

Book Reviews

Geraldine Forbes *Women in Modern India*, published by the New Cambridge History of India, IV-2, Cambridge, 1996, pp.294, price not printed.

This volume, dealing with the subject of women in modern India, comes within the fourth rubric of the planned design of the ‘new’ *Cambridge History of India* [see review of *Politics in India since Independence* by Paul R. Brass]. The author of this volume is Professor Geraldine Forbes, of the State University of New York, who has, over the years, produced researched volumes on women in Bengal and other books on India. In the writing of this volume, she has ably used the material available to her in the US, the UK and India itself. The book begins with an introduction that is followed by some eight chapters and a ‘bibliographic essay’ [according to the original design of the editors] which comments on the nature and scope of the various books, documents and other material that were consulted in the composition and preparation of this volume. The essay is extensive and it appears that the author has made wide use of available sources and reference works in English as well as those works which exist in English translation. Works not translated are beyond the accessibility of the author. One useful and praiseworthy feature which the editors should have made mandatory for all contributors is that each chapter is ended with a conclusion which sums up the findings of that chapter.

‘Modern’ is a broad blanket term without defining where it actually begins but for reason of argument one can take the position that one can begin with the beginning of the 19th century when the British were more or less entrenched in the vastnesses of the Indian subcontinent. The focus on women in the title and the chapters suggests a binary opposition between the sexes – which is not overwhelmingly the case. The term ‘women’ can be applied, in most circumstances covered by the book, to ‘Hindu women’ for the coverage and study of the

especial position of Muslim women is for the most part overlooked or ignored apart from references to the work done in this area by a fellow-American, Barbara Metcalf. As such, the book cannot claim to be a comprehensive investigation of the position, problems and peculiarities of women in the subcontinent. It would have added to the interest of the book if some mention were made to the difficulties and prejudices that came in the way of the education of all Indian women; how these were overcome and how women became writers in a foreign language [English] where they even composed novels and poetry would have been a fascinating tale. Be that as it may, we will consider the book as it stands and not as we think it should have been.

The author postulates in her first chapter that it was the reform movements started by various persons such as Ram Mohan Roy [Brahmo Samaj], Justice Ranade [Parthana Samaj] and Swami Dayanand Saraswati [Arya Samaj] that asserted their concern about the disadvantaged position of women in Hindu society. So it appears that Hindu women were obliged to Hindu men for highlighting the problems that they themselves had created. The Hindu women just played second fiddle to their men and did not come out in the open to complain about their oppressed condition. They had no voice and no representative to articulate their oppression. In the 19th century the main problems faced by women were child marriage, the ban on widow re-marriage and *sati* [the forcible or voluntary joining of a wife in her late husband's funeral pyre]. It was the British who were the colonizing power in the subcontinent that legislated against these social injustices only when these were brought to their notice and not as constituting a crime in the first place. The ban on *thuggee* came about because its criminal face appeared first and that posed a threat to the *Pax Britannica*.

The next chapter deals with the education of women in colonial India and it was from small and modest beginnings that the slow spread of female education began. The various institutions that emerged as a result are detailed with interesting details regarding the difficulties in their establishment and the efforts of persons [men] who remained committed to this goal. The spread of Christian missionary institutions are not given the publicity they demand on account of the large number of converts to Christianity made by them. The example of women who converted to Christianity as a result of their fathers or husbands converting are not given in detail. In one case, that of Lakshmibai Tilak, who became Christian as a result of her husband's example, this is very noticeable. Her Marathi autobiography is aptly titled *I Follow After* which was translated into English in 1950 and is a perfect example of the dutiful wife who blindly obeys her husband in theological matters. The

case of 'Pandita' Ramabai is another example. She learned Sanskrit and went to the US in the 19th century where she converted to Christianity and gathered funds for the supposed alleviation of the oppressed women of India. The only Muslim pioneer of education, Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain, of Bengal is given in some detail. She did not convert to Christianity but put all her efforts into the education of Muslim girls. Her central argument, as the writer points out, was that the neglect of female education would ultimately threaten Islamic culture. There were other Muslim women pioneers who struggled for this worthy cause. The name of Iqbalunnisa Hussain of Mysore is well known. She was the first Muslim woman to obtain a degree from the University of Leeds in education and after her return in 1935 devoted herself to the education of Muslim girls. She also authored books such as *Changing India: a Muslim woman speaks* [1940]. In her conclusion, the author points out that the British support for female education especially with regard to the wives of their civil servants was to generate loyalty to the British rule.

