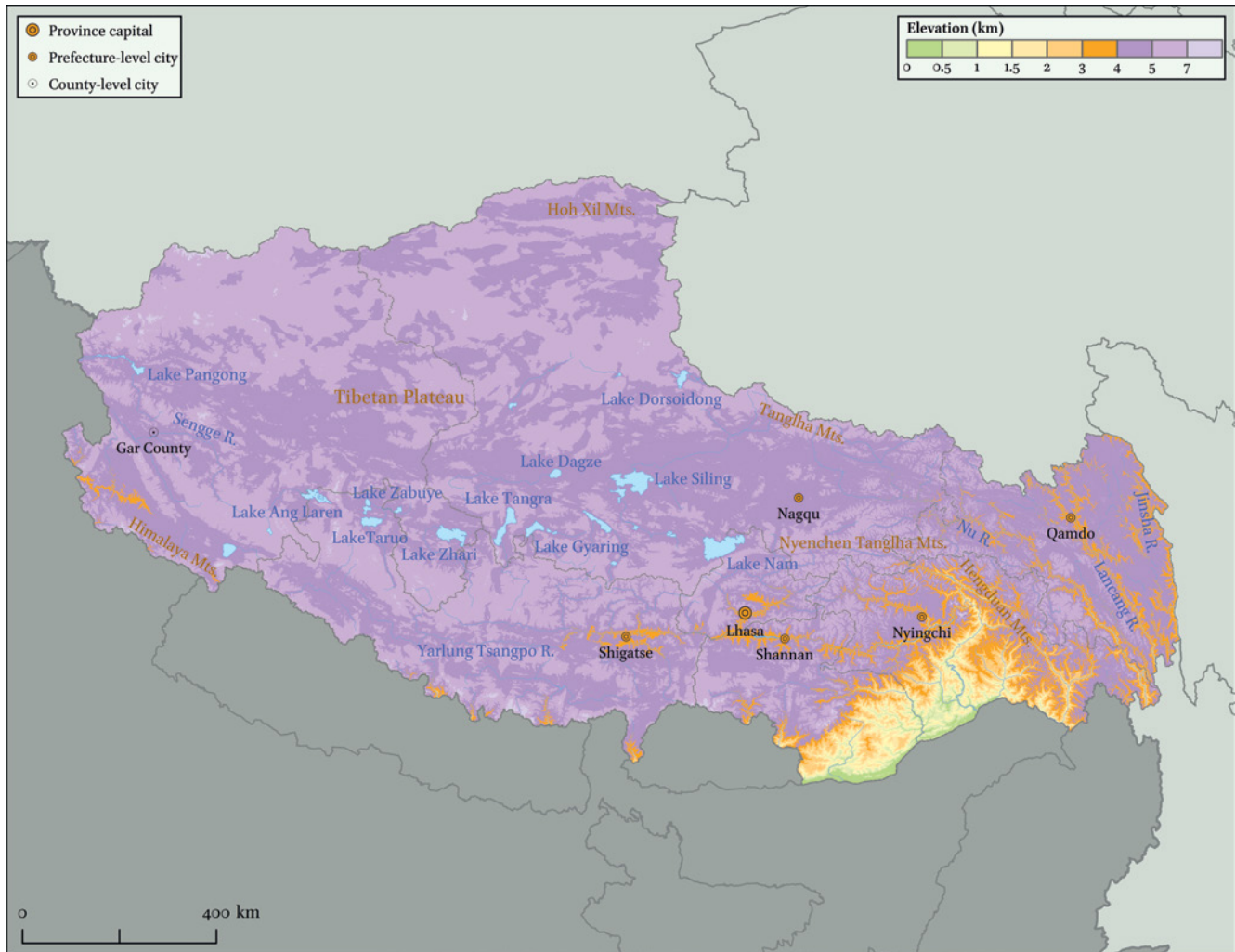
Tibet has various complex landforms, such as high and steep mountains, deep valleys, glaciers, bare rock, and deserts (Map 130). Surrounded by enormous mountains, Tibet is dominated by the vast and dry Tibetan Plateau 青藏高原, with an average elevation of 5,000 meters above sea level. The western and southern border of the Tibetan Plateau is formed by the Himalayan Mountains 喜马拉雅山, whose highest peak is Mount Everest 珠穆朗玛峰. Located on the central Tibetan Plateau, the Gangdise Mountains 冈底斯山 and the Nyenchen Tanglha Mountains 念青唐古拉山 extend from east to west, forming a huge mountain chain. This region is the source of some famous rivers, the largest being the Yarlung Zangbo

River 雅鲁藏布江. The Tibetan Plateau is dotted with numerous lakes, including Lake Nam 纳木错 and Lake Siling 色林错.

Tibet experiences minimal seasonal variation but great temperature differences during a 24-hour period. Winters are cold, with an average temperature of -2°C in January. Summers have warm days with strong sunshine and cool nights. Although Tibet is also called the Land of Snows, its annual precipitation averages only 460 millimeters, with much of that falling during the summer months. The Tibet Autonomous Region is the least developed area in China due to its low population density and high transportation costs. Economic development in this area depends upon traditional agriculture, animal husbandry, financing from the central government, and the tourist industry.

Demography

Between 2000 and 2010, Tibet's population increased nearly 15 percent. The majority of residents are Tibetan, and their spatial distribution did not change much over the decade. The number of immigrants from other provinces increased dramatically from 44,497 in 2000 to 165,423 in 2010, a 272.0 percent increase. The overall population density in Tibet remains very low, about 10 persons per square kilometer. The provincial capital, Lhasa, is relatively populous. In particular, the downtown district of Lhasa, Chengguan District 城关区, contains 402.4 persons per square kilometer.



MAP 130 Xizang: Topography.

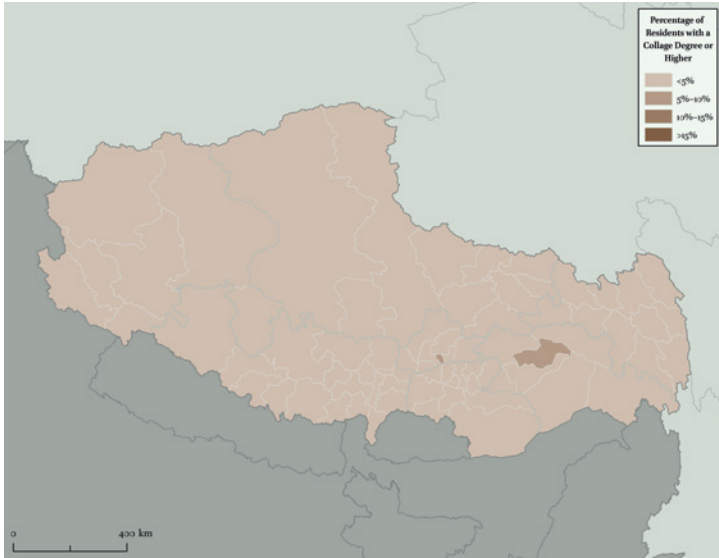
The proportion of people who completed at least a college degree increased greatly from 1 percent in 2000 to 4 percent in 2010, although this was still significantly below the national average of 7 percent (Maps 131–132). However, the urbanization of Tibet has not changed much. The percentage of urban residents was 15 percent in 2000 and 17 percent in 2010, much lower than the national average of 45.7 percent in 2010.

There was an overall decrease in the percentage of young persons and a slight increase in the elderly population. The proportion of people between ages 15 and 34 shrank from 69.3 percent in 2000 to 63.8 percent in 2010, while the percentage of people aged 60 and above was 7.6 percent in 2000 and 7.8 in 2010. Consistent with the slow pace of urbanization in Tibet, family structure did not change much. The average number of persons per household was 4.8 in 2000, declining to 4.2 in 2010. The proportion of one-generation households in 2000 was 19.1 percent, and it rose to 21.2 percent in 2010.

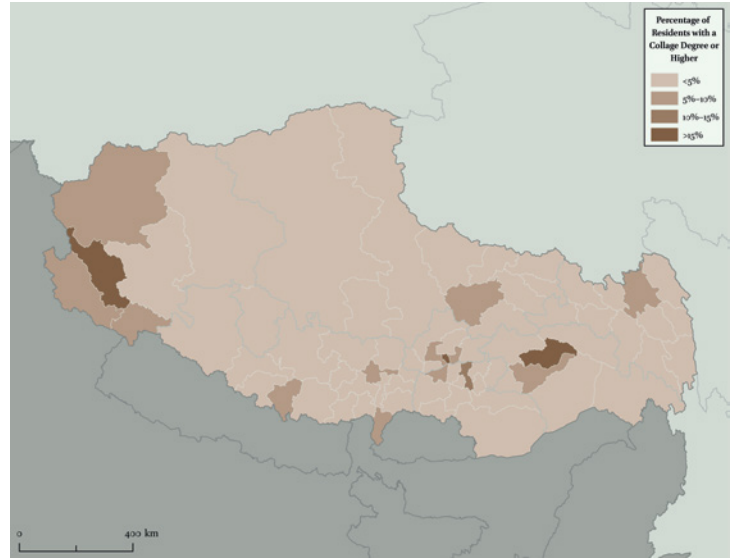
Key Religious Facts

Tibetan Buddhism is the most common religion in Tibet. According to one official source, there are more than 1,700 Tibetan Buddhist temples or monasteries and 46,000 monks and nuns (Map 133 and Figure 34).²² Lhasa, the provincial capital, is also its cultural and religious center, where most Buddhist sites in Tibet are located. Tibetan Buddhism has four different schools: Nyingma 宁玛, Kagyu 噶举, Sakya, 萨迦, and Gelug 格鲁. Among the four schools, Gelug has the most authority today and includes among its adherents the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama 班禅喇嘛, the most influential leaders among Tibetans, who are believed to have been reincarnated for generations from the earliest Buddhas. Bon 苯教, an indigenous religion, was the dominant religion in Tibet until the introduction of Buddhism in the seventh century. Some practices and beliefs of Bon have been absorbed into

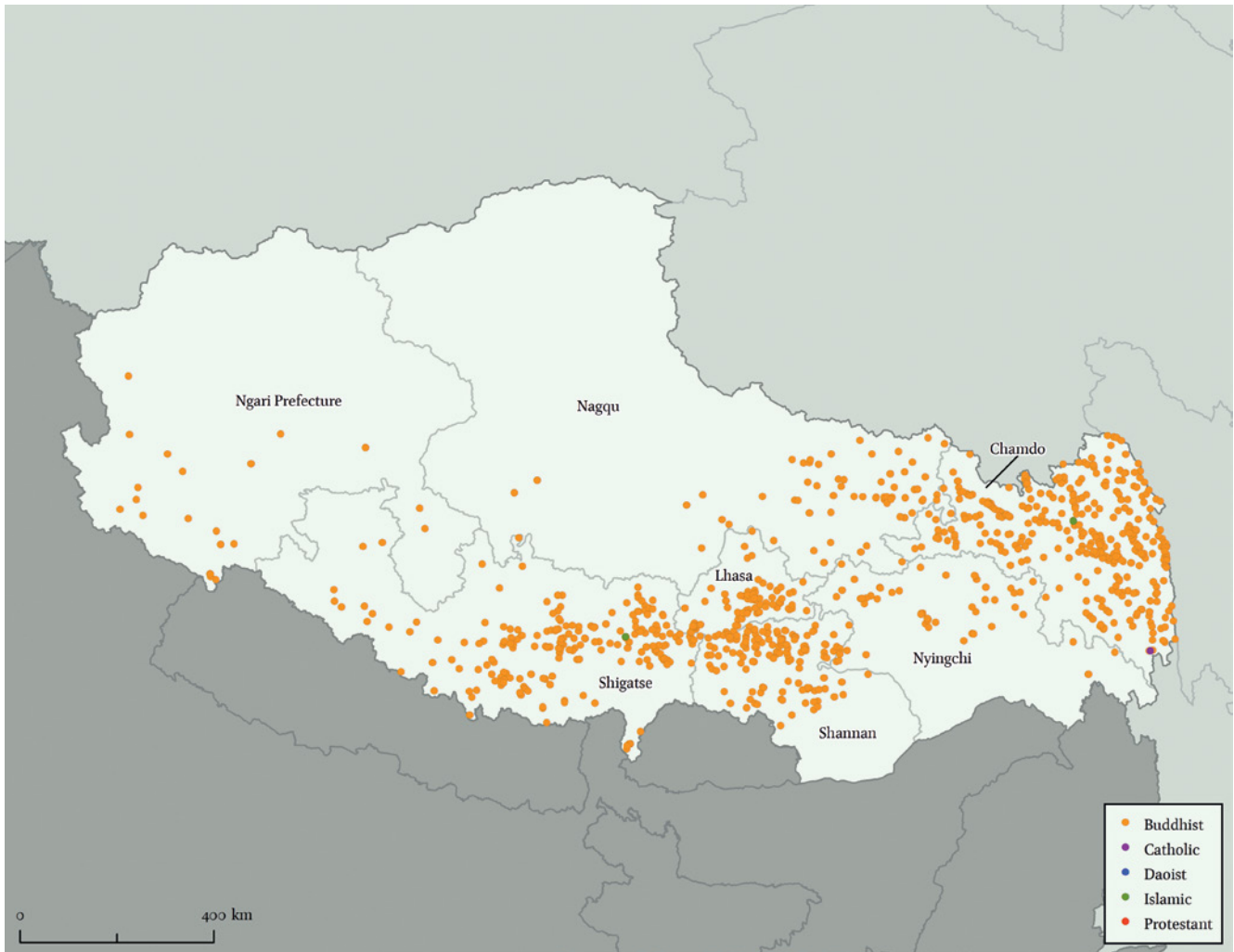
22 Xizang Pindao, "Religions in Xizang."



MAP 131 Xizang: Education in 2000.



MAP 132 Xizang: Education in 2010.



MAP 133 Xizang: Religious sites.

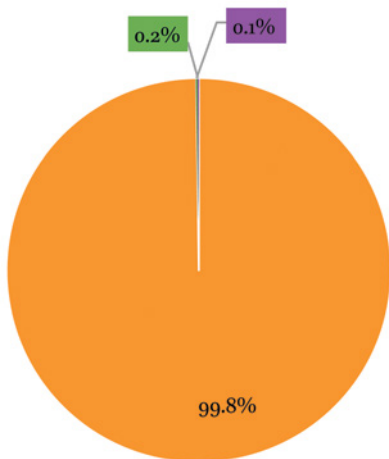
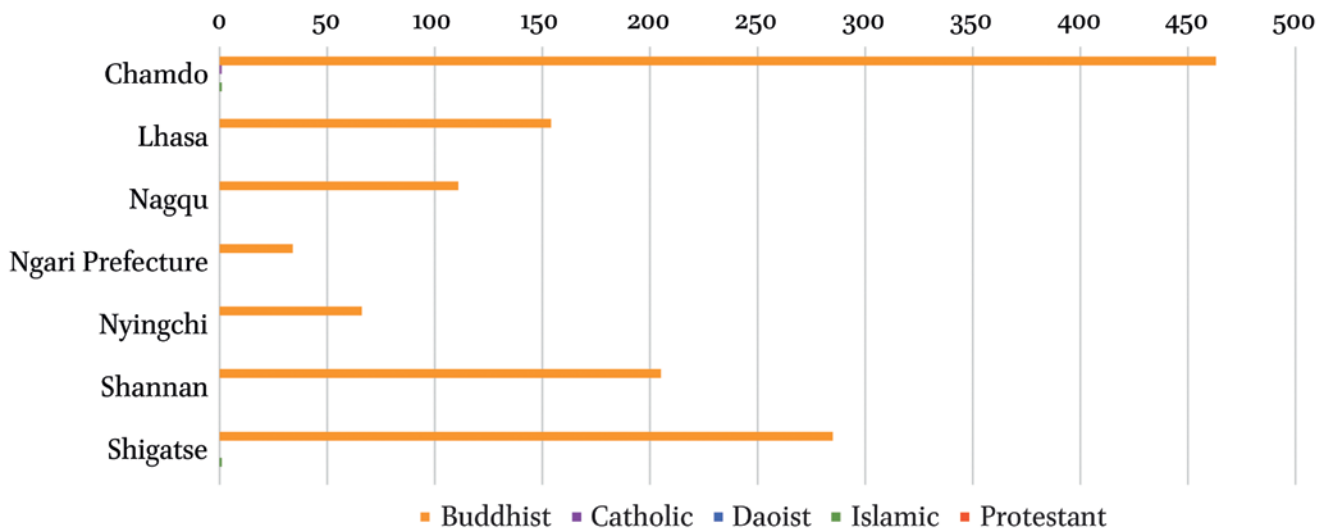


FIGURE 34 Xizang: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.

