Article

Reflections on the Modernity of Chinese Christianity in the Context of Post-Secularization

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Abstract: According to classical secularization theory, the development of Christianity (particularly Protestantism) in Chinese society has not undergone strict secularization, and any such instances have been ephemeral rather than sustained phenomena. Paradoxically, within the pluralistic sociocultural context of post-secularization, Protestant Christianity has manifested a distinctive modernity in China—one that actively reconfigures the conceptual boundaries of post-secular modernity through localized contextualization. The modernity emerging from religion-society interactions must be grounded in empirical social realities, while simultaneously acting as a catalyst for both religious transformation and theoretical evolution within secularization discourse. Through an empirical case study methodology, this investigation examines post-secular faith practices of Christianity in contemporary China, seeking to elucidate distinct manifestations of faith modernity shaped by specific sociostructural conditions.

Keywords: post-secularization; modernity; Chinese; Christianity

1. Introduction

The classical theory of secularization, commonly understood by individuals, primarily pertains to various perspectives concerning the diminishing influence of religion amid modern socialization, rooted in specific ideas proposed by classical sociologists that emerged from the notions and experiences associated with the European Enlightenment. From an empirical standpoint, concepts such as the separation between church and state, as well as the privatization of religion, which are based on the classical secularization theory, appear to conflict with the current religious landscape. Consequently, new topics have emerged based on differing perspectives and entry points. The vagueness surrounding the term secularization itself, along with the diverse social contexts in which secularization occurs, represents a significant factor contributing to the persistence of these ongoing and often conflicting debates.

Secularization is a multifaceted and extensive theoretical framework that is primarily examined through various interconnected aspects, including the definitions and boundaries between the secular and the sacred, the evolving interaction between religion and social structures, and the manner in which individuals in a secular context engage with sacred practices of faith. Utilizing a case study approach, this paper seeks to investigate the occurrence of religious beliefs within particular social environments, to illustrate the symptoms of secularization in distinct societies, and to analyze how post-religious frameworks experience transformation and reinterpretation in the context of modernity that follows secularization.

2. Reflections on the "Secularization" of Christianity in the Chinese Social Environment

2.1. Implications of the Change to "Secularization"

The societal backdrop in which classic secularization theories within the sociology of religion developed indicates that the term "secularization" encompasses three primary dimensions: first, it denotes the process in which various sectors of society and culture become independent from the influence of religious organizations and symbols; second, secularization transcends being merely a process shaped by social structures, as it impacts all aspects of cultural life and the entirety of conceptual frameworks; third, there exists a subjective dimension to secularization, characterized by a transformation of consciousness wherein individuals in contemporary societies perceive the world and their personal lives devoid of religious interpretations [1]. Therefore, secularization encompasses both objective and subjective elements. Objective secularization entails possessing multiple interpretations of existence and logic beyond a single religious viewpoint, while subjective secularization reflects individuals' inclination towards ambiguity regarding religious matters. These secularizing forces appear to have proliferated globally during the modernization process, albeit with varying degrees of development across different regions and populations, influenced significantly by diverse social conditions and cultural elements [1].

An international view on the connection between religion and society indicates that the conventional theory of secularization has significant shortcomings, particularly during the latter half of the 20th century, when a global religious resurgence prompted a reevaluation of the original claims of secularization theory, leading even to discussions on "de-secularization", which diverges from classical secularization principles. These alternative theories that contrast with classical secularization might be grouped under the term "post-secularization" perspective. Regardless of whether one supports the validity of the secularization theory or consistently defends the existence of the post-secularization theory, all discussions surrounding secularization can be categorized under the theoretical framework of "secularization". Ultimately, the discourse regarding secularization must take into account the particular social and cultural contexts and the historical phases of development. This analysis should be informed by the tenets of specific religious beliefs while simultaneously understanding the overarching trends in the relationship between religion and society, to facilitate an impartial evaluation of the secularization phenomenon within particular social environments.

2.2. Rethinking What is "Secularization"?

Considering the extensive research findings regarding secularization and the emergence of associated topics that are persistently discussed, it is crucial to examine the relationship between religion and society within particular contexts and phases of cultural evolution, especially at a time when secularization theories are thriving. This is due to the fact that the social environment serves as a significant factor that must be acknowledged in the exploration of secularization phenomena. Furthermore, when investigating the secularization of an individual religion, it is beneficial to revisit the definition of secularization as it pertains to religious teachings before delving into the relationship between religion and society within a specific social environment. In essence, the discussions surrounding secularization are significantly influenced by varied definitions of the term and different theoretical foundations; thus, it is essential to "return to the origins" of secularization.

