

LEE, JUNG YOUNG. *Korean Shamanistic Rituals*. Religion and Society 12. The Hague: Mouton Publishers, division of Walter de Gruyter, 1980. xvi+249 pp. With 64 black/white and 16 color plates, bibliography, index. Cloth DM 75,—. ISBN 90-279-3378-2.

In the early years of Korea's modernization, foreign missionaries began the study of Korean shamanism. Later, during the Japanese administration, this research was carried on by Japanese as well as Korean scholars. These studies were taken up again after the war and they became especially prolific in the sixties. It cannot be denied that studies by western scholars provided a strong incentive for Koreans to turn their interest toward shamanism, but in the midst of westernization and modernization they also felt the necessity to rediscover the culture of their homeland. In spite of this necessity it cannot be said that scholarly research and analysis in this field was a success.

In the history of the study of Korean shamanism up to the present day Takashi Akiba's achievements are especially outstanding. His work greatly influenced a large number of scholars after the war; even today, scholars can but learn from his achievements. Judging from his *Korean Shamanistic Rituals*, Jung Young Lee seems also to be one of those who has received a strong influence from Akiba. In any event, reading Lee's book one gathers the impression that it is extremely difficult to draw a clear line between Akiba's material and Lee's own opinion. He writes in the preface that he has kept his "interpretation to a minimum" in order to present the facts "as objectively as possible" (vii). I regret very much that due to an overdose of such hesitation the book has also lost its originality. The author further mentions in the preface that he carried out research for this book from 1971 to 1972, but the reader receives only a weak impression of the actual situation in the field. There is also a lack of objectivity, because Akiba's pre-war material is intermingled and described together with the author's own material. This must lead a reader who is not familiar with Akiba's work to think that everything put before him is the fruit of Lee's own research, although his introductory chapter, "The Origin and Formation of Korean Shamanism," is to a large extent a mere translation from Akiba's *Field Study of Korean Shamanism*. We should, however, add that this will at least provide useful reference material for western as well as Korean scholars who do not read Japanese.

Where he discusses the contents of the "twelve ritualistic steps" (40), Lee is taken in, as are many other scholars, by the number "twelve" in the expression "twelve ritualistic steps." If one studies *kut* as they are performed in reality, however, one notices that, depending on the size of a given celebration, all of the twelve steps are not always followed, nor is there any necessity to follow all of them. This does then mean that the expression "twelve ritualistic steps" is nothing more than a generally used mode for expressing a certain number. It is common in meeting and interviewing shamans that they arrange what they want to communicate according to these "twelve ritualistic steps." In spite of this fact, the specific number "twelve" is by no means necessary to understand the structure of the *kut* as such.

The author then introduces shamanistic songs and relates them to the twelve steps, assuming that they are sung in that order. However, since he also includes songs of *Sŏngju* that are sung independently from the twelve ritualistic steps, we are led to believe that the *kut* the author studied was a large ritual that included even more than the twelve steps. Considering this state of affairs it becomes clear that the author's analysis of field material is rather weak.

Lee classifies the rituals into *chaesu gut*, seasonal rituals, temporary rituals, rituals

for the dead and communal rituals. He takes *chaesu gut* to be the basic ritual and the fundamental form of ritual. We can hardly say that this kind of classification is impossible, yet the standards for Lee's distinction between the *chaesu gut* and seasonal rituals are rather ambiguous. In most cases the shamans themselves do not just not distinguish these rituals according to their form or characteristics, they even have several names for one and the same ritual. In consequence, it is possible to say that the imputed difference between *chaesu gut* and seasonal rituals is merely a difference in terms.

Classification of rituals differs from area to area. Even within the ceremonies at one and the same village there are those performed by divinely possessed shamans, others performed by hereditary shamans and still others performed by ritual officials, the *chegwan* 祭官 who are elected from among the villagers for the occasion. By now it is practically an accepted opinion among specialists that the characteristics of shamanism in the northern region of Korea are in contrast to those of the southern region. I do not know whether Lee made any use of this fact for reference in his research, as he certainly does not deal with it explicitly. Additionally, in his discussion of the ritualistic instruments he simply lines them up indiscriminately, disregarding regional characteristics.

