

# *Divination, Yijing, and Cultural Nationalism: The Self-Legitimation of Divination as an Aspect of “Traditional Culture” in Post-Mao China*

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## *Abstract*

By aligning themselves with the *Book of Changes* (易經 *Yijing*) and National Learning (國學 *Guoxue*), diviners in contemporary China regard themselves as protectors of “traditional culture” and promoters of “China’s national wisdom.” The alignment with the national tradition not only enhances divination’s social status, but also generates more profit for diviners and constructs a limited affinity with official ideology. Diviners can shift their public image from being typical representatives of backward feudal superstition to being in the vanguard of a traditional culture that is essential to China’s national identity. All of this is occurring against the background of China’s national project of global reordering and promoting cultural nationalism. The reactivation of elements of the cultural patrimony is regarded as useful to legitimize state power and to fortify national cohesion. While popular religious practices often maintain an alternative view to that of the state, they also develop connections with hegemonic discourses, dynamically and strategically.

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