The purpose of this paper is to examine a particular group within Christianity in the environment of Chinese society; consequently, we will initially explore the notions of secularization found in the biblical texts. The terms *kosmos* and *bebélos* are frequently employed to characterize and articulate secularism in these original biblical writings, with the former possessing a broader conceptual depth compared to the latter and being more

neutral in negative connotations. In specific contexts, *kosmos* appears more neutral, whereas *bebélos* is often associated with negative implications. The negative interpretation of "secular" is primarily linked to *bebélos*, particularly concerning the subjective feelings of the individual involved, which denotes the person's active acceptance of or affinity towards a particular thing. This element should be considered when analyzing secularization content subsequently. This interpretation is significant for later analysis of secularization [2]. The term *kosmos* encompasses three primary meanings: first, it denotes a state of harmonious order or arrangement; second, it signifies adornment or decoration; and third, it implies courtesy or proper conduct [2].

A study of the contexts in which the term *kosmos* appears in the Bible, particularly in the New Testament, uncovers three primary meanings: firstly, it denotes the physical universe or Earth along with the regulations and order it encompasses; secondly, it signifies the individuals inhabiting the world; and thirdly, it pertains to worldly possessions, which includes tangible assets such as wealth and material goods, as well as abstract concepts, conscious pursuits, and moral and ethical matters. Thus, these three interpretations can be delineated as the physical Earth or universe, the inhabitants of that space, and the items or concepts linked to those inhabitants, respectively. Additionally, there are specific lexical meanings that contrast "secular" ideas with "sacred" ones, such as the concept of "worldly lusts" concerning human will and choices, which aligns with the term *bebélos.* Consequently, the biblical notion of "worldliness" is generally well-defined, indicating that "worldliness" possesses both positive and negative aspects. For instance, the presence of the material world and its structure is favorable and beneficial to humanity, while the sinful dimension of the world, associated with *epithumeó*, or human lusts, [1] is considered detrimental. Therefore, it appears that the so-called "secular" interpretation of human will plays a pivotal role in this process, suggesting that the objective existence of entities and laws is rendered neutral, while the scope of "secularization" affecting the individual becomes a significant element [3].

2.3. "Secularization" in the Chinese Social Environment

To analyze the concept of "secularization" within the Chinese framework, it is essential to first consider whether secularization occurs in Chinese society. If one evaluates the evolution of religion in China based solely on Western secularization theories, it could be argued that secularization did manifest, particularly when referencing ancient Chinese civilization. However, if one examines modern-day Chinese society from a contemporary viewpoint, the conclusion alters significantly. Although China has undergone experiences that align with classical secularization theories, these occurrences can be characterized as merely transitory. Specifically, the trajectory of Christianity in China does not conform to the broader patterns presented by classical secularization theories. This discrepancy arises from the fact that while secularization theories were gaining prominence in the West, China was simultaneously experiencing a dynamic relationship between religion and society. If we assess the progression of Christianity in the West, it would appear that China underwent a brief phase of "pre-secularization" followed by a fleeting period of secularization, and subsequently transitioned swiftly into an enduring "post-secularization" phase—this evolution being heavily influenced by the unique stages of social development and historical contexts that China has encountered [4].

The group examined in this study is situated in the Qiantang River Basin within the southeastern coastal area of China, specifically in the Xiaoshan District of Hangzhou City. This region is noted for being among the first in China to encounter the Christian faith, particularly Protestantism, dating back to the arrival of Western missionaries in 1867. When Christianity was brought to this area in the late 19th century, it existed within a society that aligned with the typical "native character" of China. It can be asserted that the evolution of Christianity in this region closely parallels the processes of industrialization and modernization, especially with the growth of urban development and the private

economy after the reform and opening up. This phenomenon of "secularization" has significantly influenced the local Christian beliefs and cultural expressions. This area exemplifies the fusion of Christianity with local cultural traditions within Chinese society, and the rapid pace of modernization presents challenges to the traditional and contemporary aspects of Christian faith. The relationship between Christianity and Chinese society can be characterized as "dramatic", and despite the complexities involved in cultural integration, the evolution of Christianity in China reveals both shared characteristics and distinct features of religious belief systems that merit detailed investigation by scholars. The subsequent section will explore the development of Christianity within the framework of Chinese society across multiple dimensions. Next, we will investigate the features and expressions of Christianity's "post-secularization" within the social environment of China from two main perspectives.

