

State Faith and Religious Faith in Contemporary China⁽¹⁾

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Abstract: The concept of State Faith has different meanings, which may be divided into State faith, National faith, and Faith in the State. The present article discusses the above three meanings through an exploration of their birth, existence, possible trends of development, and the relationship between them and various major religions in contemporary China. Special attention has been given to Faith in the State, which has become a quasi-religion.

Key words: State Faith, National Faith, quasi-Religion

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0. Foreword

In November 2010, Shanghai Association for Philosophy and Social Sciences held its annual symposium at Fudan University. One of the sessions took as its theme 'Chinese Faith/Chinese Experience', and its coordinator, Prof Li Xiangping, assigned me such a topic - 'The Relationship of the State Faith to the Religious Faith'.

Some time before that symposium, in the presence of Prof. Li, I once criticized his concept of 'State Faith' as a 'pseudo issue' or false issue. To my surprise, however, he invited me to that symposium with such a theme and topic. Having his warmth, tolerance and persistence in mind, I felt I had to rethink this issue seriously. The conclusion of my rethinking is: this is not a 'pseudo issue', but really an important and serious reality which is emerging in China and before the world today, therefore, it is absolutely worth considering and discussing.

1. The Concept and the Reality

In fact, the Chinese phrase 'state faith' (*guojia xinyang*) is used very rarely, and its meaning is very ambiguous. Further more, people may even suppose that what it means does not exist, since they hear or see this phrase very rarely. Just for this reason, I once deemed what it refers to is a pseudo-issue or a false issue.

However, the rareness of a noun's usage does not imply the nonexistence of what it refers to. Before the appearance of a noun, which refers to some specific thing, that thing, did not enter people's consciousness, but we cannot say that it did absolutely not exist. For example, we cannot say that before the introduction or translation of the western words "nationalism" and "patriotism" into Chinese language in the beginning of 20th century, Chinese people had no feelings or ethos of

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such kind. However, the appearing, using and clarifying of the noun referring to a thing, enable people's knowledge of that thing rise from the perceptual to the conceptual, and make the knowledge widened and deepened greatly.

For the same reason, the fact that we rarely use the noun "state faith" does not imply that the historical or social phenomenon it refers to does not exist in reality. However, when we use this noun or the concept it means, it is indeed necessary for us to clarify its meaning, or analyse its reference.

2. An Analysis of the Concept

One of the two main concepts we are talking about here, the concept of "religious faith", has very clear meaning^②. At least, the common people are confident that they know the meaning of "religious faith".^③ Therefore, we only need to analyse or clarify the other one, the concept of "state faith". And only after we grip the meaning of "state faith", can we begin discussing its relationship to "religious faith".

Then, what is the meaning of "state faith"? Of course, after answering this question, we should discuss whether the socio historical phenomenon which it refers to exists or not.

Analysing semantically or logically, or literally, the concept "state faith" can only have the three meanings:

The first meaning is the state's faith, or the faith of state;

The second meaning is the national faith, or the faith of nationals;

The third meaning is the faith in state, or the belief in state.

Now, let us see whether the socio-historical phenomena, which "state faith" means in these three senses, do exist or not in the reality of China. Then, let us see, if they exist, what characteristics they possess, and what relationships to "religious faith" they have respectively.

3. The State Faith in the First Sense and the Religious Faith

The "state faith" in the first sense, the state's faith or the faith of state, does exist in today's China, but just exists in some limited sense.

As every observer of China knows, the Constitution of people's Republic of China (PRC), has continued to declare that the PRC is led by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP); and the Constitution of the CCP has continued to declare that its "guiding thought" is Marxism and its "highest goal" is to realize Communism. According to the numerous official documents of propaganda issued by CCP since it was born 90 years ago, and in the common expressions to which Chinese people have been accustomed since PRC was founded 60 years ago, CCP's "guiding thought" or "highest goal" has often been referred to as "faith", that is to say, CCP has "faith" or "belief" in Marxism or Communism. Having in mind the fact that CCP has instructed all the people of the country and decided the state's policies with its own guiding thought for 60 and more years, and the fact that

② According to the two definitions of religion in A dictionary of Religion, the meaning of "religious faith" is "the faith in the ultimate" or "the belief in mysterious supernatural power". He Guanglu, "Religion", in Ren Jiyu 任继愈 ed., 《宗教词典》Zongjiao cidian | A Dictionary of Religion, (上海辞书出版社 Shanghai cishu chubanshe [Shanghai Dictionary Press], 2009).

