



From the Director:

In 1978, China embarked on economic reforms and opening up to the world, which have brought broad and profound social changes. Also in 1978, the disciplines of Religious Studies and Sociology began to be reestablished at Chinese universities and academies of social sciences. Both disciplines have made significant advancement in the last thirty years, but up to now they have remained separate with little interaction or intersection. The study of religion is still classified under the broad category of philosophy or humanities, and Chinese sociologists tend to avoid touching the perceived ideologically sensitive issues of religion. Just as age thirty marks a new level of maturity of a person, so it marks that of the development of academic disciplines. On the thirtieth anniversary of the reestablishment of both disciplines, a new consensus has emerged among the leading scholars in both disciplines: religious studies need to expand beyond philosophy, history and literature by applying the social scientific methods and theories, and sociology needs to study religion as an important social institution in today's Chinese society. This is clearly reflected in the comments of some scholars at the Planning Meeting of the Summit for Chinese Spirituality and Society (A few brief excerpts of the comments are included in this issue of the newsletter. More detailed comments can be found at CRCS website <http://www.purdue.edu/crcs>). Therefore, the planned Summit is timely indeed.

We have introduced the keynote speakers of Rodney Stark and Tu Weiming in the previous issue of the newsletter (Vol. 1, No. 1). In this issue, we introduce the international scholars and the abstracts of their proposed presentations at the Summit. In the next issue we plan to introduce the Chinese scholars and their proposed presentations at the Summit. Stay tuned.

(Dr. Fenggang Yang)

Planning Meeting for the Beijing Summit on Chinese Spirituality and Chinese Society

On May 24, 2008 (Saturday), the Planning Meeting for the Beijing Summit on Chinese Spirituality and Society was held at the Overseas Exchange Center of Peking University. The meeting attendees include: Professor XIE Lizhong, Chairman of the Department of Sociology at Peking University, and Professors MA Rong, FANG Wen, and LU Yunfeng from the same department; Professors ZHANG Zhigang and SUN Shangyang from the Department of Religious Studies at Peking University; Professor SHEN Yuan, Associate Chairman of the Sociology Department at Tsinghua University; Professors FANG Litian, HE Guanghu and WEI Dedong from the Institute for the Study of Buddhism and Religious Theories at Renmin University; Dr. ZHUO Xinping, Director of the Institute for the Study of World Religions at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and GAO Shining, research fellow from the same institute; Dr. HE Rong, research fellow from the Institute of Sociology at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences; ZHAO Xueyi, President of *China Nationalities Newspaper*, and ZHANG Guangyan, director of *Religion Weekly of China Nationalities Newspaper*; HAN Xiaodong, journalist of *China Reading Weekly*; Professor YANG Fenggang, Director of the Center on Religion and Chinese Society at Purdue University. A few other scholars could not take part in the planning meeting personally due to other commitments, but offered excellent

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Planning Meeting for the Beijing Summit on Chinese Spirituality and Chinese Society

suggestions on preparatory matters for the Summit.

At the planning meeting, the attendees expressed affirmation of the importance of the Beijing Summit and provided many valuable suggestions. Here are a few brief excerpts from their comments (due to time constraint, the excerpts were not proofread by the speakers themselves). For full transcripts, please check our website of the Center on Religion and Chinese Society at Purdue University.

XIE Lizhong (Chairman of the Sociology Department, Peking University): Up until now, sociology of religion has not been a well-known area of study in China, but many people in academia, including myself, think that the sociological study of religion is very, very important, and very promising too. I also think it is a great thing to organize this International Summit on Chinese Spirituality and Society. Therefore, since the very beginning I have readily approved the endeavor and will continue to give as much support and help as I can.

ZHUO Xiping (Director of the Institute for the Study of World Religions at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences): I think the Summit is an especially important and timely event. Chinese Religious Studies started in 1978; this year marks its thirtieth anniversary. The Summit will likely become a landmark event that inherits the achievements of the past and gives enlightenment to the coming generations of scholars. It will review the accomplishments of the past thirty years and lay out prospects for future development. The social scientific approach to the studies of religion to be promoted through the Summit is relatively new to mainland China and can be attractive to the public. In the past, only some knowledgeable elites were interested in the research on religion from the humanities approach that we have engaged in; few other people shared the interest. As we all live in the society, the study of the social dimension of religion appeals to people from the political, religious and academic circles alike. I believe the sociology of Chinese religion has a bright future.

The Summit proffers a good opportunity for academic exchange among international and Chinese scholars. On the one hand, we hope that international scholars specialized in Chinese religions or social scientific studies of religion can pay more attention to China so as to know China better and help eliminate misunderstandings, especially at this moment when more misunderstandings are turning up as the Beijing Olympics is forthcoming. The Summit will take place shortly after the Olympic Games, and it will be good timing for us to reflect upon the experience in order to enhance mutual understanding in the future. I hope that through this Summit, the leading scholars overseas on the social scientific studies of religion will have more objective knowledge and fairer assessment of the development of religion in China. On the other hand, I also hope that Chinese scholars can change their perspectives so as to learn the approaches, methods, attitudes, positions and intentions of Western scholars in their research on religion. Knowing them better, I believe, is helpful for our own development. In sum, this is an interactive process. If we succeed, it will be a win-win situation.

FANG Litian (Director of the Institute for the Study of Buddhism and Religious Theories at Renmin University): I will simply bring up a few points. First, I think this theme is very good, very important, and very significant. To a certain extent, it is a kind of groundbreaking for the Chinese scholars. We can imagine the founders of religions whose ultimate goal was to solve social problems. The characteristic of religious solution to social problems is its transcendental approach. Also, the development of a religion itself is dependent upon the degree to which it satisfies the needs of a society. Whether the religion can meet the needs of different social groups in a society determines the destiny of this religion. Therefore, I think that the sociological study of religion is a very important aspect in the study of religion. . . .

