

to describe *mingei*. This is all part of the up-grading process from craft to art, but I am sure that every self-respecting craftsman would wince at the following: “ (*Mingei* wares) have an individuality, the charm of handmade goods; their nubby textures, modulated earth tones, and surefooted balance abound with a warm-hearted hospitality that refreshes and soothes the spirit. They possess the seductive enticement of a sentimental tug back to an era when life seemed simpler ” (p. 4). Like connoisseurs of wine, folk art critics sometimes seem to be talking more about women than objects.

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#### KOREA

JANELLI, ROGER L., and DAWNHEE YIM JANELLI. *Ancestor Worship and Korean Society*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. 1982. Xiv + 228 pp., 21 diagrams, 1 map, photos, bibliography, character list, index. Hardcover US \$25.00 ISBN 0-8047-1135-6

Among the anthropologists of the younger generation, none are more qualified for such research than the Janellis who, both from their background and training, made the ideal team: Roger Janelli, Associate Professor of Folklore at Indiana University, wrote his doctor's thesis on Korean rituals of ancestor worship, and his Korean wife, Im Don-hui 任教姬, now Assistant Professor of History at Dongguk University in Seoul, and daughter of the well-known Korean folklorist, Im Sök-jae 任哲宰, graduated with a dissertation on Korean fortunetelling. Considering this unique constellation, it is regrettable that the book does not offer more detailed information on their method of fieldwork, which judging from a few passing remarks must have been “ participant observation ” combined with free interview and the study of locally recorded genealogies (*sebo* 世譜).

The study reviewed here is the result of fieldwork done in 1973/74 and 1977/78 in a lineage village called Twisöngdwi south of Suwön 水原, a middle-sized town in Kyönggi-do 京畿道 south of Seoul. Its main objective was “ a comparative social analysis of the Korean ancestor cult in the light of similar studies from China, Japan and sub-Saharan Africa ” (p. VIII). The introduction and the first two chapters give the necessary background information on the village and the lineage in question, which is a branch of the great Kwön 權 lineage of Andong 安東 in Kyöngsang-bukdo 慶尚北道, tracing its origin to a certain Kwön Haeng 權幸, a tenth century official who became prominent in connection with the establishment of the Koryö Dynasty. In the 15th century, one of his seventeenth generation descendents, Kwön Po 權堞, moved from Kaesöng 開城, the capital of the Koryö, to the present area shortly after the establishment of the Yi Dynasty and its new capital at Seoul. By the 23rd generation, around 1600 A.D., his descendents had split up into five local lineages, one being the Twisöngdwi lineage. The ancestor worship in the families of this lineage is the object of this study.

The book first discusses problems of lineage property, the lineage being “ landed gentry,” and of the relation between lineage members and outsiders, such as hired workers and new settlers who started moving in in the 1930s and whose number has rapidly increased during recent years, and the role of both in village affairs. This is followed by an analysis of lineage families and their structure which quickly shows

the marginal role played by women who marry into the lineage from outside as well as their problems of adaption, for instance in getting along with their mothers-in-law. As women are raised to leave their natal house and also remain strangers in their husbands' lineage, they fail to identify with or attach themselves to either, and it is not at all improbable that this specific situation is responsible for the greater self-reliance displayed by women in Far Eastern societies as compared to men (p. 38). A deeper look into family life also reveals the roots of conflict between generations within the families as well as that of status competition among single families of the lineage.

Chapters three to five focus on ancestor worship and its role in family and lineage organization. In describing funeral rites (p. 58ff), the authors wonder whether the custom of binding the toes and thumbs of the deceased might be a survival from a period when Buddhism had greater influence in Korea. There is, however, no reason for this assumption: not only is it a world-wide practice to prevent the return of the dead, but it is also well documented in the neighboring areas of mainland China, e.g. the province of Shantung (Stenz, 1907: 96, Kalf, 1932: 18), where there is even a special technical term for the shackling of the feet of the deceased: *pan-chiao-suo* (絆脚鎖 or 索). According to Grube (1910: 187), the custom was even practiced in Peking and is supposed to go back to the Book of Rites (*Li Chi* 禮記). The fact that it is also found in Buddhist countries of the Southeast Asian mainland only suggests that it might be the survival of a practice originally common to the whole area and much older than either Buddhism and Confucianism.

