

BOOK REVIEWS

Shah, Haku: *Votive Terracottas of Gujarat. Living Traditions of India*. Edited by Carmen Kegal, New York 1985, publ. Mapin International, 152 pp., black and white photos in the text.

The second volume of the series *Living Traditions of India* is indeed a revealing publication, though it is not apparent from its title. It deals with the special type of votive terracotta figures from Gujarat, i. e. with terracotta objects used by local tribes, until now hardly talked about. The subject is not only interesting but also challenging. It reflects the complicated problems of tribal cultures in the India of our days, the relationships of their cultures to those of the Indian nations living in their neighbourhood, and also the question of acculturation of the tribes and the regressive influence of tribal culture on the Indian nations. The series containing this volume does not aim to solve complicated scientific problems connected with tribal material culture and to draw far-reaching conclusions. It tries to inform a wider public in a convincing but accessible manner about one of its forms and by means of attractive photographs points at its aesthetic value and place in today's India.

Haku Shah, author of the second volume, is absolutely predestinated for this purpose. From his previous publications¹ he is known as an expert on Gujarat village culture, and those having made his acquaintance know that not only is he its faithful admirer, but its propagator and passionate collector as well. A gifted and expertly trained painter and curator of the museum for Tribal Cultures of the Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad, he approaches the subject sensitively and attentively, disclosing its beauty, where a less experienced eye would not observe it. He is well acquainted with the manufacturing techniques, recognizing the slightest nuance, and evaluating the creative potency and skilled workmanship of local craftsmen. He is also outstanding photographer of professional standard. With the deep knowledge of the problem and at the same time with the experienced eye of the artist simultaneously, he is able to turn a photographic shot into a real work of art and catch in it the authentic fact, the photograph should record.

The author's true relationship to the village culture of his native Gujarat, his remarkable knowledge and,

at the same time, his capability of putting this knowledge into words and pictures for a wide public, made of him an exceptional personality whose singular attitude reflects in the conception of the reviewed volume. It has the form of authentic records and descriptions, based on personal experiences and legends, accompanied by photographic documentation. These the author, a grantee of the Nehru Fellowship, assembled during his study trips through the villages of Gujarat in the years 1973/74. Of its 152 pages $\frac{2}{5}$ th of the book makes the text, the remaining pages showing the unique photographs, which, together with the striking design by Dolly Sahriar, make an attractive and cultivated publication of it.

The material, assembled during his research in the territory, the author divides into three basic chapters, each one in succession dealing with the pottery traditions of the tribal regions of Northern, Central and South Gujarat. (The Pottery Heritage from North Gujarat, pp. 35—60; The Terracotta Tradition of Central Gujarat, pp. 61—96; The Potter's Craft in South Gujarat, pp. 97—122.) These chapters he then supplemented with shorter ones. The two-page introduction is followed by the chapter called Tribals and Terracottas (pp. 15—28) and Myths and Legends (pp. 29—34) and the final chapter The Sanctuaries of Tubraj and Goli Gadh Mata (pp. 123—134) and Tribal Tales (pp. 135—147). Then follows Conclusion (p. 148), Bibliography (p. 150) and Glossary of Indian Names and Terms (pp. 151—152). The above-mentioned chapters contain a large number of remarkable and even to experts new information. Among them is the statement that the main type of votive terracotta objects from the Gujarat tribes, like Bhils, Rathvas, Naikan and others, are terracotta figures of horses used in large number. This statement and also the fact that the authors of plastic figures are generally potters of the Hindu caste (kumbhakaras), became the main idea of the book.

Sacrificing of terracotta horses which in India is being connected with the ancient sacrifice of live horses (aśvamedha), does not occur in Gujarat only. It is quite possible to find it even today in the village culture of almost all the states of nowadays India. Surprising though is the fact that this ancient cult is carried out with great intensity, and what individual and varied forms it takes.

The author's survey of the various types of terracottas from monumental horses, with or without a rider, smaller size horse-figures up to the remarkable type of a

sitting horse (called behan or Himaryo), his exact and realistic descriptions of tools and technology of fabrication (from digging the clay, mixing it with water, the creating process on the potter's wheel to the firing of the object in the kiln) a vivid picture is given, forming the most valuable part of the book.

