

**Refugee Review Tribunal
AUSTRALIA**

RRT RESEARCH RESPONSE

Research Response Number: CHN31576
Country: China
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This response was prepared by the Country Research Section of the Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT) after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the RRT within time constraints. This response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum.

Questions

- 1. Please provide information on ‘The True Church of Jesus’, including details of its hierarchy and whether it has preachers or pastors.**
- 2. Do members of ‘The True Church of Jesus’ worship in specific church buildings or in members’ homes?**
- 3. Is ‘The True Church of Jesus’ different to local or house churches?**
- 4. Is ‘The True Church of Jesus’ one of the official ‘Three Patriotic Churches’?**
- 5. Please provide information on the attitude of the Chinese authorities to ‘The True Church of Jesus’.**
- 6. How are members of ‘The True Church of Jesus’ treated by the authorities in China?**
- 7. Please provide any information on a raid by the Chinese authorities on a meeting of the ‘The True Church of Jesus’ in Longtian town on 30 June 2001.**
- 8. Does the ‘The True Church of Jesus’ involve itself in political activities?**

RESPONSE

- 1. Please provide information on ‘The True Church of Jesus’, including details of its hierarchy and whether it has preachers or pastors.**

A search of the sources consulted found no reference to “The True Church of Jesus”. The church referred to by the applicant may be the True Jesus Church, an indigenous Chinese Protestant church with a reportedly increasing number of adherents in China and worldwide.

Background information regarding the True Jesus Church in Fujian province is provided in research responses dated 15 February 2007 (RRT Country Research 2007, *Research Response CHN31378*, 15 February – Attachment 1), 21 March 2006 (RRT Country Research 2006, *Research Response CHN30047*, 21 March – Attachment 2) and 7 June 2005 (RRT Country Research 2005, *Research Response CHN17352*, 7 June – Attachment 3).

In his book *China's Christian Millions*, Tony Lambert refers to the True Jesus Church as one of a number of churches founded in the early twentieth century by Chinese Christians:

The True Jesus Church was founded in 1917 by Paul Wei who was inspired by the Pentecostal movement. This group practices faith-healing, speaking in tongues, baptism by immersion, foot-washing and the Saturday Sabbath. By 1949 they claimed 120,000 members, meeting in 700 churches. Although banned in 1958 they have experienced rapid growth and have spread nationwide, although they are strongest in Jiangsu, Hunan and Fujian provinces. Some estimates put their numbers today as over one million. They strongly emphasize daily prayer, both private and corporate, and engage in vigorous evangelism (Lambert, T. 2006, *China's Christian Millions*, Monarch Books, Oxford, pp. 59-60 – Attachment 4).

The True Jesus Church website, which appears to be maintained in the United States of America but provides details of places of worship throughout the world, provides the following statement about the origin of the True Jesus Church:

In 1917, God revived his church by building up the True Jesus Church in Beijing, China. The early workers, having received the Holy Spirit and revelation of the true gospel, began preaching the truth of salvation from the heart of China. The Holy Spirit worked mightily; signs and miracles confirmed the truth that the church preached.

Within a few decades, the gospel advanced swiftly and covered almost every province of China. The church then expanded to other parts of Asia. Until today, the true gospel has also reached countries in America, Africa, Europe, and Australia ('Our Basic Beliefs: an Introductory Brochure' 1994, True Jesus Church website, May http://www.tjc.org/collage/awareness/EnglishSites/IA/order/pdf/Intro_Brochure.pdf – Accessed 26 March 2007 – Attachment 5).

One page of the website mentions sermons being “delivered by the speaker”, without specifying the office of the speaker. It also mentions “minister(s)”:

On occasion, the minister may invite congregants who would like to pray for the in-dwelling of the Holy Spirit or other needs to kneel at the font of the chapel for the final prayer. The minister(s) will pray with them ... ('Visiting the Church' (undated), True Jesus Church website <http://www.tjc.org/showArticle.aspx?aid=7217> – Accessed 26 March 2007 – Attachment 6).

