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THE EXPLORATION OF TRADITIONAL MENTAL CARE IN TAIWAN

By

I-Ping Chiang

A THESIS

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Telecommunication

1997

ABSTRACT

THE EXPLORATION OF TRADITIONAL MENTAL CARE IN TAIWAN

By

I-Ping Chiang

In Taiwan, there are two varied approaches to help people relieve their anxieties. One is the orthodox western mental care; the other is traditional mental care developed on the basis of Taiwanese folk beliefs. Due to cultural taboos and cultural differences, western mental care isn't widely accepted. The religious cultures of Taiwanese people play a big role to be the spiritual support and guidance in their daily life.

The purpose of this thesis is to provide insight about how the Taiwanese folk beliefs are used as a way of mental care. The function and effect of these traditional mental care approaches will also be explored.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful to Buddha's benevolence to make me meet the Wangs when I do the thesis. Mr. Jun-Kuan Wang and Jiao-Min Wang provided me most of the resources of the video program and the written paper. I also appreciate all of the deities who help out in doing my program, especially the third crown prince.

Doing this thesis provided me a chance to know how nice Taiwanese people are. Mr. Ron-Lin Mao allowed me to do shooting without considering that it might hinder people from coming to his fortune-telling stand. The interviewee Sheng-Huei Lee helped me find a nice place to do the interview. The soul tranquilizer Mr. Shi-Yao Wang even asked Mr. Liang Shi-Ma not to come to tranquilize the soul until I do the shooting. The stories behind the video program are much more than what's shown in the program. I also thank Shu-Mei Liou, Bao-Yu Wu, Yun-Chung Huang, Yuah Shiang Yao who are so cooperative as the subjects in my video program. I also appreciate my college classmates Der-Lien Chou's and

Bi-Wen Lei's assistance in the shooting stage.

I always forget my mother when I handle myself well and come to her when I am in trouble. However, my mother stands by me all the time because I'm her child. During this year, there are several times I was about to give up. It was always her who asks me to be strong and persistent on my work. She lets me know the value of myself and supports me no matter if I'm good or bad.

Mr. Albers, a strict teacher with good documentary sense was so patient to teach a plain student. This work turned out to be a well-organized piece by using the sense learned from him. With love and hatred, I also thank Media 100 software to facilitate the quality of my video program.

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INTRODUCTION

This paper is a supplement to a 25 minute video production thesis - 'The Exploration of Traditional Mental Care in Taiwan.'

The first chapter of this paper explains the origin of folk beliefs and the role it plays in the ancient human societies. Three of the greatest religions- Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism that were brought by migrants from China were the prototype of Taiwanese folk beliefs. The characteristics of each of them are introduced and how they influence Taiwanese religion is explained.

The second chapter introduces the history and the current situation of Taiwanese folk Beliefs. With the evolution of the society, the folk beliefs that people count on in the early ancient agricultural societies didn't vanish. On the contrary, they continue to be the spiritual support and guidance people count on.

The third chapter explains how folk beliefs are applied as

mental care approaches. Worshiping in the temple, tranquilizing the soul, sweeping bad lucks, asking the deity and fortune-telling are the most popular ways that people apply to solve their problems. The way these religious rituals are used to help people are introduced. The role the Tao Priest and the Taiwanese Shaman-Gi-Tong play are explained. Besides this, the mysteries of Taiwanese folk beliefs, such as the parade ritual of the pilgrim tour, the use of paper money and the five precious instruments carried by the Taiwanese shaman-Gi-Tong are also revealed.

In the fourth chapter, how the documentary history helps producing the program is stated.

In the last chapter, how the society views their folk beliefs is mentioned and a suggestion of how to treat the folk beliefs fairly is discussed.

Chapter 1

CHINESE-TAIWANESE LINKAGE

Origin of Folk Beliefs

"Primitive man was an intense realist: otherwise he could not have survived." (McNeill 13) He didn't worship the sun and the moon for their beauty but because they produce the seasons. He founded different food were grown in different seasons so he worshiped the nature for his gratification in different seasons. (McNeill 13)

In the First Stop, The Master Index to Subject Encyclopedia, folk religion was introduced as "the religious complex of peasant and rural societies insofar as they differ from mainstream religious traditions." (Ryan 370)

For instance, most of the Pagans were peasants in Russia. They only had superficial understanding about Christianity. The Russian peasants inherited Pre-Christian customs from their ancestors before Christianity existed. Their folk belief could not be displaced by the customs from the orthodox religion-Christianity. Their primary concerns, the same as primitive men, are fertility and bounty. (Ivanits 5) The domovoi, as the protector of the house and farmstead was one of the primary

spirits in Russian paganism. He supervised every domestic activity in the farmstead and determined if the farm would be prosperous or not. If the owner managed his farms well, some good omens, like completing chores would happen in the farmstead. The domovoi might feed the livestock's hay or oats if the owners forgot to do so. On the contrary, the domovoi would reveal his discontentment if he was dissatisfied with the owner's management. The spirit would cause the walls of the house to creak, bang pots, tangle needlework, spread manure on the door, and return everything upside-down in the yard. (Ivanits 53) Domovoi, in Russian pastoral cultures was the invisible master to oversee the peasants' life. (Ivanits 51-56)

Peasants populations have probably existed since 6000 BCE in southwestern Asia, since 3100 BCE in Egypt, and since 1500 BCE in southeastern Mexico. (Ryan 370) Folk belief served the same function in different tribes from the early ancient time. To manage the ecosystem, peasants, like other people, mark the cycles of nature, day and night, the lunar cycle, the solar year, the life cycles of animals and plants. (Ryan 371) The calendar for rituals was thus invented to greet the transition of equinoxes, planting, germination, and harvest in peasant cultures.

