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The Qaumi English-Urdu Dictionary

THE URDU LANGUAGE has been lucky in at least one respect: it began to attract the attention of bilingual lexicographers while still a toddler. George Hadley's *Grammatical remarks on the practical and vulgar dialect of the Indostan language commonly called Moors, with a vocabulary, English and Moors* ([London: T.Cadell] 1772) was followed by a large number of bilingual dictionaries, of which the *Qaumi English-Urdu Dictionary* (henceforward, QD), produced by the Muqtadira Qaumī Zubān or the (Pakistan) National Language Authority, Islamabad, is the latest.

One had high hopes for this work; one, because it had the backing and resources of the Government of Pakistan and, two, it was announced that Dr. Jameel Jalibi, a noted scholar of Urdu and translator of T.S. Eliot's critical essays, would be its Chief Editor. However, one is constrained to point out that the end product falls far short of one's expectations. In what follows I shall attempt to illustrate just how, and why. I shall first make a few general observations and then take up a few specific points.

The word "*qaumi*" (national) in the title would presuppose that the work's organizing principle derives in some inexorable way from national interest and need. But does it? Hardly! The QD is entirely based on an American dictionary, *Webster's*. To me at least, such a choice is patently misguided. American dictionaries are essential tools to understand the intricacies of American English no doubt, but to select one of them as the basis for a lexicon intended primarily for the people of Pakistan must be based on some incontrovertible logic. In his Preface Dr. Jalibi defends his choice by underscoring the fact that it is the American variety of English which is spreading in the world today, and that it is also largely the variety which is being used in "modern standard books on sciences, economics and finance, and in computer programs" (p. 5).

These reasons, apparently compelling and weighty, are in fact facile,

fallacious and misleading. For one thing, it is two British organizations—the British Council and the BBC—that are doing more than any American agency to spread the English language in the world. For another, most average size British dictionaries—e.g., *The Concise Oxford*, *Collins Dictionary of English Language*, *Longman's*, *Reader's Digest Universal Dictionary*—contain many more entries on scientific subjects than Webster's encyclopedic edition opted for by Dr. Jalibi.

These remarks are not intended as a criticism or denial of the importance of American English. But the ground conditions in Pakistan practically dictate that a British, rather than an American, dictionary ought to have been selected. As everyone knows, it is British English that is used throughout Pakistan. Whether in spelling or in idiom, the British usage alone is considered standard. Thus, the introduction of American orthographic conventions in a dictionary prepared under the aegis of a renowned national institution will only lead to confusion.

American English (and for that matter many other Englishes of the world) display qualities markedly different from those of British English. It could not be otherwise. After all, American English developed in a different environment and society, which included immigrants from every imaginable part of the world. Pakistani English, too, has begun to exhibit its own peculiarities. Although a scientific study of Pakistani English is yet to be undertaken, the American scholar Robert J. Baumgardner has drawn some interesting conclusions in his article, "The Pakistanisation of English," which appeared in the Lahore-based newspaper *Nation*. He proposes that Pakistani English be recognized as a separate branch of English. And *The Oxford Companion to the English Language* (New York, London: Oxford University Press, 1992) does confer this status upon it.

Baumgardner states that Pakistani English-language newspapers and magazines not only frequently use such Urdu words as *goonda* [*ghunda*], *iqra* [*iqra*], *jirga*, *kachhi abadi* [*kačči ābādī*], *mazar* [*mazā*], *mohtsib* [*muhtasib*], *nikah nama* [*nikāh nāma*], *auqaf* [*auqāf*], *sifarish* [*sifārish*], etc., but they also show no qualms in manufacturing new compounds by joining English and Urdu words together, for instance, *rikshaw wala* [*wālā*], *lathi charge* [*lāṭhī*], *paan shop* [*pān*], *double roti* [*rōṭī*], etc. What's more, they even make plurals out of them after the English method (*goondas*, *rickshawalas*, etc.). Single words and interpolations aside, the Pakistanis have gone a step further and begun to tinker with the English expressions themselves. By adding prefixes and suffixes to both English and Urdu words, they have coined novelties that remain peerless in any other variety of English. Examples: *ad hocism*, *affectee*, *bakra-lifter* (on the

pattern of shop-lifter), *child-lifter*, *derecognise*, *deload*, *denotify*, *eveninger*, *morningner*, *history-sheeter*, *mullahism*, *stop-gapism*, *shiftee*, *ziaism*, etc.

