



Marriage in China

Complete book
148-pages
available at

<http://www.marriage-in-china.china4u2.com>



read me first!

SURVIVAL CREDO

For new comers to China

- take your time,
- don't talk too much,
- spend the first five weeks
listening and looking

*“You really will learn more in one month
of looking and listening,
than you will in one year of talking”*

Geoffrey Weymouth's 10-point Cardinal Survival Credo

1. Do not judge
2. Do not compare
3. Do not become frustrated
4. Do not get angry
5. Do be patient
6. Do be tolerant
7. Do be quiet
8. Do be polite
9. Do listen (even if you don't understand)
10. Do look beyond yourself

Geoffrey Weymouth's 5-point “How not to be misunderstood” Credo

1. Say Yes if you mean Yes
2. Say Yes if you know what it means
3. Say No if you mean No
4. Say No if you are not sure
5. Do not say Yes if you mean No

I hope you enjoy China as much as I have



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About the author/compiler/publisher



Geoffrey Weymouth, 6-years former CEO of Global Access China Ltd (GAC), Beijing, and responsible for recruiting over 2,500 foreign experts for China. Geoffrey is universally recognized as an expert on marriage(of foreigners)in China. Geoffrey, himself, married in Beijing during the SARS epidemic in 2003.

Australian by birth, Geoffrey first came to China in 1995, but it was not until five years later in 2000 that any opportunity arose that saw him take the helm of the newly created international consultancy, Global Access China, as the foundation CEO, and implement the start up and roll out strategies that saw the manifestation in GAC's meteoric rise in China.

Geoffrey may be contacted at gmw@china4u2.com.



In the Beginning!

When living for a prolonged period in China, held hostage to its alien culture, it is very easy to find oneself *converted*, and thus view the local environment as though one is *Alice in Wonderland*.

Conversely, if personal failure is the main feature of your China venture, and in China failure walks hand in glove with success, it is equally as easy to slip on the mantle of perpetual critique, often pervaded with bitter and twisted anecdotes and forebodings of impending doom.

To be candid, to write a balanced view of China is extremely difficult, as there is so much to love, but also so much to dislike, and even a little to detest. How to convey what I consider a realistic and balanced picture, I have pondered for over twelve months; completed many drafts, and am still not entirely happy with the end product.

Culture with its inherent traditions and language are to the Chinese the very nuts and bolts that created this fascinating country. With a written history sweeping back over 5,000 years, you very quickly come to realize that what you consider *your* culture, as a white, Western indoctrinated foreigner is but an outer-dressing of rather thin, very new fabric, worn as much to hide as to rejoice.

Patriotism to the Chinese is an inherent part of their culture, manifesting as it does from the very finite bonds of the family unit. Unlike Western “flag waving” values, the Chinese family is very much the “Willow in the wind”. Chinese are soft at heart but able to weather the worst of storms. Break off a branch, it will quickly take root wherever it may finish its journey, develop into a facsimile of the parent, and remain forever mindful of its heritage.

The “reticent” attitude of the Chinese is forever perplexing to we ignorant foreigners; “Why don’t they want to join us and become part of our community.” The answer is very simple, the Chinese are very conceited, with just cause, and most often find our antics and

behaviour banal, inane, profane and sometimes grossly offensive.

We lack respect for others, especially family, who do not follow the “Yellow Brick Road”, live decadent lifestyles, eat revolting machine manufactured packaged foods, create icons out of brain dead gladiators, and think that old people are redundant parasites.

It is pointless to undertake the Herring Bone game, with its pros and cons, because we are unable to separate ourselves from the mystique in which we have shrouded and over-exposed ourselves. It is our god-given superior position to speak out against others and berate their faults, warts and mistreaties with a candor reminiscent of pontification.

Chinese peoples the world over never loose sight of their ethnicity; be they American born Chinese (ABC), British born Chinese (BBC) or French born Chinese, they remain, perennially Chinese. Not so European ethnics, who upon invading, occupying or taking up residency in a foreign country almost invariably attempt to dominate and become one with their new land, including whole continents: The Americas and Australia.

So who are the Chinese?

To understand the Chinese, you must first and foremost separate yourself from the dyed in the wool clinical view we have the world, where almost everything is prejudged on our own indolent and indoctrinated mindset.

In country where logic is considered illogical, where being deceptively crafty (Jiao hua) is considered an attribute to aspire to, where if you are not an old rogue by the time you are forty, you are considered a failure and redundant, at best.

So let’s look at clever vs. smart and ignore the standard literal definitions, but rather look at clever as intuitive and smart as common sense.

In a country where there is competition for (virtually, if not in reality) the very air one breaths – which attributes for survival and prosperity would you consider of paramount



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importance?

Clever is what we western cousins are. We can invent the most complicated and often useless artifacts, research and discover previously unthought of facts and hidden resources. Exceedingly clever no one, anywhere, denies – but are we very smart?

It can be safely said that the Chinese are not very clever, they may have stumbled on papermaking, gunpowder, the compass, printing; but did they get beyond the fundamental stages of development? No!

It was the Europeans, in each of the aforementioned instances that took very elementary and useful inventions and turned them into aides for destruction, suppression and manipulation.

For the Chinese, Papermaking was used to create beautiful paintings, calligraphy, maps and poetry; gunpowder was made into fireworks for enjoyment and to communicate with ancestors and occasionally to bring down the wall of a fortress, wood-cut printing allowed many to share the same traditions and the compass allowed early Chinese navigators to evade the Persian Customs collectors, bandits and robbers by sailing directly to the Horn of Africa and shores of the Mediterranean Sea for trade and commerce with Europe.

For the Europeans, the compass allowed European nations to navigate the world conquering, raping, pillaging and destroying all in their path using the destructive power of gunpowder in cannon and muskets and paper and printing to convert the subjugated *heathens* using the printed word of their God.

This brings us to the problem of Chinese logic, which is based on the Chinese conception of truth. Truth according to the Chinese can never be proved; it can only be suggested.

According to this theory of knowledge, if truth cannot be proved, but can only be grasped by the mind in a “dialectic without words”, or “one knows it so without knowing why it is so”, it can therefore only be felt as a sort of intuitive perception.

The hypocrisy of the West.

Foreigners rely on logical explanations to prove or disprove anything and everything, but what of their religious beliefs? There is nothing logical in the religions of Christianity, Judaism or Islam. There are “dialectics without words”.

The Chinese, instead of relying on the essence of logic, as Westerners do, to validate or substantiate their lifestyles and greed, which is never developed as a science, rely more on the healthier machination of common sense.

If it is possible to have 10 internationally recognized experts, each speaking the absolute truth, but each with different viewpoint, sometimes diametrically opposite, wherein lay the truth?

This is the primary reason why Western based religions have never really gained a foothold in the Asian mind. Religion is not a geographical accident, rather the evolution of ethnic characteristics. Christianity harmonizes beautifully with the Western psyche, as does Islam with Arabic peoples and Buddhism with Asians.

