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Bahir, C.

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Samenvatting

Boeddhisme Her-betoveren via Moderniserende Magie: De Filosofie en Wetenschap van ‘Bijgeloof’ van Goeroe Wuguang

Deze studie focust zich op het leven, de ondernemingen en de ideologie van Goeroe Wuguang (1818-2000), een eclecticische en invloedrijke Taiwanese Boeddhistische persoonlijkheid die Taoïstische alchemie, verschillende vormen van Chinees, Japans en Tibetaans Boeddhisme, alsook biologie, thermodynamica, filosofie, theologie en occultisme bestudeerde. Dit heeft tot doel om te begrijpen wat er gebeurt wanneer een traditie ‘gezuiverd’ van haar ‘mythische’ elementen zich opnieuw belichaamt in de spanning tussen haar ‘betoverde’ verleden en ‘wetenschappelijke’ heden. Wuguang is beroemd in de Chinees-talige Boeddhistische wereld om het doen herleven van Zhenyan, een school van esoterisch Boeddhisme die volgens overlevering floreerde in China ten tijde van de Tang Dynastie. De academische gemeenschap heeft Wuguang grotendeels genegeerd, wat dit tot de eerste diepgaande verkenning maakt van deze persoon, wiens invloed echt wereldwijd is. Voortbouwend op David McMahan's werk over Boeddhistisch modernisme, Jason Josephson's seculier-religieus-bijgeloof *trinary*, wetenschappelijke discussies met betrekking tot Weberiaanse ont-tovering, en gebruik makend van het Religieus Economisch Model, betoog ik dat Wuguang's leer een bewust her-betoverde vorm van Boeddhistisch modernisme is gericht op het harmoniseren van magie met moderne wetenschap en filosofie. Terwijl de wetenschappelijke discussie over Aziatische magie in de moderne wereld beperkt is gebleven tot volksreligie, focust deze studie zich bovendien op het ‘Hoge Kerk Boeddhisme’ door Wuguang's magisch-wetenschappelijke

interpretatie van complexe Boeddhistische doctrine te analyseren. Dit werd bereikt door elk facet van Wuguangs eclecticisme te identificeren, de herkomst ervan te traceren, en Wuguangs innovatieve gebruik ervan te belichten. Primaire data werd verzameld door tekstueel en historisch bronnenonderzoek, alsook veldwerk ter plaatse, uitgevoerd van 2011 tot en met 2016.

Stellingen

1. Reenchanted Buddhist modernists are not attempting to revert Buddhism to an earlier state. Instead, they seek to make peace between Buddhism's enchanted past and modernized present.
2. Twentieth-century Taiwanese Buddhist intellectual discourse was directly influenced by the modernization efforts that were concurrently taking place in Japan and in China.
3. Japanese Buddhist sectarian boundaries came to play a large role in Taiwanese religious sectarian consciousness. These boundaries were first imposed upon the Taiwanese populace by Japanese colonialists, and then later adopted by the Taiwanese themselves.
4. Energeticism was popular among Buddhist intellectuals in Japan, China and Taiwan.
5. Although a Buddhist, Wuguang's personal religiosity more closely resembled Daoism and Chinese folk-religion.
6. The philosophical concepts and scientific theories that Wuguang used to reenchanted Buddhism were ones that had been popular in earlier modernist Chinese and Japanese Buddhist circles.
7. Wuguang's religious exploits can be understood as a quest for the attainment and understanding of magical powers.
8. The living founders of five Buddhist communities invoke Wuguang as their teacher to legitimate their own religious authority.
9. Divine revelation and bouts of psychosis can be difficult to distinguish from one another.
10. Doctrinal, philosophical and scientific explanations regarding the mechanics behind magic need to be taken more seriously by academic scholars of religion.
11. Regularly driving in Taiwan could strengthen a libertarian's dedication to the axiom "taxation is theft," for Taiwanese traffic is an example of a government's failure to keep its citizens safe through regulation. Moreover, a Taiwan without public roads might not be such a bad thing.
12. Fieldwork and textual analysis can enrich each other.

Curriculum Vitae

Cody Bahir was born in Kentucky, USA on April 7, 1979. He earned his Bachelor's degree at the American Jewish University (former University of Judaism) in 2003. He later completed a Master's Degree at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in 2005, and another at the California Institute of Integral Studies in 2013. From 2011-2016, he lived in Taiwan conducting fieldwork at various Buddhist, Daoist and folk-religious communities throughout the island.

Mr. Bahir has held faculty positions at American Jewish University, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Skyline College and Fooyin University of Science and Technology. He has recently accepted a postdoctoral position at the Institute of Buddhist Studies at the University of California, Berkeley.