③ Common Chinese people understand religion as "faith or belief in God or gods". This understanding is very close to the meaning mentioned above.

CCP has made the "guiding thought" a general principle of the state's constitution, we can say that CCP, with its political power, has made its "faith" - Marxism or Communism - become the "state's faith" of PRC.

This is true that there has been some state's faith in the last 60 years in the society of Mainland China.

Nevertheless, however, we should add that this is true just in some limited sense, when we take more facts into account. By "limited sense", I mean that such a state's faith is mainly found in the discourse of propaganda as some official rhetoric. While talking about the intellectual nature of Marxism and communism, the ethos or morality or character of the Party members, the education or cultivation of the people, especially of the young people, and the ideals of the people or the future of the society, CCP and its propaganda organs would often utter such rhetoric as "Our faith is in Marxism-Leninism" or "We believe in Communism", as their custom of discourse. But such rhetoric or discourses had indeed been received or accepted by millions of common people, at least had been seen as official or formal faith, for nearly 30 years since 1949 in Mainland China.

On the other hand, however, since the general disillusion (described as "loss of faith" or *sunxin weiji*, meaning crisis of faith, trust and confidence in mass media those years) brought about by the national disaster of "Cultural Revolution" (1966-1976), especially since the spreading cynicism (and moral collapse and social anomic) caused by the defeat of justice in Tiananmen catastrophe (1989), such kind of rhetoric or discourse has appeared really less and less, though has not been formally abandoned by the authority. Everybody living in today's China knows the cause for this: nearly all the people, including Party members and Government officials, in the social circumstances of "all for money" and surrounded by the atmosphere of serious corruption, do no longer believe in such discourses, or do no longer consider them having any real meanings. So, we can say more exactly that the "state's faith" had once existed in some limited sense, but is now approaching its actual death.^③

As for the relationship of "state's faith" to religious faith, we can argue for the two points:

A. The "state's faith" is not really religious faith, though it has some quasi religiousness.

Firstly, such rhetoric or discourse cannot stand the test of theoretical analysis, because the founders and theorists of Marxism defined it as a kind of "science" or a "social scientific theory", and named it as "scientific socialism", but what science needs is reason rather than faith. As for communism, in all its three possible meanings (1. the doctrines that private property should be abandoned and equalitarianism should be realized, which were put forward from time to time in the history; 2. the socio-political system in which Communist Party masters all the powers and resources and controls the whole society, and which actually existed in a dozen more countries and continues to exist in a few countries today; 3. a kind of future society described and prophesied by some Marxist theoreticians), it is really not a faith in strict sense, therefore is not a religious faith.

Secondly, people can also point out that such rhetoric or discourses and expressions have some features, which are close to religious faith. For example, they appeal to affection more than to reason—they seem to have forgotten that Marxism is some "scientific theory" intending to convince people by reason, rather than some "sacred doctrine" demanding submission; they concern moral cultivation more than theoretical argument - they put emphasis upon the aspect of communism de-

③ In contemporary China, the authorities are still making efforts to maintain the official or dominant status of Marxism as its ideology. However, while the Central Department of Propaganda of CCP, the State Ministry of Education and the United Front Department of CCP have been spending hundreds of millions CNY to implement the "Project of Reconstruction and Propagation of Marxism", the term "communism" and related phrases (such as "communist faith") have been used less and less in reality at the same time.

manding everybody's selflessness for the public and sparing no efforts, rather than the aspect promising "distribution according to everybody's needs"; they refer to the future condition more than to the present situation - unlike the Communist Party of Soviet Union, CCP have not boasted of having entered the communist stage, but only refers to communism as a distant ideal.

All these and some other features, such as the worship to the leader and the demand of common people's sacrifice for "sacred" ideal or principle, have indeed made this "state's faith" look like some religious faith. But according to the strict definition of religious faith in academic study of religion (i. e. the object of religious faith should have "ultimateness", or "mysteriousness", or "superhumanness"), this "state's faith" cannot be called a religious faith.