The glossary in the abovementioned brochure lists neither “speaker” nor “minister”, but does list the following church offices:

Deacon

member who has been ordained by the church to tend to the faith of the congregation, conduct sacraments, and set good examples for others.

Elder

title given to member who is at least 50 and has ministered in the Church for at least 7 years; his duties are the same as those of deacons.

...

Preacher

full-time minister whose duties are prayer, preaching, attending to members' spiritual needs, and conducting sacraments .

The glossary also refers to various bodies that appear to be part of the organisational structure of the church. These include church boards, the General Assembly and the International Assembly:

Church Board

group of members who have been elected to be responsible for religious, financial, and administrative duties in a local church.

General Assembly (G.A.)

national coordination center set up to unify, coordinate, and direct the effort of all the churches.

International Assembly (I.A.)

international coordination center of the True Jesus Church.

Included in the glossary is the term “house of prayer”, defined as a “congregation of more than 15 but fewer than 30” (‘Our Basic Beliefs: an Introductory Brochure’ 1994, True Jesus Church website, May

http://www.tjc.org/collage/awareness/EnglishSites/IA/order/pdf/Intro_Brochure.pdf – Accessed 26 March 2007 – Attachment 5).

The beliefs of the True Jesus Church are outlined in a ‘Statement of Faith’ (‘Statement of Faith’ (undated), True Jesus Church website

<http://www.tjc.org/catLanding.aspx?tab=about&catno=about01> – Accessed 26 March 2007 – Attachment 7) and more fully in the document ‘Our Basic Beliefs: an Introductory Brochure’ (‘Our Basic Beliefs: an Introductory Brochure’ 1994, True Jesus Church website, May http://www.tjc.org/collage/awareness/EnglishSites/IA/order/pdf/Intro_Brochure.pdf – Accessed 26 March 2007 – Attachment 5).

2. Do members of ‘The True Church of Jesus’ worship in specific church buildings or in members’ homes?

3. Is ‘The True Church of Jesus’ different to local or house churches?

The sources consulted indicate that members of the True Jesus Church in China may worship both in church buildings and in members’ homes.

The research response dated 7 June 2005 refers to articles that mention True Jesus Church buildings, including the following information:

In October 2003 the UK Home Office cited sources which stated that the True Jesus Church operated openly and that it had “a large prominent church building in Fuzhou” (UK Home Office 2003, *China Country Report*, October, para.6.39...).

A 1996 paper appears to identify the church building in Fuzhou as follows:

...In Fuzhou a huge True Jesus Church sits on a tiny island in the middle of the Min River and next to a bridge with heavy traffic. It is very visible...(Woo, Jean 1996, ‘The Church in China: Some Main Concerns of the Late 1990s’, 1996 Orlando Costas Consultation on Global Mission, Modernization, the Church and the East Asian Experience Conference Paper, 15-16 March, Boston Theological Institute site <http://www.drsc.com/clients/bti/progs/imep/costas96.htm> – Accessed 4 February

1997...) (RRT Country Research 2005, *Research Response CHN17352*, 7 June – Attachment 3).

The term “house churches” is most commonly used to refer to Christian communities or congregations that conduct religious services without government approval in the homes of believers. An article published in March 2003 observes that house churches have been characterized by their independence from the state-sanctioned Christian organisations:

The ideology common to house churches in China is the maintenance of non-interference by the state towards the expression of religious faith, as was the situation fostered by the Guomindang government before 1949.

...Though diversified, house churches are characterised by their organisational independence from the TSPM [Three Self Patriotic Movement]. The house church movement generally refers to groups that are outside both the structure and leadership of the state-sanctioned patriotic Christian organisations. Hence, unregistered meeting-points under the leadership of the TSPM should not be confused with the house church movement. There are quite a number of new TSPM meeting-points currently awaiting registration in rural areas. These are willingly seeking an official status through registration and are submissive to the leadership of the TSPM. Their participants tend to be new converts from among the contacts of Christians attending TSPM churches in other towns and cities (Cheng, M.M.C. 2003, ‘House Church Movements and Religious Freedom in China’, *China: An International Journal*, Vol.1, No.1, March – Attachment 8).