The subsequent chapters of the book are devoted to the 20th century and deal with the rise of women's education as developed by their organisations. The Begum of Bhopal supported and funded several women's organisations that were geared to the promotion of female education. The example of Begum Pasha Sufi of Hyderabad Deccan [author of *Hamari Zindagi*] who represented Indian women in international conferences in the 1930s deserves to be better known. The rise in female education led to political awareness among women and they began to play a more effective role in the lives of their male politicians e.g. Fatima Jinnah, Begum Raana Liaquat, Ms Vijaya Laxmi Pandit and Mrs Indira Gandhi. The demand for female enfranchisement and its acceptance is one of the great milestones in the struggle for female education. The name of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu stands out as an enlightened and educated female personality who composed three books of English verse and was associated with Gandhi and Jinnah of Pakistan. The independence of India and Pakistan in 1947 did not augur well for the women of India. The Indian governments and their spokesmen gave lip-service to the questions and issues of gender with hardly any practical measure being taken. The most powerful of Indian women politicians, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, comes out as a total autocrat with delusions of megalomania. She treated women as an 'oppressed minority' but denied that her success had anything to do with her gender. She said: 'I do not regard myself as a woman. I am a person with a job to do.' The author writes that the women with political power have not had the political clout to improve the lot of women. The author also mentions crimes against women in relation to forced marriage, dowry deaths and female

foeticide – issues that dominate the landscape of gender issues in India at present. The Shah Bano case, in India, authorized a divorced Muslim woman to claim maintenance from her ex-husband. The sociologist Zoya Hasan [wife of Mushirul Hasan] wrote that this was done to pacify the Muslims over the handing over the Ayodhya mosque to Hindus by Rajiv Gandhi. So many issues have political colours and shades that they cease to be the issues they originally were. The BJP has come out against the increasing rape of women but giving it a communal twist accuse Muslim men of raping Hindu women.

In a final assessment, the author agrees that ‘it would be naïve to write as if all were well with the women’s movement in India. ‘ She lists the acts of terror against Muslims and revived communalism as having derailed the importance of the women’s movement. At the end of the 20th century, Indian women would argue that they still have a long way to go.

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Nafisa Shah, *Honour Unmasked Gender Violence, Law, and Power in Pakistan*, published by Oxford University Press, Karachi, 2017, pp. 390, price not printed.

Killing in the name of honour, declaring it as a moral crime is in no way specific to South Asian or Islamic societies. It is an ancient custom, prevalent in various parts of the world among peoples of varying beliefs, philosophies and worldviews. It is an act which has been dividing the traditional moralists and modern legalists. The author, Nafisa Shah, has tried to explore how and why the custom of *karo-kari* has gained so prominence and force in upper Sindh. No wonder, when investigated by an anthropologist, it has posed many layered challenges.

Nafisa, a woman of upper class family of local origin but trained anthropologist from Oxford academic world, describes the perplexing realities in a set of binaries, such as law and lawlessness, right and wrong, justice and violence, state and non-state, normative and legal, to explain the violence in *kacho* or area beyond river embankments. This geographical difference signifies the power dynamics of civility and barbarity. The author analyzes her own changing position as a journalist, investigator, researcher, mayor of Khairpur, and finally a legislator, all with reference to the subject of study, killing for honour, and she discovers a counter discourse of peace as well. She had to face manipulated stories, appeals, pressures and threats to political popularity