B. The "state's faith" which has some nature of "quasi-religion" played a powerful role of expelling religious faith. In the 30 years between 1949 and 1978, all kinds of religious faith in Mainland China had withered away and disappeared from society. The direct cause for that was the series of political campaigns from above. But another important and obvious cause was that the "state's faith" had got stronger and stronger in those years, having resulted in some psychological imposition with unprecedented scale of propaganda (e. g. all education from kindergarten to graduate school, all propagation from social institution to mass media), and resulted in some social imposition with unprecedented scale of persecution (such campaigns as those from "Anti-Rightists" to "Anti-Right Trend", from "Socialist Education" to "Cultural Revolution"). In 1950s, if you asked people in China what their faith was, a very small minority of them might answer you that it was some religion. But in 1960s and 1970s, you could get only one kind of answer from nearly all the people; that was Marxism (or Communism, or Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought)! This was because that long-term and abundant positive propaganda had inculcated to all the people the "unique correctness" of this answer on the one hand, and long-term and countless terrible persecution had displayed to all the people the "high dangerousness" of other answers.

The "state's faith" of this kind shall expel religious faith, just because it is not religious faith (it even includes atheism) and it tends to monopolize the intellectual fields. And it can expel religious faith, just because it is like religious faith (it had made itself some emotional, moralistic and sacralised thing), and it has some nature of quasi-religion. Therefore, when it is approaching its actual death, in other words, when the authority is gradually becoming more "de-ideologized" and the intellectual world is actually becoming more "pluralized", it is becoming more and more unable to expel religious faith. So, it is natural that the ideological resistance to religious faith has greatly decreased in today's China.

4. The State Faith in the Second Sense and the Religious Faith

The "state faith" in the second sense, the national faith, or the faith of nationals, does not exist in today's China, if it refers to a single or unitary faith. For the faith of Chinese people or of all the nationals of China today is very complex, multiple and diversified.

Firstly, contemporary Chinese people's faiths can be divided into two types - religious faith and non-religious faith. Secondly, while the religious faith of nationals of PRC has become very complex and diversified, their non-religious faith is even more complex and multiple.

A. Religious Faith

Besides so-called "Five major religions", namely Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Protestantism and Catholicism, there are various folk religions and new religions.

Among Buddhists, there still exist traditional sects in some sense, especially the Tibetan Bud-

dhism in contrast with the Chinese Buddhism, and the Theravada Buddhism in Yunnan Province in Southwest China. And there has appeared a very striking trend of secularization of Chinese Buddhism, including commercialization and politicization, and relating competitions or strifes among sects or Shan-men.

Taoism has still influence on Chinese intellectuals through its life philosophy, but its believers are a very small minority of religious people. However, there exist two major traditional sects among them — Ch'uan-chen (or Quanzhen) Taoism and Cheng-I (or Zhengyi) Taoism.

Traditionally speaking, ten minority ethnic groups in China are Muslims. Nowadays, however, Islam is much more active than before in converting Han people who are the overwhelming majority and mostly are atheists. And it is worth noticing that many members of the ten groups are getting more and more secularized, and some of them have been converted to Christianity.

In Protestantism, while so-called "Three-Self Church" has been steadily growing, so-called "house churches" have had very surprising increase. Although Christian faith has had no place in the official mass media, it has been exerting influence upon scores of million of contemporary Chinese. In a very striking contrast to the "state's faith" and its billions state funds consuming "propaganda project", Christian faith has been winning more people, especially poor people and young people, and entering their hearts, even though it has found very little expression in mass media owing to the state's censorship. On the other hand, we should notice that so-called "house churches", as in the illegal status and therefore in the relatively closed and isolated situation, are very likely to develop diversified forms of faith.

In Catholicism, while so-called "Patriotic" or "legal" church has been slowly growing for the last 30 years, so-called "underground church" has never disappeared, even though has always been under the pressure from the state. However, because of the politicization and bureaucratization of the present institution, some leadership in the official Catholic churches, just as that in official Protestant churches, is standing in opposition to the pious believers, especially to the believers in the illegal churches. Therefore, what we have seen in Christian faith in today's China is also a very complicated and diversified picture.

In the last 30 years, a lot of folk beliefs have been rapidly recovered, and some new religious movements have been seeking for ground. The former includes the worships of Guandi and of Wenchang and the like which are quite popular but unorganized, and the worship of Mazu and relating temples and rites and the like which are well organized and powerful at local level. The latter refers to some variant forms of traditional religions and some new religions coming from abroad, such as Mormonism, Baha'i, Moonism and some sects or cults originated in Christianity and Hinduism and other traditions. Nearly all the new religious movements are underground or under the severe supervision of police, as they are looked down by many people and officials as xiejiao (vicious cults). So, we do not know exactly how they are getting on. But we know that in contrast with them, the Chinese traditional folk beliefs are treated with greater tolerance and even support, therefore are becoming more open and prosperous.

