

PAKISTAN

- MAHRUKH YOUSUF. *Musical Instruments of Pakistan: A Catalogue*. 1989. 27 pages, photographs, drawings, map. Paper, no price.
- MAHRUKH YOUSUF. *Folk Motifs of Pakistan*. 1990. x+192 pages. Color plates, drawings, glossary, bibliography. Hardcover, no price. ISBN 969-468-000-X.
- MAHRUKH YOUSUF. *Folk Jewellery of Pakistan: A Catalogue*. 1990. 61 pages. Maps, drawings, photographs. Paper, no price.
- MAHRUKH YOUSUF. *Wood Works of Pakistan: A Catalogue*. 1991. 60 pages. Maps, drawings, photographs. Paper, no price.
- All of the above are available from Lok Virsa, P. O. Box No. 1184. Islamabad, Pakistan.

Mahrugh Yousuf has provided us with four volumes that will serve as much-needed guides to the Lok Virsa Museum and Archive in Islamabad. The volumes—covering, as the titles suggest, the subjects of musical instruments, folk motifs, jewelry, and woodwork—catalog the museum's collection and supply brief, informative write-ups, numerous drawings, and several photographs. The lists and physical descriptions of the items, local names, and pronunciations may be the strongest feature of the entire series. Although each of the four catalogs is useful in itself, the four seem to complement each other, each supplementing the other to form a picture of Lok Virsa as a whole.

Musical Instruments of Pakistan, the first catalog, opens, like the others, with an introduction to Lok Virsa, its collection of artifacts, and its library, programs, recording equipment, and educational materials. Yousuf catalogs each instrument in the collection by accession number and describes its place of origin, its shape, its sound, its material structure, and how and when it is played. This section of the series is particularly strong. Yousuf lists six categories of instrument: percussion, wind ("blow"), plucked string, bow, rhythm, and keyboard.

The second catalog, *Folk Motifs of Pakistan*, is intended as a complement to other works on folkcraft, adding "a context to their content." To this end Yousuf presents seven hundred line drawings and ten color plates, and categorizes the motifs used in several art forms in order to trace their origins and historical significance. There appears to be a romantic attempt in this volume to preserve the past and to find connections between yesterday and today—to show that the past lives on in modern art forms, as when he says, "Folk Pakistan comprises the vast majority of rural and pastoral people who inhabit the country side" (5). Modern folklore scholarship has evolved away from this way of thinking, and now recognizes the creation of new and evolving traditions among urban artists too. It no longer accepts the theory, embraced here, that only an illiterate or semiliterate artist living in a rural area can represent folklore.

This catalog supplies some very helpful maps and lists, although none of these is listed in a table of contents anywhere in the four books. One map (7) shows what crafts can be found in which area of Pakistan; another indicates all of the country's craft museums. The author also supplies a list giving the most common motifs and what they symbolize.

Following his general first section on motifs, in which he lists the various types by name, era, and location, Yousuf presents several sections on the use of the motifs in particular mediums such as terracotta, wood, metal, and textile. Each section has an

introduction, followed by pages of line drawings of the motifs as classified by name, era, and location. This volume is perhaps the strongest of the series, providing much useful information for archaeologists, historians, and museum-goers in general.

The third catalog, *Folk Jewellery of Pakistan*, again indicates Lok Virsa's romantic search for folklore in the old and the rural. The focus of the catalog (and of the museum's collection itself) is on antique jewelry and on jewelry made in the countryside. Ignoring the modern plunge into gold, it remains fixed on silver. Yousuf mentions that jewelry is the "pride and passion of folk women," and a "mark of prestige and social status" (3). More could have been made, however, of the tremendous importance of jewelry in weddings, its use in bride-prices, and its role as a form of security provided by parents to their daughters in case of divorce. Many, many stories revolve around jewelry, and it seems almost negligent to present these items as devoid of any function.

Yousuf is best at pure physical description, as he demonstrates in this volume with a list of five techniques for crafting jewelry, accompanied by drawings of the various tools employed. He also provides a very useful list of 120 items of jewelry, each with a brief description and a transliterated name to aid pronunciation. Modern folklore researchers might have appreciated some note as to the function of the items, however—certain pieces of jewelry have very specific purposes, and exist only for specific people or occasions. It could be mentioned, for instance, that the *kachkol* (#53) is a begging bowl often associated with religious mendicants. There are several blatant spelling errors in this volume (and the others as well), and some errors of fact. A *lawangin* (140), for example, is made of *lawang* (clove), not cardamom.

