

Chinese Religions Beliefs Practices

Religion in China survived the most radical suppression in human history--a total ban of any religion during and after the Cultural Revolution. All churches, temples, and mosques were closed down, converted for secular uses, or turned to museums for the purpose of atheist education. Over the last three decades, however, religion has survived and thrived even as China remains under Communist rule. Christianity ranks among the fastest-growing religions in the country, and many Buddhist and Daoist temples have been restored. The state even sponsors large Buddhist gatherings and ceremonies to venerate Confucius and the legendary ancestors of the Chinese people. On the other hand, quasi-religious qigong practices, once ubiquitous, are now rare. All the while, authorities have carried out waves of atheist propaganda, anti-superstition campaigns, severe crackdowns on the underground Christian churches and various "evil cults." How do we explain religion in China today? How did religion survive the eradication measures in the 1960s and 1970s? How do various religious groups manage to revive despite strict regulations? Why have some religions grown fast in the reform era? Why have some forms of spirituality gone through dramatic turns? In *Religion in China*, Fenggang Yang provides a comprehensive overview of the religious change in China under Communism.

Chinese Religious Art is a broad survey of the origins and development of the various forms of artistic expression of Chinese religions. This survey of icons, temples, and rituals reveals the varied ways the Chinese expressed the presence of the divine and worshipped it. Some of the most beautiful art, inspired mountain temples, lofty landscapes, lush gardens, murals and paintings both narrative and iconic, characterizes each of the traditions. Most of the visual material comprises unpublished views of these sacred sites.

"Sinicization" has become the slogan that guides Chinese official policy towards religion. What does it mean? Where will it lead? This book is one of the first in English that answers these questions.

This volume explores Chinese religions on a global stage so as to challenge the traditional dichotomy of the western global and the Chinese local, and to add a new perspective for understanding religious modernity globally. Contributors from four different continents aim at applying a social scientific approach to systematically researching the globalization of Chinese religions.

The papers in this volume go back to a conference held September 14-15, 2002, at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, B.C., in honour of Prof. Daniel L. Overmyer on his retirement. The contributions pay tribute to this renowned scholar of Chinese religious traditions, whose work is a constant reminder to look beyond text to context, beyond idea to practice, to study religion as it was and is lived by real people rather than as an abstract system of ideas and doctrines. Contents PHILIP CLART: Introduction RANDALL L. NADEAU: A Critical Review of Daniel L. Overmyer's Contribution to the Study of Chinese Religions. I. Popular Sects and Religious Movements HUBERT SEIWERT: The Transformation of Popular Religious Movements of the Ming and Qing Dynasties: A Rational Choice Interpretation SHIN-YI CHAO: The Precious Volume of Bodhisattva Zhenwu Attaining the Way. A Case Study of the Worship of Zhenwu (Perfected Warrior) in Ming-Qing Sectarian Groups CHRISTIAN JOCHIM: Popular Lay Sects and Confucianism: A Study Based on the Way of Unity in Postwar Taiwan SOO KHIN WAH: The Recent Development of the Yiguan Dao Fayi Chongde Sub-Branch in Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand PHILIP CLART: Merit beyond Measure. Notes on the Moral (and Real) Economy of Religious Publishing in Taiwan JEAN DEBERNARDI: "Ascend to Heaven and Stand on a Cloud." Daoist Teaching and Practice at Penang's Taishang Laojun Temple. II. Historical and Ethnographic Studies of Chinese Popular Religion JOHN LAGERWEY: The History and Sociology of Religion in Changting County, Fujian KENNETH DEAN: The Growth of Local Control over Cultural and Environmental Resources in Ming and Qing Coastal Fujian PAUL R. KATZ: Religion, Recruiting and Resistance in Colonial Taiwan: A Case Study of the Xilai An Incident, 1915 WANG CHIEN-CH'UAN. Transl. PHILIP CLART: The White Dragon Hermitage and the Spread of the Eight Generals Procession Troupe in Taiwan TUEN WAI MARY YEUNG: Rituals and Beliefs of Female Performers in Cantonese Opera JORDAN PAPER: The Role of Possession Trance in Chinese Culture and Religion: A Comparative Overview from the Neolithic to the Present. III. The Religious Life of Clerics, Literati, and Emperors JUDITH BOLTZ: On the Legacy of Zigu and a Manual on Spirit-writing in Her Name STEPHEN ESKILDSEN: Death, Immortality, and Spirit Liberation in Northern Song Daoism. The Hagiographical Accounts of Zhao Daoyi ROBERTO K. ONG: Chen Shiyuan and Chinese Dream Theory BAREND J. TER HAAR: Yongzheng and His Buddhist Abbots. Glossary – Index

