



FLUTE AND BUGLE

(A poem on world peace)

by

Himayat Ali Shair

Translated by

Prakash Chander

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"Bengal Se Korea Tak"

In Urdu

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Symbol of Peace

Picasso

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Dedicated

To

The memory of

Sajjad Zaheer

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Humanist as a sensitive poet

Prakash Chander

The gain of Hyderabad (Sind) was not the loss of Hyderabad (Deccan) when 21-year-old Himayat Ali Shair crossed the border into Pakistan in 1951. Tormented by the Telengana happenings of that time, Himayat entered a country which was Telengana manifold, from end to end and decade to decade the country of this humanist's choice passed and is still passing through the "Telengana" phase. One may differ on the outcome of the Telengana movement but Himayat is one product of those times who has not been able to shake what can be termed the "Telengana" mood.

It is in this context that I think Sind's gain was not Deccan's loss. Had he stayed on in India the country of his birth his poetry may not have been invested with the frenzy, the pain the pathos the rebelliousness that it possesses because of the Pak (Pure) environment.

Shair epitomises the continuing and seemingly permanent crisis in his adopted country thus:

*Kal bhi main jangal mein tha aur aaj
bhi jangal mein hoon.
Kal mere hamsaye thea khooni darinde
bheriye
Aaj main insaanon mein hoon aur
khoon ke jal thal mein hoon
Mujh ko tehzeebon ne aaina dikhaya
to khula
Rooh ka qatil hoon main aur jism ke
maqatal mein hoon*

Shair has not compromised with his gloomy surroundings though his forays into film land may give the impression of succumbing to escapism : his economic compulsions became the irony of his fate. Though he illumined every one of the various film fields and won awards too he gradually came to the conclusion that what he and literature were losing far outweighed the material transitory gains:

*Roti ke liye taaq pe rakh doonga
kitabhen
Jeena mujhe is tarah gawara to nahin
tha*

Like Rama, his banbas from literature lasted 12 years that he devoted to the celluloid world.

"In the film I got awards for lyric writing and direction.. but I felt a vacuum inside me which was expanding and my soul was getting afflicted with a poverty that would have dried up my intellectual ardour." But in the 18 years he was not in the film industry he produced and planned a considerable volume of literature.

POETRY : *Ghan Garaj* 1950 (in India); *Aag Mein Phool* 1956; *Mitti Ka Qarz* 1974; *Tashnagi Ka Safar* (long poems); *Haroon Ki Awaz* (the latest poetry collection); *Meri Dharti Mere Khwab* (lyrics); *Sargam* (Geets); and *Zaviye* (Poetic plays).

PROSE : *Faaste* (Plays); *Mehran Mauj* (Sindhi folk tales); *Shakhs-o-Aks* (Articles), and Sheikh Ayaz (Critical study of eminent Sindhi poet).

EDITED SELECTIONS : *Dood-e-Chiragh-e-Mehfil* (Selected verse of various poets); *Urdu Naatiya Shairi Ke Saat Sau Saal*; *Pakistan Mein Urdu Shairi Ke Sat Sau Saal*; and *Shakhs-o-Aks* (Collection of critical writing, book reviews and replies to his critics and denigrators of which there was a legion). *Aag Mein Phool* the product of an anguished mind. won the President's Award and *Mitti Ka Qarz* won the Writers Guild Adamji literature award.

Himayat's concept of poetry can be most aptly put in his own inimitable style: so long as poetry does not brighten the consciousness of history it is like the glow-worm in the darkness: the consciousness of history makes a poet an epochmaker and informs him of the dialectical process of values in society.

A few quotations from his first collection will help appreciate the evolving sentiments:

*Naye khad-o-khaal se hamare jasad ki
tashkeel ho rahi hai
Adhoora pan khatm ho raha hai
hamari takmeel ho rahi hai*

*Sukoon kal tha mayassar na aaj hee
hai naseeb
Yeh admi ki kahani bhi hai ajeeb-o-
ghareeb*

*Fitrat ne khud insaan ki azmat ke liye
Insaan ki ghairat ko jhanjhora barson*

*Iss fiza mein koi kya naghme bikheray
khoon jalaey
Jis fiza mein harf-e-gham ka koi bhi
mehram naheen*

The poet's epochmaking poem was surprisingly written before he was 25. The long poem *Bengal se Korea Tak* employs a technique rare in Urdu poetry- review of the past events. He considers the Bengal famine and the Korean war links in the same chain and symptoms of the same disease afflicting the world. His description of the Bengal tragedy:

*Mere Tagore ki zameen par aaj
Lashon, dhaanchon ka bas gaya tha
jahan
Is qadar tha karish yeh manzar
Jaise qai kar chuka ho qabristan*

Its English translation a commendable venture though not very apt or sophisticated. by Rajinder Singh Verma is entitled *Flowers In Flames*.

Himayat has matured considerably over the years. The compositions in *Aag Mein Phool* are "marked by the vigour enthusiasm and passions of youth" but *Mitti Ka Qarz* shows him at his best. The rudimentary ideas of the first collection are fully developed in his book --- sharp sober acute and balanced.

Himayat decided to say farewell to films because he felt he owed a debt to the soil and he repaid it by collecting and arranging the literary output of that 12-year "leave of absence" from literature in *Mitti Ka Qarz* Some couplets will best illustrate the evolution of the Youngman as a mature person:

*Kise maloom tha Shair ke hogi
dushman-e-jan bhi
Woh hasrat khooon-e-dil pee pee ke jo
palti hai seenay mein.*

*Gardish mein zindagi hai basar kar
raha hoon main
Sooraj ke ssath saath safar kar raha
hoon main*

*Uss ke gham ko ghām-e-hasti to mere
dil na bana
Zeest mushkil hai isse aur bhi mushkil
na bana*

*Jab tak na shaakh shaakh ke sar par
ho taj-e-gul
Kanton ka taj sar pe sajaye rahen gay
ham*

*Phir andhera hai wahi dahr ka alam
hai wahi
Dil-e-sozaan hai wahi deeda-e-purnam
hai wahi
Rooh mein ghulte huay zehr ka alam
hai wahi*

*Ab to darindgi ki numaaish bhi husn
hai
Deewar par sajaate hain sar kaat kaat
ke*

(Daily "The Times of India" Lucknow, Sunday, May 18, 1986.)

POET OF BRIGHT FUTURE

Yunus Ahmar

During the current century alone, millions of precious lives have been sacrificed on the alters of famine, hunger, disease and war. Societies have been torn apart, fertile lands made barren, rich economies ruined and many of the countries laid waste by the retrogressive forces. What making has witnessed all through is a grim tale of miseries and tears. The man-made famine of Bengal in 1943. Still appears a nightmare, a horrifying spectacle of living corpses of men, women and children lying on the pavements of Calcutta with bowels of alms in their hands. The dogs and vultures smelling them as dead, where having a good feast. And people unmindful of the tragedy were busy in their day-to-day lives. The whole atmosphere was charged with sobs and cries. Tears and shrieks for food to save them from death.

When my memory goes back to that grim period of the history of Bengal, I shudder to recall it. Because I have seen small babies dying with their mouths sucking the dried nipples of their mothers on the footpath of Chowringhee, one of the most fashionable areas of Calcutta. I have also seen the crowd of hungry people, walking slowly, crying for food. These were the dreadful scenes that aroused the consciency of our writers, poets and artists. Zainul Abedin was one of them who felt his conscience tortured with the sceptre of death hanging over his head. He could not sit idle. He made a series of paintings of these hungry men, women and children badly mutilated by vultures and dogs. The artist earned fame for his rational approach. His paintings stirred the feelings and emotions even of those who remain unconcerned with such gory scenes.

Zainul Abedin expressed his sentiments through paintings while Himayet Ali Shair articulated his poignant expressions through a long poem titled, "Bengal Say Korea Tak". The difference between the two upholders of truth is that Zainul Abedin was present on the spot while Himayet Ali Shair observed the game of death through his inner vision. Although he could not witness the holocaust of the worst famine of Bengal, yet he could feel the pain and pathos of the hungry people. His sensibilities were so sharp that he wrote this long poem at mere 22. Very few poets, at least in Urdu, attempted to portray their emotions. Jigar Muradabadi who was purely a poet of ghazal, however, felt pain in his heart and thus he wrote a ghazal on the Bengal's Famine.

The famine struck the province of Bengal in 1943 while war in Korea started in 1950. There is a gap of nearly seven years between the two catastrophies when humanity remained at stake throughout this period

At the back of both the events reactionary forces were very active to strike at the very root of progressive trends working for the welfare of the masses. Famine and the powder-keg of Korean war struck heavily on the dreams of mankind. As the poet says:

*Wherever the eyes turned
Gaping death was murching on
And it trampled on the way
Life's roses neat its feet.*

Howsoever he envisions the mighty hand of death destroying the hopes and expectations of mankind, he does not fall victim of despondency and frustration. He always cultivates in his heart the bright prospects of tomorrow. Because he knows that:

*Life burning in its flames
Had its loveliness enhanced
Seeing here a waning world
It had decked a newer one.*

Himayet Ali Shair needs no introduction. He has been in the vanguard of progressive movement playing the flute of love and life, peace and progress. He is one of those poets of his age who has always yearned for the betterment of making. His poetry is the harbinger of truth, which invites trouble and problems. But in speaking tough, he keeps before him the tragic end of the great Greek philosopher, Socrates. He is conscious of the fact that manifestation of truth has in store both physical and mental torture yet he is prepared to face the eventuality. Come what may, he says, but he will not break the mirror of truth. The doctrine of truth which he embraced in the early period of his poetic life, he is still adhering to it. The revolutionary thought that he cultivated in the flush of youth, continues to reinforce in him the same vigour and vitality. His emotions and images are still fresh and reinvigorating. He ardently believes in the force of love which triumphs destroying the power of evil.

"Bengal Say Korea Tak" may be described as a drama of love and hate, war and peace, hope and delusion, defeat and success and so on. And this drama revolves round only one main character and that is the poet himself. He passes through many episodes, through many experiences and through various ordeals. He observes different characteristics of life and death; he beholds the agony of famine and war, at times he feels frustrated but then controls himself. We find the elements of both ardour and anguish in the poem. We find the poet in Bengal when he says:

*Oh my country, my Bengal
Land of constant mutinies,
Land of folk saying N songs*

*Blazing in the paddy fields
Land of workers gay \ blithe
Camping amid swelling waves
Land of amours breathing in
Taj Mahal of unbacked clay
Land of prayers innocent
Taken in by lovely tricks.*

Born in 1930 in Aurangabad (Hyderabad - Deccan), Himayet Ali Shair travelled a long way to get himself settled in life. His eventful life is a glimpse of the tortuous life of Prometheus whose only sin was that he stole fire from heaven for which Zeus chained him to a rock, to be tortured by a vulture. Himayet was also tortured mentally, physically and financially. Being a poet of progressive outlook and the dreamer of peace and progress for the world at large, he outpours unhesitatingly what he feels inside his conscious heart. In "Aag Mein Phool", he encompasses the whole perspective of what had taken place during the turbulent period from 1940-50.

