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CHINA

MALEK, ROMAN. *Das Chai-chieh lu. Materialien zur Liturgie im Taoismus* [The *Chai-chien lu. Materials concerning Taoist liturgy*]. Würzburger Sino-Japonica, Band 14. Frankfurt/M, Bern, New York: Peter Lang, 1985. Vii+374 pages. Appendix and bibliography. Paper SFr. 73.—. ISBN 3-8204-9022-1, ISSN 0170-9453.

The Chinese word *zhai* 齋 in general refers to the preparatory measures taken prior to a religious ceremony which serve to ensure ritual purity. As the purificatory effort usually includes some kind of fasting, *zhai* has come to be translated as "fast" in the West. But the term also encompasses a whole range of different Taoist rites which are not "fasts" in the narrow sense of the word.

Although exact references to the word *zhai* are quite numerous, they have not been succinctly analyzed in any study to date. Roman Malek's work, which tries to delineate the meanings of *zhai* and to interpret their interrelations, has paved the way for a deeper understanding of the nature and structure of Taoist ritual in general. However, since the application of the term *zhai* has not been limited to the Taoist tradition, but was used by various religious traditions throughout Chinese history, there is a vast amount of material to be found. To accumulate and arrange this enormous information is a Herculean task indeed, especially since organization of the source material requires recourse to theoretical scholarship in the field of religious studies, as well as evaluation of the Sinological contributions made to date.

The contributions in the field of Taoist ritual are not very numerous. A complete ritual text has been translated by É. Chavannes, and the *jiao* 醮 ritual has been studied by K. M. Schipper. There is as yet no complete survey of all the various forms and types of ritual in Taoism, though J. Lagerwey is currently preparing a major study of the history and symbolism of the *jiao* ritual. Less theoretical studies, such as those by M. Saso and K. Dean, have tended to concentrate on the practical performance of the *jiao* ritual in Taiwan and also, very recently, on the Chinese mainland.

In filling the lacunae in our theoretical understanding of the concepts and structure of Taoist ritual, the new work by Roman Malek, *Das Chai-chieh-lu*, represents a valuable contribution. Using the late Tang text *Zhaijie lu* 齋戒錄 contained in the Taoist Canon (f. 207) as his major source, the author gives an extensive survey of the various meanings of the term *zhai* throughout ancient and medieval history as well as of numerous types of Taoist rites which are so named.

The work begins by delineating the meaning of *zhai* in pre-Han sources. Different passages in which the word occurs are listed and evaluated. *Zhai* is duly found to denote a state of harmony brought about through purification before a ceremony (27); it also connotes concentration of mind as well as the cleansing and fasting of the body (34). In the Taoism of the early centuries of the Christian era, on the other hand, *zhai* is found to refer to a variety of ritual practices, be they individual measures of purification or communal rites and banquets (40).

In a second part, the text *Zhaijie lu* is presented. Lists are given of all the texts dealing with *zhai* contained in the Taoist Canon (61–70), of the works cited in the *Zhaijie lu* (82–88), as well as of the contents of the text (90–94). The probable date of the text is questioned and ultimately found to lie around the year 750 (89).

The third and fourth chapters discuss the different kinds of *zhai* as mentioned in the *Zhaijie lu* of which there are altogether 54 distinct types (178–225; alphabetical list pp. 226–228). They are arranged in groups of six, eight, ten, or twelve, but also according to their times of celebration throughout the year. On the whole, it seems that references to the term *zhai* can be divided into three kinds:

- 1) *Zhai* denotes a kind of concentrative meditation, as in the compound *xinzhai* 心齋, i.e., the “fasting of the mind” (132–177).
- 2) *Zhai*, true to its basic meaning, refers to preparatory ritual purification, including among other practices physical abstinence from food and defiling acts and sights. This meaning of the term is most clearly found in the compound *zhaijie* 齋戒, “fasting and abstention” (272–277).
- 3) *Zhai* denotes a communal ritual in Taoism, different from and yet similar to the great Taoist communal offering, the *jiao* (178–228, 262–271).