The more original contributions of this volume are the last three chapters. Lee gives a very vivid account of a scene in which a deity has possessed a person and explicates the scene as well. Where he describes how in certain rituals a sacred sword or a spear are made to stand upright, how the directions in which certain objects fall are watched, the techniques of delicate balance and of counting by random, and explains all these phenomena as religious phenomena, there we encounter the truly interesting parts of this book. Lee sees shamanism as a family belief and analyzes it as a religion centered on the women of a household. He especially puts forth the important roles of *Taegam*, *Chesók* and *Sóngju* as the three tutelary deities of the household. This is a point that has been discussed in detail by Dr. Kendall in his *Restless Spirits*, which I have reviewed elsewhere (Ch'oe 1981). Dr. Kendall as well as myself have discussed this topic at meetings, yet there is no reference to such efforts in Lee's bibliography. Although it is hard to say who of the two scholars has first proposed such interpretations, they must nonetheless be considered as original. It is true that Akiba some time ago pointed to the central role of women in shamanism, but Lee's idea to further relate this structurally to the three deities is an especially good one.

What strikes me as the most original contribution of this book is its last chapter, headed "Shamanism and Sexual Repression." In those parts where Lee discusses possession dreams within the initiation process he uses material he collected from shamans he is personally acquainted with. He interprets these dreams as means by which sexual repression can be overcome. It also happens frequently, however, that the male deity appearing in a shamaness' dream takes the form of the mountain deity, a deity that appears time and again in Korean folk belief, and I therefore find it difficult to accept a standpoint that wants to see this deity as a sexual partner of the shamaness. Further, if the relationship between male shamans and male deities is interpreted as a homosexual relationship I cannot avoid thinking of this as a quite forced interpretation.

I assume that this volume will be utilized by scholars who otherwise would have only restricted access to the topic because of the languages in which most of the material is presented. I would advise the reader to treat this book critically, however.

Finally, the bibliography to this volume is valuable for locating reference material

in Korean and Japanese as well as western languages, but there are innumerable mistakes in transcription and the romanization of names and words. Just to mention a few cases, the name of a well known Japanese scholar is transcribed as *Hakutori*, but it should be *Shiratori*. Not even Akamatsu's and Akiba's names are spelled correctly although their work is most often referred to in the book. And for one and the same person's name different spellings are used, e.g. *Nam-sun* and *Nam-són*. Let us stop here, because there would be too many points to raise. I would hope, however, that in the event of a second edition of this book, its bibliography would receive the benefit of a thorough check.

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Ch'oe Kil-sōng

Keimyung University, Daegu, Korea

BROMAN, SVEN. *Chinese Shadow Theatre*. Ethnographical Museum of Sweden Monograph Series No. 15. Stockholm: Ethnographical Museum of Sweden, 1981. 252 pp. 206 illustrations in color and 507 in black and white. Hardcover 300 Sw. Crs., paper 240 Sw. Crs. ISBN 91-85344-01-X, ISSN 0081-5632. (Available from: Ethnographical Museum of Sweden, S-115 27 Stockholm, Sweden)

At last, there is a book on Chinese shadow theatre, a field heretofore largely neglected by Western scholars. To readers interested in Chinese theatre, this book should be a welcome addition to the very few existing English publications.

Part of a monograph series published by the Ethnographical Museum of Sweden in Stockholm, the book is entirely based on a collection of Chinese shadow theatre paraphernalia which is housed at the museum. It is mainly a detailed description of the collection, which includes figures, props and musical instruments, as well as the written texts for the shadow plays.

The first part of the book provides information about the general background of the Chinese shadow theatre: the use of introductory settings; the character types; colors used and their meanings; the physiognomy and the different styles of hair, beard, head-dresses; garments and footwear, and the scenery used to accompany them. There is a list of titles for all the plays in the collection. The text of one play, *The Chain-plot*, is reproduced and a full English translation is provided, although there are some technical errors. Probably the most serious of these is the rendering of *i-fu* (義父 p. 38) as "father" (p. 34), when it is really a fictive kinship term. No Chinese would ever refer to his real father as "the old thief," as Lü Pu does to his *i-fu*. The translation is accompanied by a commentary to help readers understand better the play.