The feeling and anguish has made the highly sensitive poets of today a wandering gypsy knowing not their goal. Like Himayet, all of them are not aware of the outcome of the battle which is going on between the body and the soul. The question does arise: Will they remain in the debris of man divided in shadows or will they succeed in saving the poet who wants to be alive having sunk in the abyss of death, who dreams for existence in destruction; who seeks for a new style of manifestation? This is the catastrophe of these poets. The question of identity always haunts them. The environment of social misery and decay before them has, in fact, created in them a sense of revolt.

What then is poetry? Himayet has a befitting reply to this question. He says: "So long as poetry does not brighten the consciousness of history, it is like the glow-worm in the darkness. The consciousness of history makes a poet an epochmaker and informs him of the dialectical process of values in society." Again despite his sincere efforts that he has been making to brighten the gloomy face of the strife-torn mankind, he does not know what will be the verdict of history for him, who in search of truth and wearing a shroud revolves round him and sometimes round his land and some times he cries in the chamber of literature, "I am present, I am present"

The verdict of history for a conscious poet like Himayet is not always favourable. Mostly it goes against him. This feeling is beautifully portrayed in his poem titled, "Tashnagi Ka Safar (The Journey of Thirst)". He says:

one moment (which is)

*the whirlwind in the desert of hope
and the mirage,
the circulation of blood on the desire
to touch
And the silent pain of burning solitude
Under the shades of broken stars
I desire that this fire be put out!*

Each moment for a poet like him brings with it the lamentation of unfulfilled desires and the cries of wounds which are oozing from the afflicted heart. This is the tragedy of a modern poet, who is saddled with various problems ranging from social injustice to political upheavals. Each incident of his life directly affects him. He is forlorn in a wilderness.

Himayat is a poet of modern sensibility of progressive feeling and bright future. His poetry demands careful study.

(From "FLOWER IN FLAMES")

Translated by Prof. Rajinder Singh Verma. Published in 1985.)

Himayat Ali Shair

A visionary poet with deep commitment to human values

Aftab Ahmad Khan

Himayat Ali Shair whose 70th birthday was celebrated on 14 July, 1996 is a multidimensional creative artist of Pakistan. He is a leading contemporary poet with a melodious voice and a charming personality. He has been a noted writer of plays and songs for Radio Pakistan and Pakistan Television. He adorned the profession of journalism with distinction for a number of years. He was also distinguished Professor of Urdu Literature in Sindh University, Hyderabad. He is the author of about two dozen published and unpublished books. He has received a number of literary awards in Pakistan and abroad. The three score and ten years of his life have been well spent and what Robert Browning said in his poem "In a Balcony" applies to him.

*I count life just a stuff
To try the soul's strength on*

Himayat Ali Shair is a committed poet. He says: "So long as poetry does not brighten the consciousness of history, it is like the glow-worm in the darkness." His poetry also reflects his profound love for humanity. Like Rousseau his message is: "Men be human; that is your first duty." In many of his poems there is a poetic protest against the cruelties, contradictions and iniquities of our age and he tries to harmonise the sadness of the world. The idealist in him looks forward to a new international political and economic order free from war, hatred, exploitation and poverty. In some of his poems he raises meaningful questions about man's place in the universe and his ultimate destiny. Tennyson very aptly said in his well known poem. In Memoriam:

*There is more faith in honest doubt
Believe me, than in half the creeds.*

Himayat Ali intellectualises his emotions like the English metaphysical poets whom he resembles in some respects. His is the poetry of controlled passion. He quite often universalises his grief and mourns

for the ills of humanity. He considers struggle essential for development. Life without struggle has no meaning. Life is one prolonged continuous effort. It is the ideal, not fulfillment, that gives zest to life. To quote Browning again:

What I aspired to be And was not, comforts me As regards Himayat Ali's commitment to progressive human values, it has to be emphasised that no one was ever a great poet without some commitment to progressive human values, it has to be emphasised that no one was ever a great poet without some commitment. But basically he should be a poet, as Himayat Ali Shair is and his ideological commitment takes care of itself. Unfortunately many progressive poets became ideologues first and poets afterwards and this degraded their art.

Here it brings me to an other futile controversy between 'Art for Art's Sake and Art for Life's sake. Art is for both. It is for art's sake in as much as it is an autonomous activity. Let us first make sure that it has no ulterior purpose and is the expression of the artist's own soul. If that soul is great and the expression adequate, it is bound to be for life's sake too. But if we start the other way about and try to make it for life's sake before making it for art's sake, it will be for neither; it will be no art. Art must be art first, before it is great or small. Art, most critics tell us, is meant to delight as well as to instruct. But it must delight before it instructs. If it does not delight, it is no art at all, however noble its instruction.

Goethe was of the opinion that poetry should be unnoticeably didactic. "The reader must draw in instruction from it himself, as he does from life... A work of art can have moral consequences, but to ask moral of an artist means to spoil his trade. "The poet comes in contact with life, has his experiences and, if there is any poetry in his soul, is inspired and is possessed, he speaks out. The value of his poetry depends on the quality of his experiences and the greatness of his soul, not on the ideology/philosophy that he has acquired and developed.

It is the great merit of Himayat Ali Shair that despite being possessed by a 'philosophy of history', he always maintains high poetic standards. His poetry not only instructs and intensifies our awareness of life in its varied manifestations but also delights and moves us. T.S. Eliot has quite rightly observed: "If we are not moved, then it is, as poetry mean-

ingless."

I would like to conclude by quoting Faiz Ahmed Faiz, the greatest Urdu poet of this century. After Allama Iqbal, on Himayat Ali Shair's poetry

"These days people are fond of breaking older traditions which is definitely a healthy sign, but to trample those very traditions is not good. Shair does not trample the traditions of the past." Faiz Ahmed Faiz further said: "Himayat Ali Shair writes with brevity. When he writes with brevity, it become rhetoric. A reader finds multifaceted meaning within the frame work of such brevity."

(Daily "The News" (International) Islamabad,
Wednesday, July 24, 1996)

I sat upon the shore
 Fishing, with the arid plain behind me
 Shall I at least set my lands in order?
 London Bridge is falling down falling down falling down
Poi s' ascose nel foco che gli affina
Quando fiam uti chelidon— O swallow swallow
Le Prince d'Aquitaine a la tour abolie
 These fragments I have shored against my ruins
 Why then Ile fit you. Hieronymo's mad againe.
 Datta. Dayadvam. Damyata.

Shantih Shantih Shantih

T.S. Eliot
 ("In The Wasteland")

بنگال سے کوریا تک



Picasso

Flute and Bugle

یہ کہانی آپ بیٹی نہیں، لیکن آپ بیٹی ہو سکتی ہے۔
 اس کہانی کا مرکزی کردار میں "میں" بھی ہو سکتا ہوں اور
 آپ بھی۔ کیونکہ گزشتہ عالمگیر جنگ میں بنگال جنگ
 سے دور رہ کر بھی لاکھوں انسانوں کا مدفن بن گیا اور کوریا
 — تازہ ہیہ دیشما ہے اور یہ ہیہ دیشما تہمتی تیری سے
 پھیلتا جائے گا بنگال کی دستوں میں بھی اسی سرعت سے
 اضافہ ہوتا جائے گا۔ اس پس منظر کی روشنی میں اس
 کہانی کا مرکزی کردار انفرادی ہونے کے ساتھ ساتھ ایک
 اجتماعی کردار بھی ہے۔

اور آج ہی عالمگیر جنگ کا ہولناک
 اندیشہ دنیا کے ہر انسان کے
 دل میں ایک ہولید طاقت بن گیا ہے

کیا ہماری نئی نسل بھی جنگ کا ایندھن بن جائے گی؟

This is not an autobiography but can be. Its central character may be "I" as well as "you". Despite distance from the theatre of the last war Bengal became a graveyard for hundreds of thousands of people; and Korea is a new Hiroshima and the speed with which this Hiroshima will go on spreading the boundaries of Bengal will go on expanding accordingly. Seen against this background the central character of this story is as individualistic as it is collective. Today the dreadful concern about a new world war has turned into a question mark in the minds of every man of the world. Will our new generation also serve as cannon fodder?

یادوں کے غبار میں

آئینہ ساز تصور میں
 ایک اک نقش اُجھرتا آتا ہے
 اور کچھ دیر تھر تھرتے ہی
 آپ ہی آپ ڈوب جاتا ہے

IN THE DUST OF REMINISCENCES

In pavillions of imagination,
 An image surfaces,
 For a while, it vibrates,
 And by itself disappears.

وہ مرا گاؤں — میرا اپنا وطن
 میری جنت — مرا جسم زار
 چند اونچی حویلیوں کے گرد
 زندہ لاشوں کی ٹرتوں کا دیار
 سبز شاداب کھیتوں کے بیچ
 بھوکے ننگی حیات کا بازار
 ارتقا سے جہاں کی پستی کے
 ہر فریب حسیں کا آئینہ دار
 حسنِ فطرت کا سادہ لوح این
 زرگن زیدہ سماج کا شہکار

اسی جنت — اسی جہنم میں
 غنچے پتکے، کیلے، گلاب ہوئے
 اسی چھاؤں کی نرم حدت میں
 ذرے تپ تپ کے آفتاب ہوئے

That village, my native land
 Paradise mine, hell mine
 Around a few mansions
 Burial place of living dead,
 Amidst lush green fields
 Famished bare life's display
 Mirroring each captivating trick
 Of the world's lowliness
 Simple guard of nature's charm
 Greedy society's masterpiece.

In this heaven, this hell
 Blossoms bloomed into roses
 In the dim heat of their shade
 Atoms turned into suns.

نوجوانی کہ موج طوفان ہوش
 نوجوانی کہ آندھیوں کا خروش
 پتھروں کی رگوں میں کھلتی آگ
 زندگی کے لہو کا نقطہ جوش
 ایک فریادگی — جنوں کی سی
 ایک دیوانگی — بقیہ ہوش
 ایک راحت نواز بے چینی
 اک سکون۔ اضطراب و آفتوش
 ایک خاموشی — اپنے شور میں مغم
 ایک غوغا مگر بہت خاموش

کس قدر تھے حسین وہ دن رات
 کتنا دلکش تھا زندگی کا رُپ
 ایک ہی بات تھی مرے نزدیک
 چاندنی ہو کہ چلپلائی دھوپ

Youth - a wave of surging flood,
 A loud cry of gales
 Seething fire in pebbles' veins
 Boiling point of life's blood
 Wit akin to craziness
 Frenzy to wisdom allied
 Assuaging restlessness.
 Composure so turbulent
 Silence lost in its noise
 Clamour full of calm.

