

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REPORTS

HSÜ TI-SHAN 許地山 : *A Study of the Fu-chi Superstition* 扶箕迷信
底研究, Commercial Press, Ch'ang-sha, 1941, pp. 110.

Owing to the difficulties of transportation in abnormal times the last publication of the late Prof. Hsü Ti-shan could only be received in Peking two years after his death at Hongkong in 1941. In 1934 Prof. Hsü published the first volume of his *History of Taoism*¹, in which he treated both the philosophy of Taoism and the belief in immortality, sorcery and magic adopted by Taoism from ancient Chinese popular beliefs. The present book, *A Study of the Fu-chi Superstition*, was his second publication on Chinese popular beliefs.

The great merit of this book lies in the fact that it contains 130 fu-chi stories collected from different sources of the Sung period down to the end of the Ch'ing. It can be used as a book of sources for the study of fu-chi. The author arranged the stories according to the following three chapters: 1) The origin of the fu-chi. 2) The deities and their writings. 3) The psychical explanation of the fu-chi.

I.

In the first chapter the author says that the fu-chi in its origin had some connection with the "chiang-pi" or inspirational writing 降筆 of the Taoism. In the *Tao Tsang* 道藏 some works are said to be produced by gods in such a way that the gods took possession of some men, and that men wrote very quickly in the grass style. This was called Chiang-pi and in some points the fu-chi is similar to it. From the psychological point of view we may agree with the author, because the performance of fu-chi is based on the same idea that a deity comes and writes through men. But the difference is that during the Chiang-pi men write on paper with the ordinary pen-brush, and during the fu-chi two men hold a sieve with a short stick attached to it and write with the stick in the sand². I have pointed out in a previous article written in the same journal³ that the fu-chi was derived from the sieve divination which based on the conception that the sieve possessed magical powers. Therefore, the Chiang-pi might only have exercised some influence on the development of the fu-chi but had nothing to do with its origin.

1) *History of Taoism* 道教史, Vol. I, Commercial Press, Shanghai, pp. 182.

2) How the fu-chi is performed see Chao Wei-pang, *The Origin and Growth of the Fu Chi*, *Folklore Studies*, Vol. I, 1942, p. 9.

3) *ibid.* pp. 21-23.

The *fu-chi* came directly from the invitation of *Tzū-ku* 紫姑⁴. About the origin of the name *Tzū-ku* the author says that there are two possibilities: First, it might have connection with the immortal fox, called *Ah Tzū* 阿紫, which appeared in the form of a beautiful woman and induced a man to go with her in the Later Han dynasty⁵. Second, *Tzū-ku* might be a corruption of *Tzū-yü* 紫玉, the name of a daughter of King *Fu-ch'a* 夫差 of the State *Wu* 吳 in the period of Warring States; she fell in love with a young man, but her father would not let her marry this man. She died out of grief at the age of eighteen years. After death her spirit appeared once⁶. Of course, these are only two hypothesis. About this question I have a third hypothesis in my former article⁷.

In this chapter the author occasionally mentions that *Tzū-ku* is called the *Moon Goddess* 月姑 in some districts in Kuangtung⁸. I think, this point is rather important, because it can be taken as an evidence of the connection between the sieve divination and the moon in Chinese folklore⁹.

II.

The largest part of Prof. Hsü's study is the second chapter, in which he makes an analysis of what the performers asked and how the gods or immortals answered during the *fu-chi*. A résumé of his analysis is made below; examples are cited when absolutely necessary.

From the Sung period downward, the deity invited during the *fu-chi* was not only *Tzū-ku*. Some other deities, immortals and especially the spirits of the deceased famous persons deified were also invited. As a rule, when a deity or spirit came, he or she first wrote about his or her life, in some cases nothing else; but in most cases after that the performers asked questions and he or she answered.

The *fu-chi* reached its greatest popularity in the Ming and Ch'ing period when the literary examinations were periodically held to select candidates for government offices. Then nearly in every city there were one or more *fu-chi* societies that were generally called *chi-t'an* 筮壇. Such organizations were especially flourishing in the provinces of Kiangsu and Chekiang, where a comparatively larger number of literati existed. So the *fu-chi* was closely connected with the institution of literary examination.