The author's authentic statements are proved by his quoting conversations in the potter's mother-tongue, supplementing them with English translations. This shows that the author holds the simple village potters in deep respect and understanding. That respect gave the author the idea to take the village artists from their anonymity and to point them out individually in his book. Therefore the author chose just one representative from potters of the individual Gujarat regions in whose works he underlines the principles of potters' tradition in that particular region. So North Gujarat is represented by the potter Jathabhai of Lambadia, Central Gujarat by Jadhavbhai of Chota Udaipur, and South Gujarat by Chanabhai of Buhari whose names are the subtitles of the individual chapters. In this way the author could describe the work of the chosen potter in detail and deal with his biography, his family circumstances and division of work among the family. It also enables him to point out the potter's personal approach to the artistic modelling of the figure, his imagination, leading him, e. g., to use the shapes of local crockery for the construction of objects (e. g. p. 106). He also mentions the structure of a potter's wheel and the symbolism of its various parts, depending on Hindu mythology and legends about the origin of potters and their crafts (e. g. p. 63 and myths pp. 29—33). In that way and with the use of photo-documentation, he enables the reader to follow the individual phases of the fabrication of a terracotta as clearly as if he himself had participated in field research.

Very valuable, among others, is the author's information relating to the rituals, terracotta horses serve for. We find such information in subchapters about North Gujarat called Denotation and Function (pp. 43—45) and in the chapters about sanctuaries of the tribal gods (pp. 123—134). The author introduces the reader to the tribal ceremonies, their procedures and the function of horse figures during such ceremonies. It is apparent that between the individual types of figures a certain hierarchy exists. The sculpture of the horse and rider, e. g., is considered more powerful than that of the horse without the rider, while the sitting horse, interesting

from the point of view concerning crafts, has a lower position than that of a standing horse, and so on.

Not less valuable is the paragraph dealing with Female Votive Figures (p. 111) which, together with the unique photographs, supplements the picture of pottery production in South Gujarat. It is rather a pity that the author does not write about it in detail. From the typological, functional and craft-point of view those figures are of course different types than those of the horse figures the book is dedicated to. The author naturally had too little space to write in more detail about such figures. Some readers will certainly regret that in the photographic part of the book the author did not introduce one or two examples of unfired terracottas made by tribal people themselves which the author mentions on p. 20. It would certainly be interesting as well to hear more about the relationship between the tribes and the Hindu kumbhakars who, as the makers of votive figures for tribes, have a high position in tribal regions and try to influence tribal faiths through their Hindu ideas (see p. 62). These remarks should not be understood as reproaches towards the author or editor of this volume. The aim pursued in it has been reached successfully and surely awakened the interest of the wider public in the culture of the Gujarat tribes. The comments rather express the wish for the author to return to the problems of tribal culture and to carry out a more extensive study in another volume where he could also publish what he had no space for in this here reviewed book.

H. Knižková

Note

- 1 E. g. E. Fisher, Haku Shah, Rural Craftsmen and their Work. National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad 1970.
E. Fisher, Haku Shah, Kunsttraditionen in Nordindien. Rietberg Museum Zürich, Zürich 1972.
E. Fisher, Haku Shah, Vetra Ne Khambha. Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad 1974.
Haku Shah, Forms and Many Forms of Mother Clay. Museum 147, UNESCO, Paris 1948.

Bernani, C., Camesasca, E., Conti, F.: *Storia e popoli dell'Africa nera*. Milano 1985, publ. Rizzoli, 111 pages, 16 black and white photographs and cca 200 colour photographs, 13 maps.

The book "Storia e popoli..." is an illustrated handbook, acquainting the reader with a simplified survey of African civilization during pre-colonial times. This historical aspect is brought up to date through photographs of present-day life (in the 60s and 70s of the 20th century), which should prove the survival of the traditional ways of life even in the present. The individual historical epochs or civilizations resp. form separate chapters, each one provided with a chronological chart, a map of the respective part of the African Continent and a series of colour photographs. The text itself and the accompanying titles to the photographs are rather simplified as to provide just enough information to a reader, who knows nothing at all about African history and culture.