MA Rong (Former Chair of the Department of Sociology at Peking University): My specialty is sociology and demography, which is not very closely related to the study of religion. However, through fieldwork research over these years, I have discovered that in fact a considerable number of ethnic minorities in China are intimately related to religion. For example, in the study of the minority of Zang (Tibetans), we will not be able to understand their social problems without a proper understanding of Tibetan Buddhism. The situation in Xinjiang is the same. Therefore, I really hope that people in the field of sociology in China will pay closer attention to the issue of religion, I really hope we can develop the sociology of religion at Peking University, and I really hope that the faculty and students at the Department of Sociology at Peking University will be able to study the religious phenomena, religious organizations, and how religion could be compatible with, rather than contradictory to, the Chinese society. We must take into consideration many specifics of the local traditional culture and customs in the study of the ethnic minority regions. We not only need to understand their

religious doctrines, but also need to conduct many empirical investigations to find out how religion is configured in the daily life of minority groups in different areas, what the practice of the government's religious policies is like, and the reactions of the common people to these policies. Without this kind of investigation and sound analysis, the consequences of our simplistic ideas and arbitrary conducts are worrying. In both the Han areas and in the ethnic minority regions, there have been new developments in religion in recent years. If sociologists failed to study these phenomena, I would consider it a breach of our duty. I think sociologists and scholars of Religious Studies should cooperate with each other. We sociologists should learn the meanings of religious doctrines and religious history from the scholars of humanities. If we study religious issues in relation to issues of social development, economical problems, ethnic conflicts and confrontations, together with our other empirical investigations we have conducted, we might be able to make contributions to the adjustment of governmental policies, ethnic conciliation and the healthy development of religions.

SHEN Yuan (Associate Chair of the Department of Sociology at Tsinghua University): Whether it is for the disciplinary construction of Sociology, or for the understanding of the social changes and social conditions of contemporary China, it has become necessary and pressing to develop the study of religion. First of all, this is driven by the social reality. Look at some of the ethnic minority regions. We always thought that with material investments and economic development, these areas ought to be better-off. Unfortunately, this has not been the case. Rather, we need to earnestly understand the culture and religion of these minorities. We have also encountered the same situation when doing research in the rural areas among the Han people. In rural Henan and Hebei provinces, we cannot understand a village without understanding the house churches there, as local, folk, or other religions have become an essential element in the social structure of the entire village. Unless you turn a blind eye to it, you cannot ignore the dimension of religion if you truly want to understand the development and the social structure of the village. There are many house churches in Beijing as well. To pretend that they do not exist is neither possible nor right. Therefore, we can no longer neglect the dimension of religion whether in dealing with the ethnic minorities or in understanding the development of the inland urban and rural areas. Religion exists.

Secondly, from the construction of sociology as a scientific discipline, most of the departments of sociology in China at this time are unable to offer courses on the sociology of religion. Without courses, students have no theoretical tools to grasp the social reality. This has been the major reason for the disjunction between sociology and the study and understanding of reality. I have talked with Fenggang last year that we must act quickly to train people in this area at the universities; otherwise the sociology discipline will have no intellectual energy and theoretical tool to face life in reality. Regarding the study of religion, research from the approach of humanity studies has already made considerable progress; but research from the perspectives of social sciences is deficient at present because of the underdevelopment of sociology and the insufficient attention given to religion from social sciences. The establishment of the sociology of religion is also an advancement of the study of religion by adding the dimension of social sciences. I think the Beijing Summit will be a great opportunity for the construction and development of the sociology of religion, and this is an extremely urgent task. We sociologists at Tsinghua University are ready and willing to join force with everyone else to develop this discipline.

HE Guanghu (Institute for the Study for Buddhism and Religious Theories at Renmin University of China): The Sociology of Religion is an interdisciplinary study of sociology and religious studies. Through the collaboration of the departments of Sociology and Religious Studies, Peking University has established the Center of the Study of Chinese Religion and Society. This sets a very good example for other universities. It should serve as a source of inspiration for the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and Renmin University of China. Both Renmin University and Chinese Academy of Social Sciences have the necessary conditions (both have Religious Studies and Sociology departments/institutes). I hope Renmin University of China and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences can also accomplish further development in this field as Peking University has done. We welcome and are very glad to have many sociologists to take part in the endeavor of researching on religion. We hope that through the collaboration of religious studies and sociology in the social scientific study of religion, we could bring to the fore the scientific nature of the study of religion. Sociology of religion is a rigorous science; our entire society, especially those in the leadership, should learn from it.

An Interview with Kimon Sargeant, Vice President of John Templeton Foundation



Kimon H. Sargeant, Ph.D.
Vice President
Human Sciences
John Templeton Foundation

Q: Could you please give us a few sentences to introduce the John Templeton Foundation and yourself?

A: Established in 1987, the John Templeton Foundation seeks to catalyze investigation into life's biggest questions, which range from the nature and structure of the universe to the nature of love, gratitude, forgiveness and creativity. We are committed to rigorous scientific research and guided by Sir John Templeton's maxim "How little we know, how eager to learn." I serve as the Vice President of Human Sciences, where I work with the programs team to evaluate grant proposals and to develop new initiatives based our core themes (http://www.templeton.org/funding_areas/core_themes).

Q: Does Templeton Foundation support projects related to the study of religions other than China? Could you give us some examples?