Lovely were days and nights !
 How winsome life's charm !
 To me it was all the same
 Moonlight or sizzling noon

جہل ذاتیہ نہ فکرو احساسات
 پتھروں کو نیکیں سمجھتے رہے
 اک مقدس فریب میں آکر
 آسمان کو زمیں سمجھتے رہے
 ہر توہم کے آستانے پر
 سجدہ ریزی کو دیں سمجھتے رہے
 پیتھروں کے کفن میں دفن کر
 زندگی کو مہیں سمجھتے رہے
 اٹک پنی کے مسکراتے رہے
 زہر کو انجلیں سمجھتے رہے

کس کو معلوم — کوئی کیا جانے
 کس نے کوئی حیات کی تقدیر
 کن خداؤں کے جال میں ہے لیر
 یسلی کائنات کی تقدیر

Folly-based thought, feeling
 Mistook pebbles for gems
 Taken in by sacred trick
 Thought firmament was earth
 Reckoned bowing at the sill
 Of every delusion as faith.
 Wrapping it in shredsded shroud
 Looked on life as elegant
 Suppressed tears smilingly
 Took poison as honeyed drink

Who knows, who understands
 Who has deprived life
 What gods have ensnared
 Fate of the universe.

ایک مسرت ایک موت

آئینہ خاذا تصور میں
ایک اک نقش ایجا آتا ہے
اور کچھ دیر تھرستہ آتے ہی
آپ ہی آپ ڈوب جاتا ہے

JOY AND DEATH

In pavillions of imagination,
An image surfaces,
For a while, it vibrates,
And by itself disappears.

وہ مری سانولی سلونی شام
 میسری آباد شام تنہائی
 اپنے ہی دل کی دھڑکنوں پر جب
 زندگی پہلی بار شرمائی
 مچلی مچلی سی آرزوؤں کو
 لوریاں دے رہی تھی شہنائی
 میسرے خوابوں کے آجر طے کیے بیوں میں
 ہنستے گیتوں کی فصل لہرائی
 اک اندھیری آجڑ گٹیا میں
 کہکشاں کی برات اتر آئی

کس قدر تھے عجیب وہ لمحے
 کتنے نیک رنگ، کس قدر متضاد
 کتنے خاموش، کتنے طوفانی
 کتنے پابند، کس قدر آزاد

My tawny eventide love
 Populous solitude
 At its pulsations when
 Life initially blushed
 To my disturbed urges
 Flute sang lullabies
 In my dreams' desolate fields
 Waved smiling ditties
 Into dark deserted but burst
 Procession of milky ways.

How lovely those moments were
 How even coloured, strange
 How quiet, how turbulent
 How constricted, how carefree.

سوئی سوئی سی ایک بیداری
 صبح سے تاہر شام رہتی تھی
 نوجوانی کے غواب زاروں میں
 چسپاندنی سی مدام رہتی تھی
 اپنا ساتھی تھا، اپنا سے خانہ
 زندگی غسوق جام رہتی تھی
 شام ہوتی تھی صبح میں کھیلے
 اور سویرے سے شام رہتی تھی
 دوش و فردا سے بے خبریوں ہی
 عمر محو عسرام رہتی تھی

کون سوچے کہ ہر گلستاں میں
 خار و گل ساتھ ساتھ ہوتے ہیں
 عیش و غم زندگی کے بستر ہر
 ساتھ اٹھتے ہیں! ساتھ سوتے ہیں

Day and night sleep-drowned
 Wakefulness I had
 In the sleeping rooms of youth
 Lingered moonlight
 Saqi and tavern mine
 Life ever drowned in wine
 Evening sweet as morning
 At sun-up evening fell
 Oblivious to time
 Life drifts even paced

Who thinks in each garden
 Thorns and blossoms co-exist.
 Joy and grief, on life's bed,
 Wake and sleep together.

غم حاصل

آئینہ رخسارِ تصور میں
 ایک اک نقش اُبھرتا آتا ہے
 اور کچھ دیر تقرقہ راتے ہی
 آپ ہی آپ ڈوب جاتا ہے

HARVEST OF WOE

In pavillions of imagination,
 An image surfaces,
 For a while, it vibrates,
 And by itself disappears.

وہ پسینے میں غسرق صبح و شام
 نوجوانی کے مجرم کی پاداش
 ہر نفس اپنے سوز میں غمگین
 ہر نظر رگڑا رگڑا کر معاش
 رات کو فسکیر صبح کھاتے ہوتے
 صبح کو ایک نابینا شب کی تلاش
 دل میں بے تاب حسرتوں کا ہجوم
 رُوح میں غامضی کی خراش
 نوجوانی — کہ موج طوفانِ جوش
 نوجوانی — کہ ایک زندہ لاش

میرے ادراک کے انہیرے میں
 کتنے دیکھ سگے ملک کے بجے
 راہ میں کتنے سگے میل آئے
 کوئی رستہ دکھا سکا نہ مجھے

The sweating dawn and dusk
 Punishment for youth's sins
 Every breath full of agony
 Every glance in search of bread
 Nocturnal worry for dawn
 Dawn search for night's loaf
 Restless urges through the soul
 Penury pricks wounded heart
 Youth, surging flood's wave
 Youth, a lifeless corpse.

In my sensibility's dark
 Many lamps lit and go out
 Milestones galore en route
 But none fit to guide me

میں کہ میرا ضمیر بھی محکوم
 میرا احساس، میری فکر، غلام
 تجھ کو کیا علم — کتنا اونچا ہے
 بزمِ فطرت میں آدمی کا مقام
 میری ہر صبح — ایک صبحِ حیات
 میری ہر شام — زندگی کی شام
 ہو رہے زندگی ہی جب اک موت
 کیوں نہ کرتا میں موت ہی کو سلام
 پائٹی چاولوں کے بدلے میں
 بیچ دی میں نے اپنی عمر تمام

اک بھٹل کی صدا پر فضاں تھی
 میری فکر و نگاہ — میری جبین
 دل تو ویسے بہت تھا خوش لیکن
 میں کہیں تھا — میری حیات کہیں

Even my conscience is slave
 My mind and heart serfs
 I know not how lofty
 Man's status in nature's court
 Each morn, life's dawn
 Every evening, life's eve
 Life itself is but death
 Why not I salute death itself
 For a mere bowl of rice
 I barded away my life

At the sound of bugle danced
 My insight, thought and brow
 But otherwise very happy
 I had no rapport with life

جنگ، تہذیب کا نشان تھا سارے
 سارے عالم پر چھائے جاتی تھی
 دل میں کانٹے، لبوں پر پھول کھلاتے
 نگوں مسلسل بہائے جاتی تھی
 صبح فردا کا واسطہ دے کر
 شب کی ظلمت بڑھاتے جاتی تھی
 جھونپڑوں کے چراغ گل کر کے
 شہر کے شہر کھائے جاتی تھی
 مستقل امن کی قسم کھا کر
 زندگی کو مٹائے جاتی تھی

میں کہ جاہل غریب ایک دہقان
 مجھ کو اسرار دہر کیا معلوم
 ہاں بس اتنا یقین تھا مجھ کو
 وہی ہو گا جو ہے مرا مقسوم

Civilisation's flag in hand
 War encircling the globe
 Thorn in heart, smile on lips
 Continued to shed blood
 In the hope of the dawn
 Oppression of night intensifies
 Putting out hut lights
 Swallows town after town
 Swearing by world peace
 Goes on decimating life

I, a witless, poor peasant
 Secrets of life I know not
 I was certain only that
 I deserve my fate.

وداع

آئینہ نشانی تصور میں
 ایک اک نقش امیج بنا ہے
 اور کچھ دیر قسہ تھراتے ہی
 آپ ہی آپ ڈوب جاتا ہے

ADIEU

In pavillions of imagination,
 An image surfaces,
 For a while, it vibrates,
 And by itself disappears.

وہ اداسی، وہ خاموشی، وہ سکوت
 کتنی چیزوں کو زیر طلق دبائے
 لب تک آ آ کے لوتسا ہر لفظ
 ایک انجانے خوف سے تھراتے
 قدم سے قدم پہ اپنے خوفی دانت
 کچکچاتے ہوتے بھیانک سائے
 درد۔ چیخوں کا شور لے کے اٹھتے
 اور ہونٹوں پہ آہ میں ٹھہل جاتے
 دل کی دھڑکن تڑپ کے سر پیٹے
 آنکھ چپ چاپ انک پیٹی جاتے

کس قدر تھا مہیب وہ منظر
 کیسے کیسے خیال دل میں آئے
 گھر کے پڑ بول، آداس کو نوں میں
 زندگی جھانکتے ہوئے گہرائے

That depression, hush and calm
 Throttling cries in the throat.
 Words turned from lips
 Trembling for fear undefined
 Awe-inspiring shadows grind
 Bloody teeth at every mote
 Anguish rises with cries
 Becomes sigh at lips
 Heart throbs beat hard
 Eyes silently sip tears.

How horrid the scene
 What kind of thoughts
 Life dare not peep
 In sad, awful nooks of house

اور پھر جب مرے لرزتے ہونٹ
 ماں کے قدموں کو چومنے کو بٹھکے
 کتنے نالوں کا جاگ اٹھا شور
 کتنے لاوے تڑپ کے ٹھوٹ پڑے
 چینی مکر آئیں آ کے جینوں سے
 بہنیں بھائی پٹ گئے مجھ سے
 آسمانوں پہ وار کرتی رہی
 ماں کیجے سے مجھ کو چٹا کے
 اور اک نوجوانی روتی رہی
 لگ کے چپ چاپ ایک کعبے سے

میں کہ ہر چوٹ سہرا گیا چپ چاپ
 اپنے سینے پہ رکھ لیے پتھر
 سارے گھر کی مہرتوں کے لیے
 اپنے دل میں بجمو لیے لہستر

When my quivering lips
 Bent to kiss mother's feet
 Din of laments rose
 Lavas did erupt
 Cries banged against cries
 Sisters, brothers clung to me
 Hugging me, mother
 Kept on hitting firmament
 And youth did cry hoarse
 Silently Clinging to pillar.

I calmly bore each hurt
 Piled stones on my chest
 For the joy of the house
 Lancets in my heart's I thrust

میں چلا تو گئی، مگر یہ اٹنک
 ہر قدم میرے ساتھ ساتھ آئے
 چہنیں کانوں میں گونجتی ہی رہیں
 دل نہ بہلا کسی کے بہلائے
 ایک لمحہ بھی گرے خاموش
 گھر کا گھر آنکھ میں ہمت آئے
 بوزھی عورت کو دیکھ کر سہراہ
 روج کچھ بیچ و تاب سی کھاتے
 سوچتے سوچتے دجانے کیوں
 آنکھ مہسرائے، دل لرز جاتے

اور میں اپنے دل کو تھامے ہوئے
 زہر پیتا رواں بہا چپ چا پ
 دودھ سی پاک مانتا کا پیار
 رہ گیا چہنیتا ہوا چپ چا پ

I did leave, but my tears
 Kept me company all along
 Cries echoed in my ears
 None could cheer my heart
 If I get a quiet moment
 Whole house sank into eyes
 Seeing old woman en route
 My soul cries in pain
 While musing who knows why
 Eyes wet, heart aquake

And controlling my heart
 Drinking venom, I journeyed on
 Milk pure love of mother
 Kept on crying helplessly

جنگ کے میدان میں

آئینہ خاؤ تصور میں
ایک اک نقش اُبھرتا آتا ہے
اور کچھ دیر تھر تھراتے ہی
آپ ہی آپ ڈوب جاتا ہے

IN THE WAR THEATRE

In pavillions of imagination,
An image surfaces,
For a while, it vibrates,
And by itself disappears.

