

## KOREAN ROOFING FIGURINES: THE CHAPSANG

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Some old buildings, at the ends of their roofs, are adorned with a row of terracotta figurines, often in odd numbers. These grotesques, called chapsang, "mixed figures", stand at the end of the hip hips (chunyo maru), in the case of a hipped or half-hipped roof, or bank hips (naerim maru) if the roof is on two sides. Each of the four, six or eight suites arranged on the same building usually have an equal number of statuettes, between one and eleven. This maximum number of statuettes, eleven at each corner, can be seen at Kyonghoe-ru, a large pavilion located in Kyongbok Palace in Seoul and rebuilt in 1865-1867.

In old buildings, various measures and equipment were provided to protect the building from supernatural beings. Like the other decorative pieces on the roofs, the "eagle's head" (ch'widu) and the "dragon's head" (yongdu), the function of the chapsang is apotropaic. Like the "dragon's head" which, placed higher on the ridge, passes for protection against fires, they are there to ward off nuisances caused by evil spirits.<sup>1</sup> Although qualified as "genies" (sin) in a 17th century text,<sup>2</sup> it does not seem that there were any cult practices in their favor.

Made, like the tiles, in a greyish earth, the statuettes rest on a square plinth of the same material and measure around thirty centimeters in height.<sup>3</sup> They are arranged in line on the thick bead that marks the edges; more often than not, in the most important buildings, the latter are not simply covered with a stack of tiles but covered with a clear plaster which helps, visually, to highlight the grotesques (ill. 1). In the same suite, each figure can be quite clearly different from its neighbors, but from one building to another the figures can look alike. In particular the first, that is to say the one installed on the edge of the roof, takes the form of a figure wearing a hat, seated, legs apart and hands on knees. It is distinguished, without any ambiguity, from others which represent crouching animals, more or less identifiable (dragon, monkey, fish, "phoenix", etc.), even chimeras<sup>4</sup> (ill. 2).

At the end of the Yi Dynasty (1392-1910), such ornaments did not exist on all important buildings. They were found in abundance in the royal castles (throne room, large pavilions, gates and surrounding pavilions), at the gates of the capital, at the funeral chapels of the royal tombs (chongja-kak), and in Seoul, at the temple of the royal ancestors (Chongmyo), at the temple of Confucius (Taesong-chon of Songgyun'gwan), at the temple dedicated to Kwan U

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<sup>1</sup> According to Yi Nung-hwa (1869-1943). Yi Nung-hwa: Choson togyo sa [History of Taoism in Korea], trad. by Yi Chong-un, Seoul, 1986 (reissue), p. 273-274 and 467.

<sup>2</sup> Saeroun palgyon Choson hugi chegak chon = Rediscovering the Sculpture of the Late Joseon Dynasty, Hoam misulgwan, Yongin, 2001, p. 120.

<sup>3</sup> A monkey statuette belonging to the Kyung Hee University Museum (Seoul), measures 40 x 25 x 23.5 cm. See Robert Moes: Auspicious Spirits, Washington, 1983, no 64.

<sup>4</sup> The animal depicted by a statuette in the Tonga University Museum in Pusan appears to have a bird's head, a body covered with fish scales and four legs. See Chin Hong-sop: T'ogi t'ou wajon, Seoul, 1974, (Han'guk misul chonjip, 3), ill. 136, p. 132.

(Tongmyo), at the shrine dedicated to Yi T'aejo (Hwanggongu). All these buildings have one point in common, they have a more or less close but real relationship with the royal function. This association is evident with regard to the gates of the city fortifications: the gates of the capital are provided with chapsang, as well as Namdaemun in Kaesong, the first capital of King Yi T'aejo (reign 1392-1398), and P'aldalmun in Suwon, city royal building built by King Chongjo in 1794-1796, while neither the gates of Pyongyang nor that of Chonju (P'unngnammun) are furnished. They are also lacking in Buddhist temples<sup>5</sup> as well as administration buildings,<sup>6</sup> provincial schools (hyanggyo) and Confucian institutes (sowon). Their distribution therefore reveals a characteristic, the chapsangs are related to the king while the other ornamental elements of the roof, even though their presence is required for royal buildings, are more commonly used. This connection with the royal function is clearly visible in Buddhist paintings. In eighteenth-century paintings describing the life of the Buddha,<sup>7</sup> the buildings where Prince Siddharta, son of a king lived, are equipped with them. However, chapsangs are not found on buildings where one would expect to find them, such as rooms housing portraits of kings; the relationship with the royal dignity therefore does not appear to be very close, the relationship with the roof statuettes does not appear unambiguous. Finally, it should not be forgotten that the distribution which has just been drawn schematically is that of the last days of the Yi dynasty and that it does not prejudice the situation in older times.<sup>8</sup>

