Tej K. Bhatia and **Kazuhiko Machida**, *The Oldest Grammar of Hindūstānī. Contact, Communication and Colonial Legacy.* Historical and Cross-Cultural Contexts, Grammar Corpus and Analysis. 3 Vols. Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, 2008. Vol. 1: 188 pp., ISBN 978-4-86337-014-2. Vol. 2: 218 pp., ISBN 978-4-86337-015-9. Vol. 3: 77 pp., ISBN 978-4-86337-016-6.

The work under review is based on a detailed study of the Hindūstānī grammar written in Dutch by Jean Josua Ketelaar (Kettler) in 1698. The manuscript was never published and until the 1930s was considered to be lost.

Volume 1 consists of Part 1 "Historical and Cross-Cultural Contexts" by Tej K. Bhatia and Part 2 "Grammar Corpus and Analysis" by Tej K. Bhatia and Kazuhiko Machida. Volume 2 contains the "Lexical Corpus and Analysis" [Ketelaar's Section 1–45] and Volume 3 presents the facsimile edition of the manuscript in its entirety.

At the outset it needs to be stressed that deciphering the manuscript was a tremendous task. A rather florid style of writing, the idiosyncretic way of transcribing Hindustānī words and blotches of ink on many pages made reading and even more so understanding the contents extremely difficult. Ketelaar did not provide a guide to the pronunciation of his Dutch transcription, which was not always consistent and was also influenced by German (Vol. 1: 38–39).

It goes to the credit of the editors cum commentators to have undertaken and successfully completed this task despite all odds, thus making a valuable source of the language history and of the grammatical tradition in North India available to a wider public.

Information on the author and the only existing manuscript of his work is provided by Bhatia in the first part of Volume 1. Ketelaar, whose original name was Kettler, was born in 1659 as the son of a bookbinder in Elbing on the Baltic Sea. After a chequered, partly criminal, career he went to India to work for the East India Company. He rose from clerk to "senior merchant" and was accredited as Dutch envoy to the Mughal emperors Bahadur Shah I. and Jahandar Shah. In 1715 he was appointed Dutch envoy to Persia. Ketelaar travelled extensively in Rajasthan and central India, Persia and Arabia. He died

during a mission in Persia in 1718. His interest in languages was based on his excellent talent as a communicator (26–27).

The only existing manuscript of the grammar unearthed so far was copied by Ketelaar's close friend and associate Isaac van der Hoeve in Lucknow in 1698. There might have been more copies which would explain the differences in David Mills' Latin translation (or reworking) which was published in 1843 and largely obscured the original, leading to several errors and misconceptions. Bhatia obtained a copy of the manuscript from an archive in the Netherlands (19–21). It consists of 144 pages (excluding blank and unnumbered pages) of 10-by-16 inch paper, bound like an Indian register. The title page is followed by a foreword by the copyist, a brief introduction by Ketelaar, the table of contents and the main body of the work (lexicon and grammar), a Hindustānī (Bhatia: "Hindī"!) translation of some Christian texts and an index of Dutch words with page numbers indicating where the "Hindī words" (31) are to be found.

Microfilming of the manuscript started in 1981, followed by a transcription in three phases: first by Prof. Christine Boots, a specialist of medieval and modern Dutch, secondly by Professor Koul and Bhatia, and thirdly scrutinized by Prof. Herman Olphen and his Dutch speaking colleagues at the University of Texas (28). This elaborate procedure, although only the first step toward the present publication, already gives an impression of the enormous amount of work which went into it.

In Part 1 Bhatia also deals with the Hindī grammatical tradition and its colonial context, referring to his earlier works on this topic. He aptly describes Ketelaar's work as a "religious-colonial-business" model of grammar (51) and stresses that even Ketelaar's errors are a "gold mine for researchers in (real-time-) language processing, second language acquisition, sociolinguistics, language variation (…). Most importantly, the grammar is a time capsule and provides a window through which to view perspectives on the nature of bilingualism/ multilingualism and the society in seventeenth century India." (43) In his comparative lists of Persian, Dutch and Latin words Ketelaar "succeeded in sowing the seeds of comparative–historical methods" (44). Thus, although Bhatia criticizes Ketelaar for his failure to understand aspiration and retroflexion, he duly appreciates his overall achievements.