Another peculiarity of Pakistani English is the use of nouns as verbs and the other way round. Both “aircraft” and “aeroplane” are used the world over as nouns only; in Pakistan, however, they are turned into verbs without hesitation. Likewise, “move over,” originally a phrasal verb, has been metamorphosed into a noun by the Pakistani bureaucracy.

The penchant for innovation has affected whole phrases as well. Hybrid or novel constructions are made and used with glee and confidence. Here in Pakistan, one “discusses a topic threadbare,” “is meted out a stepmotherly treatment,” “observes a death anniversary,” “raises slogans against the government,” “takes out a procession,” “copes up a problem,” “receives shoulder promotion,” “stresses on” (the importance of a matter), “requests for a favour” and is “always worried over law and order situation.”

Should these and other Pakistani innovations—which have permeated all levels of the society and are freely used and understood—be incorporated in what purports to be—indeed avowedly *is*—a “qaumī” dictionary? Both common sense and “qaumī” interests dictate that they should be.

Turning to British English and American English, quite a large number of differences have appeared between the two. These differences are not limited to words, their pronunciation, meanings and usages; they can also be seen in sentence and phrase construction itself. Limitations of space preclude exhaustive enumeration, but a partial list should suffice (the American equivalents appear in parentheses):

autumn (fall), banknote (bill), bath (bathtub), bill (check), bonnet (hood), caretaker/porter (janitor), chips (French fries), cinema (movie house/theater), cloak room (check room), conscription (draft), rubber (eraser), cooker (stove), cupboard (closet), dressing gown (bath robe), dual carriageway (divided highway), dummy (pacifier), dynamo (generator), earthwire (groundwire), estate agent (realtor), estate car (station wagon), flat (apartment), full stop (period), ground floor (first floor), hardware (house wares), Hoover (vacuum cleaner), jug (pitcher), label (tag), motor way (free way), nappy (diaper), packet (package), pavement/footpath (side walk), petrol (gas), postal code (zip code), public school (private school), state school (public school), queue (line), return ticket (round trip ticket), reverse charges (collect call), settee (love seat), silencer

(muffler), tin (can), waistcoat (vest), windscreen (windshield), zed (zee).

Of course some of these American words and expressions have gained currency in Pakistan also; however, a few stray examples cannot become the basis of standardization. The fact is that British vocabulary, expressions and constructions still hold incontestable sway over the country and it appears unlikely that the situation will change any time soon, not even with the help of an American dictionary.

An unfortunate consequence of using an American lexical model has been the elimination of all such words and expressions that refer to activities and pursuits that are unpopular or less popular in the United States. While nearly every known or obscure term pertaining to baseball, American football, ice hockey and other winter games in which Pakistanis have practically no interest can be found in the QD, there are nearly none pertaining to cricket, field hockey, and football (soccer), which continue to be the main national sports. Even such words as “bat” and “umpire” have been explained in terms of American games.

Dr. Jalibi mentions including Urdu words and expressions that are frequently used in English. However, two words—“ayah” and “phut” (as in “go phut”)—which most readily come to mind are not found in the QD. It may sound like nit-picking, but I’m more concerned about the fact that the absence of these and other similar items may spring from a flawed principle of lexicography. They are missing perhaps because they are used in British and not American English. So while they are every bit part of the English language scene in Pakistan, they have been spirited away from the QD.

Yet perhaps a more serious shortcoming is the complete absence of a pronunciation guide to lexical items in the QD. This is a flaw which it shares with almost every other English-Urdu dictionary, and with equally sad consequences. One who uses them ends up pronouncing the words in such an atrocious manner that the listener is left totally mystified.

