

NEPAL

LIENHARD, SIEGFRIED. *Songs of Nepal. An Anthology of Newar Folksongs and Hymns*. Asian Studies at Hawaii, No. 30. (Revised and shortened version of *Nevārigīṭimanjarī*, Stockholm Oriental Studies, vol. 10.) Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1984. Viii+221 pages. Appendices and select bibliography. Paper, US\$17.00, ISBN 0-8248-0680-8.

This book is an abbreviated and revised version of the author's 1974 book, *Nevārigīṭimanjarī: Religious and Secular Poetry of the Newars of the Kathmandu Valley*. The author explains his motivation for this new edition as a desire to make the Newari way of life, religious beliefs, history and folklore accessible to a broader circle of interested persons throughout the world.

Let it be said directly that he has achieved this aim very well. The Newars, who have so decisively influenced the cultural history and especially the history of scholarship of Nepal, have in the present unfortunately not enjoyed the respect they deserve. Nepal is today one of the most important centers of world tourism. This means that information about this nation will flow out of the country even more increasingly. One can only hope that books like this one contribute to a growing knowledge about the country with well founded factual information.

The majority of the hymns and folk songs published in this book in English translation as well as in the Newari original, comes from the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. Only a few have their origins as early as the 16th century or as late as the earlier half of the 20th century. They are therefore valuable products of a flourishing period of Newari culture before it was forced into the background, first after 1768 and even more strongly in the Rana period around 1850. Since the ideas contained not only in the religious hymns, but also in part in the epic songs, represent the syncretism of Hindu and Buddhist values which dominates the spiritual life of the Newars even to the present day, these songs offer a comprehensive representation of the more recent Newari culture.

In the introductory chapter the author recapitulates not only the significance of the more recent Newari literature as a representation for the entirety of Nepal, but he also shows how this literature has been regarded as undesirable by the politically powerful in more recent times and even occasionally was forbidden.

Among the love songs of this collection are several centuries-old folk songs in which the beauty, coquettishness, and the strikingly exciting clothing and jewelry of beautiful young women are described. On the other hand, however, the love lyrics with religious reference rely heavily on the Indian prototypes provided by the Kṛṣṇa songs. The broad framework in which these songs are dedicated to Lord Kṛṣṇa, Rādhā, and Gopī also demonstrates the strong Hindu-Indian influence on these songs. In those spots in which actual life events are described, however, the profound connections between Newari spiritual life and the world of fertility conceptions and rainmaking sorcery are expressed in a way characteristic of the Newari people with their agricultural outlook on life.

In contrast, the Śiva and Kālī hymns of the Newars reveal the rather strong influence of Tantrism.

The syncretistic nature of the national culture of the Newars becomes especially obvious in the songs which are dedicated to Mañjuśrī and Matsyendranātha. Mahāyāna-Buddhistic archetypes are mixed with notions from the Hindu pantheon and

a chthonic kind of thinking, which are typical for an ancient peasant people. The content of these songs as well as the selection arrived at by the author paint a representative picture of the polymorphous character of Newari culture represented by the literary products of approximately four centuries.

The author has placed before each of the translations of the hundred poems a short introduction with explanations and bibliographic references. There are at times thorough notes to the translation. The full Newari texts are also transcribed in the second part of the book.

In the last analysis it is a book which fulfills all requirements—those of a friend of Nepalese culture as well as those of the scholar—in an ideal manner.

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IRAN

MARZOLPH, ULRICH. *Typologie des persischen Volksmärchens* [Typology of the Persian oral tale]. Beirut: Texte und Studien, Band 31. Beirut: Orient-Institut der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft, 1984. Distributed by Franz Steiner Verlag, Wiesbaden. Xiii+311 pages. Motif index, bibliography. Paper DM 90.—, ISBN 03-515-03702-0. (In German, with English summary).

This book is a new contribution to the systematic survey of Persian folktales after Adrienne Boulvin's pioneer work, *Contes populaires persans du Khorassan*. The author, a German specialist of the popular literature of the Islamic Middle East, here undertakes the task of classifying Persian folktales from diverse regions of Iran according to the Aarne-Thompson system. Methodically, the work seems to be modelled on Heda Jason's "Types of Jewish-Oriental tales" (1965) in which the AT index was first applied to the comprehensive survey of Near Eastern tales. Marzolph's *Typologie* depends mostly on formerly printed materials, but he also makes use of hitherto unpublished rare sources, such as Erika Friedl's Bovir Ahmadi tales, Adrienne Boulvin's typewritten folktale catalog, Golaleh Pak's master thesis: "A study of the animal folk-tales in Iran" (1979)—the latter two works based on researches in the folklore archives of the Ethnological Museum of Tehran—and above all, the extensive tape-recorded private collection of the late Professor Elwell-Sutton, the leading authority on the study of the Persian folktales.

As we learn from the Preface, Marzolph's work is a slightly modified version of a dissertation presented at the University of Cologne in 1981. It consists of two main parts: Introduction (1-32), and the typology itself (33-264).

The Introduction includes a concise history of Persian folktale research, supplying bibliographical data (1-7); sections concerning working methods and the choice of sources (7-15); and two statistical charts accompanied with maps on the ethnic and administrative divisions of Iran (16-19). The first chart shows the geographical distribution of the folktales surveyed. They are mainly concentrated in the areas of Isfahan, Shiraz, Tehran, and in the province of Khorasan, while large parts of the West, the region of the Persian Gulf and Sistan and Balujistan are almost entirely neglected. (It is a pity that a Soviet collection of Sistani tales—*Skazki i legendy Sistana* (1981) equipped with AT index!—could not be used for the present survey, to represent