

76-81; 84-89), are likewise to be viewed from this aspect. The text edited by Röhrborn also throws light on the other confessional formulas that have been preserved in fragments insofar as it also illustrates the application of the theory of the Bodhisattva to the practice of the redemption of sins.

The origin of the Uigurian text is to be found in a Chinese source, the work *Ts'ü pei tao-ch'ang ch'an fa* (Nanjio 1509), which was written between 483 and 493 but was already revised between 502 and 519 with the inclusion of the knowledge of the doctrines of the Hīnayāna, of the Mahāyāna "and of all the other doctrinal texts" (p. 20). The date of the Uigurian translation cannot be determined. According to Prof. von Gahain, the Chinese work is a translation from Sogdian by *An Shi Kao*.

As has been stated, we learn much here about the ritual and 'theological' settings of the practice of the redemption of sins. Information is given on the relevant cultic and psychological preparations for their recital, and on their use for the awakening of the Bodhi mind as well as for prosperity in later existences. This is followed by invocational formulas for communication with beings in diverse forms of existence and for their salvation, as well as by suggestions for meditating on the dharmas. In conclusion we find a section on "reverence for the Buddhas" and a section on "how one transfers merit". The last three chapters, which appear to be additions to a more developed Bodhisattva theology, have not been edited.

The text, which is very valuable from the point of view of the history of religion, represents an indispensable base for further work on the Buddhist as well as Manichaeian formulas for the confession of sins in Central Asia. Its value is enhanced by numerous references given in the footnotes. A detailed index and the plates of the text are attached.

Professor Dr. Hans-Joachim Klimkeit

SNOY, PETER

### **Bagrot. A Dard Valley Community in the Karakorum**

["Bagrot. Eine dardische Talschaft im Karakorum"]

(Bergvölker im Hindukusch und Karakorum, Bd. 2)

Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1975; 244 pp., 119 ill. on 65 plates, 13 drawings, 1 map

The present volume presents an exhaustive ethnographical description of two mountain valleys of the Gilgit Agency in the north of Pakistan, both of which are still difficult to reach even today. On the "German Hindu Kush Expedition of 1955/56" led by Prof. A.



Friedrich, the author, who is now an ethnologist at the South Asian Institute in Heidelberg, collected in a relatively short period of about six weeks valuable material on the inhabitants of Bagrot and Haramosh, their economic system, social structure, customs and habits which he has now made available in a systematic account of the investigation. The book is the second volume of a series edited by Prof. Jettmar, the first volume of which has not yet appeared. In the foreword the editor, who himself took part in the expedition, gives a brief outline of the exploration of this district, for a knowledge of which one was almost entirely dependent upon travelogues and minor articles until the period after the Second World War, and a report on the work of the "German Hindu Kush Expedition of 1955/56" together with a long list of the publications that have been connected with its results. After a short introduction, which is followed by a time-table of the undertaking and some comments on the nature of the presentation, Chapter I contains a precise description of the two valleys, Bagrot and Haramosh, which includes the geographical environment, the composition of the population with its four "castes", the design of the villages, the traditions and legends concerning the immigration, an account of the ruins, etc. The language of the population is Shina, a language belonging to the Dardic branch of Indo-Aryan which is also spoken in Gilgit; in addition the non-Aryan Burushaski is spoken in Danyor and Oshikandas by minor groups of settlers from Hunza. The material culture and economy is described in an equally precise manner in Chapter II: housing, weapons and tools, food and a good description of the still little known group of gold-washers (Maruts). In the economy, compared with agriculture and cattle-breeding, only slight importance is still attached to hunting; it is, however, precisely there that old customs have been well preserved. Chapter III, on the "Social Life", describes not only the traditional structure of the family-group, the hereditary succession, etc., but also the interesting institution of the "milk-relationship" (Unilo), which is connected with mythological conceptions. In the section on the four caste-like classes of the population there is a good comprehensive discussion of the old problem of the origin of the two main groups, the Yeshkun and the Shin, in the course of which the author decides in favour of the reconciling opinion that the Yeshkun "branched off" from the Shin, in that "individual Shin men intermarried with the previous population (Vorbevölkerung), whereby a part of this Burushaski-speaking previous population was incorporated unmixed into the group of the Yeshkun". In Chapter IV, on the subject of the "spiritual culture", everything in the way of mythology, Shamanism, cults, etc. that has been preserved from the pre-Islamic period has been carefully assembled. The process of Islamization in this region only came to an end in the



19th century and the investigation of the remains of the earlier paganism was the main concern of the German Hindu Kush Expedition. It was inevitable that in this part, in addition to observation and description, there should be a certain amount of hypothetical conjectures, for the available data no longer represent an integrated system and one can only come closer to understanding them by drawing upon material from neighbouring areas and historical reports. The personal statements of the Shamans called "Dayal" are very illuminating, as is also the description of the seances performed at the author's request. The belief in spirits of all kinds (Darnishi, Rachi, Parian, Yamale, etc.) is still rife and is constantly nourished by personal experiences; on the other hand, of the formerly rich calendar of festivals, today hardly more than "great banquets and a general merry-making" have survived. From the realm of Islam a vivid description is given of the Shiitic celebrations of Muharram which the author was able to attend personally.

With these comments it has only been possible to indicate the most important points of this substantial volume. In it the author proves himself everywhere to be an accomplished observer who notices even the smallest detail and has the ability to describe things in a lucid manner that is free of speculation and never gets lost in the abstract, but illustrates every point by means of the concrete individual case in living contact with the bearers of the culture. Special mention should also be made of the author's 119 superb photos which are included in the appendix. The book is indispensable for everyone who wants to make himself conversant with the life and culture of the tribes of the Gilgit Agency.

Professor Dr. Hermann Berger

### **The Spirits of the Yellow River. Fairy-Tales from China**

["Die Geister des Gelben Flusses. Märchen aus China"]

(Diederichs Löwenbücher, Bd. 4)

Düsseldorf: Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1973; 168 pp.

The present collection of 26 fairy-tales is a prize example of how such an anthology should never be produced: its individual items are largely or entirely copied from other sources without any acknowledgement being made of the source or the author. Nothing is said, moreover, about the principle of selection, the arrangement, etc., as any informative epilogue or foreword is lacking.

In the case of most of the items what has happened is that they have been taken from the well-known collection of the eminent expert on Chinese philosophy and distinguished translator Richard Wilhelm