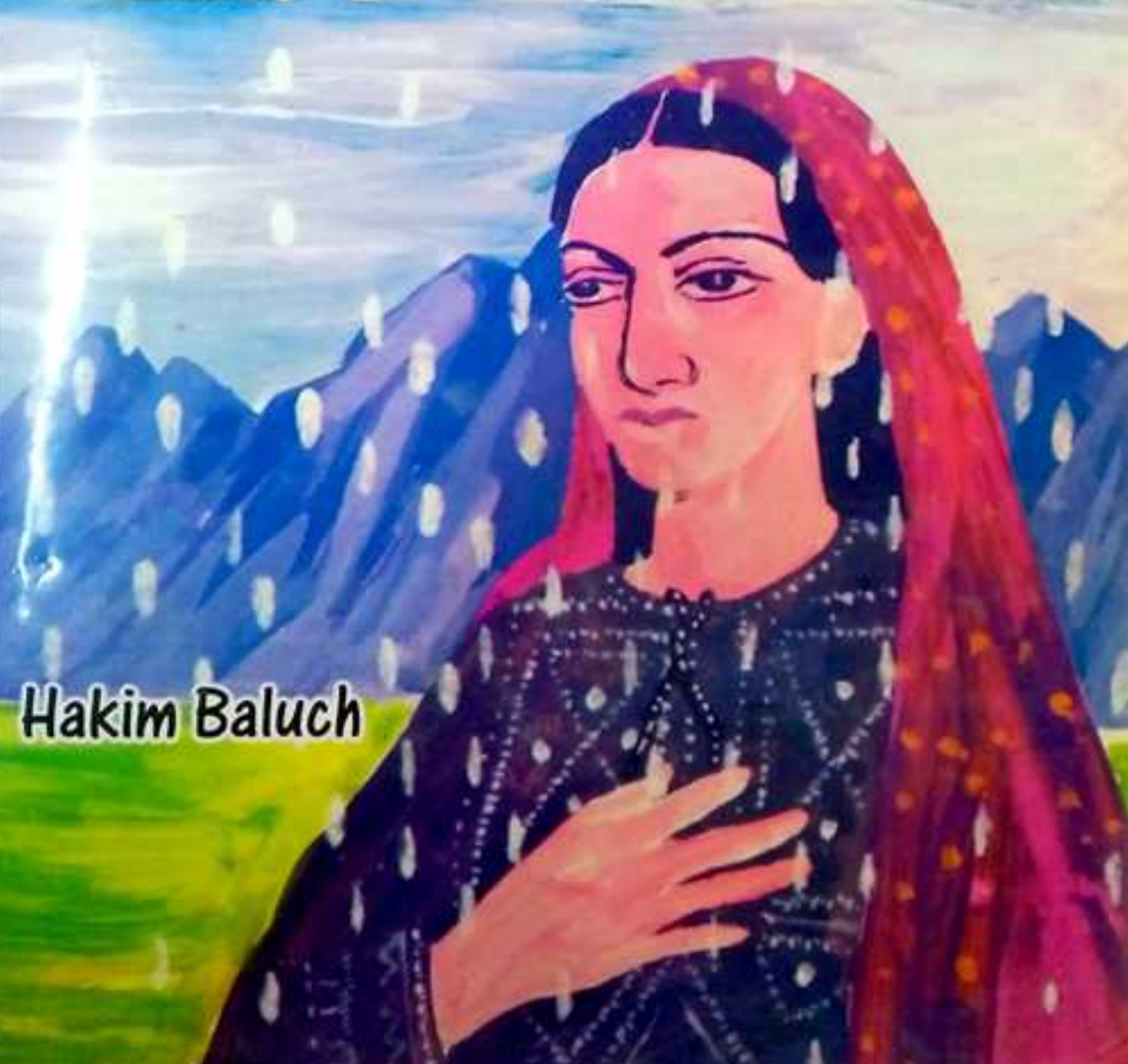




TEARS OF RESURRECTION



Hakim Baluch

Tears of Resurrection



DEDICATION

To my revered teacher
Professor Karar Hussain (Late)

Tears of Resurrection

Hakim Baluch

Baluchi Academy Quetta
2000

ISBN :- 969 - 8557 - 00 - 8

© All rights reserved for the author

Book :	Tears of Resurrection
Author:	Hakim Baluch
Composing:	Mir Shai Mazar
Proof Reading :	Mir Sadaat/ Munir Jan
Cover Design:	Akram Dost
No. of Copies:	1000
First Edition:	July 2000
Price:	Rs. 250
Export Price:	US \$ 15
Printers:	United Printers Quetta. Pakistan
Publishers:	Baluchi Academy Quetta, Pakistan.

Contents

Introduction	9
Chapter One: <i>On the Role of Intellectual</i>	15
Intellectual and National integration	17
Chapter Two: <i>On Classical Baluchi Poetry</i>	27
Balach's muse and musket	29
Tears of Resurrection	44
Tears of Resurrection's poet and her imagery	47
The folk lore of Hani- Shah Murid	59
Chapter Three: <i>To Departed Souls</i>	73
Ata from here to there	75
Baqi to eternal sleep	81
Sardar alone with his glory	95
Chapter Four: <i>On Current Events</i>	101
Will of the people	103
Politics sans morality	115
90 days 3 rd Feb:97 100 days 13 th Feb:97	131
Chapter Five: <i>Short Stories</i>	137
The grave and winter moonlight	139
From sickle to scoop	147
Dazo duzz	160
The siyahkar	167
The legal heir	173
The whore	184
Shahi mehman khana	202

INTRODUCTION

'Tears of Resurrection' is a remarkable exercise in self expression through English by a modern Baloch intellectual. In main, the author has responded to external stimuli, and yet his individualism is fully reflected with its splendor in all the themes he has touched.

During the sixties (20th Century) when Hakim Baloch was a student in Government College Quetta, I had seen in him a restless youth in revolt on the verge of a precarious political career. Subsequently while working for his Masters degree in English, he would seem to have subjected himself to a rigorous process of self appraisal and self realization. Through extensive reading in English, he gained acquaintance with modern ideas, and by listening to his great teacher, the late

Professor Karrar Hussain to whom he has dedicated this work, he must have imbibed the spirit of Islamic universalism.

Born (1942) in Panjgur, the very heart of Balochistan, young Hakim had assimilated the very essence of the ancestral value system of the Baloch society, which later on he discovered fully represented in the Classical Balochi Poetry. Therefore, he had always wished that the Classical Balochi Poetry and the folklore should be written and interpreted in its true socio-cultural setting. This wish of Hakim Baloch, the more mature and discerning scholar as he is now, stands partly fulfilled in the four articles under Chapter-II.

All the eighteen articles under the five chapters in this work, reveal an energetic mind at work, making a literary contribution that is unique and original. Chapter-I, replete with select quotes from poesy, is concluded with the far-reaching observation that "the intellectual's role, in any spheres of life, is well defined : it is up to him to choose: if he is with the vanquished he is victorious, if he is with the victor, he is bound to vanish in the dust of history". As the author sees it, our intellectuals have not played their role effectively.

The three articles under Chapter-III, are in effect obituaries of three stalwarts from the Baloch intellectual community who died during 1997-1999. In these articles (first published in Daily Dawn, Karachi), the much grieved author has expressed his feelings of loss and love for his three compatriots and contemporaries. In particular, the image of Ata Shad is brightened in the perspective of other poets.

The articles under Chapter-IV are 'on current events'. In the realm of current intellectual discourses, Altaf Gohar and M.H. Askari would appear to have been instrumental to provoke the author into writing the two articles with a bit of different approach and interpretation of Islamic political thought and that of national political life. The frequent dismissal of governments and dissolution of representative assemblies, particularly the phenomenon of installing 90 days caretaker governments and holding elections under them, has been analyzed comparing these with similar historical exercises of the antiquity, predicting that the things ultimately would lead to its logical end in view of the new world order.

The seven short stories under Chapter-V were initially written by the author in Balochi language.

These have now been translated by the author himself and included in this anthology. How far these short stories depict social, political and legal systems, or cultural values and their use and abuse by the so called upholders and champions of the society, it is for the reader to discern and judge.

The main and the unique contribution of the author comes in the articles under Chapter-II in the realm of Classical Balochi Poetry. Ever since Longworth Dames published (1907) the text/translation of poems from Classical Balochi Poetry* , no other comparable work in English has appeared on the subject. Mention may, however, be made of a meritorious work in Balochi by the late Sher Mohammed Marri which carried, besides the text copious commentary on the substances of the poems and their exposition in the context of Balochi history and tradition* . This was indeed, an original contribution in the area of modern Balochi prose and criticism.

- Dames, M. Longworth: Popular Poetry of the Baloches, Vol. I (trans.) and Vol. II (text) the Royal Asiatic Society, London, 1907.
- Marri, Sher Mohammed: *Balochi Kahnen Shahiri* (The Classical Balochi Poetry), Balochi Academy Quetta, 1970. (Also carrying an introduction in English by N. A. Baloch

It is now for the first time that an elaborate literary evaluation and exposition in English of selected pieces from Classical Balochi Poetry is being offered to the readers by a qualified modern Baloch writer himself.

For instance he has evaluated Balach's composition with regard to his and his brother Doda's commitment and the sacrifice given to uphold the values of vendetta and protection that is *Bheir* and *Bahot*, so as to show that to uphold the ideals of life one's muse and musket must go together. 'Tears of Resurrection' depicts, in purport, the imaginative approach of the lady poet Seemak who transcends the social barrier of isolation and stagnation. In the process, she takes to the realm of muse and resurrects her lost companion Natha through clouds and rain drops in the civet sprinkling atmosphere of the Maraan range

The Shah Murid folklore has been analyzed in the chaste Baloch cultural background of Mir Chakkar's era and some misunderstandings have been demolished regarding the characters of that high drama of love and romance. Particularly the misconception of gifting away Hani to minstrels has been analyzed in its social

perspective vis-à-vis the status of woman in Baloch society.

The author's analysis and observations, expression and exposition under all the themes are as much fresh in contents as they are thought provoking. With all its qualities and limitations 'Tears of Resurrection' is a valuable contribution to English literature in Pakistan in general and Balochistan in particular.

Hyderabad Sindh,
25 June 2000 A.D.

