

("Southeast Asia") and "diversity" of the volume thus seems to me to be misleading. Finally, this is an expensive book and is likely beyond the reach of most scholars, especially students who would have benefitted most from it.

These weaknesses, however, do not bear on the work of the scholars included. Indeed, for the areas represented, the scholarship is excellent and insightful. I found Wyatt's article on the Tai world especially stimulating. This article serves as an indirect reproach for those who too often depend upon the perceptions of Southeast Asia embedded in external (European and Chinese) source materials. Teruko Saito's article is also a reproach for those who have viewed Southeast Asian history through the eyes of the court (via court-centered chronicles and inscriptions) and have thus been blinded to dynamic rural societies in which developments occurred independent of and often despite the efforts of the royal center.

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SIEGFRIED KEIL, JENS JETZKOWITZ, MATTHIAS KÖNIG (eds.), *Modernisierung und Religion in Südkorea: Studien zur Multireligiosität in einer ostasiatischen Gesellschaft*. (Schriftenreihe Internationales Asienforum, 5). München/Köln/London: Weltforum Verlag, 1998. 298 pages, DM 59,-. ISBN 3-8039-0715-2

Much as readers may have reasons to rub their eyes when perusing the introductory piece to this volume as well as by what comes under the heading of *Schamanismus und Volksreligion*, they should not rashly lay it aside. For by far the larger part of the book contains often novel information no less than a lot of food for thought, and thus warrants full attention.

Food for thought is what one also finds in the less satisfactory pieces, and if it is not for their merits, it is for their failures that a few words need to be said about them. For the inherent shortcomings are of a kind often encountered in writing on Korea, and may therefore be briefly taken into consideration as well.

Being placed first in the volume, the article on ways to relate religion and societal development in South Korea appears to have been meant to set the pace for what follows. Fortunately, however, only a limited number of contributors followed suit – and found themselves caught in a predicament. For adapting their writing to an evolutionary scheme as suggested in the introductory piece obliged the authors to devote at least parts of their contributions to inquiries and statements of a historical nature. But since none of the contributors is a Koreanologist, to have done so turns out to have been too much of a demand. For, not being Koreanologists, the authors who tried to follow the evolutionary scheme would have had to rely on publications on the history and religions of Korea both sound and comprehensive enough to warrant the full confidence of non-Koreanologists. However, in view of the state of Korean studies, such publications are next to non-existent. Still, the blame for having failed to provide satisfactory outlines of historic developments cannot be attributed to the shortcomings in Korea-related scholarship. For together with a minimum of reliance on common sense, an attentive reading of the publications that do meet

ordinary scholarly and other intellectual requirements would have been enough to realize how low the standards of the publications are that some contributors to the volume were so unlucky to stumble upon.

Lack of concern for certain standards the neglect of which could at least in part have been avoided also rubs off onto the articles on Shamanism and closely related topics. Informing them no less than the introductory piece is the tenet that Shamanism has been the fundamental substratum of the history and religions of Korea up to the present day. In fact, however, the "Shamanism" a great many Korean scholars write about is not necessarily the same phenomenon as the beliefs and rituals of the Korean Shamans. That "scholarly" Shamanism is in no small measure but an invention or a projection onto Korea of ideas regarding history and religion which Korean writers have picked up from 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century romantic writing of European extraction and which so neatly matches the nationalistic fever that nowadays pervades Korea. Such distortions, it is readily admitted, are hard to discern for non-Koreanologists, Korean ones in particular. Nonetheless, doing proper bibliographical research would have sufficed to show the way toward writing on Korean Shamanism other than the mainstream and to works on Shamanism in general, reading of the latter being no less of a prerequisite when writing on Korean Shamanism than the reading of literature on the same. But above all, even the non-specialist should have been on the alert when noticing that very little is known about ancient Korean Shamanism on the one hand, and on the other they might also have noticed that the same mainstream writing abounds in statements on the perennial effects Shamanism is believed to have had on Korean life. After all, knowing that in the past Shamanism in Korea has experienced continuous disparagement and marginalisation, as narrated in much of the mainstream writing, contributors to the volume here under review should have stopped to ponder at the obvious contradiction between marginalisation on the one hand and the tenet of a Shamanic substratum on the other. To be sure, disparagement of, and neglect for, Shamanism in Korean elitist writing of old does not necessarily mean that Shamanism did indeed gradually cease to affect Korean life. For the obvious fact that Shamanism is to a certain degree still alive today would suggest that it cannot have altogether fallen into oblivion in the past. Yet, to say that Shamanism mattered and still matters today is one thing, and to maintain that Shamanism has been a substratum all over the ages and in all walks of life is another.

Running through the volume and thus contributing to the considerable degree of cohesion that one finds are two pursuits which have weighed less heavily on the minds of the authors of the introductory chapter than on the minds of the others. One pursuit revolves around the question what Confucianism and Protestantism may or may not have contributed to the industrialisation of Korea, the other addresses the rise of Korean capitalism. One would have liked to read more in the line of such thoughtful and well-balanced considerations. Also, a clearer definition of what is here meant by "family" and "Confucianism" would have been welcome. The failure to be more precise in conceptualization leaves the argument less conclusive than it needs to be.



The other central theme is the very modernity in Korean religion. The point here is the development of formal education in religious matters and the growth of a formal organizational framework, both of which were next to absent from the traditional practice of religion in Korea. Unlike the writing on Shamanism, the texts on modern religion are replete with novel, perspicacious and meaningful thought, and part of their quality is due to the fact that their authors could often draw heavily on experiences made on the spot. The argument would come down to saying that in essence the modernity of Korean religions, for the time being that of Buddhism in particular, consists in their having come closer to the Judeo-Christian tradition, which in its turn is the one that in the Occident and thus also in Occidental scholarship on religion informs the concept of religion as such. Seen in this light, one might say that it is only now that the religions of Korea have started to become religions proper. Much as the hitherto all too rash projection of a Judeo-Christian concept of religion onto religions of Korea and the Far East at large has been the cause of severely mistaken assessments, such projection is now as conducive to illuminating the embryonic "religiousness" of religions in Korea as it is with regard to what religions in Korea were like until recently. A good deal of what religion has meant traditionally would come to light by the argument on pp. 94–97, if by nothing else: the glaring disparity between religious commitment professed or claimed on the one hand and actual religious practice on the other would do away with the habit of thinking about Korean religions as "isms". Also, by way of conclusion from the articles in question, one is led to novel and hopefully more promising venues to Korean religions as well as, so one might add, to East Asian religions in general: traditional religions have been interfaced by a common set of hopes and expectations which transcend the lines habitually drawn by the educated elites to separate Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, Shamanism and what else from each other. In fact, such "isms", so one may proceed, have been but options, the choice among which would depend on religious socialisation and social environment no less than on mere expediency. Being conducive to such further-reaching thought may be said to rate as the main merit of the volume here reviewed in the eyes of students of religion as of Koreanologists.

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RAINER HOFFMANN, HU QIUHUA, *Neokonfuzianer und Sinobuddhisten. Drei Studien zur Entstehung der Lixue-Philosophie in der späten Tang-Dynastie*. (Freiburger Beiträge zu Entwicklung und Politik, 23). Freiburg i.Br.: Arnold-Bergstraesser-Institut, 1997. 291 pages, DM 30,-. ISBN 3-928597-22-1

Chinese Buddhism has recently received renewed Western scholarly attention. Based on already published studies and using a considerable number of publications issued in China the book under review is a collection of three essays focussing on the amalgamation of Buddhism and Confucianism in medieval and late medieval China. Each part contains what the authors describe as "key texts" in German translation.