

RITUAL
and
SCRIPTURE
in
CHINESE
POPULAR
RELIGION
Five Studies

Edited by
DAVID JOHNSON

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in Chinese
Popular Religion
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Introduction

Chinese popular religion deserves serious study. Villagers undoubtedly were credulous and conservative, but in their temples and rituals they could rise to impressive heights of creativity and devotion. Religious writings directed at non-elite audiences were often hackneyed and manipulative, but they also could have a directness and honesty that are deeply moving, and in their best moments are at least as powerful as the polished, self-conscious, and restrained productions of the high literate and clerical elites. The true genius of the Chinese people found some of its best expressions in the ritual, scriptures, and art of popular religion.

The inherent attractiveness of Chinese popular religion in its many forms, its importance for our understanding of the course of Chinese history and the texture of Chinese culture, and the existence of rich collections of virtually unexplored primary sources have led to growing interest in this field among scholars here and abroad in recent years.¹ Nevertheless, the idea of Chinese popular religion is regarded with suspicion by some, who think that it implies the existence of a realm of beliefs and behaviors quite separate from elite religion, or whatever the alternative to “popular” is believed to be. Such fears are groundless, at least as far as this book is concerned, for it is based on the assumption that there were many non-

¹See the “state of the field” article on Chinese religion, by Daniel Overmyer and others, forthcoming in the *Journal of Asian Studies*.

elite sub-cultures and, depending on one's definitions, several elite sub-cultures as well.² In addition, these various groupings were not isolated from each other but exercised a constant mutual influence, both direct and indirect. The terms "elite" and "popular" are simply used for the sake of convenience.

Another reason why some scholars dislike the idea of popular religion is their conviction that "everyone" in a village or town shared the same religious beliefs and participated in the same religious activities. Too little is known to be able to refute this position conclusively, and unfortunately few problems are more difficult to study. But in general those who want to dispense with the notion of popular religion are faced with two problems: first, they have to explain away the fact that members of the literate elite in China for centuries kept up a steady drumbeat of criticism against what they themselves termed popular customs and beliefs, and still are doing it today. Second, if they find a member of the gentry or a local official taking part in local religious activities they must also show that it meant to him what it meant to everyone else. This is very difficult to do, but virtually all available evidence—including that put forward in several of the chapters in this book (Chard, Cedzich, Lien)—suggests that the educated and powerful did not understand the rituals and scriptures of village religion in the same way that the uneducated and less powerful did. In fact there can be little doubt that elite and popular mentalities in traditional China differed sharply in the realm of religion, as they did in many other arenas of symbolic life. Those mentalities, however, were not isolated from each other, but on the contrary were in constant dialogue. All the chapters demonstrate this in one way or another.

As several of the chapters illustrate (Johnson, Cedzich, Chard), one of the leading characteristics of popular religion in pre-modern China was its diversity, its seemingly endless local variations. This is visible in all aspects of verbal and material culture: opera, folktales, music, dress, cuisine, and so on. For the unprepared, the variations in cultural forms from region to region, and even from village to village, can seem overwhelming—especially since there is no consensus on how to reduce this infinity of

²For details, see David Johnson, "Communication, Class, and Consciousness in Late Imperial China," in David Johnson, Andrew J. Nathan, and Evelyn S. Rawski, eds., *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

*Rituals and
Scriptures
of the
Stove Cult*

ROBERT L. CHARD

The New Year is unquestionably the greatest of all Chinese popular festivals. Taken in its entirety, it is an enormous topic of investigation, leading from ancient state rituals to the vast wealth of living practice, folklore, and art preserved in most parts of the Chinese world today. The modern festival includes an elaborate schedule of events—family reunion, feasting, rites of cleansing and renewal, observances to ancestors and other deities—spreading over two weeks and more. It is an occasion of particular importance in the context of Chinese popular religion, specifically for those cults observed within the household. The present study is concerned with one of these cults, one that forms a distinctive feature of the traditional New Year rituals throughout China: the observances to the god of the stove.¹

¹For a more comprehensive account of popular religion in the New Year festival, citing many previous studies, see the chapter “The Annual Apocalypse” in Stephan Feuchtwang, *The Imperial Metaphor: Popular Religion in China* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 25–60.