N. A. Baloch
Professor of Emeritus
University of Sindh

Chapter One

On

The Role of Intellectual

Intellectual and National integration

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

221. Shall I inform you,
(O people), on whom it is
That the Satans descend?³²³⁶

هَلْ أُنَبِّئُكُمْ عَلَىٰ مَا نَزَّلَ الشَّيَاطِينُ ﴿٣٦﴾

222. They descend on every
Lying, wicked person,

نَزَّلَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ أَفَّاكٍ أَثِيمٍ ﴿٣٧﴾

223. They listen eagerly
And most
Of them are liars.

يَلْقَوْنَ السَّمْعَ وَآذَنَهُمْ كَذِبُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

224. And the Poets,³²³⁷
It is those straying in Evil,
Who follow them:

وَالشُّعْرَاءُ يَتَّبِعُهُمُ الْغَاوُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

225. Seest thou not that they
Wander distracted in every
Valley?—

الَّذِينَ هُمْ لِكُلِّ وَادٍ مَبْهُوثُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

226. And that they say
What they practise not?—

وَأَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ مَا لَا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

227. Except those who believe,³²³⁸
Work righteousness, engaged much
In the remembrance of Allah,
And defend themselves after
They are unjustly attacked.
And soon will the unjust³²³⁹
Know what vicissitudes
Their affairs will take!

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ
كَثِيرًا وَانصَرُوا مِن بَعْدِ مَا ظَلَمُوا وَسَيَعْلَمُ الَّذِينَ
ظَلَمُوا أَيَّ مَقَلَبٍ يَنْقَلِبُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

Ladies & Gentlemen!*

Please don't be taken aback, I am not delivering a sermon:

آل راز که در سینه نهان است نه وعظ است
بردار توان گفت به منبر نه توان گفت

That secret which is hidden in the breast is not a sermon-

You can utter it on the gallows but you cannot utter it on the pulpit.

I am not on the pulpit, nor do I have a wish to be on the gallows. The verses that I just recited are from the Sura-e-Alshuara. Here the role of the poet, writer, artist and the intellectual has clearly been defined by the Holy Quran.

Allama Yusuf Ali in his commentary on these verses observes that: "The Poets to be read with the exceptions in the last verse. Poetry and other arts are not in themselves evil, but may on the contrary be used in the service of religion and righteousness. But there is a danger that they may be prostituted for base purposes. If they are insincere ("they say what they do not") or are

divorced from actual life or its goodness; or its serious purpose, they may become instruments of evil and futility. They then wander about without any set purpose and seek the depths of human follies rather than the heights of divine light”

In the light of this fulsome definition of the role of writer or intellectual I find the intellectual atmosphere prevailing around us somewhat baffling and I like to recite a couplet of Ghalib again:

کبود پوشم و قرطاس پیراہم سازم
گمے بہاتم دانش، گمے حسرت داد

I put on a dark blue dress and make a paper shirt as cloak.

Sometimes mourning for knowledge, sometimes longing for justice.

Though I am not “kabood posh” nor exactly wearing a dark blue cloak, neither have I made a shirt of paper, yet I do mourn for knowledge and do long for justice. Bedil has succinctly observed that the fever of longing for some one even keeps the pulse of the sea a-

dancing. The moonlit nights of the full moon are a testimony to this expressive line of the great poet.

And this couplet of Ghalib, the distressful but the eloquent poet of the devastated Delhi, is but a calligraphic expression of his feelings regarding the intellectual situation of his times. This may be or may not be graphically true to our intellectual situation but it does give us a metamorphic description of our own situation with regard to the role that our intellectuals have assumed for themselves in terms of national integration or social cohesion.

Faiz Sahib while lamenting upon it has given a true picture of the tragic situation.

قلم یا تیغ کے جو دھنی تھے
 جو عزم ہمت کے مدعی تھے
 اب ان کے ہاتھوں میں صدق و ایمان کی
 آزمودہ پرانی تلوار مڑ گئی ہے

Those who were expert wielders of Pen & Sword,

*And claimed to be epitomes of courage and
Determination
In their hands the old tested sword of faith and
Conviction has been twisted.*

In the words of D. H. Lawrence "Ours is a tragic age but we refuse to take it tragically". And again Faiz Sahib had identified the cause of this refusal to accept the reality and not to be alive to the dismal situation.

ہوس کے پر پیچ راستوں میں
کلہ کسی نے گردی رکھ دی
کسی نے دستار پیچ دی ہے

*In the labyrinth corridors of greed,
One has pawned the Cap,
And the other sold the Turban.*

And the officer intellectual Mustafa Zaidi's confessional couplet that:-

میں اک سراب کی خواہش پہ پیچ آیا ہوں
تمام بادہ و ساغر ، تمام تشنہ لہی

*To the wish of a mirage I have sold
The Cup and Wine with the Thirst in totality.*

It is an indicator of the role that most of us have been playing in the chequered life of our national existence for the last 50 years. Many of us, perhaps, were standing on the moving ethereal border of reality and fiction burning like the "silent candle in our own dark abode."

حلقہ کئے بیٹھے رہو اک شمع کو یارو
کچھ روشنی باقی تو ہے، ہر چند کہ کم ہے

*Keep your encirclement of the candle constant,
It may seem dim but there is at least a flicker of
light.*

The question is not the encirclement of "the one candle" that is burning with a dim light and a diminishing flicker. Lo ! it flickered and it is gone. Should we call it idealism or romanticism or romantic adhocism. Charming it may look but even in the eyes of the critics in the romantic era of English poetry adhocism was not being recognized as a thing of beauty. They were of the view that a thing of beauty is a joy for ever and that a piece of

art could be a "joy for ever" that which presents the artistic creation in a form and manner, which conforms a true fidelity to art. Fidelity to art is the endeavor of the artist that depicts the spirit of the age conjoining the cosmic beauty with human aesthetic beauty:

دیس پردیس کے یارانِ قدحِ خوار کے نام
حسنِ آفاق و جمالِ لب و رخسار کے نام

*To the health of every drinking comrade
of all climes and countries,
To the consonance of cosmic rhythm of
Aestheticism and beauty of her lips and
countenance.*

These lines of Faiz Ahmed Faiz are a true picture of the perfect art of poetry that combines the cosmic and human beauties in an attempt to attain eternity for the aestheticism by conjoining the particles of cosmic Light with that of human forces of fecundity. Man is truly a microcosmic replica of the cosmic forces of light and darkness and he can only realise his union to the forces of light through a commitment to Intellectualism and plays his role while identifying himself with the

forces of "Light and Libido" and that is "to be with all those hushed voices in the torture cells", borrowing the famous phrase of Albert Camus. The sentiments of those hushed voices can be expressed when the writer consciously contrives to be with the victims of History and not with the history makers.

لکھتا ہوں اسد سوزش دل سے سخن گرم
تا کہ رکھ نہ سکے کوئی میرے حرف پر انگشت

*I inscribe the hot words from the burning of my heart,
So that nobody can put his finger on my letters.*

The commitment should come from a burning heart so that nobody could put his fingers on the hot letters that are forming the idea. I am sure no one would like to burn his fingers, particularly the sober writers of theoretical treatises as they seldom understand the deeper meaning of these ideas. So Ata Shad clamours;

تو پہ سرانی گڈگازندے حیا لاں کو شے
پہ سندگداشت کنے پھلا شہ بوتالانیا

*By chopping the heads can you obliterate the high ideals of life?
And by plucking the flower can you contain its diverging
fragrance?*

The same idea has been expressed by Ghalib while reproaching the conformists, he questions them:

کاش سنجیدی کہ بہر قتل معنی یک قلم
جلوہ کلک و رقم دارو رسن خواهد شدن

*O, had you pondered that for killing a deeper
meaning with one stroke,
The manifestation of pen and sign
may become gallows and rope.*

Similarly Mir Gul Khan Naseer in pursuit of the same poetic conviction declares:

من دارے سرا
حق گوشاں
چپ نہ بان

*On the gallows
I speak the truth*

I can't keep silent

As he is sure that:

منصور شوم گر بر سردار بر آرید

And

عمریت که آوازه منصور کهن شد
من از سر نوزنده کتم دارو رسن را

It is a life that Mansur's voice has become old, let me give new life to the gallows and rope as I am sure I shall become Mansur (victorious) when you put me on the gallows.

The intellectual's role, in any sphere of life, is well defined; it is up to him to choose: if he is with the vanquished he is victorious, if he is with the victor he is bound to vanish in the dust of History.

This article was presented in a Seminar held on 23rd March 1997 in connection with the celebrations of Golden Jubilee under the auspices of the Institute of Balochistan Studies.

Chapter Two

On

Classical Baluchi Poetry

BALACH'S MUSE AND MUSKET

The Heroic Ballads of the Baluchi poetry are replete with tales of numerous heroes who had laid their lives for protecting the life or property of a person who happened to have taken refuge with them. While going through these ballads one always feels as if the Fate had ordained to weave the threads of Baluch Cultural and Social fabric in a fashion that the Baluch Elite should lay his life while protecting the flock-tending rich widows and their herds.

Mir Chakar Rind heralds the thirty-year-war of Rinds and Lasharis to vindicate the honour which he felt was humbled by Lashari youth who butchered and roasted the kid-camels of durrain (beautiful) Gohar. His lament may put Sevi* under

* *Mir Chakar while leaving Sibi cursed it to be perpetually engulfed in the dust of the marauding cavalries.*

the dust created by the hooves of horses or may not; but Sibi was sacrificed to the beautiful Gohar. In a similar tale Mir Qambar while struggling to rescue the herds of a protegee widow, loses his life in his wedding costume. His loving mother does not lift-up a lament but sings a wedding song, as the traditions suggest, on the death of her martyred son.

The story of Balach is a bit different in the sense that it is Doda (his elder brother) who meets the angel of death in his pursuit to recover the stolen herd of Sammi. She was the widow of a certain Buledi who was given in the protection of Doda, the Gorgej Chief, by her aged issueless husband. Before his death he requested the Chief that after his death his heirs would come to carry away his cattle but the herd of nineteen cows which had destroyed his crop of millet should not be given to them, as these cattle were a grant from heaven and he had gifted it to his beloved wife Sammi for her maintenance. Doda gave him his word to protect the lady and her cows.

As the luck would have it, Doda the Chief was lying asleep one day, the Buledis drove the cows away. Such events must have been a part of

the medieval tribal system where the Chief or the elite was committed to give protection to the life and property of each member of the tribe along-with those who might have sought refuge with them. The person who used to record such eventful episodes and preserve them for the posterity was the poet who while narrating the tale of these heroic deeds, re-created their characters in the realm of muse and imagination as a true reflection of the eternal values of the Baluch Culture, imperatively suggesting that for protecting and preserving these values, the Baluch is committed to offer the highest sacrifice and of course, honour can only be vindicated by one's own blood.

In the cosmic battle of Good and Evil, Doda's character is nothing new but what grants it a new angle is the "spite" which Balach entertains in his heart the moment Doda is fatally hurt by the arrows of the enemy and falls on the ground. The poet Balach finds a simile and describes it as "the felling of a bough" on the plain.

*The coarse arrows hitting Doda.
Bringing him down to the ground
The great Mir's felling like a bough
Is a perpetual venom of spite in Balach's
heart*

This angle does not create a new character but resurrects the martyr Doda, as with his felling like a bough on earth he sows the seeds of virtue in the soil soaked in his blood and the seeds of venomous spite and vendetta find their roots in Balach's heart. Both grow and become full blossoming trees.

