A Study of Ancient Lion Dances in East Asia: Comparing an ancient Korean poem and an old Japanese picture

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This research is animated by my curiosity about the lion dance in ancient Korea. One obvious difficulty hampers the study of dance: source materials such as historical records, illustrations and notations, which might all enable one to conjecture the various figures of dance, are scarce. Due to the scarcity of dance records, the ancient poems, Five poems regarding various Korean performances (Hyangak chapyŏng osu 鄉樂雜詠五首) are invaluable. The five, composed by Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn (崔致遠, 857–?), depict five dances performed during the late Silla period. For my research, it is important that the five poems record not only titles but also information about dance contents. One, Sanye (狻猊), depicts the lion dance and provides invaluable information.

The significance of these poems has inspired a number of Korean scholars to research them, including Ch’oe Namsŏn (1972), Ch’oe T’aeho (1994), Kim Chaech’ŏl (1974), Kim Hakchu (1964, 1994), Yang Chudong (1962), Yang Chaehyŏn (1983) and Yi Tuhyŏn (1973, 1974). Published research is mainly oriented around comparisons with performances at the Tang court or in the Western Regions (Xiyu 西域) of China. We cannot access directly performances at the Tang court. Interestingly, Yi Tuhyŏn, and Kim Hakchu, and also Yi Hyegu (1967), explore the five performances in the poems with reference to gagaku. However, their research, which is based on a scattered assortment of records, does little to clarify ambiguities, since they offer little if any concrete evidence. Rather, the simply present assumptions without deep investigation.

Owing to the nature of performing arts as an ever-changing phenomenon, research on dance iconography has often been essential to imagine the dances of the past. In this sense, dance historians must pay attention not only to dance itself but to the visual arts. Unfortunately, the oldest picture of the lion dance in Korea dates only to the 19th century. With this, it is hard to grasp early features of the dance. When we look at the Japanese court, however, more than 20 Korean dance pieces from the 4th-9th centuries still exist. In that period, many performances as well as philosophies, science and techniques were introduced to Japan from Korea. Therefore, some source materials for the ancient Korean lion dance exist in Japan.

The ancient Japanese scroll picture, the Old Performances Picture of Shinzei (Shinzei kogakuzu 信西古樂圖) is important in showing a Korean lion dance. This picture, drawn by Hujiwara no Michinori (藤原通憲, 1106?–1160), presents the
nature of the dance in the Heian period (794–1185), the golden age of Japanese court performances within the *gagaku* repertoire. It is also significant to note that this is one of the oldest pictures to show Japanese court dance. However, the original picture has been lost. A copy is housed in Tokyo University of the Arts. According to the colophon in this, the copy was made in 1449 (宝徳元年). However, the first page also indicates that Hujiwara Sadamoto (藤原貞幹, 1732–1796) copied it from the Shigenoi version (滋野井殿蔵本) in 1755 (宝歴五年). The picture that is extant, then, is the second copy. In spite of this, this picture shows the oldest form of the Japanese court performances. Due to its importance for Asian performing art history, many musicologists and dance researchers, including Korean and Japanese scholars, have studied it.

Even though there are many researches on it, the comparison with Korean dance has not been researched as deeply as it deserves. It is surely significant that some of the depictions in the scroll can still be found in Korea. For example, the depiction of a human pyramid is similar to a specific performance within the extant *namsadang* (男寺黨) – the Korean male itinerant troupe repertoire – where the name is typically *mudung nori*, a play of young buffoons. *Namsadang* troupes presented various arts such as music, acrobatics, stunts, rope walking, plays and masked dances. As it has been preserved in recent times, their repertoire consisted of six main elements: *p’ungmul* (music with dance 풍물), *pŏna* (spinning hoops and dishes 버나), *salp’an* (tumbling 살판), *ŏrŭm* (tightrope dancing 어름), *tŏppoegi* (mask dance 덧뵈기), *tŏlmi* (puppet play 덩미).

