

## Practicing Religion in Asia: Diversity and Comparison

### Religion as Social Classification System: A Study of Catholicism in A Tibetan Village in Yunnan

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This article attempts a new perspective upon Catholicism in a Chinese Tibetan village, Cizhong of Yunnan Province. The article reviews the discussion on social classification by Durham and Bourdieu, and argues that Catholicism, together with the other local religion—Tibetan Buddhism—functions as a social classification system inside the village. Catholicism, as well as Buddhism, involves a whole set of rules for the practice of daily life that are followed by villagers in Cizhong. Through this social classification system, the village achieves harmony under a reasonable order. The article, based on one month of fieldwork, argues two things: First, how Catholicism has become a “local” religion; and second, how the social classification system functions in village affairs. The former focuses on historical material and reveals that Catholicism has gradually transformed to a “native” religion, in some sense, during the past century after it was brought there by French missionaries. This transformation can be seen in the change of missionaries’ image in local legends and villagers’ narrative. The latter is based on current empirical material from fieldwork and demonstrates that villagers have created a new order out of the two sets of practices, one rooted in Catholicism and the other in Tibetan Buddhism, to manage social affairs and sustain balance or harmony in the village. Though the tension between the two religions still exists, a new order that shifts delicately between the two is practiced in most situations, such as weddings and funerals.

### The Lords of Our Village: A Competitive Dialogue between Three Village Temples in Wangjiangjing (王江泾)

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Most villages in the Tai Lake region have village temples (村廟, cunmiao), that were built by locals without government permission. The temples contain statues of deities that are famous across the Tai Lake region. The local lore of each village describes the particular powers and characteristics as well as kin-relations between the deities, and moreover, lore and religious activities emphasize the special connection between the deities and a given village. Hence, although the same deities are found in temples in different villages, each village regards them as “the deities of our village”. In a sense, then, the villages compete with each other for the authority and prestige that comes with association to the deities. In addition, incorporating deities from the government authorized temple in Wangjiangjing (built in 1986) into their own system, is used as a way to further increase their prestige while also gaining official legitimacy. As such, these village temples and their deities serve as an important medium through which the villages negotiate their village identity and relation to each other and the government. Through fieldwork and study of local documents, this research explores how the

identities and interrelationship of three villages in Wangjiangjing are negotiated in folklore about deities.

Meeting Soldiers in Sea Temple: The Current Status of Chinese Villages in Miniature

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The seagod worship of Qingdao has been for a long time, now, for the ideology of atheism aftermath government, as well as an uplift rational of modern technology and civilization, great changes have taken place its fate. This paper is mainly discussed from contemporary beliefs and status of the three aspects of coastal villages: First, the "five villages of Shazikou" and the sea temple. He introduced the "five villages of Shazikou " and the temple location, sea temple construction, especially since the army garrison lead to the sea temple have no alternative but to change. Second, the folk beliefs of "five villages of Shazikou" and Protestant. Mainly discussed is the Shazikou sea temple hosted beliefs of sea fishing village, as well as the characteristics of Protestantism in the ground. Third is the fishing village belief of "five villages of Shazikou"- belief Status Quo of China Rural in miniature. In the fishing village of Protestantism and faith-based research, is an analysis of the status of religion in rural China. The situation faith of Jianggezhuang precisely reflects the current situation of contemporary Chinese mainland village in miniature. Through this study, we attempt to add a richer case study from the study of Anthropology, based on the fieldwork in Jianggezhuang district of Qingdao Laoshan, trying to render the coastal village of contemporary belief on the form.

Locality and Ethnicity: Territorial Dimensions in Chinese Religion,  
A Study of Local Gods and its Processions (迎神赛会) in Hainan

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The paper plans to depict how ethnicity and locality plays a role in Chinese religion. This is a comparative study on procession in Hainan and Taiwan based on the analysis of historical materials. The first case illustrates how the villagers in Haikou transform themselves from Li ethnic groups to Han by oral and local gazettes evidence found in fieldworks about their traditions in worship the local gods (公期与公祖) during their immigration to Hainan. And the Taiwanese case is a study of how the historical traditions of local gods belief and its procession form the cohesion in the modern transformation of communities (社区营造). The article tries to take the Chinese religion as religions in different territories in China and to demonstrate there is a small local religious system adapted to the Han culture. In both cases, the paper attempts to clarify what kind of identity, historical and cultural resources does the local have? How do people in these regions create their religious meaning and its influence in ordinary life? The issue is about the essence of local and Han culture. These studies generally agree that Han culture has become economically, psychologically and in many other aspects as a whole in the process of historical development.

## The Birth Ritual and Material Exchanges Among the Bunun in Nantou, Taiwan

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This research is about the life ritual of the Bunun, who are one of the indigenous groups of people in Taiwan. Among life rituals of the Bunun, Masohaulus, literally meaning “wearing necklaces” or “many necklaces”, is an important one relating to the naming and identity confirmation of newborn children. Through examining historical records and fieldwork, this research would like to reflect the exact content of Masohaulus, as well as material culture and concepts surrounding it.

There are several materials worth mentioning. Needless to say, since Masohaulus literally means “wearing necklaces”, necklaces are a key material in the ritual. Millet, traditionally planted by Bunun and embedded with numerous cultural meanings, is another key material. Last but not least, meat of pigs is also an important and indispensable element. By analyzing how these materials are used and exchanged, we can understand that the cultural symbols behind them. And by combining forms and meanings of Masohaulus, the subjectivity of the Bunun can be realized.