In China, these roof figurines are widely distributed and in use for a long time. Called "crouching beasts" (dunshou), their use, without being then dominant, is already well attested under the Song dynasty; they seem to appear under the Five Dynasties (10th century) but they may have even existed since the end of the Tang.<sup>9</sup> In Korea, when did the practice of placing statuettes on the ridges of roofs go back? The presence of chapsang on the oldest monumental gates, Namdaemun in Kaesong and Seoul, is no guarantee of their antiquity, the roofs

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<sup>5</sup> Today, the roofs of the religious buildings of the bonzeries are decorated, with very rare exceptions, only by the edge tiles (maksae) and the ridge antefixes (mangwa). Nevertheless, we sometimes find white ceramic lotus buds associated with the "male" shore tiles, sut-maksae (Taeung-chon of T'ongdo-sa, Kaesim-sa, Chondung-sa) or with the ridge. Umbrella (Taeung-chon du Pomo-sa). It is not impossible that some chapsang equipped some edges. The Taeung-chon of Chunghung-sa (Pukhansan-song) which burned down in 1909 had four, but it was a temple established inside a royal fortress located in the vicinity of the palace and occupied by monk soldiers (sunggun).

<sup>6</sup> The Cens Ministry (Hojo), according to a painting of around 1550 (Seoul National Museum), was devoid of chapsang. Cf. Choson chon'gi kukpo chon [Exhibition of national treasures from the beginning of Choson], Hoam misulgwan, Yonin, 1996-1997, p. 54.

<sup>7</sup> For example the paintings called p'alsang-to at Songgwang-sa of Mount Chogye (1725), Ssanggye-sa of Mount Chiri (1728). The presentation of the chapsang is nevertheless a little fanciful; those in the Ssanggye-sa painting evoke rabbits and even occupy the ridge.

<sup>8</sup> Chapsang may have adorned bonzeries in the past. Thus the current excavations of Hoeam-sa, an important monastery destroyed in the second half of the 16th century, have unearthed some among the remains of tiles. See Pangmulgwan sinmun, no 348 of 1/8/2000, p. 5. In addition, a painting by Han Si-kak (1621-?), Titled Puksae sonun, depicting a scene of civil and military examinations in Kilju, shows chapsangs on the buildings of the local administration and the doors of the city. However, the oddity of the parrots with deer antlers, raises doubts about the accuracy of the ornaments on the roofs. An Hwi-chun: P'ungsok hwa [Genre paintings], Seoul, 1985, (Han'gugui mi, 19), ill. no 28-31.

<sup>9</sup> Qi Yingtao: «Zhongguo gudai jianzhu de jishi» [The ancient ridge decoration in China], Wenwu, 1978, no 3, p. 62-70.

undergoing frequent repairs.<sup>10</sup> In the absence of dated archaeological evidence, it is therefore necessary to refer to iconographic documents as well as to texts. A pictorial representation of Kyongbok Palace executed around 1533<sup>11</sup> shown on the throne room and the doors of its enclosure; As far as the painting can be trusted, each group consisted of only three pieces.<sup>12</sup> Likewise, a fragment of a painting from the Hoam museum depicting, it seems, the Naebul-tang in this same royal castle, reveals chapsang.<sup>13</sup> This Buddhist chapel, erected inside the palace, existed until 1424; rebuilt by King Sejong in 1448 it was moved out of the palace in 1455 and disappeared in 1505. It is at the same time that in the "Dynastic Annals" (Choson wangjo sillok) the word chapsang appears in connection with royal tombs.<sup>14</sup> The Kyongguk taejon, a treatise on administrative law published in 1474, specifies, in the list of craftsmen at the end of the book devoted to the Ministry of Works (kongjon), that there were four chapsang makers alongside the forty tile workers in function at the tile office (Waso).<sup>15</sup>