A new introduction To The field of Chinese religion and culture ideally suited to undergraduate students.

Together, and for the first time in any language, the 24 essays gathered in these volumes provide a composite picture of the history of religion in ancient China from the emergence of writing ca. 1250 BC to the collapse of the first major imperial dynasty in 220 AD. It is a multi-faceted tale of changing gods and rituals that includes the emergence of a form of "secular humanism" that doubts the existence of the gods and the efficacy of ritual and of an imperial orthodoxy that founds its legitimacy on a distinction between licit and illicit sacrifices. Written by specialists in a variety of disciplines, the essays cover such subjects as divination and cosmology, exorcism and medicine, ethics and self-cultivation, mythology, taboos, sacrifice, shamanism, burial practices, iconography, and political philosophy. Produced under the aegis of the Centre de recherche sur les civilisations chinoise, japonaise et tibétaine (UMR 8155) and the École Pratique des Hautes Études (Paris).

The Tang (618-907) and Sung (960-1279) dynasties were times of great change in China. The economy grew spectacularly, the population doubled, migration brought more and more people to the fertile south, and printing led to a great increase in the availability of books. Buddhism became a fully sinicized religion that penetrated deeply into ordinary life. New cults and sects appeared and flourished. Chan became the dominant force within institutional Buddhism, Celestial Heart and Thunder Rites teachings gained prominence within Taoism, local gods such as Wen-chang came to be worshiped all over the country, and office-holding gods, such as the gods of city walls, became a common feature of the popular pantheon. Even Neo-Confucianism, often thought of simply as an intellectual movement, was in many ways like a new sect, its followers asked to alter fundamentally their patterns of daily life and even to worship at shrines to Confucian heroes. How were changes in the religions of the Chinese people implicated in the momentous social and cultural changes of this period? This volume represents a collaborative effort of nine scholars of Chinese religion, history, and thought to begin addressing this question. Their separate chapters vividly convey the diversity of the Tang and Sung religious world: gods that communicate through spirit writing; scholars who use veneration of maligned officials as subtle forms of political protest; local residents who try to enhance their power by asserting the power of their gods or getting titles for them; officials who seek the most up-to-date techniques to master occult forces. Still the larger goal of the authors is to contribute toward a more integrated understanding of Chinese culture and the ways it has changed. Basing

themselves on close study of often difficult texts, each author has looked for evidence of interconnections: links between social and religious changes, between political or economic developments and religious ideas or practices, between folk religion and institutional religion, between Confucian philosophy and changes in the social and religious landscape, and between the ways religious and secular groups were organized. Taken together, these nine chapters present a new, fuller, and more nuanced view of the Chinese religions in this period of change.

This book explores how, unlike in the West, the daily religious life of most Chinese people spreads without institutional propagation. Based upon more than a decade of field research in rural China, the book demonstrates the decisive role of rites of passage and yearly festival rituals held in every household in shaping people's religious dispositions. It focuses on the family, the unit most central to Chinese culture and society, and reveals the repertoire embodied in daily life in a world envisioned as comprising both the "yin" world of ancestors, spirits, and ghosts, and the "yang" world of the living. It discusses especially the concept of bai, which refers to both concrete bodily movements that express respect and awe, such as bowing, kneeling, or holding up ritual offerings, and to people's religious inclinations and dispositions, which indicate that they are aware of a spiritual realm that is separate from yet close to the world of the living. Overall, the book shows that the daily practices of religion are not a separate sphere, but rather belief and ritual integrated into a way of dwelling in a world envisaged as consisting of both the "yin" and the "yang" worlds that regularly communicate with each other.