The best general accounts of the stove god and stove cult are: Yang K'un 楊堃, “Tsao shen k'ao 竈神考,” *Han Hsueh* 漢學 1 (1944), pp. 108–168; Tsuda Sōkichi 津田左右吉, “Shina no minkan-shinkō ni okeru sōjin シナの民間信仰における竈神,” *Tōyō Gakuhō* 32 (1949), pp. 127–58; and Kubo Noritada 窪徳忠, *Okinawa no shūzoku to shinkō: Chūgoku to no hikaku kenkyū* 沖縄の習俗と信仰——中國との比較研究 (Tokyo: Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 1971), pp. 313–79. See also Chard, “Master of the Family: History and Development of the Chinese Cult to the Stove” (Diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1990), which will form the basis of a forthcoming book on all aspects of the stove deity and stove cult.

Religious observances to the stove god are found in two sharply contrasting spheres. One is the real cult as practiced in most homes until quite recently, in which various observances are made to a paper image maintained in the kitchen. The high point in this cult is the New Year, when the image is burned and later replaced in two rites that vary little in their basic form through most of China. Alongside this is a tradition of scriptures and moral tracts associated with the stove god going back at least to the early Ming period, if not much earlier. Such texts always contain ritual instructions for the worship of the stove god: taboos guarding the sanctity of the stove from such things as noise and filth, a schedule of regular offerings, and invocations of atonement to be recited in times of trouble. Significantly, New Year observances are not mentioned in the majority of these works. A comparison of the nature of the rituals prescribed in the texts and the popular New Year observances reveals a fundamental difference in attitude, a demand for sincere, constant observance on the one hand, and the reality of an annual ceremony, celebrated widely but with little reverence, on the other.

POPULAR NEW YEAR OBSERVANCES TO THE STOVE

The stove god in China seems to have existed since very early times. Stove or hearth deities are found throughout Asia, and some scholars have tried to show that the form of the graph *tsao* ('stove') proves the existence of a frog or toad deity in "primitive" society.² Ritual observances to the stove

A substantial portion of the current study is based on research conducted in China between 1986 and 1988, supported by the Committee for Scholarly Communication with the People's Republic of China. Most of this research was documentary. It was supplemented by informal interviews with Chinese informants, but this should not be regarded as systematic fieldwork in any sense.

²For accounts of the stove god elsewhere in Asia see Kin Kyōkei (Kim Hyōgyong) 金孝敬, *Sōjin ni kan-suru shinkō 竈神に関する信仰*, *Minzokugaku Kenkyū* 1.1 (1935), pp. 138-40 (Japan) and 140-43 (Korea); Ofuji Tokihiko 大藤時彦, "Kamado-gami かまど神," in *Sekai dai hyakka jiten* 世界大百科事典 (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1972), vol. 6, pp. 262-63 (Japan); R. A. Stein, "La Légende du foyer dans la monde chinoise," in Jean Pouillon and Pierre Maranda, eds., *Échanges et communications: mélanges offerts à Claude Lévi-Strauss à l'occasion de son 60ème anniversaire* (The Hague: Mouton, 1970), pp. 1280-1305 (Vietnam and Tibet); Kubo, *Okinawa no shūzoku to shinkō*, p. 343 (Mongolia). For the frog or toad see Yang K'un, "Tsao shen k'ao," pp. 110-19, though the evidence cited therein is not particularly convincing.

Mu-lien

in Pao-chüan

The Performance Context and Religious Meaning of the *Yu-ming Pao-ch'uan*

DAVID JOHNSON

This paper has two subjects: first, the long prosimetric narratives with religious or didactic themes that are often called *pao-chüan*—how they and allied genres were performed, who their audiences were, and whether those performances are preserved in the *pao-chüan* texts we can read today. Second, a particular *pao-chüan* that tells the story of Mu-lien, the pious monk who was so devoted to his mother that he braved the terrors of the deepest pit of Hell to save her. The story was known throughout China in late imperial times and still is widely known today. The epic stage versions of it, which were important to the symbolic life of villagers throughout much of southern China, are among the greatest creations of the Chinese popular religious imagination.¹ But Mu-lien has also been

