Christian Spring Couplets in Contemporary North Fujian

Anthropological Perspectives

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RELIGION AND GLOBALISATION

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ISAC
Initiative for the Study of Asian Catholics

ARI
ASIA RESEARCH INSTITUTE
National University of Singapore

Christian Material

Chinese Christian Calisthenics

Statues of Mother Mary in Asia

Christian Spring Couplets

The materialization of Catholicism in Taiwanese homes

ELDERLY RESIDENTS

WEDDING

NEIGHBOR RELIGION

CHRISTIAN

愿我的祈祷上升
到你台前。 在你面
前有如馨香。
主恩浩荡恩波滋万有
圣神宠照神爱暖万家
救死亡永享
愿我的祈祷上升
到你台前。在你面
前有如馨香。
战三仇大获全胜
奉献箱
奉献箱

ARGUMENT 1

- Spring Couplets create a **liminal space** where humans and non-humans socialize
- However, Chinese ways to produce space are **evolving**
- Chinese **Christians are in tune** with their broader religious and social environment

Research Site: NANPING (North Fujian)

Jinan
济南市
SHAANXI
SHANDONG
Qingdao
青岛市
South Korea
Japan
Yellow Sea
Osaka
大阪
Xi'An
西安市
HENAN
Fukuoka
福岡
JIANGSU
Nanjing
南京市
Suzhou
苏州市
Shanghai
上海
HUBEI
ANHUI
Wuhan
武汉市
Hangzhou
杭州市
East China Sea
Chongqing
重庆
ZHEJIANG
GUIZHOU
HUNAN
JIANGXI
Nanping
FUJIAN
Taipei
臺北
GUANGXI
GUANGDONG
Taiwan
Shenzhen
深圳市
Hanoi
HAINAN
Philippine Sea

- **Gospel Church** (+- 4,000 Churchgoers)
- **Christian Assembly** (+- 1,000 churchgoers)
- **Adventist Church** (+-100 churchgoers)
- **True Jesus Church** (+- 600 churchgoers)
- **Two Catholic communities** (+- 150 churchgoers in the registered side and +- 400 churchgoers in the unregistered side)

主賜平安
年年喜納平安福
歲歲欣蒙快乐春
哈利路亞
全督家慶享平安
福音門第常春乐
神恩浩蕩
福音真理福滿人間
恩主救贖恩盈大地
屋盈恩
家屋落成欣主愛
高堂筑就樂神恩
生命的道路

春回大地千峰秀
日暖神州万木荣
逢盛世东风惠晚
过佳节春色宜人
万里江山万里锦
遍树桃李满树春
柳沐春风含笑色
桃浴艳阳带笑容
锦上添花花似锦
诗中有画画如诗
德政遍结幸福果
彩云常护如意花
神州万水清如许
盛世千山翠欲流
红杏枝头鸣喜鹊
绿柳丛中唱黄莺

門
迎
喜

Spring Couplets in context

Spring Couplets in context

萬事如意
滿堂歡樂迎富貴
合家團圓賀新春
出外求財財到手
三星高照
天地人三合同春

春新迎喜
五福臨門
神州浩瀚花宮路上氣如虹
玉宇澄清大治年頭花似錦
好運來四季平安
猪年到吉祥如意

財源廣進
家興
福來

Protestant household

恩光普照
主爱深廣似海洋
神恩浩大如涌泉

福
共创平安延平 共建和谐社会
2018
1 2 3 4 5 6
7 8 9 10 11 12
平安喜乐
傳福音除虛清心
宣聖道移風易俗
愛

SAMPLE FROM THE

TRUE JESUS CHURCH

(TJC)

恩光普照
TJC
主爱深长万户欢
TJC
神恩无限千家喜

Catholic Couplets

恩隆賜主
神臨大地千山竞秀
主降神州万木争荣

德门主賜平安福
懿家人迎富貴春
福

Couplets in context

財源廣進
福星永照平安家
財神到
財神到聚寶地

財源廣進

財源廣進

SUMMARY

福壽雙全
平安二字值千金
和順滿門添百福

福壽高照

- A distinct space between public & private spheres where civility & hospitality are performed

- A space of hospitality for all beings, including the deities and ancestors honored by the household

What About for Christians?

基督教 年历表
神的神能已将一切关乎生命和虔诚的事赐给我们，皆因我们认识那用自己荣耀和美德召我们的主。 ——彼后1:3
爱国爱教
2019 己亥年
荣神益人
一月 January
二月 February
三月 March
四月 April
五月 May
六月 June
七月 July
八月 August
九月 September
十月 October
十一月 November
十二月 December

登山宝训
福
耶和華以為
神恩浩大普天同慶
主愛深長萬世尊榮
愛
惟有愛心能造就人
命令的總歸就是愛
福音真理传万代
新宅蒙恩纳福
平屋喜乐平安
信真神天天喜乐
耶穌時時平安
緣同守信望愛
要共行善善美
陰榮光蒙神愛
家和睦感主恩
Made in Germany

恩隆賜主
主降神州万木争荣
神临大地千山竞秀

Christians use this Chinese way of producing a semi-public place of hospitality where people and God are honored together

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PLACE 2: FUZHOU

SUMMER

Historical District

吉慶有餘
502
福
鹿銜壽草福臨門
豬拱家門春貼畫

心想事成
807
福
平安如意人多福

Protestant door in Fuzhou

Catholic

Catholic

ARGUMENT 2

- **In Fuzhou, Christian Spring couplets remain present in the urban landscape but**
  - **As a marker of space (less as a maker of a liminal space)**
  - **Becoming fewer in new housing buildings**

- **The spatial reconfiguration of Spring couplets materializes the transformation of modern families and of their role in defining proper relations between private & public spheres, humans & God, etc.**

PLACE 3: HONG KONG

Tel: 3529 2020
TOWNGAS

SHORT CATHOLIC COUPLETS

Kowloon Methodist Church

In Hong Kong,

- **The socio-religious functions of spring couplets are evolving rapidly and distinctively.**
- **Institutional Churches seem more active in re-interpreting the socio-religious value of Christian Spring couplets.**
- **Among Christians, they tends to indirectly become a 'Catholic' thing.**

CONCLUSION

- There is nothing specifically Christian or not Christian, Catholic or Protestant, about Spring couplets – yet, they often hold a religious dimension

- The transformation & relative rarefaction of Spring couplets illustrates how the spatial & socio-religious fabric of China is something ALIVE, constantly evolving.

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Chinese Christian Couplets

华人基督徒的春联

Share a photo of your 2025 Spring Couplet!

分享您的2025春联照片！

https://www.isac-research.org/chinesecouplets

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Three tools that we are collectively developing **to support scholars** & **strengthen social scientific research** on Asian Catholics in contemporary societies:

PILOT RESEARCH PROJECTS

ACADEMIC CONFERENCES

PERBUALAN

Communicating Beyond Academia

Three tools that we are collectively developing to bring social scientific knowledge about Asian Catholics to broader audiences:

ONLINE ROUNDTABLES

BLOG: THE OBSERVATORY

PODCAST SERIES

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THANK YOU

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