

## BOOK REVIEWS

### GENERAL

*Shaman. An International Journal for Shamanistic Research.* Volume 1, nos. 1 and 2, 1993. Volume 2, nos. 1 and 2, 1994. Mihály Hoppál and Ádám Molnár, editors. Szeged, P. O. Box 1195, H-6701, Hungary. Molnar and Kelemen Oriental Publishers. US\$30.00; ISSN 1216-7827.

A new journal for shamanic studies has appeared: *Shamanism: An International Journal for Shamanistic Research.* Åke Hultkrantz (Sweden), honorary editor-in-chief, and editors Mihály Hoppál and Ádám Molnár (both Hungary) explain that the journal owes its existence primarily to the efforts of European—especially Scandinavian and Hungarian—scholars, but that it is an international journal open to scholars of all countries. This is testified to by contributions from Russian, Chinese, and Japanese scholars.

Each issue contains one or two articles that are general in character: “Introductory Remarks on the Study of Shamanism” by Hultkrantz (1/1), “Are ‘Trance’, ‘Ecstasy’ and Similar Concepts Appropriate in the Study of Shamanism?” by Hamayon (France; 1/2), “The Shaman in Myths and Tales” by Hultkrantz (1/2), “Language, Symbol and Dance: An Analysis of Historicity in Movement and Meaning” by László Kürti (Hungary; 2/1), and “Transcending Bodily and Territorial Boundaries: Interpreting Shamanism as a Form of Religion” by Veikko Anttonen (Finland; 2/2). Other contributions include regional studies (Manchu, Okinawa [1/1], Nepal, Manchu [1/2], Xibe in Northwestern China [2/1], Nepal, Saami in the old Norse literature, Even and Evenki [2/2]), reviews of research activity in China (1/1) and Japan (2/1), reports of conferences, updates on the International Society for Shamanistic Research, reviews of books and articles, and obituaries.

We note the journal’s variety of subject and approach, its balance of Hultkrantz’s traditional scholarship with the more critical stance of Hamayon, and its presentation of new issues. The articles are of high quality. I agree with Hultkrantz’s statement, “The publication of this first international journal on shamanism is a sign that shamanic studies have come of age” (1/1: 3). I welcome among other things the fresh information on the rather neglected shamanism of the Manchu and the people of Nepal, but would nevertheless like to see more attention paid to areas other than northern Eurasia and adjacent regions. As Hultkrantz himself puts it, “Today, most though not all shamanologists would agree that shamans and shamanism occur on most continents, with the possible exceptions of Africa and Australia” (1/1: 7).

Shamanistic studies are thriving. The publication of this journal and the convening of two international conferences on shamanism in Japan last autumn (Sapporo and Nara) bear witness to this fact. Yet I myself feel that we are presently in a transitional or incubative phase of research, waiting for what will emerge in coming years. This feeling may be responsible in part for my impression that the new journal is not entirely inspiring. It is a good journal, but tame and straightforward. Despite its status as a newcomer it lacks new and seminal ideas.

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