Besides fighting with the natural environment, the peasants also dealt with their social relationship. Most of the time, they

share the same source to irrigate and undertook some work with their neighbors, like harvesting. Meanwhile, some dispute might arise like setting the boundary for farmland or inheriting the properties. In this context, religious devotion can facilitate the unity of households within a settlement (mutual fealty to a common divinity) and solidarity between settlements (worship at common shines). (Ryan 371)

A conclusion is drawn that while human beings face the household or social problems, fighting with the natural environment or being afraid and ignorant of the future, they were not able to solve their problems with the limited wisdom they had. The religious activities related to their customs were applied as guidance, assistance, or shelter to support their life. That's the origin of folk beliefs.

Religions in China

The Chinese have from very early times been an agricultural people. (Graham 45) Chinese society had evolved to Agricultural society in the middle of the Shang Dynasty (B.C. 1788-B.C.1154). Therefore Chinese folk beliefs derives from the agricultural society as the other ancient tribes did. The ancient Chinese, like the ancient Russian and Egyptian, realized the truth that their hard work could not guarantee fertility because many

variables like rain, wind, water or drought beyond the peasants' control were involved. They started to believe the harvest is the cooperation of the highest deity-Tien with human being. Furthermore, filial piety has been the cardinal virtue and ancestor veneration the main feature of the Chinese society and religion. (Graham 45) The ancient Chinese worshiped their ancestors from the Shang dynasty. Their ancestors in turn blessed and helped their descendants, giving them success, prosperity and happiness. (Graham 46) Though the highest god was T'ien which means ruler above, or god above. Chinese religion is not monotheistic. Other Shang dynasty Chinese gods were the Dragon Woman, the Eastern Mother, the Western Mother, the South, the Ruler of Four Quarters, the Earth or Mother Earth, the Snake Spirit, and King Wind. (Graham 46)

Lesser deities during the Chou dynasty (B.C.1122-B.C.249) included the Father of War, the Father of Husbandry, the Ruler of Cold, the Father of Cookery, and the Six Honored Ones. (Graham 48) In the Ching and Han Dynasty (B.C.221-A.D.8), three systems of deities were categorized. The first system included natural features such as the sun, the moon, the stars, mountains, rivers, spring and so on. The second systems included virtuous persons, like warriors dedicated themselves to the countryland and learned scholars set good example to their descendants. The third system refers to the deceased ancestors. (Tsai 15) Unlike the

deities to whom people worship in common in the first two systems, each family unit has their own ancestors to worship in the third system.

Three of the Greatest Religions in China

Confucianism

There are some arguments about Confucianism. Some said it is no more than a discipline of philosophy, others said it is one of three greatest religions in China. The proof for the latter one is that Confucius was deified and worshiped by Chinese for thousands of years. Confucius temples also exist in modern Taiwan. Modern Taiwanese worshipped Confucius for good luck to pass exam because he was the greatest scholar, educator and philosopher in Chinese history.

Confucius (B.C.551-B.C.479) was born in the Epoch of Spring and Autumn during which China was in Chaotic war times. Among the rulers intrigue and assassinations were common, and hunting, warfare, and extravagance were their main interests. (Graham 48) The sufferings of the common people were unbearable, for they had to fight for their rulers, were heavily taxed, and were ruthlessly punished for failure to cooperate and to obey their masters. (Graham 48)

Confucius tried to reform the societies. He traveled all over the country and persuaded the rulers in different locations that the aim of government is to make most welfare for the people rather than to expand the territory for the ruler himself. The ruler should be chosen not because of heredity and wealth, but on the basis of virtue and ability, a very uncommon belief for his day. (Graham 49) The ideal person to govern the society should be a gentleman with good, honest, sincere and faithful characteristics. Though he was dedicated in training the ideal gentlemen to govern the society in his whole life, his ideal thought to the society didn't shape out while he was alive.