وہ برستے لپکتے شعلوں میں
 دوڑتے، چبھتے، چٹختے، سر
 دیوہیکل گر جتے طیتارے
 خاک برسر دھواں دھواں منظر
 سڑتی لگتی کرینہ لاشوں کے
 خون میں تر ہر ایک راہگزر
 دل کو اپنی خبر نہ اوروں کی
 بہکی بہکی ہوتی ہر ایک نظر
 شام زخموں سے چور چور مدھال
 صبح کے لب خوش۔ آنکھیں تر

جس طرف بھی نگاہ پڑ جاتی
 موت مُنہ پھاڑے برسی آتی تھی
 زندگی کے تسیں گلابوں کو
 اپنے پیروں سے روند جاتی تھی

Those lashing, leaping flames
 Crying, cracking heads
 Roaring giant sized aircraft
 Dusky, smoky environs
 The blood of rotting corpses
 Covering all roads
 Heart blind to self, others
 Forlorn every glance
 Evening lacerated, sore
 Morning mute and wet-eyed

Wherever the eyes turned
 Gaping death was advancing
 And trampling life's
 Roses beneath its feet

ہر طرف تھے ہزار ہا انسان
 اور ہر سو — مہیب تنہائی
 ناگ کی طرح خوف چہن پیلائے
 ذہن مہبوت . آنکھ پھرائی
 آہست آہست پہ وہ دہکتے دل
 کس پر کیا جانے کیا گھسٹری آئی!
 گونج اٹھی فضا میں کوئی چیخ
 اور نظروں میں موت ابھرائی
 چھپتی پھرتی تھی کونے کونے میں
 زندگی سبھی سبھی گھبرائی

موت کی زد میں آرزوئے حیات
 دل میں کتنی شدید ہوتی ہے!
 کیا خبر ان کو جن کی برسات
 زندگی کی نوید ہوتی ہے

All around men galore
 And an awful solitude
 Fears waving snaky hoods
 Eyes glazed and mind aghast
 Pounding hearts at every step
 Who will suffer what, who knows,
 Echoed in the air a cry
 Death before the eyes danced
 Lurking in the corners was
 Puzzled, horrified life.

Life in throes of death
 How intense in the heart
 They know not whose every hour
 Is happy face of life.

میں بہ ہر گام سوچت رہتا
 ہیں کہاں ہوں؟ ہماری حیات کہاں؟
 میری دہن کہ جس کے سینے میں
 مامست کا غرور ہے پتہاں
 اور میری بہن کہ جس کے خواب
 جانے کن جنتوں میں ہیں رقصاں
 جس کی خاطر اٹھا کے رکھا ہے
 ماں نے اپنے جہیز کا ساماں
 زہر کس طرح پی رہے ہوں گے
 ان کے دل کے نئے سنتاراں

اور بیکھفت اک دھماکے سے
 دل کی دنیا دہل دہل جاتی
 ٹوٹ جاتا ہر اک یقین حیات
 زندگی موت سے بدل جاتی

I mused at each step
 Where am I? Where my life?
 Hid in my bride's bosom
 Is the pride of motherhood.
 Reveries dance my sister's
 In heavens none knows
 For whom mother has kept
 All her own dowry
 How their hearts ever new
 Urges should be drinking gall.

And suddenly with a bang
 Shook my heart's world
 Every faith of life snapped
 And death replaced life.

آگ میں پھول

آئینہ نما نہ تصور میں
 ایک اک نقش اُبھرتا ہے
 اور کچھ دیر تھر تھراتے ہی
 آپ ہی آپ ڈوب جاتا ہے

BLOSSOMS IN FIRE

In pavillions of imagination,
 An image surfaces,
 For a while, it vibrates,
 And by itself disappears.

وہ مری صبح — میری شام حیات
 وہ سہرا شب سے صبح کی تنگ سہارا
 وارڈ کے مرگ اثر سکوت کا شور
 زندگانی سے پیار کا غمناز
 دم بہ دم ڈوبتی ہوئی ہنسیں
 دم بہ دم تیسرے سوش کی پرداز
 کوئی اپنے نہ کوئی بیگانہ
 زندگی پھر بھی گوش بر آواز
 خشک ہونٹوں کے چینیہ کھول
 کوئی بڑواں نہ اہرن دم ساز

کیا تمہارے تھی کہ ایسے عالم ہیں
 زندگی مسکرا بھی سکتی ہے
 موت کے جھکڑوں کی پورش میں
 شمع کوئی جلا بھی سکتی ہے

O my dawn, my evening
 The evening seeking dawn
 Din of ward's killing hush
 Betraying gusto for life
 Pulse sinks every moment
 Soaring thoughts quicken
 None a friend, none a stranger
 Life harking all the same
 Crying bowls of dry lips
 God or devil, friendly none.

None knew in such times
 Life could even smile
 Despite death's lashing gales
 It could kindle little lamps

میری دیوان خلوتوں سے دور
 میرے گھر میں بہار آئی تھی
 زندگی اپنی رخصتوں کا جمال
 ایک عورت پہ دار آئی تھی
 موت کی زد میں دیکھ کر مجھ کو
 نقش اک اور اُجبار آئی تھی
 اپنے شعلوں میں آپ تپ تپ کر
 حسن اپنا نکھار آئی تھی
 ایک دنیا کو مٹا پا کے یہاں
 ایک دنیا سٹوار آئی تھی

کیا بتاؤں کہ اُس گھڑی دل میں
 کتنے نشتر نہ گزرا گئے یک لخت
 کتنی کلیاں پنک کے پھول ہوئیں
 کتنے گلشن اُجڑ گئے یک لخت

Far beyond my solitude
 In my house same spring
 Life did its lovely facets
 Sacrifices for a woman.
 Seeing me in throes of death
 New image it had stirred
 Life burning in its flames
 Had its loveliness enhanced
 Seeing here a waning world
 It had decked a newer one.

Can't say at that time at once
 How many lancets pierced me
 How many buds burst as flowers
 And gardens laid waste

میں بصد ضبط و احتیاط م
 کچھ عجیب کشمکش میں تھا غلط
 اک طرف موت کا بیانک خوف
 اک طرف دل کے نت نئے ارماں
 سوچتا تھا کہ کس لیے ہنسر
 ہم ہیں آپس میں یوں ترین ہاں
 ہم میں کیا دشمنی ہے جس کے لیے
 خون اگلتا ہے جنگ کا میدان
 زندگی کے سبھی ہیں شہیدانی
 میں بھی انسان ہوں اودہ بھی ہیں انسان

کتنی مجبور بربریت پر
 آج انسانیت اتر آئی
 چند سکون میں بیچ کر خود کو
 زندگی — آج تو کدھرائی؟

With total calm and poise
 I was at my wit's end
 On one hand, fear of death
 On the other, longings new
 Methought after all for what
 Were we at daggers drawn
 What's the bitterness for which
 Blood floods war theatre
 All are devotees of life
 I'm human, so are they.

To what savageness today
 Human race has descended
 Selling itself for pelf
 Whither have you come, life.

جب شعلے بجھ گئے

آئینہ خائے تصور میں
 ایک اک نقش اُبھرتا آتا ہے
 اور کچھ دیر تھر تھرتے ہی
 آپ ہی آپ ڈوب جاتا ہے

WHEN FLAMES WERE QUENCHED

In pavillions of imagination,
 An image surfaces,
 For a while, it vibrates,
 And by itself disappears.

وہ صبا کے لطیف جھوکوں میں
 پہ چھپاتی ہوئی سحر کی نمود
 تیسرگی دم بہ دم سستی ہوئی
 دم بہ دم پھیلتے شفق کے حدود
 روشنی کا نشان اٹھائے ہوئے
 ہر کرن کا وہ فاتحانہ دُردرد
 راست کے مورچے پر لہراتا
 صبح کے دل کا شعلہ بے دود
 ظلمتوں میں بھینکتے نقشِ قدم
 پاگئے اپنی منزل مقصود

وقت کی گود سے سروں حیات
 صحن گیتی میں پھر اتر آئی
 ارتقا کے رستے ڈھانچے کی
 ڈوبی ڈوبی سی نہیں اُبھر آئی

In gentle morning waft
 Outburst of chirping dawn
 Darkness every moment
 Quickly sprawling twilight
 Carrying flag of light
 Every ray's triumphal march.
 Waving at the night's front
 Clear flame of morning's heart
 Straying footprints
 At the cherished goal arrive

From the lap of time pride
 Of life entered the world
 Failing pulse of sobbing did
 Stir evolution's framework

فوجوانی کے کبھرے کبھرے خواب
 پیر سنورنے لگے نگاہوں میں
 زندگی کی اسٹاک پھر اک بار
 سانس لینے لگی کراہوں میں
 جگمگاتے تہمتوں کے چراغ
 مجھستی نظروں کی خانقاہوں میں
 دل کی دھڑکن پھیل کے ناپ اٹھی
 آرزوؤں کی جلوہ گاہوں میں
 یوں غسارماں تھے فوجواں جیسے
 صفت برصفت گستاہوں ہوں اپوں ہیں

میں کہ میسر دھڑکتے سینے میں
 جیسے کلیاں چٹک رہی تھیں کہیں
 دُور — حد نگاہ سے بھی دُور
 میری نظریں بھٹک رہی تھیں کہیں

Scattered dreams of youth
 Started stirring in the eyes
 The Zest of life began to
 Breathe in sighs and cries
 Glittering lamps of smile
 In abbeys of fading eyes
 Restless heartbeats danced
 In the showplace of desires
 Rambled the youth as if
 Flowerbeds alone lined paths

In my heart's pulsations
 As if somewhere buds bloomed
 And beyond the sight's bound
 Wandered my eyes somewhere

چند سکوں کی اہلی چاندی میں
 کتنے خوابوں کی صبح مٹی خنداں
 کتنے چڑھتے دنوں کی شانِ جمال
 کتنی راتوں کی مانگ کی افشاں
 کتنی محبوب پالوں کی چھنک
 کتنے گیتوں کی نغمگی مٹی نہاں
 بننے کھیتوں کا ہلہاتا شباب
 کتنی فصلوں کا گلگاتا سماں
 دل کی دھڑکن میں جھولتے رہتے
 کیسے کیسے اُچھوتے سے ارماں

میرے ہاتھوں میں آگئی مٹی آج
 میرے ایک ایک خواب کی تعمیر
 اک اندھیری اُجاڑ گئی پیر
 رشک کرتی مٹی تلہ کی تقدیر

In the silver gloss of coins
 My dreams smirked
 Grace of many mornings
 Spangled stars in night's hair
 Clank of many anklets coy
 Lilt of many songs enshrined.
 Waving, smiling fields
 Humming, reaping crops
 Swung in heartbeats
 Many undefined urges

I have come to know
 Meaning of each dream of mine
 A dark deserted hut was
 Envied by paradise.

