

collected, when and by whom, whether there were earlier versions known or collected, the narrator and the environment, nor is there an indication of what principle governed the selection and arrangement of the tales. The foreword, where such information might have been provided, is dedicated to the definition of the genre of the folk tale, the blend of realistic detail with fantastic elements that is peculiar to the folk tale, and some apt remarks on the linguistic and stylistic peculiarities of Romanian folklore--unfortunately lost on those who do not know Romanian.

There are two great merits to this volume, however. One is that it makes the rich but little known folklore of Romania known to wider circles of readers. The other is that the poetic quality of the English translation makes it stand out as a remarkable book on its own. An illustration is provided by the oral formula which follows mention of Ileana Cosinzeana, the embodiment of all that is splendid and desirable. An alliterative, rhyming couplet in Romanian translates literally as "young spray, blossom of the garden," and in some tales there is also the formula "a flower sings in her braids." In Prof. Carianu's version, the formula becomes "a blossom's singing in her hair, nine realms listen to strains fair," which recaptures the rhyme, the formulaic element and adds additional information about Ileana's beauty.

Defiant Maids and Stubborn Farmers: Tradition and Invention in Mende Story Performance. By Donald Cosentino. New York and London: Cambridge University Press, 1982. Pp. 229, bibliography, index, charts, half tones, photographs, and maps. Cloth, U.K. £22.50, U.S., \$39.50.

Reviewed by Enoch Timpunza Mvula

The primary concern of Donald Cosentino's book is to present a structural analysis of Mende folk narrative performance, which he does elegantly, influenced by Claude Lévi-Strauss's and Harold Scheub's structural approaches. Structural, contextual, and functional approaches cross-fertilize each other so that the style of storytelling of his 'informants,' their narrative compositional techniques,

and the functions of the narratives are examined within the sociocultural context of contemporary Mende community life in Sierra Leone. He questions the prevalent premise that traditional societies are 'closed' societies. He maintains that like other elements of culture, storytelling is constructed upon a "law of contrarities" (p.33) which forms "the mainspring for the startling innovation at the heart of this storytelling tradition" (p. 2). Although the trickster narrative **domei** is performed to entertain, below the surface structure of these performances, there is an intellectual argument and debate which one can discern. Predominant in these narratives are the woman figure of the Defiant Maid, Yombo, and the 'everyman' Stubborn Farmer, Kpana.

The book is divided into six parts. Chapter one gives a lucid description of the Mende, a West African people living in the southern part of Sierra Leone around Matru. He provides the reader with the generic terms the Mende employ to describe history (**njepe**), dilemma narratives (**wovei**), mythology (**domesia**), and trickster narratives (**domei**). However, he does not appear to differentiate between tale and myth and uses the terms **domesia** and **domei** interchangeably. An inclusion of other forms of talk, such as proverbs and riddles, related to folk narrative performance, could have strengthened this chapter.

Chapter two deals with Mende mimesis. He examines the interplay between art, form, content and meaning. It is clear in this chapter that he works on the assumption that artistic forms of expression reflect a people's culture. For example, he notes that Mende folk narrative reflects social relationships such as familial conflicts. He highlights the Mende relationship between co-wives and the ambiguous role the senior wife plays (pp. 18-19).

Chapter three covers Cosentino's theoretical orientation. He uses the term "image" (coined by Harold Scheub to describe the structural narrative unit of the Xhosa **ntsoni**) as a structural unit which narrators employ to transform characters and plots in narratives to create novel stories. He prefers to use this structural unit because of "its visualization of action in an oral perfor-

mance, to the tableau which are created by means of a performer's songs, gestures, body movements, tone of voice--by the whole panoply of non-verbal devices that she employs to amplify the words of her creations" (p. 37).

The elements of a folk narrative performance in the Mende society, such as verbal conventions, music, dance, theatrics, place and time of performance, are covered in Chapter four. The communications theoretical framework is used is by no means a new conception. Richard Bauman wrote on performance keying devices in 1972 and 1975 in his work on verbal art as performance and Barbara Babcock (1977) has shown the role of metanarration in storytelling as a means of framing verbal art performance, with "specific reference to the performer, the audience, the message, the code, and the channel or medium of expression" (pp.66-67). Strikingly, none of these works have been included in Cosentino's references. It would have been enlightening if there had been a discussion of the differences and similarities between his approach and that of other scholars who have dealt with verbal art performance.

Chapters five and six have analyses of Defiant Maids and Stubborn Farmers. In Chapter five, the author examines the creative performance of three women, and attempts to give a picture of each woman's life history. He claims that folklorists have tended not to include life histories and interpersonal relationships of the 'informants'--performers in their studies (p. 161). Interestingly, the Russian repertoire investigation of the **byliny**, Juha Pentikainen's Finnish repertoire study, and Linda Dègh's **Folktales and Society** (1969) Hungarian repertoire work have not been cited in his book. More information on the depth of the repertoire and life history of the performers would have given more material to appreciating and interpreting the narratives. The inclusion of narrative variants, photographs, and musical notes add to the book's quality. However, Cosentino overlooks the performer's intent and makes a misleading statement that the narratives function merely to entertain and to debate (pp. 88, 160, 203). Further, to conclude that the Mende narrative performers use fake ending formulas in the form of a testimonial, a moral, or an etiology (p. 91), is misleading. Although

these narratives were collected from induced situations, the author's interpretations could have been more precise by analyzing the content of the tales and information obtained from the tradition bearers. When Mariatu Sandi, in her metanarration style addresses her audience: "This story I'm telling, I tell it for us fornicators; I'm telling it for any other people than we who truly commit adultery. It's our story I'm telling. Also, we whose ears are closed, we who don't agree to any truthful talk, we closed, eared people, and we insatiable fornicators..." (p.161), she surely performs her story with the intent to warn, educate, to name behavior and attitudes, and to entertain. Similarly, the ending formulas are culturally functional.

At the end of each of the last four chapters is an appendix of narratives. Only the last two seem to be well organized thematically, and various tales in various chapters seem out of place. Translating stories from vernacular languages to English is a battle between scholars and publishers. Publishers would like to print perfect English syntax while scholars would like to preserve as much as they can of the flavor of the original language as well as the authenticity of the story. Reading through the narratives, one is struck by the amount of trouble Cosentino has taken to depict the storytelling situation. He gives the time, date, place, and context of the story, and manages to translate it in such a way that it still has some flavor of the original language. Despite its limitations, this book is a welcome addition and important contribution to the study of folklore.

The Navajo Atlas: Environments, Resources, People, and History of the Diné Bikeyah. By James M. Goodman. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1982. Pp. x + 109, bibliography, index, maps.

Reviewed by Tim Cochrane

The Navajo Atlas is an attractive compedium of forty-eight topical maps weakly supported by introductory texts. Unfortunately, the map topics (and thus the book) will be of little interest to scholars with a non-empirical study focus. For example, those scholars interested