The *mudong nori* may well be related, since the picture indicates it depicts a Silla performance, that is to say, a Korean performance. Clearly, then, some performances in the five poems may also be found in the scroll picture.

In my opinion, however, a serious issue arises because most researchers have misread the scroll depictions. Their conclusions may be wrong in so much that they are based on the Westernized way of reading a picture. Generally, the Westernized way reads a picture from left top to the right bottom, but often invites misunderstandings of traditional East Asian paintings. Through the East Asian way of reading, we can more accurately comprehend dance in the period depicted, and thus find early features of the lion dance.

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The poet, Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn and Five poems regarding various Korean performances

First of all, let me take a brief look at the life and career of Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn. He was one of the leading philosophers and a symbol of intellectuals of his time. The poet was a Confucian official and a Daoist of the late Unified Silla. When Ch’oe was twelve years old, he went to Tang China to study Confucianism (in 869). In 874, he passed the highest of Tang’s civil service exams (Keju 科舉). He then won literary fame not only in Korea but also in China. A good example of his literary achievement is his Manifesto to Subjugate Huang Ch’ao (Tao Huang Ch’ao Xiwen 諨黃巢檄文), which is said to have convinced a large number of Huang’s followers to surrender to Tang rule. Thanks to this manifesto, he acquired a huge reputation during the Huang Ch’ao Rebellion (874–884). This suggests that he must have been proficient in Chinese literary composition. Ch’oe came back to Silla in 885.

When he returned, Silla was starting to collapse due to maladministration and the inconsistencies of its ageing system. Chapter 46 of the History of the Three Kingdoms (Samguk sagi 三國史記) reports that he submitted a treatise to Queen Chinsŏng (眞聖女王 r. 887–897), the Ten Urgent Points of Reform (Simu sibyŏjo 時務十餘條) in 894. However, his proposals were not accepted, due to the self-interest of the ruling aristocracy. Despondent and disappointed, he retired from public life. He wandered the Korean countryside. In the end, he settled at a Buddhist temple, Haeinsa (海印寺). It is unknown when he passed away. It is also not certain whether he was still active into the early years of the Koryŏ dynasty (which began in 918). However, he must have retained great prestige in the Koryŏ, since he was appointed as Naesaryŏng (內史令) in 1020—the second highest ranking government official—paying tribute to his achievements as a writer. Koryŏ also conferred the title of Duke of Literature (Munch’anghu 文昌侯) upon him three years later, and later performed a religious service in the Confucian Shrine to his memory (Munmyo 文廟).

The five poems are preserved in Chapter 32 of the Samguk sagi. They depict five types of Silla dance. The titles are ‘Kŭmhwan’ (金丸), ‘Wŏlchŏn’ (月顚), ‘Soktok’ (束毒), ‘Taemyŏn’ (大面) and ‘Sanye’ (狻猊). Among these, three titles allow us to glimpse the features of dance: ‘Kŭmhwan’ could signify a dance with balls since the meaning is ‘Golden ball(s)’; ‘Taemyŏn’ means ‘a big mask’ so must signify a masked dance; ‘Sanye’ is a name for a lion and seems to imply a lion dance. Yet, we cannot be certain of the meaning of two titles – ‘Wŏlchŏn’ and ‘Soktok’. The Sino-Korean characters ‘Wŏlchŏn’ can be translated as ‘Moon forehead’ or ‘Lunar forehead’, and from my point of view the title may have been used to depict a mask in performance. In the case of ‘Soktok’, the title seems mysterious, since literally it means ‘Binding poisons’. The meaning of the characters seems far from any dance. They could be intended to show the character of the dance, or they simply represent borrowed characters (jiajie 假借) to give the pronunciation of a Korean title. Now, let me move

1 When he was in China, he must have yearned for home since he composed a poem about homesickness: An Autumn Evening in the Rain (Ch’uyaujung 秋夜雨中).

