

(1172-1262), who abolished clerical celibacy in the True Pure Land sect that sprang from his teachings. And the syncretic trend detectable in generous references to such non-Buddhist deities as Shinto gods, local clan deities, and animal deities (fox Inari, etc.) in *Hokegenki* was eventually to become schematized into the *honji snijaku* 本地垂迹 theory. This volume serves as an important source in the study of evolutionary stages in Japanese Buddhism.

The annotations in this complete translation are apt and precise in providing citations of related tales in earlier and later *setsuwa* collections, explanations of Buddhist iconography and doctrinal concepts, and historical references. To be even more useful, a cross-reference of currently available English translations for each cited source would have been an invaluable addition to the otherwise thorough Selected Bibliography. The two-page Index leaves room for a comprehensive listing of prominent folklore motifs which, to be fair, is commonly missing from most translations of *setsuwa* literature and Buddhist lore. *Konjaku* at least offers long and descriptive titles such as "How the Hunters' Mother Became an Oni and Tried to Devour Her Children" (22), but tale headings in *Hokegenki* tend to give proper personal / place names and little else. Folklorists, nonetheless, would find themselves drawn to part III. An obvious clue to motif categories is the frequent use of generic terms (fox, monkey), profession (miner, lieutenant governor), and gender (old woman, good man) in the titles of the last thirty or so tales. It is in this section that the richest vein of folklore material lies.

Nearly ten centuries old, *Hokegenki* is still far from being "dead literature" in today's Japan. An unprecedented demand for Buddhist study has been sparked or revealed by a recent television program on NHK Educational Channel. The texts for the cultural lecture series titled *Buddhist Literature*, consisting of sutras from the remote *Primary Scripture* to the erudite *Flower Garland Sutra* to the popular *Lotus Sutra*, sold out more than 120,000 copies since April 1985 and climbed close to tripling the normal sales volume (about 50,000) for other lecture series. In the wake of revived interest in Buddhist source material, Dysktra's contribution has been duly acknowledged by the award of the Japan Translation Prize to this volume in 1984. *Hokegenki* is also a welcome addition to the body of primary sources in Japanese folklore in English, which is at the present none too large for the needs of researchers abroad.

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MAYER, FANNY HAGIN, translation and introduction. *Where Folk Tales are Treasured. Fifteen Tales from the Japanese of Misusawa Kenichi*. Bronxville, NY: Laughing Buddha Press, Sarah Lawrence College, 1984. iv+63 pages. ISBN 0-910913-01-3.

This handsomely produced small booklet is a truly charming little treasure. The fifteen stories Mayer has selected and introduced are not all exactly most typical for Japanese folk tales. A few are not even found in her recent collection, *Ancient Tales in Modern Japan*, while others offer significant variations to stories found there. But I do not think that Mayer intended to give a representative collection *in nucleo* of Japanese folk tales. The special value of this tiny volume lies rather in what it reveals about the telling and collecting of the stories, about their *Sitz im Leben*. All the stories

are pearls from the very rich collection of Mizusawa Kenichi, a true lover and gifted collector of folk tales. He has devoted most of his time and energy collecting tales in the remote villages of Niigata Prefecture.

In her introduction Mayer describes her experiences and observations during a field trip in 1957 with Mizusawa. She introduces him as her guide and road companion in a double sense, as one who took her along on a field trip to some of the storytellers he knew, but also as one who led her to understand the stories and their circumstances better. Her text is very straightforward, but it is not a commentary on the stories. She talks about the circumstances in which stories were told at the time of her visit and she lets us have a glimpse at Japanese rural life. It is the whole world of the storytellers that comes to life in small facets. Striking insights about the nature of storytelling and the meaning of tradition are naturally linked up with observations about this or that pertinent aspect of Japanese culture. Her statements are often made in a casual way and may be quite blunt and sudden, but they can have considerable weight. She would report, e.g. a discussion which had erupted among several women about the form of a certain story. They all knew the story, but each had learnt it in a somewhat different form. Mayer stresses that the women referred to the story as they had personally heard it and were not prepared to change any detail in it, and so she concludes dryly: "That took care of the theory by some folklorists that stories are always modified after hearing them" (12). Pointed remarks of this kind, combined with a sense of humor and irony make the short piece truly enjoyable. After this introduction the stories are left to speak for themselves.

There is only one point where I wonder if the author did not misread her notes. Speaking about the arrangement of seats around the open hearth Mayer says that "at the left was the *yoko-za* where guests were seated" (3). As far as my knowledge goes guests would as a rule indeed be seated by the side of the hearth. However, whether this seat is called *yoko-za* is quite a different matter. This term is usually reserved for the seat of the master of the house, which is the seat at the top with the inner rooms of the house at its back. If Mayer is correct in her observation it would be a quite noteworthy deviation from a very common feature.

The volume is finally rounded out with an impressive list of Mizusawa's publications and scholarly addresses as well as of the honors he has received. Both attest to the dedication of this remarkable man. The book whets the appetite for more of his treasures.

REFERENCE CITED:

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1984 *Ancient tales in modern Japan. An anthology of Japanese folk tales.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Peter Knecht

MOERAN, BRIAN. *Lost Innocence: Folk Craft Potters of Onta, Japan.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984. xvi+252 pages. Maps, black and white plates, bibliography, index. Cloth, US\$30.00. ISBN 0-520-94692-7.

Facing the table of contents of *Lost Innocence*, Brian Moeran quotes the lyrics of an unidentified popular ballad: