

**Carolyn HAN, Jay HAN (translator), and Li JI (illustrator), *Why Snails Have Shells: Minority and Han Folktales of China*, (Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 1993, pp. vi+73, ISBN 0-8248- 1505-X)**

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qui ne parvient pas tout à fait à prouver ce que l'auteur voudrait, que par les récits qu'il nous fait découvrir. Qu'importe en fin de compte puisque les théories sont éphémères et les documents, durables.

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There is much to recommend this charming book amongst the proliferation of works of/on folklore for children in recent years. First, it has strong aesthetic appeal for both children and adults: the design is clever, with a recurring and eye-catching turquoise used on the cover, for the titles and frequently in the illustrations; the print is easy to read yet not specific to children. Most important, though, are the illustrations—strong, evocative works which resonate with and truly illuminate the text to the extent perhaps of reinserting an element of the sardonic wit of tradition that seems to have been somewhat dulled in translation. It is this humour that without doubt has made the wisdom of these twenty fables and aetiological tales more accessible and their overt didacticism more palatable in the telling.

The volume is a handsome one, worthy of note and certain of an overall positive evaluation in terms of the criteria for the Aesop Prize, awarded annually since 1992 by the Children's Folklore Section of the American Folklore Society for a work or works that best incorporate(s) folklore into a book published in English for children and young adults. With respect to three of the five criteria, Han's book is particularly strong: the marriage of the text and illustrations is such that the work definitely meets the high standards of the best of children's literature and has strong appeal to the child reader; folklore is central to both the text and the illustrations; and the reader's understanding of folklore is enhanced by the book as the book is clearly enriched by the folklore. It is regarding the other two criteria that the weaknesses—not damning, but present—in the book emerge.

For the Aesop Prize, it is important that the folklore contained in the book should accurately present or reflect the cultural worldview of the people whose folklore it is. The stories do represent the worldview of some minorities in China,

but there is very little contextual and cultural information supplied to enhance the understanding gained. The reader finishes the book knowing nothing about the appearance and significance of the stories in particular, and folklore in general, in the lives of people in China. The tales are presented without introductions or notes regarding their currency, tellers, performance milieu, or traditional audience. Neither is there any indication of the degree to which Han reworked and adapted the stories she first learned from her students during three years of teaching English in China. Her use of the material is but one aspect of Han's problematic handling of sources. The Aesop Prize demands that folklore sources be fully acknowledged and annotations referenced within the bound contents of the publication. Han does provide instructive comments about the various different peoples and cultures represented in the text in the concluding section on "The Minority Peoples of China", but she fails to supply any general resources for additional reading or, more significantly, any bibliographic references or further sources for the folklore.

In sum, then, this book had the potential of excellence, but falls short in areas of some consequence to folklorists. It is, however, still a positive presentation of oral tradition in print—well worth a child's attention and a pleasure to read.

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Timothy RICE, *May It Fill Your Soul: Experiencing Bulgarian Music*, (Chicago/London, University of Chicago Press, 1994, pp. xxv + 370; compact disc; ISBN cloth 0-226-71121-8 \$65 U.S., paper 0-226-71122-6 \$24.95 U.S.)

Tim Rice has long been a shining example of an ethnomusicologist at home as a performer and participant in the culture he has specialized in. In this book, he does an admirable job of "bringing it all together": practical information and theory, specific local lore and general issues, accounts of individuals (including himself) and far-reaching implications. As a bonus, even when dealing with abstract issues, the writing style is fluid, engaging, and unpretentious.

Bulgarian music has become much better known to the Western listening public than it was, for example, when I wandered into it over 20 years ago. Most