Among these three different understandings of the term *zhai* only the second can properly be translated as “fast.” The first should rather be rendered as “mental purification,” since it is a general expression referring to different kinds of Taoist meditation practice. The third, the communal ritual *zhai*, might be given as “offering” or, inasmuch as it includes a ritual banquet (*zhu* 厨), even *agape*, as the author suggests (296).

The interrelation of the three major connotations or kinds of *zhai* is not entirely clear. The author points out that mental purification was considered as “inner ritual act of an opening and preparatory character” (176). But he also emphasizes that the “fasting of the mind,” since it was only to be practised by the highest adepts of the Taoist teaching, was a means of attaining religious ecstasy (157) or enstasy (167). Similarly he compares the practices of fasting and abstention (which he considers an accompanying but not essential part of the ritual; 124) to the Buddhist *śīla* and *samādhi*, on the one hand (121), and to Han dynasty alchemy, on the other (129).

As concerns the specific function of the different kinds of *zhai* in the varying contexts of the religious history of China, the reader is left with a number of unanswered questions. How is the *zhai* of old related to the present-day *jiao*? Within the *zhai*, what exactly is the interrelation between individual and communal practices? How much meditation practice or “fasting of the mind” was actually necessary for a participant and, even more, for an officiant of a communal *zhai*? In what sense can one consider the communal *zhai* as a whole a kind of “ritual meditation” (172)? The magical practices performed prior to operative alchemy are also called *zhai* (40); how are they related to communal ritual? Are moral precepts of abstention valid for the community to be understood as parallel to meditation practice of the individual (106)?

It is mainly the unresolved tension between the two levels of the individual practice and the communal relevance of *zhai* which makes it hard to follow and conclusively summarize the author’s presentation. He hesitates to introduce categories and judgments of his own, and the reader is left to wonder what Roman Malek himself thinks about the nature of Taoist ritual, a subject which he has studied with so much enthusiasm and energy.

It is to be regretted that the *Zhaijie lu* itself is not translated in full. However, to ensure easy identification of the translated passages, a list is appended on pages 316–318, following the Chinese original of the text. Another, purely formal but unfortunate

shortcoming of the book is the complete lack of italics throughout which makes it difficult to identify Chinese terms and texts easily.

These considerations notwithstanding, this study of the Chinese term *zhai*, as well as of the ritual and purificatory practices it denotes, is a valuable step on the way to a more complete understanding of Taoist ritual in theory and practice. Studies on the history of Taoism are rare and works which present such an enormous amount of material in a lucid manner are few and far-between. The book should encourage further discussion on the nature of Taoist ritual in relation to Taoist meditative practices and moral prescriptions. Studies of this kind are a useful and necessary counterpart to the field-work presently going on in China. It is hoped that Roman Malek will continue his research along the lines of this promising first work.

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MONGOLIA

LATTIMORE, OWEN and FUJIKO ISONO. *The Diluv Khutagt. Memoirs and Autobiography of a Mongol Buddhist Reincarnation in Religion and Revolution*. Asiatische Forschungen, Band 74. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1982. V+279 pages with 47 pages of facsimile, frontispiece, figures, 4 maps. Paper DM 228.—, ISSN 0571-320X, ISBN 3-447-02221-3.

The book under review is composed of several parts. First there is a lengthy introduction by Lattimore (1-16) wherein he describes the Diluv Khutagt's personality and meetings / contacts he had with him. Lattimore adds sketches of some episodes in the history of Mongolia and the Far East, particularly ones that occurred in the 1920 and 1930s.

The next part is the complete manuscript of the Diluv Khutagt's political diaries in Mongolian (16-65), followed by their English translation. The translation, made by Lattimore, is accompanied by a great number of annotations, prepared almost in their entirety by Fujiko Isono. Following the chronological sequence of events, the diaries are divided into several sections: I. Declaration of Independence, II. Revocation of Autonomy, III. Ungern and the Revolution, and IV. After the Revolution. There then follows "The Autobiography of the Diluv Khutagt" (141-212) which is