in order to drift her from taking any neutral and legal position on such violence cases. She also explains that as mayor of Khairpur her engagement of attending marriages and condoling violent deaths has been extensive. This is necessary to be mentioned here to show that the book is not a product of academic project or of a district officer having access to police and judiciary data, but it has more to reveal. That is the dynamics of power as women experiences in Pakistan in a feudal dominated society, though having perpetual influx of modern and liberating ideas. Moreover, this ancient customary practice has been investigated by her since 1992, and one must remember that laws have been enacted from time to time to check such violence. Unsurprisingly, news of *karo-kari* pour in so regularly, and the perpetrators commit it in such an undaunting way that it has become mere mockery of the law. Such violence happens at not simply on the allegation of having sexual/illicit relations, but marriage by own choice, if not approved by the close family members, and so it is a sin under this custom.

‘Honour killing’ or *karo kari* is not just killing in the name of ‘honour’ but it involves a complex whole covering a broad spectrum of social, political, ideological, legal and psychological factors. So, here one finds involvement of marital conflicts, and gender discrimination in launching an FIR and also in the motive behind registering such a murder, earning money through mediation and compensation thereof. The author clarifies that the event of *karo kari*, ‘as it is constructed socially, is tied intrinsically to mediation and it is mediation which affects the *karo-kari* construction and not the other way. If a man is killed, there is a greater likelihood of the killing being challenged both through conflict and the law. If a woman is killed, her complaint will be registered on her behalf by the very people who have taken her life’ (p.8). This aspect has already been documented, for instance see Sheen Farrukh’s *Kari Zakhm*, and similar writings. Nafisa Shah has integrated in the present book the practice of *karo-kari* in the web of power relations. The author proves with the help of actual court cases, that the state justice system is manipulated by the rival parties and the winner wins a lot in addition to the right of dishonouring the rival community’s women, and so indirectly, men too. Despite truth being stated in the court, the interpretations matter more than facts. Various pressure tactics are used by the parties on the periphery: such as transfer of investigation officers, fabrication of other cases, and accusing the police, etc. Traditional ways of settling dispute are maneuvered and spiritual persons are also involved. The role of plaintiff, having assumed the status of *wali* (guardian), who normally has power over life and death of a murdered person is helpful in settling dispute, but Nafisa Shah pleads that due to

the heinous role such *wali* plays in perpetuating *karo-kari* practice, this role now should be adopted by the state, as it has been done in the US, to ensure justice in the murder—‘a crime against state’.

The victims, at times, themselves become politically active agents, seeking shelter from the state to let them enjoy right to choose in marriage. But when such victims return to community they cannot live with open face. Such a situation, called by the author as ‘social death’, also endorses the power of customs and refutes the state power to let them live in a dignified manner. In continuation of their ‘black’ labels, the denial of funeral rites to *kari* and *kara*, the book also discusses the existence of *Kariyon jo Kabrustan* (the graveyard of *kari* women), where such women are buried. To this myth the author has provided a genuine answer. She writes that such a graveyard was reported in Sindh, and it was sort of sensational news for journalists, of course, in 1995. Later in her investigation, Nafisa Shah explains that this news is just a product of the media; such women are just thrown away after killing, according to local people. Is it not a crime against humanity that a dead body is thrown after violent murder under allegation which in most of the cases is totally baseless? Customs define life conditions, highlight their significance, and celebrate their happening, but customs are cruel, too, if they encourage killing of humans, who have ideally equal right to choose their life partners, or to propose such ones to their guardians. In closing days of year 2017, such notions sound so obsolete, ancient and decadent, that not condemning them even seems to be a crime. The wide range of human rights guaranteed by national constitution and international charters provide protection only to those who call out for help and are assisted by the fellow citizens.

In the context of emerging trends, and through her superb quality research, Nafisa has tried to established that the ideology of *ghairat* is baseless, rather the label and excuse of *ghairat* is used ‘as a strategy for other objectives’. Even the myth that the Baloch tribes imported the ideology to Sindh is baseless, because in Balochistan any such event resulted in divorce but not murder. So she joins those authors and women’s rights activists who assert that ‘there is no honour in killing’. True they dishonor those women and men, whom they kill and throw their bodies away to be eaten by animals.

