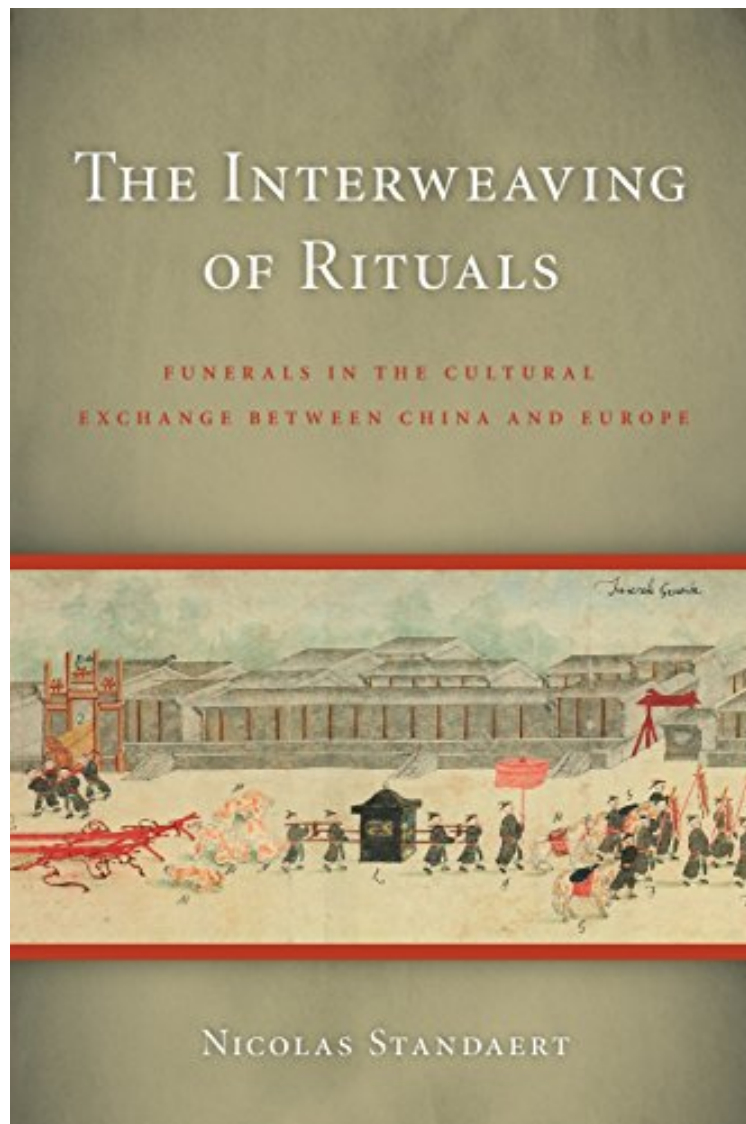


The Interweaving of Rituals: Funerals in the Cultural Exchange Between China and Europe

Nicolas Standaert

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Nicolas Standaert : The Interweaving of Rituals: Funerals in the Cultural Exchange Between China and Europe before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Interweaving of Rituals: Funerals in the Cultural Exchange Between China and Europe:

The death of the Italian Jesuit Matteo Ricci in China in 1610 was the occasion for demonstrations of European rituals appropriate for a Catholic priest and also of Chinese rituals appropriate to the country hosting the Jesuit community. Rather than burying Ricci immediately in a plain coffin near the church, according to their European practice, the Jesuits followed Chinese custom and kept Ricci's body for nearly a year in an air-tight Chinese-style coffin and asked the emperor for burial ground outside the city walls. Moreover, at Ricci's funeral itself, on their own initiative the Chinese performed their funerary rituals, thus starting a long and complex cultural dialogue in which they took the lead during the next century. *The Interweaving of Rituals* explores the role of ritual - specifically rites related to death and funerals - in cross-cultural exchange, demonstrating a gradual interweaving of Chinese and European ritual practices at all levels of interaction in seventeenth-century China. This includes the interplay of traditional and new rituals by a Christian community of commoners, the grafting of Christian funerals onto established Chinese practices, and the sponsorship of funeral processions for Jesuit officials by the emperor. Through careful observation of the details of funerary practice, Nicolas Standaert illustrates the mechanics of two-way cultural interaction. His thoughtful analysis of the ritual exchange between two very different cultural traditions is especially relevant in today's world of global ethnic and religious tension. His insights will be of interest to a broad range of scholars, from historians to anthropologists to theologians.

