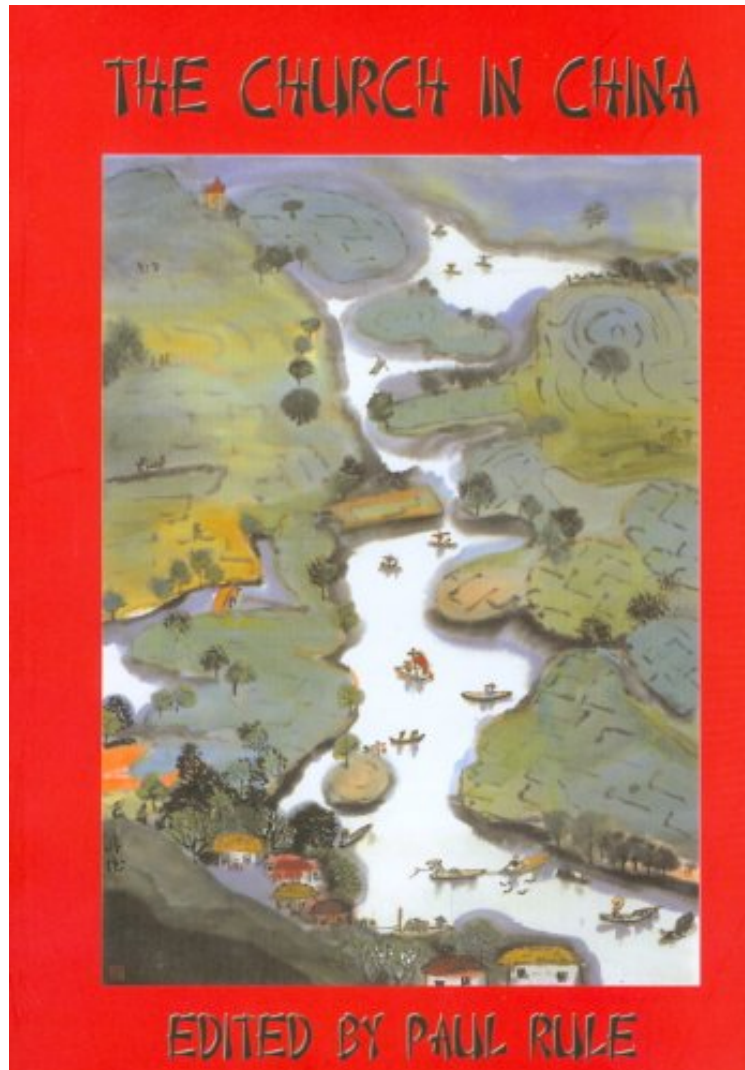


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## The Church in China (Interface: A Forum for Theology in the World)

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0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating essays on religion in China By Donald M. Bishop This volume, edited by Paul Rule of La Trobe University in Australia, gathers insightful academic papers on religion in China.-- In a useful historical review, "The Fifth Encounter," Father Jerome Heyndrickx reviews the first four

encounters between China and Christianity (Nestorian, Franciscans during Mongol rule, the early Jesuits, and with the missionaries in the 19th and 20th centuries) as background to the current growth (the fifth encounter) of Christianity in China.-- In "Christian Studies in China," Father Gianni Criveller discusses how the study of Christianity is now an accepted academic field in China, even if "Christian studies" embraces many points of view including "Sino-theology" and "Marxist Christianity."-- Claudia Devaux's "Spirited Conversations" includes stories of teaching in China and reflections on Matteo Ricci.-- In "Belief in China on the Eighth Day," Father Roderick O'Brien reflects that Mao Zedong's utopian vision of society has yielded to "building a socialist civilization," and he believes this opens a window of opportunity for believers.-- The editor's "Athens or Beijing" is an essay on Chinese theological thinking, some derived from the older generation of Chinese Catholics.-- Father Benoit Vermander introduces "Buddhism and the Religious Awakening in China."-- Justin Tan provides a reappraisal of Protestantism in China, with special focus on the role of Wang Mingdao and K.H. Ting. These scholars look beyond current trends and controversies and focus more deeply, touching on Matteo Ricci, Hellenistic thought, inculturation, and many other topics. Those learning about the more prominent place of religion in China in the 21st century will find many useful new insights and angles of view in this volume.-30-

China has been a challenge to Christianity since the beginning of modern times, and it remains so today. Here is a great civilisation comprising a quarter of humankind, yet largely untouched by Christian values and beliefs. Any theological evaluation of the state of world Christianity that does not take China into account is impoverished and radically incomplete.