The deity or immortal was often asked to foretell the question of the next examination, that was, as a rule, a subject of composition. In the stories collected one instance can be found that the deity foretold the subject completely. In some cases the deity told only a part, one or two characters, of the subject. For example, it is

4) cf. *ibid.* pp. 11-20.

5) Kan Pao 干寶, *Sou Shen Chi* 搜神記; chüan 18.

6) *ibid.* chüan 16.

7) pp. 21-23.

8) on p. 6.

9) cf. Chao Wei-pang, *Games at the Mid-autumn Festival in Kuangtung*, *Folklore Studies*, Vol. III, 1, 1944, p. 13.

said in the I Chien Chih¹⁰ that when Fang Hsi 方彞 was going to take part in the examination of 1137, he asked the Tzū-ku goddess the subject of composition; he got the answer “中和”. In fact there were two subjects at this examination, 中 being the first character of the first subject 中興日月可冀 and 和 being the second character of the second subject 我和戎國之福. In most cases the deity answered by giving a riddle. Once in the Ch'ing dynasty some students held the fu-chi and asked the subject of composition at the next examination. The Earth-god came and answered, “The subject is in my temple”. They went to the temple of the Earth-god but found nothing there. In fact the subject at this examination was 土地. The Earth-god himself was commonly so called.

Sometimes the deity was asked to foretell one's official rank in the future or one's success or failure at examination. There was only one instance that the deity spoke explicitly. In most cases the deity answered implicitly. For example, when Liu Ta-kuei 劉大攬, a famous essayist of the Ch'ing dynasty, was going to take part in the provincial examination in 1726, he asked a deity to tell him by means of fu-chi whether he would succeed or not. He got the answer “壬子兩榜”. Literally it meant that he would get the chin-shih degree (which was commonly called 兩榜) in the year 壬子, i.e. 1732. In fact, in 1732 no triennial examination was held, and he got the 副榜¹¹ twice in 1726 and 1732. The answer of the deity originally meant that he would get the 副榜 for the second time in the year 壬子. The character 兩 meant the second time and 榜 was half of the title 副榜. Of course, such a riddle could be guessed rightly only afterwards. There were also some instances that the deity did not answer what the performers asked for. Once a man asked about his honour at the examination, but the deity told him the success of another.

Sometimes the deity was asked to tell if one could get a son or not in the future or to foretell the time of one's death. In most cases the deity also answered by giving a riddle. For example, Wen T'ieh-shan 溫鐵山 once asked the time of his death during fu-chi and got the answer “甲子年華有二年”. He thought, it meant that his life would consist of a sexagenary cycle (60 years) and two years. In fact, he died two years after the performance. The answer actually meant that he had still only two years to live. The term 甲子 here did not mean a sexagenary cycle but together with the characters 年華 it meant life. In some instances the deity told something about one's “last life” (the life before his reincarnation in this life).

Sometimes fu-chi was held to asked the deity some questions about state affairs. The answers in this cases were in general not intelligible or might be interpreted in different ways. For example, in the Ch'o-k'eng Lu¹² a poem about the throne of Yüan was said to have been written by the God Chin Wu 眞武 through fu-chi. The poem is as follows:

10) I Chien Chih 夷堅志, by Hung Mai 洪邁, chüan 21.

11) Those who unsuccessful at the examination have deserved honourable mention, are called 副榜.

12) Ch'o-k'eng Lu 輟耕錄, by T'ao Tsung-i 陶宗儀, chüan 20.