Introduces ancestor cults, nature worship, shamanism, Taoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism and examines modern religious practice in China

This series provides succinct and balanced overviews of the religions of the world. Written in an accessible and informative style, and assuming little or no prior knowledge on the part of the reader, each book gives a basic introduction to the faith--its history, beliefs, and practices--and emphasizes modern developments and the role and impact of the religion in today's world. Chinese Religious Traditions provides a concise introduction to the history of religion in China and its ramifications in China today. Focusing on the four major religious traditions of Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism, and popular religion, this book covers the religious and ethical ideas as well as the practices within each tradition. The book traces themes that are common to Chinese society from earliest times to the present day. It also highlights the ways in which each tradition has responded to and influenced political and cultural change.

An exploration of Chinese during a time of monumental change, the period after the fall of the Han dynasty.

Throughout history, China has been the home and destination of many religious and philosophical traditions.

Confucianism and Taoism, in addition to Buddhism, are the so-called "three doctrines" or teachings, which have played an important role in shaping Chinese culture. The elements of these three belief systems are incorporated into the traditional Chinese religion, that is, worship devoted to local gods and ancestors; this has always been - and continues to be - the religion of the majority of the population, family-oriented and not requiring exclusive adherence, which allows the practice or expression of personal beliefs of different faiths at the same time. Some scholars prefer not to use the term "religion" in reference to Chinese belief systems, suggesting instead that it be "cultural practices", "systems of thought" and philosophies as their most appropriate definition. While Confucianism in its religious aspect corresponds to the traditional religion of worship of local gods and ancestors, Taoism has developed as an ecclesiastical movement distinct from the common religion since the 1st or 2nd century. Buddhism was introduced in the 1st century and grew to have a strong impact in China, which it still preserves today. Today's Chinese state officially recognizes five religions, managed through centralized institutions: Buddhism, Taoism, Protestantism, Catholicism, and Islam. Traditional religion in all its forms, even if not centralized at the bureaucratic level, enjoys freedom. According to statistics 70% of Chinese people practiced traditional religion, including 13% who practiced traditional cults in a Taoist doctrinal or ritual framework or popular religions influenced by Taoism, while those who identified themselves only as initiated "Taoists" were 0,8% (the term "Taoist" in China is traditionally reserved only for Taoist priests or those who undertake direct discipleship under their leadership, and is not traditionally extended to the multitude of lay followers). The adherents to Buddhism were 14%, and of these the formally initiated Buddhists formed 1.3%. Christians were 2.4%, of whom 2.2% were Protestants and 0.2% were Catholics. Muslims were 1.7%. The remaining 13% of the population was not religious (they were atheist, agnostic or had not declared any preference). Confucianism as a religious designation is popular among intellectuals, although there are various popular movements of Confucian origin.

Comprising the most up-to-date, interdisciplinary research on the study of Chinese religious beliefs and cultural practices, this volume explores the rich and complex religious and philosophical traditions that have developed and flourished in one of the world's oldest civilizations. Covers the main Chinese traditions of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism as well as Christianity and Islam Features a unique organizational structure, with groups of readings focused on historical, traditions-based, and topical elements of Chinese religion Explores a number of contemporary religious topics, including gender, nature, asceticism, material culture, and gods and spirits Brings together a team of authors who are experts in their sub-fields, providing readers with the latest research in a rapidly growing discipline

From the Pulitzer Prize winning journalist: a revelatory portrait of religion in China today its history, the spiritual traditions of its Eastern and Western faiths, and the ways in which it is influencing China's future. Following a century of violent antireligious campaigns, China is now awash with new temples, churches, and mosques as well as cults, sects, and politicians trying to harness religion for their own ends. Driving this explosion of faith is uncertainty over what it means to be Chinese, and how to live an ethical life in a country that discarded traditional morality a century ago and is still searching for new guideposts. Ian Johnson lived for extended periods with underground church members, rural Daoists, and Buddhist pilgrims. He has distilled these experiences into a cycle of festivals, births, deaths, detentions, and struggle - a great awakening of faith that is shaping the soul of the world's newest superpower. (With black-and-white illustrations

throughout).