3. Manifestationsand Characteristics of Post-Secularization in Research Case

3.1. Secular External Forces-Modernization and Development of the Region

The classification of the evolution of contemporary Christianity within Chinese society as a "post-secularization" period primarily arises from the pluralistic nature of the relationship between religion and societal dynamics in China. Furthermore, the transformations within Christianity, particularly Protestantism, in Chinese environment manifest in particularly varied ways. The concept of "post-secularization" extends beyond classical secularization theories and neo-secularization frameworks; it purposefully moves away from these secularization models to emphasize the diverse developments of various religions within differing societal environment. The recent modernization of Chinese society has accelerated religious transformations, leading to a pluralistic manifestation of Christianity's "post-secularization" notably shaped by China's distinctive social landscape.

The area where the investigation is conducted is among the first regions in China to experience reform and opening up, and the outcomes of this transformation have been especially noteworthy. This robust modernization has resulted in significant alterations in the living conditions of the local population, which includes profound shifts in the status of Christian beliefs. The most evident change is in the approach to economic development; the nature and scale of economic growth and technological advancements have swiftly transitioned into a phase of rapid industrialization. The dynamics of economic advancement and "secularization" have had the most direct effect on individual adherents, prompting faith communities to contemplate methods for preserving their beliefs amidst this intense change. They are tasked with balancing what appear to be a confrontational situation, discovering a place for their faith within the context of modernization, and reconfiguring and developing their identity, as will be elaborated upon in the following sections.

3.2. Secular Ethics and Modernity Interpretations of Economic Behavior

3.2.1. The Discernment of "Righteousness and Profit"

The research indicated that the economic advancement within society notably influences faith groups, particularly the Christian Zhejiang businessmen.[2] For this group of innovators who are at the forefront of modern change, the effects of modernization are especially evident. Zhejiang businessmen represent a significant portion of the subjects in this study, and the majority of their ancestors were farmers, resulting in generally limited educational backgrounds. The business acumen and qualities of Zhejiang entrepreneurs are referred to as the "ZheShang Spirit", which is primarily demonstrated through traits such as constant pursuit of profit and avarice. This drive is largely a response to the pressures of a subsistence economy and the unpredictability of future living conditions during the initial phases of their endeavors [5].

When the entrepreneurial spirit of Zhejiang merchants aligns with the religious principles of Protestantism, their professional ethics display distinct characteristics. Primarily, this is evident in their lack of interest in wealth solely for the purpose of leading a lavish and indulgent lifestyle. Instead, they adhere to the belief of not causing harm to others' or their own souls and strive diligently to honor God. This approach bears a resemblance to the Protestant work ethic associated with structured secular employment as a form of vocation, a concept discussed by Max Weber in his texts, which has gained moral significance and spiritual acknowledgment [3]. Nonetheless, in the actual practice of faith, there exists a disparity between the ideal and reality, along with a clash between rational decision-making and ethical values. Addressing the discord between financial motivations and ethical faith presents a challenge that Christian entrepreneurs must confront, and it constitutes an essential aspect of their journey in faith [6].

When economic actions intersect with the ethical principles of faith, the components and dimensions of these actions inevitably undergo evaluation according to the moral standards set by faith-based ethics. Additionally, the personal significance attributed to economic actions necessitates interpretation aligned with these ethical frameworks, ultimately forming ethical benchmarks and value standards pertinent to specific actions. Examining economic activities through the lens of faith-based ethics can be categorized into two distinct levels: the explicit and the implicit, with the latter being the more influential. This is due to the fact that the autonomous execution of economic actions is guided by individual consciousness and persists throughout the process. While economic behavior encompasses more than merely a "psychological" occurrence, it is characterized by a distinct form of subjective meaning, allowing for personal interpretation in relation to the whole. The autonomy felt by economic actors is often shaped by their surroundings and personal development needs, where the ethical values inherent in their faith play a crucial role in shaping their self-perception and conation.

In the ethical framework of faith, the essential motivation underlying economic actions can be identified in the intentions and goals that precede conscious decisions. This reveals whether an economic agent's actions are influenced by personal desires or are guided by ethical considerations. It also assesses whether the motivations driving the actions stem from self-interest or from the faith-based experiences of the economic individual. This dynamic bears a resemblance to the "Debate between Righteousness and Profit" found in traditional Chinese culture.

