

Dr. A. Shakoor Ahsan*

Iqbal Centenary Papers

Iqbal Centenary Papers is a collection of 25 articles which have been selected from the papers of Pakistani and foreign scholars presented at the International Congress on Allama Iqbal organized by the University of the Punjab in Lahore from 2 to 8 December 1977. 192 scholars including 63 from 29 foreign countries participated in the Congress. The book has been compiled by Prof. Mirza Muhammad Munawwar and published by the Department of Iqbal Studies, University of the Punjab. The preface has been written by Prof. Khairat Muhammad Ibne Rasa, Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Punjab, in which he has paid homage to Allama Iqbal, the poet-philosopher of Pakistan, and recounted the steps that the University has taken in commemorating the services by her greatest alumnus to humanity in general and the world of Islam in particular. The list of contributors includes eight foreign scholars. The papers deal with various aspects of Iqbal's art and thought and make a notable contribution to Iqbal studies. The subjects discussed are as wide apart as religion, mysticism, philosophy, science, metaphysics, politics, legislation, art and aesthetics. They include some new themes which add to the dimensions of the present works.

The book opens with papers in which parallels have been drawn or a certain amount of similarity discerned between Allama Iqbal and certain poets and thinkers, both ancient and modern. These include Bhartarihari, Sanai, Dante, Buber, Tillich and Malek Ben-nabi. These comparisons are at times highly exciting and revealing.

In his paper "The Medieval Religiosity of Dante and the Modern Religion of Iqbal" the famous Italian Orientalist Alessandro Bausani finds little justification in drawing a comparison between Dante, a representative of medieval Christianity and Iqbal, a product of modern Muslim environment. The author is more concerned with

*Professor Emeritus, University of the Punjab.

ORIENTAL PUBLICATIONS

1. **Tabaqat-e-Nasiri**, edited by *Aqa-ye Abd-ul-Haiy Habibi Afghani*, 1954, Vol. II, 300 pp., Rs. 10.00.

A general history of Asia by Minhaj-e-Siraj-e-Juzjani.

2. **Tazkareh-e-Makhzan-al-Gharaib**, by *Dr. Muhammad Baqir*, 1968, Vol. I, 894 pp., Rs. 50.00.

An unpublished biographical work on Persian poets by Shaikh Ahmad Ali Hashmi of Sandilah compiled in 1218 A.H. (1803 A.D.) and now reproduced from the oldest manuscript dated 1219 A.H. (1804 A.D.) with introduction and notes.

3. **Armaghan-e-Ilmi**, by *Dr. S. M. Abdullah*, 1955, 588 pp.,
Rs. 15.00.

The book represents a graceful tribute paid by scholars from many lands besides Pakistan to Dr. Maulvi Muhammad Shafi as a gesture of appreciation for his devoted services to the cause of Oriental learning and research (out of stock).

4. **Urdu Shairi Ka Siyasi Wa Samaji Pasmanzar**, by *Dr. Ghulam Husain Zulfiqar*, 1966, 521 pp., Rs. 16.00.

A valuable research of the Urdu poetry in the light of political and social trends of Indo-Pak history.

5. **Fahrist-i-Makhtutat-e-Shafi**, prepared by *Dr. Bashir Husain*, 1972, 650 pp., Rs. 40.00.

This is a descriptive catalogue of 469 manuscripts of Persian, Urdu and Punjabi in the Library of late Prof. Maulvi Muhammad Shafi. Efforts have been made to define the importance of each book, i.e. whether it is oldest, unique or contemporary etc. Various indexes and photos of rare and important manuscripts have also been added. The collection of original calligraphy pieces has also been introduced in this catalogue.

University Sale Depots

University of the Punjab

Lahore - Pakistan

3. P. Bron; "Indian Architecture"; D. B. Taraporevala sons and Co. Private Ltd; Bombay; IIIrd edition; P. 110; (1942).
4. Muhammad Waliullah Khan; "Lahore and its Monuments" International Packing Company Ltd; Karachi; P. 35; (1964).
5. F. Stiengass; "A comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary"; Routlogge 2nd Kegan Limited; London; P. 203 (1963).
6. T. H. Thornton and J. L. Kipling; "Lahore 1876; Chapter on, Fort and Places; P. 53; Private collection.
7. Muhammad Waliullah Khan; "Lahore and its Monuments"; International Packing Company Ltd; Karachi; P. 20; (1964).

and inside are Iris and Poppy plants.

Conclusion

The small but beautiful, costly, white marble Pavilion, 'Naulakha' at Lahore Fort is inlaid with precious stones. This delicate well-balanced and beautiful decorated inlay is remarkable, for exquisite minuteness in finish of execution. The panels with different patterns, which are mostly floral, with outstanding colour-schemes of precious, and semi-precious stones, reflect the originality and purity of design. This pavilion with a curvilinear roof is full of interest. It is different in architectural forms, from the nearby buildings. This type of roof reflects Turkish influence.

