

FROM THE EDITOR

By a simple coincidence the articles in this issue happen to produce a special issue about Japan. This will not hinder us, however, to go ahead with plans for a special fall issue concerning topics related to *folk medicine*, especially oral traditions as they might be used as rationalizations for curing ritual or as explanations for the use of certain medicines or their efficacy. At the time of writing we have received a number of very encouraging offers, but I still would like to repeat an earlier invitation. I do this because I see here an opportunity to remind our readers anew that ASIAN FOLKLORE STUDIES is dedicated to a widely diversified understanding of the field as well as the term of 'folklore' to include such aspects of a culture which are different from oral traditions, and also to provide background information or reference material to the interpretation of those traditions.

From such a point of view I consider it extremely important that ASIAN FOLKLORE STUDIES brings publications covering a wide field to the attention of its readers. It goes without saying that the book reviews section plays a crucial role in our effort to implement this goal. I notice with great satisfaction that for the first time we have more than twenty reviews in a single issue. Further, I am happy indeed that we could secure the cooperation of several Asian colleagues. I highly appreciate their courage to overcome linguistic barriers in order to let us participate in their views. We are, no doubt, still in an initial phase in this respect, but I consider it very important that ASIAN FOLKLORE STUDIES offers its pages in this section to the views and experiences of colleagues with a variety of scholarly traditions and attitudes. I, therefore, extend an invitation to our readers to let us know of publications in their countries and languages which would merit introduction in ASIAN FOLKLORE STUDIES. We will gladly consider volunteered reviews, because for linguistic and other reasons we find it often impossible to be fully aware of even important publications in other countries. On the other hand, if we are notified of a significant or helpful publication we will do our best to convince a publisher to let us have a review copy. For such reasons I appeal to our readers that they not hesitate to give us a hint or a helping hand if somebody comes across a publication which promises to be of interest to folklorists.

I eagerly look forward to responses which, I am sure, would be instrumental in making our journal increasingly attractive.