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# Education Research on Marxism Religious Concept from the Perspective of Cultural Security

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Religious belief affects the thoughts and behaviors of individuals as well as the cultural security of a country. Many problems can still be found in the current education of religious view in universities, and it's essential to carry out the education of Marxism religious view in universities. From a strategic perspective of an overall national security concept, this paper reviews the problems in the education mechanism of Marxism religious concepts among college students, and then explores the methods and approaches to strengthen the education of Marxism religious concepts by reinforcing from a cultural security perspective.

Keywords: Cultural security, Marxism and religion.

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

According to the discussion of Marxism classical authors, ideologies reflect the economic foundation by those "legal, political, religious, art or philosophical" [1] religions, which are "higher ideologies far away from the material economic basis". [2]As a unique ideology and social force, cultural security is the major factor maintaining the current cultural security of the country.

Jinping XI pointed out in 2016 National Religious Work Conference that: We should publicize the party theories and policies on religious issues extensively along with religious laws and regulations, and reinforce the publicity as well as public opinion guidance for religion. Religious issue has always been a major problem that should be solved by the party to govern the country, and given the new situation; we are facing extensive scope of religious work, and heavy task, and should not only promote it on a comprehensive scale, but also make key breakthroughs. One of the key breakthroughs is to follow Marxism, strengthen the publicity and education of scientific worldview for teenagers, and their study on basic religious knowledge. Jinping XI pointed out: "The youth are the social force leading the general mode of the society. A civilized national literacy can be reflected by the ethical standard and spirituality of the younger generation."[3] With respect to the future of the state and the fate of the nation, the religious concept of the youth is a major event concerning the cultural security of the country.

## 2. INFLUENCE OF THE SECULARIZATION OF RELIGION ON COLLEGE STUDENTS

There hasn't been any unified cognition on the secularization of religion in the academic circle yet. In 1960s, Harvey Cox firstly put forward the concept of "the secularization of religion" in his work called The Secular City. Cox defined the secularization of religion as "people liberate from religious and metaphysical shelters, and turn their attention from the afterlife to this life". [4] American Scholar, Larry Shiner put forward a detailed analysis, holding that the secular concepts include six types of meanings: "Firstly, it indicates the fallback of religion, i.e., the religious thoughts, behaviors and organizations have lost their original social significance"; Secondly, it indicates that the religious group has turned its value orientation to this side of the world from the other side of the world, i.e., adapting to the market economy of the modern society from contents to forms; Thirdly, this indicates that the religion is separated from social reality, and has left the original public nature and social functions, and turned into pure private affairs; Fourthly, this indicates the change of religious belief and behaviors, i.e., in the secularization process, various attentions are paid to exerting the function of original religious groups, and playing the role of spokesman for the religion; Fifthly, this indicates that the world has gradually got rid of the original divine features, i.e., the religion is getting less



trans-natural and mysterious; Sixthly, this indicates that the "divine" society is turning towards the secular society, etc. [5]The secularization of religion includes two levels, the fallback of traditional social function of religion towards the social and cultural edge, i.e., it's a process for the society to move away from religion increasingly. Such secularization is actually a process for the secular regime to recover the control, integration and management of the society. Secondly, it's also a process for religion to change and integrate the secular society, to survive and continue its influence on the secular society. The focus of traditional religion on transcending secularity, and stepping out of secularity has gradually turned to involvement in secularity, and focusing on the current life. Religion has taken the initiative to participate in political, economic, cultural and educational activities of the secular society, and involved in all life aspects, attracting the public via increasingly varied activities, which have affected college students to some extent.

First of all, religion has turned to the adjustment of personal belief and social public value in forms, and prefers to focus on the actual life of individuals, and usher in the actual demands of people, providing individuals with individual meaning of existence concerning birth, aging, illness, and death, happiness and hardship, etc. The religious value has been reinforced and oriented more to the demand of people. Currently, most Chinese people choose religious belief (or refuse to choose religious belief), to meet their spiritual demands and learn how to get along with people, and handle affairs [6]. Religious scriptures contain rich and profound philosophies as well as ethics, encouraging people to shun evil and do good things, which are attractive to teenagers who are full of curiosity and the thirst for knowledge.