Many emperors began to honor the Confucian scholars and took advice from them whenever important political decisions were needed in the Han dynasty. (B.C. 206-A.D.221) The Confucian classics had been one of the subjects for entrance examination to government office for thousands of years until the end of Ching dynasty. (A.D. 1911) Every country seat had at least one Confucian temple in which there were tablets to Confucius and his disciples. Twice a year Confucius is respectfully commemorated in the Chinese schools. (Graham 52)

Taoism

The founder of Taoism, Lao Tzu, was a contemporary of

Confucius. (Graham 52) He wanted to bring peace to individuals and society. In Lao Tzu's philosophy, there's no need to run a government for people. A main doctrine of Lao Tzu was nonaction. He advised people not to strive, but to get into harmony with Tao, which is the course of nature, the way, the path, the road, the moral and physical order of the world, the basic principle of the universe, reason, the ultimate, God. (Graham 53) The essential teachings of Lao Tzu were different after hundreds of years passed. Search for the elixir of life and longevity and even immortality, divination, witchcraft, and the use of magic ceremonies to control and exorcise demons, which were believed to cause sickness and other calamities and to accomplish other purposes, became the essential features of the Taoist religion. (Graham 55)

In Ch'in dynasty (B.C. 221-B.C. 206), Ch'in Shih Huang was longing for the elixir and longevity. Therefore the necromancers were patronized to alchemize the elixir of life for him. The emperors of the T'ang dynasty generally favored Taoism because they believed themselves to be descendants of Lao Tzu. From the time of Ch'in Shin Huang to the end of the Ching dynasty (1912), some emperors favored and promoted Taoism, whereas others persecuted and sometimes tried to exterminate it. (Graham 55-56)

Buddhism

Buddha (B.C. 563-B.C. 483) was the prince of a small country in India about 2,500 years ago. As a prince, he didn't enjoy the wealthy and noble life he had but was impressed by the suffering of human beings. He gave up the luxurious life and tried to find out why human beings suffer and how to get rid of the suffering. It is said he first tried philosophical speculation and later, failing to find a solution by that method, tried asceticism. He finally realized that this method also was useless, and at the age of 35 attained enlightenment. (Graham 57)

"Four noble truths" is the essence of Buddha's thought. They are existence is suffering, all suffering is caused by desire, the extinction of desire will end the suffering and the elimination of desire depends on the practice of eight right paths. Nirvana, the serene state of mind could be reached if eight paths are fully practiced.

Having found the way of salvation and been enlightened himself, he began to instruct disciples and send them out to teach others the way of salvation. (Graham 57) Buddhism was thus handed down from generations to generations.

The branch of Buddhism that disseminated into Ceylon,

Cambodia, Burma, Siam is called "the lesser vehicle." The branch that spread into Tibet, China, Tapan and Korea is called as "the more vehicle". After Buddhism spreaded into China, it became the greatest rival of Taoism. As is so often the case with rivals, each borrowed from each other, and each influenced the other. (Graham 56)

As the proverb goes, "the three religions are one," most Chinese people worship Confucian, Buddhist and Taoist temples and hardly underlined the differences of doctrines and teachings of these religions. Most of the priests were unable to explain the differences, and either asserted that there were no sects, or that they "differed not much." (Graham 58) Such a thought had much influence on Taiwanese after the religions disseminated from China to Taiwan.

CHAPTER 2

TAIWANESE FOLK BELIEFS

Religious History in Taiwan

In the middle of the seventeenth century, Cheng Kung Jeng who took Taiwan as the base to subvert the Manching dynasty and restored the Ming dynasty evicted the Dutch who governed Taiwan for thirty-eight years (A.D.1624-1641). Christianity declined after the Dutch left. Fujengese and Kuantongese in China migrated to Taiwan and brought Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism and some folk traditions with them. They became the prototype of Taiwanese folk belief. (Dong 114)

In 1895, Taiwan was ceded to Japan because of China's failure in the war. Taiwan thus became a Japanese colony in the coming fifty years (1895-1945). State Shintoism was stipulated as the major religion under the policy of assimilation. Buddhism popular in Japan, was also widely accepted in Taiwanese society. Any religion besides State Shintoism and Buddhism were suppressed. However, folk belief didn't vanish due to Taiwanese adherence in their traditions and obstinacy in the indigenous cultures. (Dong 114)

Current Taiwanese Folk Beliefs

After 1945, the Japanese left from Taiwan. Folk beliefs became the mainstream in Taiwanese society. 85% of the Taiwanese population embraces in folk beliefs in present day Taiwan. (Dong 51) Like any folk beliefs in the world, there's no founder, no classics and no creeds in Taiwanese folk belief. Furthermore, some Buddhist temples worship Taoist deities and some Taoist temples worship Buddhist deities. It's hard to differentiate the religion in different temples. Those temples unable to identify their religion should be classified as the temples of folk beliefs. Some people who believe in folk beliefs tended to mispresent themselves as Buddhists or Taoists. The only thing that is certain is Taiwanese are pantheists.

Deities in Taiwanese Folk Beliefs

In the book: Taiwanese Native Beliefs, deities in Taiwan are divided into six categories. They are deities in folk beliefs, deities in Buddhism, deities in nature, deities in the nether world, deities in the history of ancient China and deities in local Taiwan. (Jiang 10) The number of deities in Taiwan is countless.