B. Non-religious Faith

Firstly, we can find some faiths which are like and are confused with religious faith, such as "state's faith" mentioned above (Marxist or Communist faith) and Confucian faith. Although we have found that the "state's faith" is near to its actual death, we can find some individuals (especially some senior Party members of old age) who still keep such a faith. And while most of Confucian scholars deny that Confucianism is a religion, some of them advocate taking it as a religion,

and their influence are getting stronger. ⑤ It is very ironical that some famous Confucian scholars once refuted any ideas of Confucianism as a religion, but nowadays are petitioning for its religious place under the state and even for its establishment as the sole “state religion”! Such an advocacy or movement is turning away from basic academic or rational principles, tending to appeal to some preoccupation or presumption. However, as only some scholars are enthusiastic in such a movement, the common people or average masses have not become an active part in it, we cannot say that it is a religious faith. On the other hand, because that it is lifting its emotional elements above its rational elements, and it is evoking among some people much more passion rather than reflection, we can classify it as a kind of faith, namely, quasi-religious faith.

Secondly, besides the above-mentioned two quasi-religious faiths, contemporary Chinese have also numerous varieties of beliefs and superstitions, such as fortune-telling, astrology, Ba Zi, Feng Shui and so on. For their lack of overt collective activities and institutional organization, they cannot be classified as religions. We’d better call them as some kind of folk faiths or beliefs. Furthermore, if we take in account the Chinese’ enchantment with, pursuit of and indulgence in wealth, power, ranking, fame, criticism and enjoyment, and call the values or ideals revealed in these as some beliefs or faiths, we would have more reason to say that there exists no “state faith” in the sense of national faith or faith of all nationals. What are appearing before us are indeed countless varieties of individual beliefs or their alternatives. ⑥

Of course, since the “state faith” in the second sense does not exist at all, we do not need to talk about its characteristics and its relationship to religious faith and so on.

5. The State Faith in the Third Sense and Religious Faith

The “state faith” in the third sense, the faith in state or the belief in state, does really exist in today’s China, even though the phrase or the name is used rarely.

As statism or the similar phenomenon has had a long history of thousands of years and has been extremely powerful in China, ⑦ as a result, there has emerged some kind of faith or belief in the state among the Chinese people since antique age. From Qin Dynasty (221BC-206BC) and Western Han Dynasty (206BC-8AD) up to now, especially during the periods of establishment of unitary national regime, a state machinery of a huge united empire which seemed omnipresent and omnipotent has become the greatest and strongest power that all the Chinese have ever seen and experienced in this world. ⑧ Furthermore, as such a power has no limitation upon itself, it is very likely to sacralise itself or to be deified in the mind of common people. In fact, for centuries in China, all the imperial courts were called Tianque (Heavenly Palace), all the emperors called themselves Tianzi (the Son of the Heaven), and all the subjects called emperors as Shengshang (the Holy A-

⑤ Recently, in Confucius’ hometown Qufu, Shandong Province, the reconstruction of a Christian church was stopped, owing to the government’s response to the Confucian scholars’ petition that the “holy place of Confucianism” should be protected from invasion of foreign religion.

⑥ We can even see such a strange belief as “Li Yuchun 李宇春 Relief or Worship” (Li is a pop singer who was elected as “super-girl” by millions of fans years ago).

⑦ I have given a particular description and analysis of Chinese statism in my essay “The Dragon and the Dove” (in “Logos and Pneuma”, Hong Kong, Spring 2011).

⑧ Much stronger is the experience or feeling of the Chinese than that of the Western people. Because in the Western civilization collapsed after the fall of Roman Empire, state’s power was limited by church’s power; furthermore, owing to their faith in God who is above all the sovereigns and states, people is less likely to absolutize state and make it an object of faith.

bove), and this was true to any dynasties and empires ever existed in this country. While Christians refused to worship Roman Emperors as Lords even at expense of lives in the West, Chinese Buddhists accepted the fact that "the religious cause cannot stand without relying on the state lords", though they once advocated the Buddhist principle that "Monks should not pay reverence to the kings" when Buddhism entered China. In sum, as social organizations were too weak^② and the state became the supreme and sole and overwhelming power in this world, it is natural that there emerged the state worship, or the faith in state, among the Chinese who share the common weakness of human nature—the tendency to look after and to flatter power. This is almost the inevitable in such a historical situation.

