

he performs an admirable task of tracing the militancy among the Shanghai Catholics, who preferred martyrdom and long prison sentences to being co-opted. Their steadfastness explains the bitterness of many who stay away from the government-recognized open churches.

Mariani ends the book hoping for reconciliation: "... reconciliation cannot be forced. It must be freely asked for. And freely given" (227). He could have discussed conditions from all sides, some of which are intractable and some are amenable to solutions by worldly wisdom, before leaving all to providence.

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**DANCING FOR THE DEAD: Funeral Strippers in Taiwan: (an ethnographic film).** By *Marc L. Moskowitz, director, producer, editor, and cinematographer.* Columbia, SC: Daunting Hat Productions, 2011. 1 DVD (38 min.) US\$19.95.

Grandpa has just died so we have to prepare for the funeral. Coffin? Check. Mourners' sackcloth? Check. Tent? Flowers? Check and check. Chairs? Check. Caterer? Check. Electric flower car and strippers? Check. What? Welcome to Taiwan, where a really big sendoff to the afterlife, a temple fair or maybe even a political rally is likely to include scantily clad (at least for starters) singer-stripper-pole dancers gyrating on the stage of a truck decked out with gaudy backdrops (who's looking at the scenery?) and flashing lights.

Wearing the hats of director, producer, editor and cinematographer, Marc Moskowitz, one of our best chroniclers of the anthropology of daily life at the grassroots of Taiwan's society, has delivered a film that manages to titillate while providing an astute examination of what he calls in his narration "religious innovation" on the island. Can we call it "soft" power?

The film intersperses lurid scenes of the title ladies performing with interviews with a second generation performer, Electric Flower Car (*dianzi huache*) (EFC) managers, a government official and the requisite academic talking heads, most of whom have trouble keeping a straight face as they provide analysis and personal reminiscence of watching strippers at these outdoor festivals as well as in theatres in their youth. From behind the camera, Moskowitz himself becomes the subject of vulgar taunting by the female hostess, inviting him to try "Taiwan chicken."

Religious processions have a long history in Chinese society, and Moskowitz shows scenes not only from a rare 1930 black and white parade in Taiwan, but also from a wide range of operas, parades, festivals and fairs from around Taiwan. In the 1930 film, costumed children are posed on platforms which are carried on shoulder poles. Later, ox carts were used. Then in the 1980s, EFCs emerged becoming increasingly large (hydraulic lifts make it possible for them to enlarge to three times their original size) and *piaoliang*

(“beautiful,” but that’s a matter of taste!). Taiwan’s public religious activities include self-flagellating entranced *dangi*, modestly attired dancing women and, surely the funniest, techno-dancing traditionally costumed warriors, some of whom draw women from the audience to accompany them.

According to interviews, “gods, ghosts and ancestors” all want entertainment, and Taiwan’s “mix and match” religious life can meet the demand. One EFC manager tells how a man promised his father that if he lived till 100, the son would hire strippers for his funeral. The father lived till 100 and the filial son fulfilled his promise, with the stripper dancing on the coffin. A scholar cautions that the gods who enjoy this kind of stuff tend to be low-status deities.

One manager acknowledges that strippers initially performed at funerals for gangsters, but the routine soon spread among the masses. Putting on a big show is a sign of wealth. Stripping at religious functions is seen as a kind of safety valve, a way to do things people can’t do in regular life. Moskowitz makes the important point that funerals, as well as temple fairs and religious festivals such as Ghost Month, are social events, as much for community recognition and solidarity as a show of piety. Funerals are held on the street with a lot of noise and a procession. A latent function of temple fairs is to attract worshippers who will also fill the temple’s coffers with donations. Key to all of this is the concept of *renao*: hot and noisy. The film brings this out very clearly.

The second-generation entertainer complains that many people look down on this occupation, and do not realize the stiff training regimen the girls undergo. Not surprisingly, audiences only notice that the girls aren’t wearing clothes and not their high skill. But the performers and managers themselves comprise a tight-knit community, and offer each other support and protection.

Moskowitz makes some important points about gender. There is a display of violent machismo by male performers in some of the events for one thing. For another, while people might complain about the nudity and sexuality of the funeral strippers, Taiwan’s advertisements and media are full of images which objectify women as sexual objects yet don’t elicit the same disapproval. Children attend the performances but also gaze upon the female body on billboards and television shows wherever they go. He attributes the ubiquity of scantily clad female images to the influence of global capitalism. A government official says they have tried to restrict these performances and “point it in the right direction,” then admits that nobody listens. Cut to a scene of children on the stage watching a performance.

Moskowitz has a very good feel for the sometimes bewildering chaos that is Taiwan, and demonstrates that for all of its modernization and globalization, there remains a thriving, vibrant and constantly evolving local culture there, and that this is an indication of religious freedom on the island. He has produced a dense and very insightful, eminently watchable

film of just the right length that should have a place on the shelf of anyone interested in Taiwan society, but also in popular religion and its interaction with globalization everywhere.

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**MASCULINITY & JAPAN'S FOREIGN RELATIONS.** By *Yumiko Mikanagi*. Boulder, CO; London: FirstForumPress, 2011. ix, 139 pp. (Tables.) US\$55.00, cloth. ISBN 978-1-935049-38-8.

In the past fifteen or twenty years, gender theory and feminist analysis have been adopted by a number of historians and scholars of international relations to provide a useful framework for exploring diplomacy, war and foreign policy decision making. Yumiko Mikanagi adds to this literature with a study of the relationship between the changing styles of masculinity among Japanese elites and changing patterns of Japan's foreign relations since the Meiji Restoration. The book is structured around the notion of a correspondence between evolving and competing cultural constructions of "dominant" masculinity alternating between "hard" and "soft" poles, and a series of shifts in Japanese foreign policy from periods of militarized assertion to those of "passive" roles in world affairs.

Mikanagi writes as a scholar of political science and international relations. Her argument is brief, but seeks to explain the new willingness of the Japanese government to deploy the Self Defense Forces in operations abroad, commensurate with Japan's status as a major economic power. The heart of the book for a wider non-specialist audience, however, is her work in describing and exploring the shifting forms of dominant masculinity that, she suggests, help explain Japan's dramatic transformations over the last 150 years. This historical exploration of non-Western forms of gender ideology suggests that modern elite Japanese manhood has been constructed around two broad organizing principles, existing in tension and competition with each other. She labels these forms "warrior masculinity" and "literati masculinity." The first of these "emphasized physical might," the second "emphasized intellectual prowess" (20).

Within these two generalized constructions of elite male subjectivity, she identifies and describes five historically specific manifestations that alternately achieved hegemony. Mikanagi argues that these oscillations between competing styles of manhood "have been intertwined with Japan's international relations as both cause and effect" (21). In the wake of the Meiji restoration *bushi* (Samurai) masculinity was replaced by *haikara* (high-collar) masculinity, an emulation of elite Western styles as interpreted by adherents of the *bunmei kaika* (civilization and enlightenment movement). By 1874 domestic political opponents of governing *haikara* elites reclaimed the symbolism of the Samurai, cultivating *bankara* masculinity. According to