Matteo De Chiara. *Toponymy of the Swāt Valley: Linguistic Archaeology*

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REFERENCES

Matteo De Chiara. *Toponymy of the Swāt Valley: Linguistic Archaeology*. Lahore: Sang-e Meel, 2020, viii+283 p. + 98 cartes (ISMEO Serie Orientale Roma vol. 25 ; Act-field School Project Reports and Memoirs, Archival Studies 2).

- 1 The present book discusses the place names of Swāt valley, i.e. the valley of the river Swāt in the North West Frontier of Pakistan. The data chiefly come from maps produced by the Pakistani Government (printed in the period from 1950 to 1984) as well as Soviet and US maps etc., complemented by information provided by residents of the region.
- 2 The work is introduced by a “Presentation” by Adriano Rossi (p. vii-viii) describing the background to the present work, viz. the excavations undertaken by Italian archaeologists in the Swat valley since 1956. The current director of the excavations is Luca Maria Olivieri, who has contributed a “Short note on the fortune of toponymy studies in Swāt and Gandhāra” to the present volume (p. 245-246). Interestingly, many of the excavated sites show Buddhist architectural elements, sculptures and rock art.
- 3 The Foreword and the Introduction offer some background about Pashto as well as information on the geography, climate, economy and history of the Swāt valley. There also is a list of clans listed in a British administrative source of 1910 as living in the valley (the vast majority of inhabitants are from the Pashtun Yusufzai tribe). One also finds here De Chiara’s Conclusions from his study (p. 31-49). These include very interesting maps (Fig. 26-37, pp. 38ff.) summarising the possible etymologies of the names of settlements, mountains and rivers studied by language family (i.e. Iranian vs. Indo-Aryan vs. other or unknown). Even if a certain amount of the possibly Pashtun etyma were moved to the “unknown” category, these maps give are very enlightening.

- 4 The main part of the book (p. 59-235) consists of a list of 1375 toponyms, descriptions of these places, previous discussion where available, and Iranian (chiefly Pashto), Indo-Aryan or other words these toponyms might perhaps be connected to. The toponyms include names of villages and towns, their parts, names of fields and pastures, etc. This part is preceded by a list of elements that often occur in toponyms (p. 53-57)
 - 5 The Appendix contains the bibliography and a list of abbreviations (p. 237-244) as well as an index of place names in the district of Kandak (p. 247-254) and the index of toponyms mentioned throughout the book (p. 261-283).
 - 6 The present volume is an important contribution to our knowledge about place names in Pakistan, and to the geography of the North West Frontier Province in general.
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AUTHORS

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