

The rest of the book is a detailed item-by-item description of the collection, with photos. There is both a bibliography and a list of Chinese characters at the end. Both the photography and the calligraphy of the Chinese characters are exceptionally well done, and the book as a whole is handsomely printed and visually quite pleasing.

This book serves a very practical purpose, in that it enables readers to get to know the collection well and be able to identify individual figures in it. One hopes that this book will stimulate more interest in the field of Chinese shadow theatre and that it will lead to an analysis of its history, cultural and social context, and the symbols and meanings expressed in the texts and their performance.

Cordia Chu
University of Queensland
St. Lucia, Australia

SIBUNRUANG, J. KASEM. *Thai Folk-tales*. Bangkok, Thailand: Praepittiya Co., LP., 1976. 168 pp., illustrations.

SIBUNRUANG, J. KASEM. *Wessandorn the Charitable Prince*. Bangkok, Thailand: Praepittiya Co., LP., 1975. 66 pp., illustrations, glossary.

These two slender volumes, by one of Thailand's most active collectors of folklore, should be of interest to those who desire a general introduction to Thai folktales. They were not intended for the specialist, and the professional folklorist will have to use them with some care, as no information is provided about the initial narrators or the extent to which the author has rewritten or changed the stories. As general introductions for the non-specialist but interested reader, however, they meet their goals admirably, and it is as such works that they should be approached.

Wessandorn the Charitable Prince is a book somewhat removed from actual folklore, being a translation of the *Vessantara Jataka*, one of the many tales of the existences of the Buddha before he became the Buddha. The hero of the tale goes through many trials and tribulations because of his extreme charity, eventually giving away both his wife and his children when asked for them, but, of course, triumphs in the end, being reunited with his family and seeing his son's success. Although the text itself is not a "folktale," it contains many folktale motifs and provides a sterling example of the ways in which the Buddhist religion merges with local tradition. One's attention is especially drawn by the role of guardian spirits and creatures of the forest in the story.

The book also contains a glossary of Pali terms, and is handsomely illustrated, and in general makes pleasurable and educational reading.

Thai Folk-tales, as the title suggests, is a collection of stories, fifteen to be exact, all of which offer possibilities to the comparativist. Here we find, for example, the tale "At the Country of the Bird Women," which is an interesting variant of Swan Maiden (Motif D361.1) as it appears in Type 400, "The Man on a Quest for his Lost Wife." This version contains a long introduction to the tale proper, an introduction that centers around the role of a *naga*, or serpent deity, in the development. There are many other differences in this version from the tale as it is found in other parts of the world (including, in my limited knowledge, other parts of Southeast Asia) that make the version potentially a valuable resource to those interested in international comparisons of motifs and types.

It is unfortunate that the very purpose of the book—that is, its introductory character—has made it unadvisable for the editor to insert notes as to the distribution

of this tale within Thailand and other forms it might take, for one finds oneself often wondering just how "typical" any given version of a story might be.

The book also contains a good example of a stepmother tale, "The Golden Goby," in which the spirit of the real mother returns to the daughter in a variety of forms to help her in her sufferings. This tale too, though told in a way that reflects Thai cultural influence, is international in scope and should be of interest to a wide number of people.

A story I found particularly interesting was "The Eyes of the Twelve Queens" (pp. 75-88), for it contains the motif of children being raised by an ogre, discovering that their guardian is a creature who lives on human flesh, and hence fleeing. This motif is present in other tales in the book as well, and is also known in the West; the example that comes to mind is that of St. George, who is, in some versions of his story, said to have been raised by a demoness whom he must defeat to liberate various Christian heroes. The presence of the motif in Thailand, outside of the Christian sphere of influence, gives one pause, and invites more comparative research.

One could go on with a listing of international motifs and types to be found in this book, for, as I noted above, there are several. It would be better, however, for the reader to purchase the book and discover its pleasures on his or her own. The interested reader is advised to contact the author directly at her university, The Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University, for information on price and other matters. It might be noted that both books are also available in French.

Meanwhile, we can only hope that Dr. Sibunruang will soon turn her considerable talents and experience to the compilation of a fully-annotated and more complete collection of Thai folktales. Having partaken of the appetizer, one's desire for the main course is fully whetted, and such a work would be a real service to those who are not specialists in the folklore of Southeast Asia but nonetheless feel the need to be better informed than we currently are. Until she has done so, these books will serve nicely as introductions.

W. Michael Kelsey
Nanzan University, Nagoya

VAINSHTEIN, SEVYAN I. *Nomads of South Siberia, The Pastoral Economies of Tuva*. Edited and with an introduction by Caroline Humphrey. Translated by Michael Colenso. Cambridge Studies in Social Anthropology No. 25. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980. Cloth, x+289 pp. Illustrations, principal archive sources and museum sources, bibliographies in Russian and European languages, indices. £20.00. ISBN 0 521 22089 0.

This English translation of Sevyan Vainshtein's *Istoricheskaya ethnografiya tuvintsev*, first published in Russian in 1972, is a valuable addition to the growing literature on Siberian and Central Asian nomadic peoples. As a senior researcher with the Soviet Union's Institute of Ethnography, Dr. Vainshtein brings to his subject a formidable knowledge of the extensive Russian literature on South Siberian ethnic groups. His discussion of these related materials alone makes this a significant work for a library on ethnographical writings. However, as the editor's extensive introduction indicates, the value of the book lies primarily in its presentation of detailed data about the Tuvian people and in its discussion of certain theoretical issues. In particular he describes