

BOOK REVIEWS

GENERAL

PENTIKÄINEN, JUHA. *Shamanism and Culture*. Helsinki: Etnika Co., 1997.
112 pages, graphics. N.p.

This work is a collection of papers by an outstanding scholar on the shamanistic traditions of the "Northern" or circumpolar peoples. The chapters discuss a range of topics and issues concerning shamanism as practiced in small societies, prominently the Same (Lapps) of Scandinavia and the Khanty of Siberia, peoples with which the author has carried out extended fieldwork. Other groups which enter the discussion are the Komi in northeast Russia, the Ewenks of Siberia and northeast China, other peoples in China such as the Nanay (Goldi/Hezhen) and Oroch (Olunchun), the Chukchee and Koryaks in eastern Siberia, the Samoyeds in northern Siberia, and the Inuit of Greenland. Individual chapters examine such subjects as the relation between Northern identity and religion (taking shamanism as the primary conceptual base), the "grammar" of mind and body in Northern shamanic worldview, narrative aspects of shamanic discourse, a cross-cultural examination of values in nature, the recent revival of shamanism throughout the region, and a study of the iconography of the shaman's drum as a "cognitive map." The work also includes background to one of the author's ethnographic films, *Reindeer Sacrifice: A Khanty Shaman in 1990*.

Discussions of appropriate terminology are a recurrent feature of the work. For example, in "The Revival of Shamanism in the North," the author promotes the use of the term "Northern religion" to describe concepts that can be understood only "in relation to the ecological, social, cultural, and even political problems" of the North. He further qualifies this term with the idea that Northern religions are best understood as "ethnic religions," which seem to "have been born" among particular peoples which differ from others by linguistic and ethnologic features. His discussion centers on the revival of shamanism in Khanty and Ob-Ugrian societies in Siberia in the late twentieth century and how it figures into their attempts to preserve a sense of distinct identity. He states that, "The Arctic peoples seem to hang on to their shamans in their struggle for survival as a drowning man clutches a straw."

This concern with ethnic identity leads to another important aspect of Pentikäinen's book: the awareness the work raises about the survival of the Northern societies. In an era when the very role of fieldwork is being questioned in terms of power differentials, the author sidesteps any self-assuaging discussions of the ethics of "representation" (though he seems implicitly concerned with these issues) and forthrightly draws attention to real life crises facing the Northern peoples and the cultural strategies being used to cope. Among the topics are how national-ethnic and political leadership meet in the Fourth World, how shamanism and folk epics figure in the awakening of ethnic identities of Northern peoples (in some cases acting

like the Finnish *Kalevala*), and the encouragement of native language use as a source of identity. Other issues are the maintenance of viable economic bases in ethnic communities and the role of influences from the transnational Fourth World consciousness movement. The author identifies the pressures of late twentieth-century technology on the region, in particular the effects of oil production throughout the Northern sphere, as major threats to the survival of the Northern groups as distinct peoples. Many of these ideas are discussed and summarized in the work's final chapter, entitled "Northern Ethnography—Exploring the Fourth World."

In all, the collection is valuable for insights on Northern shamanism, the peoples in whose lives it is a dynamic part, and as an account of these cultures in crisis.

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PETZOLDT, LEANDER, editor. *Folk Narrative and World View: Vorträge des 10. Kongresses der Internationalen Gesellschaft für Volkserzählforschung (ISFNR), Innsbruck 1992*. Beiträge zur Europäischen Ethnologie und Folklore, Reihe B: Tagungsberichte und Materialien, Band 7 (two parts). Bern: Peter Lang AG, 1996. 875 pages. Paper FR 119.00; ISBN 3-631-48698-7; ISSN 0930-2336.

In the Summer of 1992 the venerable International Society for Folk Narrative Research (ISFNR), which normally holds meetings twice every ten years, conducted its tenth "congress" for folk narrative scholars in the Tirolean city of Innsbruck, Austria. Eighty-one of the papers presented at the meeting have now been published in this two volume set, part of the Peter Lang series on "Ethnology and Folklore." Leander Petzoldt, the *Ordinarius* for *Volkskunde* at the University of Innsbruck, is the series editor, while Ingo Schneider and Petra Streng are responsible for editing this particular set. The papers are written in the three official languages of the ISFNR: English, German, and French. Most of the papers are in English, a total of sixty, while fourteen are in German and seven are in French. The participants reveal that the meeting was indeed international in scope, even though the largest number of participants came from Europe. Still there were papers from Africa, America, China, India, Japan, the Middle East, and Thailand.

The series editor prefaces the published papers with a clarification that

Herausgeber und Redaktion haben es vermieden, stilistisch in die Texte einzugreifen. ... Die Beiträge sind in den Sprachen Deutsch, Englisch und Französisch verfaßt. Dies betrifft auch die Vorträge von Kolleginnen und Kollegen aus Ländern, in denen diese Sprachen nicht Umgangssprachen sind. Für Unzulänglichkeiten bei der Übersetzung sind daher jeweils Referenten bzw. Autoren verantwortlich.¹

With these few words the series editor and his editorial assistants effectively shirk their responsibility for selecting those papers which address the theme of the conference; they do not make any stylistic changes in papers written by non-native speakers, and they fail to standardize the critical apparatus, i.e., punctuation and bibliographical style of the works cited by the individual authors. What has resulted is a two volume set which does not speak well for folk narrative scholars and their scholarship. Quite specifically, there are numerous misuses