九九乾坤已定；清明節候開花。
 米田天下亂如麻，直待龍蛇續馬。
 依舊中華福地，古月一陣還家。
 當出指望作生涯，死在西江月下。

This poem taken literally is not intelligible, but Lang Ying¹³ gave the following explanation: The first two sentences meant that the Yüan throne of ninety-nine years had already been fixed and the first emperor of Ming would rise against Yüan in the third month (in which month the ch'ing-ming festival occurred) of the fifteenth year of Chih-chêng (1355). The characters 米 and 田 in the third sentence made up the character 番 which meant non-Chinese, in this case the Mongolians; the character 龍 in the fourth sentence referred to the year 甲辰 (1364) in which the first emperor of Ming ascended the throne, 蛇 referred to the year 乙巳 (1365), in which the Ming army attacked the Yüan, and 馬 referred to the year 丙午 (1366)¹⁴, in which the Yüan throne tottered. Hence, the third and fourth sentences together meant that the country under the rule of the Mongolians became chaotic in the years 1364-1366. The fifth sentence meant that the happy land would then belong to the Chinese again. The characters 古 and 月 of the sixth sentence made up the character 胡, i.e. the Mongolians, and the sentence meant that all the Mongolians would go back home. The seventh sentence was more difficult to explain. In the text of Lang Ying's Ch'i-hsiu Lei-kao the character 作 was replaced by 聽. The empress Ning-tsung 寧宗 of Yüan was surnamed 聽吉刺. According to Lang Ying this sentence referred to the fact that at Ning-tsung's death Shun-ti 順帝 came to the throne instead of the son of 聽吉刺, and the last sentence of the poem referred to the death of Shun-ti in Ying-ch'ang 應昌 and that his coffin was made of the beams of a temple called Hsi-kiang Ssü 西江寺.

In the Ming and Ch'ing period there were numerous literary societies, the members of which met periodically to compose poems and essays together. Some of them had also deity or immortal members, and during the meetings fu-chi was held. Such meetings were often held in temples, especially in ancestral temples, because the young men often studied in temples instead of schools. In Chang-chou 漳州, Fukien, there was a temple, called Ta-yüan T'ang 大顯堂, that was especially built for such a purpose. In addition there were many other fu-chi societies in Chang-chou. The most famous one was called Pei-shan T'an 北山壇, holding meetings in Hsiao Mei Ling 小梅嶺, north of the Chang-chou city. In the 9th year of T'ung chih 同治, 1870, a collection of the poems written by deities and immortals through fu-chi at the Pei-shan T'an was published under the title Pei-shan Shih Tz'un 北山詩存.

In such fu-chi meetings the deity or immortal generally composed poems on any subject he liked. There were also some instances that somebody would give a

13) Lang Ying 郎英, a scholar of the Ming dynasty. For his explanation of the poem see his Ch'i-hsiu Lei-kao 七修類稿, chüan 27.

14) In the cycle of the twelve years in accordance with the twelve earthly branches each year has a particular animal to represent it.

subject and the deity composed a poem at once. More interesting was that some one hid some thing and asked the deity to guess what it was and compose a poem on it. Besides poems the deity sometimes composed "antithetical couplets". Someone proposed one half of the couplet and the deity completed it. Occasionally the deity discussed literary styles with the performers.

In books such as the *Kuan-ti Ching* 關帝經, the *Wen-ti Ch'uan-shu* 文帝全書 etc., are many passages of ethical doctrines and moral teachings which are said to have been written by gods through *fu-chi*. The most common teachings are to abstain from fornication, to avoid killing animals, to break off the habits of smoking and gambling, etc.

Sometimes the deity taught the performers medicine and fine arts and it was very common that a deity gave prescriptions to the sick. In some instances the deity even explained the principles of medicine. There were instances that a deity taught some one composition, calligraphy, painting, chess-playing, etc.

III.

In the third chapter the author first points out that the belief in the *fu-chi* is connected with the belief that the spirit of the dead can come back and foretell something to the living persons. Originally the Chinese had no idea of Heaven and Hades where the souls went to after death. The Chinese had the same idea as some other peoples that the spirit of the dead sometimes took the form of a bird, especially that of a cock, and lived in the *shê* 社 or temple of earth. On this account trees were always planted in the *shê* and the people often went there to perform the ceremony of calling back the soul of the newly dead. Besides the *shê*, the places where the Chinese believed the dead would go were *T'ai Shan* 泰山 in Shantung, the North 有北, the Yellow Fountain 黃泉 in the depths of the earth, the Dark Capital 幽都 in the earth under the control of the Earth-goddess *Hou-t'u* 后土, and the district *Feng-tu* 酆都 in Szuchuan. The Chinese believed that the souls went there and could come back and communicate with the living persons. The *fu-chi* was one of the ways of communication. That is why most of the deities coming during *fu-chi* were deceased persons. The spirits of unnatural death were more fearful and therefore they were more powerful in foretelling future events through *fu-chi*.

