

diversity of texts and sample sentences, which vividly depict the life the author enjoyed in the village as well as that of the Limbu villagers themselves, and the detailed explanations of the meaning and use of many lexemes, especially verbs, both in the grammatical part and the appended glossary. I might add here that Dr. van Driem has also completed a grammar of Dumi, another Tibeto-Burman language of eastern Nepal, and this work is due to be published in the Mouton Grammar Library later this year.

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HESTON, W. L. and MUMTAZ NASIR. *The Bazaar of the Storytellers*. Islamabad, Pakistan: Lok Virsa Publishing House, n.d., 349 pages. Illustrations, glossary, bibliography. Hardcover Rs150.00.

The Bazaar of the Storytellers is a selection of Pashto *badala*, romantic and heroic legends and folk tales. The stories were translated into English by the authors from recordings of the Pashto verses sung by professional minstrel-bards. Some of the recordings used had been produced commercially and purchased in the “Bazaar of the Storytellers” in Peshawar, capital of Pakistan’s Northwest Frontier Province. Here the art of storytelling, the authors say, still flourishes. Other tapes were recordings of private performances especially commissioned by the publisher.

Pathan *qisa-khani*, or oral storytelling, beyond simple entertainment, has long been a medium both for transmission and reinforcement of cultural values and norms. Themes reflect the idealized structure and organization of the traditional patrilineal and patrilocal Pathan society. Sentiments, ideals, obligations, and conflicts reflecting this structure, the authors say, are depicted in their compilation of tales.

The Bazaar of the Storytellers is divided into two parts. The first, entitled “Romances Old and New,” focuses on the related themes of love, jealousy, marriage, and elopement. For individual Pathans, as members of corporate kin groups, marriages are arranged, and often the couple has no voice in the matter. Such marriages represent alliances based on the mutual economic and sociopolitical interests of the respective contracting kin groups. Traditional Pathan social organization, unlike those of the modern West, makes no accommodation for marriages based on “romantic love.” When such feelings do arise between a man and a woman, Pathans view them

with wonder and amazement. The *junun*, or madness, engendered by such yearnings of unrequited love are amongst the common themes of traditional stories, where lovers, unable to be together in life, are finally united in death. This is the central theme of the stories which constitute the first part of *The Bazaar of the Storytellers*. By far the most interesting of these texts is "Adam Khan and Durkhanai," the first story in this section of the book, which is a variant of one of the oldest known Pashto tales.

The second part of the book, called "Battles for Honor, God and Country," incorporates stories extolling the virtues of bravery in warfare, self-sacrifice, and patriotism. Included in this section are historical legends depicting such events as the siege of Chitral, and the anti-British sentiments of the colonial days. These are interesting texts for comparative analysis with extant British accounts of the same events. Similarly, the account of a 1930 anti-British uprising, in Peshawar's Bazaar of the Storytellers itself, is a valuable text documenting popular patriotic sentiments.

The authors have sought to provide an "insider's" view of Pathan society and culture, as depicted by indigenous songsters and storytellers. In this they have had to surmount at least two major difficulties. One is the very task of translating Pashto narrative poetry, which has been composed by generations of bards and is designed to be sung by professional storytellers to the accompaniment of their music. Another is how to choose from amongst a heterogeneous body of materials (comprising tales of indigenous, Iranian, and South Asian origin), those most representative of traditional Pathan values. To some extent Heston and Nasir have succeeded in overcoming these difficulties. Their translations are fairly straightforward, and their selected texts do give us some glimpse of Pathan values in respect to love, marriage, kinship, honor, courage, and patriotism.

The introductory remarks which precede each tale, the commentaries on the sources of the stories, endnotes elaborating unfamiliar aspects of the tales, literary and historical references, and a brief glossary together constitute a valuable component of the work.

One of the principal shortcomings of the book is the authors' reliance on secondary sources (i.e., already edited and transcribed tapes), which lack important details of the Pathan storytelling context. For example, with the exception of brief introductory remarks, little is told of the Bazaar of the Storytellers or of village settings where the storytellers perform; this would have provided the contemporary contexts in which the tales are sung. Still less is told of the storyteller-musicians themselves. These bards, masters of their art, skilled musicians and players upon the imaginations of their audiences, are able to convey meanings far beyond the actual words they sing. Although the publisher describes the book as the product of "extensive field research" on the oral traditions of the Bazaar, there is absolutely nothing in *The Bazaar of the Storytellers* to justify this assertion, unless one is willing to consider listening to tape-recordings as "field investigation." Lamentably, agencies that fund studies of this sort as "field research" have contributed to this misnomer.

Another shortcoming is that the authors have indiscriminately mingled tales of both oral and literary origins. Such mixing of categories is problematic, as the two kinds of materials seldom reflect similar values and ideologies.

The book is fair in its production, although it has numerous technical quirks, such as mid-paragraph gaps, and blank pages. The print quality is not very clear, making parts of the text and much of the endnote section difficult to read.

In sum, *The Bazaar of the Storytellers* is likely to be of some interest to folklorists; but its anthropological value is rather limited. Because so few works are available on

the oral tradition of the Parthans, whose language lacks a well-developed literary tradition, this book may be considered a first, if tentative, step toward classification, tale-typing, and motif-indexing, all necessary tasks for the analysis of such materials, as well as for the documentation of local and regional variants.

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