¹See my "Actions Speak Louder Than Words: The Cultural Significance of Chinese Ritual Opera," in David Johnson, ed., *Ritual Opera, Operatic Ritual: "Mu-lien Rescues His Mother" in Chinese Popular Culture* (Berkeley: Chinese Popular Culture Project, 1989), pp. 1–45. An excellent bibliographic guide to the rapidly developing field of Mu-lien studies is Mao Keng-ju 茆耕茹, "Mu-lien tso-p'in, lun-wen pien-mu kai-lüeh (tseng-ting kao)" 目連作品, 論文編目概略 (增訂稿), in Chung-kuo i-shu yen-chiu yuan Hsi-ch'ü yen-chiu so 中國藝術研究院戲曲研究所, et al., eds., *Mu-lien hsi yen-chiu wen-chi* 目連戲研究文集 (Hofei, 1988), pp. 337–77. Titles of some important recent publications together with brief comments on the phenomenon of Mu-lien studies in the PRC can be found in my "Report on the International Conference on Chinese Southern Opera and Mulian Opera, Fukien, 2/26/91–3/5/91," *CHINOPERL Papers* 16 (1992–1993).

told in chantefable for a thousand years.² It was the most popular subject for the *pien-wen*, popular prosimetric narratives dating from the T'ang and Five Dynasties (if the surviving texts are any indication),³ and in the Ch'ing dynasty it still was a popular subject for the lineal descendants of the *pien-wen*, the *pao-chüan*.⁴ Studying the *pao-chüan* genre and the Mu-lien story together is therefore very appropriate. Opera and ritual, with their potent combinations of words, elaborate visual imagery, and music were without rival as summoners-up of emotions, each in its own way. But narrative song or story, presented to much smaller audiences on less formal occasions, spoke to the individual more directly. Hence *pao-chüan* versions of the Mu-lien story are likely to have much to tell us about popular piety and village religion.

In what follows I look first at the performance context of *pao-chüan* and a wide variety of similar prosimetric didactic texts. I then turn to the *Yu-ming pao-ch'uan*, a particularly impressive *pao-chüan* version of the Mu-lien story. I discuss the relationship of this text to performance and then review its contents, comparing it in detail with a T'ang *pien-wen* about Mu-lien. In conclusion I discuss the differences between the *pien-wen* and the *pao-chüan*, trace many of those differences to the influence of Mu-lien operas, and finally attempt to understand why the *pao-chüan* and the operas, despite their close kinship, are in the end so different.

Pao-chüan is not an easy term to define. Texts that call themselves *pao-chüan* can be quite different from each other in both content and intention. Some are religious works that have been venerated for centuries (such as Lo Ch'ing's *Wei-wei pu-tung T'ai-shan shen-ken chieh-kuo pao-chüan*), while others were intended mainly to entertain (such as the anonymous *Ying-t'ai pao-chüan*, which recounts the romance of Liang Shan-po and

²"Chantefable" is a narrative genre that employs a combination of prose and verse (hence the adjective "prosimetric").

³Victor H. Mair, *T'ang Transformation Texts* (Cambridge: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1989), p. 86. Mair in various publications lists nine *pien-wen* or *pien-wen* fragments about Mu-lien, plus two more prosimetric narratives that he does not classify as *pien-wen* but that are very similar: S. 2614, S. 3704, P. 2319, P. 3107, P. 3485, P. 4988 verso, Peking 876, Peking 3789, Peking 4085; P. 2193, Peking 2496.

⁴See Cheng Chen-to 鄭振鐸, *Chung-kuo su-wen-hsüeh shih* 中國俗文學史 (Taipei: Shang-wu yin-shu kuan, 1967 rpt. of the 1938 ed.), vol. 2, p. 327. The most comprehensive catalogue, Li Shih-yü's *Pao-chüan tsung-lu* (see note 6), lists twenty-six different versions, and it is not complete.

*The Liturgies
for Sacrifices
to Ancestors
in Successive Versions
of the Family Rituals*

PATRICIA EBREY

In *The Social Life of the Chinese*, published in 1865, Justus Doolittle described a large ancestral hall in Foochow and the rites held there on an autumn equinox. The hall had been built near the end of the eighteenth century and was richly endowed. Ancestral tablets were displayed at its rear. In front of them was a table with a pair of candlesticks, a large censer, and two flower vases. Near it were other tables with a pig, a goat, and various utensils. In front of them was a second incense table, and on the walls of this room were two large pictures of some of the ancestors. There was also a large iron stove for burning mock money. Before the ceremony began, food was laid out, including five kinds of green vegetables, five kinds of fruit, five kinds of grain, cakes in five different shapes, some pig flesh, hair, and blood, an additional ten dishes of cooked food including meat, fish, and fowl, and ten cups each of tea and wine. During the ceremony the men lined up facing the ancestral tablets. A master of ceremonies directed them, telling them when to kneel, bow, and rise up. The sacrifice was performed by a boy of six or eight who was the eldest son of eldest sons on back to the descent group's first migrant ancestor. This boy made three libations of wine, pouring it onto straw. Three times cups of wine and bowls of vegetables were presented to the spirits. The master of ceremonies knelt to chant the text of a prayer, with all of those participating also kneeling. "During the progress of the worship they all knelt down

