

- c Misdeeds of Susano-o.
- d Hiding of the Sun Goddess.
- d Reappearance of the Sun Goddess.
- c A *harahe* (punishment/exorcism) is imposed on Susano-o.
- b Susano-o comes down from heaven. Victory over the serpent. Procreation of children.
- a Susano-o goes into the Land of Root.

The acts can be united in the pairs a - a, b - b, c - c, d - d. The act of each second link (*Glied*) of the pair seems to be the result or consequence of the first (57). It is Naumann's contribution to have disclosed a reversal structure in the Susano-o myths, although the discovery of such reversal structures is not new, having been discussed by Japanese scholars for other parts of Japanese mythology (e.g., ŌBAYASHI 1984, 145–69).

Some of her other observations are rather hard to accept. One example is her interpretation of the weeping Susano-o. For comparison she cites some weeping faces of Jōmon figurines from eastern Japan and Neolithic painted pottery from Panshan, Kansu. In accordance with the theory of Carl Hentze, she proposes that “the weeping face” belongs to a moon deity who possesses the water of life and as such is a general life-giver. She places the weeping Susano-o in this context (91–96).

This interpretation is highly hypothetical in nature. First of all, it is not certain that the Jōmon faces represent weeping faces—the lines below the left eyes may be tears or just tattoo marks. Secondly, one needs more convincing evidence than Jōmon figures from eastern Japan, because there are fundamental cultural differences between the Jōmon tradition in eastern Japan and the early court culture of the Yamato dynasty. There are no clear traces of the Jōmon tradition of eastern Japan in the Japanese mythology compiled in the early eighth century in Yamato. Thirdly, the lunar interpretation of Hentze is, in my estimate, by no means certain enough to be relied on as a theoretical foundation.

We hope this markedly individual introduction will stimulate other scholars to further research in ancient Japanese mythology.

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WHELAN, CHRISTAL, Translator. *The Beginning of Heaven and Earth: The Sacred Book of Japan's Hidden Christians*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1996. xii + 135 pages. Bibliography, index. Cloth US\$34.00; ISBN 0-8248-1806-7. Paper US\$16.95; ISBN 0-8248-1824-5.

The story of Japan's “underground” or “hidden” (*Kakure*) Christians has been told often, but rarely well. In its most common form, the story describes how Christianity spread rapidly in Japan during the second half of the sixteenth century, when it was warmly embraced by those who were in various ways and for various reasons drawn by the Jesuits' message, and they tell how Christianity also suffered under the increasingly intense persecution of the seventeenth-century Tokugawa Bakufu; Christianity was then all but eradicated during the 1630s, when,

with their clergy expelled, Christians either apostatized, went underground, or were martyred; and, the story concludes, more than two centuries later a remnant of these “crypto” Christians reemerged in the 1860s, some of them rejecting the invitation to join the Catholic Church and choosing instead to continue their now eccentric folk religious practices.

There are serious problems with this narrative. First, the evangelism effort was never as successful as the Jesuits’ reports suggest, and at no time did as much as 2% of Japan’s population embrace Christianity. Second, the Tokugawa effort to eradicate Christian belief had at best limited success—though hard numbers do not exist, it is likely that as many as 150,000 Japanese Christians took their faith underground, a figure that would represent fully one-half of the 300,000 Christians in Japan at the height of the mission in 1614. And third, at least some of the approximately 50,000 Christians who reemerged in the 1860s (a remarkably large “remnant”) clearly had sound doctrinal understanding of such matters as the Trinity and the Virgin Birth; knowledge of the Ten Commandments, the Lord’s Prayer, and various creeds; familiarity with Church teachings on priestly celibacy and the Papacy in Rome; and a comprehension of the approximate dates of Christmas and Lent.

