

little tradition," and "imported religion and indigenous religion" used in tandem, and definitions of the differences in the concepts. It is necessary, however, to follow this up with case studies that will flesh out the concepts as they are used here. Even granted this necessity, one still finds oneself, on completion of this volume, forced to rethink the meaning and the sophistication of the concepts.

This series promises to be concerned above all with religion, from an anthropological perspective, and I await the next volume with great interest.

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DOMENIG, GAUDENZ. *Tektonik im primitiven Dachbau. Materialien und Rekonstruktion zum Phänomen der auskragenden Giebel an alten Dachformen Ostasiens, Südostasiens und Ozeaniens. Ein architekturtheoretischer und bauethnologischer Versuch.* (Tectonics of primitive roof construction. Documents and reconstruction concerning the phenomenon of protruding gables on old roof forms of East Asia, Southeast Asia and Oceania. Attempt at an approach from the theory of architecture and the ethnology of building). Zürich: Organisationsstelle für Architekturausstellungen ETH-Hönggerberg, 1980. 197 pp., 334 photos and drawings, bibliography. Paper sFr. 24.—, ISBN 3-85676-012-10.

For a long time the roof structures of Indonesian houses in particular have challenged the minds of ethnologists and given rise to a number of theories, the most popular of which was probably the explanation of these forms as representations of ships. While all of these theories might do something to make the salient feature of those roofs, i.e. their more or less protruding gables (*Kraggiebel*), logically intelligible, most of them provide hardly more than a common sense guess as to why the roofs are constructed the way they are. Domenig uses a thorough structural analysis and a kind of evolution theory based on the inherent logic of the structures themselves to refute such common sense type of explanations as insufficient. From this point of view he does not entirely dismiss the theory that interprets certain forms of the roofs as ships, but he considers such an interpretation to be secondary, because it is first of all symbolic and does not explain how or why the roofs are constructed in this form. There are considerably more compelling reasons that explain why the roofs have taken this form.

After criticizing former theories Domenig develops his own argument whose core is an attempt to delineate the possible direction the evolution of forms might have taken from a primitive conical hut to the present, ethnographically documented elaborate roofs with protruding gable (*Kraggiebel Dach*). At the beginning of this evolution he postulates a conical hut with the roof built directly on the ground and its top adorned by a crown of rafters protruding into the air. This attempt at reconstructing a process is based on two conditions of a disparate nature, one being tectonic, the other more ideological or symbolic. Interpreting archaeological evidence from Japan and South China he comes to the conclusion that the first structure showing the basic features of protruding gables was one built from two pairs of rafters pitched against each other after the individual rafters of each pair had first been bound together in the form of scissors. By inserting a horizontal log where the pairs of rafters cross each other it

was possible to keep their tops apart, a fact that provides the basic delineation of a rooftop with protruding gables over a conical ground-hut. Explaining step-by-step the advances that could be assumed to have been made logically and reasonably from the previous situation Domenig reconstructs the main phases in the evolution process of roof structure that resulted in hip-roofs crowned with protruding gable tops and, as a special development, in saddle-roof houses on pillars.

All of these forms can structurally be explained by the same frame of the four original rafters. But before this frame had emerged, there was a simple structure made from tree trunks with their leafy tops left attached to them. And here it is where the second, the ideological condition of Domenig's hypothesis, comes into play. He sees all these structures as being fundamentally formed according to a principle of dual division between foliage and stem, top and bottom, whereby the top lacks stability compared with the bottom although it exceeds the bottom in spiritual or symbolic weight. This symbolic preeminence is underlined by a number of factors that all share in such characteristics as relative instability, openness, and orientation towards the sky. This aspect of freedom in the top part is further underlined by the aesthetics of this part itself and by additional ornamentation given to it.

As Domenig himself is quite aware, much of this reconstructive argument is of a speculative nature, but he endeavors to connect it with facts in two ways. Concentrating on the protruding gable roof as a particular form of roof, he notices its wide distribution among the speakers of Austronesian languages. Although the available ethnographic evidence is only recent and does therefore not allow for historical depth, archaeological evidence from other areas that belong to what he calls the "Austronesian greater tradition" (Neolithic [Jōmon] Japan and South China), allows at least for probable depth along the lines of the assumed direction of evolution. Much of this discussion of the history of form is speculative, albeit probable, and partly suggested by presently existing structures. In a second attempt to relate his reconstruction to facts Domenig discusses the actual structural principles involved in present-day construction of roofs with protruding gables as he has found them during his own field work among three populations of Indonesia (Karo-Batak, Toba-Batak, and Sa'dang Toraja) and in the existing ethnographic literature (Palau) with much detail and as a matter of fact. This means that often he has restricted references concerning the symbolism of certain aspects of the roof or the house to a minimum. Quite literally he makes them "aside" by often putting them into the explanatory texts of illustrations.