Taiwanese people don't just worship one particular deity in their whole life. On the contrary, the theory of Henotheism could be applied in Taiwanese society. Henotheism means if one

requests from a deity but his wish was not efficacious, he will request the other deity. He won't stop changing deities until his wish is shaped out. (Dong 165) The most popular deities in Taiwan are Holy Guan, the third crown prince and wan-yeah, which means noblemen.

Holy Guan

Guan, Yu (A.D. 162-219), deified as Holy Guan, was a warrior in the period of Three Kingdoms-Wei, Shu and Wu. He pledged in a sworn brotherhood with Chang, Fei and Liou, Bei. They united and built up the Kingdom of Shu as the base to restore the Han Dynasty. Though the aim to restore Han dynasty wasn't fulfilled, Guan was worshiped in the later generations because he possessed the virtues of benevolence, righteousness, courtesy, wisdom and honesty. There are 192 temples for Holy Guan in current Taiwan. (Tsai 109) He is also one of the few deities worshiped by Confucianists, Taoists and Buddhists. (Jiang 58)

The Third Crown Prince

The third crown prince's real name was Li, Nor Cha. He was the third son of Li, Jing, a general in Tang Dynasty. (A.D. 618-904) His story was legendized for thousands of years. It is said he was assigned by the Emperor Pearl, the greatest monarch in Taoism

to evict the evils in the world so he transmigrated to the world. It took Nor Cha's mother three years and six months to be pregnant with Nor Cha. Since Nor Cha was very mischievous and wayward, he violated the dragon king who governed the eastern sea. The dragon king in the eastern sea sought for revenge from his father, Li Jin. Nor Cha didn't want his father involve in what he did so he returned his body to his father and his blood to his mother. He went back to the Jade Emperor as an assistant to evict the evils.

The idol of the third crown prince is a seven- year-old boy who steps on the wheel standing for the wind and fire and holds the ring standing for the sky and the earth. His great power to evict the evils is well known in Taiwanese folk belief. He is classified as a Taoist deity. There are 66 temples for the third crown prince in current Taiwan. (Tsai41)

Wan Yeah

Wan-Yeah means nobleman. There are 360 wan-yeah noblemen in Chinese history. Nobleman Chi is one of the most famous noblemen in Current Taiwanese folk belief. It is said he was one of the county leaders in Tang dynasty (A.D.618-904). Since people in the county tended to do evil things, the Jade emperor decided to punish them. He assigned one of his soldiers to put poison

in the dragon well, the water source people shared in the county. The Noblemen Chi didn't want his people die so he lied to the soldier that he would put the poison in the well for him. Instead, he drank the poison himself. The Jade emperor was touched by Chi's decent behavior so he endowed Chi as nobleman. (Tsai 151)

Shamanism

The Taiwanese shaman, called as Gi-Tong, is the most common medium of souls in Taiwanese folk beliefs. Gi-Tong is the communicator between the deities and the human beings. Some of the Gi-Tong are voluntarily possessed by the spirits, others are involuntarily possessed by the spirits. (Mei 10)

J.K. Wang, a Gi-Tong, was involuntarily possessed by holy Guan and the third crown prince. "About seven or eight years ago, my mother got an illness. I went to the temples to pray for her. After that, when I help lifting the sedan chair of the third crown prince, I felt I can communicate with the deity." S.Y. Wang also portrayed his experience to become a Gi-Tong. (Wang 10 Dec. 1996)

" More than twenty years ago, General Hsing helped me survive from a couple of accidents, such as a plane crash and train accidents. I decided to help people in the name of General Hsing." (Wang 15 Dec. 1996) Mr. Chang, the Gi-Tong of wan-yeah, also said "I didn't mean to be a Gi-Tong but was picked up by the deities".

(Chang 30 Nov. 1996) In most of the cases, the Gi-Tong was involuntarily possessed by the deities.

According to the medical report, Gi-Tong tends to be hysterical, nervous, impulsive, and have less nature personality. A report like that is unfair to Gi-Tong. " (Huang 86) J.K. Wang stated "The deity didn't just pick up anybody as his Gi-Tong. Take Holy Guan for example, he was a man with the characteristic of righteousness. He won't pick up a gangster as his Gi-tong. Instead, he will pick up a person who has similar characteristics like him. He won't endow his power to a person who tends to do evil things. He would rather chooses a person with good conduct so that his power could be applied to rescue people." (Wang 10 Dec. 1996)

The way Gi-Tong helps people is to exercise the power endowed by his deity. "The power I exercised was given by my deity. I know nothing. It's my deity, Hsing his highness taught me different ways to rescue different people. When I contemplate at night, Hsing his highness will make me dream about who will come to me next day. Then I know how to help them in advance. It's all the deity's magic power. I, as an ordinary person, doesn't have any power myself." said S.Y. Wang. (Wang 15 Dec. 1996)

In Taiwanese folk beliefs, Gi-Tong usually leads the pilgrim

tours. " When the pilgrim tour sets out on their trip, there are many invisible evil souls who follow the tour. They want to grab the burning paper money used in the parade ritual. The Gi-Tong carries five precious instruments which stand for gold, wood, water, fire and earth. The seven star sword represents gold. The moon hatchet represents wood. The shark sword represents water. The thorn ball represents fire. The T-stick represents earth. Those five precious instruments are the best things to exorcise evil spirits." (Wang 10 Dec. 1996)