Countless abbreviations are used in English. Earlier on they used to be listed at the back of the dictionary in a supplement. Today they are moved into the main body of the work. Anyway, abbreviations constitute an integral part of any dictionary. The QD has, however, completely ignored them.

Just as in Arabic and Persian, a characteristic of English language is its phrasal verbs. The QD does include them but not in a number commensurate with its size. Take, for example, the verb “to get”. By

adding prepositions and adverbs—such as “about,” “across,” “after,” “ahead,” “along,” “around,” “around to,” “at,” “away,” “away with,” “back,” “by,” “down,” “down to,” “in,” “in on,” “into,” “in with,” “off,” “off with,” “on,” “on to,” “out,” “over,” “over with,” “round,” “round to,” “through,” “together,” “up,” “up to”—a vast number of idioms are produced. In the QD only those phrasal verbs have been listed that are formed with the addition of “across,” “around,” “at,” “away with,” “by,” “off,” “together,” and “up.” Then again, each idiom often affords more than one meaning. “Take off,” for example, is used in no fewer than eleven senses. Of these *only two* are given in the QD. Similarly, “to get” is used for forming many other idioms and constructions, such as: “get no change out of somebody,” “get cracking,” “get someone’s goat,” “get a look in,” “get the message,” “play hard to get,” “get used to,” “get in the way,” “get out of the way,” “get one’s way,” “get weaving,” etc. The QD takes scarcely any notice of them at all.

Participles are used in English not only for forming various kinds of tenses but also as nouns and adjectives. In English dictionaries they are seldom entered. However, their absence in English-Urdu dictionaries is acutely felt. Indeed it becomes a handicap. Try hard as one might, their suitable Urdu equivalents are not easily found. Here are just a few of them: “born (teacher),” “defeated (mentality),” “hated (person),” “misplaced (trust),” “performing (arts),” “revealed (religion),” and “stolen (goods).” It is thus crucial to list at least the more complex of such participles.

Finally, as English words and expressions, like any other language, contain a multiplicity of meanings, the standard practice in the West is to list them numerically. This makes for a clean and uncluttered presentation and does not overly tax comprehension. The QD, on the other hand, uses semicolons to separate the different fields of meanings. This method, instead of easing the task of the user, only manages to confuse him.

Let me now turn to some specifics.

Dr. Jalibi’s Preface (pp. 5–9) is followed by a small list of English abbreviations and an inventory of various terms drawn from grammar, lexicography, sciences and the arts, along with their Urdu equivalents (pp. 11–13). One thought that all those terms were, grammatically speaking, “nouns”. The QD would seem to claim that even adjectives—such as “classical (*kilāsīkī*),” “colloquial (*bōl čāl*),” “commercial (*tijārati*),” “ecclesiastic (*kalīsiyāt*),” “medical (*tibb* [*sic* —Eds.]),” “technical (*tekniki*),” etc.—can be the names of terms.

I might mention here that among these words only “ecclesiastic” can

also be used as a noun. But then as a noun it does not denote a term but means, rather, a “cleric.” If the use as a term were intended, the appropriate form would be “ecclesiasticism.”

In this section “ecology” has been rendered as “*māḥauliyāt*.” In Urdu “ecology” and “environmentalism” (which, incidentally, does not even appear in the QD) are often considered one and the same thing (and both translated as “*māḥauliyāt*”), whereas, in fact, they are different things. “Environmentalism” is the concern or advocacy for the protection of natural surroundings. “Ecology,” on the other hand, is: (a) the relationship between organisms (including human beings) and their environment, and (b) the study of this relationship. Hence two different words should be used to distinguish between the two terms.