An article dated 10 January 2006 reports that, under the regulations on religious affairs enacted in March 2005, only “meeting points” with more than forty people gathering are required to register with the government:

Now the TSPM, together with the China Christian Council, formed in the early 1980s, serves as official overseer of Protestant churches... There are about 45,000 such Protestant churches in China, plus 200 “meeting points”, places where Chinese Christians may gather, such as church buildings, homes, offices or universities. The meeting points are divided into two groups: those with 20 to 40 members and those with more than 40. Any gathering of believers with more than 40 people is required by law to register with the government, meaning the government can monitor and maintain social control of such gatherings (Yeo, K.K. 2006, ‘Home Grown’, *The Christian Century*, 10 January – Attachment 9).

4. Is ‘The True Church of Jesus’ one of the official ‘Three Patriotic Churches’?

A search of the sources consulted found no information regarding the “Three Patriotic Churches”. There was reference found to the Three-Self Patriotic Movement, an administrative organisation that oversees protestant churches in China.

An article dated 5 December 2006 provides information on the Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM) and notes that the True Jesus Church congregations “have sometimes registered directly with local authorities to meet on TSPM premises, while maintaining their own identity and autonomy”. It is stated in the article that:

The Chinese government recognises only five religions: Buddhism, Daoism, Islam, Catholic Christianity and Protestant Christianity. These five official religions are represented by seven national state-controlled organisations: the Chinese Buddhist Association, the Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association and the Chinese Bishops Conference, the Chinese Daoist

Association, the Chinese Islam Association, and the “Two Associations” of Protestant Christianity – the Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM) and the Chinese Christian Council (CCC).

... Since 1978, after the end of the Cultural Revolution and the advent of economic reforms, continued state centralisation appears to largely reflect the institutional interests of the patriotic religious organisations. For example, the “Two Associations” of Protestant Christianity generally resist efforts by Christian Protestant denominations to register with the government independent of the TSPM/CCC.

But the TSPM/CCC has not been totally successful in this. In many places different denominational groups, including Adventists, have been legalised without official affiliation with the TSPM/CCC. Similarly, congregations of the True Jesus Church and those of the Little Flock have sometimes registered directly with local authorities to meet on TSPM premises, while maintaining their own identity and autonomy. In many of these places, the TSPM/CCC plays the role of the state’s “protector,” maintaining vigilance against local state officials’ “over-zealousness” in their dealings with Protestant congregations (Hornemann, M. 2006, ‘China: State-imposed religious monopolies deny China’s religious reality’, Forum 18 News service, 5 December – Attachment 10).

The previously mentioned article dated 10 January 2006 observes that few True Jesus congregations support the Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM), the majority choosing to remain “independent” (Yeo, K.K. 2006, ‘Home Grown’, *The Christian Century*, 10 January – Attachment 9).

A DFAT report dated 29 September 1997 refers to the True Jesus Church as “a member church of the Three Self Organisation” (sic) and is referred to again in more detail in response to questions five and six, below (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 1997, *DFAT Report 475/97 China: True Jesus Church: CIS Information Request AA265*, 19 September – Attachment 11).

5. Please provide information on the attitude of the Chinese authorities to ‘The True Church of Jesus’.

6. How are members of ‘The True Church of Jesus’ treated by the authorities in China?

The research response dated 7 June 2005 refers to articles that mention that the True Jesus Church is strong in Fujian province:

Sources indicate that the True Jesus Church is “strong” in Fujian province (Johnstone, Patrick & Mandryk, Jason 2001, *Operation World: 21st Century Edition*, Paternoster Lifestyle, 6th ed, Cumbria, p.169...); (Lambert, Tony 1999, *China’s Christian Millions: The Costly Revival*, Monarch Books, London, p.210...).

Lambert estimated that there were some 70,000 True Jesus Church members in Fujian, being “very strong” in Putian County with about 20,000 members (Lambert, Tony 1999, *China’s Christian Millions: The Costly Revival*, Monarch Books, London, p.210...) (RRT Country Research 2005, *Research Response CHN17352*, 7 June – Attachment 3).

With regard to the attitude of Fujian authorities to the True Jesus Church in 1997, a DFAT report dated 19 September 1997 expressed the view that, notwithstanding that the True Jesus Church was a member church of the “Three Self Organisation” (sic), some religious activities of members might be regarded as illegal. The report stated that:

We are unable to give an authoritative answer, but would venture to suggest that as a member church of the Three Self Organisation it would not be banned as such, but inasmuch as members operated outside that fold, particularly if this involved some of the activities referred to above, some at least of these activities would be regarded as illegal. This would allow the authorities to employ the usual formulation that there is freedom of religion in China, but that religion cannot be allowed to be used to cloak law-breaking, any more than any other form of activity (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 1997, *DFAT Report 475/97 China: True Jesus Church: CIS Information Request AA265*, 19 September – Attachment 11).

Earlier information, however, indicates that the True Jesus Church was outlawed in the 1950s. The DFAT report dated 29 September 1997 includes a quote from a 1988 book by Bob Whyte, an Anglican clergyman regarded as a reliable and objective informant, that makes reference to the True Jesus Church having been “singled out for attack in 1958”. Whyte observes that behind reports and accusations of illegal activities by the church “there could well have been substance”:

“The True Jesus Church was dubiously orthodox, and it was its emphasis on faith healing and the ecstatic nature of its worship which led to the arrest in 1952 of Isaac Wei, the son of Paul Wei, one of the founders of the church... The leadership of the church was brought within the Three Self Organization, but the church continued its own life, although from 1954 it was subjected to increasing criticism. It was not until 1958, however, that the church was singled out for attack. Thus in a Hunan report preachers of the church were accused of illegal activities, including causing the death of sick people through the refusal to allow medical treatment, and causing illness and death through baptism in freezing rivers. While such accusations must be set in the context of the decisive swing to the left in Chinese politics at the time, there could well have been substance behind some of the reports. The extreme manifestations seen in certain indigenous movements in the pre-1949 period were to reappear in the 1980s, and there is no reason to think that they did not exist in the intervening years.” (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 1997, *DFAT Report 475/97 China: True Jesus Church: CIS Information Request AA265*, 19 September – Attachment 11)

The RRT research response dated 7 June 2005 refers to a paper presented at a 1996 conference that notes that in 1958 the Chinese government outlawed the True Jesus Church. The paper also makes reference to an elder recounting, in 1970, that the church had nevertheless continued to grow:

In 1958 the Chinese government outlawed the True Jesus Church. As with so many other Christian groups, it was forced underground. Nevertheless, in the 1970's in Fuqing during the Cultural Revolution, one elder recounts how he witnessed the growth of the church, people copying hymnals by hands, and exchanging the equivalent of 55 kilograms of potato chips for a Bible. Although the exception to the rule, one group in the village of Nandian near San Shan in Fuqing have met continuously since 1949 (May, Grace 1996, 'The True Jesus Church' in 'A Comparative Study of The Christian Assembly, the True Jesus Church, and the Jesus Family: Three Ecclesial Case Studies of Protestantism in China', 1996 Orlando Costas Consultation on Global Mission, Modernization, the Church and the East Asian Experience Conference Paper, 15-16 March, Boston Theological Institute site, p.9 <http://www.drsc.com/clients/bti/progs/imep/costas96.htm> – Accessed 4 February 1997...) (RRT Country Research 2005, *Research Response CHN17352*, 7 June – Attachment 3).

A report dated 23 March 2000 of a fact-finding mission to Fuzhou by the Political Counsellor from the Canadian Embassy in Beijing provides information relating to the attitude of the

authorities to religious groups including those meeting in unregistered places of religious worship. The report indicates that diverse religious groups are tolerated, that there was no indication of police harassment and that “relations with local authorities have been consistently nonconfrontational in recent years”:

There is a high degree of religious tolerance in this part of China... Various forms of Protestant religious expression thrive in metro Fuzhou. The numbers of faithful grow rapidly year by year. There is much evidence of construction of new churches to meet the increasing demand for places of worship. Diversity of religious expression seems more extensive here than in other parts of China, including the indigenous “Little Flock” sect and Seventh Day Adventists Seventh Day Adventist church...

... Over half of the places of religious worship in the area are “as yet” unregistered (photo shows discussion with Protestant Ministers at former Anglican Church in Longtian Town, Fuqing County re: status of unregistered “meeting places” in local villages that are affiliated with this church that receives an average of 1,200 worshippers every Sunday. This discussion was videotaped [the sole incidence of this intrusion], but the presence of the camera did not seem to inhibit the frankness of discussion. The stop at this Church was at my request and clearly not anticipated in advance). This situation does not seem to trouble the local authorities. In other parts of China congregations at unregistered places of worship are periodically subject to police harassment on direction of the local bureaux for Civil Affairs. No indication that this has been the case in the four counties visited was found. Extensive interviews with Christians throughout the visit suggested that relations with local authorities have been consistently nonconfrontational in recent years. These four counties have a high percentage of Christian faithful compared with other parts of Fujian, a legacy of a strong presence of British and American Christian missionaries operating out of Fuzhou in the preCommunist period.

... Several churches were visited in all four counties many of these spontaneous visits at Political Counsellor’s request (“please stop the car here, I’m going in”). In all of these churches, local Christians and ministers were engaged in private discussions. Officials responsible for Religious Affairs were interviewed in three of the the four counties, the exception being Mawei (at right: massive new Protestant Cathedral with seating for 1,600 in downtown Changle built in 1997 located walking distance from 1904 church of comparable size currently still in use and under renovation). As with the birth control policy, Central policy inhibiting freedom of religious expression does not appear to be much followed here. Discussions with Ministers confirmed that forms of worship variant from the form of post denominational Protestant service endorsed by the state supported China Christian Council and Protestant Three Self Movement are tolerated here (as they are not in other parts of the country). Most of the Catholic churches have not affiliated with the Catholic Patriotic Association and remain loyal to Rome. These Catholic churches are not able to be registered. On questioning local officials indicated that “we try to convince them to affiliate with the CPA, but if they won’t, there is nothing we can do” an encouragingly enlightened attitude.

...As in the past, from Fuzhou “heaven is high and the Emperor far away.” While this suggests that corruption, smuggling, other tax evasion and false reporting to Beijing continue to be characteristic of Fujian-Central Government relations, it also suggests that the repressive policies of the Chinese state with regard to political and social freedoms are mostly not implemented by the authorities in this area... The overall conclusion of this investigation of conditions in Changle, Fuqing, Mawei and Lianjiang counties is that human rights are much better protected in this part of Fujian than in most other parts of China (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2000, *Report of a fact finding mission to Fuzhou by political counsellor, Canadian Embassy, Beijing*, 23 March – Attachment 12).

The US Department of State *International Religious Freedom Report for 2006 – China* provides information more generally on the legal and policy framework relevant to religious groups, in particular since the enactment of the regulations on religious affairs (RRA) in March 2005:

Public security forces maintain designated units charged with monitoring religious behavior that violates law or regulation. Such police monitor unregistered facilities, check to see that religious activities do not disrupt public order, and combat illegal cults.

In March 2005 the Government enacted the RRA, replacing previous 1994 regulations governing religious sites. The regulations regularize management of religious affairs within a legal framework and codify pre-existing administrative practice and regulation. Unlike the 1994 regulations, the RRA protect the rights of registered religious groups, under certain conditions, to possess property, publish literature, train and approve clergy, and collect donations. Comprehensive implementing regulations had not been issued by the end of the period covered by this report. There was little evidence that the new regulations improved religious freedom.