five times, and while on their knees bowed down their heads simultaneously three times. There was no weeping, no smiling, and no talking, except by the professor of ceremonies. All was orderly, still, solemn, and reverent." When the ceremony was over, the cooked foods formed the basis of a feast for those participating.¹

The ancestral rituals that took place in this hall bear a remarkably close resemblance to the sequences of steps described in the many versions of Chu Hsi's (1130–1200) *Family Rituals* (*Chia-li*, or *Chu Tzu chia-li*). It seems quite likely that the master of ceremonies at the sacrifice had a copy of one of the more detailed of these texts, such as Ch'iu Chün's (1420–1495) *Family Rituals with Specifications of Procedures* (*Chia-li i-chieh*). In the tradition of Confucian scholarship within which Chu Hsi compiled his liturgy and Ming authors revised it, ancestral sacrifices were not mysterious rituals, nor the creations of gods, nor conveyed to humans through revelation, nor passed down in secret. They had originally been created by human sages who understood the principles of heaven and earth, including the social and psychological needs of people. A scholar could know what the sages' rituals had been like by studying the classics, especially the *Etiquette and Ritual* (*I-li*) and *Record of Ritual* (*Li-chi*). Yet because circumstances vary, new forms might better achieve the true purposes of the rituals than old forms. Hence scholars could and should write new liturgies: every step, procedure, and distinction in the liturgies in the ca-

¹*Social Life of the Chinese, with some Account of their Religious, Governmental, Educational, and Business Customs and Opinions, with Special but not Exclusive Reference to Fuhchau* (New York: Harper, 1865), I, 230–35, quotation p. 235. For a summary of other descriptions of ancestral rites by early Western observers, mostly missionaries, see James Thayer Addison, *Chinese Ancestor Worship* (Shanghai: Chung Hua Sheng Kung Hui, 1925). For ethnographic accounts of domestic ancestral rites in the twentieth century, see Francis L. K. Hsu, *Under the Ancestors' Shadow* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1971 [original edition 1948]), pp. 50–52, 183–92; David K. Jordan, *Gods, Ghosts, and Ancestors: The Folk Religion of a Taiwanese Village* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), pp. 93–102; Emily M. Ahern, *The Cult of the Dead in a Chinese Village* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1973); and Stevan Harrell, *Ploughshare Village: Culture and Context in Taiwan* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982), pp. 194–206. Most of the many studies of lineages treat ancestral rites as important to the identity and solidarity of the lineages, but say little about what occurs during the rites. Short descriptions are found in Daniel Harrison Kulp, *Country Life in South China: The Sociology of Familism* (New York: Teachers College, 1925), pp. 302–5, and Hsu, *Under the Ancestors' Shadow*, pp. 190–91. Fuller descriptions of both domestic and lineage ancestral rites are available for Korea. See Roger L. Janelli and Dawnhee Yin Janelli, *Ancestor Worship in Korean Society* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1982).

*The Cult of the
Wu-t'ung / Wu-hsien
in History and Fiction*

The Religious Roots of the *Journey to the South*

URSULA-ANGELIKA CEDZICH

Sinologists have recently shown an increased interest in the lives and ideas of the vast majority of the Chinese populace, those lacking formal Confucian education. This has led them to study aspects of Chinese culture that reflect the mentality of the ordinary Chinese people better than does the classical textual tradition—notably religion, iconography, opera, and, of course, popular literature. In this context stands a group of four Ming novels that had until recently been relatively unknown among Western scholars of Chinese literature.

These short novels are commonly known as the *Tung-yu chi* (*Journey to the East*), which narrates the adventures of the Eight Immortals,¹ the Nan-

To the memory of Anna Seidel.

