



## Asian visions of authority : religion and the modern states of East and Southeast Asia /

Keyes, Charles F.

Kendall, Laurel

Hardacre, Helen (

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"Since the Meiji Restoration in 1868 initiated a new era in Asian history, the rulers of various Asian states have sought to control, marginalize, or suppress religious communities within their territories to ensure that these communities do not promote visions in conflict with those of the state. It is now apparent that the modernization and nation-building projects of Asian states in that era have not only failed to subordinate religious authority to that of the state, but have created a crisis of authority that has led many people in these countries to turn to religious visions of authority other than those sanctioned by their states." "The essays in this volume together make an important statement about the nature of Asian religions and societies in the late twentieth century, and demonstrate that, despite the modernization of East and Southeast Asia, religious activity has remained resilient and pervasive. As Jean Comaroff writes in her Epilogue to this work, " ... the 'religions of Asia' were often invoked as evidence for a global evolutionary scheme in which Europe emerged as the birthplace of secular reason, itself the sine qua non of modern life. Yet the present essays draw on Asian history and ethnography to assert ... that religion and ritual are crucial in the life of 'modern' nations and communities, in Asia as elsewhere. They urge us, in collective voice, to distrust disenchantment, to rethink the telos of development that still informs the models of much mainstream social science." "The noted scholars contributing to this volume examine some of the tensions and conflicts between states and religious communities over the scope of religious views of the communities, the consequences of state-imposed definitions of religion, and the religious basis for resistance to state authority. These studies focus on Japan, Korea, the People's Republic of China, Taiwan, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Cambodia."

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- (+34) 91 456 03 60
- [informa@baratz.es](mailto:informa@baratz.es)