The period of mourning after the deceased "has become ancestor," as well as the ritual obligations on the domestic and the lineage level, are then discussed. The data show that actual behavior sometimes greatly differs from the rules prescribed by the ritual manuals, adapting to specific cases for which the latter do not provide.

Chapter six is devoted to the relationship of ancestor worship (*chosang sungbae* 祖上崇拜) and shamanism (*musok* 巫俗). It is interesting to note that villagers not only clearly distinguish between the two, but also define the latter, a form of traditional Korean folk religion which is extensively practiced all over South Korea, as "superstition" (*misin* 迷信), a derogatory term introduced and frequently used by purist Confucianists, Buddhists and Christians alike as well as by over-zealous modernists (pp. 148, 154, 164). One has the impression that they are just repeating the official point of view to demonstrate their "orthodoxy" or "modernity" to outsiders while they themselves still practice shamanism whenever they consider it necessary. Moreover, it may be somewhat misleading to describe a *kut* merely as a performance at which "everybody has a good time" (p. 149). Anyone who has ever witnessed a shamanistic seance to communicate with the dead will not fail to have been impressed by the dramatic seriousness of all participants involved in the ceremony. It should also not be considered the generally accepted custom that the family sponsoring a *kut* does not participate in the consumption of the food offerings after the rite (p. 166): This reviewer witnessed the contrary at a postceremonial feast (*umbok* 飲福) in the Kuksadang 國師堂 in Seoul. In this case, as in so many others, local varieties of custom should be taken into account.

The observation of shamanist seances sponsored by villagers to communicate with ancestors considered to be displeased and therefore hostile to their descendents naturally raises the question of why ancestors should want to harm the very family on whose offerings their own well-being in the other world may depend. Several theories trying to explain this contradiction (Freud, Fortes, Goody etc.) are tested on the Korean material (pp. 167ff) and prove to be insufficient. Finally, a cognitive approach is decided upon, but this also fails to solve the problem satisfactorily at least

with the material available, because the opinions given by informants differ in too many respects.

The final chapter reviews the results of the fieldwork in the light of comparative evidence from China and Japan (pp. 177ff). It soon becomes apparent that of the three peoples compared, the Koreans are the most rigid followers of the traditional rules of ancestor worship as prescribed by Neo-Confucianists. The ritual obligations pass to the eldest male descendent of the lineage, Buddhism or other religions play no role in the ritual, and women are excluded from funeral processions and domestic rites. This very structure tends to strengthen lineage coherence and ensures the continuation of traditional values.

The role of shamanism as a method of communicating with ancestors considered displeased and therefore hostile and harmful to the descendants is shown to exist in all three cultures. The authors conclude that the notion of ancestral hostility is predominately an idea developed by women. This conclusion is based on two arguments. First is that the shamans who act as mediums to the malevolent ancestor and their followers are mostly female. This, in spite of the case mentioned on p. 193, however, is generally not true for China. Not only have the Chinese, since ancient times, clearly distinguished between male (*wu* 巫) and female (*hsi* 媿) shamans (Schang, 1934: 9), but the mediums (*t'ung-chi* 童乩) of southern China are almost exclusively male (Elliott, 1955 and Hsiao, 1977). The second argument seems to be more convincing: Since women marry into the husband's lineage, their parents-in-law, the relationship to whom is not without conflict, will eventually become the ancestors they will have to deal with and they may believe that this hostility could continue beyond their deaths (p. 192).

This well-written work does not try to propose any final solutions, but by discussing a multitude of problems, raises new questions, which makes it extremely stimulating reading. It will remain the best introduction into a hitherto little explored field for a long time.

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