The "faith in state" was strengthened to an unprecedented degree after 1949. As the social, civil, political and all other organizations, which had been hidden and weak but became utterly open and stronger with the decline of Manchurian Qing Empire and the foundation of Republic of China (1912), were taken over by or transformed into the different organs of CCP and the Government under the leadership of the Party, and became bureaucratized into the Party's branches (e. g. "Union of Workers", "Federation of Youth", "Federation of Women", and "Association of Writers and Artists", "Communist Youth League", etc.), or broken or disbanded (e. g. former tribal or patriarchal and grassroots' religious organizations) from 1949, and as even non-state enterprises, businesses and any other economical organizations - all kinds of factories, stores, companies and corporations - were taken over by the state from 1956, all the people over through China had lost all social or horizontal organization or association, and had to face directly, individually and respectively, up to a sole pyramid-like organization unified from the top leadership down to the lowest leadership.^③ All the leaders at all the levels of this organization are appointed by the above, except that the few top leaders are appointed by themselves and through distribution of offices. So-called danwei (work unit) that everybody belonged to, then, was no more than a particle or a cell of this unprecedentedly huge and rigid organization. Every individual was just like a single sand grain washed off from any slickiness and rich soil, with no support, even no connection, and had to face up to the blue sky in isolation - which was the only place where rain might drop from the cloud, though where the sun was always a scorcher!

Therefore, at that time, a Chinese who came across any difficulties or problems would say that he/she should *qu zhao zuzhi* (go to the organization), or would say *zuzhishang hui jiejue de* (the organization's leadership can resolve it, "shang" means "above"), and his/her friends or colleagues would also say so to him/her! Then the Chinese used to say they *yao yikao zuzhi* (should rely on the organization) or *yao xiangxin zuzhi* (should believe in the organization)! *Zuzhi* did not imply the "unit" that you belonged to and consisted of your common colleagues, but the leadership of the "unit", namely, the Party's organization in it, especially the Party's organ above.

Why does the "Party's organization" have such unimaginably great power? That is because that the Party controls all the powers and all the resources of the state - not only of state's organs or institutions of legislation, judiciary and administration, but also of the whole country, whole society and whole people. So, "the organization" represents the state (and even the society and the people). Of course, when the resolution of an individual's problem was beyond the jurisdiction of the unit's

② In the words of Wittfogel, in oriental despotism, no matter how much wealth the property holders have, "they are not able to, through organization and activity based on their property, exert any influence on the state power, and therefore form a threat to the autocratic regime." (*Oriental Despotism, China Social Sciences Press, 1989*), 8.

③ The then popular expressions of this are "the whole country is a single round of chess match" and "exercising unified leadership of the Party"

Party organization, or, when the leadership of one's unit and upper unit was not willing to resolve one's problem, or even was itself maker of the problem, he/she would often say: "I believe in the Party and the State (for the matter)" or "the Party and the State will one day make a just conclusion", as his/her final or ultimate comfort. The phrase "the Party and the State" mentioned here sounds to have some abstract implication, but actually refers to the national or top leadership of the Party and the State, which has the greatest power and authority. A Chinese psychological fact that has never been explicated is: the phrase "Leader(s) of the Party and the State" which all the Chinese mass media has been repeating many times everyday for sixty years is imparting to all the nationals such a basic social reality — the Party's leaders master the state, and as the state's power is incomparably great, their power is incomparably great. Analysing in this perspective, so-called "personal worship" of Mao Zedong in nearly 30 years since 1949 is but a form of worship of state's power (or, more directly, worship of the state), a distorted form of the "faith in state".

With the existence of the faith in state (not in name, but in reality), we can explain, to some degree, why many Chinese people (especially the grassroots) are still having worship of Mao who brought to China so many terrible disasters. ⑩ Because in the eyes of the people who cannot understand rationally the relationships of the personage to the political party and the state and are not aware of the limitation of the three things and have no faith in the transcendental (God), Mao is omnipotent for he masters the power of the state, he is the state. This state is so huge and has so many organs of so enormous strength that it seems to be able to do anything at its will and to be the greatest power which the common Chinese can see around them on the earth. If such a power should have become an object of faith or worship through a certain symbol, then, it would be natural that Mao would have been made such a symbol, as he had been dictator and deified for nearly 30 years.

And to the same degree, this faith in state can be used to explain why the nationalism of many Chinese people is going to the unreasonable enthusiasm years after the death of Mao and the end of deification of top leader. For the Chinese nationalism has been actually penetrated, dominated and distorted by the statism. ⑪ That is to say, the "faith in state" expressed in the form of "personal worship of the leader" during the former 30 years of PRC, found expression in a form of unreasonable nationalism during the latter 30 years. Only this veiled faith in state, adding to very overt press control, ignorance of the West and institutional hindrance, is able to account for the fact that many Chinese, while cannot afford the expense of their children's schooling, family's medical care and even their own housing, still say they agree with Government to spend hundreds of billions of dollars in Beijing Olympic Games and Shanghai World Expo, as the two events could render glory to the state!

