

nadu differ from each other?' was given such prominence at the beginning of the book, since the author provides no clue to its answer. The structure of the book lacks balance because the connection between succeeding chapters is unclear, and their size uneven. The significance of chapters IV and V, placed after the analysis of ritual in chapter III, is particularly difficult to understand.

It is possible that the author's analysis appears insufficient because she depended too heavily for her information on *pucari* (priests). Taken up with visiting such a large number of temples, she undoubtedly was unable to consider the social context in which each of these temples exist. This is a major drawback to this type of survey. The author ignores a sociological examination of the critical problem of the difference in understanding between the priests and the devotee. Thus the remarks on castes and the fourth chapter, for example, appear as a mere addition and half-baked. It is very unfortunate that the great amount of hard work expended on this project is undermined by the limitations of this kind of survey method. In a historic society such as India, it is necessary to take into account the social and historical background even for the study and analysis of folk religion or "little traditions." It is not enough anymore to limit oneself to the methods of research on religion hitherto used in Cultural Anthropology. After the appearance of eminent works such as Appadurai (1980) and Fuller (1984), though it is admittedly asking for much, I look forward to the publication of materials on folk religion which can stand up to an analysis from a social and historical perspective.

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MICRONESIA

LINK, HILDE. *Der Olofat-Zyklus in der Erzähltradition Mikronesiens* [The Olofat cycle in the narrative tradition of Micronesia]. Münchner Ethnologische Abhandlungen, Band 6. München: Minerva-Publikation, 1986. Xi+457 pages. Illustrations, photographs, motif index, bibliography. Paperback DM 52; ISBN 3-597-10605-6.

This monograph deals almost in its entirety with Truk Atoll, those nearby atolls lying north, south, and west of Truk Atoll, plus the high islands of Yap, all in Central and Western Micronesia. The natives of Truk and the surrounding atolls speak various dialects of the same language and have similar cultural patterns. The natives of Yap speak a very different language and have many different cultural patterns. However, these islands as a whole have a long history of interaction through native political systems and trade. Since the early days of Western contact they have been pulled even

closer together under a variety of outside administrators: first the Spanish, then Germans, Japanese, and lastly, Americans.

The monograph itself represents a dissertation accepted at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Munich, 1986. As the title indicates, this publication is a study of the Micronesian trickster-culture hero Olofat. Anyone familiar with the literature pertaining to the Micronesian folktale will recognize the debt Link owes to William Lessa's encyclopedic study of 1961. Indeed, there is little in Link's work that has not been covered by Lessa (Lessa 1961, 1966, 1980). What little is absent in Lessa's writing can be found in my own work (Mitchell 1973). The organization of Link's effort follows closely Lessa's early example. Thus the lion's share of this monograph (16-324) is near kin to Lessa's "Tales of Iolofäth" and "Tale Type: *Iolofäth and Lugeiläng" (1961, 15-26; 81-91).

This similarity includes the exact order of traditions to be considered, the same printed sources, and the identical table presenting the names of heroes and heroines. Link also treats her topic in a Lessa-like fashion: first a general discussion of the tale and its component motifs. Then comes the tale itself, followed by more on the motifs, and capped by ethnographic explanations of actions in the text. This last touch is a somewhat dubious procedure for Link, since she has no first-hand experience in Micronesia and is working from at times inadequate and dated ethnographies. This can lead to sometimes amusing guesses. For example, Olofat goes to take a bath and takes with him a coconut. Link surmises he plans to wash his hair with the coconut milk (100). She errs twice. First, she has confused the water in a ripe coconut with the milky fluid produced when the ripe nut is grated and mixed with water. Secondly, it is a common Micronesian practice to take a coconut to the bathing spot and to rub one's skin down with the oily meat as a form of body lotion. *

This first long portion of her study Link calls "Tale Type Olofat and His Heavenly Father"; and she divides it into its component motifs: mating of a god with a mortal, the son's supernatural ascent to heaven, and his adventures there, including attempts to kill him. She follows this major part with several other Olofat tales portraying him in his various roles as trickster, helper, and culture hero; all following the Lessa pattern as established in the beginning section.