Like the 1994 law, the RRA require religious groups to register places of worship. Spiritual activities in places of worship that have not registered may be considered illegal, and participants can be punished. There are five requirements for the registration of “sites for religious activities.” First, establishment of the site must be consistent with the overall purpose of the RRA and must not be used to “disrupt public order, impair the health of citizens, or interfere with the educational system of the state” and must not be “subject to any foreign domination.” Second, local religious citizens must have a need to carry out collective religious activities frequently. Third, there must be religious personnel qualified to preside over the activities. Fourth, the site must have “necessary funds.” Fifth, the site must be “rationally located” so as not to interfere with normal production and neighboring residents. Government officials claim that registration requirements are simple and places of worship are not required to affiliate with one of the five official “patriotic” religious organizations that correspond to the five main faiths. However, according to the Government’s April 2005 policy statement Measures for the Approval of Religious Activities, only pre-existing local, provincial or national-level religious organizations are authorized to apply for approval of a new religious venue and approval is granted only after an inspection by the local Religious Affairs Bureau.

Under the RRA, clergy need not be approved by the Government but must be reported to the Government after being selected pursuant to the rules of the relevant religious association.

Nearly all local RAB [Religious Affairs Bureau] officials require Protestant churches to affiliate with the (Protestant) Three-Self Patriotic Movement/Chinese Christian Council (TSPM/CCC). Credentialing procedures effectively required clergy to affiliate with the TSPM/CCC, a practice that appeared unchanged since adoption of the new regulations. Many unregistered evangelical Protestant groups refuse to affiliate with the TSPM/CCC because they have theological differences with the TSPM/CCC. Some groups disagree with the TSPM/CCC teachings that all Protestant beliefs are compatible and that differences between Protestant denominations are irrelevant. In a few regions, Protestant groups have registered without affiliating with the TSPM/CCC...

Some groups register voluntarily, some register under pressure, and authorities refuse to register others. Some religious groups have declined to register out of principled opposition to state control of religion. Others do not register due to fear of adverse consequences if they reveal, as required, the names and addresses of church leaders or members. Unregistered groups also frequently refuse to register for fear that doing so would require theological

compromises, curtail doctrinal freedom, or allow government authorities to control sermon content. Some groups claimed that authorities refused them registration without explanation or detained group members who met with officials to attempt to register. The Government contended that these refusals mainly were the result of these groups' lack of adequate facilities or failure to meet other legal requirements.

...Despite the new religious affairs regulations, officials in many locations continued to pressure religious groups to register with government religious affairs authorities. There was a great deal of variation in how local authorities handled unregistered religious groups. In certain regions, government supervision of religious activity was minimal, and registered and unregistered churches existed openly side-by-side and were treated similarly by the authorities. In such areas, many congregants worshipped in both types of churches. In other regions, local officials supervise religion more strictly, and authorities cracked down on unregistered churches and their members. Local regulations, provincial work reports, and other government and party documents continued to exhort officials to enforce vigorously government policy regarding unregistered churches.

In some areas, despite the rapidly growing religious population, it remained difficult to register new places of worship, even for officially recognized churches and mosques.

Local officials have great discretion in determining whether "house churches" violate regulations. The term "house church" is used to describe both unregistered churches and gatherings in homes or businesses of groups of Christians to conduct small, private worship services. SARA officials confirmed during the year that unregistered churches are illegal, but said prayer meetings and Bible study groups held among friends and family in homes are legal and need not register. In some parts of the country, unregistered house churches with hundreds of members meet openly with the full knowledge of local authorities, who characterize the meetings as informal gatherings to pray, sing, and study the Bible. In other areas, house church meetings of more than a handful of family members and friends are not permitted. House churches often encounter difficulties when their membership grows, when they arrange for the regular use of facilities for the specific purpose of conducting religious activities, or when they forge links with other unregistered groups or with coreligionists overseas. Urban house churches are generally limited to meetings of a few dozen members or less, while meetings of unregistered Protestants in small cities and rural areas may number in the hundreds (US Department of State 2006, *International Religious Freedom Report for 2006 – China*, September – Attachment 13).

7. Please provide any information on a raid by the Chinese authorities on a meeting of the 'The True Church of Jesus' in Longtian town on 30 June 2001.