A: The Foundation is very interested in supporting objective research that connects religious thought and practice to pertinent scientific research methods; indeed, one of our funding areas is world religions (http://www.templeton.org/funding_areas/world_religions), and we support many such projects across the globe every year. We recently funded a project through the Mind and Life Institute that allowed neuroscientists to explore the intersection between Buddhist practice, particularly contemplation, and science. Another recent grant supported the constructive, interdisciplinary engagement of science and religion from an Islamic perspective through the Université Interdisciplinaire de Paris. In 2005, we funded a conference exploring Judaism and the phenomenon of life in the thought of philosopher Hans Jonas. The Foundation has also funded many survey research projects in the US, UK and other countries that examine the impact of religious beliefs and behaviors, most notably Professor Robert Putnam's research on the contributions of religion to social capital. Finally, I am developing an initiative on global Pentecostalism which we aim to launch later this year.

Q: What kinds of projects has the Templeton Foundation supported regarding the study of Chinese religion?

A: The study of Chinese society and religion has been of growing interest to the Foundation in the past few years. Starting in 2004, we funded a comparative study of religious experience in Britain and China through the University of Oxford. Through the Metanexus Institute and a Spiritual Capital program, we also provided funding to Dr. Fenggang Yang to explore the role that faith and trust play in China's emerging market economy. In 2006, we began to work with both Baylor University and Calvin College on programs which provide support to Chinese scholars conducting rigorous scientific research on religion in China. The Foundation is also organizing a major conference to mark the 400th anniversary of the invention of the telescope. Leading astronomers and other scientists from around the world will come to Beijing, with the opening of the conference to be held at the Great Hall of the People.

Q: Why is the Templeton Foundation supporting the Beijing Summit for Chinese Spirituality and Society in October?

A: The Beijing Summit was developed in cooperation between Dr. Fenggang Yang, Dr. Byron Johnson of Baylor University, and myself, and will bring together top scholars from several disciplines and from around the world. In developing the summit, we expect that it will significantly influence scholarship in—and about—China for years to come by forging contacts between scholars, providing them with new tools, and identify possible topics for future research in this area.

Q: What is the vision/agenda the foundation has after the Beijing Summit?

A: We expect that the Beijing Summit will significantly influence our future activity in China, and we are looking forward to seeing the results of the Summit. With an eye to the future, we have also provided funding to two different projects that seek to develop a model for gauging Chinese public opinion on topics related to religion to identify 'big questions' related to China that would be of interest to the Foundation. Finally, we expect that our Board of Advisors meeting in Beijing will help to identify promising new projects and to shape our future agenda in China.

Beijing Summit Organizers



Byron Johnson is Professor of Sociology and Co-Director of the Institute for Studies of Religion (ISR) as well as director of the Program on Prosocial Behavior, both at Baylor University. He is a Senior Fellow at the Witherspoon Institute (Princeton), and Senior Research Scholar at the Institute for Jewish and Community Research (San Francisco). Johnson has directed research centers at Vanderbilt University and the University of Pennsylvania and is currently conducting a series of studies for the Department of Justice on the role of religion in prosocial youth behavior. He is recognized as a leading authority on the scientific study of religion, the efficacy of faith-based organizations, domestic violence, and criminal justice. Recent publications have examined the impact of faith-based programs on recidivism reduction and prisoner reentry. Along with other ISR colleagues he is completing a series of empirical studies on religion in China. Professor Johnson is also collaborating with other scholars on several studies of religious intolerance and tolerance in America. Johnson's research has been used in consultation with the Department of Justice, Department of Defense, Department of Labor, and the National Institutes of Health.



Fenggang Yang is Associate Professor of Sociology and Director of the Center on Religion and Chinese Society (CRCS) at Purdue University. His sociological research has focused on religious change in China and immigrant religions in the United States. He is the author of *Chinese Christians in America: Conversion, Assimilation, and Adhesive Identities* (Penn State University Press, 1999), the co-editor (with Tony Carnes) of *Asian American Religions: The Making and Remaking of Borders and Boundaries* (New York University Press, 2004), and the co-editor (with Joseph B. Tamney) of *State, Market, and Religions in Chinese Societies* (Brill Academic Publishers, 2005) and *Conversion to Christianity among the Chinese* (a special issue of the *Sociology of Religion: A Quarterly Review*, 2006). Among his numerous journal articles, one won the "2002 Distinguished Article Award" of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion and one won the "2006 Distinguished Article Award" of the American Sociological Association's Section of the Sociology of Religion. His current research focuses on the political economy of religion in China, Christian ethics and market transition in China, faith and trust among business people in China, and Chinese Christian churches in the United States.

CRCS China Seminar Series:

Time	Speakers	Topics
June 25, 2008	Liping LIANG Shanxi University	Christianity and the Construction of a Democratic Society of China
June 18, 2008	Xiaoqun WU Henan University	On the Dependency of Civil Organizations in Contemporary China: a Study of Pilgrimage Associations in Beijing
May 6, 2008	Alice WANG Purdue University	Some Reflections on Confucianism by a Chinese Christian Who Raised in the Confucian Tradition
April 20, 2008	Xiaodong LI Beijing Normal University	What Kind of Cultural Self-Consciousness Do We Need? Some Philosophical Reflections
April 10, 2008	Alice WANG Purdue University	The 2008 Presidential Election of ROC in Taiwan: Some Observations and Thoughts from Overseas Aboard
April 3, 2008	Qingxiang GUO Remin University of China	The "Good Human Nature" and the "Heavenly Dao": Mengzi's Arguments for the Good Human Nature of Persons and the Reconstruction of Chinese Morality and Faith

Beijing Summit Presenter Eileen Barker



Eileen Barker is Professor Emeritus of Sociology with Special Reference to the Study of Religion at the London School of Economics, and past president of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion. She is the founder of INFORM, a non-profit organization that provides information about the new religions that is as accurate, objective and up-to-date as possible. Her main research interest is ‘cults’, ‘sects’ and new religious movements, and the social reactions to which they give rise; but since 1989 she has also been investigating changes in the religious situation in post-communist countries. She has over 250 publications (translated into 27 different languages), which include the award-winning *The Making of a Moonie: Brainwashing or Choice?* and *New Religious Movements: A Practical Introduction*. In 2000 she was the recipient of the American Academy of Religion’s Martin E. Marty Award for the Public Understanding of Religion.

