

EUROPE

ZIEL, WULFHILD, editor. *Bibliographien zu Slawisch-folkloristischem Schriftgut—ausgewählt aus dem Vorlesungsrepertoire von Vladimir Propp—und zu Slawischer Folklore und Folklore vom Balkan von Nikita I. Tolstoj, Ed.* 2nd revised and enlarged edition. Bern: Peter Lang, 1998. xiv + 202 pages. Paper SFr. 53.00; ISBN 3-631-33965-8. (In German)

The book under review discusses two works: Vl. Propp's *Russkaja skazka* (Russian folktale), Moscow 1984; and N. I. Tolstoj's (ed.) *Slavjanskij i balkanskij fol'klor* (Slavic and Balkan folklore), Moscow 1989. The book consists of a selected bibliography, culled from these two works and a slim introduction. The stated aim of the bibliography is to find specific folklore features in poetics (of what?); these features are supposed to demand a new "system of approach" (?) after the approach that has been used in the analysis of literary texts, such as the structural approach to the fairy tale in the manner of Propp (xii). The kind of new approach envisaged is not indicated. On examination, however, the bibliography presented is found to be a chance assemblage and not systematic. The very pretension is curious: how can a bibliography produce/result in analytical procedures or build new theories? By the way, neither of the two discussed works intends to be theory building.

Propp's work is a unit, namely his introductory course to folk literature; the other publication is a collection of papers on various subjects by several members of Tolstoj's Institute for Slavic and Balkanic Studies (there are several more volumes published by the same Institute, edited by Tolstoj and others; it is not clear why the author decided to discuss this volume).

As Propp's work is a unit, the present reviewer chose to concentrate on it. First, the author summarizes in twelve short pages Propp's course and F. V. Čistov's Introduction to it. The summary is haphazard and mixes Propp's opinions, his descriptions of the work of his predecessors that he mentions in his course, and the author's opinions, all without references. Lists of names of "world-wide recognized scholars" (2) and the like phrases show the survival of the heavy influence of the Soviet style in some corners. The list of works presented has been culled and selected from Propp's work; the method of selection is not stated. Most of the works listed are old, from the nineteenth and early twentieth century; the author has no com-

ment on this point. While it is of interest for the history of scholarship to know the literature that was available to Propp, the list of works presented seems to be superfluous: anybody working on the history of Russian folkloristics has to know Russian anyway; so what is the purpose of a list of book titles, out of context, some of them with a German translation?

As the main burden of the book under review is bibliographical, its poor technical level should be mentioned. In Russian words all diacritics are missing, and the transcription of Russian letters is inconsistent. For example, on page 19 “On *tsch* ukov vs na *c* alo” should be “Ončukov/načalo.” The Russian publication titles are only partly translated into German; what should a German-speaking reader do with untranslated titles? Translation is sometimes faulty; below are some examples:

“Boj na kalinovom moste” is translated: “Der Kampf auf der Kalinin-Brücke [The battle on the Kalinin bridge]”; it should be: “The battle on the snow-ball-tree bridge (*viburnum opulus*).” (15)

Miller, V. F., “Kavkazskie skazanija o velikanach, prikovannyh k goram” (1883) is translated: “Kaukasische Sagen über Berggeisterdrachen, die mit den Bergen in Verbindung stehen [Caucasian legends about mountain-spirit-dragons, who are in contact with mountains]”; it should be: “Caucasian legends about giants chained to mountains.” Intended is Amirani, a Georgian Prometheus figure; see ČIKOVANI 1966 (34).

There are also garbled bibliographical entries. What should one make of entries such as the following:

HESSISCHE BLÄTTER
für Volkskunde.; Leipzig 1905, Bd. IV.
(Author? Title? Pages?) (10)

NEKRASOWSKAJA legenda
“0 dvuch velikich gresnikach” i ee istoki. In: Russkij fol’klor
1962, Nr. 7, S. 84–98.
(Author?) (11)

SOKOLOWY, Boris M. i Juri Michailowitsch:
Skazki i pesni Belozerskogo kraja. Moskva 1915 (Märchen und
Lieder vom Weissmeergebiet). Sravnitel’nij ukazatel’ sjuzetov.:
Vostocnoslavjanskaja skazka. Leningrad 1979, S. 29–51. (20)
(Here are two items collapsed; Belozerskij = “of-the-White-Lake” a small inland lake,
35° E, 60°–61° N; and Weissmeer = “White Sea”—a branch of the Barents Sea,
35°–45° E, 64°–68° N).

Authors’ names are garbled: Roman Bogatyrew for Pjotr Bogatyryov (1); A. Dandis for Alan Dundes(?) (2); Basset, Roman for René Basset (27); Christensen, Soren for Arthur Christensen (28); Nikiforov, Alexander Ismailovitsch for Aleksandr Isaakovič (35).

Such mistakes show that the author has not taken the trouble to check the bibliography and examine the works listed.

In conclusion one wonders at the curious level of theoretical knowledge, writing skills, and technical skills of a Humboldt University (Berlin, promotion 1974) and a Moscow University alumna, and also at the publisher who did not bother to ask professional advice or employ a technical editor. (It is also worth noting that the publisher’s description of the book is completely misleading.)

REFERENCE CITED

ČIKOVANI, M. J.

- 1966 *Narodnij gruzinskij epos o prikovannom Amirani* [Georgian folk epic about the chained Amirani]. Moscow: Nauka.

Heda JASON
Jerusalem