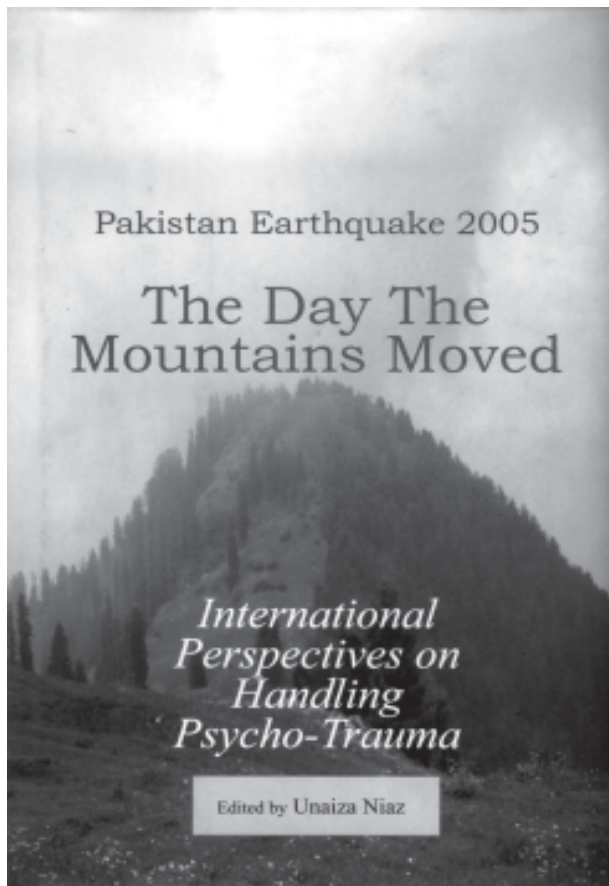


BOOK REVIEW

The Day The Mountains Moved: International Perspectives on Handling Psycho-trauma

Edited by Unaiza Niaz. Published by Sama Books & IPTP, Karachi, Pakistan. 2007. 277 pp.



Psycho – Trauma has emerged as one of the most significant issues of modern day psychiatry. While the natural disasters have regularly struck our planet, since its birth, it is the man-made disasters, in large numbers, in the new millennium that has affected our world. Disasters will always be with us. They have been happening since time immemorial and they will continue happening. There is not much we can do to prevent them but we can do a lot to prevent and manage their psychosocial consequences.

Disasters like earthquakes are events that capture human attention and concern. However, the public inter-

est in these events, are often short-lived and their long-term consequences, like psychiatric morbidity, in particular are underestimated by the health and social service providers. In the last few decades' disaster research has indicated significant and prolonged adverse consequences of these disasters. Modern research has however shown that the psychiatric and social sequelae to disasters, man-made or natural, can take diverse and multiple shape and forms, PTSD being only one of such clinical fall-outs.

The Day the Mountains Moved, edited by Dr. Unaiza Niaz an eminent and a highly respected Pakistani name in the World of Psychiatry, is a book that covers a variety of "International Perspectives on Handling Psycho-Trauma". She is a distinguished scholar and clinician in Pakistan with recognized international stature particularly in the area of disasters, women and children. Dr Unaiza Niaz, is already an author of four books and she has contributed Chapters in several books. She has to her credit numerous scientific publications in both national and international journals, besides several literary publications. Dr Niaz, has again taken the lead to publish the first book on Psycho-trauma to come out on the Pakistan Earthquake 2005.

Spread over 300 pages 'The Day the Mountains Moved – International Perspective on Handling Psycho-Trauma', the book has contributions from some of the most respected names in the World of Trauma Psychiatry. There are contributions from Aberdeen Centre for Trauma Research, Scotland UK, Institute of Psychiatry (IOP) King's College, London, University of Pennsylvania, USA, Faculty of Medicine and Istanbul Centre for Behavior Research and Therapy, Turkey, World Psychiatry Association, School of Psychology, University of Buenos Aires, Argentina and El Salvador University.

There are local contributions from Armed Forces of Pakistan, Institute of Psychiatry and WHO Collaborating Centre, Rawalpindi, Lady Reading Hospital, Peshawar and Fatima Jinnah Women University, Rawalpindi, Pakistan. And the details of IPTP'S work with women and children. Valuable chapters are also written by Dr Niaz on the Role of Media, & Faith & Resilience in recovery from psycho-trauma

The book has a list of twenty nine Pakistan and International contributors, who have dealt with preventive, promotive, therapeutic, administrative, scientific, and ethical and public health aspects of the issues of

Psycho – Trauma in the backdrop of the Pakistan Earthquake, 2005.

The book is illustrated with colored photographs of the camps and the therapy clinics run by the IPTP, alongside useful maps, figures, tables and histograms that has added value to the excellent text. With more than half of the articles written by the editor herself, the book is written with a unique blend of literary and medical writing styles. This approach makes the book not only reader – friendly but also makes it equally useful and an interesting read for professional and lay readers.

The foreword has been written by Professor David Alexander of ACTR, Scotland UK, an authority of International standing on the subject of Trauma Psychiatry. The preface is by Professor Christodoulou of World Psychiatric Association. The book therefore clearly has an International acceptance, relevance and standing.

Following an introductory chapter that provides useful perspective to the book is probably the most important chapter on 'Scientific Facts on Earthquake'. The book is then divided into the Pakistani and the International perspectives. This approach links the response of Pakistan's mental health professionals with existing approaches on dealing with psychosocial consequences of disasters. The public and private sector viewpoint is augmented by approaches taken by the Armed Forces Psychiatric services the response of the non – govern-

mental organizations, including that by the significant work of IPTP. The chapter on the International Perspective provides a review of aetiological, psychopathological and therapeutic approaches.

The book has a strong epilogue that summarizes the work of the contributors and also sets a futuristic agenda. The important topics covered have been painstakingly indexed.

This book is indeed timely produced authoritative text, identifying what were the effects of the disaster, what were the local and international responses, and what lessons were to be learned. As Prof Alexander states in his preface "what impresses me even more is Dr Niaz's ability to weld together her humanitarian concern for the survivors and the equally valuable scientific interest in the effects of major trauma and how best to address these".

The SAMA Books have done a good job and the book has an aesthetic and pleasing lay out.

A reasonably priced text, this book is bound to become an excellent addition to the world literature on the subject of Psycho-trauma and is strongly recommended for all private and professional libraries.

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