

Finally, in the last chapters, the author surveys such topics as the impact of folksongs on contemporary Persian poetry and compares the folksongs with neighboring Iranian peoples, namely, the Tajiks and the Afghans. The emphasis is generally on the texts of the folksongs. The numerous variant texts, scholarly comments, and occasional samples of musical notations enhance the value of Panāhī Semnānī's work. It is a useful source book for Iranian folklore and ethnomusicology.

Kinga MÁRKUS-TAKESHITA
Sagamihara, Japan

RAHMĀNĪ, ROWSHAN, compiler. *Afsānehā-ye dari* (Dari tales). Tehran: Soroush Press, 1998. Second edition. 616 pages. Glossary, annotations. Paper Rial 17,000. ISBN 964-435-294-7. (In Persian)

This book is a rich collection of ninety Dari tales from Afghanistan (not from Persia as it is erroneously written in the English translation of the title on the back cover. Dari is the term used nowadays for Persian as spoken in Afghanistan). It is the second edition of the original edition of 1995.

The book includes a lengthy preface (9–43), which in addition to a general discussion on the terminology used and the genres and concept of the folktale (21–27), gives a rare look at the current studies of folktales in Afghanistan. Particularly precious are the remarks on the stylistical and thematic peculiarities of the tales, as well as on the circumstances of their collection and on the narrators themselves (31–33, 39–43).

According to the preface, the tales were collected in the years between 1982 and 1985 from twenty-seven narrators (*rāvīyān*), whose names, approximate ages (we are told that the majority did not know their exact birth date), locations, and occupations are briefly summed up. Their gender can be only guessed by their names; I was able to identify fifteen women and ten men. Six of them were illiterate, one semi-illiterate, the rest mostly students, but a poet, a university professor, and some public employees were also included. They are classified by age into three groups: between thirteen and thirty, between thirty and forty, and those over forty. The compiler found the last group's storytelling most valuable.

The tales are divided thematically into seven groups. The most numerous among them are the "tales of magic" (*afsānehā-ye sehrāmīz*), with twenty-one stories, and the "narrative tales" (*afsānehā-ye sargozashī*), with thirty-nine stories. Other genres, such as "jokes" (*afsānehā-ye tanzī*; twelve stories), "love stories" (*afsānehā-ye 'eshqī* [longer stories that are in fact prosaic folk romances]; three stories), and "parables" (*afsānehā-ye tamšīlī* [actually they correspond to the Western category of "animal tales"]; seven stories), "legends" (*rivāyathā* [perhaps "realistic tales" is a more accurate English translation]; five stories) and "anecdotes" (*hikāyathā*; three stories) are also well represented. The tales are told in various local dialects. The texts are accompanied by a helpful small glossary.

This relatively large collection of Persian tales of Afghanistan surely will contribute to a better understanding of the narrative repertoire of the Iranians of central Asia.

Kinga MÁRKUS-TAKESHITA
Sagamihara, Japan

VAKILIAN, AHMAD, Editor. *Tamšil wa Maṣal* (Proverbs and their stories). Second volume. Treasury of Persian Folklore Series. No.15. Tehran:

Soroush Press, 1996. Third edition. 230 pages. Illustrations, indexes, bibliography. Paper Rial 6,900. (In Persian)

This volume, the first edition of which was issued in 1987, continues an honorable tradition; in fact, the same series started when the late great Iranian folklorist Seyyed Abu-I Qasem ANJAVĪ SHĪRĀZĪ compiled the first and still classical volume of *Tamṣil wa Maṣāl*, which also became the very first issue of the *Ganjīne-ye-Farhang-e Mardom* (Treasury of Persian Folklore) series. The original first volume contained 126 proverbs in 296 variants that were arranged in the Persian alphabetical order (ANJAVĪ SHĪRĀZĪ 1973). The hereby discussed second volume by the compiler Mr. A. Vakilian also follows the same arrangement. The number of the analyzed proverbs has reached 252. Variants are occasionally also included. In a style identical with the above mentioned first volume, after each proverb its use is explained, the story of its origin is told, and finally the date it was collected and the names of the narrators are listed. Often the corresponding Turkish or local Persian dialectological forms are also included in transcribed form. Comments and footnotes provide further help for the reader. The book is highly recommended for linguists and folklorists alike, but one must know Persian well enough to appreciate popular wisdom in such succinct form. The illustrator is unnamed, but the folksy drawings (just like in the legendary first volume) give a light touch to the book and perhaps will even help sell it outside the academic community.

I would like to commend the Soroush Press (Tehran, Iran) for publishing and distributing such valuable and interesting Iranian folklore materials.

REFERENCE CITED:

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1973 *Tamṣil wa Maṣāl* (Proverbs and their stories). *Ganjīne-ye-Farhang-e Mardom* (Treasury of Persian Folklore), vol. 1, no. 1. Tehran: Amir Kabir.

Kinga MÁRKUS-TAKESHITA
Sagamihara, Japan