

Orientální ústav AV ČR zve na přednášku

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‘Sage’ and ‘Saint’ – Canonization in Confucianism and Christianity

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Abstrakt: As exemplars of practice and transmitters of doctrine, Sages of Confucianism possess a family resemblance with Saints in Christianity. This talk compares Confucian rites of enshrinement with canonization of Saints in Catholicism so as to call attention to unique characteristics of Confucianism as a religion. To this end, four aspects of sagehood and sainthood are examined from four perspectives: the rites for recommending suitable candidates; the standards and qualifications for sagehood and sainthood; an analysis of the beliefs from the perspective of class; and the content of those beliefs. In early twentieth century the German sociologist Max Weber (1864–1920) had previously researched the correlation of Confucian belief and membership in certain social classes; however, much of Confucianism’s characteristics as a state cult and a public religion remain to be explored. This talk uses a cross-cultural comparison of Confucian and Christian rites to reveal those characteristics. To generalize: Significant differences exist between Confucianism and Christianity in that while the former is a state cult and civic religion, the latter is a private religion responsive to the well-being and misfortunes of its individual believers. Those differences may account for the inability of modern Chinese intellectuals who are immersed in the model of the private religion to grasp the religious nature of Confucianism.



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