This article is a completely revised version of my paper presented at the Conference on the Rituals and Scriptures of Chinese Popular Religion in Bodega Bay, California, in January 1990. I should like to thank Ann Tait and Phyllis Brooks, who read through earlier drafts, and Richard von Glahn, who made some valuable sources available to me. I am particularly grateful to David Johnson, whose criticism and detailed comments helped to improve the final version considerably.

¹The earliest edition of the *Tung-yu chi* 東遊記, attributed to Wu Yuan-t'ai 吳元泰 and printed by Yü Hsiang-tou 余像斗 around the turn of the seventeenth century, is preserved in the Naikaku Bunko 內閣文庫 in Tokyo. This illustrated woodblock print, which is divided into two *chüan* 卷 each comprising twenty-eight sections (*tse* 則), includes a short preface by Yü Hsiang-tou and bears the full title *Hsin-k'an pa-hsien ch'u-ch'u tung-yu chi* 新刊八仙出處東遊記. See Sun K'ai-ti 孫楷第, *Jih-pen Tung-ching so-chien hsiao-shuo shu-mu* 日本東京所見小說書目 (Peking: Jen-min wen-hsüeh ch'u-pan shê, 1981), pp. 84–85.

yu chi (*Journey to the South*), the subject of this study, the *Hsi-yu chi* (*Journey to the West*),² and the *Pei-yu chi* (*Journey to the North*), which describes the career of Chen-wu, the Emperor of the North, and was recently translated by Gary Seaman.³ Together they form a collection entitled *Ssu-yu chi* or *Four Journeys*. The earliest extant editions of this collection date from the Ch'ing dynasty,⁴ although presumably it was originally put together not long after the completion of its component parts, in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth centuries.⁵

The *Four Journeys* might have aroused no interest at all among scholars of classical literature had it not included the *Hsi-yu chi*, whose role in the formation of the famous novel of the same name (best known in the hundred-chapter edition attributed to Wu Ch'eng-en) had, of course, to be taken into account.⁶ For the same reason any scholarly attention paid to the other three parts of the *Ssu-yu chi* was usually restricted to the question of

²The earliest editions of *Hsi-yu chi* attributed to Yang Chih-ho 楊致和, who probably was a Fukienese publisher active toward the end of the sixteenth century, are transmitted in the *Ssu-yu chi* 四遊記 editions of 1811 and 1830. See notes 4 and 6 below.

³Gary Seaman, *Journey to the North: An Ethnohistorical Analysis and Annotated Translation of the Chinese Folk Novel Pei-yu chi* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987). See also Gary Seaman, "The Divine Authorship of *Pei-yu chi* [*Journey to the North*]," *Journal of Asian Studies* 45:3 (May 1986), pp. 483-95. Seaman also presented a paper on the aspects of Chinese funeral drama integrated in the *Nan-yu chi* 南遊記 (*Journey to the South*) at the 40th Annual Meeting of the Association of Asian Studies, 1988, in San Francisco.

⁴The earliest extant reprint of the *Ssu-yu chi* 四遊記, an illustrated version, dates from 1811; a slightly later edition of 1830 is obviously a facsimile reprint, based on four different prints, which presumably reproduces earlier editions from the Ming; a third Ch'ing edition printed at the Hsiao p'eng-lai hsien-kuan 小蓬萊仙館 publishing house dates probably from around the same time. See Sun K'ai-ti, *Chung-kuo t'ung-su hsiao-shuo shu-mu* 中國通俗小說書目 (Peking: Chung-kuo ta tz'u tien pien-tsu'an ch'u, 1933), 5, p. 234, and 9, p. 322; Liu Ts'un-yan 柳存仁, "Ssu-yu chi te Ming k'o-pen 四遊記的明刻本," *Ssu-yu chi* 四遊記 (Taipei: Holo t'u-shu ch'u-pan shê, 1980), p. 415; and Ch'en Hsin 陳新 (ed.), *T'ang San-tsang hsi-yu shih-e chuan; Hsi-yu chi chuan* 唐三藏西遊釋厄傳; 西遊記傳 (Peking: Jen-min wen-hsüeh ch'u-pan shê, 1984), p. 327.