All the Mughal rulers lavished great care, on the design and construction of architectural monuments. But we see that the buildings built during the reign of Shah Jahan, marked the highest point of Mughal architecture. The monuments of this period, large and small, testify equally to the superb taste of this ruler. The Mughal rulers who followed Shah Jahan did not demonstrate a comparable taste in the building arts, and the works they produced were of a decidedly inferior quality. As the Naulakha at Lahore Fort alone so clearly demonstrates, the Mughal dynasty bequeathed to the Indo-Pak Sub-continent a rich architectural heritage. We see that in Pietra dura of Naulakha at Lahore Fort almost all the designs are floral, and Pietra dura reached its climax during Shah Jahan's reign. To sum up, the Mughal Pietra dura work in Naulakha at Lahore Fort is entirely a development of indigenous craft, in its technique and character.

NOTES

1. Alhaj Maulvi Faroz-ud-Din; "Persian Feroz-ul-Lughat"; (Dictionary; Ferozsons Ltd.; P. 190.
2. Mohammad Saleh Kamboh; "Shah Jahan Nama" Translated by Dr. Nazar Hassan Zadhi, Markazi Urdu Board, Lahore, Vol. II, III; P. 316 (1974).

Plate I

The entrance of Naulakha is through a multifoil arch, which is flanked by pillars they are minutely inlaid with precious and semi-precious stones. The minuteness of work, refinement of design, and richness of colours is highly conveyed through these designs. On the six gems on the outside are designs of vases. Three of one type and three of another. There are two types of vases, one with pedestals while the others with a dish (Plate II). The panels on the platform and on the roof, both have pietra dura, on the lower panel is the band-e-rumi design, and the panel above and on the roof (Plate I) has a melon shaped decoration.

Plate III

The capitals have small sockets, each socket has a design, done in pietra dura. There are different motifs which have been repeated in these sockets. For example, (a) Cypress trees, (b) Poppy, (c) Jasmine, (d) Gulhar etc. These capitals are different from the capitals of Suman Burj⁶ or Jasmine tower of Delhi fort. Though there is similarity in the capitals, but the treatment is broader and flowers are of a different nature. The Central flower of the slab is undoubtedly Narcissus (Plate-IV, fig. 1). This single floral pattern is "Composed of about 102 pieces of different-coloured semi-Precious stones."⁷

Plate IV (Fig. 2)

The shafts have an inlay of delicate black lines inlaid in Sang-e-Musa, the base has different floral designs, and it gives the impression of a bunch of flowers in a Vase, The space between the two bases has been very artistically decorated, with a flower that is large with shades of red and with leaves that are green.

To balance the base of the shaft with the space in between the two shafts, above the base a beautiful panel is made of a creeper design with red, green and blue stones, on a white marble background (Plate V). The creeper design is over the same width from base to top. The floral border touches the lower capital line.

Plate VI

The panels of the spans inside, are entirely floral, and very delicate, with flowers leaves, and buds. It seems as if they have been executed by a miniature painter. The slabs have spiral designs

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. CORNEYIAN. | (Aqiq) |
| 2. ONYX | (Sang-i-Sulaimani) |
| 3. BLACK MARBLE. | (Sang-i-Musa) |
| 4. LAPIZ LAZULI | (Lajvard) |
| 5. MOTHER OF PEARL | (Sip) |
| 6. YELLOW | (Sang-i-Khattu) |
| 7. WHITE MARBLE | (Sang-i-Marmar) |
| 8. GRAINED MARBLE | (Sang-i-Badal) |
| 9. JADE | (Sang-i-Yashab) |

Shah Jahan has the reputation of being greatest builder among the Emperors of India, he was specially interested in making his court as beautiful as possible. Side by side with the red sandstone which had already been used for so many buildings, white marble also began to be extensively used.³ In 1631-32 A.D.⁴ Shah Jahan built Naulakha, the marble pavilion at Lahore Fort. Although it is a small marble pavilion, but its decorations which are mainly done on white marble and inlay of precious and semi-precious stones in form of Peitra dura work is magnificent. This white marble pavilion is richly decorated with coloured stones and represents in arabasque, beautiful patterns of flower vases, trees, Cypresses, and geometrical designs. Naulakha is entirely composed of white marble. Technically it marks a turning point in architecture from sandstone construction to marble construction. The Naulakha, or marble pavilion at the Lahore fort has the shape of "Turkoman Cottage" named Bangah.⁵ This pavilion at Lahore fort has a delicacy of treatment, and the chaste quality of its decoration places it in a class by itself. Over the whole surface, delicately modifying the whole dazzling effect of white marble, is a diaphanous veil of coloured inlay in patterns of astonishing diversity.

Naulakha expresses in every part the high aesthetic ideals that prevailed among the Mughals at that time. No description can convey an idea of the beauty and elegance of this pavilion. It is so profusely decorated that there is no space left which is not covered by the Pietra dura. Every design of floral and Jamè, is different from the other one, in the most natural forms of colour.