

Yen's next discussion, "Meanings in Cross Cultural Traditions," is an application of Mircea Eliade's theories of shamanism (ELIADE 1964). He analyzes several folk narratives from disparate cultures in an effort to bring the Chinese tales into a coherent worldwide tradition of shamanism. This part of his thesis is less convincing, since the range of tales and themes is quite broad. Furthermore, he does not articulate either the reasons for or the means of the comparison.

This book will be useful to scholars of folklore and narrative since it points to two methods for the cross-cultural comparison of Chinese and European narrative, one employing Lord's oral-formulaic theory and the other Eliade's studies of shamanistic ritual. It would have been interesting to see, in turn, what the Chinese materials could have added to the Western theoretical frameworks.

One weakness in the book lies in the way the author uses the narrative texts. In addition to translating the texts, he indicates in several places that he has altered, shortened, or even summarized them. Nowhere, however, does he describe the criteria of his editing or the extent and nature of his alterations. This has the effect of weakening his argument, since he uses these texts as his data.

There are frequent careless errors in his references and notes, even errors in the dating of the tales. For example, on page 81 he says that a tale from the *Soushen ji* 搜神記 antedates one from the *Sanguo zhi* 三國志 by one thousand years, when in fact the difference in their ages is closer to one hundred years. Problems such as this are perhaps related to the book's origin as a dissertation; certainly it would have profited tremendously from a thorough revision. Yen especially needs to clarify his use of data and to further explain his own thesis. The dissertation was written in 1971; possibly the author's later work (under the name of Alsace Yen) resolves many of these issues.

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#### SIBERIA

ADAMI, NORBERT R. *Religion und Schamanismus der Ainu auf Sachalin. Ein Beitrag zur historischen Völkerkunde Ostasiens* [Religion and shamanism of the Sakhalin Ainu: A contribution to historical ethnology of East Asia]. München: Iudicium Verlag GmbH, 1991. 171 pages. Bibliography. Paper DM 42.00; ISBN 3-89129-278-3. (In German)

Norbert R. Adami's monograph deals with one of the most intriguing and least-studied

subjects in modern cultural anthropology: Sakhalin Ainu shamanism. The phenomenon is of utmost importance both in the context of Ainu ideology and within the wider framework of world shamanistic ritual. It also plays a role in the intercultural relationships of the Far East region.

Shamanism was never inherent to Ainu culture. It was practiced principally on Sakhalin, where the local Ainu population probably adopted it from the Nivkhs and Tungus, the island's other aboriginal tribes. The issue of the shamanistic rites of the Ainu, despite its importance, has received very little attention from scholars; hardly ten studies exist on the topic. Among the most important are the publications of B. O. PILSUDSKI (who observed these rites on Sakhalin) and E. OHNUKI-TIERNEY (who collected her data among Ainu immigrants from Sakhalin). There is no question that Adami's study constitutes a valuable addition to this literature.

Despite its modest size, Adami's book is quite comprehensive and full of important data. Two major sections on Ainu religion and Sakhalin Ainu shamanism constitute the core of the work. Shamanistic rituals are analyzed against the background of Ainu cultural evolution; of Ainu concepts of the universe, time, and space; and of the complex Ainu animistic mythological system full of cultural heroes and good and evil spirits.

The author utilizes a great deal of published data to reconstruct the role of shamans in traditional Ainu society and help clarify their social status and function (magic healing, exorcism, "conveying" the souls of the deceased to the other world, etc.). Among the topics he describes are shamanic ceremonies, male and female shamanism, various categories of shaman (white and black, i.e., good and evil), the shamanic personality, shamanic disease, shamanistic paraphernalia (costumes, etc.), methods of conjuring up good spirits, and procedures used for attaining the ecstatic state.

The study is comparative, with the author doing his best to trace all possible parallels between the religious beliefs of the Ainu and those of the Siberian peoples. Ainu shamanism is thus seen as an integral part of the North Asian ideological system. This makes Adami's work an important contribution to Ainu studies in particular, and to research on shamanism in general.

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