Among the other terms, “colloquial” (which should have been, correctly, “colloquialism”) and “slang” are indeed quite tricky. Strictly speaking, we don’t have a precise conception of these terms in Urdu. “Colloquialism” is usually translated as “*bōl čāl*”; I don’t know why. In English a sharp line can be drawn between the spoken and written language. Apart from a sizable vocabulary, the very sentence structure of the spoken language is often quite different from that of the written language. Such expressions as “can’t,” “won’t,” “you’ll,” “I know not,” “damn it,” “devil’s own,” “I’m (or I’ll be) damned,” etc., are rarely used in the written language (except, of course, in fiction). They are truly colloquialisms. In Urdu the situation is, or used to be, quite different. Here, at least in places considered the centers of Urdu such as Delhi and Lucknow, people wrote what they spoke, except for vulgar expressions. What the English users call “colloquialism” just did not exist here. Nonetheless, if insist one must on rendering “colloquialism” as “*bōl čāl*,” one had better explain that the term is applied to English words only.

The case of “slang” is even more challenging. It has been translated as “*avāmī*,” but actually we have neither an equivalent word for it nor can we coin one. The word, quite simply, is steeped in connotations that are peculiarly Western. It entered the English language in the eighteenth century. From where or how it came, nobody has any idea. Initially, it was itself a slang term. Even today it is hard to find two people who would agree on its meaning. In 1989 an international conference was held in Paris to resolve the dispute, but no definition on which the majority of the participants could agree was forthcoming. In dictionaries it is usually defined as “language peculiar to a group, argot or jargon.” But as Tony Thorne says in his work *The Dictionary of Contemporary Slang* (1990),

[Slang] is not, in fact, jargon, a secret code, dialect, unacceptable usage or the idiom of everyday speech, although it may contain elements of all of these. To continue defining by exclusion, slang is *not* catchphrases, journalese, neologisms and buzzwords, or idiolect (the private language of an individual), although examples of all these may be found within it. Looked at from a linguist's point of view, slang is a style category within the language, which occupies an extreme position in the spectrum of formality. Slang is at the end of the line; it lies beyond mere informality or colloquialism, where language is considered too racy, raffish, novel, unsavoury for use in conversation with strangers. Slang also includes forms of language through which speakers identify with or function within social sub-groups, ranging from surfers, schoolchildren and yuppies to criminals, drinkers and fornicators. (p. iii)

Despite its comprehensiveness this definition will not be accepted by all as conclusive. Even so, it does afford us an idea of what slang actually is. Therefore, it can be said without reservation that its translation as “*avāmi*” in the *Qaumi Dictionary* is a travesty of facts. The word ought to be accepted as it is and explained at the appropriate place.

An example of slang is the word “gay.” In nineteenth-century British slang it was invariably used for women, usually prostitutes, who were easily available for sexual services. At the beginning of the twentieth century, however, it was appropriated by homosexuals of the United Kingdom and the United States as a code word. (As the word covers both sexes and is applied equally to the active and passive partners, its translation as “*laundā*” in the QD is, to say the least, quite inaccurate.) In view of its meanings—“light-hearted and carefree; merry or mirthful”—accepted by all and sundry in those days, the word was considered quite harmless; hence, homosexuals were not embarrassed in applying it to themselves. Since their opponents scorned them and made vicious attacks on their proclivities, they resorted to the use of the word “gay,” thereby seeking to clothe their actions in positive terms. In the 1960s the word gained approval by playwrights and its use became quite common. The “gays” came out of the closet and worked with a vengeance toward gaining social acceptance for themselves. Now this word is no longer slang.¹

¹I'm indebted to Thorne (*The Dictionary of Contemporary Slang*) for the greater part of the information on the word “gay.”

Let me now turn to the main body of the QD. But before that, I might mention that I have neither the time nor the patience to go over all the 2356 closely printed, rather large-size pages of the QD and analyze them entry by entry. A formidable task! Quite beyond the ken of a single individual! So I shall confine my comments to merely a handful of items randomly picked.

The first principle of a bilingual dictionary is that it strive to give equivalents of the original language in the target language without unnecessary explanations. The editors of the QD have violated this principle with a vengeance. For instance, calling a “potato” *ālū* or *shakarqand* is not enough for them, they insist on giving a detailed description as well (“*z̄k mazrū‘a paudē kī khurdanī jaṛ*” and “*paudā baḏat-e kbud*”). This is overkill. I for one feel this pedantry has resulted in increasing the size of the book and in drastically reducing its effectiveness.