It is preposterous to think that a single religion could be superimposed on all peoples, any more than democracy or communism is an ideal ideology for everyone.

Therefore, what is truth? Is it the dogma of prophesizing evangelists and those educated and immersed in the waters of pure thought, or the remaining free thinkers of the world?

For over 200 years Western governments, religious bodies and media have branded “Chinese” as “heathens”. Conversely, the Chinese like to think of themselves as free thinkers and consider the brash and superior ways of ethnic Europeans as that of uncouth “barbarians”.

The British in their brutal and superior arrogance, when they were the world’s only super-power, chose, as the Americans are now doing, to rewrite the language to fit their



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narrow and



Provisions for the Registration of Marriage Between Chinese Citizens and Foreigners

(Approved by the State Council on August 17, 1983 and promulgated by the Ministry of Civil Affairs on August 26, 1983)

1. When Chinese citizens and foreigners (including foreign residents and those who come to China for a short visit, Chinese of foreign nationality, and foreigners who have settled down in China) decide to get married of their own free will within the boundaries of China, both the man and the woman concerned shall appear together at the marriage registration department, designated by the province, autonomous region, or municipality directly under the Central Government, and stationed in the locality where the Chinese citizen has his/her residence registration and apply for marriage registration.

2. Both the man and the woman, who apply for marriage registration, shall abide by the Marriage Law of the People's Republic of China and the pertinent articles and items of these Provisions.

3. Chinese citizens and foreigners who apply for marriage registration shall respectively hold the following certificates:

A. For Chinese citizens:

(1) certificates of the applicant's residence registration;

(2) certificate signed and issued either by the people's government at the county level or above which is stationed in the locality where the applicant has his/her residence registration, or by a government department, a school, an institution, or an enterprise at the county level or above, which is the applicant's place of work; the certificate indicates the applicant's name, sex, date of birth, nationality, marital status (single, divorced, bereft of spouse- the same below), occupation, nature of work, name of the person to marry.

B. For foreigners:

(1) the applicant's passport or other documents certifying his/her identity and citizenship;

(2) "Residence Permit for Foreigners" signed and issued by the public security department, or

identification certificate issued by foreign affairs department, or entry permit and residence permit for foreigners who come to China for a short stay;

(3) marital status certification issued by the notary office of the applicant's country and confirmed by both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (or a department authorized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) of the applicant's country and the Chinese embassy or consulate in the said foreign country; or marital status certification issued by the embassy or consulate of the said foreign country in China.

C. For resident foreigners in China:

(1) the applicant's passport, or identification certificate or nationality certificate used to substitute for passport (those who have no nationality maybe exempted from presenting their nationality certificates);

(2) "Residence Permit for Foreigners" signed and issued by the public security department;

(3) certificate signed and issued either by the people's government at the county level or above, which is stationed in the locality where the applicant has his/her residence registration, or by a government department, a school, an institution, or an enterprise at the county level or above, which is the applicant's place of work; the certificate indicates the applicant's name, sex, date of birth, marital status, occupation, name of the person to marry. In addition, both the man and the woman applying for marriage registration shall also present the pre-marital health check-up report signed and issued by a hospital designated by the marriage registration department.

4. The following Chinese citizens shall not be permitted to marry foreigners:

(1) army men in active service, diplomatic personnel, public security personnel, confidential personnel, and other personnel who are in charge of important confidential work;

(2) persons who are receiving reeducation through labour or serving a sentence.

5. Chinese citizens and foreigners, who hold all the required certificates and accord with these Provisions, may present their certificates and photos to the marriage registration department and make an application. The marriage registration department, after examining the application and confirming through investigation that the application conforms to the Marriage Law of the People's Republic of China and to these Provisions, shall give the applicants the



Chinese Marriage & Divorce Registration to Be Easier & More Convenient

From Oct.1 2003 Chinese citizens carrying residence booklets and identity cards can receive their red marriage certificates simply after they register at marriage offices and sign a statement that they are single.

No reference. No marital status certificate from one's working unit, nor is it necessary to have premarital health examination. From Oct.1 Chinese citizens carrying residence booklets and identity cards can receive their red marriage certificates simply after they register at marriage offices and sign a statement that they are single.

The Regulation on Marriage Registration will come into effect from Oct.1, replacing the Regulation on Administration of Marriage Registration that has been carried out for about nine years. According to the new regulations, marriage registration offices will work in the spirit of serving the people, simplifying procedures for marriage in future.

Could I get married without a physical checkup in advance or a stamped document from my working unit? Would it be OK if I didn't obey the unit's regulation of late marriage? Such questions, which have puzzled people for years will finally find the clear answers in the upcoming marriage registry regulations. Compared with the Regulation on Administration of Marriage Registration, the new regulations enable people to register marriage in a much easier and more convenient way, show more respect for individuals' freedom of life and mark that governments will play a role in marriage as a servant rather than an administrator.

Change one: marriage

No marital status certificate necessary from one's working unit

The biggest change of the newly issued regulations is to stipulate clearly that couples on the Chinese mainland who apply for marriage registration only need to provide "Hukou" documents and identity cards and sign a statement affirming their single status and no near relation, while procedures for submitting marital status letters from their working units and premarital health examination certificates are annulled. Through simplifying procedures such

regulations avert the tediousness of marriage registration as well as the mental and physical consumption of couples to be, and make marriage registration a truly joyful occasion.

Marriage not granted under any one of the five circumstances

According to the new regulations, registration shall not be granted under any of the following five circumstances: Either or both parties are not of legal age for marriage (22 for men and 20 for women); Their marriage is not a result of voluntary choice; Either or both parties have already had a spouse; Both parties are lineal relatives by blood, or collateral relatives by blood up to the third degree of kinship; And either party suffers from any other disease which is regarded by medical science as rendering a person unfit for marriage.

Premarital health examination of one's own free will

The new regulations do not draw demands of mandatory premarital health examination, meaning applicants would take it of their own free will. In case that one party conceals his (or her) illness and keeps the other party in the dark, the marriage between them shall be considered invalid by the law.

Neighborhood committees no longer handling marriage registration

The new regulations stipulate that civil affairs departments at county level or governments at township level form the marriage registration body for citizens on the Chinese mainland, while provincial, autonomous regional and municipal governments may appoint marriage registration offices for peasants for their convenience.

Change two: divorce

Divorce certificates issued at once

After the new regulations come into force, the marriage registration office, after clearly establishing that the divorce is desired by both parties and that appropriate arrangements have been made for the care of any child and the disposition of property and any debts, shall issue the divorce certificates without delay. Couples don't have to wait for one month of examination. This move greatly simplifies the procedure for divorce.