"Most of the time, Gi-Tong whips himself by using those five precious instruments so that the evil souls dare not get too close to people in the tour. That's a way to keep Gi-Tong and the pilgrims' safe. It also shows the deity's power is great." (Wang 10 Dec. 1996)

"After the pilgrims arrive at the major temple they visit, the deity who leads the tour needs to settle down the armies who follow him. There are usually five camps of armies in Taoism. Before the armies set out or after the armies arrive in a tour, paper money will be distributed in five stacks-east, south, west, north and center. Each stack of money stands for a camp of an army and will be burned in the ceremony. Burning paper money is just like paying a salary in our modern time." (Wang 10 Dec. 1996)

"The ranks of omnipotent beings are Buddha, Bodhidattva, deities, Arhen. As long as the deity helps people, people will worship him. When the population who worship the deity is up to a certain level, his rank will be upgraded. There is a Taiwanese proverb, the deity needs people and people need the deity. I devote myself to assist my deity. My deity also helps me in my business. " said Mr. J.K. Wang. (Wang 10 Dec. 1996)

CHAPTER 3

FOLK BELIEFS AS AN APPROACH TO MENTAL CARE IN CONTEMPORARY TAIWAN

Like primitive men, the anxiety that the majority of Taiwanese had was over the fertility in their simple and self-contained agricultural society. After Kuomintang regime in mainland China took control of Taiwan in 1949, the Taiwanese reaped the achievement of astounding economic growth. However, as the pattern of the society changed from the agricultural society into an industrial society, the insecurity civilized people suffer is much more complicated than primitive men had. Taiwanese folk beliefs with deep-rooted indigenous cultural heritage didn't vanish because of the emphasis of science and the civilization of the society. On the contrary, a variety of approaches derived from folk beliefs are used as mental care methods in Taiwanese life.

Worshiping in the Temples

According to the statistics, there were 3,495 temples in 1940's. With the growth of the society, the temples over 13,300 in 1986. (Tsai 33) The function that temples serve resembles that of mental care clinics in the west. People go there for help with their problems. "There is no need to register in advance while

going to the temples. People acquire immediate service while going to temples. Furthermore, what going to a temple costs is much lower than going to a hospital. The office hours of western mental clinics are typical of other institutions, thus hinders the working people from going there. However, temples are open twenty-four hours a day for the pilgrims. (Yu 1985)

As long as people worship the deities with three incense sticks in the temples, they can speak out the anxieties they suffer or the wishes they make. People throw a pair of red bamboos after they make wishes. If each of the bamboos falls on the ground on the opposite direction, it means their wish will come true. To worship in the temples is the most popular mental care approach in Taiwan because it doesn't need any assistance from Tao priests or Gi-Tong.

Sweeping Bad Lucks

Sweeping bad lucks is to improve one's fortune by worshipping the deities. People will have different fortune in different years which is related to the astral rotation in the universe. "Come to sweep bad lucks, the deity will make your career smooth and keep your family in harmony. Or if people get an illness, coming to sweep bad lucks will make to be cured soon." said Mr. Lin, a Tao priest.

The Tao priest says a prayer for ordinary people in the ritual of sweeping bad lucks. "Since ordinary people might not know how to communicate with the deities, the Taoist plays a role as the bridge between ordinary people and deities. The Taoist is often confused with Gi-Tong. Gi-Tong is the person to whom the deity attaches. Taoist is the person who hosts the rituals and reads the incantations for ordinary people. The ordinary people are blessed by the deities after the ceremony is done." Mr. Lin further stated. (Lin 18 Dec. 1996)

"In the beginning of the rituals of sweeping bad lucks, I read the Tao's scripture to invite the deity to come here. After contributing the gifts to the deity, I start to read the incantations to the deity and tell the deity what people are requesting. People have better luck after the ceremony." (Lin 18 Dec. 1996)

Sweeping bad lucks could be hosted in the private altars or in the public temples. To be effective or not depends on whether if the Tao priest has great power. However, the help seekers sincerity would also be a main factor to determine if the ceremony works or not.

Tranquilizing the Soul

In Taiwanese culture, "people prefer to explain neurosis as a symptom of ghosts attaching to human being or souls deviating from a human's body rather than recognizing it as a syndrome of mental illness. Mental disorder is regarded as a shame unless the reason to cause mental illness are contributed to outer factors, such having bad geomancy or violating the providence." (Yu 4) Tranquilizing the soul is developed under such a rationale.