The geographical aspect alternates with the thematical one, so we find here subchapters about the empires of Ghana and Mali, about the Asante Confederation, about the empire of Songhai, about Kanem and Bornu, the Yoruba states, about the Benin, the state Bamileke, about the ethnic groups in the territory of Gabon, about the states of Congo and Zimbabwe and about the South African tribes. The chapters also deal with the way of gaining a livelihood, with divination and magic, with African music, with the transport on and along the rivers. A small dictionary follows of most important expressions, where the authors elaborate on references given in the text itself. A chronological chart ends the book.

This book resembles similar publications in W. Germany, Great Britain and Switzerland, devoted to various world civilizations. It may be compared, e.g., with the book by Peter Garlake "Afrika und seine Königreiche", Luzern 1975. In aspect to its text though, the book is rather unpretentious in comparison with all other publications. On the other hand, its advantage lies in the outstanding photographs of art items as well as of the conditions the Africans of today live in. These photographs are of course taken with the aspect to "tradition" and therefore only show the survival of "the old", or its continuity in modern African society. Many of these photographs offer unusual views of things and places, already known.

A certain problem concerns the division and contents of the book, e. g. authors devote a separate subchapter to the ancient empire of Meroe and Napata, while omitting the whole of Northeast Africa, where proofs of the ancient Axum empire can be found. A chapter about Madagascar is also missing. The text and accompanying descriptions of photographs show minor faults, e. g. confused descriptions of photographs, faulty descriptions a. s. o. (see p. 42, 81, 87 and more).

J. Kandert

Vansina, Jan: *Art History in Africa. An Introduction to Method.* London — New York 1984, publ. Longman, 233 pages, 57 black and white photographs, 22 drawings, 15 maps and plans.

Vansina, Jan: *Oral Tradition as History.* Madison 1985, The University of Wisconsin Press, 258 pages.

With his new book "Art History in Africa", the renowned specialist in African history and culture has fulfilled the task which African studies tradition puts before all outstanding representatives of this branch. So after Frobenius, Fagg, Willet and others, also Vansina tried to offer an intelligible interpretation of his own conception of African art, to point out its historical roots and fit them into the mosaic of world-wide, but mainly European art. Not omitting the pedagogical aspect, he frequently refers in his text to various errors, handed down and repeated in books, devoted to African art (see e. g. the motif "hand" mentioned in the 3rd chapter, and others). Vansina's great merit is his conception of Africa as a whole, not concentrating on so called "Black Africa" only, as is usually the case in most publications of this kind. This enables him to clarify certain questions concerning the mutual influencing of various cultures, a. s. o.

Vansina dedicated his life most of all to the ethnical groups of Zaïre, mainly the Kuba, and therefore it is not surprising that in support of his arguments, he mainly uses concrete examples originating in the Central African region. In his choice of material he does not hide being the historian, summing up all (or almost all) contemporary information of documented African art older than the 19th century. Beside his archaeological finds, he introduces the reader to the oldest objects of African art preserved in European museums, private collections — some of which published for the first time in this way. Searching for historical roots, he not only uses three-

-dimensional objects, but also written information taken from archives, but in some cases from contemporary travelbooks. Although these examples have really only an illustrating function, and Vansina does not aim to give a survey of African art, they are described and analysed thoroughly. By this approach the author enables the reader to recognize the illustrated problem to its full extent.

Looking at the contents of the book, we may say that Vansina did not avoid any of the problems which most of his predecessors also tried to solve. In his first, the introductory chapter, he treats the historical frame of African art and the history of African culture on a general level. The 2nd chapter concerns problems of evaluating three-dimensional documents of art, determination of their provenance, questions concerning date, falsifications, incomplete documentation, and such ("Identification"). The 4th chapter "Media and Techniques" offers a survey of various techniques in production and décor, and at the same time points at possibilities, offered to the artists by individual techniques. The 3rd chapter "Society, the Mother of Art" is devoted to the social importance of art items and the thereby caused problems. The 5th part "Style" begins with passages, devoted to one of the most studied problems of African art during the last decade — the question of personal, local, regional and ethnic styles. The next two parts are devoted to the same problem ("The Interpretation of Icons", "Culture and Art"), although the author puts stress mainly on historical succession and persistence of styles. The 8th chapter "The Creative Process" is mainly devoted to the creators themselves. The author explains the process of work, the origin of new elements and new varieties of style, change in individual style and the like. The 9th chapter ("The Creative Process: Foreign Inputs") takes up with the previous one and deals mainly with the problem of possible influence of foreign cultural traditions on individual African traditions in artistic styles. The book ends with the last two chapters ("Wider Perspectives", "Art in History"), where the author Vansina contemplates on possibilities to use the acquired knowledge of traditional African art for reconstructing the development of art of the African Continent in general, and the development of culture (and art) of the individual regions and ethnical groups on a concrete level.