No reference for divorce

If husband and wife both desire to divorce, they won't have to endure the embarrassment at reference for divorce from other people. According



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to the Regulation on Marriage Registration that is



Number of Marriages and Divorces

Year	Registered Marriages (couples)			Divorces (couples)	Divorce Rate (‰)
		First Marriages (persons)	Remarriages (persons)		
1985	8290588	16076337	504839	457938	0.9
1986	8822935	17075107	570763	505675	0.9
1987	9247372	17880856	613888	581484	1.1
1988	8971750	17285077	658423	658551	1.2
1989	9351815	17959680	744150	752914	1.3
1990	9486870	18191303	782437	800037	1.4
1991	9509849	18203226	816472	829449	1.4
1992	9545047	18320957	769137	849611	1.5
1993	9121622	17470092	773152	909195	1.5
1994	9290027	17793306	786748	980980	1.6
1995	9297061	17760657	833465	1055196	1.8
1996	9339615	17817240	861990	1132215	1.8
1997	9090571	17259504	921638	1197759	1.9
1998	8866593	16753749	979437	1190214	1.9
1999	8799079	16593593	1004565	1201541	1.9
2000	8420044	15813933	1026155	1212863	1.9
2001	7971000	14817000	1125000	1250000	2.0
2002	7788000	14403000	1171000	1177000	1.8



Application Procedures for Permanent Residence Permit (Green Card)

I. Submit an application to a city-level Public Security Bureau or at the county-level branch of the Public Security Bureau directly responsible for the community of the applicant's major investment or long-term residence.

II. Provide the specified application documents.

III. The public security body shall investigate and verify the conditions of the applicant according to the specified pre-requisites.

IV. The local department will submit the application to the Ministry of Public Security for examination and approval.

V. The ministry shall decide whether to approve or reject the application for permanent residence permit within 6 months of receiving the application.

VI. Upon the approval of the Ministry of Public Security, the applicant will be granted a Foreigner Permanent Residency Permit by the Ministry of Public Security.

A Chinese permanent residence card is not equivalent to Chinese nationality. Presently China does not recognize dual or multiple nationalities. Thus, if one wants to become a Chinese national, original nationality status would have to be cancelled.

Those who obtain a Chinese permanent residence card should not stay in China less than three months in a year or less than a year in five years. Special causes will need approval from city level public security bureaus.

Expats with a Chinese permanent residence card will still need to observe rules concerning traveling, temporary living in other cities, and visiting areas closed to the public.

For further information or for a free copy of the "Chinese Green Card Guide," call Xiang Yang at the Beijing Zhongfu Law Firm at 6329-3541.

Location: Beijing Commercial Guild Hall, Bldg 1 Yulinli, You'anmenwai

Requirements for Permanent Residence Permit

You Should Submit:

- (a) Valid Passport or equivalent;
- (b) Health certificate issued at state level;
- (c) Credentials proving no criminal record by China embassies or consulates;
- (d) Two passport photos, no hat;
- (e) Other relevant credentials if required.

Fees: The fee for the new green card certificate is 300 yuan or about US\$36. The cost of getting a new card is 1500 yuan or about US\$180.

Time: The agency is open from Monday to Saturday, 8:30 to 12:00 in the morning, 13:00 to 17:00 in the afternoon.

In order to qualify for permanent residence status, you must fulfill at least one of the following criteria:

I. Be a high-level foreign expert holding a post, which promotes China's economic, scientific and technological development, or social progress.

II. Have made outstanding contributions of special importance to China

III. Have made a large direct investment of over US\$ 500,000 in China

IV. Have come to China to be with your family, such as spouse, dependent minors or senior citizens.

Who Can Apply for a Green Card in China?

Foreigners who want to apply for permanent resident in china should obey the Chinese law, be healthy and have no criminal records. At same time, they should accord with one of the conditions below:

1. The applicants have invested in China directly, have with steady investment condition and good revenue record for more than 3 years.

2. The applicants take the job continually as or above assistant general managers or factory directors, have the high title of or above the associate professor or assistant researcher, or have enjoy the equal treatment in China for more than four years, during which the applicants have been living in China continuously for more no less than three years and have good revenue records.

3. The applicants have great and outstanding contributions to China or meet special



Australian citizens Getting Married in China

- Introduction
- What do I need to do
- How long does it take

Introduction

Obtaining a *Certificate of No Impediment to Marriage* - also known as a '*Statement of No Record*' in some states in Australia - is necessary if you wish to marry a Chinese national, in China.

What do I need to do?

1. Download the *Certificate of no impediment to marriage* application form from <http://www.austemb.org.cn/contacts.htm> or the consulates in Guangzhou or Shanghai.

2. Obtain a 'Statement of Single Status' or equivalent certificate from the marriage registry office in your state of residence in Australia. See the <http://www.austemb.org.cn/contacts.htm> section for Australian marriage registry office contact details.

3. Apply to the Embassy in person or by mail. You must bring or send to us the following documents:

A completed original application form with a signature witnessed by a person in the categories stated on the form.

A local Chinese equivalent office holder or a diplomatic official from any Embassy or Consulate is acceptable.

If you apply to the Embassy in person, an Embassy consular officer can witness your signature (for a huge fee).

A 'Certificate of Single Status' as described above (original or verified true copy);

A Divorce Certificate if applicable (original or verified true copy).

Your current passport (original or verified true copy of the front ID page).

Your partner's Chinese ID/citizen card. (a non-verified photocopy is acceptable)

Payment: Refer to Fees Section for the cost of preparing the certificate. Please note that an extra

charge will be added to the fee for requesting the Embassy or Consulates-General to serve as a signature witness on the application form.

4. The Embassy will issue a *Certificate of no impediment to marriage* in both English and Chinese, for you to present to the local marriage office in China.

How long does it take to issue the Certificate?
If you apply in person, the Certificate can be issued while you wait although the process may take longer during busy periods. Postal applications will be handled by normal mail unless you include additional payment for express mail delivery.

MARRIAGE CELEBRATED IN CHINA

There is no Australian law that prohibits an Australian citizen or person domiciled in Australia from marrying a national of the People's Republic of China. A marriage celebrated in the People's Republic of China according to the law of People's Republic of China between a national of the People's Republic of China and an Australian citizen or person domiciled in Australia would normally be recognised as valid in Australia.

Permission to marry in China is at the discretion of the Chinese authorities. Approval must be obtained from the local Public Security Bureau in the Province where the marriage is to be celebrated.

In order to obtain the necessary approval the Chinese authorities may require that you first obtain a "Result of Search" Certificate from the Registry Office of Births, Deaths and Marriages in Australia where the Australian citizen used to reside.

The "Result of Search" Certificate will have to be certified by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Australia, and then by the Chinese Embassy in Canberra or Chinese Consulates in the various States. Otherwise, the "Result of Search" Certificate may not be accepted by the Chinese authority.

Bear in mind that this "Search" is only valid for six months according to the Chinese authority.

CHECK WITH YOUR EMBASSY OR CONSULATE FOR LATEST INFORMATION



How to Bring Your Pet to China?

According to the Law on the Entry and Exit of Animal and Plant Quarantine, cats or dogs are the only pets allowed for entry but must be declared. Each passenger is allowed to bring one pet only, with an up-to-date rabies vaccination certificate and health certificate issued by the relevant quarantine government department in the country of origin. Furthermore, the pet and pet owner must be on board the same flight.