Presentation Title:

Preparing the Way: Describing and Understanding Religion and Spirituality in Contemporary China

ABSTRACT Concepts are very different not only between China and the West, but also within each region. Clarification is needed first about the phenomena in which we are interested and secondly about which words will be most reliable in communicating not only among scholars from both traditions but also with those whom we wish to study. Is, for example, ancestor worship to be considered a religion or just part of a cultural belief system? Is *tai chi* to be considered a spiritual practice or merely a physical exercise? Are there different levels of recognisable institutionalization – or should we be interested in the ‘cultic milieu’ – the resources that are ‘out there’ and into which people may ‘plug’ for religious/spiritual moments – such resources may include popular music, art, literature, dress and other media that are not obviously religious and/or spiritual but which can provide components of new world-views that take on a religious or spiritual function.

Only after having clarified *what* phenomena we want to study, and what questions we want to ask, can we move to decisions of *how* we wish to conduct our study. The various techniques for charting the beliefs and practices are relatively well known (observation, questionnaire, interview, literature searches, and content analysis). More complicated is the testing of hypotheses through the comparative method (which will entail the use of non-religious variables such as regional, economic, gender, age). Multi-disciplinary research (historical, anthropological/ethnographic and sociological) may be of prime importance, but psychological and historical perspectives and knowledge can also be relevant. Theological knowledge (widely defined) might be considered part of the data.

Amongst the questions that could be significant for understanding the religious/spiritual situation in China are those that enquire into the extent to which globalization is affecting Chinese religiosity/spirituality both through the arrival of recognised and unrecognised missionaries and through the information disseminated through the mass media, particularly the Internet. A related question would be to ask to what extent may one observe a globalizing reaction. Furthermore, we might ask how personal networks are used (and created) to spread beliefs and practices; and in what ways are these controlled from a centre and under what conditions might they be localised or acephalous organisations? We might also ask questions about the consequences of the sociological study of religion for the practitioners and for others, non-believers, as well as state and other official institutions.

These and further questions will be examined in the light of the author’s personal experience in studying new religious phenomena in the West over the past four decades.

Beijing Summit Presenter Daniel Bays



Daniel H. Bays is Professor of History and Director of the Asian Studies Program at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan. He is Professor Emeritus of the University of Kansas, where he chaired the History Department. His major publications include *China Enters the Twentieth Century* (1978), *Christianity in China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (ed., 1996), *The Foreign Missionary Enterprise at Home: Explorations in North American Cultural History* (co-editor with Grant Wacker, 2003), his most recent book *China's Christian Colleges: Cross-Cultural connections, 1900-1950* (co-editor with Ellen Widmer, forthcoming), and numerous articles. He has directed major research projects, funded by the Henry Luce Foundation and the Pew Charitable Trusts, on the history of Christianity in China and American missionary movements.

Presentation Title:

**Protestantism in Modern China as 'Foreign Religion' and 'Chinese Religion':
Autonomy, Independence, and the Constraints of Foreign Hegemony**

ABSTRACT

The creation of Chinese forms of what we call Catholicism and Protestantism has been a long-term project, going on for more than 400 years in the former case and for more than 150 years in the latter. And for both, the process was skewed, or thrown off track, by the more than 100 years of the treaty system, when Christianity in China was part of the broader structures of imperialism and was (to its detriment) largely viewed as a “foreign religion.” What I hope to do is to unpack the baggage that came with that label, “foreign religion,” and to identify those parts of the existing “religious” lexicon of ideas and the existing repertoire of “religious” behaviors in China that were adopted or utilized to help Christianity relate itself, at first haltingly but eventually successfully, to Chinese society. What rituals, worship, sacrifices, and teachings (li, bai or chongbai, ji, jiao) were transferred from Chinese sect or tradition to Christianity? What is the role of socioethical values such as xiao, or zhong (filial piety, loyalty)? Are they “religious”? What is the resulting product? Chinese or Western? Or viewed from today, in an age of “world Christianity,” does it matter? What is the future place of Protestantism in the Chinese spectrum of religion or spirituality?

Beijing Summit Presenter John Berthrong



John Berthrong has been the Associate Dean for Academic and Administrative Affairs and Associate Professor of Comparative Theology at the Boston University School of Theology since 1989. Active in interfaith dialogue projects and programs, his teaching and research interests are in the areas of interreligious dialogue, Chinese religions and philosophy, and comparative philosophy and theology. His published and forthcoming books are *All under Heaven: Transforming Paradigms in Confucian-Christian Dialogue* (SUNY Press [Chinese Translation from Renmin Chupanshe, 2006]), *The Transformations of the Confucian Way* (Westview Press), and *Concerning Creativity: A Comparison of Chu Hsi, Whitehead, and Neville* (SUNY Press). He most recently co-edited, with Liu Shu-hsien and Leonard Swidler, *Confucianism in Dialogue Today: West, Christianity & Judaism* (2004) and has *Expanding Process: Exploring Philosophical and Theological Transformations in China and West* forthcoming in 2008 from SUNY Press.