The poet so beautifully depicts the characters, in the reality of this world, and in the full glaze of the eventful circumstances that the first part of the act which opens the drama is such a true picture of socio-tribal psyche of its times that for the reader of the poem it is very difficult to differentiate the real and the imaginative aspects of it. The cunning enemy shrewdly selects the timings of his choice and takes away the cows of Sammi.

"Doda was fast asleep in the terraced cool reed hut of his wedding", that his wise mother came and aroused him saying, "I bore you for nine months in my womb and for three years I suckled you. Now go forth in pursuit of the cattle; either collect and bring them back or bring destruction on your own head." And his mother-in-law with great dignity said "Men who promise to give protection do not lie asleep in day time"

Doda also realizing the craft of his enemy feels :

*O, mean fellow with lizard like eyes
You spoiled my life .*

*But it would become a legend for the
Baluch.*

There is no alternative for him, he is to act quickly and swiftly to overtake his enemy. The great warrior Doda leaves his multi-coloured bedstead, overtakes his adversaries; fights ferociously to take the herd back but instead "brings destruction on his own head". Thus puts his signature on the earth with his blood , carving the indelible mark on the rock of time making it a legend forever.

The drama and its characters develop and grow in those days of antiquity when man was the bondsman of social and tribal values and taboos; he lived for them and died to defend them. He could not afford to be indifferent as the "razier tongue" of the tribe would have hurt him more efficaciously than that of a razor's edge. The venomous taunt emitted by ill-wishers was much more poisonous than the bite of the cobra. These symbolic characters exude the brilliance of perpetual perception of vow, vendetta and valour of those times so vividly and graphically that wings of

fancy carry any genuine reciter of these verses to the days of yore when Balach sings:

*Mountains are the forts of Baluchs;
 The peaks are better than an army;
 The lofty heights are our comrades;
 The pathless gorges are our friends,
 Our drink is from flowing springs:
 Our cups are the leaf of dwarf-palm;
 Our beds are the thorny bushes;
 The ground we make our pillows;
 My white sandals are my steed;
 For my sons you may choose the arrows;
 For my sons-in-law the pointed dagger;
 For my brethren the broad shield;
 For my father the wide-wounding sword.*

These verses are a true poetic reaction of Balach the warrior to the taunt of his adversary Bivargh in which he calls him a jackal and terms his taking abode in the mountains as an act of cowardice. Balach stood fast, stayed in those enchanted regions as if reigning alone over an unshared kingdom and sending messages of terror to the frightful foe from his lofty throne as he again sings:-

I have not made war like a jackal;

*But like a tiger I fight.
 I swear on my head that;
 Every night I will burst forth;
 Like a storm cloud in the rains;
 I will come forth to fight;
 When your young men are all sleeping;
 In their huts in the arms of their fair ones.*

'In the mythological world there was a sacred grove where grew a certain tree within a sanctuary. It was forbidden to pluck a bough from that tree. Only a runaway slave was allowed to break off, if he could one of its bough. Success in the attempt entitled him to fight the ever-vigilant priest in single combat. And the ancient people thought that fateful branch was the *Golden Bough*'. This incidental similitude which is created by Balach's "fallen bough" and that of the *Golden Bough* gives both the events the same immortality which any piece of art rightly attains in the realm of creative art, be it the myth or the muse, as both attempt to separate the world of "naked facts" from that of the world of art where the threads of truth are almost inextricably interwoven with fantastic and fabulous embroideries with a view to casting them into the literary form of its reality.

Balach does not pluck the golden bough from the forbidden tree but picks up the blood-soaked seeds of "spite" from the ground on which his knightly brother falls like a bough from the saddle of his mare 'with his red boots on his feet and glittering rings on his hand'.

Balach was a kid when his brother Doda was killed in the battle. He was alleged to be a poor spirited person. But the following lines belie the allegation when he challenges his stronger and craftier enemy:

*O, you have slain the men
Believing (wrongly) that
Baluch has become guardianless
The wealth that was carried away by
Bivargh
Will never be exchanged
for fair fabrics and raiment.*

The poet does express his determination to avenge the death of his brethren and warns the enemy that the wealth that he had taken away would not pay him materially either. But he does not instantly pick up his bow and arrows to materialize what he expresses in the verses. He is very conscious of ground realities prevailing

around him. He and his only companion Nakhibo (a half brother from a slave –mother) go to the shrine of a saint: the Shah.

*I went to seek refuge with the Shah
 Taking protection in his shrine
 etching water (in pots for pilgrims)
 Taking the kid-goats for grazing
 Accepting loafs as alms (like a beggar)
 Praying to God (for success)
 Wearing the coarse
 Rope around (my) neck.
 Till I became of eighteen years
 And attained adulthood
 Then took my bow and arrows*

It is then that he declares his uncompromising determination to uproot “the Evil” and establish “the Good “ so as to enkindle the eternal torch of virtue.

*With the enemy (The Evil)
 And the bitter foes of Doda
 I will do what :
 The hawks have been doing with the doves
 The goats have been doing
 With kaheer’s tender branches
 The fishermen do with the fish*

*The pigs do with the millet crop
And shall enkindle the Fire till Doomsday*

(Balach literally means Baal Deity's Fire: BAAL ACH)

The legend suggests that after three years Balach saw a vision as if the Shah had come to him and were asking him to fight with the enemies. He went and bought a bow which he left unstrung at night and found it strung when he rose in the morning. He had it as an omen and also a permission from the Shah of the shrine who has now given leave and was saying "Now thy bow is strung go and smite the enemy."

On having been armed spiritually (ideologically) he and Nakhibo get themselves armed with all the material weapons and enter the alley of the adversary to wage the un-relented spasmodic and nocturnal war against them and retreating to the mountains before dawn .

Twenty I have slain with the edge of the sword

Twenty with double – edged dagger

Ten with the axe and

Ten with wide wounding sword

The poet consciously develops the character of Balach in such an artistic manner that

the true picture of life appears vividly and confirms the belief that the growth of the ideals of life and protection of the eternal values of a society not only require the sharp edge of feeling and thought but it also calls for strength of arms and armaments. If you are equipped with weapons of thought and intellect then you must be equipped with bow and arrows: *muse and musket must go together*.

Thought and arms working in unison will certainly make the Good victorious, obliterating the Evil, and only then the pictograph is engraved on the granite of time which comes out of the burning heart of Doda and enkindles the eternal fire of goodness that was once a spite in Balach's heart.

Man is a micro-cosmic replica in the eternal cosmic battle of Good and Evil and the tale of Doda and Balach is a true picture of that replica having been so faithfully drawn in the verses of Balach that it literally emerge like a fresco of antiquity on the canvas of one's mind giving the impression of a bi-faceted lens that is concave on one and convex on the other façade: Doda being the replica of the eternal values of Bahot and Balach that of Bheir. Bahot and Bheir are two inviolable institutions of Baluch Culture, which

have been keeping the social fabric of Baluch Nation intact since time immemorial and has guaranteed the protection of Life, Liberty and Property to all the members of a clan and all those aliens who had sought refuge and got protection. Bahot has usually been translated as protection given to an alien and Bheir as vendetta. Bahot as protection does carry a positive connotation but Bheir as vendetta might carry a negative shade of meaning in the present day context. Bheir is the right of retaliation that is being exercised by the states as an instrument of national policy and the same was applicable in cultures which had not attained statehood or were not covered by a legal system that could guarantee the three basic rights of man. Even in the post modern era, our legal structure was changed so as to provide to the individual his right of Qisas and Diyat. So these two institutions are positive in nature like any institution of a given society unless those are abused and prostituted. Therefore Balach Bheir-geer (Balach the retaliator) stands as a virtuous pillar in our social memory for avenging the high-handed murder of Doda who is the other pillar of virtue who scarified his life for his Bahot.

Apart from this theme of vanguardism to the values of vendetta and valour, a critic of literary values does find another vein running manifestly in the blood vessels of this episode if he ventures to take a prismatic view of the poetic version of the whole story.

Balach loves his elder brother Doda profoundly, and naturally he earnestly wishes to possess him despite the reality of his death. Death is but a rupture of relations as Jean Paul Sartre, the great existentialist philosopher, once observed. Doda as a human being is dead but as a "self" it does exist in Balach's mind / memory in the form of an idea, the idea or self that he loves. On the other hand he hates Bivargh and therefore earnestly desires to destroy him. So Balach's entire struggle in this duality of love and hate relations of this self with the "other self" is a manifestation of the psychological micro-cosmic conflict of possession and destruction. It is not ambivalent as the persons are different. He struggles to incarnate Doda. When he kills a man from the clan of the enemy he is psychologically obsessed to destroy Bivargh (whom he hates) and re-incarnate Doda (whom he loves). In the eyes of his mind, Doda is of course re-incarnated but as the same fallen hero bathed in

his own blood. And back to his settlement he finds himself dejected and depressed with the devastation inflicted by the enemy upon his clan and laments with others and sings:

*Doda, thy lordly armour,
Thy harness and knightly weapons,
Thy feathered arrows the plunderers
divided.*

The women in the camp are scattered.

Mothers mourn for their sons.

Sisters for their brave brothers.

Mothers-in-law for their sons-in law.

Tears of blood they shed on their shoulders,

And bodices which were wet with their grief.

And:

I see the bay mares running loose.

*The women go to earn their bread in
dreams.*

No lover comes to comb their hair,

And spread it over their shoulders.

My lordly body grows hot

*at the sight like the log of Kaheer-
wood(charcoal)*

Like wax it melts and wastes away

In its soft outer garments.

I sit and fight with my heart that answers me, "Balach is a tiger, a hailstorm."

But he mourns throughout for Doda and Sohrang (his mare). In the course of this perpetual conflict he kills 66 men including Bivargh, the archenemy .

"I have killed 66 Balochs and engraved an epigraph on the bosom of time eternal." All said and done but the idea incarnate as the hated Bivargh continues to live though physically dead; but in his world of ideas and emotions still living. The tale of the eternal struggler as having been depicted by the poet makes him immortal in the world of creative art making him a part of the cosmic realm of beauty as he graphically portrays it in this couplet of him:

The birds that fly in semi-circles in the mid of night

Are arrows emitting from Balach's bow

This is a true feeling of self-realization that gives the poet a contentment of becoming an integral part of the cosmos at last. So the Balach of art and archery lives forever.

Dawn: September 1997

TEARS OF RESURRECTION*

From the opacity of dust-ridden horizon
 A white cloud floats over
 The lofty mountain of Maraan (i)
 I feel as if I were visualizing
 Natha's turban on his head.
 The dark clouds look like your scented locks.
 Rain-drops are like the arrows of your ivy-bow.
 The trail of lightning in the dark
 His golden sword in the scabbard.
 The thunder is the report of Natha's gun.
 O' Monsoon clouds I beseech you,

Mir Sher Muhammad Marri has compiled an Anthology of Baluchi Classical Poetry, entitled "Kohnein Baluchi Shaheri" in which among others a beautiful poem of lady poet Seemak has also been included. I have ventured to translate the poem in English as Tears of Resurrection.