In Beijing, upon arrival at the airport, an official from the department will await to take your pet to a quarantine facility for 30 days. They will inform you of the date at which you can claim your pet. Certain fees must be paid which vary according to local regulations, but amount to at least 1,000 yuan (US\$130). In Shanghai, the quarantine period is reduced to 7 days with a 2,000-yuan fee.

Following quarantine, the pet (only dog) must be registered at the local police department.

Consultation telephone:
Beijing: 010-6459 6302
Shanghai: 021-6854 9999

It is also possible to take a pet from one city to another by plane and train. Rabies vaccination and health certificates must be issued by the local quarantine government department of the city of departure. These are valid for 7 days.

How to Hire a Local Maid (Ayi) to Take Care of Your Home and Children?

Many foreigners who live in China hire a local maid -- or ayi - to take care of their homes, children and pets.

Ayis can work either part-time and full-time. Part-time Ayis may work for several families a day while full-time Ayis work five to 10 hours a day, depending on the amount of housework and may live in your house.

With an hourly pay ranging from 7 yuan (88 US cents) to 15 yuan or more (the price may differ from place to place), you may find a dutiful part-time Ayi to accomplish most of your daily housework, and cook good Chinese food for you every day.

In general, if you stay in a two- or three-bedroom apartment, a part-time Ayi for two or three hours a day will suffice. However, if you have a villa or large house and have a family, one or two full-time

Ayis will be necessary. Some people may even hire three -- one for cooking, one for cleaning and the other for children and pets. Those full-time Ayis will cost you 1,000 to 2,000 yuan a month, depending on their roles.

Normally, Ayis should have two rest days a week, no matter whether they are part-time or full-time. If you have a party or special event on their rest day, especially at the weekend, most Ayis will help you to prepare for such an event. Don't forget to thank them for their help, as this goes beyond their usual obligations.

Both part-time and full-time Ayis may have holidays at least once a year -- usually during Chinese New Year or the golden weeks in May and October. They may have a week-long holiday at Spring Festival (Chinese New Year) and two or three days off for May Day and National Day in October. As most Ayis come from rural areas, they will return to their hometown for their holidays. If you hire a Shanghai Ayi, she may be willing to shorten her holiday. However, again, this would go beyond the call of duty.

Warning! Some Ayis have been known to use fake ID cards and commit crimes ranging from petty theft to kidnapping in some very rare cases. Thus, you should ensure your Ayi is qualified by using a reputable agency or by a recommendation from your close friends or colleagues.

Most Ayis are unable to speak any English. An English-speaking Ayi, which is not easy to find, will cost considerably more. So, you should know how to communicate with your Ayi. Learning some useful Chinese phrases or sentences will help. By the way, your kids may learn more Chinese, especially her hometown dialect, than you from your Ayi.

Generally, Ayi are skilled and competent but you should be patient if teaching her to meet specific demands.

It would be better to write a schedule for your Ayi every day. However you should make sure your Ayi understands your instructions and rules. If you have a Chinese assistant or secretary, who is willing to be your part-time interpreter or translator, use this.

You should be aware whether your Ayi can handle emergencies or accidents. If she cannot, you should make an emergency plan for her, containing the contact numbers of the hospital, your insurance cover, the correct way to deal with fire or other household emergencies and how to take care for your family if they are ill or meet with an accident. If you have a pet, you should also tell



Opinion - Foreign-Related Marriage And Divorce In China



A marriage in China between a foreigner and a Chinese citizen or between two foreigners is considered a "foreign-related marriage".

According to Article 147 of the General Principles of the Civil Law of the People's Republic of China, marriage of a Chinese citizen to a foreigner shall be bound by the law of the place where they get married. Therefore, partners contemplating a foreign-related marriage in China must follow the procedures stipulated by Chinese law.

Marriages in China, regardless of the nationality of those being married, are registered according to the laws of China. It is important to understand that neither diplomats nor consulate officials of the foreigner's own country, nor clergy of any country, have the authority to perform marriages in China.

Under the current marriage law of the People's Republic of China, marriage registration is administered by the local offices of civil affairs. If one of the partners is a Chinese citizen, the appropriate marriage registration office shall be the one designated by the province, autonomous region, or municipality directly under the Central Government, and the one that is stationed in the locality where the residency (hukou) of the Chinese citizen is registered.

If both partners are foreigners, the registration office shall be the one located in the city where one of them lives or both of them live. Generally speaking, at least one of the partners must reside in China. Two foreigners on a temporary visit with tourist visas shall not be able to

register to marry in China.

According to current Chinese law, a foreigner cannot marry a Chinese citizen who falls within one of the following categories:

(1) military personnel in active service, diplomatic personnel, public security personnel, confidentiality personnel, or any person who possesses important and confidential information;

(2) persons who are at present receiving reeducation through labor or serving a sentence.

To apply for marriage registration, partners of the contemplated marriage shall appear together at the marriage registration office.

They should be prepared to submit all required documents, certificates, and photographs that establish the identity, residential status, as well as the marriageability of each of them. All documents in a foreign language must be translated into Chinese at the applicants' own expense. The authenticity of translation shall be certified by a Chinese notary public.

Upon receipt of an application to register a marriage, the marriage registration office will ascertain that both parties have reached legal age (generally 22 for men and 20 for women), and that both parties are single and otherwise free to marry. Persons who have been married previously must submit authentic and valid documents of final divorce or ex-spouse's death certificate if widowed.

There will be a fee charged for the registration of a marriage. In addition, both partners applying for marriage registration shall also present the pre-marital health check-up report signed and issued by a hospital designated by the marriage registration office.

Upon confirming that the application conforms to the Marriage Law of the People's Republic of China and to the required procedures, the registration office shall give the applicants the permission to register and complete the registration process within one month. Once the registration is completed, the married couple will be issued a marriage certificate.

The General Principles of the Civil Law of the People's Republic of China, Article 147, also set forth the principle that a divorce shall be bound by the law of the place where a court accepts



Holidays and Festivals in China

National Holidays in China

- January 1-3 New Year's Day.
- New Moon Spring Festival, Chinese New Year.
- May 1-7 Labor Day.
- October 1-7 National Days

Note: In addition to the above, certain groups have official public holidays on the following dates (other holidays may be observed locally):

- March 8 International Women's Day (Women only).
- May 4 National Youth Day.
- June 1 International Children's Day.
- August 1 Army Day.
- September 10 Teachers Day (Teachers only)

About Holidays and Vacations:

Legal holidays in China are New Year (January 1st), a national one-day holiday; Spring Festival (New Year by the lunar calendar), a national three-day holiday; International Working Women's Day (March 8th); Tree Planting Day (March 12th); International Labor Day (May 1st), a national three-day holiday; Chinese Youth Festival (May 4th); International Children's Day (June 1st); Anniversary of the Founding of the Chinese People's Liberation Army ("PLA") (August 1st); Teacher's Day (September 10th); and National Day (October 1st), a national three-day holiday.

