

BOOK REVIEWS

Asian Folklore. Vol. I, 1979. The Asian Folklore Association, The Institute of Folklore Studies, Kyung Hee University, Seoul, 131, Korea. 68 pp., including bibliographies. Annual dues \$5.00.

The thirteen essays in this volume deal largely with the concept of the soul as it is found in various aspects of the cultures of Korea, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Japan and China. There are also bibliographies on the topic of the soul in Korea and Japan.

This journal is the first publication of a relatively new organization, the Asian Folklore Association. Its president, Dr. Taegon Kim, states in his preface to the volume that it is time Asian folklorists stopped depending entirely on Western scholarship and began to develop their own theories and methods "to arrive at a more objective and conclusive study" of Asian culture. This is a statement with which *Asian Folklore Studies* is in full agreement, and we wish Dr. Kim and his associates every success. The publication of this journal is an important first step, as all the articles but one are written by distinguished Asian scholars.

Western scholars have much to learn from their Oriental counterparts, and I, for one, am delighted that a journal such as this is being published. The ultimate aims of Western and Eastern scholars are, of course, often quite different, but this does not mean that each side cannot learn from the other. It is distressing to see the amount of Western scholarship on Asia which makes virtually no use of Asian sources, for even when we are heading in different directions from our Asian colleagues we can scarcely afford to ignore their work.

The volume under review offers ample testimony to the scope and depth of Asian scholarship. Taegon Kim notes almost incidentally in his article, "The Idea of Soul in Korean Shamanism," that his observations are based on twenty years of fieldwork in various parts of Korea. It is precisely this kind of experience that compels respect, and serious scholars will delve deeply into what Dr. Kim has to say. None of the articles in this issue is without interest, but I personally found those of Chung Bum Suh ("The Existing Realities of the Shaman's Fortune-telling in Korea"), Sakurai Tokutarō ("The Characteristics of Shamanic Possession in Japan") and Li Yih-Yuan ("The Idea of Soul in China") especially stimulating and educational.

This is the first volume in what will hopefully become a permanent fixture in the field of Asian folklore, and with the idea of improving the journal I would offer two suggestions. The first, and least important, has to do with the quality of English and the proofreading of the journal. Most of the scholars participating in this volume are laboring in a language not their own, and while it would be churlish indeed to equate fluidity of English with excellence of scholarship, *Asian Folklore* would, in my view, be well-served by the addition of a competent copy editor. Too many errors can be embarrassing, and this should be a journal that can hold its head up with pride anywhere.

The second suggestion is more substantial. In this first issue we have thirteen essays occupying a mere fifty-seven pages; there is one essay that is only one page in

length (indeed, it ends with a paragraph that outlines the author's intentions, and one turns the page expecting that much more will follow). There is too much promise and not enough meat here, and I believe that the editors would be wise to consider limiting the number of contributions and lengthening those which are included, so that there would be more space for detailed argumentation. This would be a real service to the reader, and would help in the accomplishment of the goal set by Dr. Kim in his preface.

Let me state emphatically that *Asian Folklore* is a journal whose time has come, and that it is a most welcome addition to the growing list of scholarly publications on Asian folklore. I await the next issue with anticipation.

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GOLDSTEIN, KENNETH S., and ROSENBERG, NEIL V., eds. *Folklore Studies in Honour of Herbert Halpert, A Festschrift*. St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada: Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1980. Available from The Secretary, Department of Folklore, Memorial University of Newfoundland. Paper, 394 pp.

Herbert Halpert, who is still active at the age of seventy, has had a long and distinguished career as a folklorist. He has collected a host of tales and songs from all parts of the United States and Canada, and has supervised and helped publish material collected by his students. His association with non-academic collectors such as Vance Randolph (whom he has called "the compleat folklorist") is also well known.

