

LÖRINCZ, LÁSZLÓ. *Mongolische Märchentypen*. (Translated from the Hungarian by Judit Györi). Asiatische Forschungen, Band 61. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1979. Paper, 428 pp., DM 78.—. ISBN 3-447-01012-1 (In German).

In the preface to the second revised edition of "The Types of the Folktale" Stith Thompson stresses that his "index is merely a practical listing of tales for a certain area", namely Europe and West Asia. He goes on to warn that an extension of the classification beyond this area would be a mistake, and that each one of the other areas "would need an index based strictly upon its own traditions" (1961: 8).

In the years that have passed since these words have been written type indices for a number of such areas have appeared, yet it would be difficult to say that they have always paid enough attention to Thompson's warning. Lörincz, in trying to classify the still growing amount of Mongolian tales that have come to our attention, found that the tales imposed a kind of classification on him that was clearly difficult to harmonize with Aarne's system. He mentions this difficulty explicitly in his introduction and still the second part of the book is an attempt to construct just that sort of harmony.

The author concedes that this could not be done without forcing the tales or incurring contradictions. The reader does not have to go very far into the second part to be convinced of this. It therefore seems to me that this second part of the book is the most problematic although the author proves his point here by the means of some sort of a negative argument. Lörincz succeeded in demonstrating the high degree of incompatibility between the two worlds of tales, the European and the Mongolian. However, we may ask, if he really needed to go through such a long and rather dull exercise, taking up each tale and trying to relate it to the Aarne system, in order to make his point. His attempts to find possible lines of conciliation with Aarne's system made him introduce sub-types, which, instead of being useful, only underline the difficulty of such an endeavour.

This second part is therefore a tribute to the Aarne system, but a tribute in a negative sense. One may notice this already by just skimming through the pages thanks to the large number of minus signs by which the author marks those tales of types that are not found in Aarne's system. The fact that he could not do otherwise albeit he proposes a tentative classification that would be the closest to that of Aarne, speaks for itself.

In the first and third part of the book Lörincz does not disregard Aarne's index but there he takes it only as a reminder for purposes of reference, giving instead more preference to the characteristics of Mongolian tales. He introduces the tales in the first part by way of résumés, breaking them down into their motifs. From some 1500 tales he isolates 443 types and arranges them under five headings: animal tales; tales of heroes; tales of magic (*Zaubermärchen*); social and romantic tales (*novellenartige Märchen*, including also legendlike tales with Buddhist themes); jokes, tales of lying and riddles. Although the mode of organization still recalls the Aarne system, the contents show the difference clearly. And the author is right when he stresses that even there, where the term that describes a grouping is identical with that used by Aarne, as for instance in the case of "animal tales", the contents of the tales and the way of understanding them are different and portray the attitude and interest of a pastoral or hunting people. *Mutatis mutandis* this applies also to the other main groups of types, however most significant and characteristic of the nomadic Mongols are their tales of heroes. They therefore constitute the most important category in the corpus of Mongolian tales and yet there is no category for them in the Aarne system.

Using these five categories the author constructs an index of types that would take into account the characteristics of the Mongolian tales. He assigns a number to each tale and to its important variations and provides crossreferences to the numbers of the tales in the first part and also to the numbers in the Aarne system. Furthermore, he reorganizes them into groups according to similarities of plot or actors, with the effect that the order in this third part is slightly different from the one in the first part. And since he expects other collections of tales to be published in the near future, he chooses to leave some space open between certain numbers, but unfortunately he never tells us the reason why he does this here and not there or why he keeps space for several numbers here but for only one there. He further does not tell us why he dropped about 25 tales at all in this hypothetical index, although he had found them important enough to give them an independent number and place in the first part. Are they possibly the casualties of this catalogue which after all is designed to cater to the characteristic situation of the Mongolian tale but still does not really succeed in freeing itself enough from Aarne's shadow?

The bulk of the material collected and analyzed here comes from three regions, viz. Inner Mongolia, the Mongolian People's Republic and the Buryat ASSR. Tales that have appeared among the Kalmucks after the twenties of this century are disregarded as having undergone too much foreign influence.

This book is the fruit of a laborious effort of more than ten years. As a whole, after reading through it, one has to say that it raises more problems than it offers answers, but in spite of the above criticisms I do not think that this is a weakness which would hamper the importance of the book. The author himself does not understand it as a definite answer but rather as a first step and guide, we therefore should take it as such and see it as a much needed start in the right direction. It surely fulfills this purpose reminding us at the same time that the study of tales has still a long way to go. In view of its efforts to categorize the Mongolian tales in their own right and apart from the Aarne system, I wish the book the wide readership and close attention it deserves.

#### REFERENCE CITED:

Thompson, Stith, transl., 1961. *The Types of the Folktale. A Classification and Bibliography*. FF Communications No. 184. Helsinki.

Peter Knecht

LINDELL, KRISTINA; SWAHN, JAN-ÖJVIND, and TAYANIN, DAMRONG. *Folk Tales from Kammu, II: A Story-Teller's Tales*. Scandinavian Institute of Asian Studies Monograph Series, No. 40. London and Malmö: Curzon Press, 1980. Paper. 185 pp., Bibliography.

Though slender, this is an extremely rich volume; its eighteen stories contain a surprisingly large number of motifs and tale types. It is annotated and carefully indexed, and should prove useful to folklorists working in nearly any tradition, but especially to those in the Asian field. The stories were all collected from one master narrator, a man identified as "Mr. Cendii," said to be well known among the Kammu people in the border area along Northern Laos for his talents. If he is indeed as popular as the writers say—and the tales themselves would seem to constitute ample evi-