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1981 *Sima Chengzhen ji jijiao* 司馬承貞集輯校 [Assembled Collations of the Collected Writings of Sima Chengzhen]. Beijing.

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MONGOLIA

HEISSIG, WALTHER, Editor. *Fragen der mongolischen Heldendichtung Teil IV* [Problems of Mongolian epic poetry], Vorträge des 5. Epensymposiums des Sonderforschungsbereichs 12, Bonn 1985, Asiatische Forschungen Band 101. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1987. ix+417 pages. 1 plate. Hardcover DM 172.—; ISSN 0571-320X, ISBN 3-447-02680-4.

This book is a collection of twenty-six essays compiled from the papers read at the fifth symposium on Mongolian epic poetry held in Bonn. Many of the authors address questions concerning the epic about Geser Khan and other Mongolian heroic epics. However, I will not summarize all of the essays but examine the book especially as far as it relates to the folk culture of Yunnan, because this is my own field and because I believe that some of the contributions open up promising views.

Two essays, one by Heissig and another one by Bäcker, deal with Yunnan. Heissig discusses the topics of snakes and bulls in Mongolian epics, and his hypothesis that they can be related to archaeological findings from South China is of great interest. He claims that the bull as it appears in a complex of bull, snake, and child in findings from Mt. Shi-sé in Yunnan, a province of China, is related to the bull in Mongolian epics. However, it remains to be seen whether or not the bull and snake of Yunnan can indeed be identified with the bull and snake of the Yi. The latest documentation available concerning this hypothesis is *Yi yi dongwu yao* [Animal pharmaceuticals of the Yi] by HE Yanchao and LI Gengdong (1986). In any case, his research on snakes and bulls in Mongolian heroic epics offers suggestions which might throw new light on the development of the Nakhi pictorial texts from Yunnan. For example, the snake as a being which obstructs a road, and the relationship of the bull with the moon, are both found also in the pictorial texts of the Nakhi. The image of the death and rebirth of the mangus, which Poppe and Heissig address in this volume, has recently been further pursued by the Mongolian scholar HURLSHA (1989).

Jörg Bäcker discusses three Daghur epics. He takes up the "rebuke of the dragon" as found among the Lisu of Yunnan as an example of the anger and retribution of the gods, comparing it with the Daghur material. Since the Nakhi are also mentioned in Geser Khan, I wished that their tales too (concerning, for instance, the white old man [*der weisse Alte*], the Naga cult, and so forth) would have been discussed.

Bäcker, and Nekljudov in his separate contribution, take up Geser Khan as a code common to both Daghur and Yakut folktales. As for Veit's article on color terms and proverbs in Mongolian epics, it would have been of interest had she also studied the color terms and their relationship to sacred numbers and world picture as they appear in these epics.

Rinčindorji, in an essay concerning the development of subject structures of folktales, discusses the form of three epics. Unfortunately, the footnotes to which we are referred in his essay are missing. Hans-Jörg Uther's valuable contribution on "clas-

sifying oral tradition" brings together the classifications of Asia, China, India, Islam, and Mongolia, with the classifying attempts of Aarne, Thompson, and the Grimm brothers. With regard to China, the contributions of Eberhard and Nai-tung Ting are important. However, as Riftin, Li Zixian 李子賢, and others have argued, the various forms of the treasures (*Erzählgut*) of Chinese traditional tales are to be found also in the traditional tales from the peoples of southern China, considered only in part by Eberhard and Ting. A case in point, e.g., would be tales about the two figures of the goddess Nügua 女媧. The structural analysis by Hammayon of the spirit of the forest-giver, the hunter-taker, and *ongon*, raises the question as to whether or not this would apply to other Mongol tribes, such as the Monguor, as well.

The essay by Herrmann concerning the question of the origin of Geser Khan is based on the previous work by Franke and Stein in order to describe "the state of research on Western Tibetan epics." I hope that the publication of a *Sprachatlas* (linguistic atlas) on the Geser Khan in the future would contribute to understanding the problem of origin of this figure. The problems raised by Rudolf Kaschewsky and Pema Tsering's suggestions, in their contributions on the historicity (*Historizität*) of the hero Geser, especially their ideas that Glin is rLlang and that Geser is Kaiser, are most interesting. Finally, the collection makes it quite clear that it would be very useful for those studying East Asian tales if they had a motif-index of Geser Khan.

In summary, I believe it necessary to study also the folktales of the Nakhi, Yi, Lisu, and other populations of southern China in order to properly understand Geser Khan.

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HE Yanchao 賀延超, LI Gengdong 李耕冬, eds.

1986 *Yi yi dongwu yao* 彝医動物藥 [Animal pharmaceuticals of the Yi]. Chengdu.

HURLSHA 呼日勒沙

1989 "Gesier chuan" chongde siwang yu fuseng muti 「格斯爾傳」中的死亡与復生每題 [The death and rebirth motif in the Geser epic]. *Mingzu Wenxue Yanjiu* 民族文学研究 No. 3.

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ROSSABI, MORRIS. *Khubilai Khan. His Life and Times*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987. xvii+322 pages. Glossary, bibliography, index. Cloth US\$25.00; ISBN 0-520-05913-1.

Well prepared by a number of earlier studies he has published since 1970, Morris Rossabi has written a new biography of Khubilai Khan (1215-1294). After the long silence since B. Vladimircob's renowned biography of Činggis Khan, a true avalanche of biographies and so-called lives of Činggis Khan recently befell the learned world. In contrast, the biography of Khubilai by M. Rossabi is practically the first comprehensive biography in a Western language of this grandson of Činggis Khan who in his youth, in spite of his being "merely a member of a collateral branch of the royal family" (13), ascended to be the ruler over China and the Mongol Empire.

Rossabi has used a tremendous number of relevant sources in Chinese and other Oriental languages as well as Western sources. The bibliography alone (281-314) is a