Tibetan Buddhism. Today, Bon has about 88 temples with 3,000 monks and more than 130,000 followers.

Muslims have lived in Tibet since the eighth century and trace their origins to Kashmir, Persia, and the Central Asian Turkic countries. According to an official report, there are four mosques serving 3,000 Muslims in Tibet.²³

In recent years, despite rapid economic development, rising living standards, and large-scale improvements in infrastructure and services, the Tibet Autonomous Region and the surrounding areas with a majority of ethnic Tibetans have experienced waves of ethnic unrest. In March 2008, a crowd of Tibetans broke into a store in Lhasa owned by Han Chinese and subsequently attacked people of the Han, Hui, and other ethnic groups. Many of the shops and restaurants attacked during the riot were owned by Muslims. A mob tried to storm the city's main

mosque and succeeded in setting fire to the front gate.²⁴ This serves as an example of the continuing ethnic and religious conflict in Tibet.²⁵

Christian missionaries have regarded evangelizing Tibet as a formidable yet crucial undertaking. Yanjing Church 盐井教堂 is currently the only known Catholic church in Tibet; it is located in the very southeast in Chamdo 昌都 Prefecture. Originally built in 1865 by perseverant missionaries who brought Catholicism to this village, it was destroyed during the Cultural Revolution and rebuilt in 1987. Currently the church has about 650 members. In 2005, the government appointed Father Ding, the second Tibetan priest in China, to pastor this parish. Father Ding took the congregation to the St. Francis Cathedral in Xi'an for Mass in 2010, which was the first time that Tibetan Catholics participated in a mass celebrated by a bishop.²⁶

Tibet has been a center for Tibetan Buddhism since the seventh century (Photo 30). In recent years, the government has been tactfully managing religious and ethnic conflicts through economic development and cultural homogenization. Today in Tibet, tourism has evolved as a lucrative and ever-expanding industry, helping to maintain social stability, which is much emphasized by the government. China's official news outlet, the *China*

23 Xizang Pindao, "Religions in Xizang."

24 Economist, "Fire on the Roof of the World"; Guardian, "Oh My God, Someone Has a Gun".

25 Hillman and Tuttle, *Ethnic Conflict and Protest in Tibet and Xinjiang*, 3–5.

26 Tubilewicz, *Critical Issues in Contemporary China*; Hillman, "Interpreting the post-2008 Wave of Protest and Conflict in Tibet."



PHOTO 30 A Buddhist member of the Nakhi ethnic group in Yanjing, Mangkang, Tibet.
CREDIT: YINAN WANG.

Daily, reported that more than 6.8 million Chinese and foreign tourists had already visited Tibet in the first half of 2016.²⁷ Cultivating tourism is a key part of the Great Western Development Strategy (*Xibu dakaifa* 西部大开发), a plan adopted by the Chinese government in 2000 for

developing the nation's western regions. The plan's impact on Tibet, however, is better assessed in terms of its possible effects on culture rather than the economy.²⁸ Most Tibetans believe the plan is certain to result in cultural dilution and marginalization.

27 China Daily, "Tibet Receives Over 6.8m Tourists in First Half of 2016."

28 Cooke, "Merging Tibetan Culture into the Chinese Economic Fast Lane."

Northwest China 西北地区



MAP 134 Subregional map of Northwest China.

27. Shaanxi 陕西

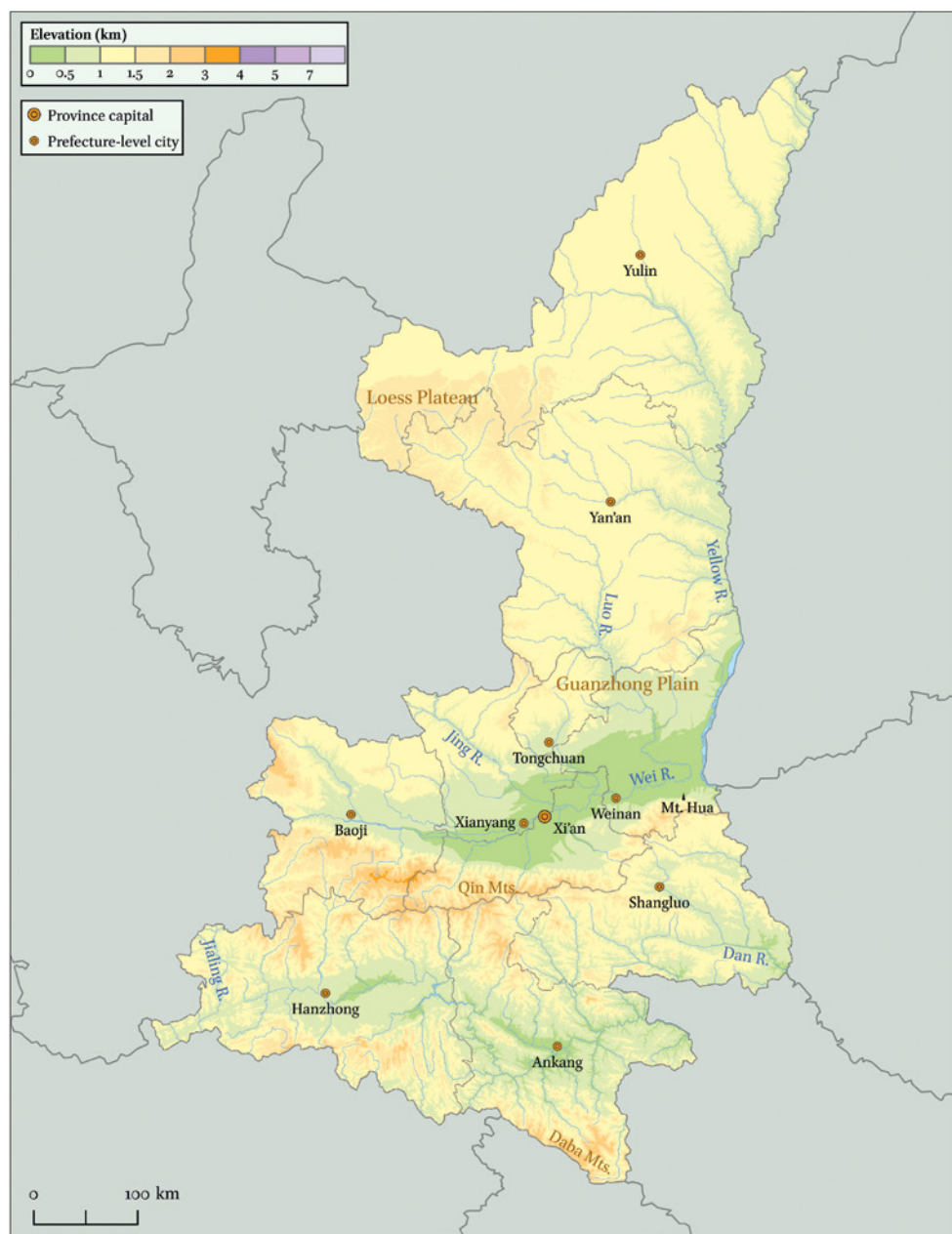
Land area: 205,600 km²

Population: 37,327,379

Capital: Xi'an 西安

Topography

Shaanxi is the gateway into China's northwest and was the political center of China many times throughout history. The province's largest city, Xi'an, was China's capital city for 13 dynasties, over a combined total of more than 1,100 years. Shaanxi has 10 prefectures, including 30 urban districts, 5 county-level cities, and 72 counties. Much



MAP 135 Shaanxi: Topography.

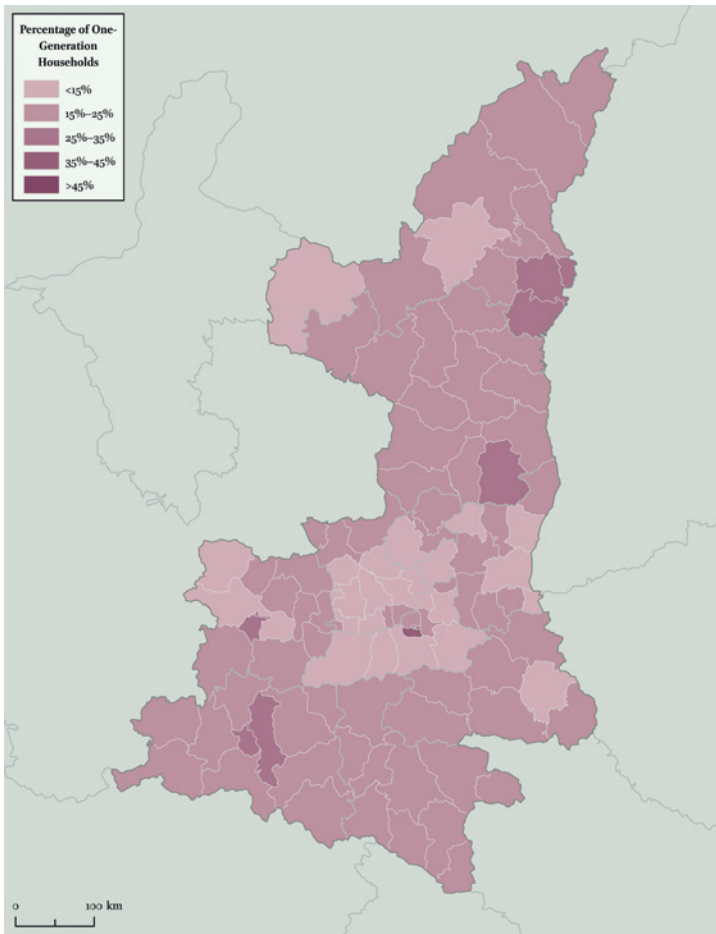
of Shaanxi is covered in highlands and mountains, but there are also significant plains and basins in the valleys along the Yellow River and the Wei River 渭河, which runs through the Guanzhong Plain 关中平原, a large alluvial plain that has been the most fertile and densely populated area in China since ancient times (Map 135). The climate varies greatly. The northern part of Shaanxi has cold and dry winters and very hot summers while the south typically has more rainfall.

Demography

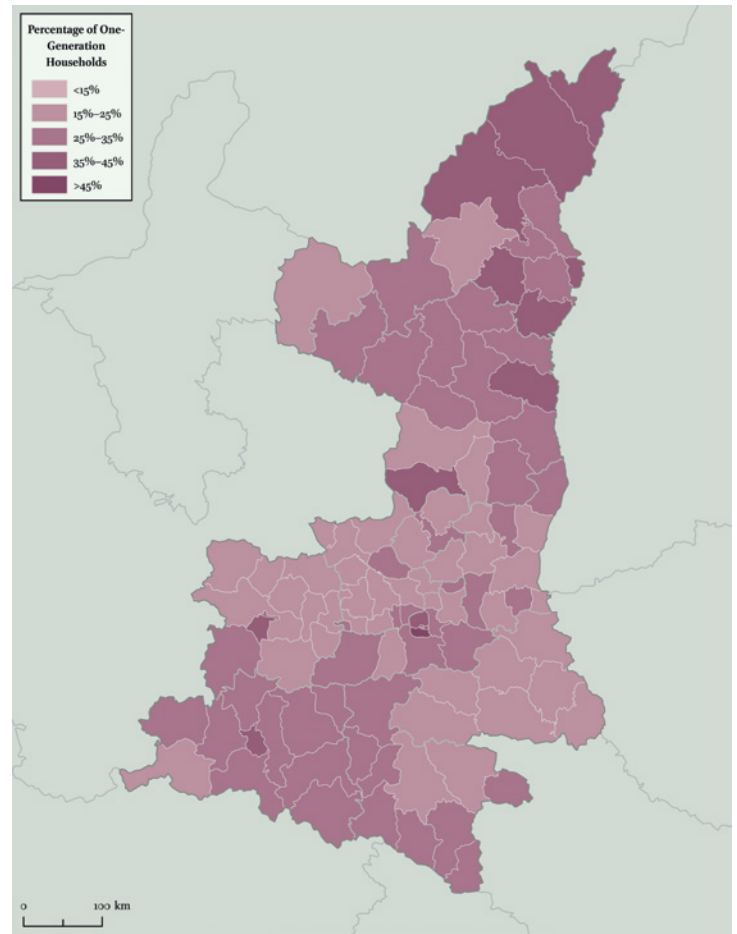
The total population grew from 35,365,072 to 37,327,379 between 2000 and 2010, a slight 6 percent increase. Only 22 percent of the province's residents were registered as

urban residents in 2000; by 2010, the figure had risen to 26 percent, still significantly below the national average. The number of immigrants from other provinces increased substantially over the same period from 614,945 to 974,362, a rise of 58 percent, but immigrants still made up less than 3 percent of the entire population of the province.

During 2000–2010, the average family size shrank, the proportion of elderly people increased, and the imbalance in the sex ratio decreased. The average family size fell from 3.6 persons in 2000 to 3.2 a decade later. The percentage of one-generation households increased in almost all counties, especially those in Yulin 榆林 prefecture (Maps 136–137). People with an age more than 60 years old made



MAP 136 Shaanxi: One-generation households in 2000.



MAP 137 One-generation households in 2010.

up 10 percent of the total population in 2000 and 13 percent in 2010, while in some southern areas they comprised more than 16 percent of the total population.

As in other provinces, higher education became more accessible and have benefited more people in Shaanxi. The percentage of college graduates increased from 4 percent in 2000 to 11 percent in 2010. In 2000, no county had a proportion of degree holders greater than 5 percent of the total population. In comparison, between 5 and 10 percent of the residents in many counties had completed college by 2010. Especially in the three central cities, Xi'an, Yan'an 延安, and Yulin, the proportions were higher.

