

New Bilingual Children's Book Combats Mainstream Image of Pakistan, Reveals Importance of Positive Representation

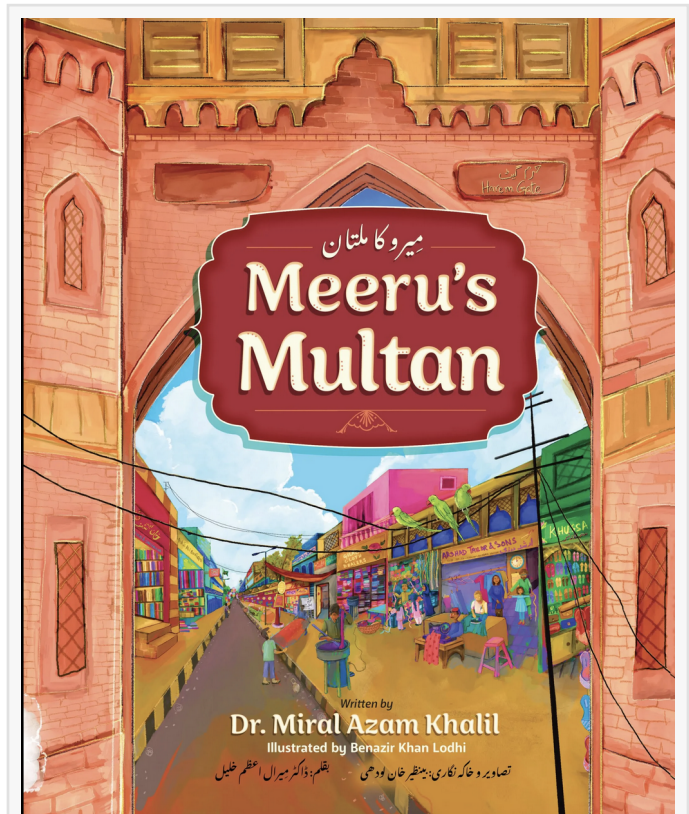
MEERU'S MULTAN by Dr. Miral Azam Khalil

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Books, like mirrors, often reflect the world around us. The lucky ones are able to see themselves reflected back on the pages — but unfortunately, this is not the case for many people. There is a growing need for diverse representation in media, allowing people of marginalized groups to find themselves and their culture reflected back at them.

In her debut children's book, *MEERU'S MULTAN*, Dr. Miral Azam Khalil showcases the brilliance of Pakistani culture.

Based on real stories and people from her childhood in Pakistan, Khalil hopes to help children find themselves positively portrayed in literature.



Meeru's Multan

Saif cannot go to sleep. Little does he know that tonight he will uncover a mischievous side of his serious mother.

“

Great story with cultural lessons that I highly recommend.”

Amazon reviewer

Together they will walk down memory lane and visit Multan, a city close to his mother's heart. An exciting adventure awaits him, full of adventure and mirth. From a mountain of bubble gum to a sky full of parrots, Saif will experience a journey beyond anything he could have imagined.

MEERU'S MULTAN reveals the healing power of storytelling. Saif begins to discover his identity as

the child of a Pakistani immigrant — viewing even the simplest things from his mother's childhood as magical.

The book is inspired by the adventures of Dr. Khalil (known by the nickname Meeru growing up) as a young child in the Pakistani city of Multan, as well as the life of her maternal family. The illustrations are breathtaking and vividly bring the streets of Pakistan (and, by extension, the author's childhood) to life.

MEERU'S MULTAN combats the mainstream media image of Pakistan being a haven for terrorism by giving center stage to a local's story and sharing the lived experience of a Pakistani-born child. It humanizes and celebrates Pakistani culture.

"I wrote this book to take ownership of my narrative and redeem our country," Khalil says. "My parents, my grandparents and my family are buried in Pakistan's soil. I owe it to them, to myself, my children and to my country to share my narrative. Our stories are embedded with rich heritage and culture; they deserve to be shared with our children. It is time we stop being ashamed of where we came from."

Pakistani Americans are the eighth largest Asian American ethnic group and 12th highest source of immigration into the United States. Pakistani Americans are well educated with an estimated 60% holding a bachelor's degree or higher professional degrees.

Yet this diaspora has very little children's literature that can act as a mirror for identity. Hence the children born to these immigrants are quickly losing their language and their culture — the very thing that is an asset to the United States. Their collective ancestral brilliance and knowledge are quickly disappearing due to the "peer pressure" to fit in among adolescents and teens.

This picture book is bilingual (both in English and Urdu) with a glossary, a popular dessert recipe and an extensive resource guide (written by an experienced US public school educator) that can be used in schools and libraries to teach all children about Pakistani culture, cuisine and language.

MEERU'S MULTAN is Khalil's debut children's book, but she has a series planned, and readers are already excited for more.



Dr. Miral Azam Khalil

"What a great story! It captured my interest right from the beginning and drew me in with its compelling characters, and the mother's story of her childhood in Pakistan ... Great story with cultural lessons that I highly recommend. I'm looking forward to more books from this terrific author." — Shifu Billy, [Amazon](#) reviewer

"In this warm picture book, a mother's abundant heritage inspires bedtime stories that spark eagerness for travel." –Foreword Reviews

MEERU'S MULTAN is available on Amazon and other popular retail outlets where books are sold.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Miral Azam Khalil was born and raised in Lahore, Pakistan. Every summer, she traveled to the city of Multan to visit her khala (maternal aunt). MEERU'S MULTAN is her debut children's book, but she has a series planned! She homeschools her two oldest children, Saif and Maha, and loves to grow flowers.

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