The traditional Chinese notion of righteousness and profit, rooted in Confucian thought, possesses significant social adaptability. It can be employed to curb profit-seeking behavior among businessmen by imposing a "righteousness" constraint, or conversely, it can align "righteousness" with "profit" thereby legitimizing economic activities. However, a distinction exists between the classical interpretation of "righteousness and profit" and the notion of "righteousness" found within Protestant ethics. The former is primarily illustrated in *The Doctrine of the Mean*, which asserts that "Sincerity is the way of heaven." This implies that all things operate according to their inherent nature, and humans should conduct themselves without deceit and falsehood [7]. Notably, the belief is held that individuals, as the agents of judgment in the process of "discernment" are in a continuous state of reassessing their understanding of goodness. This ongoing process throughout life reflects constant renewal; yet, this does not indicate that individuals can achieve a state of absolute goodness or ultimate sincerity.

The conventional view of righteousness and profit holds that the conduct of a gentleman is inclined towards being "sincere", although the journey may not be direct, constrained by the individual's understanding and beliefs. This results in a complicated and indirect renewal of one's existence, indicating that the interpretation of "righteousness and profit" resembles an idealistic approach to the moral expectations of reality. In contrast, Protestant ethics of faith are no longer ensnared in the duality of "righteousness" and "profit". Instead, they adhere to an absolute ethical standard that continuously assesses the faults associated with "lust" and acknowledges the true nature of human evil.[3]

This leads to a persistent renewal of both faith and the existence of individuals in reality, although the journey remains intricate and indirect. From an ethical practice perspective, both aim for the good; despite their differences in active and passive approaches, they can be viewed as traveling similar paths, possibly complementing one another. The former is distinguished by its association with gentlemanly behavior, while the latter evolves towards "sincerity" in line with its ethical essence.

3.2.2. Moderation-the Doctrine of the Mean

Research findings indicate that individuals who hold religious beliefs often structure their lives around ethical values and interpret their secular endeavors and social interactions from an ethical perspective. They also align their practical conduct with principles of justice, surrendering the outcomes to divine will and viewing this as the ultimate aim. Nevertheless, a conflict exists between ethics and action concerning "desires", and this discord possesses a dynamic characteristic that directs individuals toward good through a strong belief. This suggests that Weber's notion of individuals being driven to amass wealth without desiring the pleasures associated with it may be somewhat utopian [3]. Instead, it is the dedication, rational objectives, and internal limitations that uncover a secular reality. Although attributing religious importance to everyday activities represents the ethical truth of faith, it is the alignment with goodness, or the alignment of actions and intentions with virtuous principles, that intensifies the conflicts involved. In this manner, secular issues receive their most ethical rationale.

The ethics associated with faith arises from an understanding of human nature, which subsequently influences secular behaviors characterized by intentional rationality. Additionally, it involves an ethical interpretation that positions God as the ultimate aim and human beliefs and actions as the means to achieve that aim. Through extensive research, it has become evident that when Zhejiang businessmen's inherent tendencies intersect with faith-based ethics, they adeptly discover a "balance" amidst the conflicting demands of both aspects. This phenomenon can be viewed as a distinctive representation of faith-based ethics within the Chinese socio-cultural landscape. The linkage between a believer's secular role and their "transcendental role" in worldly matters is marked by a dedicated and responsible approach to the obligations and duties associated with their social position. Simultaneously, they transcend the limitations of the purposive rationality typical of secular activities, directing their attention instead toward value-based rationality and a responsibility ethic in social interactions. In doing so, they achieve a rational "balance" between the sacred and the secular. Thus, while the interpretation of faith-based ethics diverges from the traditional cultural concept of "righteousness and profit", what is ultimately sought is a "balance" between the immediate and the transcendent, establishing a state of "moderation".

In this manner, the distinction between the secular and the sacred at the economic level becomes indistinct, with the central aspect being the deliberate decisions and moral evaluations made by individuals within the framework of secular law. Throughout this time frame, the separation between sacred and secular gradually diminishes, and the essence of modernity transitions from the rationalization associated with secularization to the conflicting notion of the autonomous subject that emerges in a post-secular context [6]. It is evident that the rationalization of social structures and behaviors is intrinsically linked to the development of the autonomous subject. These can be identified as two characteristics of modernity, or one could view the latter as a component of the former. When examining the specific context of "secularization" in China, it becomes apparent that the alleged "disconnection" of modernity from tradition remains unverified; instead, modernity, grounded in the cultural meanings of tradition and the realization of "post-secularization" within the Chinese setting are still firmly established.