Secondly, religion is philosophical, ethical and psychological to some extent, which can attract the interests of college students. As an ideology, religion has unique interpretations of life, world and nature, which are attractive to college students seeking for conceptual knowledge. As groups with immature thoughts, college students are excited about special social culture phenomena, such as the religion. They will check the religion, approach it and enter join the religion from the historical and cultural perspective. Religion is no longer regarded as negative and degraded, but a major form of social consciousness and cultural exchange. As cultural industry develops fast in our country, many places holding religious activities have become famous scenic spots and cultural exchange sites. College students are vigorous, and willing to seek for new trends, and experience different feelings brought by various religious ceremonies and cultural arts, and step towards "obsession" from the early interest in experienced participation.

Secondly, most religions are declared to be "kind" causes, encouraging kindness, doing good works, benefiting us and others. The independence and mutual assistance of religious groups are the major type of religious services, and can exist in all types of social environment. Religious charity services are mostly beyond the religious groups, carrying forward and pursuing the mainstream value concept, with the orientation of social concern, which is attractive to college students with strong sense of social justice and responsibility. In their opinions, through the religion, they can find the tolerance, compassion, and justice rarely seen in social relationships. Besides, they have also especially expressed that religion can make them feel comfortable and safe and give them a sense of belonging, which are exactly missing contemporary college students. The secularization of religion has caused new situation and problems in the education of the Marxism religious concepts.

A practice survey of religious belief among college students in Shandong in 2019 indicated that: 6.5% people expressed they have religious faith, and such figure is lower than the average minimum ratio of religious faith of college students in all places across the country (3%-4%), and only 54.2% people expressed they have communism belief. According to 12% students, they often heard about religious publicity; Besides, there are also 74% students heard about religious publicity occasionally [7]. These are reminding us that, ideological and political education in colleges should focus on the education of religious concepts among college students, and grasp the initiative actively. Universities should publicize the Marxism religious concept among students, help them know about general knowledge about the religion, the development status of the religion in the contemporary China, the religious policies and regulations of the party and country, while students should try their best to figure out such issues, treat religion rationally, and follow the religious policies and regulations of the party and the country consciously.

## 3. NECESSITY TO STRENGTHEN THE EDUCATION OF THE MARXISM RELIGIOUS CONCEPT

First of all, as a complicated cultural phenomena and independent ideology, religion has existed in the early phase of socialism for a long time. We are now in the initial phase of socialism, with conflicts over the increasing wonderful life demands of the people and the unbalanced and insufficient development, which will allow religions to take root. As Jinping XI pointed out: "The source of religion is the realistic society, while the conflict struggles and long-term unbalanced development therein also determine the long-term existence of religion and the source."[8] Thus, in our current phase, it's certain that religion will exist for a long time and exert a certain effect, so we must



understand religion in a scientific and reasonable way, educate and guide students to know about its positive and negative effect, and treat it scientifically and reasonably.

Secondly, it's essential to carry out the education of the Marxism, religious concept for college students, to offset the penetration of overseas religion. Students are major missionary objects and penetration targets of foreign forces, and "since the end of the 19th century, evangelical teaching organizations have been developed constantly, to preach overseas students. Currently, Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, Campus Crusade for Christ and other large-scaled international evangelical group and thousands of small and medium-sized groups have taken the initiative to carry out ministries related to students. The church pays high attention to the plasticity of teenagers, and focuses on childhood irrigation and teenager consolidation". [9]Meanwhile, "some religious organizations and individuals will penetrate universities in China by religion, organize illegal missionary activities by student fellowship, etc., and the trend has increasingly intensified years".[10]Besides, as information network technology develops fast, the penetration approach of religion will be more diversified. According to the 47th Statistic Report on the Network Development Status in China published by China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC) in Beijing, as of December 2020, our Netizen scale reached to 989 million, which was increased by 85.4 million than that in March 2020, and the popularity of internet reached to 70.4%. [11]Such situation has made the penetration range of foreign religion more extensive, and the means more concealed. General Secretary Jinping XI stressed in the national religious work conference in April 2016, we should reinforce the publicity and education of the scientific worldview for teenagers, guide them to trust in science, learn and transmit science, and establish correct worldview, life concept and value concept. Therefore, the essential task is to "cultivate socialism builders and successors that can develop comprehensively in morals, intelligence, physical fitness, work and aesthetics".