Meanwhile, the author, with her strong feminist conviction, feels that all victim women are not silenced or ignored forever. Their voice gets resonance in a new form of poetry and fiction in Sindh. This voice is to advocate right to love and right to marry out of free will, and it laments the plight of those tortured to death for ‘love’. These writers and

artists represent women as victims of male violence, challenging the hypocrisy and criminal silence of the society.

The book is written in a lucid, eloquent jargon-free language which enhances its impact. It is methodologically sound. The author presents her arguments in a convincing manner which clears the mist around the subject. Though the impact of the book is expected only in English speaking circles, but even then, if they move a genuine legislation and ensure its implementation in far and wide corners of the country, that day can be a day of relief for all those who have been so far striving for stopping violence against women since centuries.

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Harris Khalique, *Crimson Papers Reflections on Struggle, Suffering, and Creativity in Pakistan*, published by Oxford University Press, Karachi, 2017, pp.136, price not printed.

The book is to elaborate what has happened to Pakistani citizens' rights to 'a dignified physical space to live, a respectable economic space to earn a decent living, a free intellectual space to think, and an uninhibited artistic space to create'. Harris Khalique, a well-known poet, columnist and civil society activist, has voiced his concerns on a plethora of problems and symptoms of problems, which have been persistently tormenting the state and society of Pakistan.

The four chapters of the book are titled in a symbolic manner, as 'Blood', 'Sweat', 'Tears', and 'Ink', indicating four major areas of discontent for any liberal Pakistani. These correspond, according to the author's preface, to (a) bloody wars fought on identity, communalism and Kashmir; (b) toiling and testing of progressive ideology holders; (c) striving and tribulation of five women as victims of intolerance; and (d) challenges and prospects of creative writing especially poetry in Urdu in Pakistan.

The author has worked in an NGO and, as such, he firmly believes in the participatory role of people. He has amassed sufficient data and experiential knowledge to boost his conviction in democracy as the panacea for ills faced by Pakistan. Inclined to find out the factors that have undermined democracy, promised to the people of Pakistan at the dawn of independence, he identifies a complicated network of agents and processes, all striking at the roots of civic freedoms and fundamental rights guaranteed in the international charters and national constitutions.

Khalique declares ‘Kashmir issue’ as merely claiming academic and intellectual interest, but even migrants from Kashmir are now less oriented to it. Moreover, he discusses the anti-India feeling among the Pakistanis, and trappings of Indian writers. He categorically points out the examples of identity confusions, and in Pakistan discriminating Bengalis as an oppressed nation throughout their history; was expressed by General Ayub Khan. Yet, despite all that, author states that the Bangladeshi women of today have forsaken their past bitterness, so now they do offer friendship to Pakistanis. It is not an ignorable fact that today every conscious Pakistani, little aware of the history of separation of East Pakistan, when visits Bangladesh feel something strange inside—bit fearful but showing some boldness, some feel guilt mixed with a desire to compensate with warm expression the wrongs of the past done by West Pakistan. Khalique has woven a historical background, along with his personal experiences, to analyze and draw conclusions in this chapter. He has commented on what happened in Bangladesh after 1971 regarding investigating the war crimes and military high-handedness in 1971, and those who abetted the bloodletting and sufferings of the citizens. Khalique remarks that the Bangladeshi authorities should not be selective in punishing the crimes because large scale killing of civilians was done by the liberation forces as well, which needs investigation. However, he also criticizes the Pakistani politicians of condemning the hanging of some leaders in Bangladesh, whereas it was an internal matter of Bangladesh and these persons were found guilty of killing local Awami League workers, academics and intellectuals. This matter shows a deep confusion which he puts as:

Pakistanis are troubled and feel confused when it comes to setting the record straight, bringing resolution and closure to issues that have plagued our social and political consciousness, and accepting what went wrong without being defensive. (p.18)