Bestow your showers if you must
 Bestow your showers upon Lundoh and Shank..(ii)
 But also sprinkle your waters on the shrines of
 martyrs
 Then halt the hail-drops for a while.
 Leave aside the civet scented sprinkles
 Let Natha make his groom-like appearance
 Through the cloudful climes.
 And let him come-out from
 The narrow-mouthed grave.
 Dear companion is not so handsome as he was.
 Perhaps the saline dust has made him look so dim.
 His knightly moustache is full of mud.
 Not only the moustache but
 The curly and well-scented beard is also dusty.
 (Coming out of his grave)
 He addresses the clouds and asks them:
 Who has requested you to bathe me in your
 showers?
 Whose eyes are shedding these tears?
 The clouds reply:
 We shower upon you to oblige Seemak,
 We are the tears of her eyes
 That are shed through us.
 We have seen that lamenting lady fully devastated.

Who had gone mad in your love,
 She is wearing an ash-like gray colour
 On her once beautiful face.
 The youngsters race their horses,
 And bridle them near the reed hut of mine,
 They bring halwan clothes and roasted meat.
 The elderly men also try to dodge me into
 Selecting one of the young men of the clan.
 O' young men you all are my brothers,
 The elders are like my revered father.
 I conjecture that Natha has gone on an errand,
 He will bring beautiful garments for me.
 I will not accept your clothes to wear,
 Nor would accept beautiful shoes of Lahri to put-
 on.
 O' friends I am looking,
 For the black Simurgh to come.
 I have knotted my bodice with a vow,
 That it would be untied
 By Natha, the brave companion,
 Or by death the final redeemer.

- i. *A mountain range near Kalat*
- ii. *Lundoh and Shank are two places.*

Tears Of Resurrection's Poetess and Her Imagery

“She did not find anything substantial for her feet to rest and therefore she divided the sea from sky; dancing lonely upon its waves when she turned towards the south, the wind set in motion behind her. It seemed something new and so began the work of creation. Rubbing the north wind between her hands she created the great serpent Ophion. She danced to warm herself: she danced wildly and more wildly, until Ophion grew lustful, coiled about those divine limbs and was moved to couple with her. So Eurynome was got with child. He vexed her by claiming to be the author of the universe. She kicked him and banished him to the dark caves below the earth” i

This is how the myth of creation was authored. So man became the mythographer and

woman the creator, the real author by practically experiencing the "horrors of creation". Man like an "actor is spared the horrors of creation as he is offered on a plate an imaginary universe with a special place for him in it", Simone de Beauvoir in her *Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter* while comparing the role of a writer and that of an actor observes like this. She does not become vindictive like the goddess as the actor is her father and that also only on the stage of French Theatre. She takes to writing as she thinks that "Literature takes its revenge on reality by making it the slave of fiction" Whether it is revenge or reward woman is always the epicentre of its creation and for its creation: sometime the author and sometimes the theme; but undoubtedly "the great mother goddess, the embodiment of the reproductive energies of nature." ii

In the religious literature of Babylonia. "Tammuz the youthful spouse of Ishtar was believed to die every year passing away from the cheerful earth to the gloomy subterranean world and that every year his divine mistress Ishtar journeyed in quest of him to the land from which there is no returning, to the house of darkness where dust lies on door and bolt and when the

water of life was sprinkled on them with the permission of Allatun the reluctant and stern queen of infernal regions then they could return to the upper world and with their return all nature revived" iii

The lady poet Seemak of classical Baluchi poetry who had lost her companion Natha might be feeling lonely like the Greek goddess but she would not have to create the sea to dance upon its waves nor like Babylonian goddess Ishtar she would have to journey to the subterranean world in quest of her spouse but she like Simone de Beauvoir of modern French Literature would take to the world of her imagination and really makes the reality the slave of fiction when she sings:

*From the opacity of dust-ridden horizon
A white cloud floats over
The lofty mountain of Maraan.
I feel as if I were visualizing
Natha's turban on his head.
The dark clouds look like your scented locks.
Rain drops are like the arrows of your ivy-
bow.
The trail of lightning in the dark
His golden sword in the scabbard.
The thunder is the report of Natha's gun.*



There is a striking similarity in the conceptual experiences which the mythological Greek goddess Eurynome and the classical Baluchi poetess Seemak had to undergo as both of them found "something new" in the motion of south wind and were stirred to begin the "work of creation" *The myth creates the companion out of nothingness but the muse does it by finding a new relation among the existing things; so re-incarnating the other self: the object of its love*

The poetess true to tradition of Baluchi poetry makes her expression simple and direct in form and substance both, not only giving an excellent vivid picture of life and country but envisions and creates an imaginary world of her own, seeing the living picture of her loved companion in the clouds with his white turban and long scented locks having been re-incarnated though in an anthropomorphic sense but to her trance-stricken vision having come alive. So in the fourth and fifth line she uses the second person:

*The clouds look like your scented locks.
Rain drops are like the arrows of your ivy-bow.*

No doubt in the parched land where water is scarce and rain seldom falls, the poet must

delight in describing the vivid thunder storms which occasionally visit the mountains and suddenly transform the country side as it is usually followed by rains. The visit of the thunder-storms to the range of Maraan mountains brings a similar delight to Seemak but her delight is not of an ordinary nature as it metamorphosizes every object of nature into creating the living image of her loved Natha. The heavy atmosphere laden with dust and haze is not simply transformed into clearness but brings a vivid living picture of the great companion she had lost.

The south wind (kosh) has a romance of its own. It is highly inspiring to the lovers and poets. It seems to arouse their urges and liberate their impulses. Shah Murid gives vent to his true feelings when he says:

*When the breath of south wind blows
I am, as it were, a mad man.*

Similarly Hani the beloved of the madman Shah Murid while feeling the blows of the same south wind goes into reminiscence of Shah Murid and sings :

*Last night in the upper terrace
Of Mir Chakar's Palace,
My head became heavy*

*As the south wind blew in the evening,
And the thin clouds (Naud) drizzled in early
morn.*

*It awakened memories of Shah in me
To the deep distress and anguish of my soul:
Impregnating my eyes with overflowing
tears.*

*Like the monsoon clouds,
They do shed their rain-drops (tears)
But never clear to cloudless climes
As if to have rained not at all .*

Seemak is un-like Hani She does not have tears in her eyes as she is not chained in the invisible fetters of Mir' s Palace She is free to wander about in the hills or in the parched and sweltering low lands. She therefore. makes the monsoon clouds weep as she sings .

*O' Monsoon clouds I beseech you
Bestow your showers if you must
Bestow your showers upon Lundoh and
Shank*

*But also sprinkle your waters
Over the shrines of martyrs*

“Sprinkling of water over the shrines of martyrs” reminds us of a rite which the

Babylonians used to observe every year when dirges were chanted over an effigy of the departed Tammuz and which was washed with pure water believing that he would return to the upper world. Seemak seems to believe that sprinkle of civet-scented rain drops would have awakened Natha from the sleep of death and she would therefore request the clouds to :

*Halt the hail drops for a while
 Leave aside the civet-scented sprinkles
 Let Natha make his groom-like appearance
 Through the cloudful climes;
 Let him emerge from the narrow-mouthed
 grave.*

It seems that the fragrance of civet (zabad) had the same effect over the dormant senses of Natha what in the mythological tale of Tammuz would have been the effect of the pungent fragrance that rose from the fumes of an incense that was burnt in the rite mentioned above. So Natha comes out of his grave and Seemak sees him (as if) and is somewhat bewildered to find that:

*Dear companion is not so handsome as he
 was*

Perhaps the saline dust had made him so dim,

*His knightly moustache is full of mud
Not only the moustache
But the curly and well-scented beard is also
dusty.*

Then she discerns that he has come-out from the grave and is asking the clouds.

*Who has requested you
To bathe me in you showers?
Whose eyes are shedding these tears?
The clouds reply :
We shower upon you to oblige Seemak,
We are the tears of her eyes
That are shed through us,
We have seen that lamenting lady fully
devastated
Who had gone mad in your love
She is wearing a gray ash-like colour
On her once beautiful face*

Seemak is deeply distressed at the "vanishing away" of her beloved Natha. She does not "lift-up a lament" like her Babylonian counterpart, nor does she chant a dirge of "sad refrain and

wailing notes" like the "Lament of Flute for Tammuz".

*At his vanishing away she lifts up a lament
Oh my Tammu
My enchanter and priest.
She lifts up a lament like a lament
That a house lifts up for its master
Like a lament that a city lifts up for its lord
Her chamber is a possession
That brings not forth a possession
A weary woman, a weary child fore spent. 4*

Undoubtedly Seemak is like-wise a weary woman but not fore spent as she chooses to be creative. What makes her creative in a state of such devastation? It is her firm refusal to fall back into immanence or stagnation. She seems to be striving to achieve liberty through a continual reaching out towards other liberties. Her transparent utterances in the following lines speak of her firm commitment not to be condemned to stagnation like the other women of the clan:

*The youngsters race their horses
And bridle them near the reed-hut of mine
They bring halwan clothes and roasted
meat,*

*The elderly men also try to dodge me into
 Selecting one of the young men of the clan.
 Oh, young men you all are my brothers.
 The elders are like my revered father*

Taking again to the realm of muse and imagination she seems to feel an undefined need to transcend herself and engage herself in her chosen project of re-incarnating her "other-self" (Men may forgive me for using the "other-self" for a man as we are used to use it for the woman).

*I conjecture that Natha has gone on an
 errand.
 He will bring beautiful garments for me.
 I will not accept your clothes to wear.
 Nor would accept beautiful Lahri shoes to
 put on.*

By rejecting the overtures of men she refuses to accept the brutish life of subjection which the men want to inflict upon her. She does not consent to it and thus is saved from the moral degradation and ultimate frustration and oppression. She is unlike Hani who by initially accepting the subjection to the given conditions of the brutality of customs can never transcend

herself. The following lines are a true picture of her (Hani's) pathetic condition and a deep desire to be out of those conditions. When she is asked as what reward would she give to the person who might bring a good news about Shah? She longingly replies:

*I will give to him
My precious ear-rings.
Gift him my necklace of pearl beads.
Bestow upon him my bangles of gold.
The jewels studded in my nose,
And the camel-priced ornaments,
That I wear over my ankles.
My house-hold with all its wealth
Chakar with his arm and armaments,
The son with his lovely teak cot.
My body with its silken attire
Over and above I sacrifice my head.*

Hani suffers the pangs of separation and yearns for the union with the other self (Shah Murid) but her downfall is of a moral magnitude and she like Seemak cannot engage herself in freely chosen projects and therefore falls back into immanence and fails to attain liberty or freedom. Therefore Seemak seems to have found her

freedom when she declares finally and triumphantly:

*Oh, friends I am looking
For the black Simurgh to come,
I have knotted my bodice with a vow
That it would be untied
By Natha the brave companion
Or by Death, the final redeemer.*

1, 2: The Greek Myths : Robert Graves

3, 4: The Golden Bough: Sir James Frazer

Dawn: August 1998

THE FOLK-LORE OF HANI-SHAH MURID

The folk-lore of Hani and Shah Murid is the most popular story which has been recorded in the classical Baluchi poetry. M. Longworth Dames while introducing his book *The Popular Poetry of the Balochis* says: "the existence of the Baluchi poetry may be said to have been unknown until Leech published some specimens in his 'Sketch of Baluchi Language' in the Journal of Asiatic Society, Bengal in 1840." One may agree to this observation to the extent that no written documents of Baluchi poetry was available in those areas of Balochis where these political officers were in service to the British Crown. The poetry, otherwise did exist for the Balochis as it used to be the Daptar (the public record) of theirs.