Key Religious Facts

The religious landscape of Shaanxi shows a high concentration of multiple religions in the central prefectures of Xi'an, Xianyang 咸阳, and Baoji 宝鸡, including Protestant and Catholic churches, Buddhist and Daoist temples, and some mosques (Map 138 and Figure 35). Other areas where these religions are concentrated are central Hanzhong 汉中 in the south, and south-central Yulin in the north. There are also a good number of Protestant churches in parts of Weinan 渭南 and eastern Yan'an. The Islamic

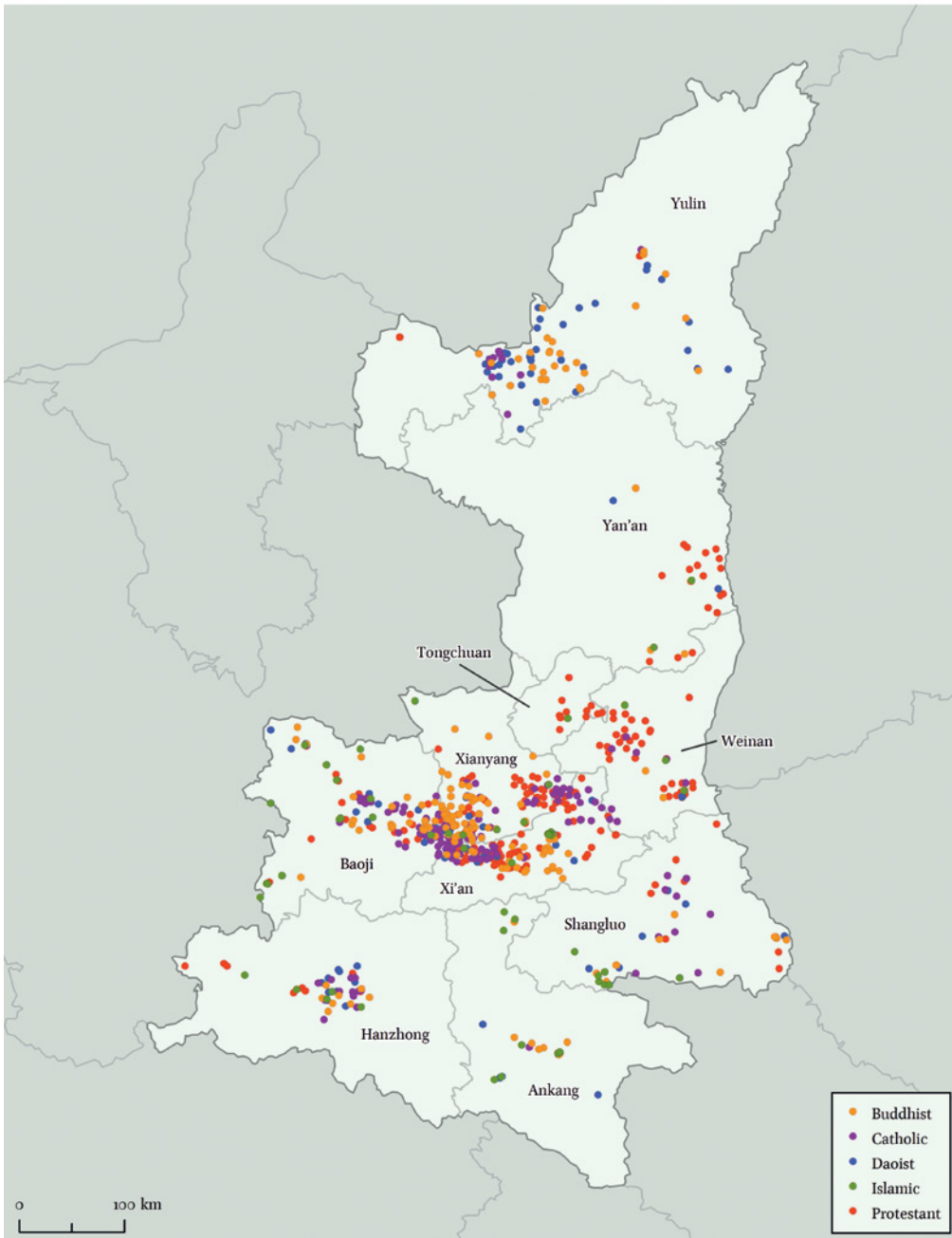
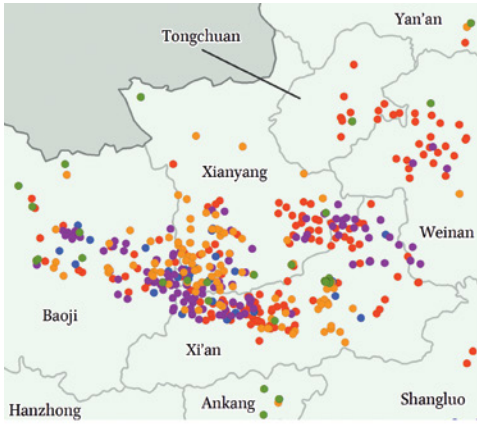
mosque in Xi'an is famous for its grand architecture in traditional Chinese style (Photo 31).

As early as 635 CE, Nestorian Christians reached Xi'an. Catholics and Protestants have long been present in many areas, especially in Guanzhong Plain where the population density is very high. In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of house churches in Shaanxi. Meanwhile, there have also been a number of highly publicized raids. For instance, in 2011, members of two house churches in Ma'an Village 马鞍 were taken into custody when police raided their Sunday worship service. The local police chief and two other officers burst into a home where the group had assembled and arrested several Christians, although 10 were released the same evening.¹ Police also confiscated all the Bibles and other books and publications in the home.²

The Daoist association in Shaanxi has been part of the global ecological movement. Taibaishan Tiejia Daoist Ecology Temple 太白山铁甲生态道观, which was destroyed during the Cultural Revolution, was rebuilt in

1 China Aid, "A House Church in Shaanxi Raided by Police."

2 Aboluo, "The Baihe Church in Shanxi Was Persecuted."



MAP 138 Shaanxi: Religious sites.

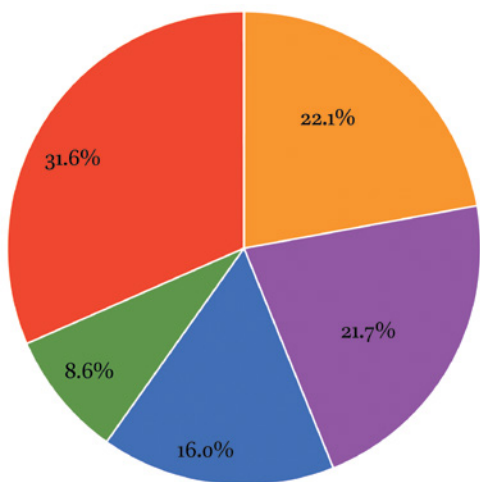
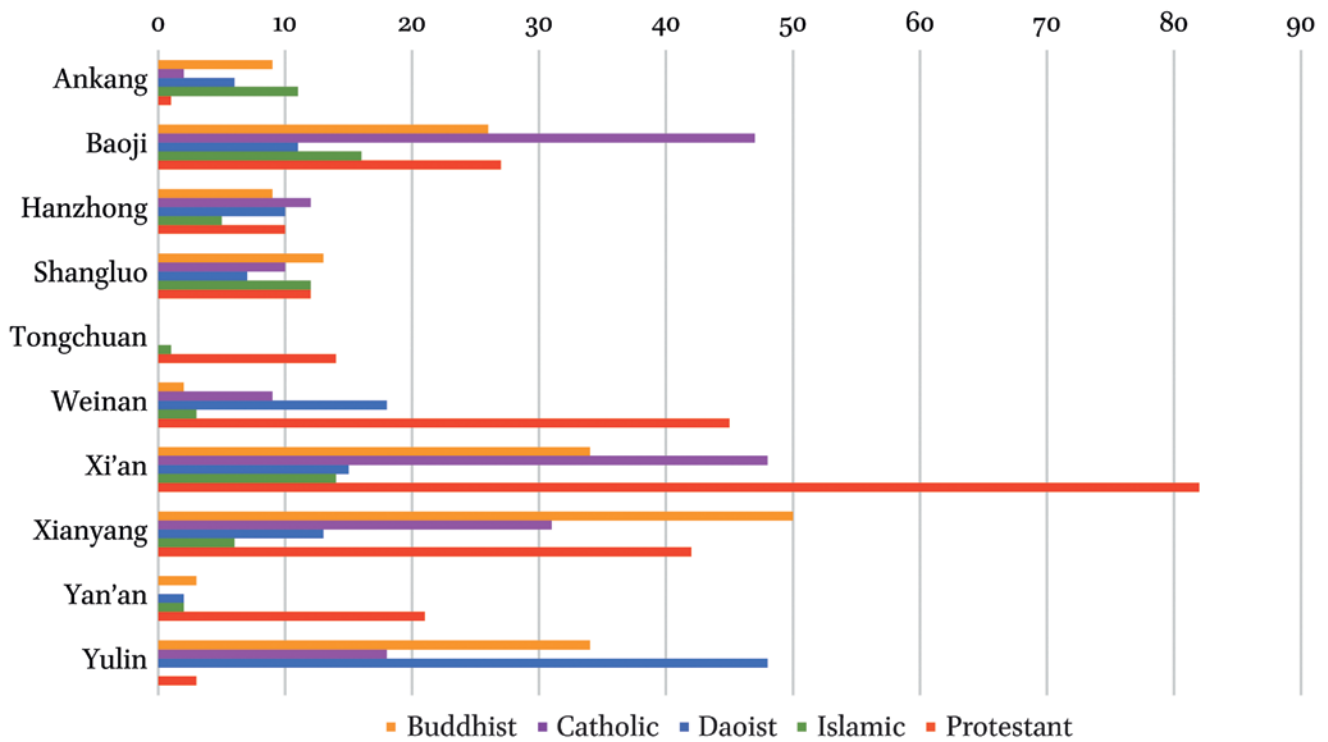


FIGURE 35 Shaanxi: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.

2005. In 2006, the first Daoist ecology workshop was held at Tiejia Temple.³ The workshop marked the inception of a Daoist association’s plan to become an important base for raising environmental awareness all over the country. The two-day event combined discussions on Daoism’s traditional teachings about ecology with practical suggestions for how to tackle specific problems faced by Daoists today, such as the ecological issues threatening the quality of ingredients in traditional Chinese medicine.

Both before and after the establishment of the PRC, Shaanxi under Communist rule was subject to Communist anti-superstition campaigns. However, traditional folk beliefs and practices were never eradicated, even though they were severely disrupted for a brief time during the Cultural Revolution.⁴ After the Cultural Revolution, the revival of temple festivals began as early as 1978. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s Shaanxi people rebuilt and renovated their temples, while many old shamans, mediums, and

3 Arcworld, “Daoist Monks and Nuns to Manage Sacred Mountains.”

4 Chau, *Miraculous Response*; idem, “Popular Religion in Shaanbei.”



PHOTO 31
Offerings on Eid al-Adha
(Huajuexiang Mosque in
Xi'an).

CREDIT: XIN CUI.

yinyang masters resumed their practice and many new ones appeared.

28. Gansu 甘肃

Land area: 454,300 km²

Population: 25,575,254

Capital: Lanzhou 兰州

Topography

Gansu, a northwestern province, has 14 prefectures, including 17 urban districts, 4 county level cities, and 65 counties. Gansu is a multiethnic province, with ethnic minorities making up nearly 10 percent of its total population, including Hui, Tibetan, Dongxiang 东乡, Bao'an 保安, Salar 撒拉, and Mongol people. The Hui comprises one-half of Gansu's ethnic minority population and most of them reside in its capital city, Lanzhou.

Located on the ancient Silk Road, the trade routes that linked China, Central Asia, and Europe, and at the juncture of the Loess Plateau, the Inner Mongolia Plateau, and the Tibetan Plateau, Gansu has complicated and diverse landforms (Map 139). Mountains and plateaus dominate this province, with most areas having an elevation above 1,000 meters. In the south, the Qilian Mountains 祁连山 pass through the province and generally rise over 4,000 meters above sea level. To the north of the Qilian Mountains is the famous Hexi Corridor 河西走廊, a unique landform

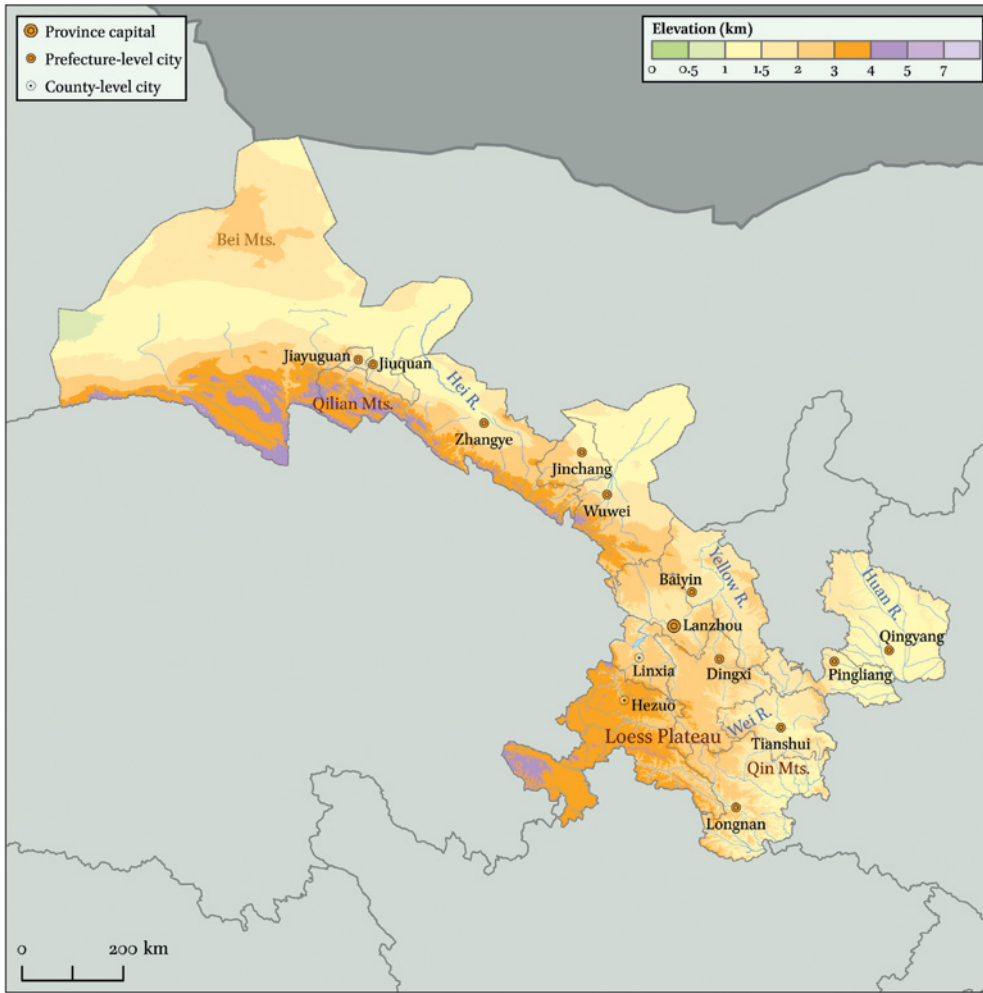
made up of smooth terrain, oases, and the Gobi Desert. Rivers passing through Gansu include the Wei River 渭河 and the Jing River 泾河, and the middle and upper reaches of the Yellow River and the Yangtze River.

