

in the forest." From this one would classify the legend as a myth of the origin of the pig. But this is doubtful, since father and son follow the pig's track. This means the pig existed already. The legend also does not say that the pig did not exist yet. First they eat the spirit-lady in form of a pig, then (for punishment) they are turned into pigs. It may be noted that it is in some legends difficult to distinguish between a myth bringing for the a product and a fairy tale in which the human actor becomes or turns into an animal or plant or object which already exists. In my experience the story teller often neglects to give further information.

The problem with these two publications is that there is no guide to lead one through the jungle of material. But the scholar who works his way through it, will be rewarded. Despite some shortcomings, these two books can be counted among the most important sources of Papua New Guinea legends.

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LEMOINE, JACQUES, assisted by DONALD GIBSON. *Yao Ceremonial Paintings*. Bangkok: White Lotus Co. Ltd., 1982. 168 pp. Maps, 297 illustrations (269 in full color), bibliography. Soft covers US \$65.00

Dr. Jacques Lemoine is a French anthropologist with some twenty years of field experience in northern Southeast Asia. He is the author of an important monograph on the Hmong (Meo) of Laos (Lemoine 1972) and of a valuable 500-page introduction to the ethnography of both the Han and non-Han peoples of China, the Japanese and the Ainu (Lemoine 1978), besides many articles. Prior to the volume under review, he produced two short papers on Yao religious paintings (Lemoine 1979, 1981). Mr. Donald Gibson, whom we have to thank for the appearance of this book in English, is a former British diplomat, polyglot and long-term resident of north Thailand. He counts several Yao among his oldest friends in that country.

The collaboration between Lemoine and Gibson has resulted in a well-written work which is of great importance to art-collectors, anthropologists, sinologists and all who are interested in the Yao people including, as Dr. Lemoine remarks (p. 159), western-educated Yao who, he hopes, "will one day find it . . . an incentive to further research into their own tradition."

But in the first instance (cf. p. 8) this book is directed to Asian art specialists (whether personal collectors or museum curators) who have had the good fortune to become the owners or custodians of Yao religious paintings. For them, this book must become an indispensable adjunct to their collections.

Since about the mid-1970s (cf. Lemoine 1981: 65), Yao religious paintings have

increasingly caught the eyes of specialist collectors of Asian art. Inevitably price tags have kept pace with the growing international interest; Lemoine tells us (p. 7) that there has been a fifteen-fold rise in the prices asked for these paintings since 1975. But far from decrying the commercialization of these *materia sacra*, Lemoine thinks it may preserve this precious Yao heritage from destruction at the hands of zealous reformers: on the one hand missionaries of Marxist atheism, on the other of Christian fundamentalism. With their growing monetary value, "Orders to burn these treasures as 'Satan's paraphernalia' are less often heard since they certainly would not be followed nowadays" (p. 7).

The first chapter of *Yao Ceremonial Paintings* provides the reader with a useful ethnographic and historical background to the Yao people. We learn (p. 11) that the name Yao (瑶) does not appear in Chinese records earlier than Tang times (618-906), when it occurs in the form *mo yao* (莫徭), meaning "not subject to compulsory service" (cf. Lemoine 1983: 197). Living on the peripheries of Han society, the Yao seem always to have cherished their independence. Today the Yao, who are segmented into a number of ethnolinguistic divisions (Mien, Mun, Punu, Lakkja, Iu-ngien), are widely scattered over large areas of southern China and northern Southeast Asia. The largest division, and the one to which all Southeast Asian Yao belong, is the Mien. It is these Mien Yao whose religious art features in *Yao Ceremonial Paintings*.

In Chapter Two, Lemoine adumbrates Yao Taoism, a worldview to which these people were probably introduced sometime in, or after, the 13th century of the Christian era (p. 23). But despite its long history among the Yao, Taoism is still not a communal cult to which all must adhere. Rather, Lemoine tells us (p. 23), "it is still in a stage of active proselytism" among Yao communities. To be a full member of the Yao Taoist cult one has to be literate in Chinese characters. This is because the Taoist rites involve, among other things, writing memorials to the gods. Semiliterate or illiterate Yao must be content with oral rituals and *sip mien*, "dealing with the spirits" (p. 24).

Yao Taoism retains the essential characteristics of its Chinese prototype, the purpose of its various rites being to purify the adherents and guarantee their salvation after death (pp. 32-33). But while among Chinese there is an elite Taoist priesthood, whose members function on behalf of the community of lay people, Yao Taoism regards ordination into the priesthood as the only assurance of personal salvation. Ideally, therefore, every Yao should seek priestly ordination. This ideal of a community of priests, although apparently unique to the Yao among modern-day Taoists, represents an early Chinese Taoist practice dating back to the 5th or 6th century of the Christian era and presumably extant among the Chinese at least until the conversion of the Yao in the 13th or 14th century.

In Chapter Three Dr. Lemoine tells us of the origins of Yao religious paintings. They represent, he says (p. 34), "another essential piece of religious paraphernalia transmitted to the Yao by their Chinese Taoist instructors." Just as a Yao priest must be able to write Chinese characters so, ideally at least, he should also be a painter. In practice many Yao do not paint; frequently such people have commissioned Chinese artists to paint their sacred icons for them. The result is that there are several styles of "Yao" painting, ranging from "the extreme refinement" of some (but by no means all) of the Chinese-executed works to "a touching primitivism . . . [of an] indigenous artist . . . limited by both his own lack of skill and the shortage of colours on his palette" (p. 35). But, Lemoine adds, many a Yao artist was quite as good as his Chinese counterpart.

