

and one can only applaud the effort it represents.

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BISCHOF-OKUBO, YUKIKO. *Übernatürliche Wesen im Glauben der Altvölker Taiwans* [Supernatural beings in the belief of Formosan Aborigines]. Europäische Hochschulschriften Reihe XIX, Abt. B Ethnologie, Band 17. Frankfurt a/M, Germany: Peter Lang, 1989. 247 pages. Bibliography, illustrations, maps. Paper SF56,—. ISBN 3-631-42274-1; ISSN 0721-3549. (In German)

This monograph is a dissertation accepted at the University of Bonn in 1988. The book falls into two main parts dealing with "Soul, Death, and Afterlife" (41-102) and "Gods and Spirits" (102-203) respectively; it begins with a rather exhaustive historical and ethnographical "Introduction" (11-40) and ends with a more general recapitulation of "Religious Basic Ideas" (204-20).

Most of Bischof-Okubo's work is descriptive—and fairly instructive. It furnishes valuable material for analysis and comparison, but caution is advisable as far as the author's own interpretations are concerned. This reservation holds particularly for the last chapter (discussing the message of myth and the idea of a "Supreme Being") and is to some extent due to the theoretical limitations of the author.

The main deficiency is, however, the exclusion of important sources; Bischof-Okubo, born in Japan and trained in Germany, relies almost solely on Japanese reports written between 1895 and 1945. She pays no attention to the European and Chinese accounts of the 17th and 18th century nor to the bulk of postwar research undertaken by Chinese anthropologists (CHEN 1976; HUANG et al. 1983; ZHUANG et al. 1988). Of the European and Chinese sources some few are mentioned in the introduction (16), but not exploited for the investigation. The consultation of the *Dagregisters* of the VOC in Zeelandia and Batavia (BLUSSÉ et al. 1986; CHIJS et al. 1887-1928) and the use of Chinese local gazetteers and travel accounts (including vivid descriptions of the natives translated by THOMPSON 1964; 1969) would have proved more beneficial for the examination of historical relations than comparisons that ignore the distance of time and space.

As far as form is concerned, a standardization of Chinese transliterations would have been highly desirable (there is a strange mixture of Mandarin and Taiwanese as well as of different romanization systems); a glossary and index are missing. Nevertheless, if the reader bears the above-mentioned shortcomings in mind, he should find this book to be a useful introduction to Formosan native religions.

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#### VIETNAM

- THE VIETNAMESE INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE DEPARTMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCE COMMITTEE OF VIET NAM, editorial board. *Dong Son Drums in Viet Nam*. Editorial Supervision of Japanese edition: Hiromitu Hakari and Erika Kaneko. Tokyo: Rocco Shuppan, 1990. 282 pages. Plates, map. Y38,00; ISBN 4-8453-3038-5.

Dong Son drums are large, elaborately decorated kettle-drums made of bronze, with a height and diameter of up to one metre, of unknown date and made for unknown purposes, although generally considered to be about 2000 years old and to have some ritual significance. Dong Son (or Dongson) is the name of a burial and habitation site in northern Vietnam, on the southwestern edge of the Red River delta, where these drums were found for the first time in an archaeological context during excavations in the 1920s. They had been known already for almost three centuries from various parts of Southeast Asia, but as surface finds only, i.e., kept in villages, palaces, or temples. The first such drum to reach Europe was one from Indonesia, which was sent by the Dutch naturalist G. E. Rumphius in 1682 as a present to the Duke of Tuscany. European travellers to Southeast Asia, mainly Austrians, Germans, Dutch, and Frenchmen, discovered more and more of these drums, until 165 were known by the end of the 19th century, and several books about them appeared. The most