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Titolo	The age of irreverence : a new history of laughter in China // Christopher Rea
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ISBN	0-520-95959-0
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Collana	Studies of the Weatherhead East Asian Institute, Columbia University
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Soggetti	Chinese wit and humor - History and criticism Popular culture - China - History - 19th century
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Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references.
Nota di contenuto	Breaking into laughter -- Jokes -- Play -- Mockery -- Farce -- The invention of humor.
Sommario/riassunto	"The Age of Irreverence tells the story of why China's entry into the modern age was not just traumatic, but uproarious. As the Qing dynasty slumped toward extinction, prominent writers compiled jokes into collections they called "histories of laughter." During the first years of the Republic, novelists, essayists and illustrators used humorous allegories to make veiled critiques of the new government. But political and cultural discussion repeatedly erupted into invective, as critics jeered and derided rivals in public. Farceurs drew followings in the popular press, promoting a culture of practical joking and buffoonery. Eventually, these various expressions of hilarity proved so offensive to high-brow writers that they launched a campaign to transform the tone of public discourse, hoping to displace the old forms of mirth with a new one they called youmo (humor). Christopher Rea argues that this era--from the 1890s up to the 1930s--transformed how Chinese people thought and talked about what is funny. Focusing on five cultural expressions of laughter--jokes, play, mockery, farce, and humor--he reveals the textures of comedy that were a part of everyday life during modern China's first "age of irreverence." This new history offers an unprecedented and up-close look at a neglected facet of Chinese cultural modernity, and discusses its legacy in the language

and styles of Chinese humor today.--Provided by publisher.