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on to Sanye and examine it closely.\textsuperscript{2}

\textit{Sanye (Lion dance 獅狛)}

From the sea of sand that you came across (遠涉流沙萬里來)
Your fur is worn and piled with dust (毛衣破盡着塵埃)
Your benevolence on a shaking head and a brandishing tail (搖頭掉尾馴仁德)
You are the lion, king of all beasts (雄氣寧同百獸才)

There is no doubt that this is a lion dance, for ‘Sanye’ means ‘lion’. The first line shows the origin of the dance, and is similar to a line in a Chinese poem, \textit{Performance of Western Liang (Xiliangji 西涼伎)} by Bai Juyi (白居易, 772–846), depicting a lion dance in the Tang dynasty. The second line describes the animal’s appearance, indicating that the performer or performers wear a mask and costume with mane and fur to represent the animal. The third shows the dance movements, imitating a shaking head and waving tail, much as is typical among contemporary lion dances in Korea. Finally, the poet praises the virtue of the lion.

Compared with the other poems in the set of five, it is relatively easy to find a comparable dance in Japan. The lion dance was immensely popular in Asian countries including China, Vietnam, Indonesia, Japan and Korea. There are many versions and stories relating to it, not to speak of China or Japan, where more than 300 different dances are documented. It is widely disseminated in Korea. As a result, it is complicated to compare the lion dance in the poem with any specific extant Japanese dance. Moreover, there was more than one type of lion dance at the Japanese court. \textit{Old Performances Picture of Shinzei} presents various ancient versions. It is necessary to find the route of transmission of the dance, given that one aim of my paper is to elucidate the relationship between the five Silla performances and Japanese court dances. So, I ask what lion dance in the \textit{Old Performances Picture of Shinzei} scroll could match the performance depicted in the poem.

In Korea, Yi Tuhyon (1973: 90–98) and Chŏn Kyŏng’uk (2008: 53), as well as Fu Qifeng (1985: 50) in China and Noma Seiroku (1943: 149–56) in Japan, propose that the scroll presents four types of lion dance. Among these, two have titles, the first <Fig. 02> ‘Sohŏhi (蘇芳菲)’, and the second <Fig. 03> ‘Shiragi koma (Silla Lion, lit. Silla Beast 新羅狛)’. According to some archeological evidence like the inscriptions on dance attires and stage props at the Shōsōin Repository used in the Buddha’s Eye-Opening Ceremony at Tōdaiji in 752, ‘Sohŏhi’ clearly belongs to Chinese repertoire. The repository was most likely built during the era of Tenpyō (天平, 729–749) and was administrated by Tōdaiji in Nara until 1875. Today, Kunaichō (the Imperial Household Agency 宮内庁) has taken over the administration from the temple. The Tōdaiji Buddha’s Eye-Opening ceremony (東大寺大佛開眼供養會) in 752 was an event representative of ancient Japanese court performance (gagaku 雅樂) history. Some musical instruments, attire and stage props of gagaku and masks of \textit{kigaku}

\textsuperscript{2} For the other poems and ancient dance, see Seo (2010).
A Study of Ancient Lion Dances in East Asia

(伎樂) used in the ceremony have been kept in the Shōsōin Repository until the present day. Zoku Nihongi reports that this event was “absolutely unparalleled in the history of the country (未嘗有如此之盛也)”. 3 It was, then, the largest and most significant gagaku event in ancient Japan. When we investigate the repertoire at this event, therefore, we gain insight into the character of gagaku at the time. In <Fig. 02>, we can see two beasts, the big lion possibly indicating that one performer is giving the other a ride.