اپنا وطن

آئینہ خانہ تصور میں
 ایک اک نقش اُبھرتا آتا ہے
 اور کچھ دیر تھر تھراتے ہی
 آپ ہی آپ ڈوب جاتا ہے

MY NATIVE LAND

In pavillions of imagination,
 An image surfaces,
 For a while, it vibrates,
 And by itself disappears.

وہ مرادیس — وہ مرا بنگال
 وہ مسلسل بغب دتوں کا وطن
 دھان کے کھیت میں سلگتے ہوتے
 لوک گیتوں، کہہ دتوں کا وطن
 پھری موجوں کی زد میں تیر زن
 ہنستی گاتی مشتقوں کا وطن
 کچی مٹی کے تاج عملوں میں
 سانس لیتی مہبتوں کا وطن
 ہر فریب حسین میں آئی ہوئی
 بھولی بھالی عبادتوں کا وطن

جس قدر میں قریب آتا تھا
 فاصلہ اور بڑھتا جاتا تھا
 دل میں بیتاب آرزوؤں کا
 سہیل موج چڑھتا جاتا تھا

My country, my Bengal
 Land of unending revolts
 Land of folk sayings, songs
 Blazing in the paddy fields
 Land of workers gay, blithe
 Camping amid swelling waves
 Land of the amorous
 Taj Mahals of unbaked clay
 Land of prayers innocent
 Taken in by lovely tricks.

More and more I neared it
 More and more distance grew
 In my heart a surging flood
 Of perturbing urges rose.

سوچتا تھا — مرے قدم لینے
 ہنسی ہنسی ہو آئیں آئیں گی
 بیٹیں پلوں: لرزتے ہونٹوں کی
 قرقر سداقی دعا میں آئیں گی
 چاند تاروں کی آرتی لے کر
 ناچتی پسرائیں آئیں گی
 میسکر ریشوں کی پیسپ دھونے کو
 بیچ کی جھبکی گھنٹائیں آئیں گی
 نرت نرت گیت گنگ گنگ ہوتی
 بانسری کی صدائیں آئیں گی

کس کو معلوم جنگ کا میدان
 کس کی دنیا کو خون تپا ہے
 اور کس کے جہان کو بیکس
 اپنے شعلوں میں بھون تپا ہے

I had hoped scented
 Breezes will hail me
 Prayers of wet eyes
 And quivering lips will come
 Worshipping moon, stars
 Dancing houris will arrive
 To wash my wounds
 Soothing clouds will advance
 Humming lyrics ever new
 Life music will offer.

Who knows war theatre gives
 Blood to whose universe
 And whose universe it roasts
 Fully in its flames

میں تھا اپنے وطن میں — اور وطن
 سترق لاشوں کی پڑیوں کا دیار
 دل کو اپنے گلے لگائی ہوئی
 سڑکھی بے جان پسلیوں کا دیار
 پائلی دھان کے موخ سہ عام
 بکتی ماؤں کا، بیٹیوں کا دیار
 تھسہ کی دیرانیوں پر ہر بلب
 گرد آلود ڈھیکٹوں کا دیار
 جن کی فصلوں سے توٹ پھوٹ پڑا
 ایسی شاداب کھیتوں کا دیار

میسر میٹور کی زمیں پر آج
 لاشوں و جانچوں کا بس گیا تھا جہان
 اس قدر تھا کرئہ ہر منظر
 جیسے تھے کر چکا ہو قبرستان

سے بھرتی ہوئی کو کہتے ہیں۔

I was in my land, abode
 Of rotting corpses, bones
 Land of inert arid ribs
 Hugging its heart
 Of mothers, daughters
 On sale for rice
 Land of dusty cereal mills
 Hushed at emptiness of houses
 Land of leafy fields in which
 Famine the only crop

In the land of Tagore
 World of cadavers, skeletons
 Such sordid scenes as if
 A burial place had vomited.

اپنا گھر

آئینہ عشاءِ تصور میں
 ایک اک نقشِ امیرتا آتا ہے
 اور کچھ دیر نظر سرتے ہی
 آپ ہی آپ ڈوب جاتا ہے

MY HOUSE

In pavillions of imaginior
 An image surfaces,
 For a while, it vibrates,
 And by itself disappears.

وہ مے گھر میں میرا پہلا قدم
 وہ یکا یک شکستِ دل کا سماں
 جیسے یک لختِ اک دھماکے سے
 ریزہ ریزہ سا ہو گیا ہو جہاں
 بام و دیوار و در کی خسِ موٹھی
 ایک معلوم خوف سے لرزاں
 کونے کونے سے کوئی شکلِ مہیب
 آنکھیں پھاڑے مری طرف بگراں
 ذرے ذرے سے جھانکتی ہوئی موت
 اپنے تازہ شکار پر خنداں

چند سکتے تھا کے باتوں میں
 داؤں مغربت پہ پل چکا تھی جوک
 جیونک کر مجھ کو جتنا کے مُنہ میں
 سارے گھر کو انگل بکلی تھی جوک

O my first step in my house
 Sight of sudden heartbreak
 As if with a sudden bang
 Fell to pieces our world
 Hush of door, roof, wall
 Shaking out of dread known
 From each corner a horrid form
 Stares at me wide eyed
 Peeping from all sides death
 Ashamed of its latest prey.

Palming off a little cash
 Hunger had beguiled want
 Flinging me in war's mouth
 Hunger swallowed all

ایک میسری بہن ہی باقی تھی
 اپنے سینے سے اپنی لاش لگائے
 میسری بچی کے دودھ کی خاطر
 اپنی تقدیر کی دکان بجائے
 اپنے احساس کے سپنوں کو
 میری آمد کی آس سے بہلائے
 اپنی غیرت کے ہر تھمے کو
 اپنے سینے کی قبر میں دفنائے
 ایک ناکردہ جرم کا حاصل
 اک گنہ کا عظیم بار اٹھائے

میسرے آتے ہی جانے کس لمحے
 وہ بھی مجھ سے بچھڑ گئی چپ چاپ
 جیب میں روپیے کھٹکتے رہے
 میری دنیا اچھڑ گئی چپ چاپ

Only my sister survived
 Caressing her own cadaver
 For the little daughter's milk
 She sold her chastity
 Patting snakes of sensation
 In the hope of my advent
 Dumping in her bosom's grave
 Every call of modesty
 Fruit of uncommitted sins
 Carrying big load of shame

As I came I don't know when
 She too left me quietly
 Coins jingled in my purse,
 Silently perished my world.

میری آنکھیں تو خشک تھیں لیکن
 تہہ نہ پاستے کھولتے جذبات
 قمر تہ راستے ہوتے لہریں لاکھوت
 پیچ کر کہہ رہا تھا دل کی بات
 خون بڑواں ہے اہرمن اوصاف
 کس نے دی زندگی کو یہ سوغات
 کیسی دسیا ہے آدمی کو قبول
 جس میں انسان ہیں بدتر از حشرات
 ہے یہ کیسا نظام زبیت کہ جو
 چوس لیتا ہے آپ خون حیات

جی میں آتا تھا توڑ کر ہر بند
 ایک اک قید سے نکل جاؤں
 ایک شمشیر توں فشاں بن کر
 ہر خدا نام خدا پر طر جاؤں

Dry eyed was I but
 Seething feelings nowhere
 Silence of my quivering lips
 Shouted my heart's secrets
 Who is that diabolic God
 Who gifted this gift to life?
 What a world man tolerates
 In which he is worse than worm
 What a scheme of things
 That sucks life's blood

I wanted to cut all bonds
 And step out of every knot
 Be a formidable sword
 And hit gods and helmsmen.

حاصلِ غم

ایمیزت نمائے تصور میں
 ایک اک نقش امیرتا آتا ہے
 اور کچھ دیر تھر تھرتے ہی
 آپ ہی آپ ڈوب جاتا ہے

HARVEST OF GRIEF

In pavillions of imagination,
 An image surfaces,
 For a while, it vibrates,
 And by itself disappears.

روز و شب کا وہ کاروانِ تماش
 اپنے سینے کی آگ میں سوزاں
 زیرِ مژگان دیکھتے انگڑے
 روح۔ ایک ایک رگ میں شعاعِ ناز
 دل میں یادوں کے دُستے پوسے ناز
 ضبط۔ بے اختیار ناکرنتن
 اشک۔ خاموش آتشِ سیال
 فکر، فسردا و دوش میں غمناں
 دُور و نزدیک اجاڑ تہنہائی
 دوشش پر بے بسی کا بارِ گراں

سوچتا تھا کہ میری غربت نے
 اپنا سب کچھ لٹا کے کیا پایا
 ایک خوشحال زندگی کے لیے
 جنگ کے کام آئے کب پایا

Time's mute caravan
 Smouldering inside
 Flames below eyelashes
 Soul engulfed in fire
 Memories pricking heart
 Poise crying helplessly
 Tears mute, molten flame
 Looking after and before
 All-pervading loneliness
 Crushed by helplessness

Methought what my poverty
 Gained in wasting all
 Hoping for affluent life
 What did death in war achieve?

یہ مرا گاؤں — میری خلیہ میں
 قبر کی طرح چپ، اداں اداں
 زندگی جیسے عرصہ سکرات
 کوئی آہنگ دور دور نہ پاس
 کوپے کوپے میں وحشتیں، قصا
 ذرے ذرے پر ثبت، خوفِ مہراس
 دل کو چپ چاپ کھائے جاتا ہے
 دم بہ دم تیرپ مرگ کا احساس
 عمر کے ہر گزرتے لمحے پر
 ٹوٹتی جا رہی ہے ایک اک آہیں

سوچت تھا۔ یہ سوچ سے حاصل؟
 میسر رکھتا، مری، ہی چھاؤں
 کس سے پوچھوں کہ کیوں تباہ ہوا؟
 جنگ سے دور رہ سکے یہ گاؤں

My village, heaven on earth
 Sad and silent like the grave
 Life a pain of agony
 Not a sound far or near
 Wildness all around
 Terror all pervasive
 Silently destroys mind
 By premonition of death
 With each passing moment
 Every hope is fading

I did muse but what's the use
 Kaaba was my shade
 Who will tell me perished why
 Village away from war

سارے بنگال کی زمیں تھی آج
 موت کی اک ہیبب بازی گاہ
 ایک میسرہ ہی گھسہ نہ تھا برباد
 ساری تہذیب ہو چکی تھی تباہ
 ہر تقدس کی کوکھ تھی ناپاک
 ہر تعلق کا اندوہ تھا سیاہ
 مائیں! بیٹوں کے پہلوؤں میں دفن
 بہنیں تھیں بھائیوں کی عشرت گاہ
 پارہ پارہ تھا شیشہ ناموس
 گودیوں میں ہنک رہے تھے گناہ

اسی قبروں کی زندہ بستی میں
 دفن تھی میسرے کائنات تمام
 اسی جنت کے نرم شکلوں میں
 زندگی بل رہی تھی صبح و شام

All Bengal had become
 Horrid playhouse of death
 Perished not my house alone
 But all civilisation died
 Womb of holiness was lewd,
 Core of each relation black
 Mother buried in son's embrace
 Sister, brother's paramour
 Continnence a broken glass
 Sin emerging from the laps

In this living town of graves
 Buried was my universe
 In heaven's gentle flames
 Day and night sizzled life.