China's major traditional festivals include the Spring Festival, the Lantern Festival, Pure Brightness Day, the Dragon Boat Festival and the Mid-Autumn Festival. Ethnic minorities have also retained their own traditional festivals, including the Water Sprinkling Festival of the Dai people, the Nadam Fair of the Mongolian people, the Torch Festival of the Yi people, the Danu (Never Forget the Past) Festival of the Yao people, the Third Month Fair of the Bai people, the Antiphonal Singing Day of the Zhuang people, the Tibetan New Year and Onghor (Expecting a Good Harvest) Festival of the Tibetan people, and the Jumping Flower Festival of the Miao people.

Spring Festival

Spring Festival is the most important festival for Chinese people. It is a time when all family

members get together, very much like Christmas in the West. Those living away from home return home for this holiday, making it the busiest time for transportation systems of about half a month. Airports, railway stations and long-distance bus stations are crowded with people returning home. Spring Festival falls on the 1st day of the 1st lunar month, often one month later than the Gregorian calendar. It originated in the Shang Dynasty (c. 1600 BC-c. 1100 BC) from people's sacrifice to gods and ancestors at the end of an old year and the beginning of a new one. Strictly speaking, Spring Festival starts every year in the early days of the 12th lunar month and will last till the mid 1st lunar month of the next year. Of these days, the most important are Spring Festival Eve and the first three days. The Chinese government has established a three-day holiday around Spring Festival or the Chinese Lunar New Year. Many customs accompany Spring Festival. Some are still followed today, but others have weakened. But most people in China attach great importance to Spring Festival Eve. At that time, all family members eat dinner together. The meal is more luxurious than usual. After dinner, it is customary for the whole family to sit around, chatting and watching TV. In recent years, the Spring Festival party broadcast on China Central Television Station ("CCTV") is essential entertainment for Chinese both at home and abroad as Chinese family stay up to see the New Year in. The lively atmosphere during Spring Festival also permeates the streets and lanes. Activities such as lion dancing, dragon lantern dancing, lantern festivals and temple fairs are held for days. Spring Festival comes to an end when the Lantern Festival ends.

Lantern Festival

During the Spring Festival, people visit each other, with a great deal of exchanging of gifts. Then the festive atmosphere of New Year begins to wind down 15 days later as the Lantern Festival sets in. This festival, believed to have Daoist origins, is for people to just have fun Ñ carrying lanterns into the street, watching lions or dragon dancing, playing Chinese riddles and games, and lighting firecrackers. A typical



Regulations Governing the Employment of Foreigners in China

Contents

Chapter I	General Provisions
Chapter II	Employment License
Chapter III	Application and Approval
Chapter IV	Labor Management
Chapter V	Penalties
Chapter VI	Supplementary Provisions
Chapter I	

General Provisions

Article 1

These regulations have been formulated in accordance with stipulations of relevant laws and regulations, for the purpose of strengthening the management of the employment of foreigners in China.

Article 2

The foreigners, as mentioned in these regulations, refer to aliens who do not possess the Chinese nationality status as stipulated in the Nationality Law of the People's Republic of China.

The employment of foreigners in China, as mentioned in these regulations, refer to such circumstances, under which the aliens, who do not have the right of abode in China, conduct legal labor service within the Chinese territory and obtain pay for such labor service.

Article 3

These regulations are applicable to both those foreigners who seek employment in China and those work units which employ foreigners. These regulations are not applicable to those personnel working in China-based foreign embassies, consulates, the United Nations representative offices and other international organizations, which enjoy diplomatic privilege and immunity.

Article 4

The labor administrative departments of the people's governments of provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities, and their authorized prefectural-level labor administrative departments, are responsible for the management of employment of foreigners in China.

Chapter II

Employment License

Article 5

A work unit which wishes to employ a foreigner, shall apply for employment license for the foreigner in question, and can only employ him or her, after the application has been approved and the "Foreigners' Employment License Certificate of the People's Republic of China" (hereinafter referred to as license certificate) has been issued therefore.

Article 6

The job posts to be assigned to foreigners in a work unit shall be of such specific requirement, which can not for the time be fulfilled by appropriate domestic employees and which does not violate relevant State regulations.

A work unit shall not employ foreigners to engage in commercial art performances, except in such cases as stipulated in Item 3, Article 9 of these regulations.

Article 7

Foreigners, who seek employment in China, shall possess the following qualifications:

- (1) Who are more than 18 years old and have a good health;
- (2) Who possess professional techniques and related working experiences as needed in such work posts they pursue;
- (3) Who have no criminal records;
- (4) Who are known to specific work units which wish to employ them; and
- (5) Who possess valid visa or other international travel documents which are equivalent to visas (hereinafter referred to as documents equivalent to visa).

Article 8

Foreigners seeking employment in China shall have the occupational visa at the time of their entry into China (but in case the foreigners' own resident countries and China have signed official agreements on mutual exemption of visas, such official agreements shall prevail), and they can only be employed in China after



Rules for the Administration of Employment of Foreigners in China

Chapter I - General Provisions

Article 1

These Rules are formulated in accordance with the provisions of the relevant laws and decrees for the purpose of strengthening the administration of employment of foreigners in China.

Article 2

The term "foreigners" in these Rules refers to the persons, who under the Nationality Law of the People's Republic of China, do not have Chinese nationality.

The term "employment of foreigners in China" in these Rules refers to acts of foreigners without permanent residence status to engage in remunerative work within Chinese territory in accordance with its laws.

Article 3

These Rules shall apply to employed foreigners within Chinese territory and their employers. These Rules shall not apply to foreigners who enjoy diplomatic privileges and immunities employed by foreign embassies or consulates, or the offices of the United Nations and other international organizations in China.

Article 4

The labour administrative authorities of the people's government of the provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the Central Government and those at the prefecture and city level with their authorization are responsible for the administration of employment of foreigners in China.

Chapter II - Employment License

Article 5

The employer shall apply for the employment permission if it intends to employ foreigners and may do so after obtaining approval and the People's Republic of China Employment License for Foreigners (hereinafter referred to as the "Employment License")

Article 6

The post to be filled by the foreigner recruited by the employer shall be the post of special

need, a post that cannot be filled by any domestic candidates for the time being but violates no government regulations.

No employer shall employ foreigners to engage in commercialized entertaining performance, except for the persons qualified under Article 9 (3) of these Rules.

Article 7

Any foreigner seeking employment in China shall meet the following conditions:

- (1) 18 years of age or older and in good health;
- (2) with professional skills and job experience required for the work of intended employment;
- (3) with no criminal record;
- (4) a clearly-defined employer;
- (5) with valid passport or other international travel document in lieu of the passport (hereinafter referred to as the "Travel Document")

Article 8

Foreigner seeking employment in China shall hold the Employment Visas for their entry (In case of agreement for mutual exemption of visas, the agreement shall prevail.), and may work within Chinese territory only after they obtain the Employment Permit for Foreigner (hereinafter referred to as the "Employment Permit") and the foreigner residence certificate. Foreigners who have not been issued residence certificate (i.e. holders of F, L, C or G type visas), and those who are under study or interim programs in China and the families of holders of Employment Visas shall not work in China.