⁵The suggestion that Yü Hsiang-tou himself, the putative author of the *Nan-yu chi* and the *Pei-yu chi*, compiled the first edition of the *Ssu-yu chi* by adding his own works to the earlier novels, *Ting-yu chi* and *Hsi-yu chi* (see Ch'en Hsin, *T'ang San-tsang hsi-yu shih-e chuan; Hsi-yu chi chuan*, p. 315), still has to be tested. Only a thorough examination of the various *Ssu-yu chi* editions could prove or disprove this point.

⁶For a detailed and convincing discussion of the role of the *Hsi-yu chi* version attributed to Yang Chih-ho and the *T'ang San-tsang hsi-yu shih-e chuan* 唐三藏西遊釋厄傳 ascribed to Chu Ting-ch'en 朱鼎臣 in the textual history of the hundred-chapter version of the *Hsi-yu chi*, see Glen Dudbridge, "The Hundred-chapter *Hsi-yu chi* and Its Early Versions," *Asia Major*, n.s. 14:2 (1969), pp. 141-91.

*Language Adaptation
in Taoist Liturgical Texts*

CHINFAL IEN

This paper is primarily concerned with Taoist liturgical texts intended for Min-speaking audiences. The texts to be examined are not found in the Tao-tsang, but rather in the Chuang-lin collection of Taiwanese Taoist texts.¹ I intend to show how imported non-Min texts were adjusted to the Min-speaking setting through a regular four-step process of contact, interaction, selection, and hybridization. The resulting hybrid texts can be identified by the many types of Min elements they contain.

Since writing is a visible record of speech, a proper understanding of the spoken language that lies behind texts is an important basis for their study. However, it is a mistake to assume that written language is subsidiary to or derivative from spoken language. As Vachek rightly argues, spoken and written language have complementary functions and each has a life of its own.² In this paper I rely on two distinctions: that between literary

I am indebted to David Johnson and William S.-Y. Wang for initiating this project, and offering advice and guidance. I am especially grateful to Johnson for trenchant comments which led me to reconsider and clarify my arguments. Thanks are also due to Allen Chun, Bernard Faure, Mei Tzulin, Michael R. Saso, Zhongwei Shen, Wang Chiukuei and the participants in the Conference on the Rituals and Scriptures of Chinese Popular Religion for extremely helpful suggestions on earlier versions of this paper.

¹Michael R. Saso 蘇海涵, ed., *Chuang-lin hsü Tao-tsang* 莊林纘道藏 [A collection of Taoist Manuals], 25 volumes (Taipei: Ch'eng-wen ch'u-pan shê, 1975).

²Josef Vachek, *Written Language Revisited* (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1989).

and colloquial forms of language, and that between Min and non-Min linguistic elements. The distinction between literary and colloquial forms should not be confused with the distinction between written and spoken language. For example, both literary and colloquial elements can occur in spoken language, and also in written language.

Within the colloquial we must distinguish between Min and non-Min forms. It is insufficient to refer simply to “vernacular” elements in liturgical texts;³ it is essential to specify whether the colloquial elements are indigenous Min elements, or derive from the spoken language of some other region.

There are norms in both literary and written colloquial Chinese. For example, most vernacular stories are written in a prestige colloquial that originated in North China during the Sung dynasty. But there are some texts that use less prestigious local colloquials.

Many texts in the Chuang-lin collection were originally written in the prestige colloquial and then adapted to the Min-speaking environment by incorporating Min colloquial elements. This shows very clearly how texts were affected by the need to communicate with an audience. Not all texts in the collection show the same degree of Min influence. Those with the most Min colloquial elements probably were aimed at audiences with the lowest levels of education, and hence had less prestige than texts with fewer Min elements.