Thirdly, As the key cultivation target of the state and society, college students are the hope of the country and the nation, and their ideology and morality as well as behavioral norms must conform to the interests and demands for national development. To stabilize the development of a country, the precondition is to ensure cultural security, and college students are the main subject to maintain the cultural security of a country. We must equip our brains with advanced culture, and fight for the main front over the ideology of the new generation of teenagers. Therefore, it's of great significance to the national cultural security for carrying out the education of the Marxism religious concept among college students, improving their cultural deposits and knowledge structure as well as their

capacity to resist negative cultural information, and set up the core value concept of socialism.

#### 4. COUNTERMEASURES TO STRENGTHEN THE EDUCATION OF MARXISM RELIGIOUS CONCEPT

The Marxism religious concept was concluded Marx and Engels in their scientific research on religious problems by applying dialectical materialism and historical materialism when they founded scientific worldview and led proletariat in the revolution of socialism, and was founded after inheriting and developing all sorts of excellent achievements related to atheism and religious concepts throughout the human history. As socialism revolution and socialism construction practices are implemented in China, Marxism religious concepts have gained new explanation and development, and formed the Marxism religious concept with Chinese features, and the theoretical foundation and guiding thoughts of the communist party of China to understand and handle religious problems and formulate religious policies. [12]

### 4.1. Carry out the Education of Basic Religious Theories

First of all, make students understand the essence of religion accurately. Religion originates from the fear and confusion of ancient people over the nature, and supernatural forces as the spiritual pillar and the object of faith, to comfort the soul of human suffering in reality. Marx pointed out that religion is a social ideology, and the reflection of social existence like all the other ideologies. Judging from the origin, development and social influence of religion, religion is not only the product of objective reality, but also a reasonable long-term existence. Meanwhile, Marx also pointed out clearly that religion is a kind of social form and a existing way of human spirit, which is deemed as a "reversed worldview". "In the world of religion, people turn their own empirical world into a kind of nature only in thought and imagination, which is opposed to people as a kind of foreign matter."[13] Freud agrees with this view, and believes that: "All these religious doctrines are hallucinations, which cannot be proved" is a way of dispelling anxiety about the real world in the way of illusion. Religion is an idealistic ideological system in essence, which is fundamentally opposed to the materialist atheism of the Communists in terms of the worldview. Students must be guided to learn the basic theoretical knowledge of religion in order to understand why members of the Communist Party don't believe in religion. It is wrong to confuse the dividing line of the Marxism materialist worldview and the idealistic worldview of religion, and to think that members of the Communist Party can believe in religion. At the same time, we must guide and



educate college students to understand and treat religious problems with Marxism standpoint, viewpoint and method in the correct manner. It's required to fully understand the objective reality that religion will still exist for a long time in our country, and fully understand that the opposition between Marxism and religion in the worldview does not mean the complete opposition between Communists and religious believers in politics. The consistent principle and policy of the Party in dealing with relations with religious personages is to unite and cooperate politically, respect each other in faith, and constantly consolidate and develop the patriotic united front of the Party and religious community.