But more than the uncalled-for explanations, it is the tendency to misinterpret and misrepresent the English words and idioms that really gets in the way. And such mistakes are to be found on practically every page. It would appear that either the editors did not sufficiently apply their minds to the task or—brought up on the tradition of British English as they are—failed to appreciate the idiom and constructions of American English. For considerations of space I shall mention only a few instances of this type of failure.²

Arche-type (why the hyphen?): “*avvalīn namūna; namūnah’-e avval; naqsh-e avval; pahlī banāvaṭ; voh pahlā namūna jis kē muṭābiq kō’ī čīz ba’d mēn banā’ī jā’e yā jis kē voh muṭābiq hō*” (p. 101). The word is used in two other senses which have been left out here. In one, it is considered the perfect example of a particular individual, object or system because the balance of their peculiarities are present in it. In that sense it is more or

New slang is being coined almost every day, more often in the U. S. than any other country. Here are a few of the slang expressions that have found currency just in the last year (1993): “bomb” (best, greatest); “crazy” (awesome, out of this world, as in “this party is crazy”); “dope” (good or cool); “do me up” (meaning, “give me the latest news”); “grind” (to eat in large quantities); “freak” (a good-looking man or woman); “pseudo” (an individual who is worried about conforming to the latest jargon); “trip” (being weird, funny or unusual); “wicked” (very, extremely, as in “that was wicked exciting”); 911 (information, as in “what’s the 911?”).

²I discuss these matters in greater detail in my Urdu pamphlet *Qaumī Anḡrēzī Lughat, Ēk Jā’iza* (Lahore: Polymer Publications, 1993).

less a synonym of “ideal,” “model,” “exemplar” or “standard.” The other is the particular sense in which C.G. Jung uses it, viz., an inherited ideal in the individual unconscious derived from the collective experience of humankind.

Authoress; poetess: such words are no longer used today because they are suggestive of sexual discrimination and are considered derogatory. This fact should have been noted.

Authorised Version: *muşaddiqa nuskhah'-e injil; bā'ebil kā shāh jēmz vālā muşaddiqa tarjuma jō 1611 mēn shā'e' huā t'ā* (p.128). To translate “authorized” as “*muşaddiqa*” is incorrect. The correct translation is “*bā-ikhhtiyār*.” As the British Bible was translated at the behest and with the permission of King James I, it is called the “Authorised Bible.” Similarly, any translation done with the permission of the copyright holder, just as any biography written with the cooperation of the subject or the subject’s descendants, is called “authorised translation” or “authorised biography.”

Biscuit, bisque: [*dō bār*] *pakā biskuṭ; muṭḥṛī; ṭikyā; qurṣ; mēdē kō sōḍē, khamīr aur bēking pā'ōḍar mēn gūndḥ kar tanūr mēn pakā'ē hu'ē ḥḥḥḥ ḥḥḥḥ ṭukṛē; ēk 'ām yā 'umda ḍabal rōṭī jisē biskuṭ numā andāz sē banāyā jā'ē. amrikā mēn is kō kurkurā* (cracker) *kahā jātā hai; kukṭ; halkā bādāmī raṅg. (zurūf sāzī) miṭṭī yā čīnī kē bartan bḥaṭṭī par čaḥḥānē kē ba'd magar vārniṣh karnē aur munaqqash banānē sē pahlē.*

First, the logic of lumping “biscuit” and “bisque” together entirely escapes me. The only senses common between the two are the two last ones in the above inventory. Then again, “biscuit” means different things to the British and American people. What is a “biscuit” to the former (as well as to the South Asians, especially Pakistanis) is more appropriately a “cookie” (sweet biscuit) or “cracker” (saltish biscuit) to the latter, who mean by “biscuit” what is called “scone” in Britain.