Almost a quarter of a century after having tried to solve the subject in his book "Oral Tradition" Vansina

returns to the problem, one of the hardest to be solved by every historian, concerned with a region whose population did not know, nor made the slightest use of written notices. The problem is, how much can be believed and to what extent can information be used, which was handed down verbally in one or the other society — the answer should be provided by the book "Oral Tradition as History".

In his book, an exemplary textbook of methodical work in "oral historical tradition", the author considers stage by stage every possible aspect and critical approach, making the verification of historical credibility in oral tradition possible. In my opinion he omits no offered possibility nor smallest province for further research. He concerns himself with "personal testimony" and other sources of historical facts, with patterns in which those facts are handed down, occasions for them to be forwarded, the proper composition of traditional information, also with the effect of society and cultural conditions on such facts, if you like on those handing them down. He is interested in mutual construction of traditional information — in the possibility of borrowing a theme, its "migration" and the like. He supports his analysis with examples, mainly from Africa, but also those of North and South Americas, from selected areas in Asia and Oceania.

It is a pity that he did not concern himself to a larger extent with folkloristic works devoted to Europe, although some such examples — e. g. from Yugoslavia — are mentioned. European folklore studies during their development of by now almost 200 years, had to settle their problem of historical authenticity of folkloristic compositions, handed down verbally (stories, tales, legends, historical songs, and the like) and in addition it worked out a method of research in mutual relationship of two worlds: the world of written facts and that of oral traditional information. In that way it also reached a similar critical, or pessimistic opinion, showing in the closing chapter of Vasina's book.

In spite of the not too optimistic conclusion, concerning the authenticity of oral historical tradition, it is good that such a book was published. In it mainly the African oral tradition is put into its proper dimensions, often uncritical, accepted literally and in the end even overestimated. It is also certain to find a larger circle of readers than a special publication by European folklorist. That is why the "Oral Tradition as History" should become the textbook of every research worker, being or

wanting to become concerned with the history of Africa or the history of African culture.

I. Kandert

Schindler, Helmut: *Die Reiterstämme des Gran Chaco*. Berlin 1983, Dietrich Reimer Verlag (Völkerkundliche Abhandlungen, Vol. VIII), 242 pages, 19 photos and 6 maps. Resumé in German, English and Portuguese.

H. Schindler's study is, on a general level, devoted to the problem of the cultural impact and its development in the perspective to a longer period (17th to 19th century). On a more concrete level it deals with the cultural and social importance of the Indian tribes of the Gran Chaco acquiring horses. The very erudite work is mainly based on information by three reporters — Jesuit missionaries. They were Martin Dobrizhoffer, Florian Paucke and José Sanches Labrador. All three of them active in the Gran Chaco during the 18th ctry, they already served as reporters for older ethnographers (e. g. Métreux).

After introductory chapters, dealing with historical sources, the characteristics of nature environment and the history of Spanish and Latin-American horsebreeds, a detailed subchapter about the historical topography of the given region follows ("Die Siedlungsgebiete der Chaco Stämme"). Here the author observes and describes the territory of the individual tribes in the perspective of time, watches the changes of tribe-dwellings and gives a well arranged summary of all accessible information.

The following chapter, concerned with the problem of determining the moment or period, when the various tribes of the Gran Chaco began to appreciate horses as cultural item, gives assurance that there is a perceivable difference in the period, when horses were accepted by eastern and western tribes. Unfortunately the author does not try to explain the reason for this difference. A group of chapters follows, dealing with Schindler's concern over material culture and the degree of its influence. He observes these three problems in the fields of riding technique, riding outfits, innovations in such outfits, their new forms connected with making use of defeated or killed horses, breeding horses and ways of hunting wild and run-wild horses.

