

Book Review

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1. ”کلیات اسد ملتانی“ مرتبہ: سید شوکت علی بخاری

This book, as is apparent by its title, consists of complete works of Asad Multani, a poet of great repute and accomplishments in the early and mid-twentieth century, recognized for his literary acumen, mastery of language and versatility. As a student, Asad Multani had the rare privilege of having a poem of his corrected and improved upon by no less a person that Allama Iqbal. The poem in question was adjudged as the best of all in a poetic symposium. Later, Asad Multani earned great reputation as a poet of meritorious stature. He composed both *ghazals* and poems with equal facility and ease, showing command over Urdu and his knowledge of the art of poetry. He exhibited a great variety of themes and moods in his poems. In 1930s, 40s and 50s he ranked among the great masters of the art of poetry. He exhibited a great variety of themes and moods in his poems. In 1930s, 40s and 50s he ranked among the great masters of the art of poetry, like Bekhud and Sa'il Dehlavi. He rubbed shoulders with poets of the stature of Josh, Hafeez and Jigar. His moral slant brought him closer to Iqbal and his spontaneity and implied humor and social satire made him, to a great extent, akin to Maulana Zafar Ali Khan. He exhibited a great variety of themes and moods in his poems. He also summed up some of the cultural aspects of Multani people in his poetry through which a specific period of the recent past of Multan's cultural history in early 20th century can well be reconstructed.

The works of this major poet were not collected in his lifetime. They were not available to the general readers and research scholars either. All those who tried to collect and compile them were faced with copyright problems. The present work is a compilation of all the available poetic works of Asad Multani scattered over hundreds of magazines, periodicals and newspapers, collected, compiled and edited by Syed Shaukat Ali Bukhari with a long introduction of definite research value. The book consists of 348 pages and includes a detailed bibliography and lists of relevant sources. The book under consideration fulfils all the pre-requisites of a first-rate research work and reflects compiler's efforts to make it a standard work of editing.

2. ”ملتان کے قدیم امام باڑے اور مجالس عزاک کی روایت“ از: ڈاکٹر ممتاز کلینی، اجمل مہاراجن کبر

It is also an in-depth study of a religio-cultural aspect of Multan. The subject matter of the book, though slightly unconventional, is important in its own right. The book under consideration contains the historical background of the tradition of *azadari* in Multan. Authors have established the links of this tradition to the early history of Arabs in Sind and Multan. They have focused on *azadari* of the *Shia* community of

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Multan as a religious phenomenon with its various ritualistic forms. They have also traced the history of almost all the *Imambargahs* of Multan and studied their architectural significance and religious value. The history of the founder families and present custodians of these *Imambargahs* is also recorded. In this collection, the author's seems to have endeavored to collect oral traditions and documents with great success. The photographs of some of the *Imambargahs* are also included in the book. But the account of *taziadari* in Multan is very brief and occupies a very short space in the book which is equal to only a single page. Similarly the authors do not seem to have done justice to the fine art of *tazia* making in Multan which should have constituted one of the major chapters of the book. On the whole the approach to their subject is sound and research oriented. The book also includes some maps and tables. It consists of about 141 pages.

3. ”تلمبہ تاریخ کے آئینے میں“ از: رائے محمد رفیق خان

It is an in-depth study of Tulambah, an important historical town in the erstwhile Multan Division. The book is informative and seems to be based on research into written and oral traditions regarding this town. But there is lack of method and balance in the research plan. The matter included in the book is not properly divided into respected chapters which, in most cases, seem to overlap. The historical background is rather well researched, but fresh and first hand information which could have been a strong point of the work under consideration is not fully researched and systematized. The book consists of 90 pages. The printing of the book is absolutely not up to the mark.

4. ”وطن آباد تو میں اور ذاتیں“ از: جمشید احمد کٹر احمدانی بلوچ

It is a book on local castes and tribes in which information about hundreds of local castes has been recorded. It is an informative book in as far as the local habitants of Punjab and Sind are concerned, particularly those who reside in the southern parts of Punjab. The author seems to have worked a lot in collecting a bulk of mostly oral traditions and giving them shape and making the book readable. But, unfortunately various castes do not seem to have received an equal amount of author's attention. There seems to be no uniformity of approach or methodology, if there be any, throughout the book which otherwise seems to be the result of a long labor of love. What is more regrettable about this book is that in some cases, which may not be very few in number, the information about some of the castes is incomplete and sketchy. In most of the cases, the author has not had access to the standard works on the local castes. For example, "The Punjab Castes" by Sir Danzil Ibatsin is not consulted even though the book is included in the sources. Some very established and known castes have received very limited space in the book. Moreover, the ethnic areas covered in his book are not well-defined. In short, information about many castes is incomplete and some times flawed. Arguments and etymology of names of the local castes is not sound, though, on the whole, the work is rather commendable. It consists of 300 pages.