

BOOK REVIEWS

SHIBUZAWA KEIZÔ: *Nihon gyomei shûkan* (澁澤敬三著, 日本魚名集覽)

(Ichthyological Nomenclature of Japan). 2 volumes, vol. I 490 pp., vol. II 329 pp. Edited by the Research Institute for Japanese Folk Culture (日本常民文化研究所). Shôwa 17/18 (1942/43).

This work on the ichthyological nomenclature of Japan is not only of interest for ichthyologists but for linguists and folklorists as well. The first volume starts with a bibliographical list, including also reference literature of older times and such in foreign languages. The bulk of the volume is filled with a list of Japanese fish-names arranged according to the Kana alphabet comprising 1230 items, to which 1228 more are added in an appendix with briefer notes. In this the Japanese fish-name is first given, then the Latin scientific name and the Japanese name of the species to which the fish belongs; there follows a reference to literature containing a picture of the fish, then a note on its habitat and another note on topics such as the living habits of the fish concerned, its economic usefulness or uselessness, its size, in a number of cases special dangers for the fishermen in catching the fish, parallels and varieties in other parts of the world and other various notes. Then follow, often in great detail, lists of local terms showing the great variability of vulgar fish nomenclature. Thus also the first volume is of no small interest for the dialectologist and folklorist.

But by far more of interest is the second volume, entitled to claim attention from the folklorists as it contains whole and extensive treatises of genuine folkloristic nature. This second volume is titled "Some Observations on Fish-names". First of all, these observations are of philological nature. There is treated for instance the classification of fish-names according to their meaning. Many such names indicate the living places of fishes, be they beaches, the open sea, marshes and swamps, rivers or others. There are names derived from the shape of the fishes, their colour or patterns on their skin, from the sound some fishes are emitting, from the seasons in which fishes make their appearance. Of special interest for the folklore science are those fish-names which have a bearing on folk-religion or -tales and those which have an allegorical meaning.

A large space is given to a fish that is called *okoze*. There are several fishes that can function as *okoze*. Under this name a fish is offered to the mountain god in order to obtain the god's blessing for hunting, fishing, for the crops of the fields and other economic enterprises. Furthermore, it is considered to possess devil chasing and sickness curing power and is believed to give fertility to cattle and rain. According to other reports *okoze* is also sacrificed to the rice god (*inari*). This rôle of the fish in popular worship is due to its strange and ugly appearance and to the poison it possesses, to the dangerous stings with which it can hurt men and animals. About the connection of the fishes called *okoze* with the mountain god we would do good to write a whole essay reviewing the existing Japanese literature on this topic, first of all the book of Yanagida Kunio and Origuchi Nobuo "Yama no kami to okoze" (the mountain god and okoze). Perhaps we can do that on another occasion.

Viscount Shibuzawa furnishes us an ample material on folk belief and worship that surround this fish or rather this group of fishes. About half of the second volume is filled with reports and observations on the religious function of the *okoze*.

By these two volumes the author has introduced himself into the world of Folklore Science as a trained expert in the fish kingdom. His dialectical and folkloristic studies on fishes are solidly based on a good knowledge of natural science in so far as each fish is identified and given its scientific name, description and classification. Within his limited field of research the author has laid down abundant linguistic and folkloristic material, well arranged and analyzed and this with due attention given to the geographical aspect of facts proposed. The work must be considered as an important and mature contribution to the Folklore Science of Japan.

TAKEDA CHŪICHIRO: *Tôhoku no minyô* (武田忠一郎著, 東北の民謡)

Folksongs from the Northeastern Provinces of Japan. Volume I: Iwate Province. Compiled under the supervision of the Central Broadcasting Station of Sendai. Shôwa 17 (1942). 374 pages with folksongs in musical notes, 89 pages explanatory analysis of these songs.

Comprising the respectable number of 262 songs collected from one of the Tôhoku provinces, this publication represents itself as a satisfactory result of research on all aspects of folksongs, viz. their music, their text, their folkloristic background and surrounding. With genuine Japanese devotion to care for registering as well as the most minute details, the author has carried on field-work for about 20 years and after having acquired a competency in understanding and recording Japanese songs and music, in translating the quite individual values of Japanese music into the Western musical system and, finally, in mastering the abundant wealth of Japanese folklore, he has bestowed on the folklore students the mature fruit of his enduring labour.

Glancing briefly at the folkloristic side of these many songs we find an extraordinary great amount of folklore reflected in them. There are nursery rhymes and children's songs (5), songs for cult ceremonies (14), songs connected with house-building customs (8), with rice-wine fabrication (13), songs of cattle-drivers to and fro between the Katsuno district and the city of Morioka (the capital of Iwate Province) and songs of cow-boys (13), wood-cutter songs (12), songs accompanying field-toiling (20) and rice-planting (36), songs belonging to Bon dances (29), to various other folk-dances as tiger-dances, lion-dances, sword-dances (11), Buddhist prayer songs (13), folk-festival songs (16), various Okagura (sacred music with dancing) songs (5), a song for the procession with the palanquin of a deity, lion-dance songs from Tôno (11), horse-dance songs (11), Taga-Kagura dance songs (from the Taga temple) (11).

An astonishing variety of folksongs and customs reveals itself in these 262 items, and the author has given a detailed description each of them as to the ways of performing the dances and their usages, has shed light into the geographical distribution of the songs and their historical development.

Altogether this publication is based on solid work and we do not hesitate to approve it as the best hitherto issued study on folksongs in the Far East. Let us hope that, since the Muses are no longer silenced by the cries of war, the plan to cover the Folksongs of all Tôhoku provinces may by no means be hindered but carried out in a not too distant future.

M. E.