Gansu is characterized by a dry climate with plenty of sunshine. The temperature varies greatly from day to night and averages between 0°C and 14°C annually. Agriculture is the foundation of Gansu's economic development. Only about 10 percent of its total land area is cultivated, with cotton, maize, melons, millet, and wheat as the main agricultural products. Gansu is also rich in natural resources, including mineral deposits, forests, and wind and solar power.

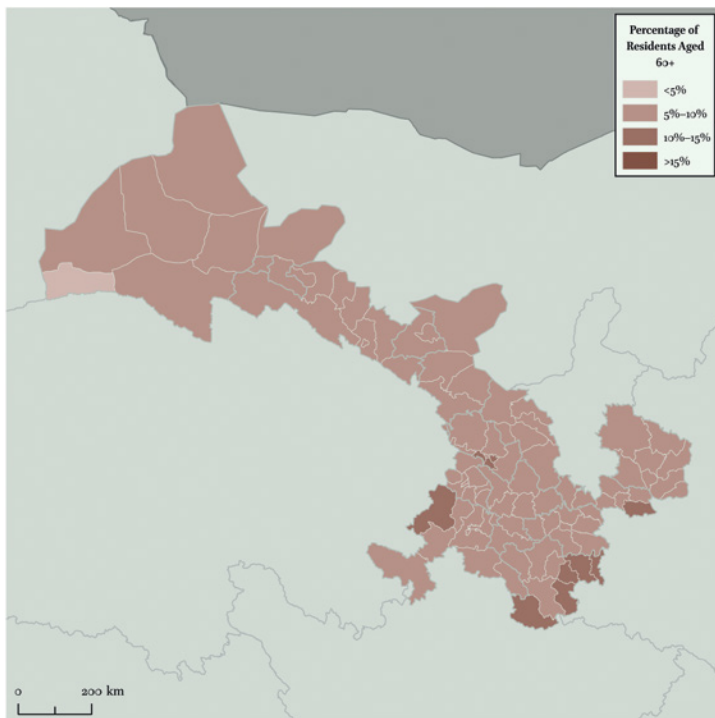
Demography

The size of the population in Gansu remained relatively stable from 2000 to 2010, with more than 25 million people. The proportion of immigrants in the total population was less than 2 percent. The proportion of people who obtained urban residency rose from 19 percent in 2000 to 25 percent a decade later, much lower than the national average. The large surplus in the rural labor force and the huge rural-urban disparity in income are the major factors driving rural residents to seek work in cities.⁵ An analysis of the mean center of population shows that people keep

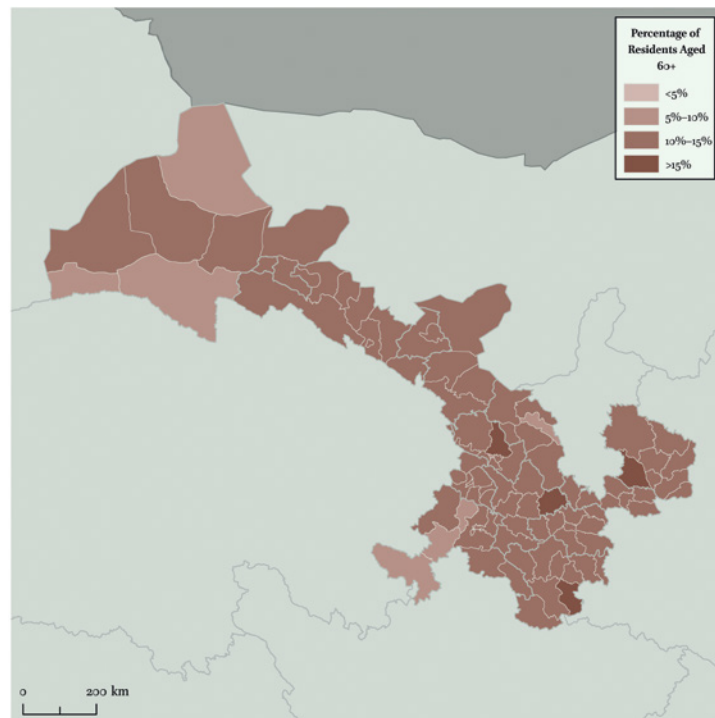
5 Ma and Lian, "Rural-urban Migration and Urbanization in Gansu Province, China."



MAP 139 Gansu: Topography.



MAP 140 Gansu: Elderly population in 2000.



MAP 141 Gansu: Elderly population in 2010.

moving toward the southeast, where the provincial capital and other major cities are located.⁶

A significant demographic change in Gansu is the aging of its population. The percentage of people aged 60 or above was 9 percent in 2000, and rose to 12 percent 10 years later (Maps 140–141). In 2000, the percentage of elderly people in southern counties was between 8 and 12 percent, and below 8 percent in most of the middle

and north counties. In contrast, in 2010, only a couple of counties had a proportion of elderly residents lower than 8 percent, while in the south the figure topped 16 percent.

Key Religious Facts

The religious landscape of Gansu shows a high concentration of Islamic mosques in Linxia Hui Autonomous Prefecture 临夏回族自治州, northeast of Tianshui Prefecture



MAP 142
Gansu: Religious sites.

6 Fu et al., “GIS based Analysis on the Population Migration of Main Nationalities in Gansu Province.”

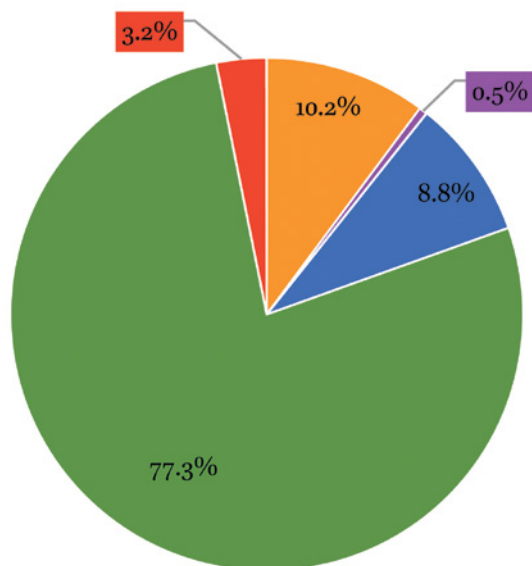
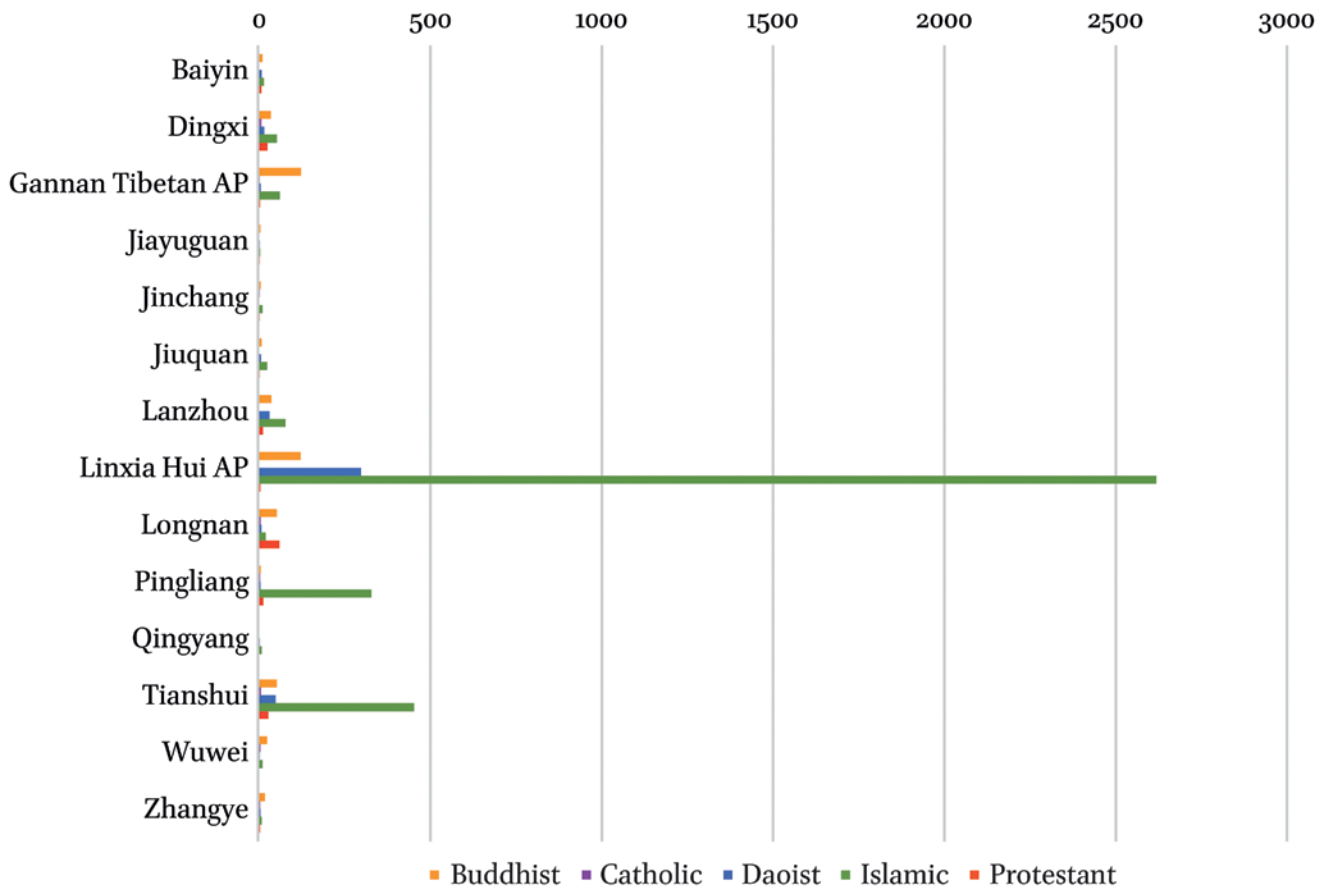


FIGURE 36 Gansu: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.

天水市, and in northern Pingliang Prefecture 平凉市; a high concentration of Buddhist temples in Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture 甘南藏族自治州 and Linxia Hui Autonomous Prefecture; and a moderate concentration of Protestant churches in southern Longnan Prefecture 陇南市, and of Daoist temples in Linxia (Map 142 and Figure 36). Indeed, Linxia, Tianshui, and Pingliang have high degrees of religious diversity. Catholic churches are scattered in the southeastern prefectures.

Religion in Gansu has been diverse for many centuries. Among the religious legacies in Gansu, the Mogao Caves 莫高窟 carved into the cliffs above the Daquan River 大泉河 are perhaps best known to the world. With over one thousand years of history, the Mogao Caves comprise the “largest, most richly endowed, and longest used treasure house of Buddhist art in the world.”⁷ The caves were first constructed in 366 CE and represent the great achievement of Buddhist art from the fourth to the fourteenth century. What makes the Mogao Caves artistically unique is the amalgamation of Han Chinese tradition and styles adopted from the ancient Indian, Gandharan,

7 UNESCO, “Mogao Caves.”

Turkish, and Tibetan peoples, as well as other Chinese ethnic minorities.⁸

As a nexus of connections between people of various ethnicities, Gansu is also a place prone to discord. Due to the conflict between the exiled Dalai Lama and the Communist Party after the 1959 Tibetan uprising, there exist two systems for selecting Tibetan Buddhist leaders. Following the death of the previous Panchen Lama, two candidates of the next Panchen Lama were picked, one sanctioned by the state and the other by the Dalai Lama. Labrang Monastery 拉卜楞寺, one of the most famous monasteries of the Gelug school of Tibetan Buddhism and the most important monastery town outside the Tibet Autonomous Region, is often the center of conflicts between the state and the diasporic Tibetan monks. In October 2012, a Tibetan man burned himself to death at Labrang, marking the sixth protest by self-immolation in less than a month. Dhondup, the deceased, was in his late 50s and set himself on fire while other Tibetans were offering prayers at Labrang.⁹ It was the fifty-seventh self-immolation protest since the wave of burnings began in February 2009.¹⁰

In recent years, the government has begun to invest in Confucius temples, and each year various celebrations are held across the country. In 2005, Wuwei Confucius Temple 武威孔庙 of Gansu was the exclusive venue in Northwest China for a globally coordinated ritual that paid respect to Confucius. Outside China, Confucius temples in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, Singapore, the United States, and Germany participated in this ritual, reflecting the state's emphasis on a homogeneous international Confucian/Chinese society. In 2006, the offering ritual to Confucius was one of the first nominees for the Chinese government's list of intangible cultural heritage sites.¹¹

Islam has been a major religion in Gansu since the medieval era. Lanzhou, the capital and the largest city in Gansu province, illustrates the prominence of Islam in Gansu. One of the oldest mosques in Lanzhou, Xinguan Mosque 新关清真寺 was initially constructed during the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644), and later during the Republican era became an innovative institution for experimenting with modern-style education. In recent years, the mosque had an imam trained in Saudi Arabia. Although he was known as the “modern imam” for bringing in new ideas to connect the Muslim community with the modern world, including

preaching in Mandarin instead of Arabic, his teaching indicated the spread of Salafism among Chinese Muslims.¹²

29. Qinghai 青海

Land area: 721,000 km²

Population: 5,626,723

Capital: Xining 西宁

Topography

Qinghai forms the northeastern frontier of the Tibetan plateau with an area of 721,000 square kilometers and 5.6 million residents, Qinghai is the fourth-largest province in China in terms of land area, but the second-smallest in terms of population. There are 8 prefectures, including 6 urban districts, three county-level cities, and 34 counties. Most cities and counties of the province are located in the relatively low-lying areas of the northeastern quarter of the province (Map 143). The average elevation throughout the province is 3,000 meters. The immense Qaidam Basin 柴达木盆地 dominates the northwest of Qinghai. The Qilian Mountains 祁连山 and Kunlun Mountains 昆仑山 are the major mountains in this province. The Yellow River originates in the middle of Qinghai, and the province is home to the largest lake in China, Lake Qinghai 青海湖. Qinghai has very little rainfall and plenty of sunshine. Average temperatures range between -5°C and 8°C.

With a GDP of only around \$37 billion, Qinghai is one of China's least-developed provinces. Agriculture in Qinghai is small-scale and limited, but the province has developed a burgeoning livestock industry for beef and lamb production. In 2006, the construction of the highest railway in the world, the Qinghai–Tibet railway, was completed. This railway brings a significant advance in economic development for the local people. The Tibetan tourism industry also benefits Qinghai. An increasing number of shops and restaurants are being built in the province and flocks of tourists come to share Tibetan culture.

