

BOOK REVIEW

Paul Brunner, S.J.: L'Euchologe de la Mission de Chine. Editio princeps 1628 et développements jusqu'à nos jours. Études et Documents Missionnaires, tome 28. Veröffentlichungen des internationalen Institutes für missionswissenschaftliche Forschungen. Münster in Westfalen, Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung 1963. XII, 367 pages.

Though of course not a publication intended for folklorists, this book is not without interest for them and students of the spiritual life of the Chinese people. The book is a study of the quasi-official prayer-book used in the Catholic Church of China. This prayer-book, compiled early in the 17th century by Jesuit missionaries, is still used in our times with but relatively few revisions. Its study is therefore a contribution both to Catholic Mission history and to the history of Catholic piety as well. In 1957 the author discovered in the Vatican Library the first edition (*editio princeps*) of the *Recueil Général des prières de la Sainte Religion du Seigneur du Ciel* (in transcribed Chinese *T'ien-chu Sheng-Chiao Nien-Ching Tsung-Tu*) of 1628. Brunner examines and evaluates the various editions in view of a reform in compliance with pastoral necessities, first giving a detailed analysis, then the Chinese text of the prayer-book and its French translation.

Prayer-books for lay people of different periods have repeatedly been made the object of investigation by European scholars of folk religion. The present study on the Chinese prayer-book *par excellence* can claim our interest as folklorists in two ways, that is, how far the early missionaries in China went in their accommodation to the Chinese mentality and how the Chinese Christians reacted to the Christian way of praying in Church and in private. We have here, in other words, an interesting case of acculturation, a meeting between East and West. The very fact, that the prayer-book was in use for three centuries, shows its popularity with the native Christians. Its language is that of the literary classic style, understandable for the masses only after proper interpretation. With the Chinese Republic came a language reform and the *Kuo-yü*, a language halfway between the literary and the spoken language. To bring the prayer-book text in line with the language reform proved to be a problem, as native clergy and the faithfuls alike clung to the old language. For a prayer-book, a language used to speak to God and to the Saints a language of newspapers and profane books and too close to daily conversation seemed not dignified enough. Besides, the *Kuo-yü* or National Language is still far from its universal realisation. The old language culture proved to have been a cherished ideal of the Chinese, even of the less literate and near-illiterate classes.

This reviewer, when in China, experienced frequently how proud the Chinese are of the great number of the Chinese characters, a number unsurmountable for the majority of them, and how they looked down on our "poor" Western alphabet with "only" 25 signs. The language problem encountered by the reformers of the old prayer-book is illustrative of the Chinese mentality, not to be changed so easily by decrees from above.

In Brunner's study we find not a few instances of how already the first missionaries endeavored to meet Chinese feeling and thinking whenever this was possible without compromising Christian doctrine and conduct of life. From notes taken down by the reviewer when going through the book the following miscellaneous informations may be interesting. At Chinese New Year the gay decoration of a house is incomplete without the so-called door-gods (*men-jen*), wood-block prints on strips of paper pasted over the two halves of the house-door. In order that converts needed not to part with them, missionaries substituted pictures of Angels and guardian-saints for the door-gods. The Chinese City God was christianized by substituting the Guardian Angel of the City for him. Church Fathers were brought into parallel with the great men of Wisdom around Confucius, and the Christian Saints were brought closer to the Chinese heart by comparing them with the holy and wise men of ancient China. The martyrdom for the cause of the Christian faith was justified by recalling the teaching of Confucius and Mencius: "The steadfast and virtuous man will never try to save his life at the expense of virtue, he will prefer virtue to life." Since the birthday celebration is in China a great personal and family affair, special prayers for it have been included in the prayer-book. Wedding ceremonies and elaborate funeral rites are of paramount importance for the Chinese. The early Church did not forsake them in its ritual in either respect. Prayers were and are still chanted in the Chinese churches about the same as they are in Buddhist gatherings. The prayers show an extraordinary submission and humility before God in conformity with Chinese courtesy. The Chinese have white as mourning color and detest our black. It is to be expected that after the Second Vatican Council white will be permitted for the vestments of the Requiem Mass and funeral rites. Those legitimately prevented from obligatory Church attendance are advised to bow in the direction of their church as the mandarin bows in the direction of the Imperial Palace. This applies especially to women who in accordance with Chinese propriety should not show themselves more often than necessary in public. The Christian baptismal names have been a perennial problem as most of them run counter to Chinese phonetics, so Peter becomes something like *Pei-to-lo*, and there are much worse monsters of names, so that Christians never use their Christian names except for ecclesiastic registering. The reform of the prayer-book now in progress envisages many new approaches towards further assimilation of elements of Chinese tradition, for instance, chanting the Psalms with melodies found in the liturgies of the Temple of Confucius or of ancestor temples, not to mention new orientation in piety and in the concept of the Church.