3.3. Political Ethics and Faith Interpretation

In the conducted study, the fundamental perception of the religious community regarding political governance appears to be straightforward. They express full support for the routine management of secular matters and affirm God's ordained authority. Conversely, their attitudes shift concerning the faith-based affairs and domains of the church. A particularly illustrative incident involves the debate over the display of the national flag on church property. Based on the fieldwork findings, some churches ultimately reached a compromise after extensive discussions, while others remained resolute and experienced conflicts. Meanwhile, a subset of churches exhibited mild opposition, advocating for an internal decision-making process, with the research participants belonging to this last category.

The variety of reactions to civil authority indicates that the specific expressions of "post-secularization" within the political domain resemble those found in the economic context. This refers to the challenge of managing the apparently conflicting interactions between religion and society when secular influences intersect with faith. The core of the inquiry centers on determining where the distinction lies between civil authority and religious authority. Two significant components are involved: the limits of authority and the domain of secular matters. This topic is particularly distinctive within the Chinese social context and may be regarded as a different practical interpretation of the secularization theory [8].

Returning to the biblical scripture, the nature of the matter has been articulated by Jesus through the lessons of his ministry, with explicit declarations regarding the responsibilities of citizenship and the extent of earthly authority, among other aspects. The initial category pertains to the nature and extent of civil authority. In the original biblical texts, the term *exousia*[4] is predominantly utilized, which signifies possessing the ability or authority to perform actions, particularly in relation to moral authority and influence. Under the impact of late Judaism, *exousia* may also denote spiritual authority, and subsequently, it may also imply civil authority. The first aspect involves the believer's perspective on secular authority, which is substantiated by distinct biblical passages advocating submission and respect.[5] Paul's conviction that all authority is established by God, and that all who govern (*exousia*) are appointed by Him, shapes the characteristics of secular authority within the framework of faith ethics, specifically the rational characteristics of secular authority [9]. The second aspect reveals that civil authority exists within a comparative hierarchy, which can be analyzed by revisiting the context of the original text. The expression "unto the higher powers" alludes to authority and command over the masses and consists of two components in the dative feminine plural form, namely, the noun *exousiais* and the verb *huperechousais* in the present participle form, with the latter signifying "higher than, surpassing", particularly concerning superiority in status and arrangement, as well as in rank, authority, and power.[6] The relative high status in the ethical hierarchy does not equate to the Supreme or represent the pinnacle of the hierarchy; rather, it serves as one of the representatives of authority within the comparative hierarchy in the ethics of faith, encapsulating the attributes that fall under the category of civil authority [9].

Thirdly, it addresses the just characteristics of civil authority, which is typically represented by the concept of "Bear the Sword." Considering the previous two points, the responsibility of authority is to punish wrongdoing and encourage virtuous behavior, with the "sword" also aimed at evil, instilling a fear of committing wrongdoing rather than a fear of acting rightly. Consequently, civil authority does not wield a sword ineffectively, nor does it misuse its power; instead, it strives to correct injustices and penalize those who engage in wrongdoing or break the law. Thus, civil authority is inherently just in its nature and qualities, which is a fundamental requirement for the directive to "submit to." However, if the "sword" is not wielded in justice, if injustices arise that contradict the essence of authority, or if the rights and properties of individuals or groups are not safeguarded, the ethical teachings of faith still do not endorse violent defiance against civil

authority. From the aforementioned points, it is evident that the ethical perspective of faith fundamentally appreciates earthly authority and acknowledges the just nature within the scope of reason.

The biblical teachings clearly outline the responsibilities and obligations of citizens. In terms of the concept of human responsibility, the term *suneidésis* found in the original text translates to "consciousness" or "conscience." This term, when describing conscience, typically signifies the integration of moral and spiritual awareness. Each individual is a free moral agent, possessing the capability to discern right from wrong, particularly in the conscious identification of moral good versus evil. Faith-based ethics advocate for the avoidance of evil and commend the pursuit of goodness [8]. Consequently, in alignment with the concept of "conscience", fulfilling obligations such as providing for food and paying taxes is considered part of a believer's responsibilities as a citizen.