Demography

The population in Qinghai is highly concentrated in the eastern prefectures. The major cities, including the provincial capital Xining, are located in the northeastern part of the province. The total population of Qinghai was 4,822,963 in 2000 and increased by 16.7 percent to

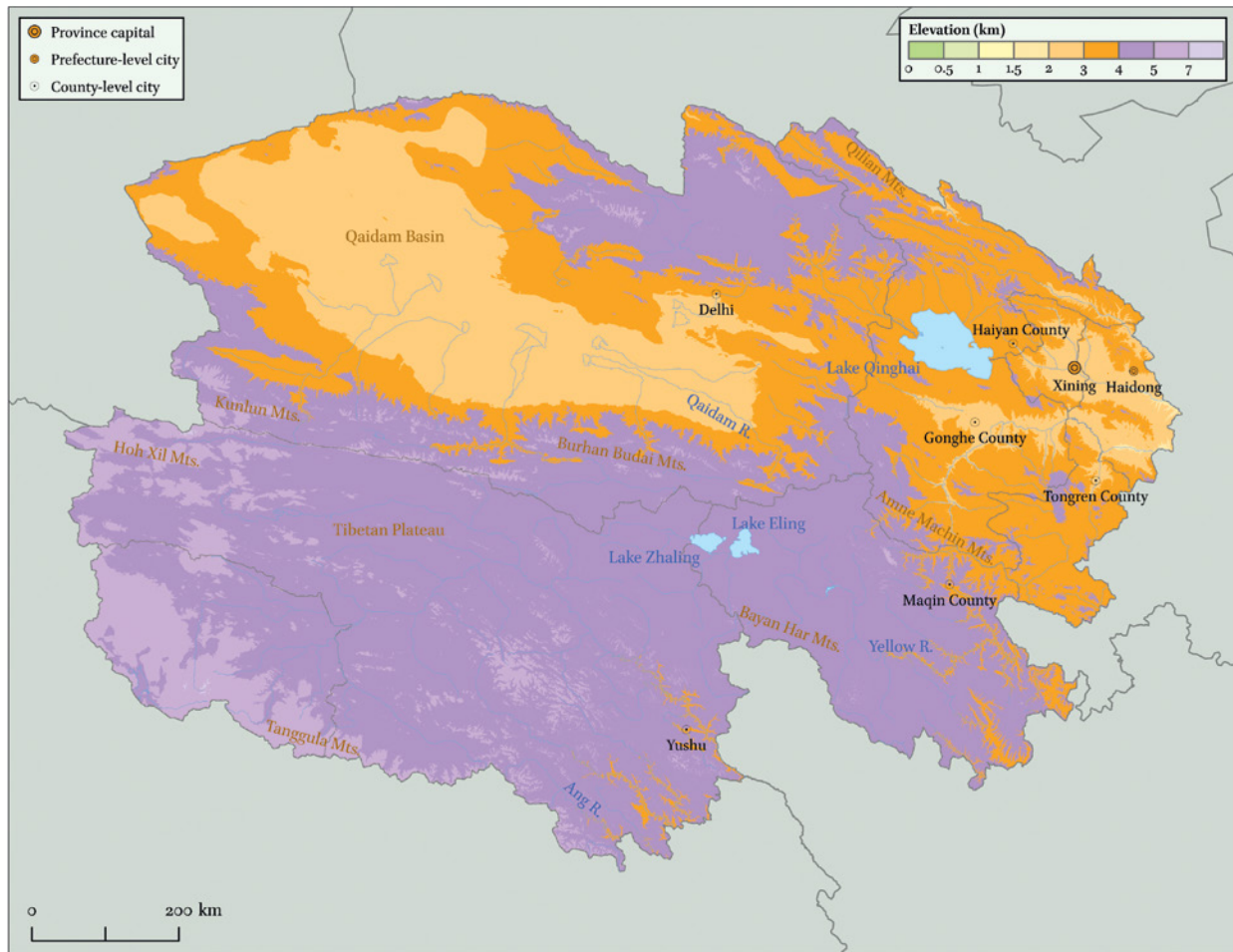
8 Dunhuang Academy, 2015 Dunhuang Forum.

9 Radio Free Asia, “Burning at Labrang Monastery.”

10 Radio Free Asia, “Burning at Labrang Monastery.”

11 Xinhuanet, “The Confucius-vestigation Ritual May Fail to be Handed Down to Future Generations.”

12 Kaiman, “In China, Rise of Salafism Fosters Suspicion and Division among Muslims.”



MAP 143 Qinghai: Topography.

5,626,723 a decade later. The percentage of people immigrating from other provinces rose substantially from 3.8 percent in 2000 to 5.7 percent in 2010 (Maps 144–145). There has also been a substantial effort to foster immigration in the northwestern reaches of the province.¹³ In the meantime, in order to improve the grassland ecosystem and the socioeconomic status of local people, the local government has launched a program to encourage pastoral Tibetan communities to settle in urban areas.¹⁴

Higher education expanded substantially. The number of people with at least a college education was 156,434 in 2000 and rose to 484,794 a decade later, a 210 percent increase. However, the rise in education level was limited to the eastern part. Also, the average family size decreased from 4 persons in 2000 to 3.5 in 2010. Qinghai's urban residents only constituted 26 percent of the total population in 2000 and 28 percent in 2010. In Qinghai, the elderly

population remained relatively small over the decade, as persons aged 60 or higher comprised only 8 percent of the population in 2000 and 9 percent in 2010.

Key Religious Facts

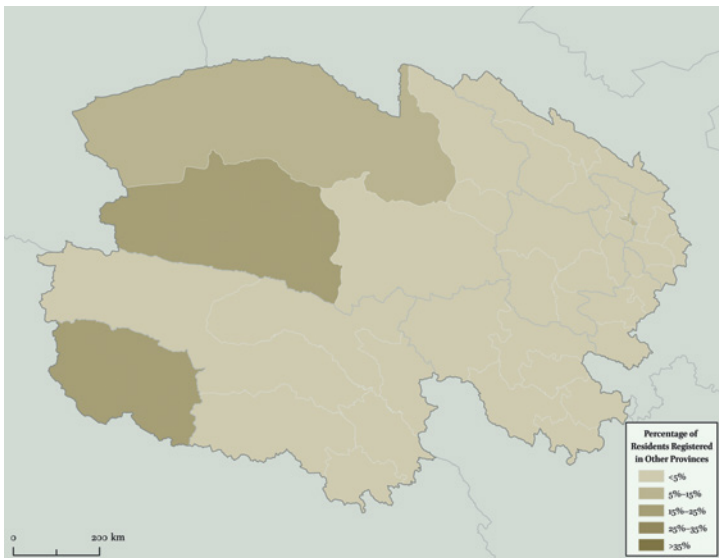
Although Qinghai's ethnic culture is predominantly Tibetan, the province is also home to a great diversity of peoples, including Han, Hui, Tu 土, Mongols, and Salars. There is a high concentration of mosques in Haidong 海东, Xining, and some parts of the Haibei Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture 海北藏族自治州. There are also a few Protestant and Catholic churches in Xining and Haidong (Map 146 and Figure 37). Perhaps the province's most famous religious site is the Ta'er Temple 塔尔寺 (Kunbum Monastery) to the west of Xining City, which was founded in 1583 by the third Dalai Lama, Sonamgyatso (Suonanjiacuo 索南嘉措, 1543–1588). The temple is also where Tsongkhapa (Zongkaba 宗喀巴, 1357–1419), the founder of the Gelug school of Tibetan Buddhism, was born. Legend has it that drops of blood from Tsongkhapa's umbilical cord fell on the ground, from which grew the

13 Fischer, "Population Invasion versus Urban Exclusion in the Tibetan Areas of Western China."

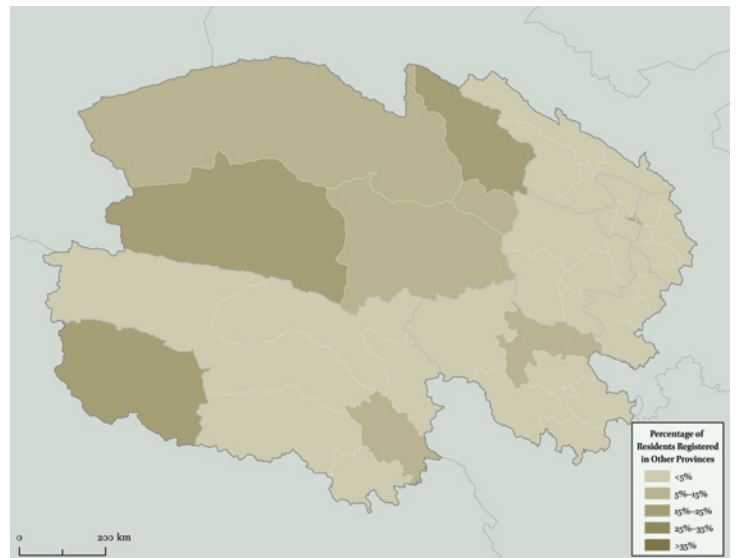
14 Foggin, "Depopulating the Tibetan Grasslands."



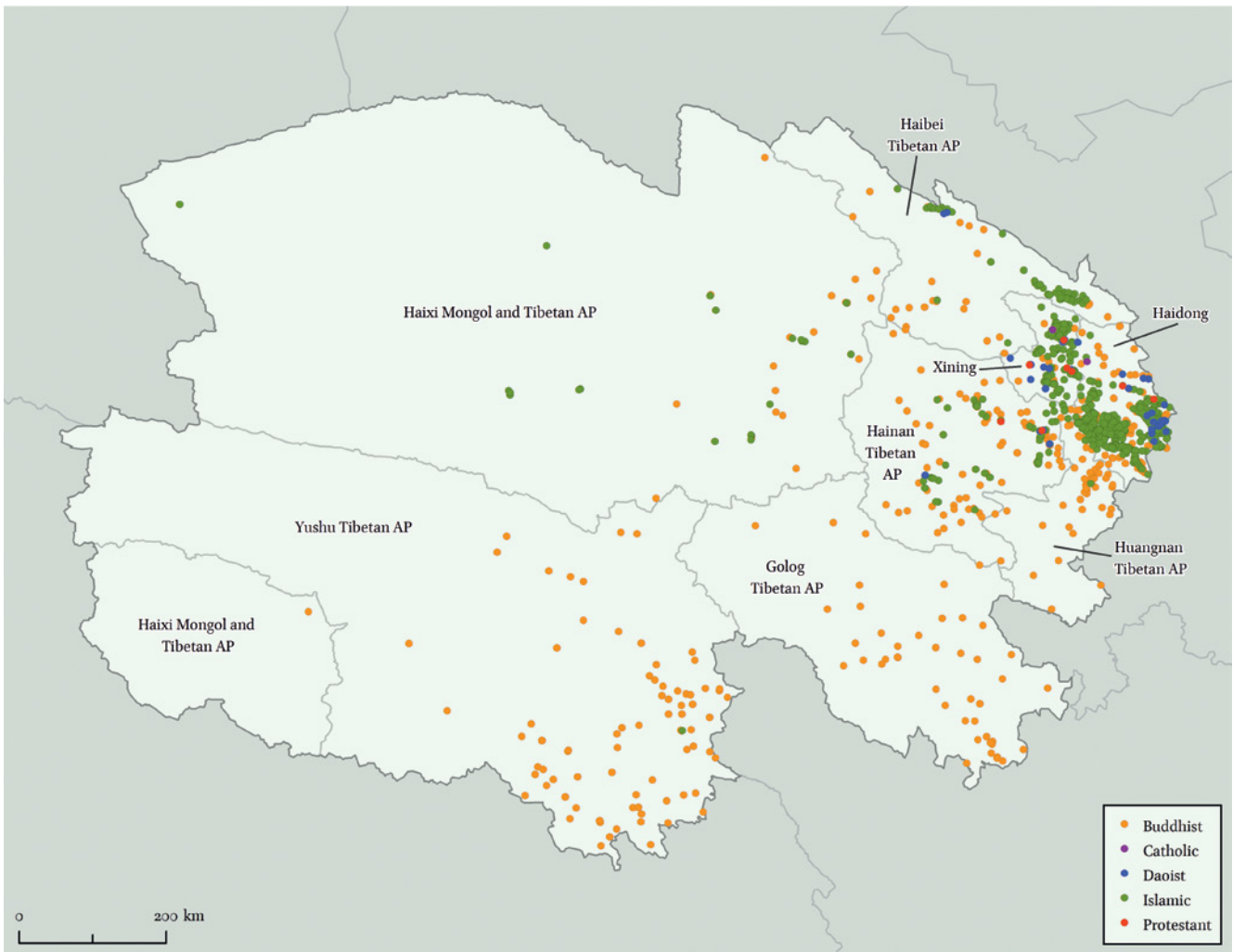
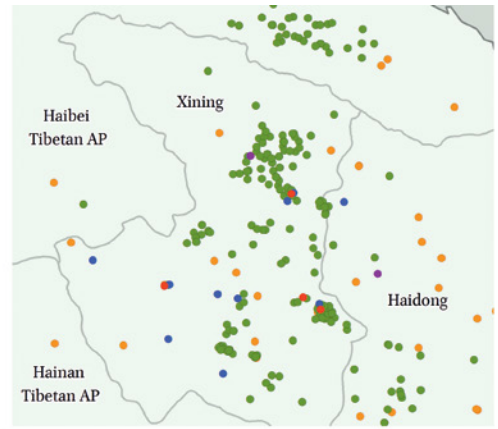
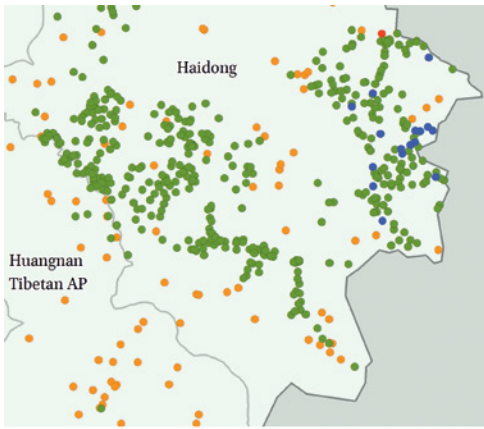
PHOTO 32 Thousands of lamas and followers pray before a Buddhist *thangka* painting at the Rongwo Monastery (Longwu si 隆务寺), Tongren County, Qinghai.
CREDIT: WEIJIAN DENG.



MAP 144 Qinghai: Immigration in 2000.



MAP 145 Qinghai: Immigration in 2010.



MAP 146 Qinghai: Religious sites.