Secondly, it's required to guide students to realize that religion is an important part of the culture. Marx regards religion as a way for human beings to master the world, and a complex cultural system that has a profound influence on all areas of human life. So the comprehensive and profound analysis is needed. Marxism classical writers have been aware of that religion is an important category of human ideological and cultural forms, who regard religious spirit as one of the four major spiritual activities. Marx once put forward: "As the totality of thought and the concrete of thought, the concrete totality is actually the product of thought and understanding; but it is not the product of the self-generated idealistic concept which is out of the intuition and representation. Instead, it is the product created in the course of the intuition and representation turned into the concept. In terms of the totality, it is the product of the thinking mind when it appears in the mind as a totality of thought, which masters the world in its own way. It is different from the artistic spirit of the world. "[ 14] Religion is inclusive of religious belief, religious morals and religious laws, religious experiences and emotions as psychological contents, as well as religious organizations, religious activities, etc. Religion has such an important influence on human society and its civilization that Engels has taken Christianity as an example to explain it clearly: "As for a religion that has conquered the Roman Empire and dominated the great majority of civilized mankind for 1800 years, it is a groundless statement put together by deceivers, which cannot solve the problem. It can only be solved by explaining its origin and development in the light of the historical conditions under which religion came into being and gained its dominance. Especially it's true for Christianity." [15] China's traditional culture is also deeply influenced by religious traditions such as Buddhism and Taoism. The idea of denying religion and believing that religious culture is dispensable is obviously incorrect. We must understand religion in order to understand the development of Chinese and Western civilizations. It is necessary to inculcate and guide college students to realize that the multicultural collision is also reflected in religious and

cultural exchanges in the era of economic globalization. In terms of religious culture, however, we must absorb the quintessence, discard its dross, make the past serve the present, and get rid of the stale and bring forth the fresh, who guard against the alienation and deterioration of the communication function of religious culture in order to criticize and resist the religious transmission which is reduced to the tool of "cultural hegemony", "cultural colonization" or "cultural aggression".

Thirdly, we should make college students realize that religion has a dual social role. Marxism holds that religion has a dual social role, which has both positive and negative functions. Based on their own social environment, religious situation and political mission, Marx, Engels and Lenin deeply discussed the social role of religion, which analyzed and criticized the negative role of religion in serving the ruling class in particular. In the class society, religion serves as the spiritual tool to maintain the fundamental interests of the ruling class, which is the spiritual opium controlling the ruled class. Religion has the effect of spiritual anesthesia for the oppressed people. In the meantime, they also regard religion as the tool with which the oppressed revolted against the rulers under special historical circumstances. The religion is recognized to a certain extent. Taking early Christianity as an example, "it was originally the religion believed by the slaves and the freed slaves, the poor and the powerless, and the people who had been conquered by the Roman Empire." [16] It reflected the good will of the lower classes to escape from suffering and pursue a happy life, as well as their strong desire to escape from the rule of Roman. In the Reformation of Luther and Calvin, religion became the powerful weapon of the bourgeoisie against the feudal ruling class. But it also must guide the student to realize that this positive role often plays only in form, with its limitations. The nature of religion determines its negative effects. As a result, the "peasant war, the most radical event in German history, was defeated by the theology" [17]

As a form of social culture, religious doctrines and canons contain the positive factors serving for Socialism with Chinese Characteristic. Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, Party Central Committee with General Secretary Jinping XI has proposed to "support all religions to deeply dig into the doctrines and canons conducive to social harmony, progress of the times and health and civilization while maintaining basic beliefs, core doctrines and etiquette systems, and interpret the doctrines and canons in line with the requirements of development and progress of contemporary China and the excellent traditional Chinese culture". [18] Give play to the positive role of religions in promoting social harmony, unite and guide religious community and the vast majority of religious believers, enhance social harmony, and work together to realize the Chinese dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.



College students must be guided to deeply understand the positive factors in religious canons and doctrines that can serve Socialism with Chinese Characteristics, such as charitable ideas, so as to unite patriotic believers and give full play to the positive role of religion. We should guide college students to realize the positive role of religion; At the same time, the college students shall pay attention to the negative role of religion in the realistic society. The idealistic characteristics of religious theism and the use of hostile forces have disturbed the normal production and living order of the people to a certain extent, endangering the ideological and cultural security of our country under the guidance of Marxism. Therefore, we must take a clear-cut stand against the infiltration of western religions, carry forward the excellent cultural traditions of China and establish socialism core values, so as to safeguard the religious and cultural security of our country.