"Nicolas Standaert's impressive research on funerary rites in China and Europe in the seventeenth century shows again that we cannot use a universal recipe in the study of cultural exchanges. . . . This book is a compelling example of a historiographical narrative that takes into account the two-way nature of Chinese and Catholic relations." Marco Musillo, *European History Quarterly*, November 2013 "A fascinating tale about cultural exchange in the early history of East-West relations." *China International* "The author deftly traces the emergence of a new Chinese Christian identity in the seventeenth century. Along the way, Nicolas Standaert proposes an important new framework for analyzing cultural exchanges in situations where an entity other than the West plays a dominant role. *The Interweaving of Rituals* is a welcome corrective to a scholarship that at times has emphasized incommensurability, dominance, and the impossibility of understanding." *The Historian* "In this systematic study of funeral rituals, Nicolas Standaert has assembled all relevant sources from western-language documents and Chinese records to weave together a panoramic tapestry of the evolution of funeral rituals among Chinese Christians from the time of Matteo Ricci to the eve of Cardinal Tournon's visit to China." *Archivum Historicum* "The book will appeal broadly to researchers who are interested in intercultural relations, as well as those focusing on religion in China or late imperial culture. The numerous illustrations of tombs, mourning clothes, and funerary processions will captivate general audiences." *Journal of Asian Studies* "Standaert's topic is an inspired choice, and the result is a readable and thought-provoking study with relevance well beyond the study of Christianity in China." *Journal of Chinese Religions* "Nicolas Standaert offers readers surprising perspectives on the often shunned topics of death, commemoration of the deceased, and interment. . . . The text contains a generous number of illustrations from a variety of printed and archival sources that depict Chinese and Sino-European funeral scenes and processions, plus schema of grave plot-design and funeral apparatus. [Standaert's] contributions to the field are extensive and tireless." *Sino-Western Cultural Relations Journal XXXI* (2009) "Standaert goes to the very core of socio-religious inculturation, by means of analysing the changing nature of funerary rites in Christian, Buddhist and Confucian ritual communities." *China Quarterly* (June 2009) "A valuable new study of a subject that has attracted surprisingly scant attention, that of religious ritual. . . . The arguments made in this study are solidly grounded in copious citations from printed sources in Chinese as well as a host of Western languages." *Renaissance Quarterly* "This book is an outstanding work of original scholarship. Standaert uses a huge range of published and unpublished materials in many European languages as well as in Chinese. Several of the texts he discusses, such as the set of Chinese Christian funeral instructions from Guangdong Province, will be new to nearly all China scholars and are likely to be of great interest in themselves for the study of Chinese rituals and practices. The interpretation is original and the scholarship is so strong that one would be hard put to disagree with the conclusions." Henrietta Harrison, Harvard University "The *Interweaving of Rituals* is one of the most surprising books on Chinese history that I have ever read. The author's command of sources in Chinese, Latin, and vernacular European languages is exemplary. It is a book of immense erudition, worn lightly." Timothy Brook, University of British Columbia From the Publisher "This book is an outstanding work of original scholarship. Standaert uses a huge range of published and unpublished materials in many European languages as well as in Chinese. Several of the texts he discusses, such as the set of Chinese Christian funeral instructions from Guangdong Province, will be new to nearly all China scholars and are likely to be of great interest in themselves for the study of Chinese rituals and practices. The interpretation is original and the scholarship is so strong that one would be hard put to disagree with the conclusions." - Henrietta Harrison, Harvard University "The *Interweaving of Rituals* is one of the most surprising books on Chinese history that I have ever read. The author's command of sources in Chinese, Latin, and vernacular European languages is exemplary. It is a book of immense erudition, worn lightly." - Timothy Brook, University of British Columbia