Presentation Title: From Beijing to Boston: The Future Contributions of the Globalization of New Confucianism

ABSTRACT Without a doubt the contemporary philosophical movement called New Confucianism will have an impact on the ethical development of Chinese and other societies, even if the nature of the impact is still clouded in the realm of speculative prophecy. For instance, how can a tradition in the midst of a profound internal process of reform, renewal, and regeneration have an impact on cultural regions that do not share in any historical or social memory of a ‘Confucian’ past? Can modern New Confucianism, and we must remember that this in and of itself is a highly contested notion, be transmitted to an alien environment such as Boston? Many scholars believe that the modern reformation of Confucianism is nothing but a nostalgic drama driven by the smoke and mirrors of a rosily constructed subjective past. Others argue the contrary case and believe in the intrinsic worth of a revived Confucian discourse. But even if it were possible to transmit something of substance in East Asia New Confucianism to Boston, what could Boston Confucianism offer to North American ethical life? Furthermore, what would be the dialogical connections between the New Confucianism of Beijing and Boston Confucianism? The very question of the globalization of New Confucianism is complex in terms of its own task of the hermeneutics of retrieval and renewal within the intellectual matrix of East Asia much less conversations with those who share different historical worldviews and inherited cultural patterns. Yet globalization drives just such a conversation about the future role of Confucian ethics and cannot be ignored in the 21st century.

Beijing Summit Presenter Kenneth Dean

Kenneth Dean is James McGill Professor and Drs. Richard Charles and Esther Yewpick Lee Chair of Chinese Cultural Studies in the Department of East Asian Studies of McGill University. He is the author of seven books, including *The Return of the Gods: introduction to a survey of village temples, regional alliances, and ritual activities in Putian, Fujian, China*, and *Ritual Networks: A survey of village ritual alliances in the irrigated alluvial Putian plain*, both forthcoming from E.J. Brill in Leiden. He is also the author of over forty articles on various aspects of Daoist ritual and local ritual traditions of Southeast China.

Presentation Title:

Local Ritual Traditions of Southeast China: A Challenge to Definitions of Religion and Theories of Ritual

ABSTRACT This paper begins with a description of a recent village ritual held during the Yuanxiao festival of the first full moon of the year in the Xinghua region of Fujian province. The paper first outlines the many historical layers of different ritual traditions that combine in this boisterous ritual-event in which every villager has a role to perform. In this ritual, simultaneous and parallel rites were performed by Daoist ritual masters and Three in One Scripture Masters (The Three in One is a local movement combining Confucian self-cultivation, Daoist inner alchemy and Buddhist meditation). During the ritual, spirit mediums are possessed by the gods, who are carried around the village boundaries in sedan chairs. There are also other ritual specialists involved in setting up the altar and directing worshippers in their offerings of food, incense, prayers, spirit money, and fireworks. The ritual is shown to include multiple liturgical frameworks, and many different vantage points on the event as a whole. The difficulty this kind of event raises for most definitions of religion is discussed, and implications of this kind of local ritual tradition for theories of ritual are explored. The leaders of these village temples, which can be said in some areas to constitute China's second government, are engaged in a skillful negotiation of modernity, as the ritual-events they organize absorb flows of capital and state symbolism while still generating worlds of local difference.

Beijing Summit Presenter Dru C. Gladney



Dru C. Gladney is President of the Pacific Basin Institute at Pomona College, a research foundation widely recognized for its work enhancing understanding among the nations of the Pacific Rim, and professor of Anthropology at Pomona College. His research focuses on ethnic and cultural nationalism in Asia, specializing in the peoples, politics, and cultures of the Silk Road. He has conducted long-term field research in Western China, Central Asia, and Turkey for more than 25 years. His research languages include Mandarin Chinese, Turkish, Uyghur, Uzbek, Kazakh, and Russian. He is the author of four books and more than 100 academic articles and book chapters on topics spanning the Asian continent, including *Muslim Chinese: Ethnic Nationalism in the People's Republic* (Harvard, 2nd edition, 1996) and *Ethnic Identity in China: The Making of a Muslim Minority Nationality* (Wadsworth, 1998). Some of his publications have been translated into Chinese, Japanese, Russian, Arabic, Turkish, French, and German. Gladney's most recent book is *Dislocating China: Muslims, Minorities, and Other Subaltern Subjects* (University of Chicago Press, 2004).

Presentation Title: Islam and Spirituality in China: Secularization or Radicalization?

ABSTRACT This paper examines Islam and Muslim spirituality in China, not only because it is where this author has conducted most of his research, but also because with the largest Muslim minority in East Asia. China's Muslims are clearly the most threatened in terms of self-preservation and Islamic identity. Through examining the long history of two Muslim groups (Uyghur and Hui) as they have interacted with the integration and more recently, modernization program of the Chinese state, it will be argued that successful Muslim accommodation to minority status in China can be seen to be a measure of the extent to which Muslim groups have been able to reconcile the dictates of Islamic spirituality to their host culture. This goes against the opposite view that can be found in the writings of some analysts of Islam in China, that Islam in the region is almost unavoidably rebellious and that Muslims as minorities are inherently problematic to a non-Muslim state. The 1300 year history of Islam in China suggests that both within each Muslim community, as well as between Muslim nationalities, there are many alternatives to either secularization or radicalism.

Beijing Summit Presenter Philip Jenkins

Philip Jenkins is Edwin Erle Sparks Professor of the Humanities at Penn State University. His major current interests include the study of global Christianity, past and present; of new and emerging religious movements; and of twentieth century US history, chiefly post-1975. He also has an enduring interest in issues of crime and deviance, and the construction of social problems. He has published twenty books, including *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South* (also 2006) and *God's Continent: Christianity, Islam and Europe's Religious Crisis* (2007: all from Oxford University Press). His latest book, forthcoming in Fall 2008, is *The Lost History of Christianity* (Harper One).



