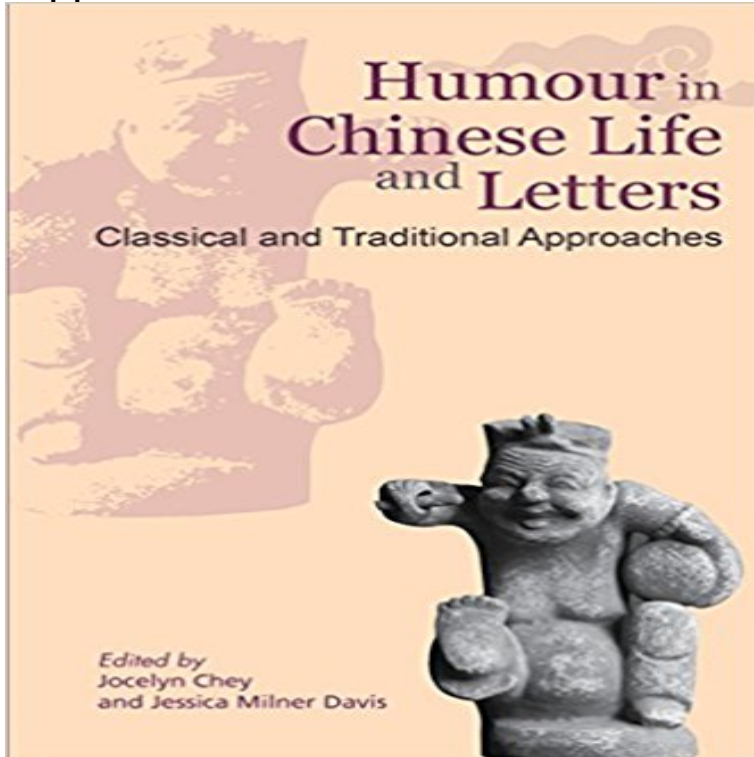


Humour in Chinese Life and Letters: Classical and Traditional Approaches



How do Chinese societies approach humour in personal life and in the public sphere? This book addresses the etymological difficulties of humour as a concept in Chinese language and explores connections and contrasts with Western styles of humour. Periods discussed range from earliest times to the beginning of the twentieth century, covering many different forms of humour - verbal, visual and behavioural. The book brings together internationally respected scholars in Chinese studies with other specialists to explore humour through modes of enquiry in cultural and political history, linguistics, literature, drama and the history and philosophy of science. The unifying focus of the book is humour and laughter in their many forms in Chinese tradition and culture. Chapters are written in a common style. Readers more generally interested in humour and laughter not well-understood forms of human behaviour will also find the book casts light on significant differences in their concepts and practice between cultures. Jocelyn Chey is a visiting professor in the School of Languages and Cultures, University of Sydney, and a consultant on Australia-China relations. She left an academic career to serve for over twenty years in the Departments of Overseas Trade and Foreign Affairs, and was also director of the China Branch of the International Wool Secretariat. She served as Consul-General in Hong Kong from 1992-95. She was presented with the Order of Australia in 2009 for her contribution to the development of Australia-China relations. Jessica Milner Davis is an honorary research associate in the School of Letters, Art and Media, University of Sydney, and convenes the Australasian Humour Studies Network (www.sydney.edu.au/humourstudies). She served as Deputy Chancellor of the University of New South Wales in Sydney

and is a Life Member of Clare Hall, Cambridge. President of the International Society for Humor Studies in 1996 and 2001, she is an Editorial Board member of *Humor: International Journal for Humor Research* and other journals and publishes on comedy and cross-cultural humour studies. An excellent insight into classical and traditional approaches. Chinese humour is unique and important, and there has long been a need for an erudite and comprehensive account of its nature, philosophy and history. Christie Davies, Emeritus Professor of Sociology, University of Reading, UK It gives me great pleasure to endorse this wonderful publication co-edited by esteemed academics. This book will be very helpful to anyone wanting to understand or do business with China. Patrick WU Po Kong, Standing Committee Member of The Chinese General Chamber of Commerce, Hong Kong *Humour in Chinese Life and Letters* is a highly engaging, thought-provoking, and most enjoyable book. Breaking new ground in the comparative study of humour and laughter, this book has shown me that many things are found rather than lost in translation. Giseline Kuipers, Norbert Elias Professor of Sociology, Erasmus University & University of Amsterdam A timely contribution to the sparse literature on the history and expression of humour in Chinese society. Carefully annotated with original Chinese sources, this is a valuable reference and an enjoyable introduction to a poorly understood but integral aspect of everyday Chinese life. Kee Pookong, Professor and Director, Asia Institute, University of Melbourne *Humor is serious business anywhere. It can also be dangerous. Humour in Chinese Life and Letters*, Jocelyn Chey and Jessica Milner Daviss two-volume collection of essays on aspects of humor in Chinese literature, daily life and art over the last three millennium, is a remarkable testament to the enduring importance of humor throughout the Chinese dynasties up to the present, to elements of its continuity, and

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