The following group of chapters deals with the relationship of material cultures and social organization. Here we find subchapters about war-ethics, about social

grading, the way and aim of waging war, about manners for trading horses. Above social problems though stands the information about the sphere of spiritual culture. The last but one chapter gives a survey of the wars between Indians and Whites during the years 1600 to 1800. The last chapter is a treatise about the place of horses in the ideology of the individual tribes.

The author, mainly concerned with the question about breeding horses in the Gran Chaco, gives an account of it to the readers. His work does not solve any problem, it gives an account of the state of affairs and provides rich material on facts, being the asset of the study. No one has dealt with the breeding of horses in the Gran Chaco as fully and thoroughly, although several authors mention it.

The quoted figures are interesting giving the impression of speed for adapting horses leading to the instinctive question, whether a certain "mythicization" of horses, known from early Spanish sources, was not a mere propaganda trick of the conquerors. The work certainly shows that the Indians were adaptable and accessible to new influences and technique, which they speedily made their own. The work also carries proof that the so-called isolated development of Indian groups, controlled by white colonization in the 19th century, were by far not as isolated, and that, in the early times of Spanish and Portuguese colonization, meaning the 17th and 18th ctry, we must consider all South American Indians, if not directly, then surely negotiated under the influence of European cultures. In those parts of the world they were introduced by religious orders, whose influence was not limited to spiritual spheres only. We also get acquainted with the problem of war and of waging wars as an important factor in the exchange of cultural possessions.

For more particulars I am able to add the exact dates of one of the before-mentioned three reporters: Florian Paucke (also Pauke or Pauschke) who was born on 24 Sept. 1719 in Silesia and died on 14 July 1779 in Jindřichův Hradec, in South Bohemia. (I thank O. Kašpar for this information.) The long lance might have had its origin in the Spanish or Portuguese weapons of the 16th and the first half of the 17th ctry. The foot-soldier's pike had a length of 6 metres, the one of a horseman was 4 to 5 metres long. Both may have been taken over together with a horseman's equipment.

O. Kandertová

Rafael L. López Valdés: *Componentes africanos en el etnos cubano*. Ciencias Sociales, La Habana, 1985, 252 páginas.

El estudio de las raíces del elemento africano en el ambiente caribeño, o más estrechamente, cubano, constituye una larga y continua tradición en la historia de la etnografía cubana, que encontró su expresión no solamente en el trabajo de los representantes de la corriente literaria negrista (Ramón Guirao, Rómulo Lachatañeré, Lydia Cabrera y otros) — y su continuador actual principal, folklorista y poeta Samuel Feijóo — sino también en la gran obra del «padre de la etnografía cubana», antropólogo, folklorista e historiador Fernando Ortiz. La línea iniciada por Ortiz y representada principalmente por sus trabajos afro-cubanistas, fue desarrollada por la siguiente generación de autores cubanos y sus estudios publicados en las páginas de la revista «ETNOLOGIA Y FOLKLORE» editada por la Academia de Ciencias Cubana en la década de sesenta, así como publicaciones independientes. Entre los trabajos recientes señalemos ante todo el significativo estudio del profesor de la Universidad de la Habana Enrique Sosa Rodríguez dedicado a la importante secta afrocubana de ñañigos.¹

El aporte más reciente al tema desarrollado podemos considerar la publicación reseñada, un resumen de estudios publicados anteriormente en diferentes revistas por uno de los más destacados representantes de la etnografía cubana actual, Rafael L. López Valdés.

Graduado de la Universidad de Lomonosov de Moscú, alumno sobresaliente de los estudiosos soviéticos, académico I. R. Grigulevich y Dr. Yu. P. Averkieva, trabaja en el campo de etnografía en la Academia de Ciencias cubana desde el año 1962. Actualmente está frente al proyecto etnográfico más grandioso de Cuba, ATLAS ETNOGRÁFICO DE CUBA.

En su libro, Rafael L. López recoge nueve estudios que tratan, según indica el propio título de la publicación, sobre algunos de los problemas básicos del papel del elemento africano en la formación de la nación cubana.

Los primeros dos estudios están dedicados más bien a los aspectos etno-históricos,² principalmente la periodización de la época esclavista en Cuba, registro e interpretación de los datos básicos relacionados con la evolución de la esclavitud y comercio de los esclavos.