Studies in Japanese Folklore.

General Editor Richard M. Dorson. Advisory Editors Toichi Mabuchi and Tokihiko Oto.

Indiana University Folklore Series Number 7. VI, 334 pages. Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1963.

The book under review contains an Introduction written by Dr. Richard M. Dorson, Professor of Indiana University and Director of its Folklore Institute, and 16 essays on various topics written by leading native specialists in Japanese Folklore Science. Prof. Dorson, who has already introduced himself to students of Japanese Folklore by his book *Folk Legends of Japan*, 1962 (our review *F. St.*, Vol. XXI, 1962, p. 247) and by his contribution *Folklore Research in Japan*, in: *Folklore Research around the World*, edited by him, 1961 (our review *F.St.*, Vol. XXI, 1962, p. 245 ff.), calls his Introduction Bridges between Japanese and American Folklorists. He first outlines the history of research work on Japanese folklore and sketches the bibliography both of Japanese and foreign publications in the field. Of special value we find the imposing scientific profile of the late Yanagita Kunio, the patriarch of Japanese folklore studies, and the description of the activities of his most outstanding associates, a team of indefatigable folklorists which he guided and inspired. The writer of this review had the privilege and honor to get in contact first with the master in summer of 1939, having been received by him in his well stocked library in Seijômachî, Tokyo, which was the very heart of the lively folklore research and publication activities in Japan. I do not hesitate to say that among my teachers to whom I owe my education and training in cultural anthropology and related fields, feeling at home in their vicinity and spiritual world, master Yanagita ranks very high. Thus it gives me much satisfaction that Prof. Dorson pays tribute to our patriarch and this not only before an American but before the whole Western and Western educated forum of folklorists and cultural anthropologists. Due to Yanagita and his associates Japanese Folklore Science ranks now an equal among the best in the Western world. It is to be hoped and we anticipate it that Indiana University's *Studies in Japanese Folklore* makes it now possible that the entire family of folklorists the world over share at least a part of the fruits of the relentless endeavors of native scholars and fieldworkers of Japan.

Prof. Dorson's Introduction is followed by an essay of Yanagita: *Opportunities of Folklore Research in Japan*. With Yanagita certainly agree all those folklorists who at least have done one step into the field of Japanese folklore research and studies, that Japan, in spite of her modernization, still abounds in such opportunities. This reviewer recalls that, after having been forced out of the promising field of folklore research in China, he needed only to make a few motorcycle excursion, a little off the highways, in the Kantô Plain around Tokyo with open eyes to find Japan is also a promising field.

The other contributions by Japanese experts cover miscellaneous fields. Under the heading "Rice Farmers" we find *Seasonal Rituals Con-*

ected with Rice Culture, by Toshijiro Hirayama, and *Mysterious Visitors from the Harvest to the New Year*, by Ichirô Hori. Under "Fishermen" come *The Taboos of Fishermen*, by Tokihiko Ôtô, *The Ebisu-gami in Fishing Villages*, by Katsunori Sakurada [Ebisu-gami is the god of fishermen], and *Drifted Deities in the Noto Peninsula*, by Manabu Ogura. On "Ironworkers" Nobuhiro Matsumoto wrote *Japanese Metalworkers: a Possible Source for their Legends*. Under "Worshipers" are grouped *The Double-Grave System*, by Takayoshi Mogami; *The Concept of Tamashii [soul] in Japan*, by Narimitsu Matsudaira; *A Study of Yashigami, the Deity of House and Ground*, by Hiroji Naoe; *The Village Tutelary Deity and the Use of Holy Rods*, by Toshiaki Harada; *The Position of the Shinto Priesthood: Historical Changes and Developments*, by Tatsuo Hagiwara. Under "Housewives" *Menstrual Taboos Imposed upon Women* by Kiyoko Segawa; *Ashiire-Kon, Putting-One's-Feet-in Marriage* [observations from Toshima, an island in the Izu chain, on matri-patrilocal marriage, E.], by Tokuzô Ômachi; *The Spool of Thread: a Subtype of the Japanese Serpent-Bridegroom Tale*. Under "Youths", *Initiation Rites and Young Men's Organisations*, by Tarô Wakamori.

To each of the above essays explanatory and bibliographical notes are added, making it possible for linguistically prepared students to go into further studies of the topic concerned. The 16 essays selected for the present book are of course only a very small fraction of Japanese folkloristic publications of equal niveau, but the selection has been thoughtfully made so that the book offers a variegated and representative cross-section through the many fields of the immense complex of traditional Japanese folk life. We only wish we had similar publications for Western readers of other Asiatic countries, also. In this direction, may the grand vision of the Folklore Research Center at Indiana University come true in a not too distant future.

M.E.