Thus attested in the 15th century, was it customary earlier? On paintings dating from the end of the Koryo (918-1392) and illustrating the introduction to Amitayur-dhyana-sutra,<sup>16</sup> namely the murder of Bimbisara, king of Magadha, by his son Ajatasatru, are represented approaching ornaments, placed in the same places of the roof. This is particularly clear in the painting preserved at Taiin-ji in Kyoto and dated 1312.<sup>17</sup> Can we deduce from this that the custom existed in Korea at that time? This is possible, but it is not certain. These paintings correspond to a defined genre, linked to a tradition of representations resulting from Chinese religious productions; they therefore reflect more Chinese architectural uses than Korean ones. Even if their absence from the Buddhist buildings of the time, currently surviving, is not convincing, it should be noted that the chapsang do not exist either on the figured roofs of the

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<sup>10</sup> It can be notable changes. Namdaemun, first built in 1396, was seriously altered under Sejong (1448): the simple eave was then changed to a "double" eave (kyop-ch'oma). Later (1st half of the 17th century?), the half-hipped roof would have been transformed into a hipped roof. See Sin Yong-hun: "Soul Namdaemun chibungui pyonch'on" [The transformations of the Great South Gate in Seoul], Kogo misul, no 63-64, 1965, reed. p. 134-135 and Yun Mu-pyong: "Namdaemun haech'ae pujae taehan chosa pogo kaeyo" [Summary report on the rehabilitation of Namdaemun], Misul charyo, no 4, 1961, p. 31-35.

<sup>11</sup> The painting, named Chungmyojo soyon'gwan sayon to is housed at the Hongik University Museum in Seoul, illustrates a banquet. An Hwi-chun: op. cit., ill. no 18.

<sup>12</sup> According to a painting from 1580 (Yomei Bunko, Japan), depicting a banquet offered to the winners of a competition, there are three pieces which appear to be quite different from the forms of the 19th century. See Choson chon'gi kukpo chon, op. cit., p. 97. The Naebul-sa also seems to have been decorated with three chapsangs.

<sup>13</sup> Mun Myong-tae: "<Naebul-tang to> e nat'anan Naebul-tang konch'uk ko" [Research on the architecture of the Naebul-tang which appears in the Naebul-tang painting], Pulgyo misul, 14, 1997, p. 153-170.

<sup>14</sup> 1452 (year of accession to the throne of Tanjong - volume 6, p. 538); 1457 (3rd year of Sejo - vol. 7, p. 232); etc.

<sup>15</sup> They were the only workers in this specialty, there were no others in the capital or in the provinces. This situation does not appear to have undergone any changes during the Yi Dynasty: the Taejon hoet'ong of 1865 provides the same indication.

<sup>16</sup> Korean Kwan muryang subul kyong, Taisho shinshu daizokyo no 365. On these paintings see lastly, Lyu Ma-ri: "Kwan'gyong sobun pyonsang toui yon'gu = A Study on the Buddhist Paintings of the Legend of Ajatasatru", Munhwajae, no 33, 2000, p. 182-208.

<sup>17</sup> We can also cite the illustration of the same sutra kept at Saifuku-ji (Tsuruga) where we seem to distinguish an animal with horns, or the one kept at the Chion-in in Kyoto, dated 1323. In this last painting, we think rather to the so-called paraegi tiles found in Anap-chi (see below).

Kyongch'on-sa pagoda (today within the walls of Kyongbok Palace) erected in 1348. While the details of a wooden pagoda are meticulously rendered in stone, only a dragon's head is present on the hips.

The grotesques do not appear in the older Koryo documents. However, the scale models of pagodas, in bronze, attributed to a period prior to the Mongol conquest (13th century) show edges provided with 2 or 3 ornamental elements (ill. 3). One is in the shape of a ball (a pearl?) Stuck at the top of a short stem, the others look like bent cylinders.<sup>18</sup> A tradition of ornamentation of hip trees, by means of protruding elements, such as they can be observed on these pagodas, could therefore constitute an antecedent to the chapsangs. These ornaments are not unrelated to ancient Chinese forms. The elements adorning the roofs revealed by ancient Chinese paintings sometimes have more of this aspect than that of real statuettes. Thus for the Jin period, the palaces represented in the murals of Yanshansi (in Fanshi, Shanxi), completed in 1167, have, on the edges in front of the dragon's head, two protuberances ending in a ball.<sup>19</sup>