El tercer estudio representa un aporte valioso para despejar el papel que ha jugado y juega el componente africano en la historia étnica de Cuba.³

Los siguientes cuatro trabajos tratan sobre en análisis de los diferentes fenómenos afrocubanos concretos;⁴ el penúltimo tiene un carácter más general y teórico, está dedicado al análisis y característica de los cultos de origen africano en Cuba.⁵

Finalmente, el último artículo enmarca en cierta forma todo el compendio y fue dedicado al legado científico del ya mencionado Fernando Ortíz.⁶

El compendio reseñado de estudios de Rafael L. López Valdés, autor cuya interesante conferencia dedicada a la cultura afrocubana tuvimos la oportunidad de oír en el Instituto de Etnografía y Folklore de la Academia de Ciencias Checoslovaca hace unos años, indica claramente la orientación de la etnografía cubana actual.

O. Kašpar

Notas

- 1 Enrique Sosa Rodríguez, *Los Ñañigos*, La Habana 1983.
- 2 *Hacia una periodización de la historia de la esclavitud en Cuba. Cronología de hechos relativos al régimen esclavista en Cuba y al comercio de esclavos con destino a la Isla.*
- 3 *Problemas del estudio de los componentes africanos en la historia étnica de Cuba.*
- 4 *El lenguaje de los signos de Ifá y sus antecedentes transculturales en Cuba. Las «firmas» de los Santos en Palo Monte. El complejo mitológico de los jimaguas en la santería de Cuba. La Sociedad Secreta Abakuá en un grupo trabajadores portuarios.*
- 5 *Elementos para una caracterización de los cultos populares de origen africano en Cuba.*
- 6 *Expresiones materialistas en la obra científica de don Fernando Ortíz.*

Lilian Scheffler: *Grupos indígenas de México. Ubicación geográfica, organización social y política, economía, religión y costumbres.* Panorama Editorial, México 1986, 250 páginas.

La publicación objeto de la presente anotación constituye un manual de carácter estadístico-demográfico altamente sinóptico y de gran utilidad. Comprende todas las etnias indígenas que se conservan hasta nuestros

días en México. La división básica en cuatro grupos respeta totalmente la clasificación etnolingüística: joca-meridional, otomangue, nahua-cuitlateca, mayatotonaco.

La información acerca de las tribus que pertenecen a los grupos señalados está organizada según un esquema estable: datos generales, economía, religión, creencia, ritos, estructura social y política. En su conjunto, este interesante manual recoge cincuenta y cuatro tribus de los indios mexicanos.

El trabajo está complementado por una bibliografía relativamente amplia de literatura especializada (pp. 243—250), que facilita la orientación en otras fuentes de esta especialidad (principalmente las mexicanas).

El librito de Lilian Scheffler, autora, entre otros, de una selección de mitos y cuentos mexicanos (Cuentos y leyendas de México. Tradición oral de grupos indígenas y mestizos, 1985⁴), sin lugar a duda, resultará de mucho interés a todo el que quiera conocer la vida actual de los indios mexicanos.

O. Kašpar

Kazuo Takagi: *Shoku kara mita Nihonshi* (Japanese History from the Point of View of Food), Mebaesha, Tokyo 1986—1987. Volume I: 238 pp., 61 illustrations (black and white photos, drawings), 33 charts, Volume II: 271 pp., 69 illustrations, 43 charts.

Kazuo Takagi, a long-time specialist and educationalist in the field of dietetics, has already published several treatises on the history of eating habits in the Far East. First part of Volume I of the discussed book deals with the Ancient Times from prehistory to the Nara period, the second one with the Middle Ages from the Heian period to the Age of Warring States (Sengoku jidai). K. Takagi's work is based on the thesis that the generally accepted image of the Japanese as an almost exclusively vegetable-eating nation is historically wrong. After years of research in the field of history, archeology, geology, ethnology etc. and after a detailed study of old records as well as literary works, K. Takagi assembled ample proof supporting his theory claiming that from ancient times the Japanese used to eat a great deal of animal food, not only meat but also dairy products. Since the reign of emperor Ōjin (270?—310) when cattle and horses have been imported for the first time (from Korean Peninsula) to Japan, the archi-

pelago's central power, i.e. the state of Yamatai, became a cattle-raising country. This was only natural for a state where upper social strata were originally of nomadic racial stock accustomed to meat diet. According to K. Takagi the Japanese nation formed from 3 (or 4) ethnic components, which during the first centuries A.D. for some time may have lived side by side on the archipelago: 1. the Jōmon culture people (hunters), 2. the Yayoi culture people (who introduced rice-cultivation techniques to the archipelago), 3. the Kiba tribe (the so-called Horse Riders) and probably also 4. Ainu ethnic group (surviving in small numbers to our days in the northern parts of Japan).