There is a well-known saying in Arabic that "Poetry is the public register of the Arabs". It

is equally applicable to the Baluchis as it used to be the most important source of information though not written yet preserved by oral tradition through poems and fragments of verses. A vast number of them have been collected, committed to writing and preserved for the posterity by M. Longworth Dames himself almost a century ago in his above named famous book. It is undoubtedly the single greatest service done to the Baluch Nation and Baluchi Literature.

According to him the Hani Shah Murid's "Poem is a romantic ballad relating to Mir Chakar and his companions but is probably of later composition than the epic ballads of Chakar cycle". Ballad is basically a poem of short syllables and metres, which is so composed that it can be sung with music and dance telling a story or depicting events to an audience which already knows about the details of the story or the events.

This poem has been so beautifully and faithfully rendered into English from its Baluchi text that I find no reason to change it and therefore reproduce it verbatim:

i) The Poem

The Rind held an assembly below Mir Chakar's tent, and Mir Chakar said, "How many

times was there lightning last night"? No one gave any information. "Sardar, there was neither cloud nor storm. How can there be lightning, without clouds, on a fine winter's night?" Then said Murid the Mad: "Let not my lord be angry, and I will tell thee the truth: If my manly body be not destroyed, I will give a true token".

Last night it did lighten thrice. The third time it was but feeble, but twice it blazed out. Then said Chakar the Amir: "Well done! Son of Mubarak, with thy unworthy stories about Chakar's moon-faced lady".

Then Mubarak pulled off his shoe and hit Murid on the head, saying, "Leave off, Murid, thy evil deeds and shameful work with Chakar's moon-faced lady. Chakar is not a man of bad reputation. At his call a thousand armed Rinds ride forth on sturdy horses."

Then said Murid the Mad: "Oh, my excellent father, he is but Chakar, and I am a Sheikh. I too am not a man of bad reputation. He rides out with a thousand horsemen, and I with my own companions. It were well he had not seen my fair one, the pari palace-shaker with bare head in her narrow hut, the maiden of towns and camps, Hani of the seamless garments. For she belongs to

me, who am ready to answer for her, though I wander and am lost, and have but a Quran with me. I am not in chains and fetters, nor are my hands confined in iron manacles. I flee at the disgrace of the blacksmith's touch. When the breath of the south wind blows I am, as it were, a madman. Bring no forge for me, no Mullah with many documents. There is no plague among my cattle. I will not become either Mulla or Munshi. Nor will I say many prayers. And, with hands joined and head bent, I swear that on account of that blow from Mubarak's shoe I will cut off my hair, and will at once depart and go to a far land. I will lay down my noble weapons, put off my rustling clothes from my body, and I give them to Mir Mando, Hani's royal father. Fair Hani will keep them white from the moisture of storms and clouds. My carpet I give to 'Ali, my cross-bow to Isa. And I leave my horses tied up, tethered inside my hut, I leave them to Mir Chakar. Myself I will go with a cubit of cloth for a waist cloth. I am a mendicant and beggar, and go with those men, the naked brotherhood: I will go as a pilgrim to salute the blessed shrine of the Prophet (PBUH). Thirty years will I pass thus, thirty years and part of a year, and

one day I will return and come to a camp of the Rinds”.

The Rinds had set up a mark below Mir Chakar's tent. “ Now let the faqir shoot arrows at the mark”. When he drew the bow the wood snapped. The Rinds then guessed and perceived that it was Murid of the embroidered garments, the lord of the iron-bow: “Bring Murid's bow-string”. They brought his iron-bow to him: he kissed it and laid it on his eyes: The unstrung bow he strung. With the first arrow he hit the mark, with the second arrow he hit the notch of the first. Then the Rinds know him that he was certainly Murid of the embroidered clothes. The lord of the iron-bow. Then they placed Hani and sweet-scented Murid in a house. Murid, as a *mast* camel, bit Hani on the cheek and her two soft lips .

Then said Murid the Mad.” Hani as long as I had need of thee there was no kindness in thy heart of stone, thou wast with thy lover, Mir Chakar. Now the powder is spilt from the pan; I am not in a fit state for thee. So not separate me from my companions. From a seeing man do not make me blind.

As soon as Murid had turned his back the Rind women began to lament, and Hani said to her

companions: "I will put my sari around my neck and go twenty paces after him. It may be I shall turn Murid back from the naked brotherhood, and if I do not succeed I will get a token from his hand ." Then Hani called after him. This was the answer of Murid." May Chakar the Amir be destroyed, may thy house be burnt with fire, may thieves carry off thy horses. (If I consent) may the token of my hand be destroyed, may my body be laden with the burden of sin".

ii) The characters.

The same poem has been included in Mir Sardar Khan's Literary History of the Baluchis consisting of 113 lines, narrating almost the same tale with certain changes and interpolations which surely have been incorporated by singers and bards latterly so as to eulogize Mir Chakar or bring him at par with the rulers of the age. So his residence of "Kull " (reed-hut or tent) is converted into Mahl (Palace) and a number of events twisted in favour of or against the Mir depending upon the wishfullness of singers and the bards of the era or the later ages. Now the contemporary writers also depict the episode in line with their personal idiosyncrasies or tribal bias and clannish

prejudices. Literary minds and history writers in their approach have suffered alike.

The whole story is very simple. Chakar and Murid were friends and companions in hunting and in drinking. Once they were out for hunting that Mir Chakar became thirsty and he asked for water. A young woman brought water to him putting some straws in the cup so that he did not drink it hurriedly, but did sip it slowly and patiently. Chakar was enamoured or impressed by this lady-like gesture and common sense of the damsel. It is also said (as Dames puts it) that both of them became thirsty. It was Chakar who said to Murid "Go to my betrothed and drink water and I will go to yours and drink water" After drinking water Murid became sick but Chakar did not become sick as he drank the water slowly because of the straws which were put in the cup. In the evening when the hunting party returned to their homes Chakar and Murid drank together. Murid got drunk. Chakar asked Murid to give his would-be-bridal to him and Murid, as he must have been riding on cloud nine, said "she is yours".

Chakar addressing the assembly of the Rinds said that, "You stand witness that Murid has given me his bride". There he declared that he

would celebrate his marriage next day and there was nothing to deter him, so he must have done it immediately.

It is quite a prosaic narration of the whole episode. Had that been only versified and sung as plainly as it was, that would and could not have become a thing of beauty forever as it stands as an immortal and eternal piece of art and poetry till date. It is because of its poetization and character creation that the lore had attained this elemental attribute of immortality to itself and had bestowed the same to its characters so as to make many believe that all is historical: the events, the characters and the plot with the whole story. There is nothing historical about it. This is a pure and simple folk lore which the poets, singers, bards and balladeers have been poetizing, versifying, composing and singing to many assemblies with its triad: Chakar, Hani and Murid as its main characters, since centuries.

Chakar, as he has been alluded to throughout the lore and poetry as the great Chief of the Rinds, is, undoubtedly, historical but here in this drama of romance and love, is only a character like the other two characters. Hani and Shah Murid are neither among the history makers nor are they

victims of the history as suggested by our history writer (I do not choose the word historian deliberately as I firmly believe that the mind of a historian does not and must not entertain such errors which may obliterate the distinction between historical and poetical). As by no measure the characters in the story are historical, therefore the story did not and will not earn a place for itself in the history (except literary history) as has been suggested by our contemporary writer in his said book. It in no way "thickens" the glory of Mir Chakar, but it adds a feather in his glorious deeds unless we accept the new charge leveled against the Mir by the same scribe when he delightfully writes, "Chakar wedded her but not bedded" (P-248 Literary History of the Balochis). We have been hearing through Gospels that God createth Man in His image. But here unless we believe that this too is an act of image-making by man in similitude to that, the writer's charge cannot be established as the Mir's fecundity and libido are authenticated by Hani herself when she declares that she would sacrifice her son with his teak cot for Murid. So the forces of light and libido were in full play between the couple after marriage.

It is alleged that Chakar under a pre-plan sent the singers and musician to Shah Murid on Thursday evening to demand Hani (his betrothal) as a gift (dud) as he (Murid) had taken a vow to the effect that he would bestow anything on demand by minstrels on such an occasion. It is not at all tenable in view of strong Baluch norms and taboos prevailing in those old good days of Baluch glory. It amounts not only to vilifying the Baloch Chief but beguiling the entire Baloch society and shaking the very foundation of its Culture that was replete with tales of honour, valour, vow and vendetta. One can renounce his betrothed but he has no right to bestow it to singers and bards who were definitely servile and inferior in social status. The poet of that era declares:

*Jattanis are like handkerchiefs to the Amirs
Dombnis are like the fresh milk pui in a cup.*

So it is simply impossible that an aristocrat would divorce his bride and would hand her over to the dombs (singers). In a song there is only a reference to Murid saying that he would offer a prayer and hand over Hani to minstrels (Loris). It does not mean that he had been dodged into handing her over to them as a gift so that they could deliver her in turn to the Mir. It is obviously

stated in the oldest poem that Chakar had made Murid to agree to leave his bride for him when the latter was in a state of acute drunkardness and then Chakar declaring to celebrate and solemnize his marriage next day. It might have been a custom to send dombs to bring the bride to the groom in a Doli (Sedan chair) in those days even. This could be the only plausible explanation for handing over the bride to *Loris*, otherwise what is not probable in a given society it cannot be accepted as a fact in a tale as has been suggested by certain writers. Murid must have honoured his word or vow like any blue-blooded Baluch and must have renounced his bride so that Chakar could marry her. But this word or vow was neither made mischievously or redeemed so ignominiously as has been depicted by certain poets and is being asserted by semi-educated writers even today. This, I believe, has occurred because of mis-construction or misinterpretation of a few verses which must have been coined at a very later stage.

