KASHFUL ALFAZ –DEEWAN-E-GHALIB

(Mutdawil, Ghazliyat)
Compiled/edited by Jamal Abdul Wajid New Delhi, Ghalib Institute.2002.
807p. Price: Re 400.00

Concordancing in modern connotation is a science of making indexes, analyzing keywords, counting word frequencies and finding phrases and idioms and much more. It has been reinvented lately, thanks to software engineering and WWW, to serve as a tool in language teaching/learning, data mining and data clean up, translation /language engineering, corpus linguistics and natural language software development, Lexicography and content analysis in many disciplines including Accounting, History and Medieval studies. Thus web concordances are already available especially in the field of Religion and English literature. We witness concordances of Bible on the web, besides of P.B Shelley (Selected Poems) and of T.S. Coleridge and John Keats. Software for web concordance is developed by K J C Watt Known as "Concordance" acting as a powerful tool for concordancing, which means that every single (orthographic) word (i.e. a string of text separated by a space) is searched and compiled into a concordance. It is useful for East Asian texts as well. However, there is no evidence of right aligned languages/ scripts like Arabic, Persian and Urdu covered in the programme as these have their own problems of syntax and connotation of the word and its derivatives, homonym etc.

The book under review is a rare contribution of a scholar librarian in the field of Urdu literature in general and in understanding the facets of concordance of an Asian language in particular. It should not only help to meet and understand the usual and unusual needs of Urdu love sonnets of Ghalib and Classical Urdu Literature but may serve as basic tool for programmers and algorithm writers for developing a software for developing concordances in the near future. Thus it is a landmark in exploring new frontiers of knowledge and useful to a scholar investigating linguistic dimension of Urdu or Persian literature. The work has put in hard labour, besides monotonous in nature which should have been normally carried out by some organisation for about two to three yeas with at least three persons. It can't be a job of an individual, unless filled up with enthusiasm, dedication, extraordinary hold on Urdu poetry and linguistics.

Mr. Wajid commences his work with a preface and introduction, both well documented and informative. The book is spread over three parts. The first part is divided into three sections. The first section contains list of ghazals (love sonnets) in alphabetical order under 'Radeef' (i e Rhyme) & year of composition indicating ghazal number given in the book itself. It serves as an index to the collection of love sonnets

Its second section is an index in alphabetical order with first sentence of the couplet, making the first word as an entry element. This entry element or key is in bold face to distinguish it from other words. The main and last section is 'Deewnan-e- Ghalib " (F3. نسخہ عرشی) Collection of love sonnets in rhyme order] having 234 'ghazals'.

The second part contains indexes, graphs ,tables etc . The first table indicates against each radeef , number of 'ghazils' and total number of couplets. The second set of tables gives under each radeef ,list of ghazils with the full line showing 'radeef' in bold face and indicating ghazil number and its total couplets. The third set of tables under each year shows for each redeef 'ghazil ' number as per the 'deewn" and couplets thereof. The next set of tables is distribution of 'ghazils' with couplet number under each 'radeef' analysed in many tables. The last table is a time graph drawn using spreadsheet showing 'ghazils' and number of couplets and also expressing it with a percentage bar in different shading. The use of colour mechanism could have made it more contrast and beautiful on a magnified scale on A4 size paper.

The 3rd part is the main part of the book giving the dictionary description of the words used by Ghalib in his ghazils. It is divided into two sections-

one dedicated to the nouns and the other to the verbs associated with the poetry of Ghalib. The document contains description for use of the book in a well organized manner.It has excluded certain words listed separately in the book under review as a "Stop List". The homographs are taken together and where Aphesis Aphaeresis has been encountered in the dictionary, cross references are given. The nouns used are singular for Urdu and Persian words especially where "ha" (ہ) has been used for making plurals but while different mechanism is used for construction of number in Urdu language both singular as well as plural is used. Each word in the list refers to three digits in the fist line i.e. Ghazal number, couplet number and line first or second of the couplet referred to. Each digit is separated by a dot in the line. The second line of the book refers to five digits. The first digit shows frequency of the word in the content, the second digit position of composition order, the third digit percentage calculated from total occurrence, fourth digit shows its presence in number of ghazils ,while the fifth digit Indicates its percentage.

The volume is printed on a good quality paper and excellent bindings in hard covers, with text well executed having accuracy, precision and dedication to the aims and objectives of this useful dictionary. Prof Wajid is to be congratulated for a meticulous and superbly executed concordance, that deserves to be consulted by readers of Indian culture, scholars, students and libraries interested in Urdu literature especially one specializing in Ghalib studies.

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