

ther understanding of the subject of research but as proofs in support of, or in opposition to, arguments. In the end hypotheses are (predictably) proven and justified without any reference to the validity or acceptance of these in the cultural context to which the research material belongs.

As for the two types of comparisons, between Western and Tamil humor, and between folk and non-folk Tamil humor, the former runs throughout the book, while the latter is discussed in one separate section. The writer admits that the comparison between Tamil and Western humor can only be "impressionistic," especially because the Western materials are not the subject of the work. Comparisons are, however, drawn at every level with reference to "Western" humor without citing any instance of it, and with the assumption that the nuances of it (Western humor) are homogeneous, defined, and universally known. The readers are told again and again which particular instances of Tamil humor would or would not be appreciated by "Westerners." The direct subject of research seems to have a secondary status to this undefined "Western humor" and makes a direct and independent conception of Tamil humor impossible. It is noteworthy that instances of Tamil humor regarding Westerners or the Westernization of Indians, are almost completely absent. The factor of historical time in the concept of humor (i.e., how the concept of humor changes over time) has been completely ignored, except when the absence of certain types of jokes in Western society, like jokes about mothers-in-law (46-47), is explained in terms of their subject matter having lost their importance in contemporary Western society (176). By inference, Tamil society seems to represent the "Western past" or to be "backward in time."

In regard to the comparisons of Tamil folk and non-folk humor, they are too sketchy and based on insufficient sources of folk humor. Differences are cited while no comparisons are drawn. For example, it is stated that among the Tamil rural folk, gurus are the butt of jokes, while among the urban and literate the school teacher and college lecturer are laughed at (175). However, the reader has no way of knowing whether this difference also extends to a difference in attitude towards the institution of "teacher" between the rural and the urban populace. The equation of folk with rural and of literate with urban is questionable, even within the Indian context, and is bound to disturb some folklorists.

Gabriella Eichinger Ferro-Luzzi's work is largely descriptive, with few insights into the aspects of Tamil humor.

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HANDOO, LALITA. *Structural Analysis of Kashmiri Folktales*. CIIL Silver Jubilee Publication Series. Mysore: Central Institute of Indian Languages, 1994. xiii + 230 pages. Map, tables, bibliography. Rs. 82.00; ISBN 81-7342-007-6.

The aim of *Structural Analysis of Kashmiri Folktales* is to test V. J. Propp's morphological-structural approach by applying it to Kashmiri folktales. The author bases the study on J. Hinten Knowles's work *The Folk-Tales of Kashmir* (London, 1893), which can be used to apply Propp's theory as it contains every kind of narrative type. In applying Propp's theory the author limits the study to the framework of the forms of the tales. The author's conclusion is that Kashmiri folktales are highly structured and that there is a morphological oicotypization evident in them.

Chapter 1 gives a description of the historical and geographical background of the Kashmir Valley and its surroundings, with various ethnic groups, linguistic affinities, socio-cultural situations, and different religions. It also introduces the “chequered nature of Kashmir’s historical scene” (7) shared among Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh empires, the interference of Britain’s and Pakistan’s claim to the area, and the present situation. In this way the author establishes the background for the analysis of folktales by saying that these factors have contributed to the processes of acculturation and identification, and have shaped the present culture of Kashmir. The author also argues that the historical processes have a bearing upon the pattern of Kashmiri folklore, especially in narrative literature.

Examples are given to show the acculturation and identification processes. For instance, though Kashmiri linguistically belongs to the Dardic group of the Indo-European language family, it had assimilated Sanskrit elements as well as Perso-Arabic elements. This has influenced the phonological, morphological, and syntactic pattern of the Kashmiri language. However, the author notes that linguistic identification at the lexical level has been maintained both by Hindus and Muslims.

The author also points out other similarities and gives examples from the literature of Hindus and the Muslims but believes that there was acculturation in the oral and literary expressions of both groups. Handoo gives an example of a birth song to show that “in the Muslim version of the song all those lexical items and sentences which are associated with Hindu rituals or ceremonies or which have any Hindu religious connotations have been replaced with suitable items from Muslim culture” (15). Speaking about the folktale, the author likewise says, “Because of its oral nature it is prone to diffusion and transmission and hence to the forces of acculturation and identification” (15). With this background information the author wants to “show that if identification has been so strong at various levels of cultural expressions it should equally be strong at the level of folklore items” (16).