Presentation Title: The Transformation of Gender and Family in Emerging Asian Christianity

ABSTRACT Over the past century, Christianity has spread widely in the global South, in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and much of the social science research addressing this phenomenon has focused on the role of gender. Women have played a critical role throughout, often as leaders of new churches, and as the key converts and lay activists. Although many successful churches are conservative in theological terms, the new religious forms have often had a strongly progressive element. Besides the academic or intellectual feminism developed in many countries, we find much evidence of the impact of new religious ideologies and structures on ordinary believers, especially in societies undergoing rapid modernization. Moreover, these changes arise not from sophisticated feminist theories, but from grass-roots interpretations of the Bible and of Christian tradition. Latin American scholars speak of a “reformation of machismo,” while others describe how women acquire “tongues of fire” in these church settings. Many hope that new kinds of charismatic Christianity will produce long-term effects in the form of stronger family structures and greater economic responsibility, perhaps even laying the foundations for a new civil society. This paper will identify forces promoting transformation of gender roles, and suggest the likely impact in the emerging Christianity of China and the Chinese diaspora.

Beijing Summit Presenter Graeme Lang



Graeme Lang is Professor and Head of the Department of Asian and International Studies at City University of Hong Kong. His publications on religion include *The Rise of a Refugee God*, with Lars Ragvald (Oxford University Press, 1993), and 30 articles and book chapters. His research also includes environmental and resource issues.

Presentation Title: Religious Individualism and Collectivism in Chinese Societies

ABSTRACT One of the key questions about religion is the extent to which religious allegiance is devoted solely to self-serving activities, or includes also other-serving activities which make a contribution to aggregate real-world social welfare or well-being, even beyond the well-being of the population of same-religious worshippers. This should be one of the areas of investigation for societies and regimes which are concerned to distinguish and support the most society-serving ideologies. Some religious activity is entirely self-serving, or devoted solely to local-communal welfare. Other religious ideologies promote a broader and more collectivist approach to welfare and well-being, even at some individual cost to religious believers and activists. Some of this service-orientation is due to ideological factors, but some is due to pragmatic considerations (e.g. social acceptance and good relations with regimes). In this paper, I present a classification of religious individual and collectivism. Then I focus on one type of collectivist orientation – longer-term environmental/ecological rationality – which is arguably the most crucial type of collectivist orientation for any society, and particularly for China, in the coming decades. I propose a survey-research design which would assess this type of rationality among religious and non-religious people in China.

Beijing Summit Presenter J. Gordon Melton



J. Gordon Melton is the Director of the Institute for the Study of American Religion located in Santa Barbara, California, and a Research Specialist with the Department of Religious Studies, University of California-Santa Barbara. He is the author of more than 40 reference and scholarly books. His most famous book *The Encyclopedia of American Religions* originally appeared in 1979 and is now in its 7th edition (2002). Most recently he co-edited *Religions of the World: a Comprehensive Encyclopedia of Beliefs and Practices* (ABC-Clio, 2002), with Martin Baumann, which received the Editor's Choice Award from the American Library Association and *Booklist*, the ALA journal. Other recent titles include: *Encyclopedia of Protestantism* (2005), *Nelson's Handbook of Denominations* (2007) and *A Will to Choose: the Origins of African American Methodism* (2007). He is currently finishing a book on Chinese Buddhism.

Presentation Title: History as a Factor in the Social Scientific Study of Chinese Religion

ABSTRACT China's lengthy history should not be neglected as social scientific methodologies come to the fore in research on Chinese religions. A historically informed sociology offers an enlarged meaning context for research, often suggesting insights not initially apparent and reminding us of trends highlighted by recently produced data taps. Religion is always local, but rarely just so. A quick review of China's history reminds us how the historical religions have grown, developed and experienced ups and downs against a back-drop of traditional culture. Even the traditional culture, often seen as existing in a "timeless" world, has been swept-up into larger historical events.

It is also the case that as the pace of history has increased over the last century that the pressures of change in the larger environment will have become a significant factor in the consciousness of those we study. Even the most remote rural areas have been swept into a globalized world tied together by modern transportation, communication and information systems. Multiple cultural influences now freely circulate in the globalized context.

Operating as social scientists with a historical consciousness will suggest certain themes to contextualize our research. Buddhism, for example, entered experienced multiple transmissions over several centuries into China from its birthplace in India. As older texts were translated and new texts produced, it took on an indigenous character, and subsequent generations experienced the emergence of new social collectivities with resulting intellectual constructs, each interacting with the economic, social, and political status of followers. Some pushed sectarian uniqueness while others championed unifying themes. As differing forms of Buddhism competed, there were winners and losers and variant successes in different provinces.

Any particular subject of current research is both the product of its history and subject to the same historical forces operating in the present. Contemporary religious communities, as they move to appropriate the tradition passed to them, are at the same time experiencing the urges to identify with or even create new social collectivities and fresh intellectual constructs that inform their present situation.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ChineseSSSR/>

This online/email discussion group is for scholars and students interested in the social scientific study of Chinese religions (including religions among the Chinese anywhere in the world). Currently (June 2008) it has about 400 subscribers from many parts of the world. Most of the postings are in Chinese, and some in English. If you are interested in joining the group, please visit the website above or send an email to CRCS@purdue.edu.

Beijing Summit Presenter Robert C. Neville



Robert Cummings Neville is Professor of Philosophy, Religion, and Theology at Boston University where he is also the Executive Director of the Albert and Jessie Danielsen Institute. He is Dean Emeritus of the Boston University School of Theology, and Dean Emeritus of Marsh Chapel at Boston University. He is past-president of the Metaphysical Society of America, the American Academy of Religion, and the International Society for the Study of Chinese Philosophy. The author of scores of papers, Professor Neville has published twenty books, two of which have been translated into Chinese, *Behind the Masks of God* and *Boston Confucianism: Portable Tradition in the Late-Modern World*. Two more books are currently in press, *Ritual and Deference*, and *Realism in Religion*. His current research projects include a theological approach to sexual identities and comparative cross-cultural philosophy and theology giving rise to systematic construction.