In the Baluch society and culture the status of woman, particularly that of the elite and aristocracy is held in high esteem. Woman has been enjoying that status and still is enjoying it. We believe that Hani was the daughter of Mir

Mando, the gentleman who was appointed as Governor of Kalat by Mir Chakar Khan, so it is unthinkable that the daughter of such a mighty and respectable Baluch could be given as alms (dud) to the minstrels by her betrothal (Murid). He could have renounced that relation as he had done. After the renunciation that relation stood severed. There are some inferior cultures where woman is sold to the groom and she remains a property to him; and after his death that of his kith and kin. This customary practice has reduced the status of woman to that of a chattel and has dehumanized her to the extent of depriving her of the basic human rights. In the chaste Baluch Culture this abhorrent practice has never been in vogue and till date it is not .

Mir Sardar Khan while talking very high about the status of woman in Baluch society declares vehemently: "In the purity of his blood, in his noble ancestry, his sword and horse the Baluchis would take boundless pride. Female honour has been ever deemed as the rarest jewel in the crown of his honour and chivalry. Zealously jealous of female probity almost to a perverted sense of honour, "the Baluchis" with heroic vigilance would guard their female-honour like a

falcon hovering over his nest". Is that falcon dead in Murid or Mando as they blatantly fail to guard the honour of Hani and dare to gift her like an house-hold article to the minstrels? Or is this episode a concoction of the foes of Rinds and their bards? Could it be interpreted as a de-generation which might have set in those sections of Baluch tribes which had come in contact with cultures wherein the place of woman is inferior to that of the Baluch woman? Certainly the falcon was not dead. In the glorious age of the "Baluchis" the Baluch could honour his word to the detriment of his aching soul, therefore he could not barter away the honour of his woman to *dombs* and *lories* and could neither give her as an alms to them. No doubt, Hani once questioned Murid as to 'how a sane person could give away as gift to others his family members or loved one?' This does not necessarily imply that gifting has been done to the singers. It must have been felt by Hani that the very act of Murid agreeing to Chakar to renounce his bride in favour of the Mir was tantamount to gifting her away.

Chapter Three

To

Departed Souls

ATA FROM HERE TO THERE

Thirty five years ago I wrote my first literary reportage for the monthly ULUS Baluchi, with the title "*Mahikan-Thai Kabr-Zimistan* (Moonlight-Your Grave-Winter). It was in fact an obituary for a fallen hero of Balochistan's western part that became a Province of Iran when the colonial Gold Schmidt Line was drawn in pursuit of the policy of divide and rule. And that Baluch ruler could not find two square yards of land like Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar in the 'Alley of the beloved'. He could only find that much land for eternal rest in Panjgur on the southern bank of Rakhshan river in village Shapataan.

Now as I recapitulate the title of that reportage I am flabbergasted to feel as if I had in advance conceived this title three and a half

decades ago also for the obituary of my dearest friend Ata Shad who suddenly chooses to stalk on the paths of eternity on 13th February 1997. The community or the same-ness of the title does not at all mean that the departed souls did have anything otherwise common except the common title of obituary in conceptuality. Ironically, it was the same year that I persuaded Ata to accompany me to Panjgur as his mother was insistently asking me to bring him along during the winter vacations as her Ishaq has not visited her for two years.

On that fateful evening of 13th February when my loving daughter Dr. Shahnaz with tears in her eyes informed me, "Daddy uncle Ata Shad is gone" the blood in my veins froze. I rushed to his residence hoping against hope that might be the news is not a bad one. Not death, but the news of death is the only truth. It is even certain like death. Perhaps this is the reason that death in its eternity conveys to man a feeling of immortality perpetuating a desire in him to live through the dead. All these rituals, rites, recitations, prayers and offerings are imminent expressions in various forms of the one and only desire to attain immortality through the dead.

It was a day of biting cold of an usual *Zimistan* (Winter) with high and dry *Gureech* (Northern) wind blowing like the West Wind of Shelley, the great English romantic poet, who died reciting and hoping that each winter would be heralding a spring of hopes in the society as he believed when Winter comes Spring is not far behind, and he was rather convinced that the fast blowing cold winds of winter spreading the pollen seeds are the main vehicle for bringing the beautiful spring with its blossoming flowers. Our Baluchi romantic poet leaves us in a similar situation of blowing cold winds perhaps hoping in certitude while lyricizing : *Kapant beer o sarapant dumbal o sabzeet surmagen Bolan* (The thunder light and torrential rains falling on the gray Bolan would grant it the greenery with blossoming flowers).

The rain did come but without lightning. It may or may not give "the Bolan" its blossoming flowery greenery but it did settle the hanging dust of the atmosphere and blowing dust of the thirsty ground. Nature was not concealing her foul deformities as Milton would have been saying "on the morning of Christ nativity".

Only with speeches fair

*She woos the gentle air
To hide her guilty front
With innocent snow*

Nature was gentle, it gave a touch of springliness. The sun was shining that Friday (a holy day for us the Muslims). Surely men of piety and humility bring good weather even in their death as a manifestation of their abundant affection which they had been giving to their fellow beings in their life time. Ata this time practically brought his poetic *hatam* (Spring) in the late winter of *Shal* in the wake of his fare-well journey. All the mourners were whispering the same sentiments.

Did Ata Shad leave us or did we leave him? No one is to blame. Logically the result is the same. Friends present on that sad occasion to mourn his death were feeling like this, as they were laying him to eternal rest in the womb of Mother Earth next to his mother in the Kasi graveyard.

Death is a rupture of relations, as Jean Paul Sartre feels about it. A man may be dead, but he continues to live in the memory of all those who have loved him or might have even hated him. Ata was a person who gave affection to others and kept notoriety for himself, naturally no one particularly

those near and dear to him could give to him nothing but only love. So when he went the entire town was in tears .

wo geya to ek shehr deeda-e-tar tha

When he departed the entire Town was in tears

This is a line of his obituary that he wrote on the death of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and we saw it with our own eyes having been translated into reality in the Kasi *Kabristan* on his burial. Tears were in our eyes at the final farewell and not his. He was the eloquent, he could have written and recited many an obituary. We could only use our colourless tears to write his obituary and this is what exactly I am doing at the moment.

Our companionship, friendship and comrade-ship of 42 years, all seem to have ended so suddenly as if,

I am working by candle-light,

It flickers, it's gone.

They say that when a person is dying many events of his life flash before his mind's eye and as I was dear to him and one of the closest friends, I must have occupied many precious seconds of his dying thoughts, or might be he was preparing himself to encounter darkness as a bride

and hug it in his arms, as he seemed smiling in his eternal sleep while all around him were weeping or might be these lines of Shakespeare were being inscribed on his mind by angel of death;

*Now boast thee death
In thy possession,
Lies a 'lad' unparalleled.*

Never mind if Shakespeare had used even 'lass' but the angel and particularly that of death can concede this much particularly in case of a poet who might at the moment be arguing with Shakespeare about his dramas that we both and Aman Gichki used to steal and adopt in Balochi for Radio Pakistan. What I did with Lear and Aman with Hamlet, he must be facing the music all alone for our common sins of innocent literary theft to the intellectual property of that great English poet-dramatist. Alas! We cannot help him as he, as usual, was in a hurry and chose to go on his own, all alone. I used to tell him "Ata, you were the last to join and the first to leave". True to his impatient poetic nature as he was, again he was the first to leave, but this time never to return.

BAQI TO ETERNAL SLEEP

When did I meet with Baqi Baluch, I am not sure. My father and his father were friends, we also had family relations. I must have been a kid of tender age when Baqi and his family were in Panjgur. My elder brothers were well-acquainted with him and were highly appreciative of his wits and talent.

It was the year 1963, I was a student leader and he a political leader. He was then a member of West Pakistan Provincial Assembly. I met him with Dr. Haider Baloch who was then a student of King Edward Medical College Lahore. It was a Sunday, Baqi was in Gulberg. He was collecting material for a speech which he was delivering next day. He asked both of us to find out references from a number of voluminous books spread in front of him on the floor of his room. I did try to find out some

but Dr. Haider was to attend to some other business. I had to abandon and to leave with him as being new to Lahore I felt some what handicapped to find out places and people on my own. Baqi kept to his guns and did not accompany us.

It was April and poet Shelley called it a cruel month and T. S Eliot says:

*April is the cruelest month, breeding
Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing
Memory and desire, stirring
Dull roots with spring rain.*

Faiz Sahib prayed for the lovers as flowers blossom in those months .

دل عشاق کی خبر لینا
پھول کھلتے ہیں ان مہینوں میں

Baqi was no mean lover but his love at that point of time was to fight against the autocratic system which was ushered by Ayubian Martial Law and latterly continued by his granted system of Basic Democracies through a tailored Constitution, setting one National Assembly and two Provincial Assemblies under a Presidential and quasi- federal set-up to suit the political ambitions

of the elite of his time. Next day Baqi Baluch presented his views against the Draconian law which was to replace the notorious F.C.R in Quetta/Kalat Region. He profusely quoted the Father of the Nation and many jurists to establish that such laws never helped in deliverance of justice rather they promoted indifference among the general public and ultimately bringing about a situation of collapse of the legal system leading to a sort of anarchy. He spoke with such vigour and vehemence of a real parliamentary orator that he was even applauded by many sitting in the visitor's gallery despite warnings from the Speaker. Khawaja Safdar the then leader of the opposition was also to speak but he requested the Chair to let Mr. Baloch finish his speech. Mr. Mobeen Siddiqui conceded. It did cost him the Speakership as the government did not even like this much leniency to a member of the opposition.

