

gers considering the time and the places he traveled—the channels of south China, the roads of the North Chinese countryside, and Japan. Because of his long stay in Shanghai, extending over nearly a decade, he had some knowledge of Chinese and some insights into the historical background as well as the present political situation of the country. One may discern this fact from his great respect for the Chinese people and their culture, though not so much from the comments that accompany his travel reports (e.g., when he confronts the ruins caused by the Tai-ping rebellion). Daily events are mentioned only when they concern him personally. In the case of his journeys to Japan he sticks all the more to things he personally sees or experiences: he comments that he seems to be “the first citizen of Basel coming to Japan” (53), and that the mountains remind him of those in Switzerland. He compares China and Japan with regard to commerce and tidiness, but he does not compare Japan as he saw it in 1863 with the Japan of 1868, although he was able to observe the procession of the Emperor Meiji along the Tōkaidō from Kyoto to Edo in 1868 (284–86).

The book is first and foremost a “reading pleasure” because of its content and the author’s sense of humor. But, in addition, the reader gains the important understanding that merchants going about their businesses in China and Japan during the 1860s did so within strict limits, separated from the rest of the population of their host countries. They were, therefore, not well suited to serve as “interpreters” (9).

In accordance with the aims of the series there are only few annotations, which themselves show in part the distance between the author and his subject: many place-names written down in the form the author heard them are garbled to such a degree that they could not be verified by the commentators.

There is a short, encyclopedia-like appendix to the book offering background knowledge in such fields as religion, geography, and area studies, ordered according to about twenty keywords. This appendix, as well as the historical introduction and the bibliography, deal only with China. One misses some keywords related to Japan, such as “Meiji Tennō” and “Nagasaki.” They would certainly have been useful for the general reader to whom this book is mainly addressed.

Last but not least, it should be mentioned that the book includes contemporary photos taken by Krayer himself, especially in the travel report about the silk districts. The sensitive introduction by Georg Krayer, a descendant of the author, should also be mentioned.

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NENTWIG, INGO, Editor. *Märchen der Völker Nordost-Chinas*. Translated from the Chinese by Mareile Flitsch, Ingo Nentwig, and Jiang Wu. (Die Märchen der Weltliteratur.) Munich: Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1994. 343 pages. Illustrations, map. Hardcover, n.p. (In German)

In the early 1980s a number of young German researchers formed a group called Sinologie-Ethnologie. The group managed to convene twice at Sankt Augustin near Bonn, after which it was unable to find sufficient funds for new symposia/workshops. Although most of the participants were from German-speaking areas, two Lund University colleagues and I were invited to the symposia, and we took part with the greatest pleasure. Many of the sinologues/ethnologists seemed to be preparing for their doctorates, and it was sheer joy to be surrounded by their youthful energy and enthusiasm. We got the impression that the symposia

heralded a new era for Asian folklore research (and perhaps they did, despite the fact that funds were not available?).

It is evident that the enthusiasm of the organizers did not peter out with the money. Two of them, Mareile Flitsch and Ingo Nentwig, in cooperation with a Chinese researcher, Jiang Wu, have now made a valuable contribution to folklore research. This contribution, *Märchen der Völker Nordost-Chinas*, has been published in the series "Die Märchen der Weltliteratur," where it joins a slightly earlier work on Chinese folklore, *Märchen aus der Mandschurei* (see LINDELL 1996). Although these two collections both deal with tales from the same geographical area there is no overlapping in the contents. It would have facilitated comparison between the two considerably if there had been lists of tale types and motifs in the new volume as there were in the earlier one, but unfortunately this is not the case.

The present volume contains forty-three tales from thirteen ethnic groups living in Northeastern China. There is, however, one more story running through the book, namely a tale of a ginseng child "told" in the form of ten paper cuttings by the artist Hou Yumei.

Preceding the postscript is a map of the area with numbers marking precisely where each tale was recorded. The postscript, by Ingo Nentwig, begins with a brief but informative description of the region's geography. The following survey of the complicated cultural and religious conditions and the section on shamanism are clear and enlightening. Each ethnic group is then described, and its history, ethnic relations, and cultural influences are discussed.

In the extensive notes to each tale there is information on the teller, collection, translation, area of distribution, etc. Local names and expressions are carefully explained (but only the first time they occur, and it would have been an advantage to have had them listed separately). There is also a wealth of information on, for instance, the plants and animals that appear in the tales. The bibliography begins with a list of the works from which the tales were selected. Of the works mentioned in the following seventeen pages of additional literature, the vast majority are in Chinese.

