

tion to each number. The tales are set down in dialect without a glossary to help the uninitiated. Perhaps that will be included in future publications.

This technique of group collecting is new in Japan. The results offer no new types of tales, but it is heartwarming to see such interest on the part of many young students on one hand and the friendly response of local narrators to their efforts on the other hand. Veteran collectors make repeated visits to fill in missing parts to tales which appear in another telling. These tales collected by the students are brief, but there is a true ring to them. The young approach is welcome and we hope it will continue.

Fanny Hagin Mayer

RUTH QUINLAN SUN: *Land of Seagull and Fox. Folktales of Vietnam.* Illustrations by Ho Thanh Duc. John Weatherhill, Inc., Publishers, Tokyo, 1966, 136 pages.

The book contains 31 tales. Its author has spent one year in Vietnam as a Fulbright lecturer on the Faculty of Letters at the University of Saigon during the academic year 1964-65. In the Introduction the author reveals that in writing the book she received much help from her students at the University of Saigon to whom the folktales of their country are a familiar heritage. She is also indebted to native folklore scholars, especially to Pham Duy Khiem whose versions of many of the tales were published at Hanoi in 1943 and at Paris in 1951 under the title *Légendes des terres sereines*, and to Bach Lan who published *Vietnamese Legends* at Saigon in 1957. The Introduction gives also some general background information on the cultural and political history of Vietnam.

Justice can be done to a book only by taking it as what its author wanted it to be. This book is intended for the general reader to whom the author wishes to open a door to the spiritual life of the Vietnamese by introducing him into the world of its folktales. Thus the book is striving for an understanding of the people and at the same time its reading is an exquisite literary enjoyment. This enjoyment is intensified by the many pen drawings by a noted native artist.

M.E.

Monumenta Nipponica Monographs No. 25: *Folk Cultures of Japan and East Asia.* Sophia University Press, Tokyo 1966 (review of papers contained continued from Vol. XXV, 1966, pp. 249 ff.)

MICHAEL R. SASO: *Taiwanese Feasts and Customs* (pp. 74-100).

This paper is a noteworthy contribution to our knowledge of religion,

legendry and customs of South China. The author drew both from personal observation and written sources. Many, if not most, Taiwanese beliefs and practices have their parallels on the Chinese mainland, North and South, but already from a first reading of Saso's paper it becomes evident that many accents are set differently. The legends surrounding the temple gods show also local colors. The goddess Matsu of South China enjoys great popularity also in Taiwan. Of special interest we find the treatment of Wen Shen, the God of Pestilence, as a scapegoat. When a pestilence is threatening, people place statues of Wen Shen on a boat which they set adrift on the sea. Thus the pestilence is kept away from the community. For the sake of comparison the author could have included de Groot's "Les Fêtes annuellement célébrées à Amoy" in the literature he worked into his study. He writes on the ritual at a sacrifice to the God of Pestilence in which the officiant tortures and even wounds himself in various ways. De Groot describes such practices in details from Amoy.

Saso omits the New Year ceremonies on the ground that they have been described at length in the *Journal of the China Society*, Vol. V, 1965, for which information we are grateful. As an appendix we find the sketch of the ground-plan of the temple of Ch'eng Huang or the God of the Wall and Moat with the positions of the altars and statues, and four iconographic photos.

MABUCHI TÔICHI: *Sphere of Geographical Knowledge and Socio-Political Organisation among the Mountain Peoples of Formosa* (pp. 101-146).

In measuring the geographical knowledge of the Mountain Tribes of Formosa Prof. Mabuchi goes about by first defining three different degrees of such knowledge, that is, 1) geographical knowledge of the life sphere, 2) geographical knowledge of the observation and hearsay sphere, 3) geographical knowledge of the legend sphere. He then examines the ethnic and regional diversity of each group of tribes in so far as these condition the extent of geographical knowledge. As is well known, the author is one of the most competent anthropologists who were at work in Formosa when the island was ruled by Japan. In charge of research work on ethnohistory he contributed to the monumental work "The Formosan Native Tribes: A Genealogical and Classificatory Study", 2 vols., edited by the Institute of Ethnology, Taihoku (Taipei) Imperial University of Formosa, Tokyo, 1935. The present paper under review here is an English translation of a paper in Japanese, "Geographical Knowledge and Socio-Political Organisation among the Formosan Mountain Peoples", in: *Minzokugaku Nempô* (Annual Report of the Institute of Ethnology), Tokyo, 1940-1941, III, 267-312. Since the end of World War II the Formosan tribes are in a process of rapid changes. Fortunate for our knowledge of these tribes, Japan had a skilled team of fieldworkers on the island who gathered a very substantial amount of ethnographic, linguistic and folkloristic

data before it became too late.