After the session at lunch I had a lengthy discussion with Baqi Baluch about Baluch politics. I was the President of B.S.O and also the Vice President of the College Students Union of Government College Quetta. Those days college students union activities were permissible. I had gone there to meet with the West Pakistan

Assembly Members from Quetta/Kalat region. (The present province of Balochistan was known as such). Our main topic was a separate province for the Baluch people in the Federation of Pakistan. He did uphold this idea but did not agree to the dismemberment of the One Unit earlier than twenty years. Why? He was very vocal and believed it as a conviction that were the One Unit broken earlier that would perpetuate the political power of Sardars and Landlords to the detriment of the people and that it would thwart the growth of the nascent democracy. He warned us the Baluch that in their case the Sardars (Tribal Chiefs) would become like the Pir-e-Tasmapa. He narrated the anecdote of the Pir-e-Tasmapa and said that an old man sitting on the trunk of a tree was requesting every passerby to take him across the river. A poor fellow taking pity on him put him on his shoulders and the Pir crossed his lace-like legs around his neck and remained there forever. I did not agree with him and did not like his pro-One-Unit stance. Now every Baluch with a bit of intellectual and political training must be realizing as to how was Baqi Baluch prophetic and correct. The One Unit was broken and Provinces were created on old colonial boundaries. Today many people call the

Balochistan Assembly the House of Lords to their dismay. A few days back a columnist baptized the Assembly to call it "Sardar-Nawab-Khan-Mulla-zai"

Baqi kept to his principles antagonizing the entire elite of West Pakistan. He did not agree to the re-demarcation of boundary line between Iran and Pakistan as he believed that quite a sizeable chunk of copper-ore rich area on north-western border and perennial resources of water on south-western border of Pakistan were made over to Iran by the Boundary Commission. He was right when later on we found the facts on ground that the same infringement having been made feasible by our greedy members of that Commission have rendered the Saindak copper project non-viable as the richer area was given to our neighbour which remained with us after the creation of colonial border based on Gold Schmidt Line. It divided Balochistan between Iran and British Empire. The colonialist made it sure that rich and fertile areas were possibly made part of their domain. Unfortunately our own compatriots were indifferent to such patriotic considerations. Mr. Baqi Baloch agitated it and he was convicted by a tribunal on the charge of demolishing the boundary pillars between Mand

(Pakistan) and Peeshin (Iran). He later on when visiting the area with us (in 1975 when I was Addl: Deputy Commissioner of the then Mekran District) said that it was his first time to have visited the area and to have seen the pillars but he had been convicted ten years ago for having broken those pillars. Aman Gichki said that justice must have been done in anticipation as they had done to Mir Bizenjo in retrospect in case of a student strike. Mr. Baqi had taken the case to the Court under the valid plea that according to the Pakistan Constitution no area can be given to any person or power. The case continued in Karachi Bench of West Pakistan High Court and with the fall of Dacca it perhaps became infructuous as one day we read in the newspapers that the case had been disposed of and consigned to record.

Baqi was a man of independent thinking in all spheres of life. He had a pride of his own and with some justification as he had been able to defeat Mir Sheikh Omer Khan the son of Nawab Mekran who was a blue eyed boy of the ruling elite of the country. Mir Ghous Bakhsh Bizenjo also worked for Baqi as he himself could not contest having been disqualified and he did not want his arch rival family of Gichkis to intrude in his

political domain of Mekran which he held in sway as a Nationalist hero of that generation. This conflict of mutual interest and personal pride made Baqi to pay heavily as the elite considered him as their potent political rival by having defeated their man and the Baloch Nationalist aristocracy discarded him as he did not fall in line with them particularly regarding the dismemberment of the One Unit.

Baqi was convinced that the Sardars would and could never rescue the Baloch from the clutches of exploitation of varying forms as they were among the perpetrators and their slogans of Baloch rights of political autonomy or that of Greater Balochistan were all meant to have a haven for the Sardars of this part of the country. Therefore, he refused to compromise with Baloch elite on the one hand and declined to fall prey to the lure of ruling junta. This is a stand which seemed to many as unique and principled and to some odd and floating. An intellectual Baloch Sardar once remarked that Mr. Baqi was asking for a price bigger than his position so Kalabagh (the then Governor of West Pakistan) was not ready to pay it otherwise he would have joined them. Our intellectual friend Aman Gichki once giving a pen

picture of the intellectual Sardar observed that his charm was his tri-facetedness as he was a red Communist with mild socialists; a chauvinist to the liberal nationalists and medieval Sardar to his own tribesmen. Baqi was not a Sardar to have been able to see the many faces as he could have been anything but a hypocrite. This unhypocritical and frank approach of a person believing in individualism and preaching for the rights or freedom of expression and human liberty would pay every protagonist like the hero of "A MAN" of Oriana Fallacci. So in the fall of 1964 Mr. Baqi fell victim to a spree of bullets by unknown assailants in Lahore in which his journalist friend Zameer Siddiqui died. It was really an attempt to eliminate him physically as he could not be made to compromise politically. He was precariously wounded and remained in intensive care for many days. He stubbornly kept fighting the angel of death with an indefatigable will that he was master of.

Baqi, once wrote a poem in Urdu in the mid fifties "Chiltan ki Awaz".

کس کی غم خوار ہوتی ہیں
 بیخ بستہ تختہ بہ تختہ سلیمیں
 شب ہے گھنگور چاروں طرف
 غم کے ماروں ابھی سور ہو
 صبح ہوگی خود جگالوں کا تم کو
 اگل کر لہو

Chiltan is a mountain near Quetta with some legendary background. He therefore took it as a symbol for Balochistan. Chiltan calls upon her children to keep asleep as the night is not over. The atmosphere is laden with a cold frozen darkness. You should not get up as the day dawns I shall awaken you "oozing out blood". Chiltan and many lofty mountains spitted blood. Baqi did ooze-out blood but of no avail. The children of Chiltan are either still asleep or they are awakening, one cannot say either for sure because some are in a slumber others are used to darkness like bats; Or:

رات باقی ہے سو جاؤ

سو کر گزارو

ابھی سو رہو

*Baqi the night is lingering
Keep on sleeping
The darkness is lengthening
Hug the eternal sleep*

I remember the day Baqi reached Karachi after having escaped death in Lahore . The B.S.O. despite imposition of Section 144 Cr.P.C, did make arrangements to give him a rousing welcome worth to a hero. The entire Drig Road from Star Gate to Asha Bhavani was packed with vehicles and the traffic had become one-way. In those days it was not wide like the present Shara-i-Faisal. We deposited him in Lakhm House where he recuperated and convalesced. He contested elections from Lyari against Mahmood Haroon and was defeated. Later on when Mahmood Haroon became a minister that seat fell vacant. Baqi was asked by Haroon family to contest it against Hafiz Habibullah (father of senator Saifullah Khan Paracha. He declined to contest saying that he

would not like to become a "fighting rooster" between two industrialist families. As they were bent upon to bring a Baloch leader on this seat so they contacted Mir Ghous Bakhsh Bizenjo who obliged them and for the first time he became a member of West Pakistan Assembly .

While staying in Lakham House Baqi fell in love with the grand daughter of Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy and claimed to have married her. The family refuted the claim but instead of proceeding to legal niceties, in the first instance he was detained under D.P.R (Defence of Pakistan Rules) and to which Aman wittingly said that Suhrawardy family was also Pakistan so they had rightfully applied the D.P.R. Poor Baqi remained for a long time in detention facing civil litigation in addition. As he was destined to lose and he lost, not only the loves labour was lost but the love itself. He lost his love and we lost our leader. It was neither his fault nor ours. He could not make himself to compromise as politics requires many compromises as many of our common friends and foes maintain that politics is a game of compromises and compensations. Many had compromised but did not get any compensation. But Baqi till the last had the pride not to have bartered away his pride and

compromised his principles whether it was love or politics. He was an epitome of Ghalib's couplet.

ہندگی میں بھی وہ آزادہ و خودبین کہ ہم
لئے پھر آئے در کعبہ اگر وانہ ہوا!

*Even in adoration I am so intent on my self-respect
that
I'd retrace my steps if don't find the Ka'ba door
open .*

In the last issue of Nail-o-nehar I read a very beautiful ghazal of Baqi Baloch of which I still remember a couplet ;

گہری نیلی آنکھوں والی جب بھی گئی ہے ساحل پر
ڈوب چلا ہو جیسے سمندر شور مچایا موجوں نے

*Whenever the lady with deep blue eyes had gone to
the beach
The sea would have made such a noise as if it were
sinking (in her eyes)*

The poet who made the sea sink in the deep blue eyes of the damsel was being laid to rest on 22 .11. 1997 near that sinking sea in the Defence

Society graveyard in the presence of a few friends and well-wishers, but alas I was not among them. What a gloomy evening must that have been but with no deep blue eyes to shed a tear and long tresses to scatter. When I read the sad news of his death I was shocked to find myself having been unable to take part in his funeral rites. Firaq has rightly said:

اب یاد رفتگان کی بھی فرصت نہیں رہی
یاروں نے کتنی دور بسائی ہیں بستیاں

*Lost is the lure to lament the departed souls
Friends have taken abode in far off lands.*

I suddenly remembered what Qadir Baloch said in the party of that evening which we had celebrated in 30, Haji Building on the recovery to health of Baqi Baloch after the almost fatal attack. He said it would have been better to have died in harness as a martyr as no one knew what the future carried in her bosom for him. At that time we felt that the Raees was being rather callous and cruel. But now it sounds otherwise. Final journeys are always the same but their effect varies with

circumstances in relation with public response. To dears and nears it is always the same.

From the silence of the heart's garden now desolate,

The word of love speaks of the burnt up breath

as the secret of garden

Frontier Post Feb: 1998

SARDAR ALONE WITH HIS GLORY

Mir Muhammad Sardar Khan Baluch M.A (Alig) who embarked upon the tedious task of writing the History of the Baluch Race, after having graduated from Aligarh Muslim University, could not carve out a bright blue print of its history, yet he succeeded in constructing an edifice from the ashes of Sumerian Civilization by erecting the Temple of Belus (Tower of Babylon) as the symbol of edification for the Baluch people and that of unification for the race itself. The history of Baluch Race and Baluchistan was first published in 1958 and I had the honour of having met its author Mir Sardar Khan the same year. My dear friend the late Ata Shad took me to his resident at Jungle Bagh. He met us very warmly and affectionately, and smilingly said to me "Hakim, you are carrying a big head on your weak shoulders"

To-day when I recapitulate events of the last forty years, I am rather amazed to feel that how true he was in depicting a true pen-picture of mine on the first encounter, as throughout these years I have been struggling hard to keep in balance the "big head" over the "weak shoulders" of mine.

This great author of Baluch history and mythographer of its pre-historic existence, when breathed his last and was buried right here in Quetta no news of his death appeared in the press. It was only through a few condolences in Quetta press that a couple of days later we came to know of the great loss to the Baluch Intellectual community. I suddenly felt myself reciting the first lines of T.S. Eliot's "The Hollow Men"

*We are the hollow men
 We are the stuffed men
 Leaning together
 Headpiece filled with straw. Alas!
 We whisper together
 Are quite and meaningless
 As wind in dry grass*

And I had to agree with that great mystic poet that we are:

Shape without form,

*Shade without colour,
Paralysed force,
Gesture without motion.*

Otherwise they would not have buried him in the manner they did forty days ago. The last lines of Sir John Moor's burial might as well be truly applicable:

*Slowly and sadly we laid him down
From the field of his fame and gory;
We carved not a line, and raised not a stone,
But we left him alone with his glory.*

(C. Wolfe)

Sardar Khan is survived by no son or daughter but by the glory of his intellectual offsprings: his books. The first book is History of Baluch Race in which the author while reconstructing the past of the Baluch constructed a history for him and in the process he created a charming myth for them (the Baluch) so as to make them believe that they are the true descendents of the mythological "King Belus" whose followers had the honour to have created the first civilization in Babylon. The author had presented this book to me in the first meeting with him. I was so delighted that I kept on reading the book throughout that day and late in the night. Its language though was

English but it appeared Greek to me. I truly felt lacking and deficient as being just a student of first year in the college. But after a few years as I could grasp the meaning of words and could make head and tail of the text and then I found that he was not only the first Baluch historian of a unique style who loves mingling facts with fiction and in turn creating a myth so alluring that minds with no intellectual training would easily fall prey to it.