Nearing the end of her consideration of the Olofat cycle, Link presents a short chapter (329-340) which she terms "Single Tales Without Parallels in the Known Literature." It is here that Link reveals her basic weakness. She is not in sufficient control of the literature, despite the fact that most of it was already pointed out to her in earlier publications, some of which she used, at least in part. For example, she makes brief mention of Hijikata Hisataku's studies, but there it ends. However, Hijikata's research covered that important period between World War I and World War II, when the Japanese took over the administration of most of Micronesia from the Germans. Hijikata spent many years researching the Micronesian folktale, and his *Dittilapal-Satewal* [Folktales of Satewal] contains much important Olofat-cycle material. To ignore Hijikata is to leave great holes in one's data in such a study as attempted by Link (Hijikata 1953).

Indeed, Link did not make full use of the sources which she apparently had. She chose two tales of Olofat from my work (1973) which were locatable in the index by title. However, had she read all the texts she would have found more. For example, "Tale 66: The Sexual Contest," begins thusly: "This is a story about Olofat, Olofat the Great," and it displays Olofat in some of his less lofty behavior (Mitchell 1973, 190-191). Why didn't she check my "The Wooden Bride" (Mitchell 1973, 134-138)? Surely she should have noted the resemblance of my title to her "Olofat und die höl-

zerne Braut" (297-307). Moreover, this tale also included a variant on her major focus, "Olofat and His Heavenly Father."

Perusal of my twenty-one pages of comparative notes would have provided Link with even more variants. A careful reading of my Table of Contents would have shown Link that there was an appendix giving information on the story-tellers. Then she would not have twice committed the error of stating that there was no information on my informants other than their names (254, 335). Moreover, she could have then assigned my variants to their proper islands. There is also the matter of my doctoral dissertation, listed in my 1973 bibliography and containing more Olofat variants (Mitchell 1967).

Considering these and other gaps in Link's sources, what can be said of her conclusions? They are short, especially in comparison to her lengthy text. First, Link debates Olofat's various roles as trickster, culture hero, and god. She decides that after his return to heaven and his problems there ("d.h. seiner Initiation"), he becomes a god ("ist er nicht mehr Mensch und Gott, sondern er ist nur Gott . . . p. 381).

I cannot agree with this merging of the traditions of the central Truk area with those of the Olofat (Iolofath) traditions to be found in the Western Islands of Yap and its nearby atolls. I have made a very thorough search of the literature known to me, including all of Lessa's sources, and others covered neither by Lessa or Link (for example, Hijikata, 1942; 1953). I have also collected widely in Micronesia and am now preparing a monograph on Micronesia erotic tales. The evidence strongly supports the existence of two separate traditions which blend at those points of contact between Yap and other nearby islands.

In Truk and the surrounding atolls of similar culture there is a vigorous and lengthy Olofat cycle, where he is definitely presented as a god, not a demi-god, and as full brother to the High God's other sons and daughters. In this area he is also the well-known figure of trickster-culture hero, traveling easily between heaven and earth.

When one nears Yap, then Olofat becomes a demi-god, son of a mortal woman and the High God. The emphasis in Yap especially is on Olofat's joining his father in heaven and his acceptance into the heavenly family. Only in this last instance can I accept Link's statement that he has now become another god. In the general Truk area his fame as trickster-culture hero lives on, often at the expense of his heavenly origin.

As for this monograph, it is generally accepted in publishing circles that it is the rare dissertation that can be published just as written. Most require more research, stern editing for redundancies, poor punctuation, and crude corrections. Link's monograph suffers all these deficiencies. It needed much more work before being ushered into print, especially as a photo duplication of the original typescript.

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