"If you got an illness physically, you need to see a doctor. If you violate the evil soul, see people handling funeral affairs or violate the geomancy, it won't work just to take medicine. You might need to tranquil your soul with the deity's help and take medicine from the doctor. You need both science and deity. If you don't tranquil the soul and just take medicine, your illness won't be healed." said S.Y. Wang, a Gi-tong and also a soul tranquilizer. (Wang 15 Dec. 1996)

S.Y. Wang also stated that tranquilizing the soul only works when people are offended by the evil souls. He doesn't want people to misunderstand that tranquilizing the soul is omnipotent to cure any mental illness. "There are two kind of psychosis. If you are attached by the evil soul, you need to tranquilize your soul. If your illness is caused by other reasons such as failing in love, it would be of no use to come to me. As the proverb goes, "You need the person who ties the ring to untie the ring." You

might need to figure out the genuine reason that cause your mental syndrome.” (Wang 15 Dec.1996) “ Some people will ask me to diagnose their healthy conditions. What the deity can do is show you a right direction to find out a good doctor rather than cure your illness. If the deity can cure the illness for people, there’s no need to have doctors in the world. That’s why I always tell people believe in deities but don’t be superstitious.” said J.K. Wang. (Wang 10 Dec.1996)

Asking Deities

Gi-Tong, as the communicator between deities and ordinary people, plays a role as the western psychotherapist. The difference between Gi-Tong and the western mental care provider is the Gi-Tong relieves people’s anxiety through supernatural power. The western psychotherapist analyze the advice-takers’ problems under a rational basis.

Take J.K. Wang as an example, He runs a video production company with his elder brother on the weekdays. He was an atheist before Holy Guan came to him. After Holy Guan picked him up, he had no other choice but to become a part time Gi-Tong. His vice deity is the third crown prince. The spirit of the third crown prince goes to their house on the midnight of every Saturday.

Mr. Wang's apartment is open for anyone who needs advice from the deity every Saturday night. He never charges any payment from the advice takers because the deity told him not to help people for money. He looks like any ordinary person before the third crown prince attaches to him. He sits in front of the table on which there are many idols. As soon as the deity comes, he starts to shake his legs. Most of the times, he vomits because he feels uncomfortable while the deity occupies his body. After the deity attaches to his body, the tone of his voice sounds different. The helper, Mr. Wang's elder brother, calls the advice-taker and speaks out the advice taker's name, birth year, birth month, birth date, birth time and the question s/he asks from a slip of paper written by the advice taker in advance. The third crown prince thus has a direct communication with the advice taker. The problems the third crown prince solves include household disputes, relationship, schoolwork, career, geomancy, marriage and so on. Advice takers bring their friends there if their problems are solved by following the third crown prince's advice. Thus, more and more people come to Mr. Wang's apartment on Saturday night. Mr. Wang's apartment becomes a local mental care center.

Moral Issue

"Nowadays... it's not the deity doesn't behave well. It's

people who exercise the power doesn't behave well. I tell my deity not to attach to me so often. I try to help people by saying a prayer or tranquilizing the soul for them." said S.Y. Wang. When magic power is involved, there's a big possibility for someone to cheat people in the name of deities.

In October, 1996, the deceitful case of Sung, Chi-Li was exposed. He announced himself as Buddha and used photographic techniques to fabricate pictures as fake evidence that he creates miracles. The total amount he stole from his believers is over \$ U.S. 7,500,000 dollars. Such a story happens frequently which makes the public hold negative impressions toward Gi-tong or sorcerers in folk beliefs. (China Time 12 Oct. 1996)

"If people want to pay me after I help them, I'll ask them to put money in the donation box. Whatever is in the donation box is used to buy flowers, fruits, candles and some necessary products." said S.Y. Wang. (Wang 15 Dec. 1996) " Everybody has the ability to judge. The deity helps people without asking any reward. If one asks the price for every service they provide, that wouldn't be a good conduct." said J.K. Wang. (Wang 10 Dec. 1996)

Chapter 4

FORMING THE CONCEPT OF SHOOTING BY RETRACING THE DOCUMENTARY HISTORY

The Value And Critique Of Documentary

This video program is presented in the format of documentary. The concepts of documentary formed by discovered the history of documentary are applied in producing the video program.

Actuality

In the early years, motion pictures were used to record daily events. In December 28, 1895, Lumiere showed his films "Workers Leaving The Lumiere Factory" and "Arriving At The Train Station" in Paris. They were the very first moving pictures run in the public. These films that simply recorded people's wonder to the world established the prototype of documentary. To choose real events becomes the fundamental criteria to create documentary. (Barnouw 7)

Newsreel

During world war I, celluloid was used as a medium of communication between the government and their civil populations.

Instead the footage is event-centered, but the events' relationship and meaning lie somewhere else in the overall tapestry of the war. (Rabiger 13) The film footage in wartime tended to assert "our side" as heroes and "the enemy" as a malevolent and inhuman machine". (Rabiger 13) The aim of the newsreels was to disseminate the jingoism of war time. The so-called "truth" advocated in the newsreels was not valid.

Nanook of the North-The First Documentary Film

Nanook of the North, a film made by Robert Flaherty was hailed as the first documentary film. Robert Flaherty was also honored as the "Father of the Documentary Film." (Sherwood 16) Flaherty, as an outsider to the Eskimo's culture spent years to understand the Eskimo's life and philosophy. The subjects-Nanook and his family-performed naturally and hardly perceived the existence of the camera. The images that Nanook created were rarely pathetic but presented how the Eskimos struggle with merciless nature in an authentic way. Flaherty established a paradigm of anthropological film. Flaherty's "participatory observation" also become a common perspective for the documentary filmmakers to produce their programs.

