

in den jeweiligen Disziplinen eingehegten Fragestellungen zuwendet, stärker Ausdruck einer Suche denn einer "Konfession" oder gar "Profession" ist: einen Standpunkt zu finden, von dem aus sich das exterritorialisierte Subjekt der Moderne zu behaupten vermag, ohne dabei der Gewalt, der regressiven Reaktion oder dem Fatalismus anheim zu fallen. Das tritt freilich noch unmittelbar vor Augen, sobald man die ethnologischen Arbeiten neben die Dichtung legt. Die Herausgeber weisen darauf an einigen Stellen hin; so wie man ihre über zweihundertseitige "Einführung in Leben und Denken" ohnedies als umfangreichen Forschungsauftrag für künftige Steiner-Exegeten lesen kann. Deren Mühe dürfte sich lohnen (Adler und Fardon bereiten den Oxford-Kontext systematisch auf, zum kontinentaleuropäischen finden sich einige kluge Gedanken in Michael Macks Studie "Anthropology as Memory. Elias Canetti's and Franz Baermann Steiner's Responses to the Shoah". Tübingen 2001).

Last but not least hervorzuheben ist Brigitte Luchesis Übersetzungsleistung – wenngleich in den Vorlesungen einige Sottisen des Originals notwendig ausbleichen, bleibt doch die spezifisch Steinersche Aneignung und Überformung des aus Umgangssprache und scholastischer Argumentation verschweißten britischen Dozierstils nachvollziehbar, als Geste auch der Selbstverwandlung, die für das Werk des Anthropologen unabdingbar ist. Ulrich van Loyen

**Stewart, Pamela J., and Andrew Strathern** (eds.): *Asian Ritual Systems. Syncretisms and Ruptures*. Durham: Carolina Academic Press, 2007. 295 pp. ISBN 978-1-59460-157-6. Prix: \$ 40.00

This rich, interdisciplinary collection of essays was originally published as a 2005 special issue (19.1) in the *Journal of Ritual Studies* on "Ritual and the Ritual Expression of Identity in Asia." The editors are doing the field an important service by issuing them as a book in the Ritual Studies Monograph Series, thus reaching a much wider audience. Scholars working on Asian religion and ritual will obviously find this volume useful. But the book should also appeal to those who have a comparativist interest in the social-embeddedness of rituals and how rituals and religious conceptions inform and are in turn informed by historical changes. Lured by the title of the book, one might ask: What is a ritual system? What make Asian ritual systems interesting or theoretically significant? Though the editors and the authors do not provide explicit answers to these questions – which is a pity, leaving the readers themselves to draw these theoretical conclusions – the insights and ethnographic richness of the individual essays are reward enough.

The editors Pamela J. Stewart and Andrew Strathern are specialists of Melanesia (especially Papua New Guinea), but in recent years they have developed comparativist research interests in East Asia, especially among the Austronesian-speaking aboriginals in Taiwan. Beside introducing the chapters, in the Introduction the

editors explore cultural revivalism among the Taiwanese aboriginals in the more liberal political environment of post-Martial Law Taiwan as well as the reconfigurations of the Mazu cult networks in Taiwan in the wake of expanded Taiwan mainland interactions, which include rekindling the links between Mazu temples in Taiwan and their "ancestral" temples on the mainland, rebuilt in the reform period.

Two chapters are by musicologists (given the importance of music and sound-making in most rituals, scholars of ritual can learn much from ethno/musicology). Joseph S. C. Lam writes on the ritual life and musical insignia of the Song Dynasty emperor Huizong (1082–1135). An artistically accomplished emperor, Huizong supported an extravagant ritual life at court and in the whole country, and sponsored the composition and performance of grand ritual music. Ironically, when the Liao (Jurchens) captured Huizong, their ritual of humiliation for him and other Song captives was accompanied by Liao music. Yu Siu Wah writes on the cultural negotiations that went on in the rituals of the 1997 Hong Kong sovereignty transfer from Great Britain to China. He shows a Communist party state that is an astute manipulator of political rituals in an age of mass media (exemplified in the annual televised Lunar New Year extravaganza), how the transfer rituals featured icons as well as music and dance performances that accentuated the Chinese government's sovereignty and authority, and how some Hong Kong people resisted such assertions by the "new master." One may disagree with Yu in his interpretation of the death theme in Tan Dun's "Symphony 1997: Heaven, Earth, and Man," a centerpiece in the handover concert; it could be about the death of British colonial rule over the Crown Colony but not the death of Hong Kong itself, whose rebirth was plentifully symbolised.

Anthropologist Marc L. Moskowitz's chapter looks at the ritual performances (and trickeries) of an enterprising householder Daoist master ("Daoist Master Bob") in the city of Gaoxiong in southern Taiwan, the changing relationships he had with his clients (mostly women), and the ways in which he embedded his ritual efficacy and trustworthiness in a performed persona of moral authority (though he eventually skipped town after having made a lot of money). The stories Moskowitz recounts of box magic, a nighttime graveyard outing, and other antics of Daoist Master Bob make fun reading. The chapter closes with a useful discussion of individualistic religiosity.

A scholar of Chinese religions, Philip Clart analyzes a spirit-writing cult in the central Taiwanese city of Taizhong and their making of new morality books (*shanshu*) through séances. Morality books are didactic works exhorting people to virtuous acts (mostly couched in religious terms, e.g., tales of karmic retribution) and have a long history in China, but in 20th century Taiwan it enjoyed a surprising resurgence. Drawing upon Jan Assmann's work on "cultural memory," Clart interprets these modern divine-authored morality books, especially their narrative orientation, as folk historiography and a

way of affirming traditional values in a climate of rapid social change. One such book features Stalin reincarnated as a pig about to be slaughtered in the abattoir. These spirit-writing cults would compare interestingly with the US channelling groups examined by the anthropologist Michael F. Brown (*The Channeling Zone. American Spirituality in an Anxious Age*. Cambridge 1997).