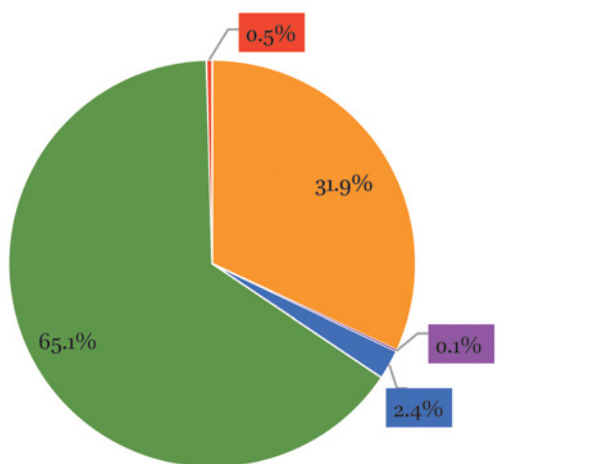
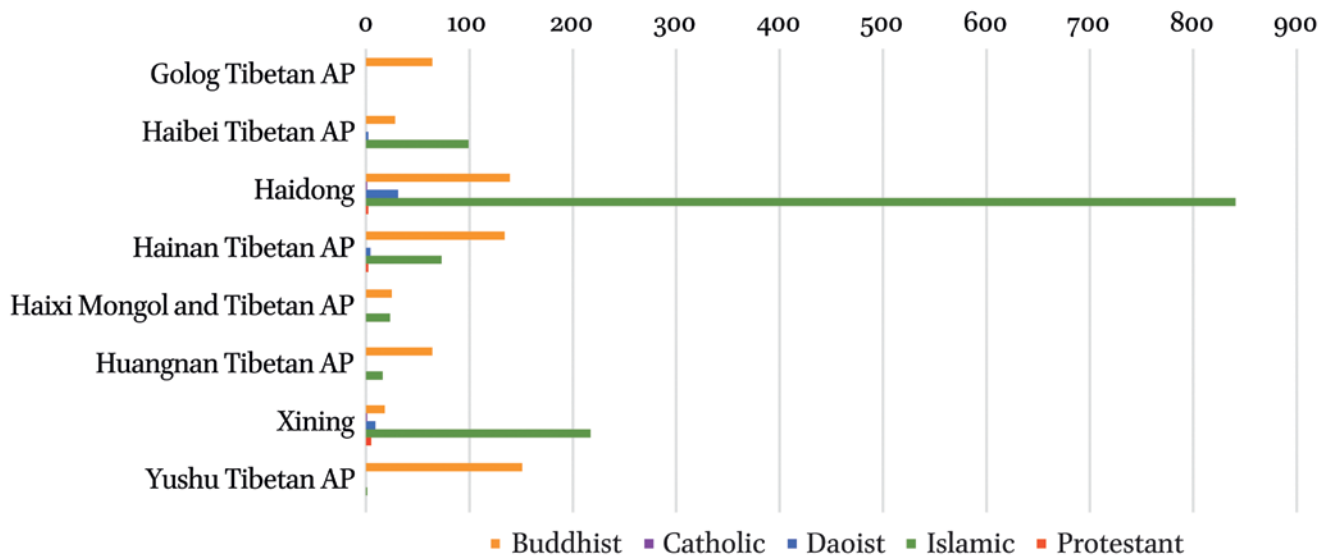


FIGURE 37 Qinghai: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.

“tree of merit” that still stands in the monastery. Kumbum, one of the six most important monasteries of the Gelug school, consists of four monastic colleges that give courses not only on religion, but also medicine and astrology. It currently has 400 monks, which is a significant reduction from the 3,000 who resided there prior to 1949.¹⁵

Hui Muslims have been the main ethnic group in many areas since the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911). Nearly one million Muslims live in Qinghai, where they comprise one-fifth of the province’s total population. In September 2015, a bank with “Muslim characteristics” was opened in Xining to provide customized services for Muslims. Before opening, the bank invited an imam from the city’s Dongguan Mosque 东关清真大寺 to offer supervision with regard

to Islamic doctrines, standards of behavior, and the use of Arabic translations. The imam also inspected the hygiene of the bank and provided suggestions in other areas. Islamic banking should in theory be consistent with the principles of *sharia* (Islamic law), which prohibits charging interest or fees on loans of money. The bank thus offers small loans to Muslim customers at only 15 percent of the average interest rate. The bank also provides guarantee and mortgage services for Mecca pilgrims.¹⁶

Despite its location in northwestern inland China, Qinghai has a surprisingly long history of Christian presence. First contacts were already established as early as the Tang Dynasty (618–907) by Nestorian traders doing business along the Silk Road. In the Republican period, more than 500 missionaries served in Gansu and Qinghai. Xining in particular was the first place in Qinghai to establish a Catholic community. During the Cultural Revolution, many churches in Xining were destroyed. Heizui’er Church 黑嘴儿耶稣圣心教堂, the most recently revived Catholic church in Xining, is one witness to this history. The church was initially built in 1923 and was torn down during the Cultural Revolution; only one of its buildings was left intact. In the 1980s, this building was converted into the current church. In 2002, through negotiations with the Religious Affairs Bureau, the church was able to reacquire some other parts of the property. Initiated by Father Qin Guoliang 秦国良, the building project was completed in August 2005.¹⁷

15 Barnett and Akiner, *Resistance and Reform in Tibet*; Norbu, “The 1959 Tibetan Rebellion.”

16 Jia, “China’s Islamic Bank.”

17 China Catholic, “New Church in Qinghai Province and Assumption of Our Lady Solemnly Celebrated in Xining Parish.”

30. Ningxia 宁夏

Land area: 66,400 km²

Population: 6,301,350

Capital: Yinchuan 银川

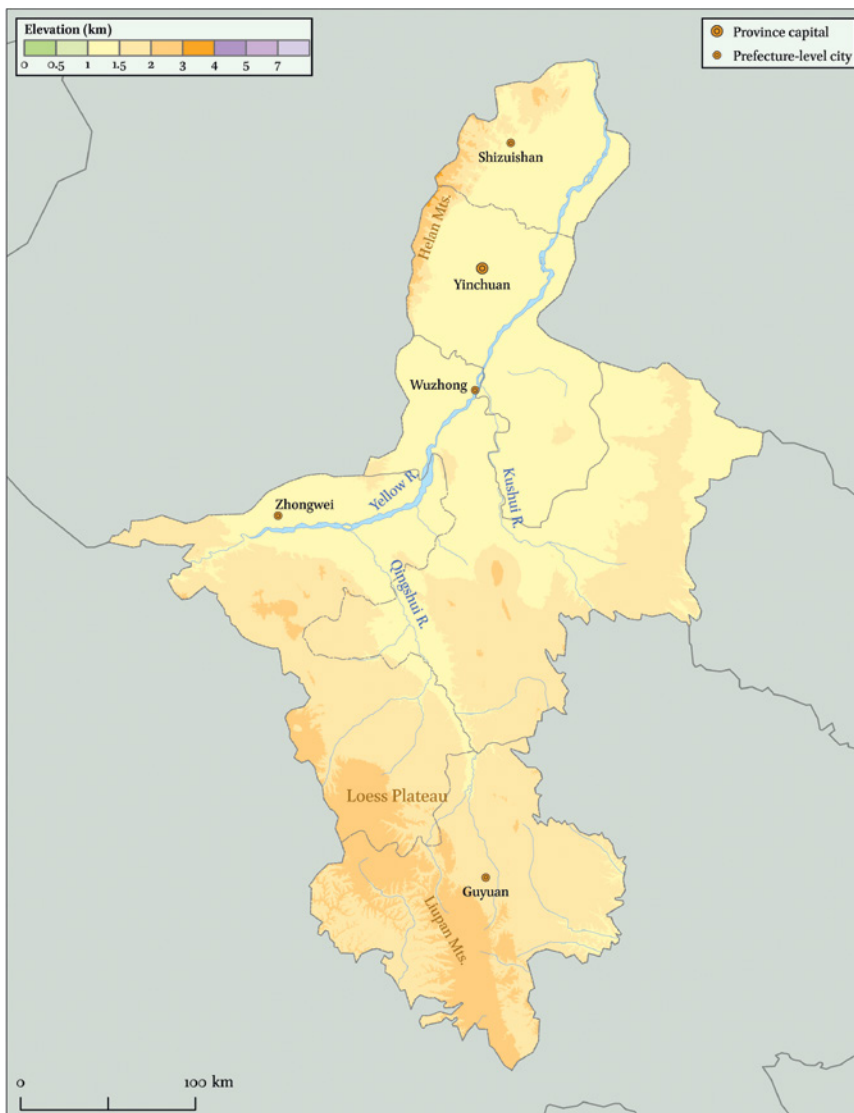
Topography

The Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region 宁夏回族自治区 is located in northwest China. It comprises five prefectures, including 9 urban districts, two county-level cities, and 11 counties. Ethnic minorities constitute 35.2 percent of the total population and most of them are Hui people. Ningxia is among the least-developed provinces in China and has the third smallest GDP. Natural resources and agricultural products such as wool and sugar are the foundation of the economy. Thanks to the nearby coal reserves, there is a well-developed chemical industry around the capital city of Yinchuan.

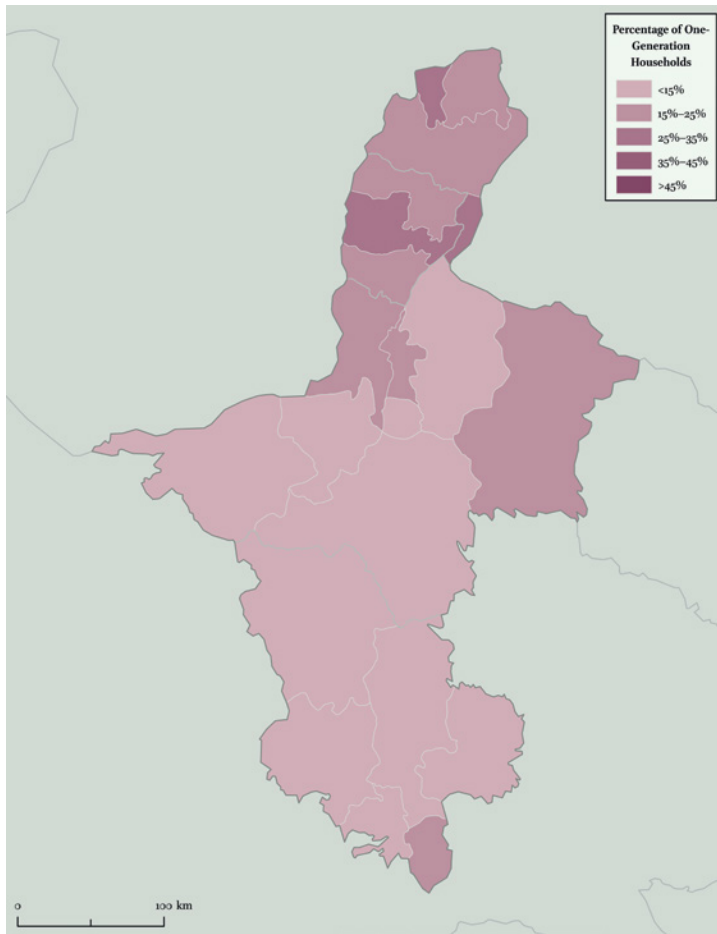
The topography of Ningxia slopes downward from the highlands in the south to the Yellow River valley in the north (Map 147). The borders of Ningxia are formed by the Liupan Mountains 六盘山 in the south and the Helan Mountains 贺兰山 in the north. The Yellow River enters Ningxia from Gansu and flows northeast into Inner Mongolia, forming a flood plain in the north of Ningxia. Four of the five major metropolitan centers in Ningxia, as well as the province's agricultural and pastoral sectors, are located in the flood plain. Southern Ningxia, however, is covered with a thick layer of loess soil unsuited to agriculture and thus is less populated. Ningxia features a dry and extreme climate with hot summers and temperatures well below freezing in the winter.

Demography

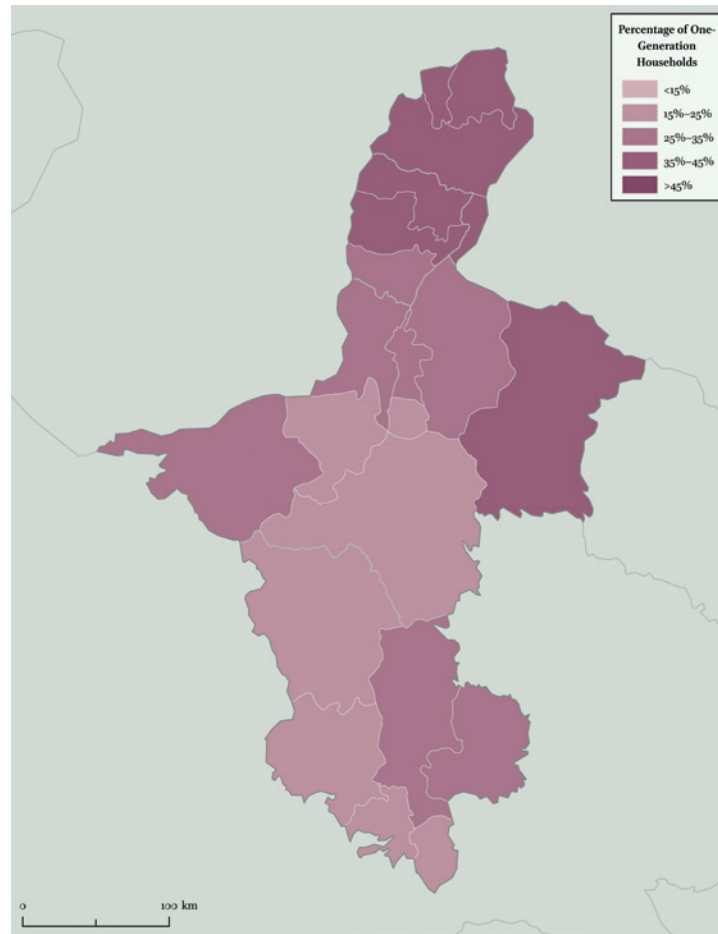
Ningxia is relatively populous compared with the neighboring provinces of Qinghai and Gansu. The total



MAP 147
Ningxia: Topography.



MAP 148 Ningxia: One-generation Households in 2000.



MAP 149 Ningxia: One-generation Households in 2010.

population in Ningxia rose to 6,301,350 in 2010, a 15 percent increase from 2000. The proportion of immigrants from other provinces was small, comprising less than 6 percent of the total population. In fact, since the 1990s Ningxia has been supplying migrant workers to other provinces.¹⁸ People moved from Ningxia to the east coast of China for better economic prospects. There was very little change in the overall population distribution between 2000 and 2010, except for a noticeable increase in people residing in two large cities: Yinchuan and Wuzhong 吴忠. The percentage of people aged 60 and over increased slightly, while still remaining below the national average, and the overall percentage of persons between the ages of 15 and 34 decreased from 66.9 percent in 2000 to 55.2 percent in 2010.