Khalique’s analysis of India-Pakistan relations, tensions, security dilemmas and the psyche cultivated on the memories and legacies of partition is exquisite. He compares the lives and death of General A.A.K. Niazi and Sepoy Maqbool Hussain, highlighting the sufferings of two patriots as a class issue. He also highlights the wrongs and wrong perceptions about the events reported and interpreted about Kashmir. He refers to the myths about being peaceful and proud South Asians, whereas there is unending show of intolerance, misuse of religion for political gains, persecution of religious minorities, so he suggests ‘a lot of soul searching’ to set the course right. To him, just dreaming of a peaceful South Asia is not enough; there has to be an imagination of a

different South Asia—living with mutual interests, respect for sovereignty, and operating a common market.

The chapter on ‘sweat’ starts with mentioning Pakistan’s early sophisticated non-conformists. They were struggling to ensure constitutionalism, equality, justice and human dignity. Khalique recalls his meeting with leaders of progressive trade unions movement, their commitment to socialism, and the trials they had to go through at the hands of Zia regime; many of whom died as unsung heroes. Some notable and celebrated names of Progressive Writers Association (PWA) has also been mentioned. Khalique has narrated his personal account of meeting many of the prominent names of PWA, who were active, committed and determined to sustain the leftist movement, such as Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Zamir Niaz, Khawaja Masood, Aftab Ahmad Khan, Sadiq Hussain, and Begum Majid Malik. The movement according to Khalique, has succumbed to changing economic conditions. He describes hard workers, labourers, rickshaw drivers, writers, and many such ‘toilers of the east’ who were spirit of the movement.

In the chapter under the heading ‘Ink’, Khalique starts with the debate on medium of instruction, the English mania but actually depriving the lower classes of the English needed for and also guaranteeing, ‘power, prosperity, privilege, and prestige’. Irony of not teaching the language to the people, in which state affairs are run, is pointed out in the book. Being bilingual or multilingual and writing creatively in more than one language simultaneously is not striking for Pakistanis, but writing in English and local languages together is striking, because English is language of power. Once it was Persian, and this shift of second language has been associated with ‘complete transformation in the dynamics of power, politics and economy in this region and the world’ (p. 96). The availability of translated works in any major language, is the fact which enables the reader, appreciate and enjoy the creativity, and not the language as a medium. Moreover, English-speaking people in Pakistan are a few and even fewer are those who write creatively in English, yet their works representing Pakistan to the international audience needs to be far better, as the literature produced in local languages in Pakistan is undoubtedly better in richness and depth. However, the author asserts that English writers’ contribution in introducing Pakistan to the world must be acknowledged (p.97). He identifies two streams of poetry written in Pakistan in English. One is in ‘archetypal English idiom’, while the other is rooted in local experience but having universal expansion as well. Khalique holds poetry as a mirror reflecting progress of human evolution. The poets are revered in nations who have acumen and taste for art and creativity, whereas in

Pakistan strangulating bold voices has been a practice. He appreciates Taufiq Rafat for his English poetry and a host of Urdu and regional languages poets for their superb poetry.

In the reflections and narration under the chapter heading, 'Tears', Khalique shows that Pakistan is declining fast at the scale of human dignity and citizens' rights. What he has expressed so vividly as 'Squeezed elbow room and shrinking leg space', describes the dilemma of today's Pakistan's citizenry. He, however, appreciates struggle of five women, in particular, who have struggled hard to get this space expanded. They faced grave consequences ranging from their death and imprisonment to the death of a son. Nonetheless, new dimensions have emerged in the struggle for citizens' rights in the country. Feminization is one and harder the struggle, harsher the punitive action for the 'darsers'. He explains the case of those women, including Shabana, a traditional singer and dancer of Swat, and Saeeda of Quetta belonging to Hazara community. Then comes Parween Rahman, the architect and social worker par excellence, upholding the cause of downtrodden Karachiites, 'a true disciple of Dr Akhtar Hameed Khan' (p.71), who was eliminated because possibly, 'a bigot who found the existence of an independent woman in his neighbourhood threatening to his ideology and values' (p.79). Then the story of Sabeen Mahmud unfolds a series of sores of Pakistan: intolerance, insurgency, state terrorism resulting in missing person, anti-federation drive, and inequality of citizenship. Sabeen had been resisting all forms of discrimination and injustice. She had to pay with her life.

