

lized transvestism with the relative unimportance of gender for governing social behavior and group membership. This stance may account for her failure to remark on the striking similarities between the Iban institution of *manang bali* and the Native American *berdache* which Whitehead analyzes in terms of the framework she and Ortner proposed and Graham herself employs. Both cases of gender-crossing occur in conjunction with parallel systems of prestige for women and men, and a marked lack of gender inequality. And in both cases, gender-crossing is a source of ritual and cosmological mediation that acknowledges women's and men's contributions to, and participation in, societal reproduction and well-being.

I think Graham is error to substitute the claim that gender is highly salient for the Iban for the claim that it is not. Instead, some attention to contexts and domains of gender's salience is in order. Gender distinctions in many facets of social life are either unelaborated or phrased in complementary terms—not only among the Iban, but in Island Southeast Asia more generally. Where prestige is at stake, however, gender emerges—sometimes in cultural formulations, usually in practice—as what Bateson would term a “difference that makes a difference.” Graham's book is a fine contribution to our understanding of one of those powerful domains.

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*Phun Thin-Phun Than: Miti Mai Khong Katichonwittaya Lae Withi Chiwit Saman Khong Phun Ban-Phun Muang* [Folklore-Folklife: New Dimensions in Folklore and Folklife Studies] *Special Issue of Arts and Culture*. Wannu Wibulswasdi Anderson, ed., Bangkok: Silapa Wattanatham Press, 1988. 224 pages. \$2.50. (in Thai)

Folklore as a discipline was introduced to Thai academics only twenty years ago. Once the importance of preserving folklore materials was pointed out, a tremendous amount of various kinds of folklore materials has been collected from village storytellers, folk-song singers, etc., by teachers and students from regional universities and teachers' colleges all over Thailand.

Until now, these folklore materials have only been categorized into different genres, or folktales have been categorized into different types of stories; analyses from socio-cultural perspectives, however, have been very limited. One of the important reasons for such a state of affairs is that those who did the collecting and have folklore materials at hand are academics in the field of literature who are, by training, keen in textual analysis, yet have little training to analyze the material from a socio-cultural point of view.

In 1982, *Arts and Culture* presented a special issue on *Phun Ban-Phun Muang* (Folklore-Folklife), composed of papers written by Pranee Wongthet, a Thai folklorist-anthropologist. In these papers she analyzed folk songs, lullabies, folktales, etc., from an anthropological point of view. This was probably the first time socio-cultural

analysis of folklore has been brought to the awareness of Thai folklorists. Since then the importance of analyzing folklore material in relation to its socio-cultural context has been emphasized, though no other real substantial folklore text has been published after *Phun Ban-Phun Muang* until *Phun Thin-Phun Than*, the volume under review.

*Phun Thin-Phun Than* (the parallel titles of the two publications imply that they are in the same series of cultural studies presented by *Arts and Culture*, though in Thai, both convey the same meaning, i.e., folklore-folklife) appeared in 1988 as a reminder to Thai folklorists that folklore should be examined in relation to folklife.

The relation of folklore-folklife is emphasized and carried as the main theme through the whole book. Theories, methodology, and case studies presented are all substantially provided to support this central theme. The book is divided into six parts of a similar structure. Each part is composed of an article introducing theory or methodology concerning the given topic, followed by one or two articles presenting case studies to illustrate the application of such theory or methodology. In certain parts Wann W. Anderson, the editor, translates some significant articles written by leading European and American folklorists to show the Thai readers good examples of folklore analysis in the area under discussion.

The first part is an introduction generally reviewing traditional folklore approaches, e.g., the historico-geographic approach or that of the solar mythologists, and of the psychoanalytic schools.

Part two leads to the main theme of the book, with the editor introducing the approach of contextual studies, or the ethnography of speaking. Since Ben-Amos is a pioneer in this field, convinced that folklore should be studied from the perspective of performance and communication, Anderson selects and translates his article, "Towards a Definition of Folklore in Context" so that the Thai audience can see the initiatives of this approach. Ben-Amos argues that folklore should not be studied as "survivals" from the past, but one should study its process and the dynamics of folklore through time. In short, folklore should be seen as "new wine in a new bottle" and as the product of social and cultural context.

Jane C. Goodale and Joan D. Coss's article on "Cultural Context of Tiwi's Creative Process" is translated by the editor as an example of a study applying the performance and communication approach. The authors say that in Tiwi society one can be culturally accepted by being a successful artist—carving the most beautiful poles used in the funeral ceremony. To back this up they analyze the process of pole carving in the context of Tiwi values, taboos, social status of the deceased, and the kinship relation between the deceased and the artist.

Part two ends with a case study from Thailand. Using Malinowski's functionalism and Ben-Amos and Goldstein's performance and communication approach, Aporn Ukrit illustrates the influence of the social and cultural context on the persistence of beliefs and the spirit possession ceremony in the celebration of the birthday of Pun Tao Kong—a Chinese guardian deity in southern Thailand. Describing the social context of Krabee province in southern Thailand which in the process of urbanizing experienced crimes, fires, competition, and corruption, Ukrit points out how the trance where the medium is possessed by the spirit of the guardian deity provides spiritual comfort to people in the midst of such unpeaceful town life. For this reason details of the ceremony itself, such as the medium, the audience, the spatial and environmental context, and the components and steps of the ceremony are described.

Part three deals with the qualitative research method or field research. The introductory paper provides general guidelines for doing fieldwork such as hypotheses

formation, research site selection, interviewing techniques, and the use of camera and tape recorders. It also includes a discussion of the ethics of field workers.