To call a “biscuit” *muṭḥṛī* is to stretch the meanings rather too much. And can “biscuit” ever be used in the sense of *ṭikyā* or *qurṣ* (tablet, pill, etc.)? I do not know. I could not find these meanings for the word in any British or American dictionary. It is also unclear why “cracker” has been rendered as “*kurkurā*”? Waris Sirhindi, an editor of the QD, defines *kurkurā* in his *Ilmī Urdū Lughat as khasta, bḥurbḥurā, karārā*. It is thus an adjective, not a noun, as “biscuit” is.

“Bisque” is also given separately on the same page, in fact three times. The first two entries explain it according to its meanings in French. In the third, it appears as a variant of the English “biscuit.” At one point, it has been explained in the context of sports/games. It is, in fact, “an advantage allowed an inferior player in certain games, especially a free point taken

when desired in a tennis set.” In this sense, too, it is a French word and unrelated to “biscuit.” The meanings given in the QD are incomprehensible.

Conversation: At one point it has been explained as “(qānūn) ikhlāqī kirdār yā čāl-čalan” (p. 449). Maybe the sense is correct, though I was unable to find evidence for it anywhere. The accompanying example (“criminal conversation or adultery”) does not help.

Definitive: To some extent this word has been correctly defined as *mu‘ayyin*, *mu‘tabar*, *ḥaqīqī*, etc. (p. 537). Strictly speaking, however, these are the meanings of the word “definite” and not “definitive” which, according to *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, has “the connotations of authority and conclusiveness.” The word is used for “an answer, treaty, verdict, etc.” and means “decisive” (*faiṣla kun*), “unconditional” (*ghēr mashrūṭ*), “final” (*qaṭ‘ī*). An important sense of the word, which is absent in the QD, is “most authoritative.” In this sense it is used in regard to an edition of a book or the performance of an actor. For example: “the definitive text of *Hamlet*”; “the definitive biography of Byron”; “of all actors, perhaps Olivier has been the definitive Macbeth.”

Deism: *tauḥīd; khudā-parastī; ilāhiyat; khudā kē vujūd kā ‘aqīda; khudā kē vujūd maḡar vaḥī kē ankār aur maḡhab-e fiṭrat kā ‘aqīda; is ‘aqīdē mēn khudā kō khāliq-e kā’ināt tō mānā jātā hai maḡar ḥādī nabiḥ; muvaḥḥid kā ‘aqīda yā maslak* (p. 539).

One is at a loss to understand how all these meanings have been discovered in this word. According to both British and American dictionaries, “deism” is “a belief in the existence of God as the creator of the universe.” But after setting the universe in motion, He totally disengaged Himself from it and no longer exercised any control over natural phenomena. It requires no special talent to appreciate that this belief is based solely on reason and denies the balance of divine revelations.

I would like to discuss here two other items as well: “pantheism” and “theism.” “Pantheism” has two senses. In the first sense it is quite close to the Ṣūfī doctrine of *Vaḥdat al-Vujūd*. A pantheist can identify God “with the forces of nature and with natural substances.” However, what he cannot do is to maintain or claim, as the QD does, that “*ḥaqīqat vaḥy-e ilāhī kā ēk maḡhar hai*.” The latter, although true in the doctrine of *Vaḥdat al-Vujūd*, cannot be applied to pantheism.

In its second sense “pantheism” has been described as: “*rūmiyōn kī ‘ibādat tamām dēvtā’ōn kē liyē*.” This, too, is incorrect. Its correct meaning is: “the belief in worshipping and tolerating all gods.”

Only with “theism” can *vahy* (revelation) be said to have some sort of relationship, but not in the way in which Muslims believe in it. The West denies the very concept of Divine revelation or *vahy*. In describing “theism” it freely talks of supernaturalism. “Theism” for it is “a belief in the existence of god or many gods.” For many it is a god who “is supernaturally revealed” to a human being and “sustains a personal relation to his creatures.” The QD defines “theism,” among other things, as “*tauḥīd-parastī*” and “*vahdat al-vujūd kā nazariya*.” This fantastic definition has left me stunned.