In Korea itself, we can relate these ornamental pieces to an old tile from Silla. It is an upturned tile (*kopsae kiwa* or *paraegi*), related to the antefixes (*mangwa*), examples of which were found during excavations of the Anap pond in Kyongju.<sup>20</sup> This particular tile, with an angled cylindrical body and decorated with a lotus at its end, protruding from the hip sections in a composition that has long since disappeared in Korea. This particular arrangement remains observable on certain *pudo* (sort of funeral or commemorative pagodons) from the end of Silla (9th century) which imitate tiled roofs in stone.<sup>21</sup> Even more straightened elements, perhaps developments of the previous tile, have also been found during excavations. One is from the site of Hwangnyong-sa, a former monastery in Kyongju. It is attributed to the 8th-9th centuries and has remained almost complete: a hollow cylinder bent at a right angle ending in a circle decorated with a lotus flower<sup>22</sup> (ill. 5). It was to be placed on a ridge as shown in the scale

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<sup>18</sup> For example that of the Hoam museum (national treasure no.213) where there are 3 elements, that of the national museum of Taegu where there is 1 dragon head, 1 ball and 1 twisted element not easily identifiable (cf. Chong Yong-ho: "Koryo kumdong taet'abui sillye" [A new example of a large bronze pagoda from Koryo], *Kogo misul*, no 118, 1973, p. 21-28). We can also cite the reduced model of a Buddhist sanctuary at the Kansong museum (Seoul) where there are 3 (4?) Balls. In a reduced pagoda recently exhibited in San Francisco, a stuck ball is associated on each stop with what appear to be two schematically rendered figurines. Kumja Paik Kim: *Goryeo Dynasty: Korea's Age of Enlightenment*, San Francisco, 2003, no 69, p. 215-216.

<sup>19</sup> Reproductions in Chai Zejun, Zhang Chouliang: *Fanshi Yanshansi*, Beijing, 1990. On this monastery see: Patricia Eichenbaum Karetzky: "The Recently Discovered Chin Dynasty Murals Illustrating the Life of the Buddha at Yen-Shang-Ssu, Shansi", *Artibus Asiae*, vol. XLII, no 4, 1980, p. 245-260.

<sup>20</sup> Anap-chi: *p'algul chosa pogoso* [Anap-chi: excavation report], Seoul, 1978.

<sup>21</sup> Sin Yong-hun: "Paraegi", *Kogo misul*, no 129-130, 1976, p. 219-221. A good example is provided by the eastern *pudo* of Yon'gok-sa (Kurye). This type of tile with a protruding cylindrical appendage has endured in Japanese architecture (called *tori-busuma*).

<sup>22</sup> Hwangnyong-sa: *yujok p'algul chosa pogoso I*, Seoul, 1984, p. 150 and plate 255 (4). See also Mun Myong-tae: "Uri narai kiwa", *Pulgyo misul*, no 9, 1988, ill. 13, p. 196.

models of pagodas. of Koryo. The tiled roofs of Silla<sup>23</sup> therefore differed a little from those of Choson and the grotesques ridge were undoubtedly unknown there, but the presence of raised ornamental tiles attested. There is finally a possible connection between the ornamental ridge tiles of the Silla and the Koryo and statuettes as they existed in the 15th century, a lineage which, on the Korean peninsula, probably only constitutes a time-shifted transposition of customs in China.

The varying number of chapsang observable from building to building at the end of the Yi Dynasty does not appear to be determined by any obvious reason. It can be argued, however, that it has evolved over time and increased in size: they are less numerous in the old buildings of Ch'anggyong Palace and in the old figurations. Nevertheless, from the end of the 16th century, an anecdote set out below mentions ten while in China, there could be up to 9 statuettes after a regulation of 1734.