In the Epistle to the Romans, Paul provides a thorough explanation regarding the responsibilities of individuals towards their leaders and governmental bodies. He emphasizes the importance of respecting and following the laws, decrees, and judicial decisions, as well as fulfilling tax obligations. This should not be done begrudgingly, but rather as an obligation and with a sense of willingness, as it is pleasing to God [9]. [7] For within the framework of faith-based ethics, effective governance necessitates appropriate and sufficient support, and the provision of taxes and subsidies constitutes a rational and essential expenditure for managing state affairs.

The second category illustrates that, based on the preceding analysis; the distinction between "Caesar's things" and "God's things" differs from economic ethics, where an individual's "conation" significantly influences the practice of faith. In contrast, political ethics exhibits a more distinct separation, which can be interpreted as the secular foundation for the "self-splitting" within the ethics of faith. The characterization of these two categories, to some degree, outlines the limits and parameters of secularization. "Theconcentration of religious activities and symbols in *one*institutional sphere, however, *ipso facto* defines the rest ofsociety as 'the world,' as a profane realm at least relativelyremoved from the jurisdiction of the sacred." [1]. Viewed from another perspective, these established boundaries also reflect the degree of "de-secularization" occurring within the religious community as a subsystem of the broader societal framework, which signifies the re-establishment of the post-secular realm [10].

To sum up, the concept of "post-secularization" within political ethics reflects the degree to which the sacred and the secular have intertwined within the context of modernization. Throughout this development, religious ethics reevaluates the essence of faith and adjusts to the challenges presented by modernity, simultaneously intensifying the friction within the secular realm, all aimed at achieving religious significance and societal organization in the interplay between religion and society. The essence of modernity is defined by contrasting elements of freedom and regulation, totalitarianism and pluralism, which are continuously reshaped by local influences amidst their global proliferation. Therefore, modern civilization embodies a synthesis of these opposing forces that coexist under a shared framework.

4. Conclusion

This study examines the distinct characteristics and expressions of the relationship between religion and society during the era of "post-secularization" within the Chinese social environment, focusing on economic and political aspects. The objective is to assess how religion, recognized as a significant social institution, navigates its interactions with other social institutions within the framework of secular governance amid rapid modernization. Furthermore, it investigates how these transformations and pressures have contributed to the diverse and rich nature of religious beliefs. In China, Christianity is in a constant state of development and renewal as it merges with traditional Chinese culture and adjusts to the domestic social landscape. Throughout this process, the belief system

itself experiences a form of "self-denial" and reconstruction in Calvin's treatises. This journey is undoubtedly lengthy and complex, illustrating the pivotal role that religion plays in the broader spectrum of social development. It reveals the "invisible" influence of religion in shaping modernity across historical, cultural, and political dimensions. This suggests that the cultural heritage inherent in religion can shape the manner and trajectory of secularization, while also implying the potential and constraints of modernity in the context of social evolution.

Note

1) Reference can be made to *The New Testament* , Titus 2:12 and 1 John 2:16.
2) Christian "ZheShang" specifically refers to Zhejiang businessmen with Christian faith. "ZheShang" as a group is characterized as pioneers of private enterprise, courageous entrepreneurs, and the first to be rich in reform and opening up, and is known for its hard-working character and bold entrepreneurial spirit.
3) Refer to*The New Testament*, Galatians 5:19.
4) "*exousia*" (number:1849) is equivalent to the Hebrew words 'שָׁלְטָן' (*sholtan*) and "מֶמְשָׁלָה" (*memshalah*), meaning abstract or concrete dominion and sovereignty (dominion), belonging to the authority of administration. The more representative context of use in the Old Testament story is in the book of Daniel, referring to the kingdom and authority of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, which is related in the fourth chapter of Daniel.
5) There are clearly three passages in the Bible that speak of attitudes toward kings and rulers: Romans 13:1, I Peter 2:13, and I Peter 2:17.
6) The Dative is a grammatical form of words that is usually used to indicate that an action has an effect on someone or something, but that effect is realized in some mediated or indirect way.
7) In the original text, two nouns are used to express the meaning of "tax", namely, "φόρος" (*phoros*) and "τέλος" (*telos*). The former translates as "tribute", which refers to personal, especially annual, personal income tax on one's house, land, etc.; the latter translates as "custom", which refers to taxes and charges on commodities, goods and travel.

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