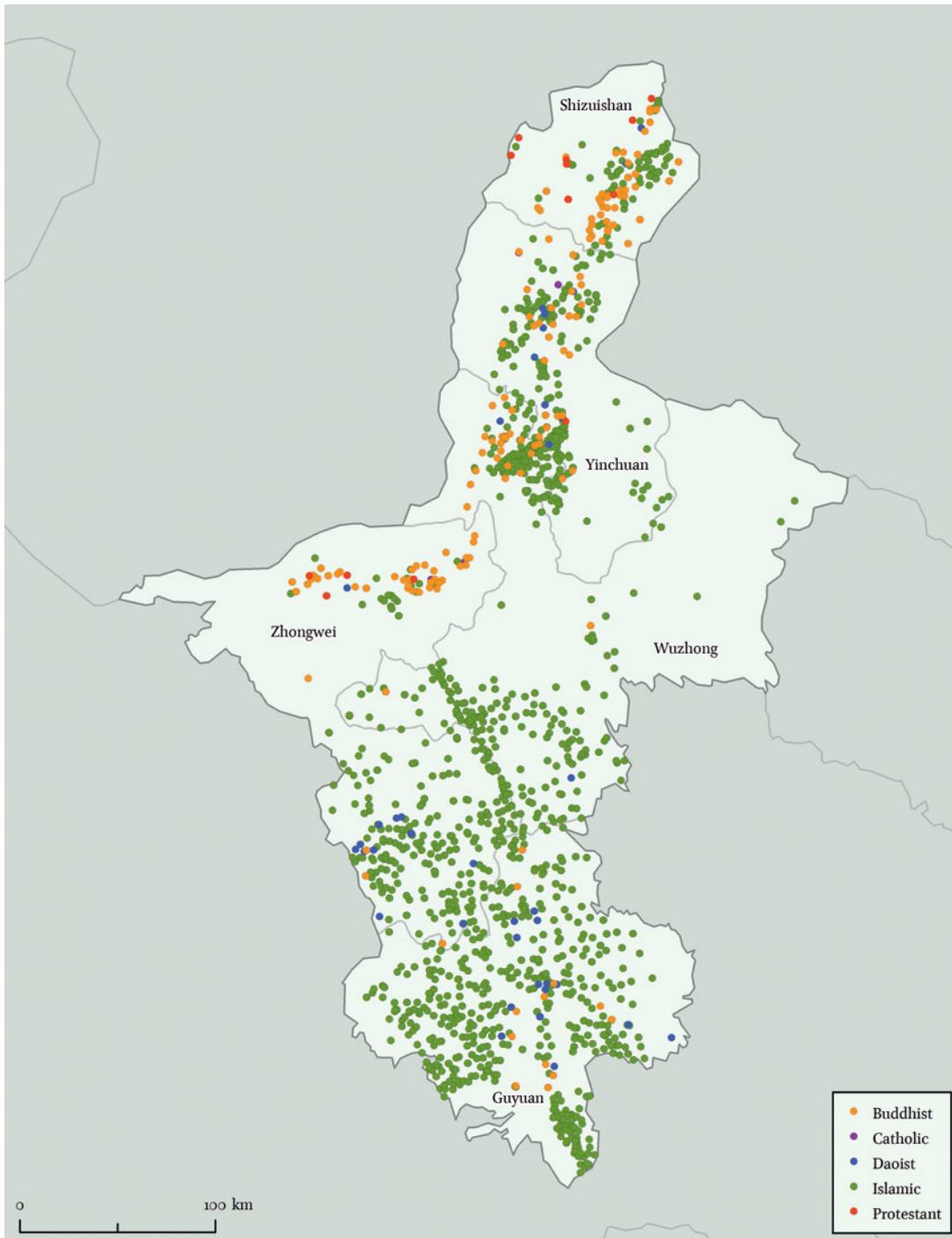
There was some noticeable improvement in education between 2000 and 2010. The percentage of the population with a college degree or higher was 2.8 percent in 2000 and

increased to 6.5 percent in 2010, even though this was still below the national average. Ningxia residents who had completed college were largely concentrated in Yinchuan. The changes in urbanization appear to be consistent with those in education. Meanwhile, the average family size shrank from 3.8 persons in 2000 to 3.2 in 2010, while in the same period the percentage of one-generation households increased dramatically from 14.7 to 29.7 percent (Maps 148–149).

Key Religious Facts

As Ningxia is the Hui Autonomous Region, Islam is the dominant religion (Photo 33), with some Buddhist temples in the north and a few Daoist sites in the south (Map 150 and Figure 38). There are a few Protestant churches in Zhongwei 中卫 in the west and Shizuishan 石嘴山 in the north. Muslims comprise roughly one-third of the province's population, but 92 percent of religious sites are mosques. Ningxia has great religious and ethnic importance in spite of its small size. Various projects

18 D. G. Johnson, "Provincial Migration in China in the 1990s."



MAP 150 Ningxia: Religious sites.

have showcased the region's Islamic culture, including the China Hui Nationality Culture Garden and the World Muslim City, a multi-billion-dollar endeavor that was to include investment from other Muslim countries. In 2015, the China–Arab States Expo 中国-阿拉伯国家博览会 was

held in Yinchuan, under the theme “Carry Forward the Silk Road Spirit, Deepen China–Arab States Cooperation.”¹⁹

Meanwhile, tensions persist between the Muslim Hui people and Han people. In May 2016, the *Ningxia Evening*

19 See the official website of the China–Arab States Expo 中国-阿拉伯国家博览会, <http://www.casetf.org/>

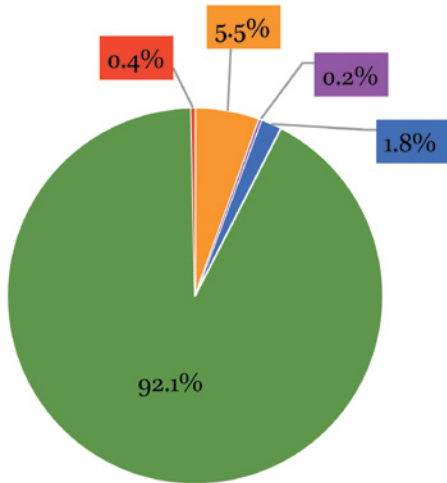
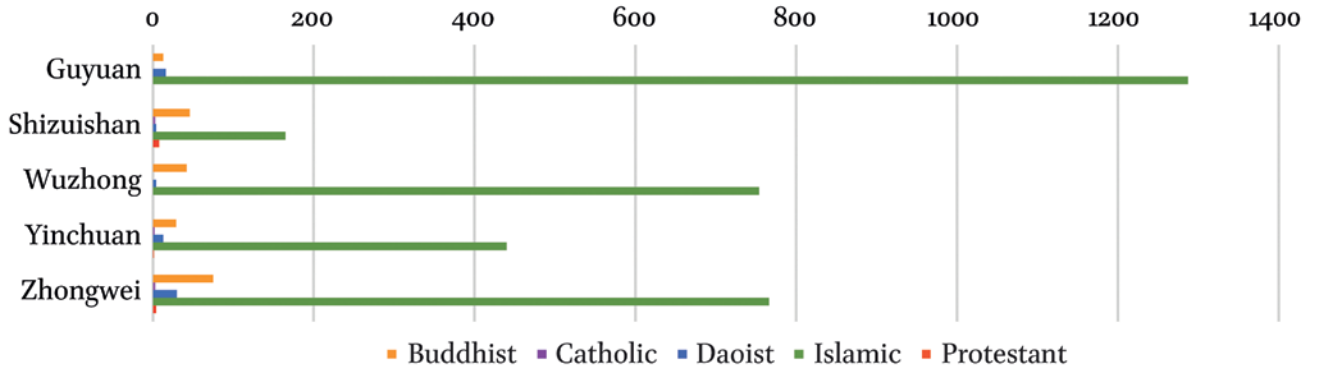


FIGURE 38
Ningxia: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.



PHOTO 33 Family members pay their respects at their ancestors' tomb (Tongxin County, Ningxia).
CREDIT: WEI FENG.

News 宁夏晚报 reported that all the school canteens in Ningxia would exclusively serve halal food, which generated heated discussions among netizens. Many people asked why the Han majority should be forced to compromise for the benefit of an ethnic minority. However, most online discussions were soon censored.²⁰

Ningxia is on the ancient Silk Road, along which stand several important Buddhist grottos. In 2011, the Ningxia Xumishan Grottoes 宁夏须弥山石窟博物馆 opened to the public. The site includes 70 grottoes decorated with carvings, color paintings, frescoes, and inscriptions in Chinese and Tibetan carved during the medieval era on stone tablets. As early as 1982, the State Administration of Religious Affairs announced that the grottoes were an important cultural heritage site under state protection. In 2003, the Autonomous Region Tourism Administration designated the site a top-rated scenic spot.²¹ This reflects the provincial government's aim to preserve and promote the historical religious grottos as a contemporary tourist site.²²

While Islam is by far the most widely practiced religion in Ningxia, other religions thrive here as well. Protestant Christianity was introduced to Ningxia as early as 1879 and has grown in the Yellow River Valley in recent decades. The Xixia Church 西夏区基督教堂 in Yinchuan, founded in 1998, is the regional center of Christianity. In June 2016, the church began collecting funds to purchase a new three-story building that would allow it to host larger gatherings. At the same time, the church also donated large amounts to other churches and seminaries in the province and beyond to support Christian congregations and theological education.²³

31. Xinjiang 新疆

Land area: 1,660,400 km²

Population: 21,815,815

Capital: Ürümqi 乌鲁木齐

20 BBC Chinese, "The Debate between a Halal Restaurant and Islamophobia."

21 Zhou, "The Xumi Mountain Grottoes."

22 Sofield and Li, "Tourism Development and Cultural Policies in China"; Sigley, "Cultural Heritage Tourism and the Ancient Tea Horse Road of Southwest China."

23 Zhi, "Ningxia Xixia Church Will Purchase House for New Gathering."

Topography

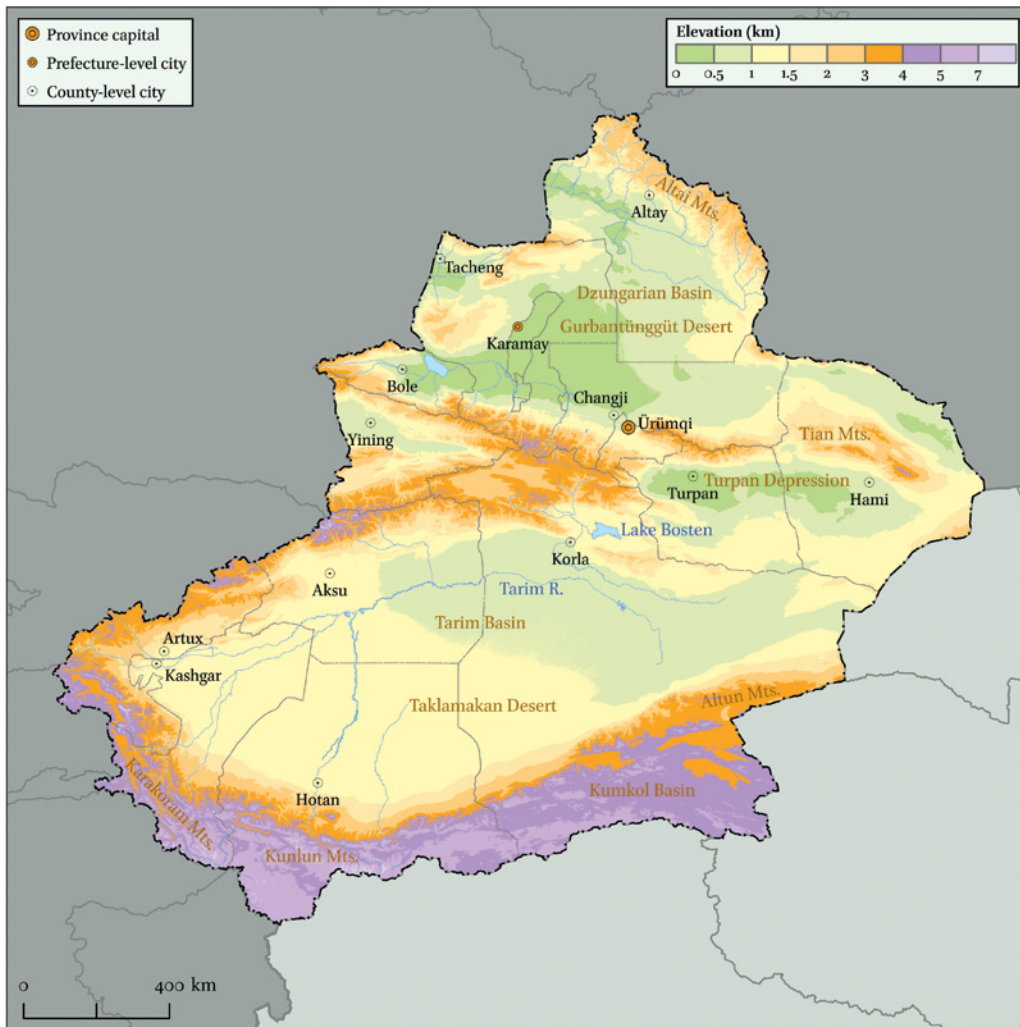
The Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region 新疆维吾尔自治区 is on the northwestern border of China. Measuring 1.66 million square kilometers, Xinjiang is the largest province in China but one of the most sparsely populated regions. The province is home to various ethnic groups and an increasingly large Han population. Xinjiang has 14 prefectures, including 13 urban districts, 24 county-level cities, and 62 counties. Besides Uyghur and Han, the other ethnic minorities include Mongol, Kyrgyz 吉尔吉斯, Kazakhs 哈萨克, and Hui.

The northern and southern parts of Xinjiang are immense basins separated by the Tian Mountains 天山, which run through the center of the province (Map 151). Much of the Tarim Basin 塔里木盆地 in the south is comprised of the Taklamakan Desert 塔克拉玛干沙漠, which contains the lowest point in all of China, at 155 meters below sea level. The Dzungarian Basin 准噶尔盆地 in the north receives slightly more precipitation and is slightly cooler than the Tarim Basin. Much of the basin's center is covered by the large Gurbantünggüt Desert 古尔班通古特沙漠. The hot summers and low levels of precipitation often mean that Xinjiang's rivers either disappear in the desert or terminate in salt lakes. The only exception is the river traversing Xinjiang's northernmost regions, the Irtysh River 额尔齐斯河, which flows via Kazakhstan and Russia to the Arctic Ocean.

Situated far from the sea, Xinjiang has both semi-arid or desert climates that are characterized by little rainfall and drastic temperature variations. The average temperature in the Tarim Basin is -7°C in January and 27°C in the summer. The hottest part of Xinjiang is the Turpan Depression, where the temperature averages 32°C and can reach 49°C . Irrigated agriculture has been practiced in Xinjiang for centuries. Traditionally, wheat is the main staple crop of the region, although maize and millet are now quite common. Xinjiang is also known for its several oases, which produce Hami melons, Turpan grapes, raisins, pears, and walnuts. Since the construction of the West–East Gas Pipeline in 2002, the oil and gas extraction industry in Aksu and Karamay has been booming. Today the oil and petrochemical sectors account for 60 percent of Xinjiang's economy.

Demography

The population is concentrated in two areas, one in the central north and the other in the southwest. A number of important cities, including the provincial capital Ürümqi, Tulufan 吐鲁番, Hami 哈密, and Yining 伊宁, are located around the Tian Mountains in the center of Xinjiang. In the southwestern area, the populous cities



MAP 151
Xinjiang: Topography.

of Hotan 和田 [Hetian], Kashgar 喀什, and Aksu 阿克苏 are built near the Hotan River 和田河 [Hetian River], the Kashigaer River 喀什噶尔河, and the Talimu River 塔里木河. The total population increased from 18,459,511 in 2000 to 21,815,815 in 2010, a rise of 18 percent. The number of people moving into Xinjiang from other provinces during the same period tripled to 1,791,642.