The second lion must be played by a single performer. Considering the word ‘Shiragi (K. Silla 新羅)', ‘Shiragi koma (Silla lion or Silla Beast)’ in <Fig. 03> originated in Korea, in particular Unified Silla. Yi and Noma claim that the third lion dance, shown in <Fig. 04>, could relate to the Chinese lion dance in Bai Juyi’s Performance of Western Liang, because of the text next to the picture. The text also explains that the dance originates from the Chinese Five Colour Lion dance (五方師子). The fourth, in <Fig. 05>, has three ferocious beasts.

Before investigating the scroll and the poem, it is essential to confirm that the title ‘Sanye’ refers to the lion. The first record using this term, but in Chinese, is Account of King Mu of Zhou (Mutianzi Zhuan 穆天子傳), an account of the oldest Chinese noble probably written in the fifth or fourth century BCE. It recounts the love story of King Mu and the Queen Mother of the West (Xiwangmu 西王母), stating: “Suanni (K. Sanye 獛猊) is a wild horse (野馬) that can run around 250 km a day”.4 However, the oldest extant Chinese dictionary, Erya (爾雅), defines the term differently. This compilation goes back to the third century BCE.5 A footnote in the dictionary states, “Suanni is the lion from the Western Regions”.6 The dictionary thus indicates we are dealing with a lion rather than a horse. If we compare these two records, it appears that ‘suanni’ initially meant a kind of horse but was changed to a lion at a later period. At the period when the dictionary was compiled, however, it may not have been known exactly what a lion was, for the dictionary says, “Suanni is similar to a tiger or cat. It preys on the tiger and leopard”.7 From this, we may assume that ‘suanni’ was regarded as an imaginary animal; the Chinese would have clarified their notions regarding the lion after the explorations of Zhang Qian (張騫, ?–114 BCE).

As a matter of fact, Zhang Qian was sent on a mission by the Chinese emperor to ally himself with the Tokharians (C. Dayuezhi 大月氏) in the Tarim Basin against the Han enemy, the Xiongnu (匈奴). A majority of the ethnic groups in the Western Regions, including the Tokharians, were of Indo-European stock, and although the mission was unsuccessful, his travels provided an opportunity to open up the Silk Road. This may explain the change in meaning of ‘suanni’. Certainly, ‘suanni’ is classified as a lion in the later Sancai tuhui (三才圖會). The dictionary Sancai tuhui notes that the lion did not come from China but from the Western Regions. This reminds us of the first line of the poem. The Western Regions are mainly desert, and the first line seems to reflect this. Considering the career of the poet amongst the Tang, it is not surprising that he knew the origin of the lion. A line in the Tang poem Performance of Western Liang (Xiliangji) states, “As if it came

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4 獛猊 野馬 走五百里 (Mutianzi Zhuan 1).
5 Bernhard Karlgren (1931: 49).
6 獛猊即獅子也. 出西域.
7 我麄 如虦貓. 食虎豹 (Erya: shishou).
across the sea of sand from a long distance (如從流砂來萬里)”. In this sense, the Korean lion dance in the poem depicted seems to relate to the Chinese lion dance.

Performance of Western Liang (Xiliangji) was one of ten kinds of performing repertoires (shibuji 十部伎) in the Tang court. Actually, the system began with the seven kinds of repertoires (qibuji) – Koguryô (Gaoliji 高麗伎), Western Liang (Xiliangji 西凉伎), Chinese folk (qingshangji 清商伎), Indian (Tianzhuji 天竺伎), Bokharan (Anguoji 安國伎), Kucha (Guiziji 龜茲伎) and Chinese mask dance (Wenkangji 文康伎). This division originated in the era of Kaihuang (開皇, 581–600) of the Sui dynasty. During the reign of Emperor Yang (煬帝 r. 569–618) of Sui, Samarkand (Kangguoji 康國伎) and Kashgar (Shuleji 疏勒伎) repertoires were added. Then, in the Tang dynasty, the Turfan repertoire (Gaochangji 高昌伎) was incorporated to give the ten kinds. The notion is also found in ‘Seven Kinds of Repertoires (Qibuji 七部伎)’, indicating that the repertoire was introduced before the Sui dynasty (581–618). Su Beihai (1996: 622) notes that Performance of Western Liang (Xiliangji) came from the Western Regions, particularly Kucha (C. Guizi 龜茲), based on the Yuefu zalu (樂府雜錄), where it is so classified. While these poems relate to the lion dance, if we compare the Korean and Chinese versions, the dances are slightly different. Performance of Western Liang (Xiliangji) is a poem about sorrow, marking the loss by the Tang dynasty of the An Xi (安西, current Akesu prefecture) area in 764. Part of it runs:

Barbarians who wear a mask and a lion (假面胡人假獅子)
Its head made by wood and its tail by twine (刻木為頭絲作尾)
The golden eyes and the silver teeth (金鍍眼睛銀帖齒)
Shake off the fur by waving two ears (奮迅毛衣擺雙耳)
As if it came across the sea of sand from a long distance (如從流砂來萬里).
Two barbarians who have violet beards and deep eyes (紫髥深目兩胡兒)
Dance to the accompaniment of drums and say (鼓舞跳粱前致辭)
“I came here before An Xi fell (應似涼州未陷日)
When An Xi Prefecture brought a tribute” (安西都護進來時)
When I listened to this news, I heard (須臾云得新消息)
“The road to An Xi is cut off and people cannot go back to there” (安西路絶歸不得).

Two lions look at each other with tears (泣向獅子涕雙垂)
Do they know that Liang Zhou has fallen or not? (涼州陷沒知不知)
The lions turn their heads to look over the West (獅子回頭向西望)
When they cry with a roar, the audience laments (哀吼一聲觀者悲)

These lions and young barbarians are always in front of my eyes (獅子胡兒長在目)

The performance refers to a lion dance, but there are three differences with the

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A Study of Ancient Lion Dances in East Asia

Korean poem by Ch’oe, regarding mood, objects described, and the number of lions. The first and second differences could be literary issues. However, the third is significant, because it suggests that the Korean and Chinese dances are different. Firstly, the Chinese poem has a certain tragic beauty. The poet laments the decline of the Tang dynasty through watching a lion dance. For example, “Two lions look at each other with tears” reflects the mind of the poet. The mood is very different in the Korean version, which describes the lion as spirited and vivacious. Secondly, the objects described are distinct. The Korean poem focuses only on the lion, describing its origin, character, appearance and movements, while the Chinese poem depicts the atmosphere and response of the audience as well as the origin, appearance and movements. Thirdly, the number of performers may be different. The Korean poem depicts only one lion dancing, but the Chinese dance may have been performed with two. If we now compare the Korean poem to the lion dance in Old Performances Picture of Shinzei, this knowledge yields important clues.

The Chinese poem depicts two barbarians in the performance, with masks that present the features of Indo-Europeans. The poet uses the words ‘deep eyes (深目)’, an abbreviation in Chinese for ‘deep eyes and high nose (深目高鼻)’, an idiom referring to the appearance of people from the West. They take the role of lion tamers (shizilang 獅子郞). Yuefu zalu also describes a lion dance with lion tamers, and the section on Kucha-style performance mentions that the tamer has a brush (fuzi 拂子). The brush could be a stick or whip to control the lion.

Lions with tamers remind us of the inscriptions for the dance attire and stage props at the Shōsōin Repository. There, the shishi (lion) has two buffoons (弄人二人), rather like the Chinese poem. Old Performances Picture of Shinzei also presents a lion dance with a tamer and two young buffoons <Fig. 04>. However, the lion in this illustration appears to be slightly different to the lion dance in the Chinese poem, at least in terms of number, since the poem describes the play of two lions whereas the Japanese scroll shows only one. Moreover, the lion dance in the inscription on the dance attire in the Buddha’s Eye-Opening Ceremony at Tōdaiji in 752 did not belong to tōgaku but to komagaku, indicating that this lion dance came not from China but from Korea.