Crazy Ji: Chinese Religion and Popular Literature is the first study in any language of one of the most colorful deities in the pantheon of late imperial and modern China: Sire Ji - or, as he is better known, Crazy Ji. The author uses the evolution of the cult of this eccentric deity to address central questions regarding the nature of the Chinese religious tradition, its relation to the Chinese social structure, and the role of vernacular fiction and popular media in shaping religious beliefs in China. His analysis of the cult of Crazy Ji shows that far from being, as is often argued, a mirror of the Chinese bureaucratic order, Chinese religion offers a means of liberation from it. Finally, this study of the cult of Crazy Ji illustrates how lay believers influenced the practices of organized religion (in this case, monastic Buddhism)

The inaugural volume of *Princeton Readings in Religions* brings together the work of thirty scholars of the religions of India in a new anthology designed to reshape the ways in which the religious traditions of India are understood. The book contains translations of forty-five works, most of which have never before been available in a Western language. Many of these highlight types of discourse (especially ritual manuals, folktales, and oral narratives) and voices (vernacular, esoteric, domestic, and female) that have not been sufficiently represented in previous anthologies and standard accounts of Indian religions. The selections are drawn from ancient texts, medieval manuscripts, modern pamphlets, and contemporary fieldwork in rural and urban India. They represent every region in South Asia and include Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Sikh, and Muslim materials. Some are written texts reflecting elite concerns, while others are transcriptions of oral narratives told by nonliterate peasants. Some texts are addressed to a public and pan-Indian audience, others to a limited coterie of initiates in an esoteric sect, and still others are intended for a few women gathered in the courtyard for a household ceremony. The editor has reinforced this diversity by arranging the selections within several overarching themes and categories of discourse (hymns, rituals, narratives, and religious interactions), and encourages us to make our own connections.

This third volume of *Princeton Readings in Religions* demonstrates that the "three religions" of China--Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism (with a fourth, folk religion, sometimes added)--are not mutually exclusive: they overlap and interact with each other in a rich variety of ways. The volume also illustrates some of the many interactions between Han culture and the cultures designated by the current government as "minorities." Selections from minority cultures here, for instance, are the folktale of Ny Dan the Manchu Shamaness and a funeral chant of the Yi nationality collected by local researchers in the early 1980s. Each of the forty unusual selections, from ancient oracle bones to stirring accounts of mystic visions, is preceded by a substantial introduction. As with the other volumes, most of the selections here have never been translated before. Stephen Teiser provides a general introduction in which the major themes and categories of the religions of China are analyzed. The book represents an attempt to move from one conception of the "Chinese spirit" to a picture of many spirits, including a Laozi who acquires magical powers and eventually ascends to heaven in broad daylight; the white-robed Guanyin, one of the most beloved Buddhist deities in China; and the burning-mouth hungry ghost. The book concludes with a section on "earthly conduct."

This is a comprehensive work on the religions of China. As such, it includes an introduction giving an overview of the subject, and the special themes treated in the book, as well as detailed chapters on ancient religions, Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, Chinese Islam, Christianity in China as well as popular religion. Throughout the book, care is taken to present both the philosophical teachings as well as the religious practices of the religious traditions, and reflections are offered regarding their present situation and future prospects. Comparisons are offered with other religions, especially Christianity.