Presentation Title: Confucian Humaneness (Ren) Across Social Barriers

ABSTRACT Unlike some traditions, both East and West, that advocate universal love, Confucianism has advocated "love with differences," meaning generally that one has greater duties of love or humaneness to those close in family, interests, culture, and circumstance than to those more distant. Yet a crucial problem in modern society, and probably in all societies, is that sharp differences in culture and class make it easy to objectify and ill-treat those different from oneself. This has been thematized in modern philosophy as the problem of the "Other." Confucianism is right to acknowledge real difference. But can it foster forms of humaneness appropriate to difference? This paper will argue that it can by means of a dual development of humaneness and ritual. Rituals unite people across great differences, even when the rituals involve conflict and competition. A Confucian conception of humaneness for all ritual players can offer a way forward in humane social development without denying genuine differences.

Beijing Summit Presenter Daniel Olson

Daniel V. A. Olson is an associate professor of sociology at Purdue University. He is the past-president of the Religious Research Association and has served on the editorial boards of the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* and *Sociology of Religion*. He is co-editor with Detlef Pollack of *The Role of Religion in Modern Societies* (Routledge, 2007) and co-editor with William Swatos of *The Secularization Debate* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000). His recent publications focus on factors that affect the commitment levels of religious group members, and the ways that the religious composition of geographic areas does and does not affect the religious behavior of individuals and religious organizations in those same areas.



Presentation Title: Explanations of International Differences in Religion that May Apply to China

ABSTRACT I examine several explanations for differences in levels of religious practice in different nations and within nations over time including classical secularization theories, state involvement in suppressing or aiding religion, and levels of insecurity and inequality in society. I examine what empirical evidence currently exists for or against these explanations. I conclude with a brief discussion of ways in which these theories do or do not apply to China and how they could be tested with Chinese data.

Beijing Summit Presenter David Palmer



David A. Palmer is Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology at Hong Kong University. From 2004 to 2008 he was a research fellow at the Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient (French School of Asian Studies), where he was director of its Hong Kong centre. In addition to 13 articles and book chapters, he is the author of *Qigong Fever: Body, Science and Utopia in China* (Columbia University Press, 2007) and is currently completing book manuscripts on *The Religious Question in Modern China* (with Vincent Goossaert) and *Global Taoism: the Search for Authenticity* (with Elijah Siegler).

Presentation Title: From Local Tradition to Global Spirituality: the Modern Evolution of Taoism

ABSTRACT In the mid 20th century, Taoism was considered by most scholars and intellectuals to be a virtually dead tradition, a tangle of superstitions whose last remnants were destined to be soon swept into the dustbin of history by the triumphant forces of modernization. Fifty years later, such a verdict turns out to be premature: while Taoism remains institutionally weak, its ritual traditions have not only experienced a revival in rural China, but have been integrated within transnational circuits of practices and ideas linking Chinese and diasporic societies. Taoist-related body cultivation traditions have enjoyed new waves of popularity, not only in China, but also among growing numbers of Europeans and North Americans. This paper will present an overview of the evolution of Taoism since the 20th century, considered in light of sociological concepts of modernity and globalization. It will show how elements of Taoist tradition which focus on the nurturing of the body easily lend themselves to be recast in terms of a modern quest for individual selfhood and authenticity rooted in embodied experience. In the absence of strong orthodox institutions, these symbolic and technical elements of Taoist tradition have been freely exploited by a wide range of groups and spiritual entrepreneurs, both in China and abroad. Taoism is thus becoming a reservoir of cultural resources for the religious productions of global modernity.

Beijing Summit Presenter Joseph Tamney



Joseph B. Tamney is an Associate Fellow of Life Cycle Institute at the Catholic University of America and Professor Emeritus of Sociology at Ball State University (USA). He was a member of the editorial board for the *Encyclopedia of Religion and Society*, editor of *Sociology of Religion* (1994-2000) and of the ASA religion section *Newsletter* (2000-2002), and president of the Association for the Sociology of Religion (2003-4). He has authored or co-authored 76 articles and essays. His books include *The Resilience of Christianity in the Modern World* (State University of New York Press, 1992), *American Society in the Buddhist Mirror* (Garland, 1992), *The Struggle Over Singapore's Soul: Western Modernization and Asian Culture* (Walter de Gruyter, 1996), *The Resilience of Conservative Religion* (Cambridge University Press, 2002), and, with Linda Hsueh-Ling Chiang, *Modernization, Globalization, and Confucianism in Chinese Societies* (Praeger, 2002). With Fenggang Yang, he co-edited *State, Market, and Religions in Chinese Societies* (Brill, 2005). His most recent publications are on Buddhism in North America and Islam in Malaysia.

Presentation Title: The Resilience of Confucianism

ABSTRACT This paper utilizes modernization/globalization theory to understand the contemporary development of Confucianism. Today all moral/religious traditions react to modernity in two ways: either rejecting a differentiated and pluralistic society based on the value of the individual, the traditionalist response, or accommodating such a society, the modernist response. Moreover as a result of globalization, traditions in particular societies are being affected by developments within the tradition in other societies and by competition with other traditions. This paper uses data from mainland China, Singapore, and Taiwan to examine the development of the two versions of Confucian tradition: what factors favor one version over another, what are the consequences of each version of the tradition for societal development. The paper concludes with suggestions for future research.

