

Bio

Risaw Walis is a PhD student in Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Leeds under the guidance of Prof. Johanna Stiebert. He earned Bachelor and Masters from Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium and Yu-shan Theological Seminary, Taiwan, with special interests in Taiwan indigenous theologies, cultural theologies, postcolonial theologies and political theologies.

Title

Rethinking the Relationship between Indigenous Spiritualities and Healthcare from The Philosophies of Mutux

Abstract

In the author's Sediq traditional philosophies, there are plenty of terms that can describe one's well-being and health status. However, there is not a single term that can definitely and scientifically precisely refer to someone as "healthy" or "unhealthy". Mutux is one of these many terms. Tribal fellows tend to say: "Mutux ka isu!" to describe someone who has become physically and mentally "abnormal" or "non-human-like". Within Sediq cultural text and story, it is customary that this people need to be consoled by the msapoh (lit. healer, spirit or ghost medium) who can hold a psbunul rite to tell which Utux has possessed this people and why this people has been possessed by this stronger Utux. Then msapoh will hold a psbalay (lit. reconciliation, recovery or rapprochement) rite to reconcile Utux of the possessed and Utux that possesses the people and bring the normal mental and physical status back. Although most of Taiwan's indigenous peoples have embraced Christianity and accepted modern medical treatment and examination, Sediq spiritual approach, cultural genes and ancestral philosophies behind Sediq's Mutux cannot be downplayed and worth more exploration to establish the relationship between indigenous spiritualities and healthcare. This also corresponds to the growing interests over the issues and concerns that indigenous ancestral, traditional and spiritual assets should be incorporated also into the assessment of indigenous people's healthcare and health status. The presentation is firstly planned to explore the cultural, ancestral and traditional philosophies behind Mutux. Then, the Sediq healthcare or notion of being "healthy" will be attempted to be located. Finally, it hopes to suggest that Sediq and also other Taiwan indigenous spiritualities can one way or another be complementary therapies to contribute to indigenous healthcare