Next is Anderson's paper on her own field research about Thai-Muslim adolescents in southern Thailand. She argues that certain research topics need both quantitative and qualitative methods. Her findings show that the definition of adolescents varies cross-culturally and that participant observation and informal interview are required for acquiring and understanding data on adolescent behavior.

Parts four to six are devoted to the study of specific folklore genres, i.e., part four, folk narratives; part five, folk games and play; and part six, life history.

As a case study of folk narrative, following the contextual approach, Prance Wongthet analyzes *jataka* tales (Buddhist religious tales) with reference to folklife in a community of northeastern Thailand. *Jataka* tales are used to construct the history of a Lao Puan village in which the inhabitants are of ethnic Lao Puan origin. The tales help form the world view of the ethnic group and community about itself and its identity. The telling of *jataka* tales in the funeral ceremony, or in post-child delivery rites and in other social events, clearly illustrates the role of folklore in folklife. The case study truly supports the importance of contextual studies for understanding folklore, and in general of studying folklore in order to understand folklife and the history of a community.

Part five focuses on the study of play and games as social events. In a case study of children's game-playing events in a village of central Thailand, Anderson intends to show the influence of the ecological and socio-cultural environment in determining the kinds of games children select to play at a given time, place, and context. Determining variables include weather, geography, group structure, sex of players, social class and number of players, time, place and tools. Linking this to the social background of the village, the study is a good example of an ethnography of play.

Another case study concerns play culture among Thai-Muslim adolescents in southern Thailand. Here Anderson suggests that the study of adolescent play has to be considered with reference to the adolescents' physical development together with their socio-cultural context. Sex and age are the variables used to structure different kinds of games male and female adolescents play. Recent changes in adolescent games are investigated in relation with other contemporary social and technological changes.

As for part six, life histories are demonstrated to be useful data in understanding culture and personality from the natives' point of view. They can be conceived as a kind of person-centered ethnography. Excerpts from an autobiography of Sribrahma Krisadakorn, a person who lived in the reign of King Rama V (1868-1910), offer an example for the value of such a document as a historical record of people's lives, social events, and traditions in a certain historical period of the past.

*Phun Thin-Phun Than* as, I may say, a handbook of folklore analysis, came out at the right time to answer the needs of Thai folklorists. They can use the conceptual and analytical framework the book offers, together with the case studies provided, as guidelines to look at the folklore data in their hands. The emphasis on folklore-folklife or the "ethnography of folklore" is consistent with current trends in other disciplines, e.g., political sciences, economics, and history, which have now adopted an anthropological viewpoint in giving emphasis to the socio-cultural context of a given unit of study. *Phun Thin-Phun Than* is certainly a great contribution to folklore studies in Thailand. It will encourage folklorists to adopt a more meaningful approach to folklore materials when analyzing them with reference to Thai social and cultural dimensions.

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MULHOLLAND, JEAN. *Medicine, Magic and Evil Spirits. Study of a Text on Thai Traditional Paediatrics*. Faculty of Asian Studies Monographs: New Series No. 8. Canberra: Australian National University, Faculty of Asian Studies, 1987. xi/316 pages. Appendices, tables, bibliography. Paper Aus. \$15.00 (approx. US\$10.00); ISBN 0-7315-0016-4, ISSN 0729-363. (Distributed by Bibliotech. Australian National University, Box 4, Canberra 2601, Australia)

Mulholland's book is the first translation and detailed study in English of a Thai medicinal text (besides the articles which she has published earlier). The text studied—*khamphoe prathom chindaa* (KPC)—is a traditional text on paediatrics compiled in 1871 from earlier texts of unknown origin. The text is today incorporated in the syllabus used at the various schools of traditional medicine throughout Thailand.

Being a compilation of several texts the organization of KPC is confusing. Mulholland has, very sensibly, translated relevant sections of the original (—a full translation will be published later—) and then rearranged them so that information on the same topics—otherwise scattered about in the original—now are presented together. Thus quotations relevant to the aetiology, the description of the disease concepts and the diagnosis are presented and analyzed in chapters 4–7, while the prescriptions, the ingredients, the therapeutic uses of the drugs and the prescribing patterns are examined in chapters 8–11. The study is preceeded by an introduction, and chapters on the history of Thai medical texts, education of traditional doctors and the composition of the text (chapters 1–3). After the conclusion (chapter 12) follow several glossaries of Thai words and of medicinal substances, as well as a substantial bibliography. Thai words are, besides being transcribed, also written in Thai.

While Thai medical manuals normally concentrate on the prescriptions, and have but little to say about the diseases and the principles behind the tradition, the nearly 200 pages long KPC describes a whole field of diseases in great detail, namely childrens' diseases (*saang*) and their treatment.

The *saang* concept includes parasitic diseases, minor childrens' diseases, diseases vaguely connected with abnormalities in the four elements, and birth *saang*. Birth *saang* are in turn accompanied by minor *saang* (complications), the (mouth) disorders *la* and *la-ong*, and wind (*lom*) involving the nervous system. The birth *saang* and the accompanying diseases are related to specific weekdays. Thus there appears to be seven birth *saang*, seven minor *saang*, seven *la*, seven *la-ong* and seven *lom*, each a product of the weekday one was born or conceived. This absolute correlation between time and disease—although diagnostically unsatisfactory, and done at the expence of consistency and clarity—is clearly an attempt to establish a norm or a model. That this relationship is an ideal one is underscored by Mulholland's own observations that in actual practice “the birth *saang* did not appear to be taken seriously” (258). In fact, the information about which weekday a sick child was born seems only to be used to establish the name of the disease (259). Such pro-forma naming links practice to theory and can be seen as establishing a reciprocal legitimacy: practice justifying the model, and the model lending authority to practice.