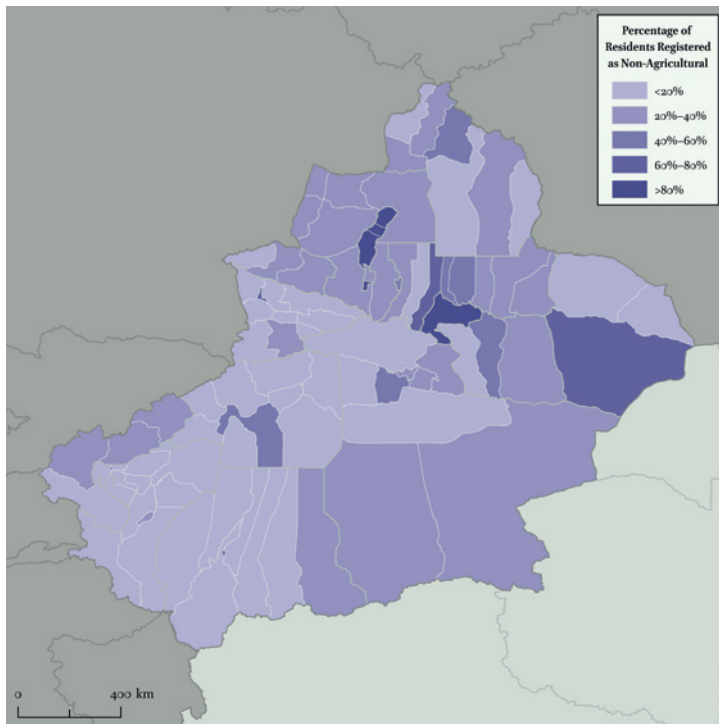
The percentage of urban residents was 30 percent in 2000 and grew to 40 percent over the following decade (Maps 152–153). In the meantime, the population remained young. People 60 years old or above made up 8 percent of the total population in 2000, and the proportion slightly increased to 10 percent in 2010. To develop local economies and maintain social stability, the government launched a series of projects including building infrastructure and mining natural resources. These developmental measures have attracted a large number of Han Chinese seeking better economic prospects. However, the incoming migrant workers compete with residents for employment and resources, leading to tension between Han

Chinese and local ethnic minorities.²⁴ Northern Xinjiang has a higher level of ethnic diversity, in part due to the increased number of Han migrant workers. Southern Xinjiang is more homogenous and most residents are Uighurs.

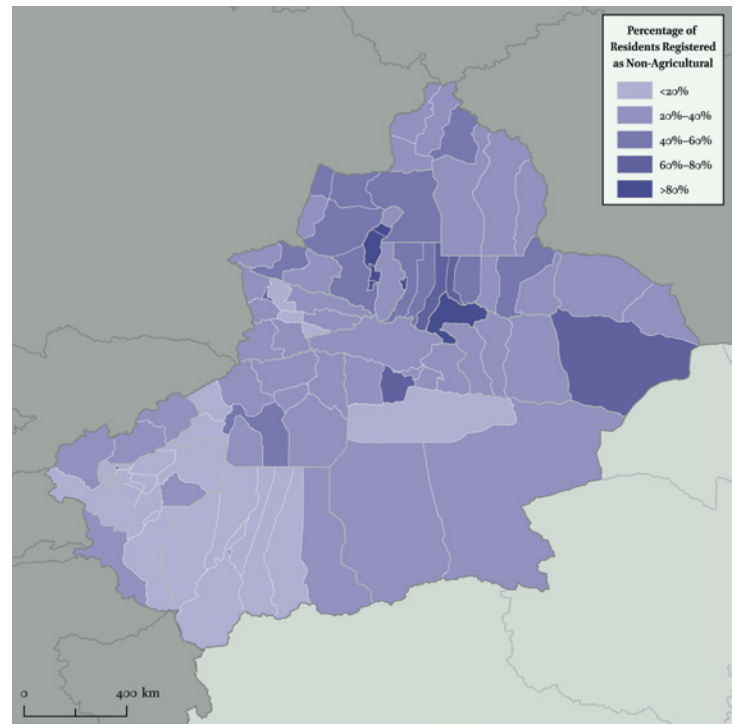
The two populous areas have different sociodemographic characteristics. The north-central area is more urbanized, educated, and older than the southwestern area. Most cities are located in the north-central area.²⁵ In a few counties the percentage of urban residents reached far beyond 40 percent. The proportion of elderly people was more than 8 percent or even 12 percent in north-central counties, whereas it was below 8 percent in many southwestern counties. Most northern counties saw a significant increase in college graduates during this decade, while the percentage of college graduates did not change much in most southwestern counties. The central govern-

²⁴ Shepard, "The Complex Impact of Urbanization in Xinjiang."

²⁵ R. Wang, "The Constraints on Urbanization in Xinjiang Province."



MAP 152 Xinjiang: Urbanization in 2000.



MAP 153 Xinjiang: Urbanization in 2010.

ment has dedicated a large amount of funds to higher education in Xinjiang.²⁶

Key Religious Facts

The dominant religion in Xinjiang is Islam. However, there is also a diversity of religions, especially reflected in the presence of Buddhist temples and Protestant churches (Map 154 and Figure 39). Indeed, it might come as a surprise to see a good number of Protestant churches spanning central Xinjiang from east to west. Many of these churches were planted by Christian evangelists from eastern China in the Back-to-Jerusalem Movement in the 1940s, which had a vision of bringing the gospel back to Jerusalem.

A historically multiethnic region, Xinjiang has residents from 55 of China's 56 ethnic groups, including relatively large populations of Uyghurs, Han, Kazakhs, Hui, Mongols, and Tajiks 塔吉克. Ethnic minorities account for more than 60 percent of Xinjiang's total population.²⁷ Due to its diverse ethnic makeup, Xinjiang has a diverse religious composition. Islam is practiced by Uyghurs, Hui, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, Uzbeks 乌兹别克, Tajiks, and Tatars 塔塔尔. Most of them are Sunni Muslims; the few Shi'i Muslims are mostly Tajiks. Historically, Xinjiang has been

home to many Islamic sects, including Gedimu, Yihawani, and Sufism. Wahhabism and Salafi-jihadism have also been introduced to Xinjiang in recent decades and have gradually gained popularity.²⁸ Xinjiang is also home to Buddhism (including Tibetan Buddhism), Protestantism, Daoism, Catholicism, Orthodox Christianity, and folk religions. The followers of these religions include Han, Mongols, Xibo, Manchu, and Russians 俄罗斯.

While there has been a long history of ethnic and religious conflicts in Xinjiang among Han, Hui, and Uyghur groups, most of them did not attract much attention until July 5, 2009, when a protest against the government quickly escalated into mob attacks mainly targeting Han people. The bloody conflict resulted in nearly 200 deaths and more than 1,500 people injured, and many vehicles were burned and buildings destroyed.²⁹ More than 1,500 people were arrested.³⁰ Many more violent clashes between the Uyghurs and the Han people have occurred in the past several years, triggering the expression of anti-Uyghur and anti-Muslim sentiments on the Chinese internet. Chinese officials said they suspected jihadist ideology was taking hold among some Uyghurs. In December 2014, the *Global Times*, an official newspaper in China, reported

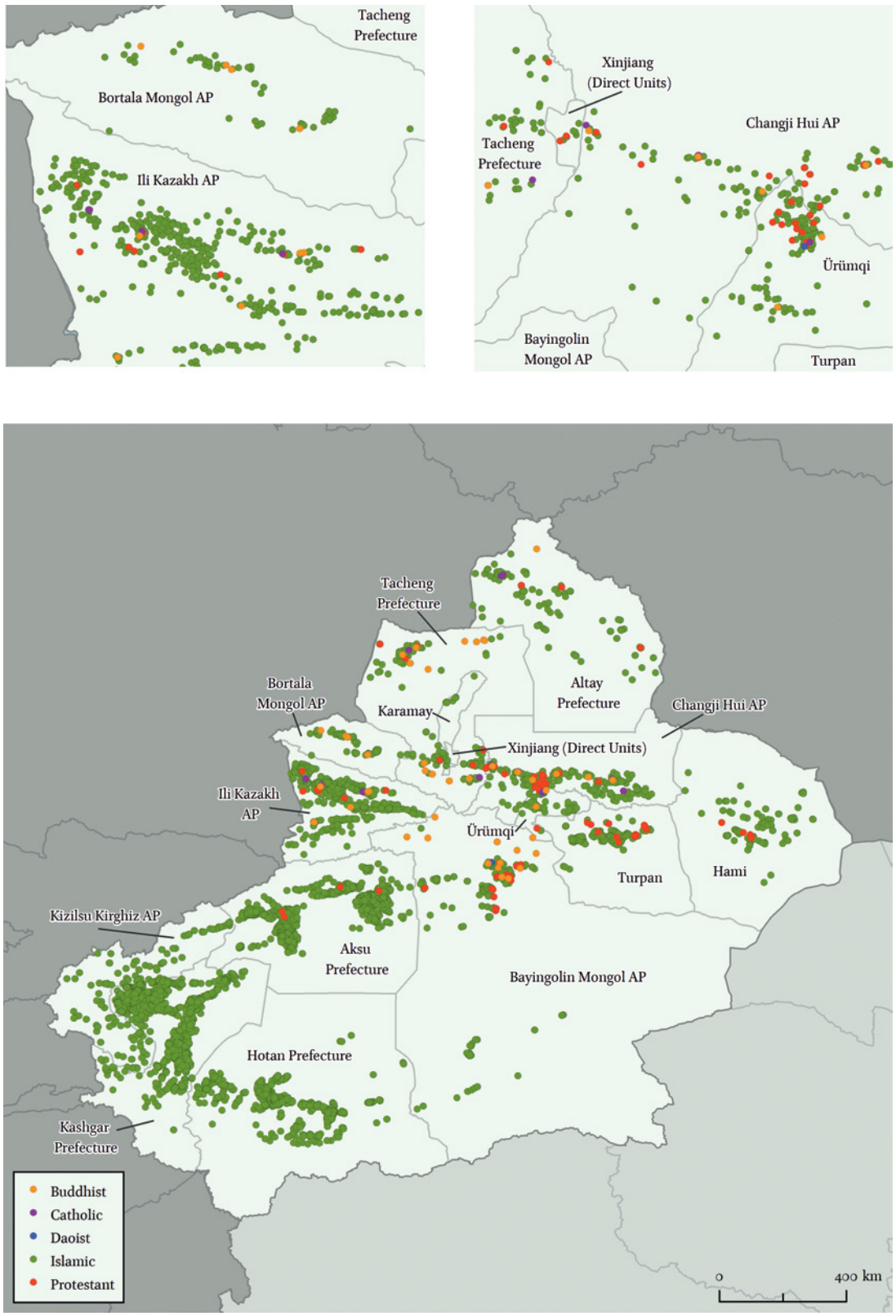
26 Cao, "A Review of Support-Education Policies in Western Region."

27 Xinjiang Government, "Distribution of Ethnic Groups."

28 Kuo, "Revisiting the Salafi-jihadist Threat in Xinjiang."

29 South China Morning Post, "Initial Probe Completed and Arrest Warrants to Be Issued Soon, Xinjiang Prosecutor Says."

30 BBC, "Xinjiang Arrests 'Now over 1,500.'"



MAP 154 Xinjiang: Religious sites.

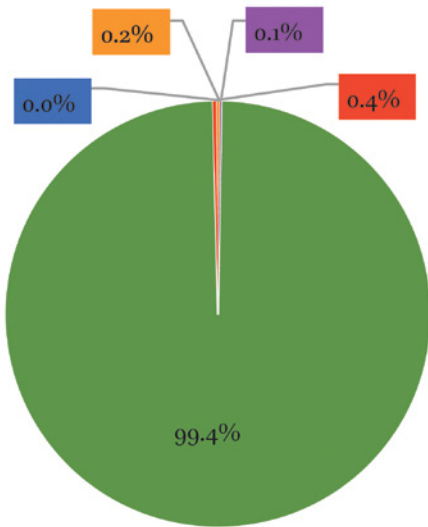
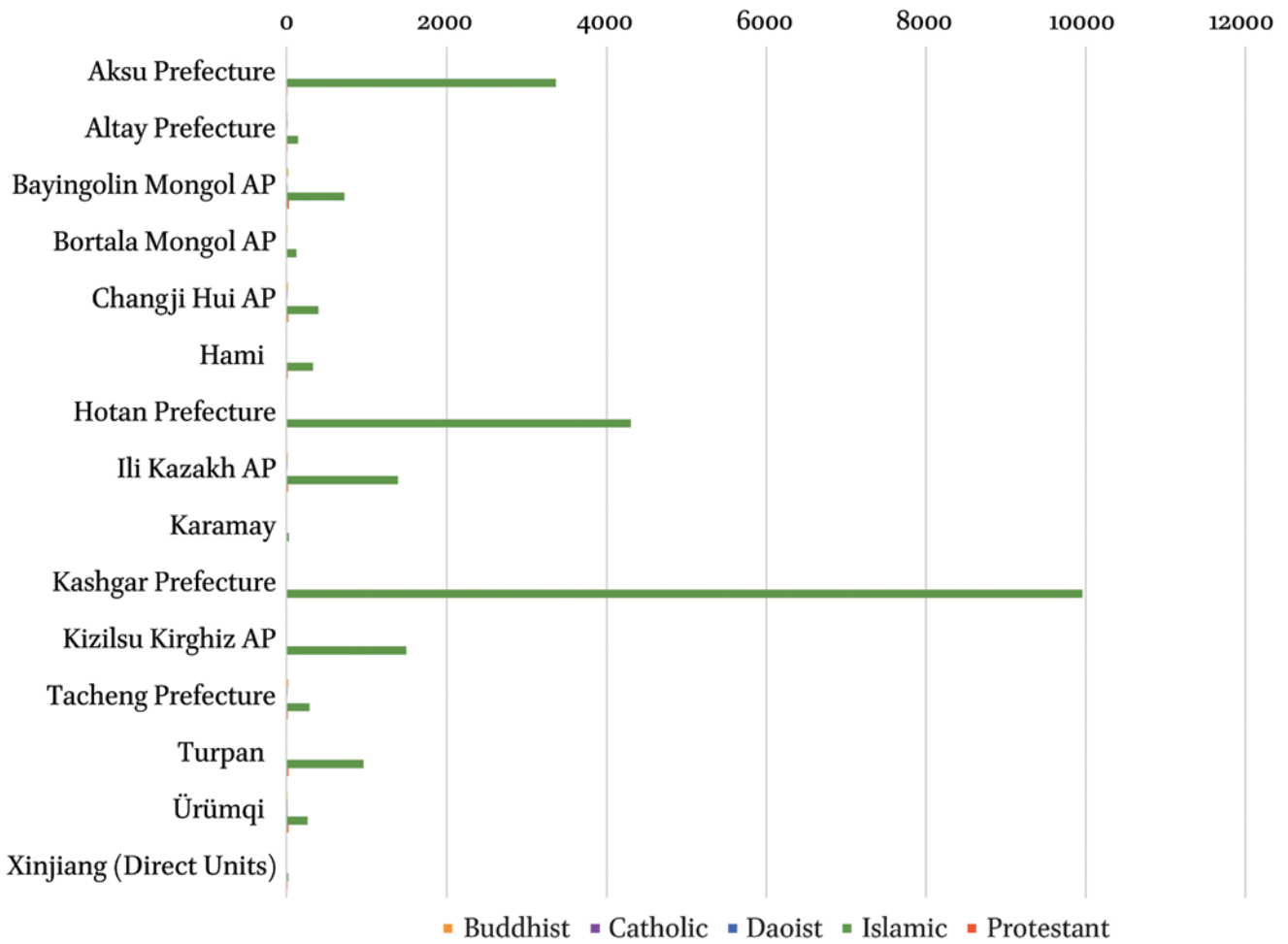


FIGURE 39 Xinjiang: Distribution of religious sites by prefecture.

that as many as 300 Chinese citizens had travelled to ISIS-controlled territories to be trained and to fight.³¹

In recent years, Protestant house churches have suffered frequent harassment from the government. Converts to Protestantism, especially from Uyghurs and Hui, have been persecuted and jailed. For instance, a Uyghur house church evangelist, Alimujiang Yimiti, was sentenced to 15 years in prison for spreading Christian beliefs in Kashgar.³²

31 Qiu, "Some Chinese Muslims Who Were Smuggled Abroad Fought for ISIS."

32 China Aid, "Alimujiang Yimiti."

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