In special cases, employment may be allowed when the foreigner changes his status at the public security organs with the Employment License secured by his employer in accordance with the clearance procedures, under these Rules foreigners changes his status at the public security organs with the Employment License and receives his Employment Permit and residence certificate.

The employment in China of the spouses of the personnel of foreign embassies, consulates, representative offices of the United Nations System and other international organization in China shall follow the Provisions of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China Concerning the Employment of the Spouses of the Personnel of Foreign



Law Of The People's Republic Of China On Entry And Exit Of Aliens

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1 The present Law is enacted for the purpose of safe-guarding the sovereignty and maintaining the security and public order of the People's Republic of China and facilitating international exchanges.

The present Law shall apply to aliens entering, leaving or passing through the territory of the People's Republic of China and to aliens residing or traveling in China.

Article 2 Permission must be obtained from the competent authorities of the Chinese Government by aliens for their entry, transit and residence in China.

Article 3 For entry, exit and transit, aliens shall pass through the ports open to aliens or other designated ports and shall be subject to inspection at border checkpoints.

For entry, exit and transit, aliens' means of transport shall pass through the ports open to aliens or other designated ports and shall be subject to Inspection and supervision at border checkpoints.

Article 4 The Chinese Government protects the legitimate rights and interests of aliens within Chinese territory.

The personal freedom of aliens shall be inviolable. Aliens shall not be liable to arrest unless a warrant or decision is made by a people's procuratorate or a decision is made by a people's court and such a warrant or decision is executed by a public security organ or state security organ.

Article 5 Aliens in China shall abide by Chinese law and shall not endanger the national security of China, harm its public interests or disturb its public order.

CHAPTER II

ENTRY

Article 6 For entry into China, aliens shall apply for visas to the Chinese diplomatic missions or consular posts or other agencies abroad authorized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the P.R.C.

In specific situations and in compliance with the stipulations of the State Council, aliens may also apply for visas to visa offices at the ports designated by the competent authorities of the Chinese Government.

The entry of nationals of a country having visa agreement with the Chinese Government shall be dealt with in accordance with the said agreement.

In cases where a country has special regulations regarding the entry and transit of Chinese citizens, the competent authorities of the Chinese Government may take corresponding measures contingent on the circumstances.

Visas are not required for aliens in immediate transit on continued international flights, who stay not more than 24 hours within the airport in China. Permission may be obtained from the border checkpoints for aliens wishing to leave the airport temporarily.

Article 7 In applying for visas, aliens shall present valid pass ports and, if necessary, provide pertinent certificates

Article 8 Aliens invited or employed to work in China shall, applying for visas, produce letters of invitation or employment

Article 9 Aliens wishing to reside in China permanently shall in applying for visas, present residence confirmation forms, which may be obtained upon application from the public security organs at the intended places of residence.

Article 10 The competent authorities of the Chinese Government shall issue appropriate visas to aliens wishing to enter China in the light of each case of application.

Article 11 When an aircraft or a vessel operating international services arrives at a Chinese port, the captain or his agent must submit a passenger list to the border checkpoint, and in the case of a foreign aircraft or vessel, must



Visa & Passport Requirements

All foreigners need an entry visa. Individual travellers can apply at any Chinese embassy. The procedure is usually straightforward and takes about a week. If your visa runs out while in China, it can be extended by the local Public Security Bureau (PSB), the police. However, make sure you visit them before it expires, because you will be fined for overstaying your visa.

A valid passport is required to enter China. China does not allow entrance if the holder's passport expires in under six months; returning home with an expired passport is illegal, and may result in a fine.

It is a good idea to photocopy the page of your passport that contains your photograph, passport number, and other identifying information, along with other important documents such as visas, travel insurance policies, aeroplane tickets, and traveller's check serial numbers, in case you lose anything.

Originals are usually preferred to photocopies; however, copies are certainly better than nothing and will often do in a pinch. Information for Chinese Visa Application for tourist "L" visas, a letter of confirmation of the tour arrangement made by a travel agency in China or letter of reservation of hotel in China is required.

For visitor / business "F" visa, an official invitation letter with a seal and code from a Chinese Ministry or a provincial government or government-authorized Chinese companies (institutions) is required.

For work "Z" visa (single entry, no multiple), an employment license or a work permit or an official visa notice from authorized Chinese organizations is required.

For student "X"/"F" visa (single entry, no multiple), Form JW202 or JW 201 issued by the State Education Commission of China and notice of admission from the receiving university are required. An "X" visa is issued for those who study in China over 6 months and "F" visa for those who study in China less than 6 months.

When you apply for "Z" and "X" visa, you should

provide a "physical examination Record for Foreigner" which can be picked up from the Chinese embassies or Consulate General.

For multiple entry visitor/business visas (6 months or one year), an invitation letter from government-authorized Chinese organizations is required.

For transit "G" visa, it is requested to provide a valid visa to or from the next country of destination or a letter of invitation of the visiting country or an air ticket.

For travel to Tibet, please contact your local travel agency to obtain approval from the Tourist Bureau of Tibet before applying for visa. (Tibet Tourist Bureau, Lhasa, Tibet, China, Telephone: (86-891 633 4313 Facsimile: 86-891-633 4632.)

Please be sure that your passport should be valid over 6 months with blank visa pages. To applying for multiple entries visas, the validity of the passport must be long enough. Suggested time to apply for visa is one month before your departure (to avoid expiration of the visa).

You should provide your original passport, a complete visa application form and one recent passport-size (2x2) photo (full face and without hat).

The Chinese Embassies and Consulate General will not be responsible for any mishandling by post office or courier.

Personal checks are not acceptable. Money order or company check should be made to the order of the Embassy or Consulate General of the People's Republic of China. Cash is accepted when you come to the visa office in person.

Persons suffering from mental disorder, leprosy, AIDS, venereal disease, contagious tuberculosis or other infectious diseases shall not be allowed to enter China.

The Chinese Embassies or Consulate Generals reserves the right to refuse any application and withhold disclosure of the reason. All regulation and cost are subject to change without notice. If you have any question, please write or send fax to the Chinese consulate general or embassy in the area you live.

Z-type Visa

* Z-type visa is granted to foreigner with permission to work in China.