## 4.2. Popularize the Basic Religious Policies and Policies of the Party

The policy of religious work is gradually formed and developed by the Communist Party of China in the long-term practice of correctly understanding and dealing with religious problems by virtue of Marxism in our country. In 2004, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) clarified the basic principle of religious work that is "fully implement the CPC's policy on freedom of religious belief, administer religious affairs in accordance with the law, adhere to the principle of independence and self-management, and actively guide religions to adapt to socialism" at the National Working Conference for Religious Affair.

Firstly, implement the CPC's policy on freedom of religious belief fully. The freedom of religious belief is based on the objective fact that religion exists for a long time. Freedom of religious belief means that every citizen has the freedom to believe in religion as well as the freedom not to believe in religion. Meanwhile, every citizen has the freedom of belief in this religion and the freedom of belief in that religion; In terms of the same religion, every citizen has enjoyed the freedom of belief in different religious sects; although he did not believe in religion in the past, he still has enjoyed freedom of believing in religion now and vice versa. It's required to make students realize that religious belief is a problem of ideological understanding, and respect the religious belief of religious citizens. It is wrong to discriminate against religious citizens or non-religious citizens. At the same time, students should be educated to realize that freedom of religious belief is the unity of rights and obligations. Religious affairs must be done within the limits of the rights and obligations stipulated in the Constitution and laws, which must not interfere with social, work and living order. Students should be educated to consciously resist missionary activities on campus. In the process of education, we should especially guide college students to understand the problem that Communist Party members and Communist Youth League members cannot believe in religion. There is no contradiction between freedom of religious belief and the religion that is not believed by Party members and League members. As the vanguard of the working class, the Communist Party of China is a scientific atheist who believes in Marxism and communism.

Secondly, Administer Religious Accordance with the Law. In theory, "religion as a social entity, it is bound to carry out a variety of activities, and other aspects of society, with the government a variety of relations, to take place a variety of events, these activities, relationships, events are religious affairs." [19] Administering religious affairs according to law means that our government administers the religious affairs based on the Constitution and relevant laws. Regulations and rules administer the relations and acts involving the national and social public interests in respect of the religion, and the relations and acts involving the rights and interests of the religious community in social and public activities. As a result, it can make college students realize that administering religious affairs according to law is an inevitable requirement for the Party to govern the country according to law and build a socialism lawbased country. College students shall be guided to understand the requirements of religious belief and religious emotion, and the policy of freedom of religious belief carried out. Religious affairs and activities involving the national and public interests shall be managed in accordance with the law. In addition, it is also necessary to provide the college students with the education and guidance to manage religious affairs, which does not mean to interfere in the internal affairs of religion. Administering religious affairs according to law is intended to guarantee the freedom of religious belief and the orderly progress of religious activities, which can administer affairs involving the national and public interests according to law.

Thirdly, adhere to the principle of independence and self-management. The principle of independence and self-management means that our religious undertakings are managed by religious believers themselves, and religious groups, places holding religious activities and religious affairs are not dominated by foreign forces; Religious groups, places holding religious activities and religious priests shall carry out foreign exchanges on the basis of friendship and equality; Other organizations or individuals shall not accept additional religious conditions in the cooperation and exchange activities of the foreign economy, culture, etc. In terms of history, China underwent semi-colonial and semi-feudal society, where Religion became the tool of imperialism to invade China. Up to now, some anti-China forces have



taken religion as a breakthrough to infiltrate, subvert, westernize and split China. Therefore, China should adhere to the principle of religious independence and self-management. It's required to provide students with the full guidance to realize the importance of the independence and self-management religions in order to resist the infiltration of foreign hostile religions. What's more, we should make it clear to the students that adhering to the principle of independence and selfmanagement does not mean encouraging and supporting religious community to develop external exchanges with other countries on the basis of independence, equality, friendship and mutual respect, rather than engaging in self-seclusion. As a result, it can enhance mutual understanding and friendship among different countries and nations in order to create good international relations.

