

EVENTS, INQUIRIES, NEWS, NOTICES, REPORTS

A NUMBER of Urdu writers and patrons left us during the past eighteen months, among them: (2008) Khalid Abdullah, Nazir Ahmad, Ahmed Faraz, Khatir Ghaznavi, Sha‘ir Jamali, Latif Kashmiri, Adil Mansuri, Ralph Russell, Javed Shaheen, Nazrul Hasan Siddiqi; (2009) Fiza Ibne Faizi, Khalid Hassan, Suhail Ahmad Khan, Victor Kiernan, Syed Nasiruddin Nasir Gilani, Naved Zafar, Qamar Rais, Hamida Akhtar Husain Raipuri, Syed Ahmad Sahar, Agha Suhail, Abul Mujahid Zahid.

I

The following is an inventory of scholars and the papers which they presented at conferences, seminars, and symposia:

37th Annual Conference on South Asia (Madison, 17–19 October 2008)

ALYSSA GABBAY (University of Washington): “Turk and Hindu in *Nub Sibir*: The Transformation of a Literary Construct.”

KAVITA DATLA (Mount Holyoke College): “Creating Urdu Textbooks: The History of India Series at Osmania University, Hyderabad.”

SYED NAQVI (Brown University): “The Aesthetics of and Politics of Historical Exile: Intizar Husain and Friends.”

II

Award

S.R. Faruqi was awarded the 2009 Padma Sri Prize in the category of literature. The award is one of the highest civilian awards in India.

III

Two Outstanding Achievements

WAY BACK IN 1976, Dr. Anwar Moazzam of Hyderabad launched an extremely

useful project—the creation of a bibliography of Urdu sources for social sciences research. The fruit of his long labor is now available in four volumes, two in Urdu script—*Vazāḥatī Urdū Kitābiyāt (‘Imrānī ‘Ulūm)*—and two in an English/Roman version—*Annotated Urdu Bibliography (Social Science)* (Delhi: Educational Publishing House, 2008. Rs. 3000 per set of four. The book is co-edited by Dr. Moazzam’s son, Ashhar Farhan, an expert in information technology. The work was begun under the auspices of the Indian Council for Social Science Research, and completed with the help of the National Council for the Promotion of Urdu.

It is a mammoth (over 9200 entries) bibliography of books that do not fall into the category of belles-lettres, and instead deal with topics that are now subsumed under social sciences. In all, twenty-one subject headings are used in the book; these are: Ethics, Anthropology, History (General), History (Countries), Education, Technology, Geography and Travel, Biography, Political Science, Personal Hygiene, Home Economics, Sociology, Arts and Sculpture, Law, Commerce, Library Science, Essays, Economics, Managerial Services, Public Administration, and Psychology.

The work was very sensibly done in two phases, first at four major libraries at Hyderabad, and then at ten other major libraries around India, including the National Library (Kolkata), Khuda Bakhsh Library (Patna), Raza Library (Rampur), and the libraries of the Aligarh Muslim University (Aligarh), Jamia Millia Islamia (New Delhi), and the Nadvatul Ulama (Lucknow). Each entry clearly indicates the libraries where the book may be found. Further, the entries are arranged according to a slightly modified Dewey Decimal classification system—a boon to librarians around the world.

Most importantly, in every instance, *all bibliographical data was obtained directly from the book*. Those of us who have experienced the vagaries of card catalogues of Urdu books in India cannot be too grateful for this. Considerable thought and effort were put into indicating the contents of each book; for example, in the case of an edited volume or a collection by a single author, the entry lists all the essays included. (I was delighted to finally learn what essays by Abdul Halim Sharar were included in the various volumes of his *Mazāmīn-e Sharar*.)

To further help the user, the editors have added two indices: one for authors, compilers, and translators, and the other for subject headings. Thus one can conveniently find not only the books by an author but also the books on that author.

No doubt there are some repetitions and some odd classifications, but these are astonishingly few in a work of this size. That is true also concerning typographical errors. Dr Anwar Moazzam deserves our profound thanks for conceiving of this project in the first place and then bringing it to fruition with such meticulous attention. It is indeed a model work.

In addition to the four printed volumes, the work is also available in a searchable digital form. Individuals interested in this should contact Dr. Anwar Moazzam at: moazzam.71@gmail.com. The printed edition can be obtained either from Dr. Moazzam or from Educational Publishing House (www.ephbooks.com);

ephdelhi@yahoo.com).

Another major project, *The National Bibliography of Indian Literature (1901–1953)* was done long ago under the auspices of the Sahitya Akademi, India. Its Urdu volume was edited by Professor Ale Ahmad Suroor, and I had done the initial collection of data for several months in 1955–56. That bibliography included fiction and poetry, but as I recall was more concerned with “major” writers. I was most pleasantly surprised to learn that this too is now available in digitized form. According to James H. Nye, Director, South Asia Language and Area Center and Bibliographer for Southern Asia, Regenstein Library, University of Chicago, the entire NBIL, including the supplementary 5th volume, was converted to electronic form in 1990. It is available as a searchable database at (<http://dsal.uchicago.edu/bibliographic/nbil/nbil.php>). The NBIL titles that were microfilmed are also found in the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) Catalogue, WorldCat. More than 27,000 of the 56,000 titles included in the five-volume set have been microfilmed. And finally, the bibliographic data of the South Asia Union Catalogue (<http://sauc.uchicago.edu/>) are being loaded in the OCLC database along with the holdings of the British Library. (Try a search for “British Library” for the BL holdings or “Early 20th” for the NBIL microfilmed titles.) All Urdu-wallahs owe a big debt and a big round of applause to Anwar Moazzam, Ashhar Farhan, and James Nye for these remarkable achievements.

—C.M. NAIM

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NOTE: If you have read a paper or published an item or know of a piece of information of interest to Urdu-wallahs, please do not hesitate to send it to us for inclusion in the next issue of the *AUS*. —*Editor*