The Chinese deities, except those of natural objects, are deceased persons with a rank. The character *hsien* 仙 originally meant immortality of one's soul with the body, but that was impossible and hence it changed later to the immortality of the soul without the body. However, in the case of becoming a *hsien* one is not said to be dead but to have given up one's corpse. Consequently the gods, immortals and ghosts are the same in nature. They are all spirits in the world. They all can foretell something to persons through the *fu-chi*. Therefore the term *chi-hsien* 箕仙 is used in some books to designate them in general and no distinction is made among them.

Because a ghost of the dead often came during the *fu-chi*, some persons even did not believe that an orthodox god such as *Kuan-ti* 關帝 would come also. If it was said that a god came, it was a ghost or fox that came in his name.

At last the author says, the existence of deities and ghosts of the dead cannot be demonstrated. There are no such spirits who can move the chi during the fu-chi performance. It is the holders who move it consciously or unconsciously. If unconsciously, it is a psychical phenomenon and it cannot foretell anything. However, the holders may be influenced by the others with concentrated minds and strong ideas. The author has given some examples to illustrate this point.

Chao Wei-pang

YANAGIDA KUNIO: *The Dialects of Izu-Ôshima* (柳田國男著, 伊豆大島方言集). Shôwa 17(1942), 76 pp. Appendix, 8 pp., containing a Plan for the Collection of Japanese Dialects.

Volume III of the Dialect Collections of Japan (全國方言集. 三) treats the dialect of Izu-Ôshima, an island lying on the periphery of Sagami Bay east of the tip of the Izu-peninsula. The other volumes of the Dialect Collections are: *Dialect Collection of Kikaigashima* by Iwagura Ichirô (岩倉市郎著, 喜界島方言集); *Dialect Collection of the Kimotsuki District in Ôzumi Province* (Kagoshima-ken) by Nomura Denshi (野村傳四著, 大隅肝屬郡方言集); *Dialect Collection of Suwô-Ôshima* (Yamaguchi-ken) by Hara Yasuo (原安雄著, 周防大島方言集). The entire series of Dialect Collections is published by the Chûô Kôron-sha (中央公論社). In the preface of his book on the dialects of Izu-Ôshima Yanagida asserts that this new collection of word lists reflects the current condition of the native language of Izu-Ôshima. He does not claim that this dialect forms a dialectical unit well characterized by typical features but rather hints that this dialect is part and parcel of a larger dialectical circle that includes the adjacent district of the mainland. The dialect of Izu-Ôshima is one of the innumerable stones in the whole mosaic of Japanese dialects and Yanagida devotes the pages of his book to a close scrutiny and appreciation of this stone.

Yanagida gives due consideration to the dialectical changes wrought by the existing social and commercial intercourse between Izu-Ôshima and the neighboring linguistic centers. He succinctly states in the introduction that although Ôshima is but one of the "Seven Islands of Izu" (伊豆七島), its dialect is nevertheless quite distinct from the dialects of the other islands. The author urges the necessity for further research on this problem to meet the current movement of standardizing national linguistic education, modern traffic and communication.

The vocabulary is divided into 17 sections. The first four and the sixteenth sections give us an idea of the grammatical peculiarities of the dialect; the seventeenth section elucidates phonetic changes. The material collected and arranged in 17 sections is given under the following titles: 1) adjectives; 3) adverbs; 4) interjections; 5) celestial and terrestrial phenomena; 6) animals and plants; 7) agricultural and

forestry work; 8) maritime transport and fishery; 9) labour; 10) food, clothing, dwelling; 11) villages and houses; 12) comments, human body; 13) children's language, childbirth, funeral; 14) worship of gods, ghosts; 15) measurements; 16) idioms, manners of speaking, formulas; 17) phonetic changings.

Yanagida, in taking one island as the field of his research, has followed the principles he himself formulated in the Plan for the Collection of Japanese Dialects. These principles he discusses in the appendix of his book. He states that single islands and districts (gun) should be taken as units of inquiry. We think that if the principles of the geographical method of inquiry would be joined to his methodical procedure, the dialect research work in Japan would advantageously be facilitated.

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MINZOKUGAKU KENKYU, New Series, Vol. II (1944).

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