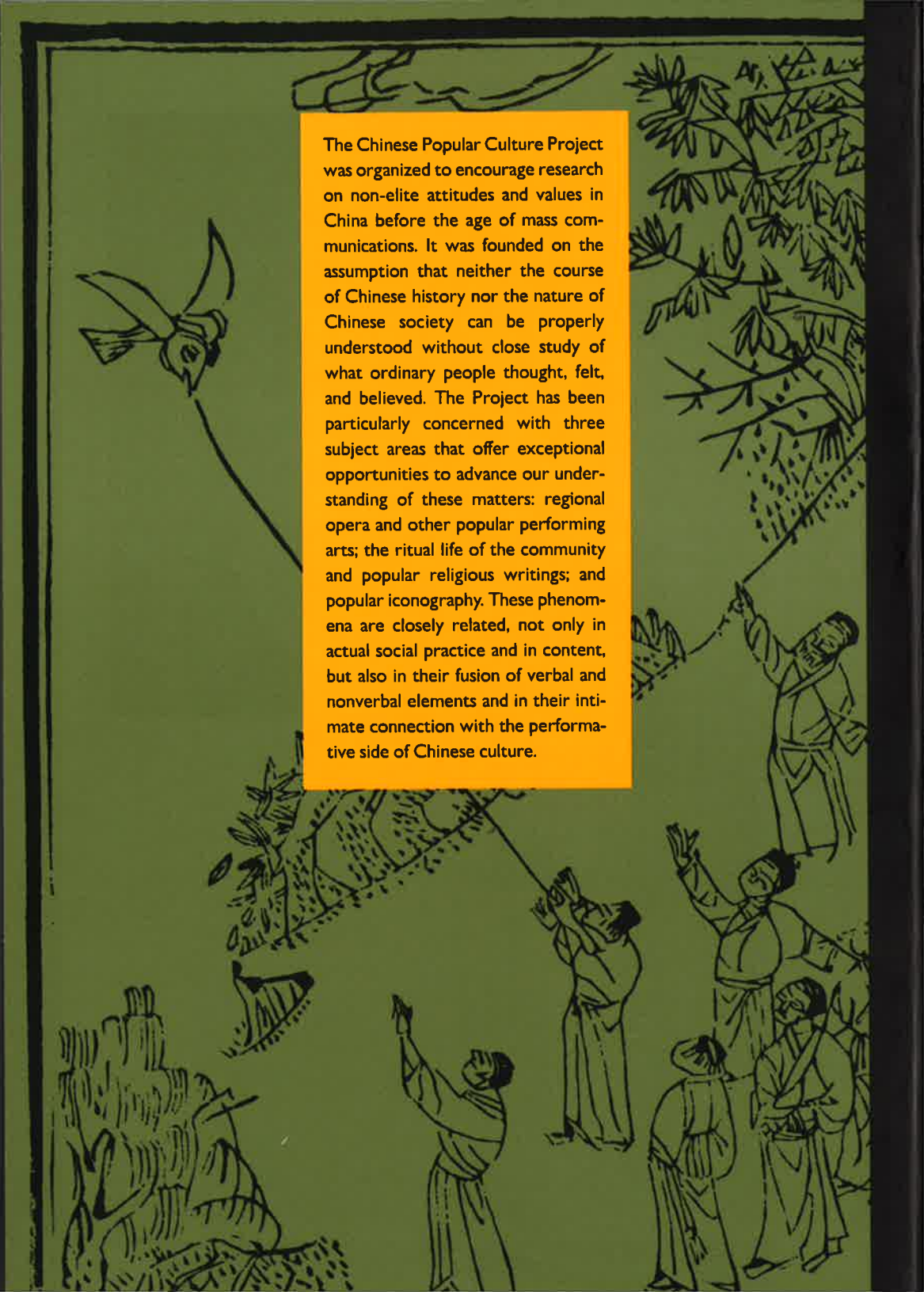
This paper is organized as follows: the first section discusses the concept of colloquial and literary strata and the distinction between Min and non-Min, the second discusses the principles of writing southern Min dialect words in Chinese characters, the third uses linguistic criteria such as lexicon, grammar, prosody, and sandhi phenomena to identify Southern Min elements in the Chuang-lin texts, the fourth proposes the concept of hybridization to explain the linguistic adaptation of the Taoist texts in the Chuang-lin collection, the fifth shows how orthodox Taoist texts differ from their counterparts that have been adapted for a Min-

³Kristofer Schipper 施博爾, “Vernacular and Classical Ritual in Taoism,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 45 (1985), pp. 21–57. In this article no attempt is made to distinguish between colloquials written in different dialects.

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The Chinese Popular Culture Project was organized to encourage research on non-elite attitudes and values in China before the age of mass communications. It was founded on the assumption that neither the course of Chinese history nor the nature of Chinese society can be properly understood without close study of what ordinary people thought, felt, and believed. The Project has been particularly concerned with three subject areas that offer exceptional opportunities to advance our understanding of these matters: regional opera and other popular performing arts; the ritual life of the community and popular religious writings; and popular iconography. These phenomena are closely related, not only in actual social practice and in content, but also in their fusion of verbal and nonverbal elements and in their intimate connection with the performative side of Chinese culture.