* Z-type visa holder should, within 30 days after the entry, apply for the foreigner residence



CHINESE OVERSEAS LEGATIONS, EMBASSIES AND CONSULATES

AUSTRALIA

Chinese Embassy in Australia
<http://au.china-embassy.org/eng/>
 Australia (Document download)
<http://au.china-embassy.org/eng/ls/default.htm>
 Australia (Consulates, Procedure & Fees)
<http://au.china-embassy.org/eng/ls/t142780.htm>
 Chinese Consulate-general in Brisbane
www.brisbane.chineseconsulate.org
 Chinese Consulate-general in Sydney
<http://sydney.chineseconsulate.org/eng/>
 Sydney (Document download)
<http://sydney.chineseconsulate.org/eng/hzqz/default.htm>
 Chinese Consulate-general in Melbourne
<http://www.chinaconsulatemel.org>

Chinese Embassy in Austria
<http://www.chinaembassy.at>
 Chinese Embassy in Belgium
<http://www.chinaembassy-org.be>
 Chinese Embassy in Brazil
<http://www.embchina.org.br>
 Chinese Consulate-general in Rio de Janeiro
<http://www.consulado-china-rj.org.br>
 Chinese Embassy in Bulgaria
<http://www.chinaembassy.bg>

CANADA

Chinese Embassy in Canada
<http://www.chinaembassycanada.org>
 Canada
<http://www.chinaembassycanada.org/eng/>
 Canada (Document download)
<http://www.chinaembassycanada.org/eng/lsfw/Chinese%20Visa/default.htm>
 Chinese Consulate-general in Vancouver
<http://www.chineseconsulatevancouver.org>

Chinese Embassy in Czech
<http://www.chinaembassy.cz>
 Chinese Embassy in Denmark
<http://www.chinaembassy.dk>
 Chinese Embassy in Egypt
<http://www.chinaembassy.org.eg>
 Chinese Embassy in Estonia
<http://www.chinaembassy.ee>
 Chinese Embassy in Finland
<http://www.chinaembassy-fi.org>
 Chinese Embassy in France
<http://web.amb-chine.fr>
 Chinese Embassy in Germany
<http://www.china-botschaft.de>

Chinese Embassy in Hungary
<http://www.chinaembassy.hu>
 Chinese Embassy in Iceland
<http://www.china-embassy.is>
 Chinese Embassy in India
<http://www.chinaembassy-india.org>
 Chinese Embassy in Indonesia
<http://www.chinaembassy-indonesia.or.id>
 Chinese Embassy in Ireland
<http://www.chinaembassy.ie>
 Chinese Embassy in Israel
<http://www.chinaembassy.org.il>
 Chinese Embassy in Japan
<http://www.china-embassy.or.jp>
 Chinese Consulate-general in Fukuoka
<http://www.chn-consulate-fukuoka.or.jp>
 Chinese Embassy in Lithuania
<http://www.chinaembassy.lt>
 Chinese Embassy in Nepal
<http://www.chinaembassy.org.np/>
 Chinese Embassy in Mexico
<http://www.embajadachina.org.mx>

NEW ZEALAND

Chinese Embassy in New Zealand
<http://www.chinaembassy.org.nz>
 Chinese Consulate-general in Auckland
<http://www.chinaconsulate.org.nz>
 New Zealand
<http://www.chinaembassy.org.nz/eng/default.htm>
 New Zealand (Document download)
<http://www.chinaembassy.org.nz/eng/lsqz/prcd/t39418.htm>

Chinese Embassy in Norway
<http://www.chinese-embassy.no>
 Chinese Embassy in Papua New Guinea
<http://www.chinaembassy.org.pg>
 Chinese Embassy in Peru
<http://www.embajadachina.org.pe>
 Chinese Embassy in Poland
<http://www.chinaembassy.org.pl>
 Chinese Embassy in Portugal
<http://www.embaixadachina.pt>
 Chinese Embassy in Romania
<http://www.chinaembassy.org.ro>
 Chinese Embassy in Russia
<http://www.chinaembassy.ru>
 Chinese Consulate-general in Khabarovsk
<http://www.chinaconsulate.khb.ru>
 Chinese Embassy in Saudi Arabia
<http://www.chinaembassy.org.sa>
 Chinese Embassy in Singapore
<http://www.chinaembassy.org.sg>
 Chinese Embassy in South Africa
<http://www.chinese-embassy.org.za>
 Chinese Embassy in Spain
<http://www.embajadachina.es>
 Chinese Embassy in Sweden



AUSTRALIA China embassy & consulates

AUSTRALIA WEBSITES

Chinese Embassy in Australia

<http://au.china-embassy.org/eng/>

Australia (Document download)

<http://au.china-embassy.org/eng/ls/default.htm>

Australia (Consulates, Procedure & Fees)

<http://au.china-embassy.org/eng/ls/t142780.htm>

Chinese Consulate-general in **Brisbane**

www.brisbane.chineseconsulate.org

Chinese Consulate-general in **Sydney**

<http://sydney.chineseconsulate.org/eng/>

Sydney (Document download)

<http://sydney.chineseconsulate.org/eng/hzqz/default.htm>

Chinese Consulate-general in **Melbourne**

<http://www.chinaconsulatemel.org>

Note: Surnames or family names are shown in large capital letters.

New South Wales

Consulate-General of the People's Republic of China Jurisdiction throughout New South Wales

Consulate-general:

39 Dunblane Street

Camperdown NSW 2050

Website: www.sydney.chineseconsulate.org

Telephone:

(02) 8595 8012 (Protocol)

(02) 8595 8002 (Visa & Passport)

(02) 8595 8050 (Science & Technology)

(02) 8595 8040 (Culture)

Hours of Business:

Monday - Friday: 8.30 a.m. - 12.00 p.m., 2.00

p.m. - 5.00 p.m. Visas and Passports: Monday -

Friday: 9.00 a.m. - 12.00 p.m.

Economic and Commercial Office:

68 George Street

Redfern NSW 2016 Tel: (02) 9698 7788

Fax: (02) 9698 7373

Education Office:

19 Anzac Parade

Kensington NSW 2033 Tel: (02) 9662 1723

Fax: (02) 9697 3368

Mr QIU Shaofang

Consul-General

Mrs HAN Laixiang

Mr HUANG Dizhong

Deputy Consuls-General

Mr LI Chao, Mr LI Jianmin

Consul (Educational Affairs)

Mrs LI (Mme ZHANG Zhifang)

Mr LIU Zhiming

Consul

Mrs SUI Yan

Mr YIN Yali

Consul

Mr BAI Gang

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Mrs HE Jing

Mr Mr ZHU Xiaochuan

Consul (Economic & Commercial Affairs)

Mrs ZHU Xiaochuan (Mme WANG Jinfeng)

Mr JIANG Chenbo

Consul

Mr YU Kanglin

Consul

Mrs YU (Mme JIANG Yu Hong)

Mr CHEN Haoqi

Consul

Mrs HU Dahua

Mrs LIU Xiaosu

Consul

Mrs DAI Lili

Consul

Mr ZHOU Xiaoming

Ms LEI Guoming

Consul

Ms GAO Yusheng

Consul

Mr GAO Shengchun

Mr QIAO Yongjun

Consul

Mrs QIAO (Mme CHEN Mo)

Ms LI Renzhu

Consul

Mr JIANG Yandong

Ms WANG Shufeng

Consul

Mr JIANG Yun

Consul

Mr ZHANG Jianxun

Consul

Mr YU YU

Consul

Mrs MA Wenge

Mr KANG Bingjian

Consul

Mrs YIN Ling

Mr QIU Jian

Consul

Mr ZHOU Bo

Vice-Consul



Freedom of Religious Belief in China

WHITE PAPER:

Information Office of the State Council
Of the People's Republic of China
October 1997, Beijing

I. The Present Conditions of Religion in China

China is a country with a great diversity of religious beliefs. The main religions are Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Catholicism and Protestantism. Citizens of China may freely choose and express their religious beliefs, and make clear their religious affiliations. According to incomplete statistics, there are over 100 million followers of various religious faiths, more than 85,000 sites for religious activities, some 300,000 clergy and over 3,000 religious organizations throughout China. In addition, there are 74 religious schools and colleges run by religious organizations for training clerical personnel.