In all such cases Khalique asserts foremost responsibility of the state to protect its citizens. All such reference cases relate a story of a high degree of intolerance for different cultural practice, beliefs, or subtle shades of a mainstream faith, or even a locale promoting dialogue. He also explains the metamorphosis of Pakistani society becoming a hardened intolerant bigot and shortsighted, quite contrary to the exigencies of the global world. He very rightfully and forcefully laments the social ostracism and inhuman treatment meted out to non-Muslims in public transport, buses, schools and the resultant amount of harassment, strengthened by the possible allegations under blasphemous labels. The pressures on such people are commonplace to convert to Islam if they are living in Pakistan, thus a mission to make the country a monotheistic and 'pure' Muslim state, quite contrary to ideal of the founders of Pakistan. He confirms that this social discrimination is class-specific; any upper class non-Muslim would be welcomed in the same house to share grand crockery but their servants would separate the non-Muslim's crockery.

One must remember that a large number of non-Muslims are poor, serving in low-paid jobs or become agricultural unskilled labourers.

Looking for the roots of mistrust, maltreatment and gross violation of citizens of Pakistan, Khalique states that there has been an ongoing conflict between pro-people and elitist politics in Pakistan, even from the pre-partition days. Those who were determined to support people's rights and democratic norms, like Mian Iftikharuddin, at least have reported the insulting attitude of big landlord politicians towards Quaid-i-Azam, who wanted new land settlement and resettling the uprooted community from the East Punjab, and to initiate land reforms. All such pro-people plans of the Quaid were flopped by such arrogant feudal class which was supported by elite politicians like Liaquat Ali Khan and Chaudhry Khaliquzzaman. Politics in Pakistan, in the initial phase, remained high-politics, with common Pakistanis having no say in the affairs of government. Analyzing derailment of democracy, third reasons listed by the author is the role of higher judiciary and lawyers, who have been protecting legally the political designs of dictators and self-serving rulers. A very plain but warning signal from the author is in the phrase: 'watch closely the recently found self-confidence of superior judiciary', as he thinks it should not be taken as an optimistic trend. The fourth and final factor to abhor democracy has been the lack of internal democracy, in political parties themselves; their poor organisation, and lack of knowledgeable cadres. He blames the political class to sustain reactionary and conservative elements, for showing a liberal posture regarding economy but upholding religious rhetoric simultaneously. These included Z.A. Bhutto, General Zia, and then the state itself nurturing and promoting '*jihadis*'.

Khalique boldly points out the blistered face of patriotism due to 'hypocrisy and pomposity'; such elements have been upholding an archaic and traditional brand of ideology of Pakistan, and have a profound pride in the past Muslim glory. In the meantime the dogmatism of the leftists in Pakistan keeps the author away from being in relief because both the ideological camps rely on past theorists and their theories fail to present any fresh analyses for the objective conditions of today. He regrettably mentions that in the past decades some great ideologists and revolutionaries had to go through difficult times: jails, torture, exile, destitution, and murder, but nowadays, even activists who simply demand basic human needs for people in Pakistan are being killed.

