

song which she and Zin were unable to decipher later. Clearly, Linda Young had the aim of translating some Shan texts into English as her main goal, using Chinese and Standard Thai as a bridge to that end. The work she has done will prove to be a useful record and reference point for future scholarship on Shan dialects, albeit a limited one.

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MALAYSIA | SINGAPORE

TAN CHEE-BENG. *The Development and Distribution of Dejiao Associations in Malaysia and Singapore. A Study on a Religious Organization*. Institute of Southeast Asian Studies Occasional Paper No. 79. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1985. Xi+87 pages. Two maps, black and white plates, appendices on distribution of the groups. Paper US\$8.50, S\$15.00, ISBN 9971-998-14-3.

Religion and ritual provide very fruitful fields for anthropologists to study complex modern societies. It is especially so in the case of multiethnic societies like Malaysia where religion plays an important function in generating ethnic identities. We can easily associate Malays with Islam and Indians with Hinduism and partially with Islam. But how about the Chinese Malaysians? This is a book which lucidly illuminates contemporary Chinese religious life in Malaysia.

Although Tan concentrates his focus on particular religious organizations, namely *Dejiao* 德教 associations, he tries to understand them in the larger context of Chinese religion. By "Chinese religion" he means the folk religion in which "Taoist and Buddhist deities, as well as the belief in heavens and hells, eventually became part and parcel" (1). He classifies *Dejiao* organizations as a syncretic sect which includes Islamic and Christian elements besides the traditional *san jiao* 三教 (namely Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism) within Chinese religion. Tan traces the origin of *Dejiao* organizations in the regions of Chaozhou and Shandou in China in the twentieth century. He mentions that the first *Dejiao* temple was like the various charity temples which had emerged in China. "This temple provided certain traditions for the present-day *Dejiao* organization, namely the importance of planchette divination ['a kind of intellectual divination through the use of a Y-shaped willow stick' (6)], the important roles of the Taoist deities, and the emphasis on doing charity" (15).

In chapter 4 through chapter 8 Tan classifies all the *Dejiao* associations in Malaysia and Singapore into five categories, namely the Zi group (*Zi Xi* 紫系), Ji group (*Ji Xi* 濟系), Zan Hua group (*Zan Hua* 贊化), Zhen group (*Zhen Xi* 振系), and others, and shows clearly the similarity and the differences among these five groups. This is the first attempt to completely cover the *Dejiao* associations in Malaysia and Singapore. Through painstaking fieldwork he visited all of these associations interviewed the leaders and followers, and collected documents, from 1980 to 1983. He took full advantage of his situation as a local/insider fieldworker in language and accessibility to informants. In a footnote he confesses that he only once experienced a language barrier, with informants who spoke only Cantonese.

It is interesting that, as Tan points out, "*Dejiao* leaders often stress that the association aims to get rid of the 'superstitious' elements in Chinese religious practices" (6), but that planchette divination still figures as the central ritual in most of the *Dejiao* associations. Tan stresses the institutional aspects of *Dejiao* associations. I also

think that the leaders of the *Dejiao* associations use their organizational posts to climb the ladder of social success. But what are the main factors which attract followers to *Dejiao* associations? I suppose the answer is that the very (for the reviewer at least) "superstitious" elements, e.g. planchette divination, are the key elements. Readers of this book would like to know the details of how people believe in the validity of planchette divination, although the author seems to regard it as intellectual. I would like to ask the author whether or not the strong influence of planchette divination goes beyond the boundary of the Teochiu dialect group.

The second point of the analysis of *Dejiao* associations in this book which was of interest to the reviewer is the way they proliferate. As with other Chinese temples, the ash of the incense from an existing temple should be placed in the new temple's censer. So *Dejiao* associations proliferate like a chemical chain reaction. Tan points out that Teochiu businessmen played important roles in their development and that generally associations located in urban areas are rather successful because of the involvement of influential members. At this point a question arose in my mind. Are *Dejiao* associations really religious organizations? Can we regard them as welfare organizations with traditional Chinese religious elements? In chapter 10 Tan concludes that "the success of *Dejiao* associations depends on developing its intellectual base as well as changing the traditional religious mentality of Chinese Malaysians and Chinese Singaporeans" (73). But I think there might be another way for the organizations to develop, as welfare organizations with a traditional Chinese flavor. Should *Dejiao* associations be "truly rational" religious organizations?

Since *Dejiao* associations are still rather a developing religious organization in Malaysia and Singapore, the direction of its development might have great influence on Chinese society in Malaysia and Singapore in the future. I hope that the author will continue to develop his study of *Dejiao* associations as well as Chinese religion.

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INDONESIA / INDIA

FRANKE-BENN, CHRISTIANE. *Die Wayangwelt. Namen und Gestalten im javanischen Schattenspiel. Ein lexikalisches und genealogisches Nachschlagewerk* [The world of wayang. Names and figures in the Javanese shadowplay]. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1984. 494 pages. Appendices, bibliography. Cloth DM 68.—, ISBN 3-447-02462-3 (In German).

SELTMANN, FRIEDRICH. *Schatten- und Marionettenspiel in Savantvadi (Süd-Maharashtra)* [Shadow and puppet play in Savantvadi, South Maharashtra]. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1985. 102 pages. Seven drawings, 38 plates (eight in color), bibliography, index. Cloth DM 146.—, ISBN 3-515-04122-2 (In German with English summary).

Puppetry, and in particular Asian puppetry, may be studied in two different but compatible ways: as a text realized (an epic, a novel, a drama) and as an ongoing practice. Some puppet theatres, for instance the old Arabic shadow puppetry, exist only in the form of texts and hence do not occasion any study of technique or associated customs. Others, such as the Japanese *bunraku* represent such artistic refinement that their texts