In this country, they figured fantastic animals and stellar deities, namely the dragon, the "phoenix", the lion, the sea horse, the celestial horse, the xiayu fish, the suanni lion, the xiezhi [fantastic animal], la mansion douniu<sup>24</sup>. They were framed, above on the hip, by a horned dragon's head, and, at the edge of the roof, by an "immortal" (xianren) mounted on a rooster which was popularly identified with a prince of the Warring States,<sup>25</sup> King Min of Qi (died 284 BC). In Korea, it does not seem that the shapes of statuettes and their arrangement obey extremely strict rules: some animals, when they are identifiable, are the same as Chinese animals (lion, haech'i - that is, say haet'ae -, "phoenix", etc.) although in an undefined order and for some repeated. But the Korean specificity lies in the first figurine, as seen on all edges. It is a seated figure with legs bent and spread apart, hands on knees, protruding eyes, strong, puffy nose, head topped with a hat (ill. 6). We do not know when the first figurine took on this particular aspect, but tradition strangely associates it with a singular character.

Around 1930, to demonstrate the influence of Taoism in Korea, Yi Nung-hwa cited an anecdote reported by Yu Mong-in (1559-1623) in *Ou yadam*,<sup>26</sup> "The Anecdotes of Ou". It reveals that in 1596, among customary bullying inflicted on a newly appointed mandarin, he had to recite the names of the ten chapsangs ten times in one go. These were, respectively from the outer edge of the roof: Taedang sabu [the Great Tang bonze], Son Haengja [Son the Hitchhiker], Cho P'algye [Pig Eight tusks], Sa hwasang [the master of the sands], Ma hwasang [the master of hemp], Samsal posal [the bodhisattva of the 3 protections], Iguryong [the two-mouthed dragon], Ch'onsan'gap [the pangolin], Igwibak, Nat'odu [the land head of the arhat?]. They would therefore each have had their own identity and it is possible to relate some of these

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<sup>23</sup> In the kingdom of Silla, according to the story of Kim Pu-sik (1075-1151), the *Samguk sagi* (volume 33, chap. "Houses"), from the fifth class to the people use Chinese tiles and "animal heads" was prohibited but these last attributes had to correspond to acroterions or more surely to antefixes

<sup>24</sup> Qi Yingtao: *op. cit.*, p. 66. In the catalog *A legacy of the Ming* (Nanjing and Hong Kong, 1996) a reconstruction of the roof of the early Ming palace gives a slightly different list, totaling ten animals to which is added the "immortal".

<sup>25</sup> Laszlo Legeza: «Decorative Roof Ceramics in Chinese Architecture», *Arts of Asia*, May-June 1982, p. 105-111.

<sup>26</sup> Yi Nung-hwa, *op. cit.*, p. 274 et 467.

names to known beings. The first of these genis correspond to characters found in the famous Chinese novel attributed to Wu Cheng'en (ca. 1500-1582), the *Xiyou ji*, which recounts the fabulous adventures of Xuanzang (602-660) through Central Asia.<sup>27</sup> Thus Taedang sabu would be none other than this illustrious pilgrim monk accompanied by the king of the monkeys, Sun Wukong, and the two deities banished from Heaven, Zhu Bajie, decked out with a pig's head and armed with a rake, and Sha Seng. The triumphs of the cleric and his acolytes over countless demons in the desert areas would have earned him the guard of the Korean royal palaces.<sup>28</sup>

However, the earliest known edition of the novel dates from 1592. As the anecdote recounted is from 1596, it is doubtful whether there is a direct relationship between the two. But the novel attributed to Wu Cheng'en is a complete formatting and has become the reference version of a legendary and romantic material that has spread in different forms. Its circulation is old in China and may therefore be in Korea. Without scrutinizing the literary history of the latter country, it may be mentioned that this material appears in a Chinese phrasebook for use by interpreters, the *Pak T'ongsa*, "The Interpreter Pak." The original, in Chinese characters, was used in the 15th century: an edition was published by letterpress in 1423 and it was reproduced by woodcut in 1458.<sup>29</sup> However, its use could date back to the 14th century and the manual was used for a very long time. At the beginning of the 16th century, the pronunciation of characters was noted using the Korean alphabet and the text translated into Korean. This work was the work of an official, himself a famous interpreter, Ch'oe Se-chin (died 1542) who added comments collected in a work entitled *No Pak chimnan*.<sup>30</sup> From the version due to Ch'oe Se-chin only the first volume remains. But it was again translated and published in 1677 as *Pak t'ongsa onhae* and again the following century. This book exists in its entirety. It contains the text in Chinese with a double pronunciation of each character noted in alphabet and a translation in Korean completed by annotations in Chinese from Ch'oe Se-chin. In the third volume of this text there is a long passage which corresponds to the quarrels of Xuanzang and Sun Wukong with the Taoist masters in the "kingdom of Char-Tard" (Chechiguo). The attached note recalls the biography of the latter and the existence of the other two accomplices from the monk's suite. The fact that the commentary associated with this passage gives Zhu Bajie as the surname of the Ming Dynasty (Zhu) seems to prove that it refers to a version of history prior to this dynasty.<sup>31</sup> This name, however, is not used as a name for a statuette, it is replaced as in the novel by zhu, pig. Several characters with whom the grotesques of the roofs are identified were therefore known for two or three centuries, and independently of the *Xiyou ji* in one hundred chapters, at the time when the anecdote reported by Yu Mong-in takes place.