On the whole, a unique quality of the book lies in its biographical content making it a sort of oral history. The author shows that how he has been interacting with luminaries of various creative

fields, who had been shaping the path of the people, or influencing their respective areas of creative activities. He also takes inference from individual life histories and relates and interprets them to apply the results to a wider section of population. All such techniques of writing social, cultural and oral history are integrated in this book. These skills which require a keen observing eye, have matured well in the author. As Ghalib once put it as looking at '*qatray main qulzam*' (ocean in a drop), so has the vision been acquired by the author, which is then skillfully woven with a literary and artistic approach to express the social realities. It is because of author's good training in the literature written in English, Urdu and diverse languages. Such reflections on observations are made by every sensitive and sensible citizen, but are rarely penned down for which Harris Khalique deserves applause. Wherever he applies his personal judgment, it is informed and cultivated in liberal, humanist philosophy and is well-contextualized in history. The book is not voluminous but contains an analysis of a wide range of factors interplaying to shape main features of Pakistan's polity and society. The approach used is an important dimension of historiography as well, i.e. writing history through one's own experiences immersed in time and space. True every Pakistani is watching and going through such times, yet few could relate the turmoil Pakistanis are suffering as a nation, or struggling to achieve the status of a nation to a larger national canvas.

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Dr. Jürgen Wasim Frembgen, *The Art and Craft of the Hunza Valley in Pakistan: Living Traditions in the Karakoram*, published by Oxford University Press, Karachi, 2017, pp.110, Rs.1,425.

The Book, *The Art and Craft of The Hunza Valley in Pakistan*, is an amazing work of Dr. Jurgem Wasim Frembgen. He discusses the areas of Pakistan which spread among the world's greatest mountainous ranges of Himalaya, Karakorum and Hindukush. Dr. Frembgen teaches subjects like Anthropology and Islamic Studies in various universities of Germany and Austria. Not only this, he is also associated with many universities of Pakistan like Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, and National College of Arts, Lahore. In view of this association, he has an interest in the topics like Culture, Islamic Studies, Art and Sufism etc. He possesses a vast knowledge on these subjects.

In this book Dr. Frembgen has specifically discussed the geography and history of the area, race and language of the inhabitants, and related art of the areas of Hunza valley and Nagar. This effort is directly influenced by the lack of research material on these areas, due to which the only source a writer is left with is his own experience. Dr. Frembgen himself says:

Ethnographic field research in Hunza and Nagar has been conducted over a period of more than twenty years (between 1981 and 2004). During the initial years of my research here, I focused on anthropology, the local history, and the ancient political system. However, by July 1986 I had already collected a representative sample of embroidery on behalf of the German Textile Museum in Krefeld. Subsequently, I concentrated more on the various crafts in this region and thereafter, through annual visits, I intensified the documentation of this dying, and in some cases already virtually extinct, material culture as thoroughly as possible.

Dr. Frembgen has deeply analyzed the areas of Hunza Valley and Nagar and also highlighted the subtleties of the art of these areas. The art of making jewelry, sewing, the ancient talent of making things out of natural silk, textile designing, cotton made products, specific construction material, beautiful wood furniture, specific musical instruments, weapons, tools, iron, leather and wool products like carpet making have been analyzed very closely. The author has also included beautiful and high quality pictures of these products in his book to make it fascinating to look while reading.

Northern Areas, by their geography, history and culture, are related to Central Asia. The population of this area belongs to the *Ithna Ashari*, Twelver-Shi'as and Ismaili, Shi'as. The inhabitants on the right side of the river Hunza are called 'Hunzukuts' which means 'The inhabitants of Hunza'. These people speak Shina and Burusho languages whereas; the people on the other side of the river Hunza are called 'Nagarkuts'. They also speak the same Shina and Burusho Languages.

One interesting and strange thing of this area which is worth mentioning is the resemblance of the designs of jewelries made from gold, silver and other metals with an ancient local stupa. It means that the art of this area is influenced by the history and talent of thousands of years. These mountains and glaciers have preserved not only the history of thousands of years but also preserved the traditions and art.

This book provides the reader with a complete picture of those far away, beautiful and natural areas of Pakistan from which many people are unaware. It is a fact that the people living in other areas of

Pakistan do not know much about the Northern Areas specially Hunza valley. Dr. Frembgen's book is a great source of bringing the attention of many people living in other parts of Pakistan or abroad towards these beautiful areas.

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