CONFUCIAN CULTURES OF AUTHORITY
Peter D. Hershock and Roger T. Ames, editors

Explores a wide range of Confucian-based cultures of authority in China.

This volume examines the values that have historically guided the negotiation of identity, both practical and ideal, in Chinese Confucian culture, considers how these values play into the conception and exercise of authority, and assesses their contemporary relevance in a rapidly globalizing world. Included are essays that explore the rule of ritual in classical Confucian political discourse; parental authority in early medieval tales; authority in writings on women; authority in the great and long-beloved folk novel of China Journey to the West; and the anti-Confucianism of Lu Xun, the twentieth-century writer and reformer. By examining authority in cultural context, these essays shed considerable light on the continuities and contentions underlying the vibrancy of Chinese culture.

While of interest to individual scholars and students, the book also exemplifies the merits of a thematic (rather than geographic or area studies) approach to incorporating Asian content throughout the curriculum. This approach provides increased opportunities for cross-cultural comparison and a forum for encouraging values-centered conversation in the classroom.

Peter D. Hershock is Coordinator of the Asian Studies Development Program at the East-West Center in Honolulu. His books include Chan Buddhism. Roger T. Ames is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Hawaii at Manoa and editor of Philosophy East & West. His many books include the translation of the classic Chinese work Sun Bin: The Art of Warfare, also published by SUNY Press.

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Roger T. Ames and Peter D. Hershock, editors

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HONG MAI’S RECORD OF THE LISTENER AND ITS SONG DYNASTY CONTEXT
Alister D. Inglis

The first book-length consideration of Hong Mai’s Record of the Listener, the Song dynasty text that has been an ongoing source of literary and social history.

Song dynasty historian Hong Mai (1123–1202) spent a lifetime on a collection of supernatural accounts, contemporary incidents, poems, and riddles, among other genres, which he entitled Record of the Listener (Yijian zhi). His informants included a wide range of his contemporaries, from scholar-officials to concubines, Buddhist monks, and soldiers, who helped Hong Mai leave one of the most vivid portraits of life and the different classes in China during this period. Originally comprising a massive 420 chapters, only a fraction survived the Mongol ravaging of China in the thirteenth century.

The present volume is the first book-length consideration of this important text, which has been an ongoing source of literary and social history. Alister D. Inglis explores fundamental questions surrounding the work and its making, such as theme, genre, authorial intent, the veracity of the accounts, and their circulation in both oral and written form. In addition to a brief outline of Hong Mai’s life that incorporates Hong’s autobiographical anecdotes, the book includes many intriguing stories translated into English for the first time, including Hong’s legendary thirty-one prefaces. Record of the Listener fills the gaps left by official Chinese historians who, unlike Hong Mai, did not comment on women’s affairs, ghosts and the paranormal, local crime, human sacrifice, little-known locales, and unofficial biographies.

“This is a painstaking inquiry into the process by which a major collection of zhiguai accounts came to be formed, as well as of how it was intended by its author-compiler and how it was received by readers from the time of its compilation to the twentieth century. The author’s fundamental point that Hong Mai understood himself to be compiling a sort of history of events as told by contemporary narrators, and that most of his readers also understood him to be engaged in this task, is of great intellectual importance.” — Robert Ford Campany, author of Strange Writing: Anomaly Accounts in Early Medieval China

Alister D. Inglis is Freeman Professor of Chinese Language and Literature at Simmons College.

A volume in the SUNY series in Chinese Philosophy and Culture
Roger T. Ames, editor

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GENDER AND STORY IN SOUTH INDIA
Leela Prasad, Ruth B. Bottigheimer, and Lalita Handoo, editors

Indian women scholars present and discuss tales about women, bringing new insights about gender and the moral universe of the folk narrative.

Gender and Story in South India presents exciting ethnographic research by Indian women scholars on Hindu and Muslim women-centered oral narratives. The book is unique for its geographic and linguistic focus on South India, for its inclusion of urban and rural locales of narration, and for its exploration of shared Hindu and Muslim female space. Drawing on the worldviews of South Indian female narrators in both everyday and performative settings, the contributors lead readers away from customary and comfortable assumptions about gender distinctions in India to experience a more dialogical, poetically ordered moral universe that is sensitive to women’s material and spiritual lives.

“Women’s expressive traditions remain understudied even after decades of feminist influence; this is partly because of the greater difficulties of research and translation they may pose. This book, with its offerings from South Asian female folklorists, makes a particular and significant contribution in this area.” — Ann Grodzins Gold, coauthor of Listen to the Heron’s Words: Reimagining Gender and Kinship in North India

Leela Prasad is Assistant Professor of Ethics and Indian Religions at Duke University. Ruth B. Bottigheimer teaches Comparative Literature at Stony Brook University, State University of New York, and is the author of several books, including Fairy Godfather: Straparola, Venice, and the Fairy Tale Tradition. Lalita Handoo is Associate Professor of Lexicography and Folklore at the Central Institute of Indian Languages in Mysore, India, and is the author of several books, including Structural Analysis of Kashmiri Folktales.

A volume in the SUNY series in Hindu Studies
Wendy Doniger, editor

CHINESE THEORIES OF FICTION
A Non-Western Narrative System
Ming Dong Gu

An ambitious, innovative work that proposes a distinctly Chinese theory of fiction.

In this innovative work, Ming Dong Gu examines Chinese literature and traditional Chinese criticism to construct a distinctly Chinese theory of fiction and places it within the context of international fiction theory. He argues that because Chinese fiction, or xiaoshuo, was produced in a tradition very different from that of the West, it has formed a system of fiction theory that cannot be adequately accounted for by Western fiction theory grounded in mimesis and realism. Through an inquiry into the macrocosm of Chinese fiction, the art of formative works, and theoretical data in fiction commentaries and intellectual thought, Gu explores the conceptual and historical conditions of Chinese fiction in relation to European and world fiction. In the process, Gu critiques and challenges some accepted views of Chinese fiction and provides a theoretical basis for fresh approaches to fiction study in general and Chinese fiction in particular. Such masterpieces as the Jin Ping Mei (The Plum in a Golden Vase) and the Hongloumeng (The Story of the Stone) are discussed at length to advance his notion of fiction and fiction theory.

“The author’s efforts to theorize and to place Chinese fiction in the ‘transnational’ context are refreshing and should be applauded. Many of his arguments are provocative or thought-provoking, compelling us to rethink many important issues in the study of Chinese literature and particularly Chinese fiction and to confront some thorny questions, such as that of the generic nature of Chinese fiction.” — Martin W. Huang, author of Negotiating Masculinities in Late Imperial China

Ming Dong Gu is Associate Professor of Modern Languages at Rhodes College and author of Chinese Theories of Reading and Writing: A Route to Hermeneutics and Open Poetics, also published by SUNY Press.

A volume in the SUNY series in Chinese Philosophy and Culture
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