The *Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion* offers a comprehensive exploration of the dynamics of religious conversion, which for centuries has profoundly shaped societies, cultures, and individuals throughout the world. Scholars from a wide array of religions and disciplines interpret both the varieties of conversion experiences and the processes that inform this personal and communal phenomenon. This volume examines the experiences of individuals and communities who change religions, those who experience an intensification of their religion of origin, and those who encounter new religions through colonial intrusion, missionary work, and charismatic and revitalization movements. The thirty-two innovative essays provide overviews of the history of particular religions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Sikhism, Islam, Christianity, Judaism, indigenous religions, and new religious movements. The essays also offer a wide range of disciplinary perspectives-psychological, sociological, anthropological, legal, political, feminist, and geographical-on methods and theories deployed in understanding conversion, and insight into various forms of deconversion.

Informative and eye-opening, the *Handbook on Religion in China* provides a uniquely broad insight into the contemporary Chinese variations of Buddhism, Islam and Christianity. In turn, China's own religions and transmissions of rites and systems of divination have spread beyond China, a progression that is explored in detail across 19 chapters, written by leading experts in the field.

This authoritative volume examines the two main faiths, Confucianism and Daoism, that developed before China had meaningful contact with the rest of the world. Aspects of Buddhism later joined features of these faiths to form elements of Chinese ideology and, with the beliefs in immortals and the worship of ancestors, they led to a popular religion. The narrative describes the gods and goddesses that dominated China's mythology and folk culture, roughly from the 3rd millennium to 221 BCE, including the Baxian (Eight Immortals), Chang'e (moon goddess), Guandi (god of war), the Men Shen (door spirits), and Pan Gu (first man).

Offering an introduction to religion in contemporary China, the essays in this volume consider many diverse themes including religion in urban, rural and ethnic minority settings and the historical, sociological, economic and political aspects of religion on the country as a whole.

This study is the first comprehensive analysis of its kind. It examines the Communist Party's evolving religious controls and citizens' responses to them, focusing on seven religious groups that account for 350 million believers: Chinese Buddhism, Taoism, Catholicism, Protestantism, Islam, Tibetan Buddhism, and Falun Gong.

The guiding themes of Chinese religion as it is actually lived! This short work explains basic ideas and practices of Chinese religions in direct and simple language, with many examples and analogies for increased understanding. Its basic assumption is that religion is best understood as an aspect of everyday life as something that makes sense to those who practice it even if outsiders might be puzzled at first. While Overmyer's treatment focuses on traditional China before the twentieth century, many of the beliefs and practices described are still alive, at least in some Chinese communities. While the basic concern of this book is, first, to understand Chinese religions in their own right, it takes the additional step of exploring what modern students might learn from them.

This book consists of fifteen chapters which can be divided into five major themes: (i) Chinese religion, (ii) Chinese attitudes toward religion, (iii) Chinese spirit cults in Malaysia, (iv) the development of local spirit cults, and (v) major festivals celebrated in Malaysia. The first section deals with three Chinese religious traditions in Malaysia, in particular, and other countries like Singapore, Indonesia, and Thailand in Southeast Asia, in general. The second section attempts to discuss on Chinese attitudes towards religion, Chinese religious conception and its implication in their social life, and how Confucian ethics have contributed to the economic success of the Chinese in Malaysia. The Third section seeks to examine the various aspects of the Nine Emperor Gods, the Datuk Kong (Malay keramat), and the spread of Malay and Chinese spirit cults to Sabah, East Malaysia. The fourth section deliberates on three major processes of change in the development of spirit cults in Malaysia: the localization of Chinese locality cults, including Tudigong and Dabogong, the Sinicization of the Malay keramat, and the indigenization or desinicization of an aboriginal Datuk Seman in Broga, Selangor. And the last section winds up with the practical aspects of celebrating festivals in Malaysia and other parts of Southeast Asia, with special emphasis on festivals in general in the Chinese calendar, the festival of the Nine Emperor Gods in Southeast Asia, and the socio-psychological aspects of the Nine Emperor Gods Vegetarian Festival in Thailand.

