The Chained Mother of Eight, Missing Girls, and Religious Geography of China

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The Chained Mother of Eight in Feng County of Xuzhou Prefecture in Jiangsu Province has caught the media attention since January 2022. Many commentaries have pointed out the problems in many layers, including human trafficking, enslavement of women, and corruption of officials. This talk will examine one of the root problems – the shortage of girls due to the son-preference cultural tradition. Census data and GIS methods are used to analyze the imbalance of sex ratios that vary widely in China’s counties. Does religion make any difference, if so, by which religion and in what ways? This talk will introduce the open-access book Atlas of Religion in China (https://brill.com/view/title/36038) and the online resource of OSAGE-China (https://globaleast.org/osage), and present the key findings of a study titled “Religious Geography and County-Level Sex Ratios in China.”

Fenggang Yang is Professor of Sociology, the founding Director of the Center on Religion and the Global East at Purdue University, the founding editor of the Review of Religion and Chinese Society, and the recipient of multiple prestigious grants. His research focuses on the sociology of religion, religious change in China and immigrant religion in the United States. He is the author of Atlas of Religion in China: Social and Geographical Contexts (2018), Religion in China: Survival and Revival under Communist Rule (2012), and Chinese Christians in America: Conversion, Assimilation, and Adhesive Identities (1999), and the co-editor of more than ten books. Among his numerous journal articles, two won distinguished article awards. His media interviews have appeared on the National Public Radio, New York Times, Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, USA Today, Time, Economist, CNN, BBC, etc.

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