Esoteric: The meanings of this word have been limited to “*masā’il-e muḥramāna; kō’ī sirrī ‘aqīda; makhfi*” (p. 685). In English this word is used for all those things that can be comprehended or deciphered by only a select few who possess special knowledge, taste, or interests. For example: “It is written in an esoteric script that few people can understand.” “The arguments are rather esoteric.”

Feckless: the QD defines it as: “*kamzōr; nāmard; majhūl; naqīb; kābil, ghēr zimmēdār*” (p. 730). Actually the word means “lacking determination or strength, unable to do anything properly.”

Intimacy: this word is altogether missing in the QD.

Languorous: “*kamzōr; nātavān; behāl; ḥasrat-zada; ghunūda*” (p. 1098). The word, in fact, means: “lazy, relaxed, not energetic, usually in a pleasant way,” as in “languorous looks/walk/wave of the hand.”

Look in: “*mukhtaṣar daura karnā*” (p. 1155). This, too, is an incorrect definition. The expression, practically interchangeable with “drop in,” means: “to make a brief, especially unplanned, call on a person or at a place.”

Make love to: This expression has been defined at two separate places in the QD. Whether this is deliberate or due to oversight is not clear. Anyway, on p. 1160 it is defined as “*čūmā-čāṭī karnā; bōsa lēnā; čūmnā; ‘ishq-bāzī karnā; muḥabbat zāhir karnā; piyār karnā; mu‘āshqa karnā*” and on p. 1181 as “*mubāshrat karnā; bōs-o-kinār karnā*.” What is one to make of this unwarranted avalanche of definitions? In modern English the expression is quite simply used for having sexual intercourse.

Make out: “(*avāmī*) *jinsī ‘amal mēñ kāmyāb hōnā*” (p. 1181). The QD overlooks the five or six usually acceptable senses in which this expression is used (such as to understand, to fill in, etc.) and only defines it as slang. The given definition, again, is not only funny but also ridiculous. It means: “to succeed in (having) sexual intercourse.”

Necessity: It also means “*jabr*” (compulsion, determination), which is not mentioned in the QD.

Performance: among the meanings given for this word one is “*taṣnīf*” (p. 1444); however, “performance” stands for the entirety of an author’s works, both written words as well as utterances; “*taṣnīf*,” on the other hand, refers strictly to a written work.

Persian: “*fārsī; ‘ajamī; pārsī; irānī; junūb maghribī ʿshiyā kē mulk fārs kē mutaʿalliq jō ab irān kahlātā hai; fārs/irān kī zubān, ṣaqāfat yā us kē bāshindōn se mansūb. (ism) irān kī zubān yā is kā kōʿi bāshinda*” (p. 1450).

First, Fars is the name of a province in Iran, not of the whole country. It is true that some Western writers still call the Iranians Persian, but on the whole this practice is declining. I might point out that rendering “Persian” as “*pārsī*” is also questionable.

Second, as a noun “Persian” has been translated as “*irān kī zubān yā is kā kōʿi bāshinda*.” One would have thought that “Persian” as a language was an equivalent of “*Fārsī*.” But the QD prefers to call it “*irān kī zubān*,” as if the language spoken in Iran (and for that matter in many parts of Central Asia as well) has no name and is simply known as “*irān kī zubān*.”

Reveal: “*zāhir karnā, batā dēnā yā khōl dēnā; afshā karnā*” (p. 1691). In light of these, how is one to define—or translate—the phrase “revealed religion”?

Schematic: This word has been incorrectly defined as “*taṣavvurī yā qiyāsi*” (p. 1768). It is derived from “schema,” which means “an outline or diagram.” Hence anything that is in the form of a schema or diagram can be called “schematic.” It is also used in Engineering, but as a noun, and means “a structural or procedural diagram.”

