

FROM THE EDITOR

Although ASIAN FOLKLORE STUDIES has always made it its policy to interpret folklore in an inclusive rather than in an exclusive sense of the word, there was hardly ever a chance before to demonstrate it in a single issue. The contributions of the present issue, however, cover a large portion of Asian territory, including China, Indochina, Indonesia and India, and take up also a wide array of topics from folklore in a more strict sense to folk traditions and even descriptive ethnography. We are convinced that both have to go together if we are to correctly understand the *Sitz im Leben* of particular ideas or traditions.

A great step toward the realization of this issue was made thanks to the kind cooperation and mediation of Dr. Kristina Lindell of the University of Lund, Sweden. We are most grateful to her efforts through which we were offered a number of papers that were read at the *Symposium on Southeast Asian Folklore* in Humlebaek, Denmark, August 23-26, 1982.¹ From the contributions to the symposium we include the articles on the Kammu, their totem tales and a song (Lindell, Li, and Lundström); the music of the Lisu (Larsen); customs of pregnancy and childbirth in northerh Thailand (Poulsen); Kubu worldview (Sandbukt), and religion in Songkhla (Burr). Mottin's contribution fits in thematically although it was not part of the symposium.

Apart from a certain concentration on minorities in Indochina, we feel that some of the articles cover borderlands. Geographically speaking we have in mind those which cover the Kammu or Hmong, populations of which large portions live in more than one country. Thematically we reach borderland with Ma's discussion of genealogy on the border between legend and history or Sri's dealing with the transformations of a Sanskrit deity in Tamil folk belief.

As a whole the issue might look like a bouquet of wild flowers, each flower having its strong individual character. Not every reader will probably appreciate all of them equally, neither do we want to suggest that he should do so. And yet we hope that he might enjoy the variety. We take particular pleasure and satisfaction in that we are able to offer a contribution from China. It is yet a small beginning but we hope that it would initiate a long period of fruitful cooperation with colleagues there in order to let our readers share in the treasures of China's many cultures.

1. See our report in AFS vol. 42, 1983 p. 290