دوسری زندگی

آئینہ خداداد تصور میں
 ایک اک نقش اُبھرتا آتا ہے
 اور کچھ دیر تھر تھرتے ہی
 آپ ہی آپ ڈوب جاتا ہے

SECOND LIFE

In pavillions of imagination,
 An image surfaces,
 For a while, it vibrates,
 And by itself disappears

وہ پیسے میں غرق شام و سحر
 زندہ رہنے کے جرم کی پاداش
 ہر نفس اک کراہ در آنوش
 ہر قدم وقف جستجوئے معاش
 روح میں تشہد حسرتوں کی تڑپ
 دل میں خارِ شکرستی کی تراش
 کل تک تھی جو زندگی کی روش
 آج جی کچھ وہی تھی اس کی تراش
 کل جی تھا روح پر یہ تن بیماری
 آج جی روح پر گراں تھی یہ لاش

سوچتا تھا کہ اس بنیابی سے
 جنگ بازوں کو کیا ملا آخر
 کوئی محمود تو رہا محسود
 ہم ایسا زوں کو کیا ملا آخر

The sweating days and nights
 Penalise sin of living
 Every moment webe gone
 Every move a quest of bread
 Ache of yearning in the soul
 Sorrow's thorn pricks heart
 Way of life unchanged
 From yesterday's
 Body did weigh on soul
 And today it does the same

I wondered what lords of war
 Got out of this holocaust
 The poor remained same
 What could they get?

زندگی کے ہر ایک گوشے میں
 ایک اک چیز کاروباری تھی
 کھیت کے کھیت تھے گھرن میں بن
 اور ٹھوکی خدائی ساری تھی
 دیر تا کتب کوئی دوکان ہو
 ہر طرف زر کی شہریاری تھی
 ہر تجوری میں قبر کی مانند
 موت کی جوئے نہیں جاری تھی
 جنگ تو ختم ہو چکی تھی مگر
 جنگ ایک ایک گھر میں جاری تھی

تنگ آکر نہ جانے کتنی بار
 دل نے سانسوں کا ساتھ چھوڑ دیا
 لیکن اکثر مرے عزائم کو
 ایک بچی تے ہنس کے توڑ دیا

Throughout the world
 Everything was businesslike
 Houses entomb crops
 But famished was human race
 As if Kaaba and temple are shops
 Money reigned everywhere
 In each grave-like coffer
 Tender brook of death did flow
 Though war had ended
 It was on in every house.

Fed up, heart many times
 Snapped link with breath
 With a smile, tiny girl
 Ended all my vows

میرا سب کچھ تو لوٹ چکا تھا مگر
زندگی دے گئی تھی اک سوغات
ایک ذرہ کہ جس کے گرد و پیش
گھومتے رہتے تھے مرے نانات
سخت سے سخت ہو گئے آلام
تنگ سے تنگ تر رہے اوقات
ہر کٹھن راہ سے گذرتے رہے
میسری داماندہ عمر کے لمحات
ایک کچی کلی سے ملتا رہا
اک خزاں دیدہ گلستا کج ثبات

کیسے کیسے زخموں کے طوفان میں
زندگی ڈوب کر اُبھر آئی
ایک بچی کے واسطے یہ لاش
برکھوسے دور سے گذر آئی

I had lost all but
Life did offer a bounty
Single jot around which
My days, nights revolved
Cares toughened day by day
Time pestered more and more
Moments of my tired life
Kept on facing ordeals
A bud gave autumn-hit
Flowerbed sustenance

In floods of blood
Life sank and emerged
For a daughter the
Corpse underwent ordeals

دوسری مہرت

آئینہ خداداد تصور میں
 ایک اک نقش اُبھرتا آتا ہے
 اور کچھ دیر پھر ہٹتا ہے
 آپ ہی آپ ڈوب جاتا ہے

SECOND JOY

In pavillions of imagination,
 An image surfaces,
 For a while, it vibrates,
 And by itself disappears.

پھر وہی سانولی سلونی شام
 وہی آباد شام تہبانی
 وہی راک پر سکون ساعتِ غم
 حاصل عمر ناشکیبانی
 راک طرب زار، کرب آلودہ
 راک آلم کیشس، بزم آرائی
 ایک دیرانی، جس کے سامنے بیچ
 سیکڑوں جنوں کی رعنائی
 اعتبارِ حیات کا حاصل
 راک نئے دور کی پذیرائی

کتنے برسوں کی گردنوں کے بعد
 وہی ساعت پلٹ کے آئی ہے
 ایک داماندہ سفر کے لیے
 ایک منزل کا خواب لائی ہے

The same tawny eve
 Populated lonely eve
 Some calm hour of sorrow
 Fruit of life impatient
 Agonised place of mirth
 Get-together fond of grief
 Desolateness outdoing
 Hundred paradises charm
 Fruit of human life's faith
 Harbinger of new age

After several years
 Same hour has returned
 Bringing for a laggard me
 Dream of a destination.

میری بیٹی بنی ہے دلہن آج
 یہ خوشی جی عجیب ہوتی ہے
 گل کھلاتی ہوتی ہر اک ساعت
 دل میں اک خار سا چبوتی ہے
 رشکِ جنت ہو ہے گھر لیکن
 زندگی منہ چھپا کے رتی ہے
 کانپ جاتا ہوں جب کوئی ٹورت
 سوتی ہیں کوئی گل پرتی ہے
 مجھ کو شہنائیوں میں بھی محسوس
 اک صدائے بگل سی ہوتی ہے

آج چہر کچھ صدائے دولتِ ارض
 نقشِ مہتی مٹاتے جاتے ہیں
 نئے نئے کوہِ یابا — نئے بنگال
 سویلیوں پہ چڑھاتے جاتے ہیں

My daughter today's bride
 Queer is the joy indeed
 Every hour causing bloom
 Plunges thorns in hearts
 House rivals heaven but
 Life hides face, cries
 When she makes a wreath
 Out of blossoms, I shake
 In the flute recital
 I hear the bugle's sound.

Once again the lords of earth
 Are decimating life
 They are busy crucifying
 New Bengals, new Koreas.

جنگ نے کتنے کھلتے پھولوں کو
 پھول بننے سے پہلے توڑ دیا
 کتنی راتوں کی مانگ سنوادی
 کتنی صبحوں کا غم چھوڑ دیا
 کتنے کڑیل جوان جسموں کو
 سوکھی شاخوں کی طرح توڑ دیا
 صبح فردا کے کتنے خوابوں کو
 ظلمتوں میں بھٹکتا چھوڑ دیا
 ارتقا کے پسکتے قدموں کا
 رخ کسی اور سمت موڑ دیا

کوئی سوچے، عروسِ فطرت کیوں
 شام سے تباہ صبح رشتی ہے
 ایک سورج کی موت میں مہمتر
 کتنی کرنوں کی موت ہوتی ہے

War has crushed many buds
 Ere they could bloom
 Widowed many eventides
 Bled white many mornings
 Several bodies, stiff and young
 Like dry twigs, it broke
 Many dreams of coming dawn
 Led astray in the dark
 It diverted advancing steps
 Of progress to other side

Think awhile why wails
 Nature's bride day and night.
 A single sun's demise hides
 The death of many a ray.

Himayat Ali Shair honoured

Prof. Nazeer Siddiqi

During the last few years one good literary tradition in Urdu literature is being followed by a better one. From the beginning of the current century most of the first rate and second rate Urdu magazines have been celebrating a number of distinguished writers by bringing out special numbers for them after their death. Zamana Allahabad, Makhzan Lahore, Nigar Lucknow, Nuqush Lahore, Naya Daur Karachi Afkar Karachi, Fun Aur Shakhshiat Bombay, Naya Daur Lucknow, all these well-known Urdu magazines and many others have to their credit several special numbers in memory of established writers and poets.

Now almost all the magazines have started publishing Special Numbers in honour of the living writers. In Dubai where annual world Moshahas are held every year, the Urdu audience have started celebrating jushn in honour of the popular poets by publishing grand and voluminous magazines on very fine art paper and rewarding the poets by presenting substantial amount of money as well.

In Pakistan there has been a social-cum cultural organisation, namely Talents Guild, for more than 25 years. It has been serving arts and artists by promoting arts and helping the artists towards their recognition and appreciation. It was founded in 1974 in Karachi. The familiar newscaster of Pakistan Television, Zubairuddin, is the general secretary and Akhtar Adil is the programme organiser of this organisation which has held evenings with numerous artists of different fields and staged plays, the income of which has been presented to the artists or their widows. It has given awards to television artists and producers who worked in the dramatic serialisation of the famous novel Khuda ki Basti by Shaukat Siddiqi. It presented the famous actor Shahzad Raza for the first time as drama director, it held an evening with the popular artist Moeen Akhtar in 1975 when he was not at his zenith; it arranged a musical evening with the well known singer Bashir Ahmed before he returned to Bangladesh. In short, this organisation has been rendering very valuable services.

The latest performance of this admirable organisation is the presentation of a beautiful documentary magazine of 616 pages to the outstanding Urdu poet Himayat Ali Shair on the occasion of his 70th birthday. It is difficult to realise for many of us that one who looks so young and still handsome is 70 years old. God has been very kind to him. He was endowed with a very handsome personality and melodious voice, which helped him to be a first-rate Moshahas Star. This is far from say-

ing that his Moshahas success is only due to his charming voice.

Himayat has been many things combined in one. He is a poet, a prose writer, a story writer, a playwright, a research scholar, a critic, a journalist, an editor, a university teacher, a songwriter for films, a dialogue writer, a film-producer, a film director, a film actor, a broadcaster, a telecaster, a television script writer, a radio-script writer and what not. By this time he has published five collection of poetry, two collections of critical prose, his 11 books of different subjects are under publication. His central position is that of a poet. Since 1959 he has won 15 awards in Pakistan, India and America, including the award of Lifelong Literary Achievement from Eastern Arts Forum 1994 by Mayor Peter Canto, New Jersey, USA, and Honorary Citizen of Boling Brook by Mayor Roger C. Clear, Chicago USA.

Pandit Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India was not only a politician. He was also a man of letters, a distinguished writer in English and a lover of Urdu poetry because of his cultural background. He invited Faiz Ahmed Faiz more than once and heard his poems along with his cabinet colleagues. When an Indo-Pak Moshahas was held in his time some of the Pakistani poets, including Qateel Shafee and Himayat Ali Shair, were invited on behalf of Prime Minister Nehru. It was on this occasion (1962) that the famous Indian educationist Khawaja Ghulamhus Sayedain wrote a letter to Himayat to tell him that he looked a greater poet than his age. In short, Himayat has bagged a considerable number of awards and honours.

