

Two lectures on  
Contemporary  
Chinese society and  
Culture

**November 30  
2009  
17:00 -  
Room 301  
3F  
Building 10  
Sophia  
University**

Lecture in English (No translation)  
No registration required

Sophia University Institute of Comparative Culture  
Director: James Farrer  
7-1 Kioicho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-8554, JAPAN  
TEL: +81-(0)3-3238-4082, FAX: +81-(0)3-3238-4081  
Email: [diricc@sophia.ac.jp](mailto:diricc@sophia.ac.jp) Web page: <http://icc fla.sophia.ac.jp>

## **The Resurgence and Strategy of Chinese Popular Religion in North Rural China**

**Dr. Fan Lizhu**, (Fudan University)

Since 1979, with the ending of the Cultural Revolution and the beginning of the economic reforms of Deng Xiaoping, a massive resurgence and re-invention of local ritual traditions, perhaps the greatest in history, has taken place across China. The revival of folk religion at the village level is not simply taken as the result of gambles between the state and people. Rather the revival is a much more complex process of interaction among different social forces and cultural-historical resources, in which temple and folk religions are taken as a source of considerable cultural capital. This research focuses on devotional beliefs and rituals that are alive in the practices of ordinary Chinese people today, and are especially present in rural temples and as a characteristic as local devotion. The research is based on the data from ethnographical studies in rural areas of northern China in recent years.

**Fan Lizhu** holds a B.A. and an M.A. in history (both from Nankai U. China) and PhD in sociology from Chinese University of Hong Kong. She is Professor of Sociology and Associate Dean of School of Social Development and Public Policy at Fudan University, Shanghai, China. Teaching and research areas: Sociology of Religion, Religion in Chinese Society.

## **“Created Equal” or “Born Equal”: An Issue in Intercultural Communication**

**Dr. Chen Na**, (Fudan University)

That “all men are created equal” has become an unquestionable motto in American culture. Once it is translated into Chinese, however, it reads “all men are born equal” The inherent meaning of the Christian belief - human beings are created by God and all men are equal in the sense that they are all creatures of God - cannot find its “equivalent” in the cultural context of the Chinese language. The cultural barrier in the translation of “all men are created equal” into Chinese is extremely difficult, if possible at all, to overcome. As a result, its Chinese version - all men are born equal - is a twisted translation. This twisted translation is consequential. To a great extent, the democratic system proposed by Thomas Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence finds its justification in the abovementioned Christian belief. Can we expect the Chinese to establish or accept a democratic system based on the justification that “all men are born equal”, meanwhile it is more likely that “all men are born unequal” in a “typical” Chinese society?

**Chen Na** holds a B.A. in English language and literature and an M.A. in comparative literature (both from Peking University, China), an M.A. in communications (U. of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, U.S.), and an M.A. and PhD in sociology from Temple University, Philadelphia, U.S. He is Associate Professor of Communication and Academic Advisor for International Programs at the School of Journalism at Fudan University.

Teaching and research areas: Intercultural Communications, Comparative Study of Cultures.