This being a collection of lore from Northeast Asia, it goes without saying that the book contains several ginseng tales. One also finds the expected shaman tales (though it is somewhat surprising to find the shamans waging a religious war against the lamas, as in the Mongol tale no. 25 *Höbögtaï, der Schamane*. One almost deplores that it is the Lama Khan (!) who comes off victorious, since the Qikala tale no. 5, "Der Schamane Nisu und das Aoli-Kraut" (with its very fine notes) has shown the warm and positive relation between a shaman and his society.

It is not surprising to find that Yusuf with his eleven brethren, as well as Adam and Hāwwā (=Eve), have crossed the continent with the spread of Islam, and they are quite recognizable in the Hui stories no. 18 and 19. It is a very long way from the Middle East to Northeast Asia, yet perhaps Adam and Hāwwā made a detour through Southeast Asia? After the Fall they are banished, Hāwwā to the west and Adam to the east. It is a bird, a swallow, that helps them to find each other again. The section reminds one of the brother-sister couple who have to seek their partner after the Flood in Southeast Asian myths. The thirty-six pairs of twins Hāwwā gives birth to do not become the ancestors of all the peoples of the world but just of the Hui themselves.

It is somewhat more unexpected to find that the Bremen City Musicians are present also in this area. A version where the leader is a Lump of Shit was told at a folklore meeting at Mahidol University in Thailand in 1995 (See *AFS* 54, 317). In the Daur version in this volume the leader is a Haniaakaa, a little paper doll, whose sisters have been kidnapped by a demon.

The tale type AT 210 (Cock, Hen, Duck, Pin, and Needle on a Journey) and motif K1161 (Animals hidden in various parts of a house attack owner with their characteristic

powers and kill him when he enters) are, indeed, very widespread all over the Eurasian continent, although the actors vary. Are the tale type and the motif so self-evident that they may have come into existence spontaneously in various places? Or is it a question of diffusion?

The volume under review thus raises many questions, and should serve as a reminder of how important for international folklore studies it is that tales from the Far East be made available for research.

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1996 Review of Jörg Bäcker, translator and editor, *Märchen aus der Mandschurei*. Die Märchen der Weltliteratur. Munich: Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1988. *Asian Folklore Studies* 55: 162–65.

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RIFTIN, BORIS L'VOVICH. *Zhongguo shenhua gushi lunji* 中國神話故事論集 [Collected essays on Chinese myth and lore]. Taipei: Student Bookstore, 1991. Paper, n.p. (In Chinese)

Boris Lvovich Riftin (b. 1932) is easily the leading Russian scholar on Chinese myth, folklore, and popular literature. Between 1951 and 1987 alone the number of his publications comes to 178 (see pages 341–59). His control of the materials, the languages, and the bibliographies is astounding.

The present volume is a selective translation of a number of his works (some only in part), edited by the late Ma Changyi 馬昌儀, a PRC authority on folk and oral literature who contributed a preface (xvii–xxxviii). The translations include:

1. "Legend of Emperor Mu from a Literary Perspective" (1967), 1–13;
2. "From Myth to the Serial Novel" (1979), 15–85;
3. "Chinese Myth" (1980), 87–112;
4. "On the Study of Chinese Myth" (1987), 113–217;
5. "The Development of the Historical Narrative Seen from the Tales of the Three Kingdoms" (1964), 219–28;
6. "Character and Plot in Han Folk Tales" (1972), 229–49;
7. "The Artistic World of Ethnic Hui Stories" (1977), 251–92;
8. "Chinese Idioms as a Means for Researching the Common People's Worldview" (1960), 293–315;
9. "Legends of the Great Wall of China and the Question of Form in Chinese Popular Literature" (1961), 317–40.

Item 9 comes from Riftin's doctoral dissertation work on the story of Meng Jiang, the devoted wife who went looking for her spouse drafted into building the Great Wall of China. Her tears eventually brought the wall down. Riftin sidesteps the *Zuo Zhuan* legend of the wife of Liang Qi whose tears also brought a wall down. Riftin prefers to trace this protest story to the folk ditties that complain of the general sufferings caused by the First Emperor. The study traces the story from its first appearance in the Tang all the way down to a Buddhist "precious scroll" in the Ming. Genre often determines how the story is told. The funeral procession liturgy stresses