Historian Joseph Tse-Hei Lee's chapter is on the politics of conversion to Christianity in rural Chaoshou in southern China in the late 19th century. In this highly militarized region with frequent intervillage/lineage fights, many communities appealed to the power and influence of Western missionaries for extra leverage, spurring mass conversions that followed lines of kin and lineage loyalty and rivalry. One case study shows how two rival sublineages both converted to Christianity, but one to Scottish Presbyterian and the other to American Baptist churches respectively.

Historian Paul R. Katz's piece is on the post-Mao revival of popular religious festivals in Pucheng, a small rural town of about 7,000 inhabitants in Zhejiang Province. Like many other locales in China, Pucheng has a rich popular religious tradition, with temples dedicated to various deities, many of which have been revived. Katz focusses on the ritual competition and rivalry between the two prominent factions in Pucheng: the fishing/commercial community of West Gate and the agricultural community of East Gate. Each faction has a number of temples dedicated to the same deity, Duke Yan, but they compete fiercely to outdo each other in lavishness of their processions, rites, performances, and banquets, which Katz interprets as the conversion of wealth into symbolic capital as well as the recreation of communal identities. One is reminded of the annual, early-Spring, ritualized rock fight in the town of Lukang described by the anthropologist Donald DeGlopper (*Lukang. Commerce and Community in a Chinese City*. Albany 1995), in which members of different lineage groups face each other off and throw rocks at one another, and blood spilled is seen as bringing good fortune for the communities.

Historian Michael Szonyi examines a ghost cult centered on a woman named Wang Yulan on Jinmen (Quemoy, a small island off the coast of Xiamen of Fujian Province). Jinmen was a heavily militarized Cold War flashpoint, one of the frontier zones between the Communist Block and the anti-Communist "Free World" ever since the retreat of the Nationalists to Taiwan. Szonyi shows how ordinary villagers, Nationalist soldiers and officers, and much later tourists from Taiwan invest divergent meanings onto the woman and her cult, revealing intricate interactions between geopolitics and Chinese religiosity.

Scholar of Chinese religion Eric Reinders's chapter is an interesting symbolic analysis of the meanings given to certain postures signifying obeisance and disobedience, using the cases of the non-bowing of Buddhist monks (to laity including the emperor, parents, and ancestors) and Protestants, the ideology of postural erectness of the latter preventing them from bowing to any-

one. Such insistence on correct postures illustrates the crucial link between ritual uses of the body and religious identities. The lone non-China piece in the volume is on the development of Indian Buddhist esoteric rituals by Vesna A. Wallace, a specialist of South Asian religions. Highly informative, its focus on liturgical, doctrinal, and symbolic aspects contrasts sharply with the other essays' more sociopolitical orientations.

In the Epilogue the editors recount their travel-cum-fieldwork peregrinations in East Asia (Taiwan, China, Korea, Okinawa) and relate their findings with parallel processes in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands (e.g., conversion to Christianity, ritual change, the revitalization of indigenous knowledge, etc.). Not to take the considerable merits away from the volume, but the book has the sloppiest and bizarrest index I have ever seen. While most of the index items seem straightforward, there are, inexplicably, separate entries for "bow" and "bowing"; "Communist" and "Communists"; "cult" and "cults"; "Daoists" and "Taoists"; "deities," "deity," and "gods"; "festival" and "festivals"; "ghost" and "ghosts"; "lineage" and "lineages"; "medium" and "mediums"; "performance" and "performances"; "Presbyterian" and "Presbyterians"; "ritual" and "rituals"; "rupture" and "ruptures"; "sacrifice," "sacrifices," and "sacrificial ceremony"; "song" and "songs"; "Song" and "Song dynasty"; "tradition," "traditional," and "traditions." Most bizarrely, the entry "Yan" (glossed as "hatred") points to mentions of a cited Chinese scholar surnamed Yan, the bibliographic entry of his cited work (both in Lee's chapter), a Chinese deity called Duke Yan (Katz), a Chinese girl whose given name is Yan (only here meaning "hatred") (Szonyi), and another deity channelled through spirit writing in Taiwan called Yan Yuan Fuzi (Clart). There are also no subentries for entries with far too numerous indexed pages (there are scores of indexed pages for "body," "China," "community," "cult(s)," "deity/deities," "history," "identity," "performance(s)," "power," "state," "Taiwan," "temples," not to mention "religion" and "ritual(s)"). As an important scholarly apparatus, the index certainly deserves more attention and care.

Adam Yuet Chau

**Taylor, Philip:** *Cham Muslims of the Mekong Delta. Place and Mobility in the Cosmopolitan Periphery*. Singapore: NUS Press; Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2007. 313 pp. ISBN 978-9971-69-361-9; ISBN 978-87-7694-009-6. Price: £ 14.99

In this welcome study, Taylor adds substantially to the growing interest in the Cham Muslims of the lower Mekong delta in Southern Vietnam. The Cham Muslims are a tiny minority living in the borderland where the Mekong River flows from Cambodia into Vietnam. Taylor builds on the existing ethnography on the Cham, but adds an innovative perspective of the Cham community by providing a picture of a minority in motion that makes creative use of cultural, spatial, and economic resources to secure their survival in a