

Kapiteln beibehalten. Hier zeichnet der Autor die posthume Inszenierung der Ikone Ho Chi Minh nach, die zumindest teilweise gegen seinen letzten Willen stattgefunden hat und geht auf den andauernden Kampf um die Deutungshoheit des Lebens von Ho Chi Minh zwischen staatlichen Medien und Kommunistischer Partei auf der einen Seite und exilvietnamesischen Gruppen auf der anderen Seite ein.

Zusammengefasst trägt Großheims Buch zu einem komplexeren, menschlicheren Bild von Ho Chi Minh, jenseits von Überhöhung und Dämonisierung bei. Wer sich aber neue Erkenntnisse über das „Privatleben des Asketen“ erhofft, wie der Klappentext ankündigt, wird enttäuscht sein. Die kurze Ehe Ho Chi Minhs mit einer Chinesin wird in zwei Kapiteln auf knappen 30 Zeilen abgehandelt, die Kontakte zu seiner Familie, werden auf ein paar kurze Sätze beschränkt. Trotz dieses nichteingehaltenen Versprechens bietet das Buch, besonders für Studierende, aber auch für alle anderen Vietnam-Interessierten einen sehr guten, weil kontroversen, Einstieg in die politische Person Ho Chi Minh, die Kommunistische Partei Vietnams und die transnationalen Vernetzungen und Zerwürfnisse zwischen den kommunistischen Bewegungen und späteren kommunistischen Staaten Vietnam, der Sowjetunion und China.

Judith Moneke-Schmidt

Beth Osnes: The Shadow Puppet Theatre on Malaysia. A Study of *Wayang Kulit* with Performance Scripts and Puppet Designs

Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2010. 194 S., USD 55,00

The Malaysian shadow theatre (Malay: *wayang kulit*) is a quite neglected topic of study compared to the vast literature on the Javanese or even Balinese variants. Thus, Beth Osnes' book could have been a welcome addition to our knowledge of an often

overlooked cultural expression of Southeast Asia, the more as it is based on two intensive fieldwork experiences in 1991 and 2001. However, the book under review turned out to be a disappointment.

After a preface (pp. 1–6) and a short introduction (pp. 7–12) the book is divided into five chapters. The first chapter gives an overview on Southeast Asian forms of the shadow theatre and its general features. It is rather a descriptive summary of existing studies and delivers nothing new. The second chapter consists mainly of a synopsis of the most widely played stories, while the analytical parts again are short and not without shortcomings. Whether the Cerita Mahraja Wana is properly described as “the Malay folk version of the Hindu Ramayana” (p. 33) is questionable, as Osnes does not tell us how she defines the term “folk version”. Chapter 3 is the strongest part of this book, as Osnes gives an ethnographical account on performance aspects of the Malay *wayang kulit* based mainly on her own fieldwork. The Malay shadow play is performed in the Kelantanese dialect of Malay and derives from the Northeastern state of Kelantan. In Chapter 4 Osnes gives five scripts of Malay shadow plays, only one not written by Osnes herself. Thus, in this chapter we learn how a Western scholar sets out “to create a shadow puppet show” (p. 110) to be performed at an American university in order to keep “tradition alive” (p. 91). It is surprising that Osnes seems to have heard nothing of the on-going discussions on Eric Hobsbawm's concept of invented traditions, but more astonishing is the claim that English-language performances of Malay shadow play by American students in the USA will keep alive a Malay-language tradition in Malaysia. Chapter 5 finally describes Osnes experiences in teaching Malaysian (or rather her invention of) *wayang kulit* to American students.

This book suffers from its lack of theory, especially on the performance and oral aspects of the shadow play. Osnes carefully avoids any deeper discussion of the works of

the late Amin Sweeney who is only mentioned shortly on p. 5. Sweeney's studies on the Kelantanese *wayang kulit* were based on his fieldwork in the late 1960s and were published in the early 1970s. His enormous fieldwork experience made him write his impressive studies and lead him to further research on the nature of orality in the Malay shadow play and traditional Malay literature. We do not learn anything on oral aspects of the Malay *wayang kulit*. Writing down a kind of libretto of Malay shadow plays by an American scholar in the English language is an anachronism to the Malaysian oral cultural background, the more, as Osnes mentions that she imbued the texts with her "own interpretations of the spiritual mystery of the *wayang*" (p. 104).

Aspects of politics or the modern nation-state are also excluded from this book. We are informed that the PAS-run government of the state of Kelantan had forbidden *wayang kulit* performances only in a short subordinate clause without any further explanation or discussion (p. 91). This would have been necessary as the fundamentalist Islamic party PAS introduced the ban due to the "un-Islamic contents" of the shadow play, while performances for tourists were not involved. Nor does Osnes discuss the *wayang kulit* performances carried out by the Malaysian Ministry of Culture in Kuala Lumpur as part of the Malaysian national culture. As Malay *wayang kulit* is a cultural expression more or less exclusively located in the northeastern parts of the Malay Peninsula and in its traditional surroundings almost everywhere in decline, these ministry-ordered performances would make a nearly perfect example of invented traditions in Hobsbawm's sense. Interesting would also be some information on gender aspects of Malay *wayang kulit*. Malay (and probably all other Southeast Asian) puppeteers (Mal.: *dalang*) are male. Osnes included photographs which show her performing the shadow play in Kelantan. It would be interesting how the audiences reacted to her and

what Malay *dalangs* in general thought of female puppeteers.

Furthermore, the fieldwork experience might also have been too intensive. Although Osnes claims to have been taught by a Kelantanese puppet player in the Kelantanese dialect, her mastering of Malay seems not to be very deep as there are faults in the language examples: "*sekola bas*" (p. 10) means "school of buses" instead of "school bus" (*bas sekolah*). The traditional *rebab* played during performances is not a wind instrument as claimed by Osnes (p. 55), but a string instrument.

Summarizing, this book is rather descriptive and lacks any deeper interpretation, based on firmly grounded theoretical work on shadow play. Factual (and also several spelling) errors are also quite numerous. Thus, whoever wants to read well-founded works on Malay shadow play still has to rely on the ground-breaking studies by Amin Sweeney.

Holger Warnk

Andres Ufen: Ethnizität, Islam, Reformasi. Die Evolution der Konfliktlinien im Parteiensystem Malaysias

Wiesbaden: VS Verlag, 2011. 307 S., EUR 34,95

Andreas Ufen has written one of the best single volume studies on Malaysia's political system, capturing both its historical development and current trajectory. But he has also made a major contribution to the comparative study of Southeast Asian politics, particularly Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand. He offers an additional comparison between the different political party systems of west with east Malaysia. I hope it is not long before it is also translated into English so that it can reach a wider audience.

In the introduction Ufen explores the distinctiveness of the west Malaysian party system. Theoretically his chief concern is to show the continued relevance of the "old" European-based Lipset and Rokkan cleavage