One of the characteristics of this "faith in state" is that it has taken "patriotism" as most popular and main expression in modern China. During the former 30 years of PRC, while the state faith in the first sense or the "communist faith" occupied a higher position in the Party's propaganda than patriotism, ⑫ the phrase *ai guo* (love the state) was often used immediately following the phrase *ai dang* (love the Party), and the slogan "Love motherland" was also found everywhere. Further-

⑩ Cf. Li Xiangping 李向平, "An Economical Analysis of the Faith in Mao Zedong", in Wang Yan ed., *Teahouse for Sociologists*, No. 2, (Jinan, Shandong people's Publishing House, 2011).

⑪ See He Guangshu 何光沪, "The Dragon and the Dove: Natio Statism and Catholic Protestant Christianity in China Today", in 道风 Dao Feng | Logos and Pneuma |, (Hong Kong, Spring, 2011).

⑫ In fact, Marxism should oppose "the faith in state", for it argued that state was only some tool and would disappear in the future; and Marxist communism advocated the elimination of state; Workers have no motherland! Communism aims at "free development of every person" as well as of humankind. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Communist Manifesto*, Chapter 2.

more, the principle that “state is above collective, collective is above individual” was propagated as basic part of communist morality. From 1980s on, with the decline of “communist faith” in the official propaganda, “patriotism” has been raised to the top. And we should know that the Chinese word *aiguo zhuyi* translated from patriotism has literally lost any sense of “patria” or country-fellows as object of love, leaving instead the sense of *guo* (meaning State) as the only object. In this way, the word “patriotism” has readily become the properly expressive symbol of the faith in state.

Actually, the “faith in state” is just one of the “non-religious faiths” or beliefs mentioned above in Section 4. Judging in the perspective of religious philosophy, these various “non-religious faiths” can be called “quasi-religions” or “pseudo-religions”, which mistake as the Ultimate those various kinds of the penultimate or non-ultimate, such as human doctrines or isms, wealth, power, rankings, fames, etc. As the worldly state itself has no ultimateness and is not God, the faith in state is nothing more than a worship of some human power.

Therefore, the “state faith” in the third sense, the “faith in state”, has the same relationship to religious faith with that of any other quasi-religion and pseudo-religion to religious faith. That is to say, firstly, it is in opposition to and competition with the religious faith, as it is not religious faith but concerns ideas of value; secondly, it is not in full competition with religious faith (especially in the country where atheists or people with no faith form a majority), as it is some kind of quasi-religious or pseudo-religious faith.

Just for this reason, we can see that many religious people are also patriots in today’s China, in other words or in terms of this paper, they have also the “state faith” in the third sense.

Of course, what we are here referring to is just a social appearance, namely, a superficial phenomenon existing among masses that are occupied by livelihood earning and cannot spare time for considering such concepts or relationships.

Of the essence, true religious faith should relativize all the worldly things and affairs, including the state. Therefore, true religious believers could have different concepts or ideas of the state, but should not absolutize it as an object of faith; instead, they should treat the state with reason. After all, living memory of the humankind tells us that the “faith in state” or statism has brought to the world enormous catastrophes in the last century; and clear reason tells us that the “faith in state” distorts the human nature and reverses the order for the state and the people, transforming the state, the tool for the purpose of people’s happiness, into the goal at the expense of people’s happiness.

The significance of discussing this topic is to remind us of the existence of this danger.

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中文题目:

当代中国的国家信仰与宗教信仰

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提要:“国家信仰”(State Faith)这一概念在其各层次有不同的意涵,可区分为:国家的信仰(state's Faith);国族信仰(National Faith);对国家的信仰(The Faith In State)。本文从概念和实际两方面分别阐述了以上二者在当今中国的产生、存在状态及其可能的走向并探讨其与各大宗教的关系。其中,本文着重论述“对国家的信仰”,认为其根源于中国传统中强大的集权力量,这种力量对社会的控制在现当代臻于顶峰,使得社会将其抽象化,以至于成为信仰对象。对这种伪宗教(Quasi-Religion)的信仰势将滋生非理性的连锁反应,进而威胁社会机体的健康,与现代社会要求理性审视国家权力之上行不符。

关键词(Keywords):国家信仰、国族信仰、伪宗教