Introducing Talents Guild, Shafiquzzaman announced that the Guild proposes to compile a document every year on an important personality of the country which will cover his life. This document will be a voluminous magazine which will enable the intellectuals to know how a particular important personality managed to attain the stature and status he/she is enjoying. This magazine will aim at portraying what stages were crossed by a drop of water to become a pearl. To begin with, Talents Guild has selected Himayat Ali Shair.

In advanced countries these objectives are achieved by a continuing series of biographies and critical studies, one after another. Even collections of personal letters are published to throw light on the development of personality. I do not know and cannot speculate how many years a country like Pakistan will take to employ these techniques. In backward countries it is well-nigh impossible to write a good biography; critical study and objective evaluation of the work of a person offer no less difficulties. Publication of personal letters, reflecting human frailties, is considered obnoxious.

However, Himayat Ali Shair number of Shakhshiat has attempted to

scan Himayat's life from his birth to his present age. It tells us that his family name is Mir Himayat Ali while his literary name is Himayat Ali Shair. According to his matriculation certificate he was born on July 14, 1926, but according to his family in 1929 or 1930. He hails from Aurangabad, Deccan (India). He obtained his MA from Sindh University. He was married on February 14, 1949, and has four sons and four daughters. He taught at Sindh University from October 1977 to July 1986, and was appointed at Peking University in 1990 but due to ill health could not join it. He wrote songs, dialogues and scenarios of numerous films. He produced the film *Lori* in 1966 and directed his film *Gurya* in 1973. He is a widely travelled writer. His travels include the US, Canada, Europe, Africa, China, Arab countries, India, Bangladesh and Mauritius.

Himayat has been publishing parts of his poetic autobiography in *Afkar Karachi* for the last about one year. Twelve parts of the autobiography have been included in this magazine. He is fond of literary experiments. Years ago when there was no talk of Japanese *Hico* in Urdu poetry, he composed what he calls *Sulasi* which resembles *Hico*, a Japanese form of poetry consisting of three lines. Similarly his poetic autobiography is an experiment in the art of autobiography which displays his classical command over poetry.

By virtue of his subjects Himayat is a modern poet belonging to the progressive tradition. His first collection of poems "Aag Main Phool" was reviewed by no less a progressive writer than Sajjad Zaheer. Similarly his second collection of poems "Mitti Ka Qurz" was reviewed, among others, by Ahmad Nadeem Qasmi. However he has never been an orthodox progressive. He got his first volume of poetry reviewed even by Maulana Maherul Qadri, who belonged to *Jamaat-e-Islami*. This magazine includes impressions about his work by Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Raees Amrohwi, Mirza Adeeb, Ada Jafari and others. Among his correspondents are Wajda Tabussum, Ahmad Faraz, Mustafa Zaidi, Saqi Farooqi, Prof. Rajender Singh Verma, Prof. Akber Rahmani and others. A selection of his letters has also been included. This magazine includes a large number of photographs as well. It brings to light almost all the salient features of Himayat's life. My congratulations on celebration of his 70th birthday in an enviable manner.

(Daily "The News" (International) Islamabad
Wednesday, October 9, 1996.)

Himayat Ali Shair A man of many faces

Sikandar Sarwar

While talking to Himayat Ali Shair one can not help being attracted by the magneticism of his personality. At 70, he retains a humorous glint in his eyes that measure one with perhaps some degree of reservation. He keeps his luxuriant hair long, which, during his conversation, he unconsciously combs back from his forehead and face with his left hand, an age old habit which hasn't died. His face reflects his emotions and feelings as he speaks, but his voice retains an even, calm tenor, even though its rise and fall is ever so slight. His demeanour shows his inner sense of security: he has nothing to prove to any body, least of all to himself. He has done it all.

Himayat was a young prodigy journalist and he also worked for the radio back in Hyderabad Deccan before he had even matriculated. He used to write columns for the dailies "Jinnah" (which became "Manzil" after the fall of Hyderabad State) and for "Hamdard", a newspaper founded by MOHAMMAD ALI JAUHAR. He edited the monthly literary magazine "Shaoor" in Hyderabad Sindh for two years in 1956-57. And he brought out the "Iqbal-number" and the "Nat-number" of "Sareer -E- Khama" a monthly literary journal from Sindh University in the late seventies.

With the radio he started in 1947 at the Hyderabad Deccan station of All India Radio. On migration to Pakistan in 1951, he joined Radio Pakistan and stayed with it for eleven years. He wrote many tracts for the radio on various subjects and was careless, like many of his colleagues in not attempting to preserve his works. One of his sons, Auj-e-Kamal is trying to collect whatever he can, and Himayat hopes that he will be able to salvage some of his writings, which might reveal how he grew during this period as a creative person.

Part of Himayat's life was spent in Hyderabad, Sindh, after the radio station there started functioning in 1955. Here it was that he did his Masters in Urdu. Here it was that his career as a fertile writer flowered, and here it was that he formed lasting associations with persons such as Sheikh Ayaz, who as vice Chancellor, would invite Himayat to teach Urdu.

Later when the University established the Journalism Department, Sheikh Ayaz would ask Himayat to also take classes in Journalism. And it was this Sheikh Ayaz, whose translated works when published in Urdu, would be lovingly introduced by Himayat Ali Shair.

In Hyderabad Sindh Himayat and a few like-minded persons formed a general purpose organisation, Arzhang, and under its umbrella organised plays, painting exhibitions and musical evenings.

"The film actor, Mohammad Ali, his elder brother, Irshad Ali, Mustafa Qureshi and Mir Laiq Ali worked in a tableau based on my early long poem, Bengal Sey Korea Tak and the play, Andhare Ujale, which was a story by Irshad Ali." Himayat Ali Shair penned the dialogue and he also doubled as a director. As if that was not enough, he played the main role of a rebellious character in it.

Apa Shams, the principal of girls college and a prominent lady of Hyderabad used to provide us her "College Stage" for our plays. Niaz Ahmad, the Hyderabad Commissioner, and Sajjad Haider, Director Radio Pakistan, patronized ARZHANG. Mirza Abid Abbas, Principal of city college, also patronized us. Other friends, Nayab Husain (General Secretary) Tahir Rizvi, Usman Irfani, Mohsin Bhopali, Qasid Aziz, Shakir Jafri, Masood Jafri and so many others were attached with ARZHANG.

Himayat is leading a retired life since 1986, when he retired from the Sindh University. He regarded teaching as a labour of love and his success as a teacher brought him a nomination for appointment in Beijing University. However, on health grounds he was unable to take up that assignment. His children, four sons and an equal number of daughters, have not liked the idea of letting him continue working formally after what they thought was a life of long hard work. So, if he is not out socially or has not been invited to a literary gathering, he enjoys his time and freedom at home. "I find this type of busy-ness most satisfying. It gives me a sense of freedom completed with a sense of purpose."

Purpose he achieves for his intellectual satisfaction. For Radio Pakistan he has prepared two series, each of thirteen episodes, of a survey of Urdu literature. The first series will trace the history of satire and humour in Urdu verse and the second in Urdu prose. Himayat is known more for his poetry than for anything else, though he has been a man of many parts. Writing poetry has been a passion which has not diminished.

He is now writing his own autobiography in verse in a local literary monthly. He has won international recognition as a poet, and is widely read in Pakistan, India and the Urdu reading world. But he has also written, among others, in-depth analyses of currents of similarities in Urdu poetry, that is to say how poets have been influenced by their peers and precursors, going as far back as Mir Taqi Mir. Since the late sixties, to quote a few examples, he has, for the T.V prepared learned discourses on the seven hundred years of Urdu ghazal and five hundred years of Urdu poetry by non-Urdu speaking poets, the seven hundred years of Na'tya Urdu verse, the forty years of protest verse etc. He has been widely published in Pakistan, though there was a wide gap, due to his preoccupation with films, between his first "Aag main Phool" collection's coming out in 1956, and the next "Mitti ka Qarz" that came out in 1974. Three more collections, "Tishnaggi ka Safar" "Haroon ki Aawaz" and "Harf Harf Roshni" come out in 1981, 1985 and 1986 respectively. His long poems, "Bengal sey Korea Tak", "Aag main Phool" and "Harf Harf Roshni" have been translated into Sindhi, Hindi, Telugu and English.

Himayat has also experimented with triplets in Urdu poetry, inspired as he was by the Punjabi Mahiyay and the Japanese Haiku. "Urdu had two line, four line forms, but no three line forms, so I decided to experiment with my salasiyays, as I call the three liners." For this particular effort he was given the special Moojid-e-Salasi award in Chicago in 1993.

Himayat jumped into the arena of films for the sake of bread and butter. "One could get Rs 500 for writing one song as compared to one's salary for two whole months. He left the film industry because his children, especially the girls were growing up and his wife did n't like the milieu. "Also, the East Pakistan market had gone." His first song was for the film Aanchal in 1962. Four years later he produced his first film, Lori which was commercially successful and brought him recognition. For fifteen years, Himayat stayed in the film industry and wrote a good number of songs, not to speak of dialogue and screenplays for the movies.

His film lyrics were just as rich in poetic content as Shakeel Badayuni's. Rajendra Krishan's Sahir Ludhianvi and Qateel Shifai's. Examples, if examples are needed, are two songs "Tujh ko maloom naheen, Tujh ko bhala kya maloom" and "Kisi chaman mein raho tum, bahar bun ke raho."

Himayat Ali Shair is a husband who acknowledges the role of his wife in helping to raise his numerous progeny. He is a fond father who has ensured that his children get the best of life that he could for them.

Himayat Ali Shair has lived a full life and he has enriched the lives of those who have come into contact with him.

(Daily "Star" Karachi, Saturday, July 12, 1997.)

"I have contributed my bit"

--- Himayat Ali Shair

Humair Ishtiaq

Running away from home is a misadventure which often ends in a disaster. But there are exceptions to the rule. Himayat Ali Shair is one such exception.

A self-made man, Himayat symbolises success in life as he battled with various odds after he ran away from home in his teens.

Success, it seems, has come to Himayat the natural way. Apart from his literary attainments, he excelled in his association with radio, television and films, not to speak of his success as a professor at the Sindh University.

Born in 1930 in Aurangabad, Himayat's early years were spent in the troublesome 1940s which saw almost the whole world at odds with itself. The monster of war was playing havoc all around. In the Subcontinent, the movement to divide India was gaining momentum and in Himayat's hometown, Hyderabad Deccan, the socialist guerrillas had already intensified their battle against the Nizam.

For Himayat and his friends, it was utter confusion. Their elders labelled and treated them as rebels. Things came to such a pass that Himayat finally ran away from his home not knowing his next destination. He worked for the Hyderabad Deccan Radio and sold newspapers on the streets to earn a living but remained sincere to his cause.

"When Pakistan was carved out, I preferred to stay back as I was enjoying my time with the radio, but things got really tough in October, 1950, when my entry was banned by the All-India Radio management due to my progressive outlook. So, it was in 1951 that I decided to move to Pakistan" Himayat reminisces.