Kino-Provda

In 1922, Kino-Pravda was acclaimed by Dziga Vertov with his Council of Three. As the title- Kino Pravda (Film Truth) reveals, what Dziga Vertov asserted is a film should be made to reflect truth. (Barnouw 55) He claimed that the popular films made on the basis of fabricated story plots were the anaesthetic to the proletariat. A cameraman should rely on the Kino-Eye "to record life without imposing on it". (Rabiger 19)

Dziga Vertov was also influenced by futurism which tearing down the well organized grammatical structure. "He believed that by compiling a rapid and ever-changing montage of shots, life itself would emerge free of any point of view but that of the all-seeing camera." (Rabiger 19)

There's no denying that film, especially documentary, is made to represent reality. Editing is of course a necessary process. However, to assert the technique of montage as an approach to represent reality might be dangerous because over recomposing the original footage might make a program meretricious. A real story should be told without the fragmented presentation of footage.

English Grierson Age

John Grierson defined the documentary form as a creative

treatment of actuality. (Rabiger 17) His definition of documentary is widely accepted. He also proclaimed "art is not a mirror held up to reality, but a hammer with which to shape it" (Rabiger 17) Film is used to solve social problems rather than just reflect the society.

"The characteristic Grierson documentary dealt with impersonal social process; it was usually a short film fused by a "commentary" that articulated a point of view." (Barnouw 99) The narration was usually subjective, arbitrary and authoritative. Image, supplementary to the narration was illustrative to the well-written script. Grierson's concept of documentary has much influence on current television production.

European Painter's Documentary

The documentary films in European countries other than England in the 1920's and 1930's are poetic and stylish. European documentary makers presented documentary as an inventive, impressionistic and rhythmic image. "Berlin: Symphony Of A City" made by Walter Ruttmann is the representative work of this period. Ruttmann was interested in rhythms and patterns. (Barnouw 73) The score of the symphonic documentary made by the scenery and people in Berlin made the impression of Berlin romantic and rhythmic.

Political Propaganda Age In World War II

While Grierson used documentary film as a propaganda tool to solve social problem, Hitler politicized it. In the Nazi era, media were under the government's control. Goebbels, as the Minister of Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda manipulated all of the media production. Leni Riefenstahl was the only exception. She finished "Victory of Faith" and "The Olympia" with Hitler's sponsorship. (Barnouw 100-101) Leni considered any commentator an "enemy of film." (Barnouw 103) The power of these films comes from "choreography of images and sounds." (Barnouw 104) The march, the oratory, the folksongs and the cheers in the crowd were the narration in her film. Riefenstahl showed little interest in politics but emphasized the aesthetics.

In 1955, Alain Resnais's "Night and Fog" "was a searing indictment- but with a shift in aim" (Barnouw 180). The images presented in a lyrical and poetic form without any condemnatory and emotional narration shows the most powerful accusation of the Nazi era.

Free Cinema Movement

Free cinema was just "the title of showings organized at

National Film Theater" in London in 1956. (Barnouw 231) The young leaders Karel Reisz, Lindsay Anderson and others asserted that film makers were observers rather than propagandists. The authoritative and arbitrary should be denounced, an idea that reversed Grierson's concept. Light equipment should be adopted to make possible intimate observation of the subjects in documentary. (Barnouw 231)

The innovations of the Free Cinema Movement make direct cinema and cinema verit e possible in the near future.

Direct Cinema

Robert Drew and the Maysles brothers promoted the concept of direct cinema that catches the climax of events at the critical moment. For these photographic reporters, the aesthetics of direct cinema was influenced by news photography.

The workers of direct cinema assert that the camera should be like a fly on the wall that "intrudes as little as possible in order to capture the spontaneity and uninhibited flow of live events". (Rabiger 23) The cameraman should hold the camera and wait for the crises rather than initiate any events because the authenticity of events would be obliterated if the filmmaker tried to manipulate anything while filming. Interview is the

technique that direct cinema abandoned because no unexpected footage will be acquired in an interview. However, interview is considered the most feasible way to gather information from the subjects in depth.

Cinema Verit e

Jean Rouch, an anthropologist, developed the idea of cinema verit e. To legitimize the presence of camera, to encourage the interaction between subjects and director, to allow the director as the provocateur and catalyst to participate in certain events and to attach importance to the usage of interview are the essences of cinema verit e.

The representative work of cinema verit e, Chronicle of a Summer applied the theory asserted in cinema verit e. The filmmakers, Edgar Morin and Michael Brault went to the Parisian streets, In view of the camera, people were stopped with a microphone and asked: "Tell us, are you happy?" Some Parisians brushed the questions aside, others stopped to consider. (Barnouw 254) The filmmakers were the catalyst to stimulate the subjects to react to the camera. The question is the subjects might behave unusually when they are irritated.