Seduce: “*gumrāh karnā; farḡ aur rāstī sē haṭānē kī kōshish karnā; bad-qamāsh kardēnā; burī targhīb dēnā; bad-kārī kī ṭaraf behkānā*” (p. 1791). These are not the only meanings of the word. To “tempt, attract, or win over” are also part of its semantic range. For example: “They were seduced by the grandeur of the scheme.” “He was seduced into saying that he would do it.” “The seductions of life in television.” “These are seductive arguments.” “The building’s seductive shape.”

The West is a permissive society. I say this not by way of censure or criticism, but merely as a statement of fact. Consequently, most of the words and expressions that have sexual connotations no longer bear the stigma of disapproval. In Muslim societies, however, they do. Take the word “lover.” It is used freely by either sex for a member of the opposite sex and usually means “a person with whom one is having sexual relations.” A young woman can talk quite unabashedly of her “lover” with her parents and not incur disapproval or censure. In translating such words and expressions we feel the hidden moral pressure of our societies

and become unavoidably judgemental. Thus the explanations for “seduce” given in the QD are not necessarily incorrect, but the editors overlooked that in English the word often means “to induce to have sexual intercourse” but without any sense of shame or contempt. Obviously this is not the case with “*bad-kārī kī ṭaraf behkānā*,” which suggests sin, immorality, guilt. How should we translate such expressions is a matter worth some serious thought.

Twelfth-night: “*yaum-e ‘id-e zuhūr-e masīh sē pablī shām yā zuhūr-e masīh kī shām ‘id*” (p. 2163). It is not clear from where the editors have dug out these meanings. From Maulvi Abdul Haq’s *The Standard English-Urdu Dictionary*? But even there they are given incorrectly. According to the traditional Christian belief, Jesus was born on December 25, celebrated as Christmas day. Christmas celebrations continue for the next twelve days, culminating on January 6, the festival of Epiphany. Three things happened on that day: (1) Christ was baptized; (2) he manifested himself to the Magi; and (3) he turned water into wine at a wedding when the existing stock ran out. The Epiphany is celebrated to commemorate all these events. The eve of the Epiphany is known as Twelfth Night.

The word “accrue” has been treated most uncharitably in the QD. Its logical place is after “accrual” on p. 14 but instead it is incongruously entered on p. 38 in column 1 between “after” and “after-all.” And here is how the QD defines it: “*dēkhā-dēkhī; andāz čurāte hū’ē kisi namūnē kā (jaisē after a model); kē muṭābiq; muvāfaqat mēn; kē tanāsub sē (jaisē after our deserts); rutbē yā manṣab mēn kam; kē ba’d; muta’alliq (jaisē inquire after); mausūm bih (jaisē named after her mother), etc.*”³

What I would consider the most unfortunate oversight is the absence of the word “Pakistani” from the *Qaumi Dictionary*, which was, after all, intended primarily for the Pakistani *qaum*. The same goes for the neologisms, often derogatory, formed from this word, viz.: Pak, Paki, Paki-bashing, Paki-basher, etc.

³The present reviewer has overlooked that the editors never meant these words as an explanation of “accrue.” The explanations obviously belong to the word “after.” Through a type-setting error, “accrue” has moved to the wrong place, with the wrong string of meanings appended to it. The error is one of proof-reading and occurs rather frequently in the QD. Another example is the word “India” (p. 991) with no meaning given; the space for the definition is occupied by the continuation of the previous entry, “Index of refraction.” —*Ed.*

Altogether then, the QD does fill a longstanding need, but only to a degree. Its shortcomings spring, in the main, from two sources: (1) the lack of a clear conception of the goals underlying its compilation, along with an inadequate sensitivity to the principles of lexicography, and (2) a rushed attempt to push the work through the press without allowing either the editors enough time to collect their thoughts and think things through, or the proofreaders enough time to ensure greater accuracy in printing. Had the editors been clear about their purpose, they would not have relied on just one foreign dictionary, and an American dictionary at that. Instead, they would have consulted a number of British and American dictionaries. These shortcomings greatly reduce the work's effectiveness as a reliable linguistic tool.