- Buddhism has a history of 2,000 years in China. Currently China has 13,000-some Buddhist temples and about 200,000 Buddhist monks and nuns. Among them are 120,000 lamas and nuns, more than 1,700 Tibetan Buddhas, and 3,000-some temples of Tibetan Buddhism and nearly 10,000 Bhiksu and senior monks and more than 1,600 temples of Pali Buddhism.
- Taoism, native to China, has a history of more than 1,700 years. China now has over 1,500 Taoist temples and more than 25,000 Taoist priests and nuns.
- Islam was introduced into China in the seventh century. Nowadays in China there are ten national minorities, including the Hui and Uygur, with a total population of 18 million, whose faith is Islam. Their 30,000-odd mosques are served by 40,000 Imams and Akhunds.
- Catholicism was introduced into China intermittently in the seventh century, but it had not spread widely until after the Opium War in 1840. At present, China has four million Catholics, 4,000 clergy and more than 4,600 churches and meeting houses.

- Protestantism was first brought to China in the early 19th century and spread widely after the Opium War. There are about 10 million Protestants, more than 18,000 clergy, more than 12,000 churches and 25,000-some meeting places throughout China.

China has the following national religious organizations: Buddhist Association of China, Taoist Association of China, Islamic Association of China, Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association, Chinese Catholic Bishops' College, Three-Self Patriotic Movement Committee of the Protestant Churches of China, and China Christian Council.

Religious leaders and leading organs of the various religious bodies are selected and ordained in accordance with their own regulations.

Religious organizations in China run their own affairs independently and set up religious schools, publish religious classics and periodicals, and run social services according to their own needs. As in many other countries, China practices the principle of separating religion from education; religion is not a subject taught in schools of the popular education in China, although some institutions of higher learning and research institutes do teach or conduct research into religion. The various religious schools and institutes set up by the different religious organizations teach religious knowledge in line with their own needs. All normal clerical activities conducted by the clergy and all normal religious activities held either at sites for religious activities or in believers' own homes in accordance with usual religious practices, such as worshipping Buddha, reciting scriptures, going to church, praying, preaching, observing Mass, baptising, monkhood initiation, fasting, celebrating religious festivals, observing extreme unction, and holding memorial ceremonies, are protected by law as the affairs of religious bodies and believers themselves and may not be interfered with.

The "cultural revolution" (1966 to 1976) had a disastrous effect on all aspects of the society in China, including religion. But in the course of correcting the errors of the "cultural revolution" governments at all levels made great efforts to revive and implement the policy of freedom of religious belief, redressed the unjust, false or wrong cases imposed on religious personages, and reopened sites for religious activities. Since the 1980s, approximately 600 Protestant



Marriage in China

churches have been reopened or rebuilt each year in China. By the end of 1996 more than 18 million copies of the Bible had been printed, with special tax exemption treatment speeding their publication. In addition, more than eight million copies of a hymn book published by the China Christian Council in 1983 have been distributed. From 1958 to 1995, a total of 126 Catholic bishops were selected and ordained by the Chinese Catholic church itself. In the past dozen years more than 900 young Catholic priests have been trained or consecrated by Chinese Catholicism. More than 3,000 Protestants attend the Sunday service at Chongwenmen church in Beijing each week. The Beijing Nantang Catholic Cathedral observes Mass four times each week with an attendance of more than 2,000. Of these, one Mass is held in English specially for foreigners in Beijing.

In the course of the country's long history, the various religions in China have become part of the traditional Chinese thinking and culture. It is traditional for Chinese religious believers to love their country and religions. The Chinese government supports and encourages the religious circles to unite the religious believers to actively participate in the construction of the country. The various religions all advocate serving the society and promoting people's well-being, such as the Buddhists' "honoring the country and benefiting the people," the Catholics and Protestants' "glorifying God and benefiting the people," the Taoists' "being benevolent, peaceful and harmonious, saving the world and benefiting the people," and the Islam's "praying to Allah to give great reward in this world and hereafter."

In China all religions have equal status and coexist in tranquillity. Religious disputes are unknown in China. Religious believers and non-believers respect each other, are united and have a harmonious relationship. This shows, on the one hand, the influence of traditional Chinese compatibility and tolerance, and, on the other, the fact that since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949 the Chinese government has formulated and carried out the policy of freedom of religious belief and established a politico-religious relationship that conforms to China's national conditions.

II. Legal Protection of the Freedom of Religious Belief

Chinese citizens' right to the freedom of religious belief is protected by the Constitution and laws.

In the Constitution of the People's Republic of China freedom of religious belief is a basic right enjoyed by all citizens. Article 36 of the Constitution stipulates, "Citizens of the People's Republic of China enjoy freedom of religious belief." It also goes on to say, "No State organ, public organization or individual may compel citizens to believe in, or not to believe in, any religion; nor may they discriminate against citizens who believe in, or do not believe in, any religion." Again, "the State protects normal religious activities," and "No one may make use of religion to engage in activities that disrupt public order, impair the health of citizens or interfere with the educational system of the State." In addition, "Religious bodies and religious affairs are not subject to any foreign domination."

China's Law on National Regional Autonomy, General Principles of the Civil Law, Education Law, Labor Law, Compulsory Education Law, Electoral Law of the People's Congresses, Organic Law of the Villagers' Committees, Advertisement Law, and other laws stipulate that all citizens, regardless of their religious beliefs, have the right to vote and stand for election; the legitimate property of religious bodies is subject to legal protection; education is separate from religion, and all citizens, regardless of their religious beliefs, enjoy equal educational opportunities in accordance with the law; the people of all ethnic groups should respect each other's languages, customs and habits, and religious beliefs; citizens shall not be discriminated against in terms of employment because of different religious beliefs; and no advertisements or trade marks shall include discriminatory contents against any ethnic group or religion.

The Chinese government has promulgated the Regulations on the Administration of Sites for Religious Activities so as to protect the lawful rights and interests of such sites. The Regulations specify: Sites for religious activities shall be run independently by