

proverb is a reflection of the Japanese value system. We are, so to speak, "spontaneity-oriented" people who like to leave things flow as they flow, to let life be as it is, to cast away the self, to stay in the station in life destiny puts you in. Japanese are accustomed to this kind of precept, which essentially leads to ideas that seek for "nothingness." It is required of Zen priests practicing Zen meditation that they "don't see," "don't hear," "don't speak," and of course this sort of instruction will not be acceptable in Western countries, where self-independence or establishment of the self is highly estimated. As a consequence, dropping the word *evil* after "don't see," "don't hear," and "don't speak" is not acceptable to Westerners—though it is interesting that the Germans do not add *evil*.

REFERENCE CITED:

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1974 *Hāmerun no fuefuki otoko* [The Pied Piper of Hamelin]. Tokyo: Heibonsha.

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SWIDERSKI, RICHARD M. *Lives between Cultures: A Study of Human Nature, Identity and Culture*. Juneau, Alaska: The Denali Press, 1991. 273 pages. Illustrations, references. Paper US\$25.00; ISBN 0-938737-24-4.

Anthropology has grown increasingly reflective upon its own methods of studying other cultures and the possible effects of such methods on the cultures studied. *Lives between Cultures* is a contribution to such reflection, though quite unusual in that it considers the motives behind certain "lives between cultures" and their narration, and because it is a series of astute observations rather than a sustained argument. Swiderski describes his book as "an array of lives of people who made crossings. It is devoid of a specific theoretical program beyond the cumulative effect of presenting these lives together" (4). The assertion is quite humble. In fact, these lives of a colorful group of individuals (missionaries, anthropologists, captives, and more or less shrewd impostors) give the author cause to consider the phenomenon of "border crossing" from a great variety of viewpoints. Where he speaks of culture, it may be the "culture" of a people, a tribe, a social group, or even an individual. Culture is the fixed point from which or into which the "crosser" moves. It is the dialectic relationship between this fixed position (of the majority) and the movement of the individual "crosser" that provides the thread connecting the episodes of seventeen chapters in a loose and yet consistent manner.

Swiderski interprets these movements as being basically of two kinds. One will eventually return to where it originated and is in effect, therefore, more a staying in place than movement. Richard Burton on his pilgrimage to Mecca is a case in point, because, notwithstanding all his elaborate disguise and interest in Arab matters, he is at all times very much aware that he is an Englishman and that all the rest is nothing but disguise. His purpose is not to become Arab. The other movement knows no return. That is the kind of effort de Nobili made in order to become a *sanyasi* to the Indian, or that of Gauguin in order to become more Tahitian than the islanders themselves. Although each chapter describes different motivations for cultural cross-

ings, the author does not pretend to exhaust all the possible variations.

Regardless of what direction might be involved, crossings invite moral judgements. The one making a movement leaves stability behind and may therefore be accused of hanging his coat according to the wind, of being a strange maverick or, in the worst case, a renegade who does not hesitate to sell out the most treasured values of a society. However, Swiderski does not judge his cases. He narrates the lives of his heroes (missionaries like de Nobili and Gützlaff; scholars like Doughty, Cushing, and David-Neel; artists like Gauguin; and various impostors) with much detail, but his main interest lies with what motivated their attempts to find a place in a world different from the one they were born into. Anthropologists studying other cultures seriously may feel uncomfortable about finding themselves placed in company with impostors and make-believers. However, I think that one of the points the book makes (rather in passing) is that the serious traveler between cultures may be dangerously close to the impostor. Both may in fact be sincere about their actions, but personal sincerity is only one part of the picture, the other being the assumptions of society. In this respect the author invites to a good deal of thinking that needs to cross ordinary mental horizons.

Swiderski's style and presentation should have made this book thoroughly enjoyable reading, but enjoyment is marred by a great number of typos and other mistakes that make understanding difficult. All of them could have been eliminated by a good proofreader. Other shortcomings concern some facts. To mention just one example, the island that the Dutch were ordered by the Japanese shogunate to use as their only place to live was not off Edo, but in the harbor of Nagasaki, more than a thousand kilometers away and out of sight of the shogun. In spite of such shortcomings the book invites thinking, because it brings together unusual lives in an unusual manner in order to make a point that is of concern to many of us.

Peter KNECHT

VIRTANEN, LEEA. "*That Must Have Been ESP!*" *An Examination of Psychic Experiences*. Translated by John Atkinson and Thomas Dubois. *Folklore Today*. Linda Dégh, General Editor. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990. xvii+169 pages. Paper US\$12.50; ISBN 0-253-36264-4. Cloth US\$27.50.

Leea Virtanen, who teaches Folklore at the University of Helsinki, has here gathered a batch of testimonials by Finns concerning what she calls "simultaneous experiences" (usually called telepathic occurrences). For an ordinary reader the interest of the book lies in the pathos of the material and in the peculiar richness of extrasensory experiences among Finns, particularly Carelian Finns, the same group whose singers have provided us with the traditional chants of the nation. A brief foreword by Linda Dégh points out the general contradictory attitude towards ESP: scepticism and belief, waves of occultist frenzy and of violent debunking alternate or overlap. The "scientific" investigation of occult phenomena seems to ignore the social, folkloric element that sustains them. Virtanen has bridged the gap and, according to Ms. Dégh, folklorists who accomplish this should be entitled to display their personal bias. In her preface Virtanen is quite outspoken:

Perhaps the answer is to be found in the theories of modern physics in which subatomic particles contain simultaneous information. Or is it rather, as some