Beijing Summit Presenter Robert Weller



Robert Weller is Professor and Chair of Anthropology at Boston University and Research Associate at the Institute on Culture, Religion and World Affairs there. His present research is concerned with the development of the environmental movement and nature tourism in China and Taiwan in the context of economic growth. He is also looking at the role of local voluntary organizations as mediators between state and society in Hong Kong, Taiwan and China, and he has consulted on poverty and unemployment relief in western China. He has written numerous books and articles on Chinese political, social, and cultural change, often with a focus on the relations between religion and civic life. His latest book, *Ritual and Its Consequences: an Essay on the Limits of Sincerity* (co-authored with A. Seligman, M. Puett, and B. Simon; Oxford, 2008) has just appeared. His current research focuses on the role of religion in creating public social benefits in Chinese communities in China, Malaysia, and Taiwan.

Presentation Title: Religion, Ritual and the Public Good in China

ABSTRACT This essay explores several directions for research on religion in China, with a focus on its contributions to social construction. One part of the paper examines religious philanthropic activity as it has evolved in China. This part concentrates on three core questions: (1) the influence of denomination (with particular attention to local temples, Buddhists, and various forms of Christianity), (2) the role of scale (the effects of large scale institutions vs. local and less institutionalized groups), and (3) the power and ability of varying state/society relationships to affect the public role of religion. The other part of the paper looks at the revival of ritual, and its important implications for managing social relations between individuals and groups and a pluralist context.

Beijing Summit Presenter Mayfair Yang

Mayfair Yang is the Chair of Asian Studies at the University of Sydney. She has also taught at U.C. Santa Barbara between 1987 and June 2007. Dr. Yang is interested in issues of religion, secularization, and the state in modernity, especially in the tensions and traumas accompanying the break with traditional orders under colonial and post-colonial conditions. Her areas of research and teaching are: critical theory; gender and feminism; media studies; sovereignty and state power; and cultural approaches to political economy. Dr. Yang's cultural and geographical region of specialization is China and China's offshoot cultures and diaspora in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Southeast Asia and the West. Although her research is based on fieldwork in contemporary China and Taiwan, her approach is always informed by a vision of the *longue duree* in Chinese history, and she has published on ancient China. She has published many articles and book chapters. Most recently, she edited *Chinese Religiosities: Afflictions of Modernity and State Formation* (forthcoming, University of California Press, 2008).



Presentation Title: What's Missing in the "Wenzhou Model"?: Ritual Economy, Community-Building, & Georges Bataille's Notion of "Sovereignty"

ABSTRACT There has been much discussion of the "Wenzhou Model" of economic development both in China as well as among foreign China scholars abroad. Most discussions have focused on Wenzhou's entrepreneurialism, household industries, specialized commodities markets, growth of rural towns, and traditional private banking and credit system. Few have noticed an important but highly visible feature of the Wenzhou economic miracle: the revival and expansion of a "ritual economy" of deity worship, temple-building, life-cycle family rituals, traditional lunar festivals and community religious processions, Buddhist and Daoist rituals, Christian churches, ancestor sacrifices, religiously-inspired donation drives for community projects and charities, and divination and geomantic activities. All these ritual expenditures have been regarded by educated elites and officials as "feudal superstitions," "useless," and "wasteful." However, such ritual expenditures are crucial to counter-balancing Wenzhou's economy of private accumulation with practices of redistribution of wealth and community-building. Furthermore, they represent a local assertion of what Georges Bataille has called the freedom and right to "sovereignty," or transcendence from earthly entrapment through direct access to the divine world beyond.

Website:

<http://www.purdue.edu/crcs>

This website is currently under construction. Soon it will be developed into a center of information and resources of Chinese religion, spirituality and society. The website will also serve as a portal for an online Chinese journal for the scientific study of religion, a forum for interactive discussions, and an archive of government documents, scholarly articles, short essays and commentaries on Chinese spirituality, religion and society.



Stone Hall Room 306
700 W. State Street
Purdue University
West Lafayette, IN 47907-2059

Phone: (765)494-5801
Fax: (765)494-6938
Email: CRCS@purdue.edu

**Center on Religion and
Chinese Society**

Director
Fenggang Yang

Project Manager
Lily Szeto

2008 Summer Institute to be Held on July 14-20 in Beijing

The Fifth Summer Institute of the Social Scientific Study of Religion is going to be held at Renmin University on July 14-20, 2008, cosponsored by Renmin University, Baylor University and CRCS at Purdue. The major lecturers are Professor F. Carson Mencken of Baylor University and Professor Fenggang Yang of Purdue University.

Since 2004, we have organized an annual summer institute in Beijing or Shanghai, co-sponsored by Purdue University, with the financial support from the Henry Luce Foundation, and Renmin University or Shanghai University. Each year, two well-known international scholars gave lectures for two weeks to about 70 to 100 participants – young scholars and graduate students throughout Mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia, and the United States.

Recent Presentations of Dr. Fenggang Yang:

On October 9-12, 2007, Dr. Fenggang Yang gave lectures on religion in China at Princeton University, Yale University and Harvard University, and a talk on Asian American religion at Boston University.

On May 14, 2008, Dr. Fenggang Yang gave a presentation describing nine religious trends in China at the Seminar on “China, Religion and Human Rights” at the National Press Club, Washington, DC. The seminar was organized by the Religion Newswriters Association.

On May 27, 2008, Dr. Fenggang Yang gave a lecture on “Society, Religion and Spirituality in China” at China Agricultural University in Beijing.

On May 28, 2008, Dr. Fenggang Yang gave a lecture on “Economics of Shortage and the Religious Market in China” at Peking University. This was the inaugural lecture of the newly established Center for the Study of Religion and Chinese Society at Peking University.

On June 11, 2008, Council on Foreign Relations in New York City organized a symposium on “Religion and the Future China.” Dr. Fenggang Yang was one of the panelists at Session One about “China’s Dynamic Religious Landscape”.