<Fig. 06> Lion dance from Ŭnyul, Korea

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If we consider contemporary Korean dances, the lion dances in the Northern provinces, namely from Pongsan (봉산), Únyul (은율), Kangnyŏng (강령) and Pukch’ŏng (북청), involve lion tamers. The tamer has a whip or stick to control the beast. The tamers are not described as foreigners or barbarians. While the Pukch’ŏng and Kangnyŏng styles have two lions to the Chinese one, the Pongsan and Únyul styles have only one. It seems reasonable to suggest that the lion dances in the Northern provinces relate to the Performance of Western Liang (Xiliangji).
On the other hand, it is interesting that lion dances from South Kyŏngsang province, from T’ongyŏng (통영) and Suyŏng (수영), the area in which Silla had its centre of power, do not have tammers. The existence or not of the tamer is one criteria indicating the process of transmission in Korean dance. In the T’ongyŏng and Suyŏng dances, the lion preys on a tiger or a monster (tambo 담보). While two performers combine to play the lion, only one plays a tiger or monster. This seems similar to the ferocious beast in the fourth example from the Japanese scroll, and it is of note that neither lion is covered in fur. The ferocious beast in the scroll, however, does not look like a lion because it has horns. Pak Chint’ae (2007) points out that the appearance of the lion in South Kyŏngsang is closer to that of a monster, suggesting a local variation. Han Okkŭn (1996: 90–91) considers that the fact the lion preys on a tiger or a monster relates to apotropaecism, showing its power to protect against evil sprits. This reminds us of the fourth line in the Korean poem, where the poet praises the lion as the king of all beasts. It is possible that the poet had once watched lions prey upon tigers or other beasts, but, anyhow, this represents a difference to the Chinese dance.

We may infer that the lion dance in South Kyŏngsang is related to an earlier lion dance from Kaya in the south centre of the peninsula. When Urŭk (于勒) exiled himself, he introduced 12 Kaya repertoires to the Silla court, one of them being a lion dance, Sajagi (獅子伎). King Chinhŭng (眞興王 r. 540–576) of Silla subjugated Tae Kaya (Great Kaya 大伽倻, 42–562), which was the last state of six within the Kaya confederacy, but Urŭk escaped before the destruction of Tae Kaya. The T’ongyŏng and Suyŏng areas were in territory controlled by the Kaya federation that were assimilated by Silla. In spite of this, it is hard to relate the South Kyŏngsang dance to the poem, owing to the lion’s lack of fur. The poem clearly indicates the lion has fur.

Thanks to the importance of the role of tammers in lion dances, it would be hard to say that the poet ignored the tamer in his poem. The title, though, may imply that the performance involved a tamer. As mentioned above, ‘Sanye’ means lion. In Chinese, basically, there are two words to refer to the lion – shizi (獅子 or 師子) and suanni. In the case of shizi, the meaning is only a lion, but suanni can mean a

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11 The twelve pieces are Hagarado (下加羅都), Sanggarado (上加羅都), Pogi (寶伎), Talki (達己), Samul (思勿), Mulhye (勿慧), Hagimul (下奇物), Sajagi (獅子伎 師子伎), Köyŏl (居烈), Sap’alhye (沙八兮), Isa (爾赦) and Sanggimul (上奇物) (Samguk sagi 32: 8a–9a).

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dragon as well as a lion, indicating that the word *suanni* (and the title ‘*Sanye*’) may show an imaginary beast. This requires us to pay attention to the change in meaning in China from horse to lion, for in contemporary Korean lion dances, the tamer looks much like a horse driver. Could it be the same in the Chinese case? This appears to match the third of the scroll depictions. If so, the title ‘*Sanye*’ could well imply the performance has a tamer.