Part 2 of Volume 1 presents Ketelaar's grammar sections 46–47 (Persian) and 48–49 (Hindustani), section 50 (analysis of names), section 51 (analysis of homophonous words, section 52 (explanation of words) and three Christian texts in Dutch and Hindustānī. Section 45 intersects with the lexicon which is presented in Volume 3. English translations are provided for all introductory and accompanying texts as well as for the entries of Ketelaar's tables. Page numbers of the manuscript are inserted throughout thus facilitating easy access to the original.

In Volume 2 Ketelaar's tables are presented in the following form:

Page	Section	Dutch	English	Hindu-stānī	Target Form	Translit-eration	Etymology /Notes	Persian

The editors explain their "Target Form" as the "perceived word/phrase (i.e. target word) that Ketelaar had in mind. It may or may not map neatly on a (modern) Hindī form. The target Hindustani form is given in the Devanagari script. It gives the best possible approximation of the target form/choice" (Vol. 1: 29, Vol. 2: ii). That, however, seems not always to be the case. Quite a number of the incongruities between Ketelaar's forms and the "target forms" in Devanagari are based on the replacement of "Hindustānī" by "Hindī" throughout the tables.

The justification given by Bhatia is that in his work he uses Hindī in the all-encompassing sense of Hindī-Hindustānī-Urdū. In accordance with this view, he claims that it is "Hindī" which is spoken in Pakistan and that "Hindī" has 600 million speakers (including second language speakers) (Vol. 1: 1). He mentions that no "hazard-free" or "anxiety-free" label exists for this language and hints at the religious, political and emotional affiliations which the labels "Hindī" and "Urdū" have come to represent in India (ibid.: 2). But would it then not have to be the safest option to stick to the label used by Ketelaar? This is not only a question of naming, it has much wider implications because defining Ketelaar's target forms as "Hindī" leads to a number of misrepresentations and is highly questionable when we think of the oral information compiled by Ketelaar. His sources included a number of languages other than "Hindī", and his target in no way was modern

standard Hindī, but this is exactly what the tables attempt to present in Devanāgarī and in transliteration. Bhatia was not unaware of this problem, though. Mentioning the difficulties in "identifying" and "selecting" the modern Hindī target he refers to the fact that Ketelaar had input from "more than one variety of Hindī" in addition to Persian and Arabic (28). Many of the words Ketelaar heard from his informants in all likelihood had their written equivalents, if at all, in scripts other than Devanāgarī, quite a number of them probably in a script derived from the Perso-Arabic which was later developed into the Urdu script. Bhatia follows Chatterjī in terming Ketelaar's target language as "bāzār Hindī" which, however, shows in-depth familiarity with "High Hindustānī" vocabulary (50). He admits that Ketelaar's grammar "does not exhibit any preference for standard or prestigious Hindī forms" (51). Why then are most of the forms presented in Devanāgarī in the tables in Part 2 of Volume 1 and throughout Volume 2 modern standard Hindī forms? Such decisions appear to be informed by the politics of language rather than by linguistic considerations. Apparently the editors have deviated from the principle quoted above in many cases because they were too narrowly fixated on modern standard Hindī. Thus, forms such as "kon" *(kõ,* postposition marking objects) and "naom" (*nāõ/nāv*, name) were common in older forms of Hindī/Urdū. As "target forms", however, only the respective modern standard forms (*ko*, Vol. 1: 89ff, and *nām*, ibid: 180) are given. Ketelaar's "aundhoe" has been replaced by Hindī "*sā̃r*" (Vol 1, p. 96) although the correspondent form would have been "*ā̃ḍū(ā)*" (bull) as it is cited in Platts as well as in modern Urdu dictionaries.

Apart from this conceptual problem, a number of Persian and Arabic words have also not been correctly identified, e.g. "fasel" obviously denotes *fāzil*, not "faizal" (Vol. 1: 142), "erradet chan" pobably is *irādat xān,* not "?ardata xāna" (ibid.: 145), "raand" is *rān*, not "?ḍã̄ra" (Vol 2: 8), and "gomasta" is meant to represent *gumāśtah* (ibid: 17).

There are other misinterpretations and minor writing and formatting errors. However, given the condition of the manuscript, it is no small wonder that the editors succeeded in deciphering as much as they did. I would suggest that whosoever detects any errors or is able to fill lacunae in the tables should communicate her/his findings

to the editors. As is to be expected, a work of this scope and complexity offers ample opportunity for further discoveries and differing interpretations of forms. It goes to the credit of the editors to have made this exceptional text accessible to the community of South Asianists all over the world.

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The present book is a further highly welcome contribution in this field of study as well as to a number of publications dealing with issues of "religious legitimation" of (royal) power in different historical and regional contexts in India. The first six chapters of