The Kiba race which reached Japan from the Korean Peninsula around 300 A.D. had a great mobility and in a rather short time brought the earlier inhabitants under their domination. As rulers of the greater part of the country they established the Yamatai state. They lived on rice taken by force from the oppressed farming population of the Yayoi culture, and they hunted but being originally a Siberian tribe raising pasturing cattle they longed for beef. After successfully importing necessary head of cattle and after breeding new herds the ruling classes of the Japanese society enjoyed rich diet of meat, rice as well as dairy products. In 675 A.D., however, emperor Temmu's edict prohibited killing and eating animals. This prohibition is usually explained as an act resulting from Buddhist beliefs but K. Takagi presents a different interpretation. According to his opinion the edict was the expression of an effort to encourage the cattle- and horse-raising and its main objective was the protection of cattle. This interpretation is based, for example, on the fact that 65 years later, during the reign of emperor Shōmu, another similar edict was issued stating that although horses and cattle worked instead of people and their killing was forbidden there were still peasants who slaughtered them. As a matter of fact, not only meat and dairy products but also cow-hides — something ritually unclean — were requested by the government and collected from the peasants in the form of taxes.

During the time of emperor Daigo's reign (897—930) the dairy farming became particularly flourishing. This emperor even took his imperial name after the most prized dairy delicacy of the day (*daigo* was a sort of mixture of cream and butter). According to the author Japanese aristocrats of the Heian period used to

consume a considerable quantity of dairy products. In the province of Yamashiro a Buddhist temple called Daigoji was built and in the whole country 27 places used to produce *so* (whey). The annual dairy activities are mentioned in Engi Shiki (927), a well-known collection of rites, customs and annual events. K. Takagi included also short but interesting linguistic remarks (concerning the ethymology, the role of Korean language among the Yamatai aristocracy etc.) into his book.

The main reason why the Japanese turned into an almost exclusively vegetable- (and fish-) eating nation the author finds in long decades and centuries of disastrous civil wars — first of them raging toward the end of the Heian period and at the beginning of the Kamakura period, the second one during the 15th and 16th centuries. During the wartime raising of horses indispensable for feudal warriors was given preference over the cattle-raising. Moreover, all these wars brought along enormous waste of cow-hides necessary for armour and helmets and herds of cattle have been gradually extinguished. And in a few generations the knowledge of cattle-raising and dairy farming has been forgotten by the decimated peasant population.

Volume II deals with the Premodern Age, i.e. Edo period, and with the Modern Age since the Meiji era up to the thirties of the 20th century. Many valuable data concerning calamities, starvation, diseases, contacts with foreign countries and their influence on Japanese eating habits, as well as history of basic foodstuffs and popular dishes are presented. In this volume K. Takagi continues his polemic with the general conviction that the Japanese started to eat meat only after Meiji Restoration, during the years of Japan's westernization. He mentions records dating from the Edo period which prove that since around 1700 in Edo city there were shops not only selling flesh of animals but also serving meat-dishes. Among animals sold and prepared in such shops wild boar, fox, bear, otter, chamois, deer, hare and also horse could be found. For fear of violating Buddhist law the meat of these animals used to be called „whale caught in mountains“. The second part of Volume II deals a.o., with health condition of the Japanese population during the country's industrialization era and with many social problems related to food.

Kazuo Takagi's book complemented by an interesting and instructive assortment of photographs and other illustrations represents a rich source of statistical

data and detailed information on eating habits in Japan throughout centuries. Its original and novel approach to the problems of Japanese life style since ancient times has undoubtedly an inspirational value for further research in this field of Japanese history.

V. Winkelhöferová