Chapter 2 considers the historical development of Kashmiri folktales in three parts. The first part shows that it is difficult to trace and reconstruct the history of oral narratives since even the dates of the folktales in written records are disputed. After introducing various positions taken by folklorists, the author agrees that the earliest folklore in the area is *Brihat Katha*, which was written between 700 and 400 BC. The second part briefly discusses the special status of the folktale genre. The author points out that the art of story-telling is something special to the Kashmiris even today and says it is culturally specific to the Kashmiris. In the third part the author provides a historical chronology of literature on Kashmiri oral narratives by J. H. Knowles, M. Gaster, Aurel Steiner, and William Crooke and says, “In spite of reasonable good collections, Kashmiri Folktale remains untouched as far as studying it or analyzing it is concerned” (32) either historically, comparatively, psychologically, or in terms of structural or pattern analysis.

In chapter 3, the “type” of Antti AARNE and “motif” of Stith THOMPSON are introduced. The author concurs with Dundes and others that these are products of an atomistic attitude. As an alternative, the author proposes the synchronic approach and structuralism as a method of analysis. Here the author briefly describes structuralism in folklore, linguistics, psychology, anthropology, and the various viewpoints on structuralism raised by Joseph Bedier, A. I. Nikiforov, Adolf Stender Peterson, V. J. Propp, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Thomas A. Sebeik, Alan Dundes, A. J. Greimas, Claude Bremond, Roland Barthes, Heda Jason, and the Marandas.

The main focus of the study begins with chapter 4. At first the author introduces Propp’s morphological method as a scale and scheme to measure the morphology of Kashmiri folktales. Pointing out that the “units scholars devised were fundamentally classificatory and near-analytical in nature” (57) and inadequate for the analysis of oral narratives,

the author shows the need for structural analysis after the model of Propp, whose method “decomposes the tales, reduces them to basic structural components which indicate definite patterns and exhibit structural similarities or dissimilarities” (57). This method, according to the author, gives the tales a “typological unity” that can be structurally identified within, and across, genres. Mentioning the fact that Propp’s morphology was developed for *märchen*, the author confirms that it can be applied to narratives other than *märchen* when they exhibit major structural similarities.

On the basis of Propp’s method, the author classifies Kashmiri folktales into three major structural types and subtypes: (i) A-K(W) (Villainy-Villain Liquidation) type tales; (ii) a-K(W) (Lack-Lack Liquidation) type tales. (iii) M-N (Difficult-Task-Task-Resolved) type tales. Giving examples of each type the author further treats the Single-Move tale of A-K(W) type with five, four, three, two, one, and zero prefix function tales (61–82). Similarly, the a-K(W) type tales with development through M-N, DEF are illustrated with examples from Kashmiri folktales (83–90).

Chapter 5 deals with the morphology of multimove tales and their various move combinations. The author identifies four main move-combinations in Kashmiri folktales: 1) two types of direct moves: (a) positive-move combination with four-move combinations, three-move combinations, and two-move combinations, where the two-move combinations have different moves such as a-K(W), A-K(W) combination, and A-K(W) and its repetitions; (b) positive-negative- and negative-positive-move combinations. Examples are given to illustrate each of these (100–42); 2) interwoven moves (142–51); 3) embedded moves (151–65); 4) simultaneous moves (165–71).

Chapter 6 examines tales that are not covered by Propp but are morphologically simpler than the fairy-tale type. These are single structural type tales very much like the M-N type. Such tales in the Kashmiri folktale tradition can be classified into three subgroups: 1) someone proposes a task and the hero decides to become a donor to accomplish the task (179–83); 2) The hero sets a task for himself and accomplishes it with a donor’s help (183–91); 3) the problem is solved not by the hero but by the donor. In this last case the tales are structured on the basis of three core functions and two peripheral functions (191–201).

Chapter 7 gives a summary of the preceding chapters and an outline of the characteristics of Kashmiri folktales.

To sum up, *Structural Analysis of Kashmiri Folktales* is a commendable attempt to promote Propp’s morphology and to apply his methodology to Kashmiri folktales.

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