Though there are various ways of accounting for the inaccuracy of so much that has been written about the underground Christians, one of the most important factors has been the high degree of regionalism among the underground Christian communities. Unlike the similarly proscribed underground *fujufuse* 不受不施 Buddhists who practiced their faith concealed within the labyrinthine structure of the aboveground Nichiren Church, the best veil available to underground Christians was that of model citizen-cultivators, typically living in remote rural communities that often comprised entire villages. Removed from contact with one another, these communities developed in different ways over their more than two centuries of underground existence; some (particularly those who had the advantage of learning prayers and catechisms translated into Japanese) maintained considerable fidelity to the original teachings, but others (particularly those whose knowledge of Christianity rested upon the memorization of Latin materials) had difficulty maintaining creedal integrity and absorbed much from local ways into their beliefs, practices, and teachings. Furthermore, there is scant evidence regarding how these communities changed over time. One can form a reasonably clear picture of what these communities were like at about the time they entered their underground phase, and what they were like some two-and-a-half centuries later when they emerged from it, but there is precious little to indicate how the communities lived and communicated their traditions from one generation to the next.

These are the factors that make Christal Whelan’s fine translation of *Tenchi hajimari no koto* [The beginning of heaven and earth] so important a contribution to our understanding of at least some underground Christians. The *Tenchi* is of uncertain origin but was of unarguable importance to the underground Christian community in Sotome and its later offshoot in the Gotō Islands. In view of the potentially lethal consequences of possessing material evidence linking one to the proscribed Christian faith, the work was probably transmitted as an oral tradition for a considerable time prior to the composition of the earliest extant manuscripts, which date from the 1820s. The *Tenchi* provides an outstanding example of how the Christian faith of this region was amalgamated within a complex folk religious structure, resulting in a syncretic admixture that would probably appear equally curious to an orthodox Buddhist, a Christian, or a follower of Shinto. Prior to Whelan’s translation, the *Tenchi* was only available to nonreaders of Japanese in a German translation by Alfred Bohner (1938) and in a rather literal and hard-to-obtain translation by Tagita Kōya (1965–67). Whelan’s translation is amplified by a thoughtful introduction that situates the *Tenchi* within a number of helpful interpretative contexts.

My only reservation regarding Whelan’s book is a certain ambivalence on her part

regarding the *Tenchi*'s significance. When, for example, she refers to it as the Kakure Kirishitan's "bible" (13) or "a collection of [their] wisdom" (23), I believe that she clearly overstates the work's significance and effaces its regional character. Elsewhere in her introduction Whelan is in fact both more candid and more accurate, and it must be noted that her efforts in translating and introducing this work in no way require the support of hyperbole. What makes the *Tenchi* so valuable is precisely the microcosmic laboratory it discloses for the interaction of radically dissimilar creeds and worldviews, and for making this intriguing and delightful text so accessible to European and American audiences. Christal Whelan deserves our heartfelt thanks.

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KOREA

CHOE Kil-Sung 崔吉城. *Kankōku minzoku e no shōtai* 韓国民俗への招待 [Invitation to Korean folklore]. Tokyo: Fūkyōsha, 1996. 302 pages. Map, illustrations, tables, chronology, index. Hardcover Yen 2575; ISBN 4-938718-16-2. (In Japanese)

The author is a researcher in folklore and cultural anthropology who has theoretically organized and analyzed material on Korean shamanism that he has gathered through his own fieldwork, and who has published widely on this topic. In recent years he has continued his research while teaching at Japanese universities. *Kankōku minzoku e no shōtai* is indeed an appropriate introduction to the study of Korean folklore, in line with the author's hope, stated in the Afterword, that the book serve as a guide for those with an interest in Korean folklore and a desire to study it.

The volume deals with four areas, each devoted to folklore topics that I shall comment on as I review the contents of this volume. In the first chapter, "Invitation to Korean Folklore," the author points out how important it is, in order to know Korean society, to understand the society's traditional Confucianist way of thinking regarding blood relations. In the Confucian view, males are symbolized by bone and females by flesh, and blood relations are formed by blood flowing along the line that links bone to bone. In Korea, where purity of blood is of great importance, the range of people who cannot marry each other (because of having the same name and same stem) is, as the author argues, determined by custom as well as by law. Since it is of utmost importance to maintain blood relations, the eldest son has the obligation to look after his parents and to perform the ancestral rituals. Confucian influence extends also to village festivals, as is the case in the *dong-je* 洞祭, which is celebrated, in the Confucian manner, quietly and in the middle of the night by males. Villages also have *mu-je* 巫祭,