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TERRY F. KLEEMAN. *A God's Own Tale: The Book of Transformations of Wenchang, the Divine Lord of Zitong*. SUNY Series in Philosophy and Culture. Albany, N. Y.: State University of New York Press, 1994. xvi + 335 pages. Illustrations, appendix of extant editions, bibliography, index. Hardcover US\$19.95; ISBN 0-7914-2001-9.

Wenchang 文昌, the Divine Lord of Zitong (Zitong dijun 梓潼帝君), originated as the Viper (*ezi* 蠶子), a local nature spirit of northern Sichuan Province, where his cult may have existed from as early as Neolithic times (1). Terry Kleeman shows how over the centuries Wenchang developed from this zoomorphic form into — among several other manifestations — the Divine Lord, a major Confucian deity worshipped throughout China. One of the Divine Lord's celestial duties is keeping the Cinnamon Record (*guiji* 桂籍), a ledger that registers the destiny of people as determined by their moral conduct. Though nowadays known mainly as a stern supernatural official who exemplifies Confucian morality, the Divine Lord and his cult have in the course of history encompassed traits of all the major Chinese religious traditions and effortlessly combined elite Confucian beliefs with popular folk-Buddhist and Daoist ideas.

Wenchang's following was increased by his responsiveness to petitions and by his willingness to communicate with his followers through spirit possession, dream revelation, and physical manifestation in human form. Wenchang became anthropomorphized by the mid-eighth century as a *renshen* 人神, adopting the surname Zhang 張, a name he was to keep through successive reincarnations. As Kleeman points out, the god's assumption of human form fulfilled a major condition for official sanction of the cult, and was followed by the granting of official titles to the god during the Tang dynasty (4-5). This movement into the human and the secular sphere marked an important step in the development of the cult of Wenchang, as it did in the development of any growing cult. The canonization integrated the Wenchang cult into the state cult system, linking it with Confucianism (i.e., orthodoxy) and formalizing the god's alliance with the state.

A God's Own Tale is the published version of the author's 1988 dissertation. A substantial introduction (1-83) discusses the early history of the cult (1-27), the *Wendi huashu* 文帝化書 [the *Book of Transformations*] (28-66) and the development of the cult in late imperial China (68-83). The main portion of the volume (85-292) consists of a copiously annotated translation of the seventy-three chapter *Book of Transformations* found in the *Daozang jiyao* 道藏輯要 [Collected essentials of the Daoist canon]. This is a Song dynasty version of the text purportedly revealed through planchette writing in A.D. 1181. The document takes the form of the god's "autobiography."

In his introduction Kleeman traces the deity's syncretistic religious and historical development from a zoomorphic to an anthropomorphic entity, from a local to a national figure, and from a low-status creature to a divine being. The author's account of the god's history is well researched and touches upon virtually every aspect of the *Book of Transformations*,

including the relation between the text's history and the development of the god/cult. Kleeman devotes a section (8–16) to the religious technique of revelation via spirit writing (*fuji* 扶乩, “wielding the stylus,” or *fuluan* 扶鸞, “wielding the phoenix”), since, as mentioned above, the *Book of Transformations* is said to have been dictated by the god in just this fashion. He also includes a comparative survey of other revealed texts that relate to the *Book of Transformations*. Kleeman's discussion of the *Book* itself is well researched and detailed, and contains a wealth of information that provides a fine background for the following translation. Aspects of the topic that lie beyond the defined scope of the book have been addressed by the author elsewhere to some extent (see the bibliography, 309–10).

Kleeman has rendered the *Wendi huashu* into carefully phrased English; in particular, the elegant literary phrasing of the parallel sentences at the beginning of each chapter shows a mastery of the complex literary, philological, and technical aspects of the work, the difficulty of which is amply revealed in the extensive commentaries and annotations.

The bibliography lists an impressive number of works up to 1994, although there is among the secondary works a slight underrepresentation of non-English European titles, as is sometimes the case with publications by Americans. The book is well edited, and the few slips and typos I noticed in no way affect the pleasure of reading it.

A God's Own Tale is a fine study that enriches our understanding of the Wenchang cult and its lore and legend. Anyone interested in the many themes and topics treated by the author will benefit from this work, which demonstrates the degree of sophistication that the field of textual studies in Chinese religions has reached.

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LIU CHIH-WAN. 劉 枝萬. *Taiwan no dōkyō to minkan shinkō* 台湾の道教と民間信仰 [Daoism and folk belief in Taiwan]. Tokyo: Fukyōsha, 1994. 466 pages. Plates (7 in color, 75 black/white), maps, tables, indices. Cloth Yen 8,240. ISBN 4-938718-02-2. (In Japanese)

In contrast to what the title would lead one to expect, this book covers many aspects of traditional Chinese religion, not only on Taiwan but in mainland China as well. Author Liu Chih-Wan draws both on his own research data and on an extensive study of traditional Chinese texts, making this a study of truly wide scope.

Taiwan no dōkyō to minzoku shinkō consists of five sections. In the introductory part Liu summarizes the history of Daoism and the background of religious specialists and festivals. He emphasizes that Daoism is deeply engrained in the lives of the Chinese people, but that its rituals and festivals are too varied and complex for an exhaustive analysis.

In part 1 Liu deals with the history of Daoism, utilizing traditional texts from both Taiwan and mainland China in an examination of the three topics of shamanism, Thunder God worship, and Tian-feng-shen 天蓬神. According to Liu, shamanism in ancient times had great political influence but gradually lost it while gaining a new position in Daoism and folk belief. Worship of the Thunder God, Lei-shen 雷神, who can exorcise evil spirits, is based on the belief in *tian* 天, Heaven. Descriptions of Lei-shen are found in many folktales and novels. Tian-feng-shen is a Daoist god with strong magical powers who for more than a thousand years has been widely worshipped in Chinese society, but whose origins are very difficult to trace. In this first part Liu shows that Daoism draws from many legends, folktales, and texts, and that it is not easy to clarify exactly what it is that Daoism worships.

The second part deals with Daoism and folk belief in Taiwan specifically. From the seventeenth century many Chinese emigrated to Taiwan from the southeastern coast of