Fourthly, guide religions to adapt to socialism actively. As a group belief, religion has existed for a long time in socialist society. So we must face up to religious issues. Religious issues are fundamentally long-term in nature. Religion cannot be "weakened" or "retrogressed" in the primary stage of socialism. Based on the reality that religion will exist for a long time and even develop in some places and at some time, we should actively guide religion to adapt to socialist society and give play to its positive role. Jinping XI emphasizes: "Guiding religions to adapt to socialist society actively is to guide religious believers to love the motherland and the people, safeguard the unification of the motherland and the great unity of the Chinese nation, and serve the highest interests of the State and the overall interests of the Chinese nation; Uphold the leadership of the Communist Party of China and the socialist system and follow the road of socialism with Chinese character; Practice the core value concept of socialism positively, carry forward Chinese culture, and strive to integrate religious teachings with Chinese culture; Abide by the laws and regulations of the state, and accept the administration of the state according to law consciously; We will devote ourselves to the reform and opening-up and socialist modernization and contribute to the realization of the Chinese dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. " [20] It is necessary to educate college students to understand that guiding religion to adapt to socialist society actively is shown the correct direction of religions in the historical process of our country, which does not require religious believers to give up their religious beliefs or force them to convert to Marxism. Instead, it requires them to love the motherland, uphold the leadership of the Party and the socialist system, abide by the laws, regulations, guidelines and policies of the State in order to make more contributions to national unity, social harmony and reunification of the motherland.

### 4.3. Strengthen the Publicity and Education of the Scientific Worldview

Firstly, educate the students in the scientific worldview of dialectical materialism and historical materialism. As for students, it's required to understand the dialectical relationship between matter and consciousness, the world unified in the matter. Adhere to emancipate the mind and seek truth from facts. Uphold the practice as the only standard to test the truth and try to understand religion based on real life and social practice. Based on the basic theories, viewpoints and standpoints of Marxism materialism, it analyzes profoundly the causes and developing law of religion and the extinction conditions in future. Only by adhering to the basic principles and methods of Marxism can we scientifically reveal the essence and social function of religion in order to correctly understand the religious problems for college students in the socialism period.

What's more, cultivate and carry forward the spirit of science. Cultivating and carrying forward the spirit of science aim to cultivate the spirit of seeking truth from facts, exploring genuine knowledge, pursuing truth and courage to bring forth new ideas. Marxism believes that the human society, natural world and the human thinking field are objective, which has the objective law independent of the human consciousness.

Thus, we shall respect the law. Science is adopted to study and explain the natural world and the development of human society correctly, whose essence lies in the innovation. We should make great efforts to cultivate the scientific spirit, help students distinguish between science and pseudoscience, between science and superstition, between civilization and ignorance, and learn to use dialectical materialism and historical materialism to treat and analyze issues.

Finally, we should insist on strengthening the education of ideals and beliefs among college students. In the course of education, we should guide students to establish the correct worldview, life concept and value concept, lead value concept with the core socialist values, arm their minds with the latest theoretical achievements of Marxism, and rally the strength of youth with the common ideal of socialism with Chinese characteristics. As a result, it strives to enhance the attraction of socialist ideology, maintain the leading position of Marxism, and strengthen the belief in Marxism and the belief in communism.

#### 5. CONCLUSIONS

Under the background of secularization of religion, we should attach importance to the influence of religion on college students, and guide them to establish Marxism Religious Concept. It's required to guide the students to set up the marxism belief, treat religious



culture, religious belief and other issues correctly, understand the Party's religious policies, and adhere to a scientific worldview by strengthening the education of Marxist religious outlook on college students in the course of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. It needs to analyze problems with Marxist standpoint, views and methods, and adhere to set lofty ideals and ambitions. It strives to grow into a socialism builder and reliable successor with ideals and responsibilities.

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