In light of this background it is hardly surprising that a large percentage of the twenty-six articles in this book (which includes as well a brief biographical sketch and a bibliography of Halpert's work) tends towards concrete analyses of material collected by the authors of the essays or their students. In his essay "The reception of the British folklorists, or, have you read the great team?" Richard Dorson says of the difference between folklorists and anthropologists, "Folklorists pay attention to oral traditions" (p. 150); the articles in this book (ironically, Dorson's is an exception) by and large do exactly that. There are a few offerings on the relationships between folklore and other media (the essays by Coldwell, Rosenberg or Thomas, with the latter being exceptionally fascinating), and a few other miscellaneous pieces (such as Beck's "The Bequin whale complex," which hovers between being a study of a legend and a general folklife description), but mostly we have here textual material gathered by working folklorists.

None of the articles is particularly long—fifteen pages is about average—and the book offers fairly easy and quite stimulating reading. One first notices the presence of a number of familiar and well-respected names, such as Dorson, Roger D. Abrahams, Wayland D. Hand, Edith Fowke and D. K. Wilgus, among others; then one's attention is attracted by some of the more tantalizing titles. My own favorites include "Some thoughts on threatening children" (which is about the ways by which adults threaten children, and not about bullies), "From Edda and saga to ballad: a troll bridge," "*Padepissers* and *wekschissers*: a folk medical inquiry into the cause of styes," and "Proverbs as table decoration motifs." A complete rendering of the table of contents would have some intrinsic interest of its own, but would hardly con-

stitute a review, so I will content myself with the above samples and urge readers to buy the book and find their own favorites.

Naturally, the quality and scope of the articles vary considerably, something common to *festschrift* in general. Abrahams' "Riddles which tell stories" (31-54) is a top-quality piece which will be of use to folklorists working in nearly any geographical area, while Ernest W. Baughman's "Growing up in a folklore-deprived community" is, in spite of its intriguing title and potential, a somewhat disappointing and flat self-conscious attempt to create a portrait of the folklorist as a young man. The reader searching for penetrating insights into the nature of knowledge or folklore theory is apt to be disappointed, but those whose interest is oral traditions as they exist among the people will find this book well worth having.

Although it has no essays dealing specifically with Asia (unless one counts the West Indies as being a part of Asia) the book still has much to offer the Asian folklorist, for within its pages we can find many examples of folklorists soundly practicing their trade. It is to be highly recommended.

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KLEINMAN, ARTHUR, PETER KUNSTADTER, E. RUSSELL ALEXANDER, JAMES L. GALE, eds. *Culture and Healing in Asian Societies, Anthropological, Psychiatric and Public Health Studies*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Schenkman Publishing Company, 1978. Paper, 462 pp., index, bibliographies. US \$11.25.

The twenty-two essays of this volume have been written by anthropologists, a medical sociologist, clinicians, epidemiologists, and experts in international health and community medicine. They reflect the wide range of cross-cultural medical studies. The essays have been read first at an international conference on the "Comparative Study of Traditional and Modern Medicine in Chinese Societies," sponsored by the University of Washington and the Fogarty International Center, National Institute of Health in Seattle, Washington, February 4-6, 1974. Most of the contributions in the present volume were originally part of a much larger work, "Medicine in Chinese Culture; Comparative Studies of Health Care in Chinese and Other Societies," edited by the producers of this volume. While the earlier book reproduced the entire proceedings of the above-mentioned conference, this volume concentrates on direct investigations of the various aspects of health care in Asian societies with some chapters on general theory and methods in medical anthropology and cross-cultural studies. It provides solid ethnographic evidence for the problems and suggests the framework for solutions in different socio-cultural settings.

Seven anthropological studies are concerned with the concepts of health and curing in contemporary Chinese settings, i.e., on Taiwan (Ahern, Chapter 2 and Gould-Martin, Chapter 3), in two Chinese communities in Hong Kong and Malaysia (Andersons, Chapter 4). Ahern (Chapter 5) and Gale (Chapter 14) compare the health-related attitudes of Chinese-style and Western-style practitioners and patients in Taipei, while Topley (Chapter 6) speaks of the historical, political, and cultural determinants of the health care in Hong Kong where traditional and modern practices can be observed more closely. Lee's survey on the health system of a rapidly modernizing