His works in the realm of poetry, which had begun as early as in 1945 under the occasional guidance of Prof. Akhtar-uz-Zaman Nasir, continued. He was in his early twenties, yet it was time for Himayat to experiment. So he did not only in terms of ideas but also in the form of expression. While he talked about social equality and peaceful coexistence, he expressed his ideas through

relatively newer forms. He wrote probably the shortest possible poem in Urdu and named the series *Aik misra - aik nazam*. But soon realised that it would have no permanent place and opted for another -- *sulasi* or triplets.

"Taking inspiration from the conventional *rubai*, I thought it would be interesting to express the thought by dropping the second line of the four-line *rubai*." The idea, as Himayat himself confesses, was not exactly novel as it had been experimented with in Persian by some unknown poet. "But at the time when I was writing those *sulasis*, it was not known to me nor to anyone else. The idea had occurred, as I mentioned, through the conventional *rubai*."

In any case, he asserts, the main thing is how one excels in any form rather than wasting time in tenuous matters, "Mir and Ghalib were not the first ones to write *ghazals*, but are remembered for having excelled in that art."

Himayat also contests the validity of certain forms being used by our poets in expressing their thoughts such as *doha* and *haiku*. *Doha* is a popular form in Hindi language but the ones being written in Urdu have no resemblance to the original *Doha*, but some of our poets continue to call them such despite being widely criticised by our Hindi counterparts. Similarly *haiku* is a Japanese conformation, comprising three lines of 5:7:5 meter but is being generally abused in our literary circles," he claims citing several examples.

He was still a student when his first collection of verses, *Aag mein phool* was published in 1956 and won immediate acclaim in the shape of the Presidential Award. The same year he formed *Arzhang*, a theatre group which used to stage plays in Hyderabad.

Continued adherence to his philosophy had earlier brought tragic consequences for him when he was rusticated and had to shift to Hyderabad to continue his studies. He completed his M.A in 1964 from Sindh University, but much before that he had ventured into the film world as a song writer. In fact, he had received two consecutive Nigar Awards in 1962 and 1963 for his songs in *Aanchal* and *Daman*.

This chain of success both in the literary and film world brought in its wake mental agony as some of his 'friends' turned green with envy and launched a propaganda campaign against him. Himayat remembers those days with

agony. "It was tough, people were misusing their capacity as columnists and my version couldn't reach the general reader as they managed to edge it out of the newspaper columns."

At first Himayat took it lightly :

Yeh bhi hai mehtab parasti ki ek ada

Jab us kou chhoo na paaiy to khak us pay phaink di

But the sinister campaign continued and pushed him to such depths of despair that he protested in anguish:

Jeena bhi ek ilzam hai, marna bhi ek ilzam

Aiy Kaash hum is mulk kay fankar na hootay

Himayat opposes the trend of publishing literary columns in newspapers. Most of the columnists misuse it to unduly project their own causes. "Intellectual issues should only be discussed in literary magazines as readers of any newspaper are unable to take a decision on their own and are bound to be misled by one-sided projection"

Saddened though he was, Himayat refused to be deterred and kept on writing and even produced and directed successful films like *Lori* and *Guria*. Himayat spent more than a decade in the industry and enjoyed enviable success, but never really felt at ease with the prevailing norms. He parted ways in mid 70s when his second collection, *Mitti ka Qarz* came out in 1974. The book was honoured by the prestigious Adamjee Adabi Award, and went a long way in silencing the self-styled connoisseurs of Urdu poetry.

Himayat is an avid reader and believes that one has to know about every philosophy and doctrine before accepting or rejecting it. "Nobody is justified in making decisions on mere whims," has been his viewpoint since childhood. His library has a vast array of holdings and is a research scholar's dream. It is surprising that he did not go for research himself.

In fact, he did attempt it twice, but both attempts proved abortive for different reasons. First he registered himself for Ph.D with the Sindh University in 1964, the topic being "Urdu drama in Pakistan." In those days research scholars were bound to stay in the University town but Himayat could not do so because of his hectic schedule in the film industry.

The second effort came in 1975 after he had left the film world. This time he registered with the Karachi University and Dr Syed Ali Shah was appointed his guide.

The two soon developed differences and Himayat's thesis hit snags. "He wanted me to discuss the issue in the context of East Pakistan also to which my reply was that it did not exist in 1975 when I had registered the subject." Himayat recalls, regretting that he could not get what he deserved even when the thesis was finished.

Having overcome a number of odds during his lifetime, he soon forgot the issue and joined the Sindh University when his friend Shaikh Ayaz, who was the Vice Chancellor, asked him to come over. He left it in 1986 and is since leading a retired life in the sense that he is not employed anywhere. Otherwise, he is as active now as at any stage of his life.

Being a member of the Progressive Writers Association himself, Himayat has words of praise for the movement. "It was so forceful that it had in its fold people from a varied shade of opinion - from Faiz Ahmad Faiz and Sajjad Zaheer to liberals like Hasrat Mohani and staunch Muslims like Syed Suleman Nadvi. The movement had nothing to do with religion as it was all about justice, equality, and peaceful coexistence."

For someone who has published as many as nine books and whose number of awards runs into double figures, Himayat is a very humble man. He modestly talks about his achievements and sounds philosophical when he says: "I have contributed my bit, but I have no illusions."

(Daily "Dawn" Karachi, Friday, March 19, 1993.)

A Plea for Peace

Prof. Azhar Qadri

Himayat Ali Shair's famous long poem, "Bengal Se Korea Tak" has been translated into English by Professor Rajinder Singh Verma of Punjabi University Patiala and has now been published as book entitled "Flower In Flames".

"Bengal Se Korea Tak" was composed in 1951. The second part of this poem was first published in 1952 in the Urdu College Magazine, edited by Ibne Insha and A.R. Mumtaz under the title of "Tassavur".

The fifth and sixth parts of it were published in May 1953. In the "Mashrab" Karachi. Professor Mumtaz Husain published its eighth part in his journal, "Saiyara" Karachi in September 1953.

In March 1954 the "Shahrah", Delhi edited by Wamiq Jaunpuri published the full poem in its annual number.

The central idea of the poem is based on peace and according to the poet, was conceived during the Korean War. The gruesome consequences of World War II and the disastrous effects of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were then still fresh in the minds of the people. The American involvement in the Korean War naturally gave rise to general fear for another world war.

It is this human side of war that has stirred the poet's imagination and led to "Bengal Se Korea Tak". The technique employed in this poem is that of "Flash Back" which is rare in Urdu poetry. It is, in fact a sort of reminiscences in which the poet recalls past events in relation to the last World War. Though speaking in the first person singular, he elucidates his point through imaginary characters.

Although it not an autobiography as such, the central character of the story may be the poet as well as the reader.

Today as science puts even deadlier weapons at the disposal of war-mongers, peace has become one of man's most desired objects.

(Daily "Dawn" Karachi, Friday, February 21, 1986)

اہل قلم کا آئینہ ہوتی ہے ہر کتاب دنیاۓ ادب کی مطبوعات

نی رتوں کا سراغ (نظمیں، غزلیں، قطعات)	ڈاکٹر ظاہر سعید ہارون (لاہور)
متاع عزیز (غزلیں)	عزیز الحسن عزیز (نیویارک)
چراغوں (غزلیں)	سید محمد حنیف اعظمی (نیویارک)
شہر نگار (غزلیں، قطعات)	سرور عالم راز (ڈہلیس)
پاکستان میں ٹیلیویژن صحافت (ترجمہ)	ادج کمال (کراچی)
فن تحقیق (ایم اے کے نصاب کیلئے)	ادج کمال (کراچی)
Flower in Flames (ترجمہ بنگال سے کوریا تک)	راجندر سنگھ درما (پٹنالیہ)
Every Word Aglow (حرف حرف روشنی)	راجندر سنگھ درما (پٹنالیہ)
میرے خواب (نظمیں، غزلیں)	زرین یاسین (نیوجرسی)
بانو کے افسانے (21 افسانوں پر مشتمل مجموعہ)	بانوارشد (لندن)
آئینوں کے چہرے (نظمیں، غزلیں)	رشیدہ عیال (نیوجرسی)
دل کے گنبد میں (غزلیات)	صلاح الدین ناصر (نیویارک)
دشت جنوں (غزلیات)	غوث مہر اوی (کراچی)
ہاں اور نہیں کے درمیاں (غزلیں، نظمیں)	احمد نوید (کراچی)
خیاباں (نعت، منقبت، غزلیات)	سید محمد حنیف اعظمی (نیویارک)
Flute & Bugle (ترجمہ بنگال سے کوریا تک)	پرکاش چندر (دہلی)

زیر طبع

عقیدت کا سفر (سات سو سالہ نعتیہ شاعری کا انتخاب)	مرتبہ: حمایت علی شاعر (کراچی)
خواب آنکھوں میں (نظمیں، غزلیں)	ڈاکٹر زاہدہ تنیم مقصود (کراچی)
لیلائے سخن (نظمیں، غزلیں)	سید کاظم رضا رشوی (کراچی)
حرف تمنا (غزلیات)	شاہدہ نسیم سالک (سٹنٹن)
بولتی آنکھیں (نظمیں، غزلیں)	خواجہ رحمت اللہ جری (کراچی)
بانو کی کہانیاں (21 افسانوں پر مشتمل مجموعہ)	بانوارشد (لندن)

اور

ایک بین الاقوامی معروف جریدہ
ماہنامہ دنیاۓ ادب کراچی (مدیر اعزازی) ادج کمال



HIMAYAT ALI SHAIR

Himayat Ali Shair was born in 1926 in Aurangabad, (Deccan) India. Besides literary achievements he made his mark as a journalist, broadcaster, television compare, playwright, film producer, director and song writer. As best poet he received President award 1959, Nigar award 1962, 1963, 1988, Adamji award, 1974, Usmania Gold Medal 1987, Naqoosh award 1987, Maqdoom mohiuddin award delhi 1989, Dr. Mohammad Iqbal award, (Academy of Letters) 1985, Hindi Sahtia award lucknow 1991, Radio Pakistan long life achievement award 1993. Mojid Salasi award chicago 1993. Vasiqa - e- Aitraf Hamdard 1994, Long life literary achievement award new jersi 1994, Honrary citizen ship of Boling broke chicaco on his poetic work 1996. Among his published work are: Poetry: "Aag main Phool" 1956, Mitti ka Qarz 1974, Tashnagi ka Safar 1981, Haroon ki Awaz 1985 Translated work: Flower in Flames by Rajinder Singh Verma 1985, Every word aglow by Rajinder Singh Verma 1993, Flute & Bugle by Prakash Chander 1997. Prose: Shaikh Ayaz 1979, Shaksh -o- Aks 1984.



Prakash Chander

Mr. Prakash Chander retired as resident editor of the Times of India, Lucknow after more than four decades in the profession. He is equally well versed in English and Urdu which he learnt in the thirties in his home town Rawalpindi (Pakistan) An avid student of all progressive literature from the late thirties he has made a deep study of progressive literature in Urdu. He holds that translation from one language to another in an arduous task. It is all the more so in poetry, more specially Urdu poetry whose idiom is almost untranslatable. But in this translation of "Bengal se Korea Tak" he has tried to approximate to the nearest English phrase and idiom. The verdicts is with the reader.