Television Documentary

The documentary film, with inevitably small audiences, has a hard time as soon as it jumped from the movie theater to television screen. It needs the permission of giant television networks which are dominated by commercial, political and moral pressure groups. (Rabinger 28)

Standard type of television inherited many characteristics from Grierson's propaganda. Video that is illustrative to audio is used in most television documentaries. The sound over used to amplify the producer's idea is the primary part of the documentary. The power of image is thus minimized because the audiences' attention was drawn to the audio.

Producing a Documentary

For this thesis, the topic is how Taiwanese rely on folk beliefs as a way to relieve mental anxieties. This topic was going to be dealt with under the philosophy of anthropological films because it is filled with traditional religious mystery. In anthropological films, the filmmakers observe and reveal a story. Such an idea was partly shaped out in the pilgrim tour. There are lots of rituals held in the parade of the pilgrim tour which were mysterious to the producer. The producer unveiled the reason behind these rituals by interviewing the Gi-Tong and the

Tao-Priests. However, the anthropological film tries not to illustrate the video by narration. Since lots of information need to be presented to help the international audience understand the rituals, narration was added in the post-production stage.

As the shooting stage went on, the producer went to the temples and the altars to take some footage. By following the concept of direct cinema, the camera was handled like a fly on the wall. The subjects were shot with a minimum interference so that genuine reactions could be caught.

The subjects were also interviewed about why they go to "sweep bad luck, tranquilize the soul or ask the deity". The interview is the most efficient way to acquire information. Tao priests and Taiwanese shamans also provided information about the method they use to help people. In the ideal concept, only their sound over will be used in the program rather than have a transcribed narration. The idea was modified after the following reasons were considered. Some observations from the producer beyond the interviewees revelation needed to be told. Furthermore, the translated narration is not enough for the international audiences to acquire complete information. Though the interviewees not talking fluently could be considered a natural performance, the program tends to not be rhythmical as some redundant information is provided. Under this situation,

a narration that provides basic information and condenses the messages from the interviewees is properly used. The international audience will catch the idea immediately from the narration rather than read from translated subtitle.

In Nanook of the North, Flaherty took a couple of years to make his acquaintance with Nanook. Vivid footage was acquired after he was familiar with the Eskimo's life pattern. The price of doing a good documentary is an enormous amount of time of participation. Though only a couple of weeks was allowed to do the shooting, the idea of "participatory observation" and sharing was practiced. With the cooperation of the subject J.K. Wang, the producer was allowed to do the observation and wait for the events in his apartment every weekend. In the beginning, the subjects seem not comfortable with the camera because an outsider intruded into their private place. After a couple weeks, a mutual understanding was established. The Wangs helped explain to the advice-taker about the reason for shooting. The advice-takers trusted the producer with the Wangs help. The reason why people come to ask the deity was discovered by doing the interview. The information gathered seems superficial. The observation that is undone beyond the altar is where the actual story happened. If time is allowed, a deeper story might be possibly told.

Though the actuality of a documentary is important, the aesthetic aspects shouldn't be ignored. Illuminated by the European painters, a lyrical montage was created in the opening and end as the prelude.

Seeing everything through the black and white view finder while doing the shooting, the producer also experienced Dziga Vertov's idea of Kino Eye. The cameraman to a large extent relied on the camera to present the world. However, recomposing the fragmental pieces to represent the real world is questionable. In the five precious instruments session, a long take was used to present how Gi-Tong whips himself when the deity attaches to his body and how he recovered at once after the deity left. A real story was told by a long take. In the paper money session, the ritual for the Gi-Tong and the servant to exchange five precious instruments was provided by a long take. A long take and proper editing would both be ways to present the reality.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

Taiwanese folk beliefs indeed inherited much religious heritage from Chinese religion. Nevertheless, the unique Taiwanese folklore and natural geographic environment different from that of China has formed his own folk beliefs. It is also a support to assist people to strive for a real, everyday life. To divine, to choose a proper direction for deceased ancestors, to ask the deity are the superficial impressions of Taiwanese folk beliefs. Most educated people view folk beliefs as superstitious customs rather than notice it as one of the significant dimensions of Taiwanese culture. Many orthodox traditions in Taiwanese folk beliefs which are beyond the intellectual's academic knowledge have prevailed in folk Taiwanese society from generation to generation no matter how progressive science has improved. The history of folk beliefs needs to be explored and the reason why it has deeply influenced Taiwanese needed be comprehended rather than just dismissed as superstition.

This video thesis provides a vision about current use of Taiwanese folk beliefs and reveals the significance of religious rituals that are not familiar and respected by Taiwanese. To broadcast it would help Taiwanese people understand their own

cultures. The Taiwanese people's self-awareness could be awakened though realizing and appreciating themselves.

Furthermore, typical programs about folk beliefs are sensational and lead the mass to be superstitious. Since the power of mass media in the late twentieth century is overwhelming, to produce a program with sincerity and accuracy that helps people understand the cultures they are living with would be an urgent task for the media producers in Taiwan to fulfill.

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