The third line of the poem refers to the benevolence (*rende 仁德*) of the lion. Benevolence is the first virtue in Confucianism. It can be defined in one sentence: “It is only the truly benevolent man (*renzhe 仁者*) who can love or hate others.” The core value of benevolence can be connected to another primary virtue, justice (*yi 義*), the virtue that distinguishes between good and evil. The concept of benevolence is thus different from the concept of love in the Christian tradition. According to the *New Testament*, “...whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also” (Matthew 5: 39). In the Korean lion dance, we find benevolence in the lion. The role of the lion is to punish a depraved monk and to make him devote himself to Buddhism. Hence, the lion is a symbol of Buddhism and the dance has a strong connection to this. A record in *Gakkaroku* confirms this, reporting that the ‘*Shishi*’ (獅子) lion dance is always performed with Bodhisattva (J. *Bosatsu 菩薩*). Bodhisattva is a Buddhist identity striving to attain the Buddha’s mercy for the benefit of all living beings. If this is so, Ch’oe’s poem’s third line relates to the character of the lion in performance. While *Gakkaroku* (樂家錄) classifies ‘*Shishi*’ as *tōgaku*, it notes that performers of the Right (*komagaku 右方*) play the piece, implying that the dance came from Korea.

It is a mystery that the appearance of the lion in the second scroll depiction is not found in contemporary Korean or Japanese dances. Yi Tuhyŏn (1973: 90–98) claims that two performers combined to play the lion, but to me the pose suggests that only one performer was involved. In the picture, the lion stands with outstretched forepaws: if two performers were involved, this pose would be impossible. The typical standing pose with two performers is to gather the forepaws. The size of the lion in the picture might have created Yi’s misunderstanding, since it is almost the same as that of a lion performed by two dancers. However, this does not automatically suggest two performers, due to perspective. In the West, the idea of perspective, in that objects are not always the size they appear to the naked eye, has been around since Renaissance Italian painters such as Filippo Brunelleschi (1377–1446) and Leon Battista Alberti (1404–1472).

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12 Especially, the dragon likes fire (*Dai Kan-Wa jiten* 7: 702c).
13 唯仁者能好人 能惡人 (*The Analects: Li ren*).
14 *Gakkaroku* 12: 448.
In analyzing the *Old Performances Picture of Shinzei* scroll, Yi Tuhyŏn (1973), Fu Qifeng (1985) and Noma Seiroku (1943) overlooked the possibility that the second, <Fig. 03> and third <Fig. 04> depictions are of one piece. When we read the scroll, every depiction of a musical instrument has its own title. In the case of dance, every dance from *Ama* (安摩) to *Bairo* has its title. But, at the end of the scroll, nine dance pieces do not have titles. These nine were added at a later time, as is stated at the end of the scroll, which reads: “Shinzei added them later”. In respect to the second, <Fig. 03> and the third, <Fig. 04> lion depictions, however, from the title ‘*Shiragi koma*’ (Silla lion 新羅狛) to the musicians, we find no titles, only explanation. In the context of the scroll, a dance piece without any title is supplementary to another. Hence, the two can be considered a single dance piece.

This was overlooked by Yi (1973), Fu (1985) and Noma (1943) who applied a Western way of reading a picture, reading from left top to right bottom. The East Asian way is to read from right top to left bottom. If we read the *Old Performances Picture of Shinzei* in the Western way, the result is as in <Fig. 10>.

<Fig. 10> Westernized way of reading *Shinzei kogakuzu*

The picture seems to divide into (B) and (C) thanks to the part (A). That is to say, part (A) plays a role in creating an obstacle to separate part (B) from (C). The result is the opinion of Yi Tuhyŏn (1973), Fu Qifeng (1985) and Noma Seiroku (1943).