Whether the artist be Yao or Chinese, these sacred paintings (in scroll form to be

unrolled and hung, usually vertically) are always executed "in an atmosphere of religious devotion." The painter works in a specially-prepared place (p. 35), either a room partitioned off in his client's house, or a bamboo outhouse . . . erected at the side of it "whose walls are plastered with white paper, covered with new white cotton cloth. All this is necessary because "purification and cleanliness are central themes of any Taoist activity." It takes one to two months to complete a set (22 or 24 paintings), during which time the artist must observe strict celibacy.

Yao regard these paintings quite literally as abodes of the gods (p. 36) and, besides having their eyes "opened" by the artist himself, following Chinese ritual practice, the Yao additionally insist that one of their own high priests perform a special ceremony in which the new paintings are introduced to the gods (p. 37). (When paintings are deemed to be too old or in too poor a condition for religious use, there is a prescribed rite of deconsecration; cf. Lemoine 1981: 67).

In Chapter Four, appropriately entitled "The Celestial Chessboard," Dr. Lemoine introduces us to the subject matter of the paintings, the gods and other celestials of the Yao Taoist pantheon. Whatever their artistic merits, Lemoine (p. 46) emphasizes, these paintings are for the Yao essentially religious, not decorative. They provide "pictorial support for the manuals of liturgy" and are a vital component of Yao ordination rites, as well as of major funeral ceremonies (cf. Lemoine 1981: 65).

Chapters Five to Nineteen—the bulk of the book—offer detailed explanations of the iconography. We are taught how to recognize the principal deities and other celestial worthies, and to understand their significance for the Yao. Chapter Five deals with the Three Pure Ones, who reign over the Taoist pantheon. Chapter Six concerns the Jade Emperor and his alter ego, the Master of the Saints. Chapter Seven treats with the Celestial Masters: Li, Guardian of Heaven, and Chang, the historical founder of Taoism. Chapters Eight and Nine deal with two deified mortals, respectively Tai Wai, the High Constable and Monarch of Hell, and Hoi Fan. The latter was probably the leader of an early Taoist community. Chapters Ten and Eleven concern four nature divinities, all of whom double as Inspectors of Merits (cf. Lemoine 1981: 69). They are the Governors of this world, the waters, the sky and the underground. Chapter Twelve discusses the Lords of the Ten Tribunals of Hades, through which the soul must pass before reincarnation. Chapters Thirteen and Fourteen deal with the military guardian deities, the six Marshalls and the Three Generals.

Chapter Fifteen, "The Ancestors" discusses one of the paintings in the set which portrays "the whole assembly of Taoist gods and Celestial Worthies, executed in the typical Chinese tradition" (p. 126), while Chapter Sixteen, "The Forbears" treats with another group painting, this time representing the ancestors of the particular family who commissioned the set. Chapter Seventeen discusses another representation of the whole pantheon. Known as "The Dragon Bridge of the Great Tao," this large horizontal scroll shows a group of Yao priests (at the extreme left) welcoming the arrival of a long procession of deities. This scroll is especially important at the funeral ceremony for a fully-fledged Yao priest, and in the middle of the procession, seated on a sedan chair, is a representation of the dead priest. At the rear of the procession, nearest heaven, are the Three Pure Ones. Chapter Eighteen discusses the celestial enforcers of fasting and chastity. Finally, Chapter Nineteen explains the painting entitled "P'an Hu's Five Banners of Knights," which pictures the Yao crossing the sea and being rescued by their legendary ancestor, King P'an Hu.

The final chapter of the work briefly describes Yao painted masks which are always included with a set of paintings and which are worn during ordinations and funerals

and on some other ritual occasions.

Yao Ceremonial Paintings is profusely illustrated with no less than 297 plates, 269 of them in full, magnificent color. Even without Dr. Lemoine's scholarly exegesis, the plates alone would make this book a collector's piece. But we have to thank Dr. Lemoine and Mr. Gibson for ensuring that it is also a significant work of scholarship. And it provides further grist to the mill for those of us who insist that upland minority peoples of the China-Southeast Asian borderlands must be seen *within* the context of the neighbouring lowland-based civilizations with whom they have interacted for countless centuries. The heritage of Yao religious painting provides us with marvellous visual proof of such interaction.

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LINDELL, KRISTINA, JAN-ÖJVIND SWAHN, DAMRONG TAYANIN. *Folk Tales from Kammu III. Pearls of Kammu Literature* (Scandinavian Institute of Asian Studies Monograph Series No. 51). London and Malmö: Curzon Press Ltd., 1984. Lxiii+325 pp. Bibliography. ISBN 0-7007-0170-2 ISSN 0069-1712.

Folk Tales from Kammu—III, like the two preceding volumes of the same series (nos. 33, 40), is a very impressive work. Unlike most other tale collections, it is evidently the result of years of thoughtful designing, painstaking efforts, and scrupulous care. Introductory chapters, analyses and comments (pp. xii-lxiii, 237-325) occupy almost as much space as the texts of folk narratives and poetry (pp. 3-236), since the latter part contains also many illustrations and a great deal of blank space. Besides the usual acknowledgement and preface, the academic paraphernalia include chapters discussing the story-teller's home village, the ethics of Kammu folktales, Kammu literature, the Kammu spirit world, and the story-teller Kam Raw. After the main texts, there are folklore comments to the stories, motifs and tale-types according to Thompson's *Motif Index* and the second edition of the *Types of the Folktale*, as well as notes to the introductory chapters, to the stories, and to the folklore comments. Included also is a bibliography. The elaborate preparation that went into the making of this volume makes almost all other collections of Asian folk narratives appear inadequate.

Since few human efforts are entirely faultless, however, three imperfections may be found in this volume. First, the title is a little misleading. Two sections of Part