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<sup>27</sup> For the Chinese novel, see André Lévy's introduction to his translation published under the title *La Pérégrination vers l'Ouest*, Paris, 1991 (La Pléiade collection).

<sup>28</sup> The other six names correspond according to Yi Nung-hwa (*ibid.*) to genis of the soil (t'osin) but nothing seems to confirm this assertion.

<sup>29</sup> Kim Tu-jong: *Han'guk koinsew kisul sa* [History of ancient Korean printing], Seoul, 1980, p. 139 and 205.

<sup>30</sup> Meeting with commentary from another Chinese language learning manual, *Nogoldae*, also translated by Ch'oe Se-chin.

<sup>31</sup> André Lévy, *op. cit.*, p. XXXII.

The association of grotesques with characters found in the *Xiyou ji* is later confirmed by a note from a law book, *Chonyul t'ongbo* by Ku Yun-myong (1711-1797), completed in 1786. However, it introduces a variant since it specifies that the first statuette in the series depicts the monkey king Son O-kong (Sun Wukong).<sup>32</sup> We find this tradition, at the beginning of the 20th century, in a small collection of representations of the *chapsang*, entitled *Sang wa to*, a copy of which is kept at the Changso-kak (Chongsin munhwa yon'guwon library in Songnam). It reproduces the images of ten statuettes with their identity.<sup>33</sup> Compared to the list given by Yu Mong-in, the order is slightly different, but the first four names match. In these ten names, four names present spelling variations: the Chinese characters used respect the pronunciation but the meaning is confused.<sup>34</sup> The note of Ku Yun-myong's treatise and this book thus refer to the same tradition which associates the *chapsang* with characters appearing in the *Xiyou ji*.

Other figures from the same book were found, on the occasion of an annual custom, also employed as supernatural protectors in buildings. According to the *Kyongdo chapchi* by Yu Tuk-kong (1749-?), For the New Year, we painted the images of two generals in gold armor (called *munbae*), of a size exceeding the fathead and a half (more than a *chang*), and they were plastered on the two leaves of the palace doors.<sup>35</sup> One carried an ax, the other an insignia called *chol*.<sup>36</sup> In addition, on side doors (*hammun*) was displayed the image of a general in red court dress, wearing a black hat. The author adds that, popularly, the gold armored generals are identified as Chin Suk-po (Chinese Qin Shubao), the second Ulji Kong (Chinese Yuchi Gong, alias Hu Jingde) and the third as Wi Chong (Wei Zeng). The reason for their use in such places is fully explained in chapter ten of the novel. It is told how they kept watch at the gates of the palace to prevent the spirits from assaulting their ruler, Emperor Taizong of Tang. The first two, soldiers, stood guard for three nights after which they were replaced by their images so that they could rest. But soon the spirits returned through the back doors and it was the third, a devoted minister, who officiated there. It is not impossible that, in Korea, these effigies plastered on New Year's Day on doors acquired individuality long after their appearance. Thus, in the 15th century, the great scholar Song Hyon (1439-1504), in his *Yongjae ch'onghwa*, indicates a variety of figures, including armed generals without any particular personality.<sup>37</sup> Perhaps it was only later that these armored warriors, once undifferentiated, were assimilated

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<sup>32</sup> Kang Mu-hyong, *chapsang* article in *Han'guk minjok munhwa taebaek kwa sajon*, Songnam, 1991, vol. 20, p. 101-102. Yi Nung-hwa: op. cit., p. 274.