I see the special value of this book in this matter-of-fact approach. Domenig makes ample use of hypotheses when he tries to reconstruct a line of evolution in order to find a possible original form. In one of the most intriguing of these hypotheses he asks if there might not exist a link between the most primitive structure for a protruding gable and the structure that is used in many parts of the same area for the ritual swing, not to speak of the purifying aspects of swinging under four poles with their leaves still attached and the similar relative sacrality attributed to the room under the rafters of the roof in the areas studied. However, he is quite aware of the fragility of some of these hypotheses. On the other hand, where the material is available, he bases his judgement on his analysis as a trained architect in order to explain structure and form as such, and from there he would move on to more symbolic interpretations. I read it therefore almost as a warning when he says that people use a proverb to explain a certain feature of a building, not in order to underline that feature's special significance within the structure, but rather to justify its existence in a local tradition because it would otherwise not be backed by the requirements of the structure itself. He certainly does not deny the possibility of symbolic interpretations, but they have to be

seen in their relation also to the structural conditions of a building. To interpret the roofs as representing ships might be correct as a partial interpretation, but it would not meet the requirements for a structural explanation.

This volume has to be seen in relation with others that accompanied an exhibition held in Zürich, Switzerland. Together they try to direct the attention of students of certain traditions, in this case of building traditions, first to a correct and detailed analysis of forms and their respective functions before jumping to premature "symbolic" interpretations. Domenig raises many new questions and needs to be challenged in a number of his assumptions, but he also succeeds in providing both a convincing and a thought-provoking explanation for an important aspect of traditional Indonesian culture. I would highly recommend this book which is, incidentally, also good ethnography, to everyone with an interest in traditional building methods as well as in their possibility of providing for symbolic interpretation.

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ALGARIN, JOANNE P. *Japanese Folk Literature, A Core Collection and Reference Guide*. New York and London: R.R. Bowker Company, 1982. xii + 266 pp. Appendixes, indexes. Hardbound US\$24.95.

The title which Joanne P. Algarin chose for her reference work is misleading. The book is a core collection neither of Japanese literature nor of Japanese folk tales. The title is apparently one which she coined to cover the selections she made for her study.

The book demonstrates carefully organized detail, and the format is pleasing. The main text is divided into three chapters, to which are added two Appendixes and three Indices. Entries are numbered consecutively from the start of Chapter One to p. 138 at the end of Chapter Three. Items are listed alphabetically by author in the first two chapters, except that ten works of Lafcadio Hearn are given numbers 54 to 63 at the end of Chapter one. Items in Chapter Three are listed alphabetically by English title followed by the Japanese title romanized and *kanji* where applicable.

The carefully written Introduction is addressed to those who depend upon English language books and articles or translations from Japanese. It presents as background for study some brief comments on Japanese myths, historical tales, and the Buddhist tales known as tale literature or *setsuwa*. *Otogizōshi* and *Nara-ehon* are omitted. The reviewer questions Algarin's estimate that "during the medieval era of Japan, literacy increased dramatically, so that by 1600 well over half of the male population, and a good percentage of the female population, were at least semiliterate" (p. x). She mentions "books" that were read, but the early literature was written or copied by hand into scrolls. Sometimes these were folded into pages and bound, but such works were available to only a limited number of people. The myths, historical tales, and tale literature were hardly *popular* reading.

Algarin's discussion of such works is followed by descriptions of general works on the folk tale to give a basis for recognizing that form of literature. The reviewer questions her statement that "the best source of folktales from individual countries is the Folktales of the World series published by the University of Chicago Press" (p. viii). She apparently is not aware of *Die Märchen der Weltliteratur* published by Eugen Diederichs in Leipzig prior to World War Two and subsequently in Jena. The translation of Fritz Rumpf (1938), which was edited and enlarged by Horst Hammitzsch (1964) gives good selections of Japanese folk tales. Algarin closes her Intro-