More interesting though is the text with the picture, in particular, part (A). This text quotes a book to explain the origin of the dance, the *Wenxian Tongkao* (Comprehensive Examination of Literature, 文獻通考) compiled by Ma Duanlin (馬端臨, 1245–1322) in 1317. It is impossible that the original painter, Shinzei (Hujiwara no Michinori 藤原通憲, 1106?–1160) could know that book because *Wenxian Tongkao* was compiled after his time. From my opinion, therefore, part (A) could not exist in the original picture, but was added during copying. As mentioned above, scholars including Yi Tuhyŏn (1973), Fu Qifeng (1985) and Noma Seiroku (1943) insist that the dance relates to the Chinese Five Colour Lion Dance and Bai Juji’s *Performance of Western Liang* based on the explanation of the text. As examined above, however, *Performance of Western Liang* may be more similar to *Sohōhi* in <Fig. 02>. In this sense, the text might lead to a wrong conclusion.

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15 以少納言入道本信西追加入之別記.
If we read the picture using the East Asian way of reading, the result is different <Fig. 11>. There is now no obstacle that stops us separating the picture. This reaffirms that the two <Fig. 03> and <Fig. 04> are a single dance piece. Moreover, since the text was added in the later period, we can ignore it. Fusing <Fig. 03> and <Fig. 04> may be a small difference, but suggests many things.

Considered together, the main character is the lion in the centre, with the beast at the right not a lion but a monster, conforming, in other words, what we observe today in South Kyŏngsang province. The striped pattern on its back and legs confirms that the fierce animal is a tiger, or something similar. The appearance of the monster can change. In <Fig. 12>, the lion in the centre seems to stare fiercely at the monster, which corresponds to the fourth line of Ch’oe’s poem: “You are the lion, king of all beasts”. The existence of the tamer and the monster suggest that the lion dance in the Japanese scroll contains all elements of Korean lion dances from the north and from South Kyŏngsang provinces. The most important point is the title in the scroll, which clearly shows that the dance came from Silla. The poem and the scroll depiction can therefore be connected, as is supported by our knowledge that the lion dance of the Buddha’s Eye-Opening Ceremony at Tōdaiji in 752 came from Korea.

The initial record of a lion in Silla is found in Samguk sagi. When Silla military forces subjugated Usan’guk (于山國), current-day Ullusdo, in 512, they used wooden figures resembling lions (木偶師子) to threaten their enemy.\(^\text{16}\) The existence of alliances between Koguryŏ and Silla during the fourth and fifth centuries allows us to

\(^{16}\) Samguk sagi 4: 3a and 44: 4b.

http://www.soas.ac.uk/japankorea/research/soas-aks-papers/
A Study of Ancient Lion Dances in East Asia

assume that the idea of the lion was introduced from Koguryŏ in the north, before the exile of Urük from the southwestern Kaya in 552. Therefore, when the Kaya lion dance was transmitted, Silla people already knew about the existence of the lion. Now, since we know that the lion dance in kigaku was brought by the Paekche officer Mimaji to Japan, we can conclude that Unified Silla people knew of more than one type of lion dance, and may have used a mixture of northern and southern styles. And, in all cases, the lion dance was introduced from the Western Regions through China, and through Korea to Japan.

Conclusion

Through the comparison between the ancient Korean poem, Sanye (狻猊) and the Old Performances Picture of Shinzei (Shinzei kogakuzu 信西古樂圖), I have demonstrated how the Japanese picture depicts the poem. The lion dance in the picture came from Korea. I also found that the dance in the picture is very similar to Korean lion dance but that this may be different to the Chinese lion dance, Sohōhi. The Korean dance has a local monster, tambo, which is normally presented as a tiger. The lion dance in the picture shows the monster. However, many scholars have overlooked this, insisting that the monster is a lion and so separating the lion dance from the monster. Their opinion may be based on the text, but this must have been added at a later period and so may not be relevant to the lion dance depicted. The lion dance in the Old Performances Picture of Shinzei contains all elements of Korean lion dances from the north and from South Kyŏngsang provinces. The most important point is the title of the picture, which clearly shows that the dance came from Silla.

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