<sup>33</sup> According to the catalog this is a lithographic print made around 1920. It has only six folios. I owe Ms. Lyu Ma-ri's kindness for being able to study a photocopy of it.

<sup>34</sup> The variants are for *Taegang sabu*, *Sa hwasang*, for *Mahwasang*, and for *Samsal posal*.

<sup>35</sup> Yu Tuk-kong, *Kyongdo chapchi*, trad. Yi Sok-ho, Seoul, 1973, p. 164. The same fact is indicated by Hong Sok-mo in the *Tongguk sesigi* written in 1849 (same edition, pp. 26-27). Yi Nung-hwa: op. cit., p. 274-275. The usage is in imitation of China. Henri Doré: *Research on Superstitions in China*, Changhai, 1919, vol. XI, p. 978 and following.

<sup>36</sup> Kind of cord fitted with tassels and hanging from a stick; he distinguished between generals and ambassadors charged with a royal commission.

<sup>37</sup> Song Hyon (1439-1504): *Yongjae ch'onghwa*, trad. Nam Man-song, Séoul, 1973, p. 82.

to the protagonists of an episode of the novel or of the tradition on which it is based and that they thereby acquired an individuality.<sup>38</sup>

But this assumption is perhaps only made for lack of sources or the personalization of the images is simply due to the direct Chinese influence. However, such a development seems very plausible as regards the chapsang. The writing reveals a hint of a process of personification. While in the 15th century the word chapsang was most often noted, later the spelling came into being, that is, that where the key of the man is added to the second character. The figured beings are no longer then simple more or less fabulous animals: the slide towards their humanization has become manifest. The anecdote recounted by Yu Mong-in may even lead to hazarding a hypothesis. Wouldn't the names that have been individually attached to the figures come simply from a scholar's joke, or even from the bullying of hazing? Upon taking up his post, before being approved, a new civil servant suffered various humiliating trials, carried out by his older colleagues. This practice, known as myon sin rye, was widespread and resisted attempts to abolish it.<sup>39</sup> It would then be easier to understand how the characters in a novel could have been found on the roofs of the main buildings. By joke we attributed, to statuettes of fantastic beings in use for a long time, names of legendary characters, the name of a doubly strange animal (dragon with two mouths) or of an exotic beast (the pangolin), names pure imagination, perhaps even for others.

In Korea in the 19th century, the use of figurines lined up on the ridges of roofs appears to be limited to buildings linked, more or less closely, to royal power. Their presence is certain at the latest in the 15th century, but the names attached to them are only attested later, at the end of the 16th century. The assimilation of these grotesques to certain characters in the Chinese fictional material to which *Xiyou ji* belongs seems unique to Korea. Whether this particularity is the result of a joke or not does not mean that, subsequently, tradition has not given a certain faith to this fanciful identification nor that the statuary has not been marked by it:<sup>40</sup> the singularity of the first This figurine may have been bolstered by its association with a personality who had long enjoyed fabulous fame.

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<sup>38</sup> In China, the image of generals on doors dates back at least to the Northern Song period (960-1127) and the legend of the Taizong generals to at least the Yuan (1279-1367). See Mary F. Fong: "Wu Daozi's Legacy in the Popular Door Gods (Menshen) Qin Shubao and Yuchi Gong", *Archives of Asian Art*, XLII, 1989, p. 6-24.

<sup>39</sup> See for example Song Hyon: *op. cit.*, p. 46-47 and 55-56.

<sup>40</sup> The exhibition catalog cited in note 2 identifies a statuette representing a monkey in Son Haengja and one representing a pig in a hat in Cho P'algye.

## ABSTRACT

In the ancient architecture of Korea, during the Yi Dynasty (1392-1910), the roofs of some buildings were adorned with protective statuettes, arranged in a line on their ridges. At the end of the 19th century, only buildings more or less related to the royal function were provided with it. The presence of these figurines, with the appearance of crouching animals, is attested in the 15th century. They may have succeeded other ornaments and, more distantly, special raised-toe tiles.

One tradition associates four of these grotesques with figures well known from the 16th century Chinese novel, *Xiyou ji*. More precisely, the statuette placed on the bank is identified with the famous monk Xuanzang, hero of this book. It is finally suggested that the personification of these statuettes could be related to hazing practices.