The last catalog, *Wood Works of Pakistan*, opens with an introduction discussing the symbolism of wood, the types of wood found in Pakistan, woodworking and carpentry tools, carpentry techniques, woodwork ornamentation, and ornamentation techniques (including carving, inlay, and lacquerwork). Although this essay too is laden with errors in spelling and grammar, it is nevertheless a strong and useful piece of work.

Following the introduction is a section on architectural items, in which Yousuf describes how house plans evolved from single- to multiple-room designs. He notes the ornamental carvings on pillars, beams, and doors, and even suggests the meaning of the horseshoe or horse head appearing on main gates (it might have been a nice touch here to relate the beliefs of an actual person). There are also sections describing agricultural tools, artisan's tools, large furniture, household accessories, and such miscellaneous items as chessboards, masks, guns, and bird traps.

The final section of the catalog discusses some of the folk traditions associated with such wood-crafted items as spinning wheels, statues, butter churns, spears, communal eating bowls, and chairs. Here Yousuf describes some of the traditional uses and beliefs connected with these items, although it is once again misleadingly implied that the items are only used in rural areas by the "folk." Each section of this catalog too includes lists of the items in the archive, their local names, the areas they come from, and their accession numbers.

The consistent lack of "folk" behind the "lore" remains the weakest aspect of all four catalogs. The presentation of material culture nowadays generally includes mention of the artisans who created the items. Yousuf bypasses this entirely, ignoring individual people, styles, and preferences. Drawings of faceless artisans at work make us wonder who these artisans are, what their family occupations might be, and what their social standing is. Items are described in the passive voice, almost as if to avoid

having to mention the presence of a human hand behind them. Statues "are made" and "are erected." "The spindle is fixed." "The ball of cotton or wool is held." "Yarn is spun." These are only a few examples of how the "folk" are sadly excluded from this presentation.

With this one reservation, however, the four books remain a useful tool for viewers of the museum's items.

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ARABIA

MARZOLPH, ULRICH. *Arabia ridens: Die humoristische Kurzprosa der frühen adab-Literatur im internationalen Traditionsgeflecht* [Arabia ridens: The humoristic short prose of early *adab* literature in the international web of traditions]. Band 1: Darstellung [Exposition]. Band 2: Material [Material]. Frankfurter Wissenschaftliche Beiträge, Kulturwissenschaftliche Reihe Band 21/1-2. Frankfurt am Main, Germany: Vittorio Klostermann, 1992. Band 1: xiii+295 pages, indices. Band 2: vii+417 pages, indices of quotations from the Quran, types and motifs, sources, subjects, names, bibliography. Cloth DM 180.00 (both volumes); ISBN 3-465-02550-4. (In German)

The comparative investigation of literature is to a large extent Eurocentric; the literatures of other high cultures that for centuries interacted with each other and with European antique and medieval literature are now on the periphery of our attention. *Arabia Ridens* is a contribution to the broadening of our literary-historic horizons, presenting a section of medieval Arabic and Persian literature to the Western audience. Being medieval, this literature is of course in written form; nevertheless, its close interrelation with the oral tradition, commonly called "folklore," is conspicuous (see the partial type and motif indices in vol. 1, 276-77 and vol. 2, 269-70).

The study under review is a first attempt to bring to the attention of the literary comparatist the "short genres" (jokes, anecdotes, parables, wisdom sayings, numskull tales, etc.) from the prose sections of the *adab* anthologies (see the *Encyclopedia of Islam*, s.v. *adab*). In the first volume the author presents several comparative historical studies of literary works and themes, examining the changes, assimilations, and acculturations the materials went through as they moved from one culture to another through space and time. The author avoids focusing on European literature; he centers instead on Arabic literature in order to demonstrate the role of medieval *adab* literature in the development of short humoristic written folk prose in the region from Europe to India. This is an important contribution to the discussion of how the Euro-Afro-Asian "literary area" (encompassing Christian Europe, Muslim North Africa, the Near East, Central Asia, and India) evolved. Now it is up to the literary theoreticians to work on the materials Marzolph has presented us with: to describe their formal and semantic literary qualities; to define the genres involved; to determine the place of these genres in the literary system of their culture as delimited in time and space; to develop a classificatory scheme for the various literary types within the framework of their respective genres; to examine the relations of the Arabic system to the literary