V. Arrests and Trials

This book considers the ways in which religious beliefs and practices have contributed to the formation of Chinese legal culture. It does so by describing two forms of overlap between religion and the law: the ideology of justice and the performance of judicial rituals. One of the most important conceptual underpinnings of the Chinese ideology of justice is the belief in the inevitability of retribution. Similar values permeate Chinese religious traditions, all of which contend that justice will prevail despite corruption and incompetence among judicial officials in this world and even the underworld, with all wrongdoers eventually suffering some form of punishment. The second form of overlap between religion and the law may be found in the realm of practice, and involves instances when men and women perform judicial rituals like oaths, chicken-beheadings, and underworld indictments in order to enhance the legitimacy of their positions, deal with cases of perceived injustice, and resolve disputes. These rites coexist with other forms of legal practice, including private mediation and the courts, comprising a wide-ranging spectrum of practices. Divine Justice will be of enormous interest to scholars of the Chinese legal system and the development of Chinese culture and society more generally.

This book provides a sampling of recent field studies of religions in China, along with theoretical reflections by sociologists, anthropologists and religious studies scholars, both inside and outside China, on the revival of the social scientific study of religion in Chinese societies.

This book brings together the studies of Jeaneane Fowler in Taoism, Chinese popular religion, and the broader canvas of Chinese cosmogony, along with those of Merv Fowler in Confucianism, Ch'an (Zen) Buddhism, and Pure Land Buddhism. Chinese Religions requires no previous knowledge and thereby serves as an introduction to the religions of China, placing them in the wider context of Chinese history and philosophy. The facets of Chinese religions are as broad, multilayered, and varied as the geographical vastness of China itself, yet so many Chinese beliefs have found their way into the West - the theory of yin and yang, the I Ching, the Tao Te Ching, etc. One of the greatest characteristics of Chinese religions is that they encompass virtually every avenue of religious thought throughout the long span of Chinese pre-historic and historical pathways.

A comprehensive introduction to the resurgence of religion in China and Taiwan since the end of the Cultural Revolution and a wide-ranging examination of the impact of religious traditions on Euro-Americans and Chinese immigrants in present-day North America. * A collection of essays written by a diverse lineup of distinguished experts including James Miller, Tam Wai Lun, Ven. Jing Yin, Kim Sung-Hae, Alison Marshall, Tak-ling Terry Woo, David Palmer, Jonathan H. X. Lee, and Elijah Siegler * Photographs illustrating important aspects of Chinese religious practices * A bibliography for each chapter to facilitate further research * An index for fast access to key events, individuals, organizations, deities, religious terms and practices, and time periods

This book examines the political consequences of growing religiosity in countries where politics are repressive and religious freedoms are in flux. The study compares how two authoritarian regimes - Russia and China - manage religion and how religious communities navigate restrictive political environments to pursue their own spiritual and economic interests.

Covers Confucianism, Taoism, and Chinese Buddhism focusing on the interaction between religion and aspects of Chinese culture such as the family, the community, the arts, etc.

Features a whirlwind tour of the religions of China.

Shanghai, a dynamic world metropolis, is home to a multitude of religions, from Buddhism and Islam, to Christianity and Bahá'ism, to Hinduism and Daoism, and many more. In this city of 24 million inhabitants, new religious groups and older faiths together claim and reclaim spiritual space. Shanghai Sacred explores the spaces, rituals, and daily practices that make up the religious landscape of the city, offering a new paradigm for the study of Chinese spirituality that reflects the global trends shaping Chinese culture and civil society. Based on years of fieldwork, incorporating both comparative and methodological perspectives, Shanghai Sacred demonstrates how religions are lived, constructed, and thus inscribed into the social imaginary of the metropolis.

Evocative photographs by Liz Hingley enrich and interact with the narrative, making the book an innovative contribution to religious visual ethnography.

This collection of essays by major scholars analyze the religious diversity in Chinese religion, bringing together topics from traditional and contemporary contexts and Chinese religions' encounters with Western religion.

This informative book describes Chinese Religion in Malaysia and contributes to an understanding of Chinese migration and settlement, religion and identity politics as well the significance of religion to both individuals and communities.

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