SHIRATORI YOSHIRO: Ethnic Configurations in Southern China (pp. 147-163).

Prof. Shiratori is a well known authority on the ethnohistory of South China and Southeast Asia. The problem he attempts to shed new light into is a very perplexing one so that it is not easy to follow in a brief summary the paths of the subtle reasoning of the writer. The ethnohistory of the area in question is the history of tribal kingdoms and the history of the Chinese conquest of the various tribes. Outstanding historians, ethnologists and linguists have exerted much acumen and scholarship to find new avenues to the recalcitrant problems posed. Shiratori first deals with the ethnic group of the Miao-Yao and concludes that the Miao are not a homogenous group, the greatest part of them being identical with the Yao. Then the author concentrates on the Ancient Kingdom of Nan-chao, treating the problem of its ethnic composition from the point of view of culture configuration, and he finds that the Kingdom of Nan-chao has not been the first state and original homeland of the Thai, but was founded by an emerging chiefly Lolo family. Lastly the independent Lolo of Ssu-ch'uan are investigated. Shiratori's main point is that the independent Lolo are composed of the Black Lolo and the White Lolo, the latter being subordinates of the former with whom they cannot intermarry. With this small glossary we hope to have grasped the core of the core of Shiratori's findings.

M.E.

CHENG MAN-CH'ING and ROBERT W. SMITH: *Tai-ch'i*. The "Supreme Ultimate" Exercise for Health, Sport and Self-Defense. John Weatherhill, Inc., Tokyo, 1966. 112 pages, 257 photos and 122 diagrams. Price: In Far East US \$ 3.00 or ¥ 1.080. In the US \$ 3.95.

For an assessment of the values of the subject matter of the book, *Tai-ch'i*, neither our journal is the right place nor is the present reviewer the right man. However, the book deserves the attention of the student of Oriental culture and folklore. Also the Chinese like physical exercise. Long ago the following story made its round in Peking. In the Legation Quarter of Peking people watched foreigners playing football. They found this very strange and said: "What funny people these Westerners are! For kicking that ball around do they not have servants?" The story may be true, but still it does not say that the Chinese are not sport-minded. The importance of bodily postures and movements for the mind of man has been recognized in the Orient since very early times and found typical expressions. We find the beginning of Yoga practices already in the Vedic antiquity of India. In Taoism

breathing techniques were developed with the intent to increase the forces of life. The perfect Chinese gentleman was master of the "Five Excellences", that is, painting, poetry, calligraphy, medicine, and callisthenics (*Tai-ch'i* and other systems). Many picturesque names of postures of *Tai-ch'i* are suggestive of Chinese art motifs, like "embrace tiger and return to mountain", "golden cock stands on one leg", "play the guitar", "wave hands in clouds", etc. In the Chinese military arts drill in such callisthenics was for a long time prevalent though detrimental to the efficiency of the army. The military reforms introduced in the Ming time by Chi Chi-kuang to cope better with the inroads of Japanese pirates did away with the "flowery military arts" (*hua-wu*) as this kind of performances was called.

In his Foreword Robert Smith tells us the story of his editing of the book, which was originally in Chinese. Smith studied in Taiwan *Tai-ch'i* under Master Chen Man-ch'ing for five years and became also acquainted with other *Tai-ch'i* teachers in Taiwan, Hongkong, and Singapore. The name *Tai-ch'i* for this particular system of physical exercise can hardly mean that the latter is directly related to the cosmological concept *Tai-ch'i*, the Supreme Ultimate, the eight positions of which underlie all functions of evolution and operations of nature. Yet the founder of this training system seems to have had the philosophical principle in mind by way of association. The author of the book tells us that his school dates back not earlier than the reign of Emperor Ch'ien-lung (1736-1795). Interesting notes are that Robert W. Smith, an expert on Far Eastern sports and martial arts, is the author of *The Secrets of Shaolin Temple Boxing* and of *A Complete Guide to Judo*.

M.E.