A search of the sources consulted found no reference to a raid by the Chinese authorities of a meeting of the True Jesus Church in Longtian on 30 June 2001 or on any other date.

8. Does the 'The True Church of Jesus' involve itself in political activities?

A search of the sources consulted has found no reference to political activities of the True Jesus Church.

A previously mentioned article, dated 10 January 2006, observes that churches registered with the TSPM find ways of accommodating themselves to "the political reality" while unregistered churches are more likely to "attempt to focus on theology and to be detached from politics":

...The primary distinction in Chinese church life is that between registered and unregistered churches. The government wants all churches to register through the TSPM or the CCC. Many of the independent churches have declined to register, because they believe in the separation of church and state, of theology and politics. And, of course, because the government is officially atheist, they see it as naturally in conflict with religion.

No great theological chasm exists between registered churches and unregistered churches. Many Chinese Christians attend both...

However, there is a difference between registered and unregistered churches in political attitude. Most of the churches aligned with the TSPM and the CCC adhere to the theology of Romans 13:1, 4 ("let every person be subject to the governing authorities . . . [they are] God's servant for your good") and 1 Peter 2:13 ("For the Lord's sake accept the authority of every human institution"). They hope to be God's agent of salvation within the political reality. In response to the communist view of religion – and the TSPM has no illusions about communism's atheist views – the TSPM has been accommodating, finding ways to cooperate with the state's mission.

The political attitude of the unregistered churches reflects the theology of the Book of Revelation. They assume that the Chinese government, being communist in ideology, is pagan and satanic – similar to that of the Roman Empire, the beast and the dragon in Revelation. Most unregistered churches do not believe that Christianity should collaborate with a government that does not love or honor God. By and large, they don't find the communist government a trustworthy partner or think that the state's fallenness is redeemable. Many unregistered churches attempt to focus on theology and to be detached from politics.

... China's two church groups – registered and unregistered – differ chiefly in political attitude (Yeo, K.K. 2006, 'Home Grown', *The Christian Century*, 10 January – Attachment 9).

List of Sources Consulted

Internet Sources:

Government Information & Reports

UK Home Office website <http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk>

US Department of State website <http://www.state.gov>

Non-Government Organisations

Amnesty International website <http://www.amnesty.org>

Human Rights Watch website <http://www.hrw.org>

International News & Politics

BBC News website <http://news.bbc.co.uk>

Topic Specific Links

True Jesus Church website <http://www.tjc.org>

True Jesus Church website (Chinese) <http://www.tjc.org.cn>

Search Engines

Copernic search engine

Databases:

FACTIVA (news database)

BACIS (DIMA Country Information database)

REFINFO (IRBDC (Canada) Country Information database)

ISYS (RRT Country Research database)

List of Attachments

1. RRT Country Research 2007, *Research Response CHN31378*, 15 February.
2. RRT Country Research 2006, *Research Response CHN30047*, 21 March.
3. RRT Country Research 2005, *Research Response CHN17352*, 7 June.
4. Lambert, T. 2006, *China's Christian Millions*, Monarch Books, Oxford, pp. 59-60. (RRT Library)
5. 'Our Basic Beliefs: an Introductory Brochure' 1994, True Jesus Church website, May http://www.tjc.org/collage/awareness/EnglishSites/IA/order/pdf/Intro_Brochure.pdf – Accessed 26 March 2007.
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9. Yeo, K. K. 2006, 'Home Grown', *The Christian Century*, 10 January. (FACTIVA)
10. Hornemann, M. 2006, 'China: State-imposed religious monopolies deny China's religious reality', Forum 18 News service, 5 December. (CISNET China CX166572)
11. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 1997, *DFAT Report 475/97 China: True Jesus Church: CIS Information Request AA265*, 19 September. (CISNET China CX27124)
12. Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2000, *Report of a fact finding mission to Fuzhou by political counsellor, Canadian Embassy, Beijing*, 23 March. (REFINFO)
13. US Department of State 2006, *International Religious Freedom Report – China*, September.