His book "The Great Baluch" about Mir Chakar Rind is again a marvelous piece of legend turned into history but still believed by all and sundry as the most authentic piece of literature on this legendary hero of the Baluch race.

Mir Sardar Khan was also the founding President of Baluchi Academy. He continued to head it for two decades and during this period he again embarked upon the venture of writing the history of Baluchi literature "on the system adopted by the illustrious and excellent Orientalist Professor Browne in his Literary History of Persia" as he himself has put it in the preface of his Literary History of the Baluchis. He planned to publish it in four volumes but he could get published only two volumes which are about the classical and medieval periods. The other two

volumes have not seen the light of the day. I wish those could be published posthumously. So far he is the sole Baluch scholar and lone writer on this subject. The author while introducing his book declares that it is "an attempt to depict the intellectual characteristics of the Baluch as shown by the reflexes of their own mind" and that its main purpose is to depict the contribution of Baluch mind in the field of literature and that he is not concerned with non Baluch mind. Professor Browne in his *Literary History of Persia* had expressed similar intentions and written about the "reflexes of Persian Mind".

Browne's literary history is one of the greatest books on the subject in all literatures of the world so much so that Mr. Nicholson in the preface of his *Literary History of Arabs* also declares that he had adopted the system of Professor Browne's *Literary History of Persia*. Similarity of approach and systems of writing in their respective histories of Persia and Arabs is quite evident but it is highly lacking in both volumes of the "*Literary History of the Baluchis*". But Mir Sardar Khan still remains the pioneer and pace-setter in the field of both history and literature. I wish writers who are actually trained in intellectual pursuits could come

forward and could produce what is of real historical and literary value in objectivity.

Sardar Khan was not a poet himself but he did belong to the realm of them as he has left his soul here with us on the earth and we must endeavour to benefit from it:-

Bards of Passion and of Mirth

You have your souls on Earth!

Have ye souls in heaven too,

Double lived in regions new? Keats

Dawn: September 1998.

Chapter Four

On

Current Events

WILL OF THE PEOPLE

The political doctrine of the will of the people that has been termed by Mr Altaf Gauhar (Dawn 14-3-1997) as the foundation stone of any democratic structure; was propounded by Hobbes in 1615. It did not mean to lay the foundation stone of a democratic set up in society but it enunciated the theory of the Origin of State as a result of a "Social Contract"; and bestowed upon the great Leviathan (called Commonwealth, or State) absolute powers because he was convinced that man by nature is selfish, brutish and nasty. By declaring the state as the sovereign he in turn makes the king the absolute sovereign.

Thomas Hobbes was born in April 1588 in England. It was said that the fear of Spanish Armada was so acute that the wife of Vicar of Westport (his mother) gave birth (to him)

prematurely. So Hobbes once commented that he was born "a twin with fear" and perhaps to overcome that fear he gave to the state absolute powers with a view to overcoming the chaos and confusion and bring about peace and tranquillity at the cost of human rights.

Rousseau, after 111 years, pronounced his Social Contract Theory in 1726 highlighting the importance of General Will as an indestructible instrument for ensuring the sustained continuity of institutions that could guarantee and provide the basis of the modern social set-up for democracy in the Western Society.

Hobbes had to flee from England to Paris and Rousseau had to flee from Paris to Geneva as their doctrines were not acceptable to the elite of their respective societies. But both of them had the moral courage and the intellectual honesty to go against the elite, clergy and the establishment; and expressed what they wanted to say. In Rousseau's case, Voltaire being a contemporary while commenting upon his discourses wrote to him that he detested what he had said but he would be defending the right to say it till death.

Such were the spirits of their age and so vigorous were the endeavours in pursuit of their

intellectual goals that it heralded the French Revolution in 1789. The revolution produced Napoleon whose armies were welcomed in the continent as champions of Equality, Liberty and Fraternity. But with these passionate slogans he established himself as the Emperor boasting to appoint kings and monarchs to various states and principalities in Europe. Talleyrand, his Foreign Minister and later Minister of Religious Affairs, conspired against him in Vienna. He was defeated and deposed and the gout-ridden Bourbon was back as the King of France, shattering all the ideals of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity.

Do the Muslim scholars and liberal intellectuals have that moral fibre of those great western thinkers and philosophers who could have lived for their ideals, and in turn also could have died for those ideals?

I was immensely impressed by Mr. Altaf Gauhar's famous book *Translations from the Quran* which I read twenty one years ago, and the catching phrase that we "may either discard the pretence of being Muslims or adopt the faith as a matter of conviction", was so inspiring that I earnestly began to study the Quran. His views on the finality of the prophet-hood in the same book

are worthwhile(p-14) “Since no one could claim access to divine revelation after the Prophet, (PBUH) religious authority ended with the Prophet. (PBUH)”.

One cannot lose sight of the following paragraph on page-3 of the same book “perhaps the most unhappy effect of literal translation and interpretation has been the tendency to force the words of the Quran to yield meanings which would embrace a new idea or a scientific discovery. This is a common weakness among people who have only a vague, if not erroneous, understanding of the scientific discoveries which they would like to see forecast in the verses of the Quran. The Quran has to be read and understood as it is. Not as the western mind would like it to be. The truth of the Quranic message does not depend on the extent to which its words can be made to reflect modern inventions. We feel that the West represents the highest level of enlightenment and progress, so we are at pains to interpret the Quran in Western terms hoping that this might make it easier for our people, who envy the material advancement of the West to confess that they believe in the Quran”.

Should one interpret the article as an attempt to avoid “the unhappy effect of literal

translation” or term it as the “tendency to voice the words of the Quran to yield meanings which would embrace a new idea” and make social contract as the basis for the origin of state and that of the “General Will” as the sustainer of democratic institutions as envisaged by the three great political philosophers: Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau and overcome the “pains at” which we were “to interpret the Quran in western terms”?

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad has rightly observed in the Tarjuman-ul-Quran. “The writer of every age is the product of its mental environment but only that intellectual stands aloof who endeavours with the zeal and talent of a Mujtahid. So we find that from the early days of Islam till the modern age all the scholars, who undertook the interpretation of the Quran shared a common tendency in their manner of the interpretation which reflected a continuous deterioration of thought. This was in fact a reflection of the general deterioration that was prevalent among the Muslims of different ages. So the scholars could not keep pace with the heights of the Quranic thought and they tried to bring it down to a level where it could fit into their low depressions of thought”.

The origin of the state is not the theme of the Quranic thought. State is quite a mundane affair and the art of statecraft is the business of statesman. The philosophers, intellectuals and political thinkers are at liberty to have their interpretation about the political institutions of their own time. What the Quran demands from us is also quite clear. It is neither conformism nor non-conformism. It does recognize the will of the people as the guiding principles in their day to day affairs. As Allah declares:

*We have indeed created man,
In the best of moulds.
Then do we debase him,
(To be) the lowest
Of the low,
Except such as believe.
And do righteous deeds.
For they shall have,
A reward unfailing (Sura Tin:59.4.6)*

The Quranic man is not like the brute of the Hobbesian thought which may require an absolute Leviathan to tame him through the coercive apparatus of the state because "Allah has created him in the best of moulds" but he himself chooses to "fall to the lowest depth". So man is free to

choose the best of the mundane institutions and rise to the highest peaks of piety and righteousness or may elect to fall in the abyss of darkness as a result of his having gone astray. And the best of the institutions are those which are founded on the Islamic Code that is the ethical pattern of Islam. The following from Sura Aal-e-Imran:

*The Religion before God is Islam
(submission to His Will) ,
Nor did the people of the Book,
Dissent therefrom except,
Through envy of each other,
After knowledge had come to them.
But if any one deny the signs of God,
God is swift in calling to account,
So if they dispute with thee,
Say: " I have submitted,
My whole self to God,
And so have those,
Who follow me".
And say to the People of the Book,
And to those who are unlearned:
Do ye (also) submit yourselves?
If they do, they are in right guidance,
But they turn back,
Thy duty is to convey the Message;*

*And in God's sight ,
Are (all) His servants" (3:19-20).*

The will of the people should be a reflection of such ethical values that it may not lead them astray from the true path and the path is course Habillah and it is not synonymous with the will of God. And about the "Will of People" the following from Sura-e-Imran:

*Do they seek,
For other than the Religion
Of God? While all creatures
In the heavens or on earth
Have willing or unwilling,
Bowed to His Will
And to Him shall they
All be brought back (3:83)
If anyone desires
A religion other than
Islam (submission to God,)
Never will it be accepted
Of him: and in the hereafter
He will be in the ranks
Of those who have lost
(All spiritual good)(3:85).*

When the Quran declares that no other Religion is acceptable to God except Islam, it

indicates the fact that the real Religion is one: and all the Prophets have been teaching and preaching a common message. Therefore to Allah no sectarianism or schism in religion is acceptable because all that is man-made. Therefore, Islamic message envisages a society based on basic principle of monotheism and Unity of God. The schism or states are endeavours by men to run their political, social or economic affairs according to their own objective conditions. Therefore Allah says that the mankind has been distributed in a large number of tribes, principalities and groups because they should be identified and may not lose their national, regional, tribal or linguistic entity and at the same time may pursue a life according to the tenets to ultimate submission to God. So Allah ordains:

*And hold fast
 All together by the Rope
 Which God (stretches out for you)
 And be not divided
 Among yourselves:
 And remember with gratitude
 God's favours on you;
 For ye were enemies
 And he joined your hearts*

*In love
 So that by His grace
 Ye became brethren
 And you were on the brink
 Of the Pit of Fire
 And He saved you from it.
 Thus doth God make
 His signs clear to you:
 That ye may be guided (3: 103).*

Allama Abudullah Yusuf Ali, whose translations of the Quranic verses have been given in this article, comments that: "the simile is that of people struggling in deep water to whom a benevolent Providence stretches out a strong and unbreakable rope of rescue. If all hold fast to it together there mutual support adds to the chance of their safety."

*Shame is pitched over them
 (Like a tent) whenever
 They are found
 Except when under a covenant
 (Of protection) from God
 And from men; they draw
 On themselves wrath from God
 And pitched over them
 Is (the tent of) destitution*

*This because they rejected
The signs of God and slew
The prophets in defiance of rights (3:112)*

Allama Yusuf Ali again comments that the word, "Dhuribat is a simile from the pitching of the tent. Ordinarily a man's tent is a place of tranquility and honour for him. The tent of the wicked wherever they are found is ignominy, shame and humiliation. It is the pity from God or from men that gives them protection when their pride has fallen. Using the same simile of a tent in another way, their home will be destitution and misery."

The word *Habl* has been rendered "covenant" by the same scholar, where as in the earlier paragraph 103 of the same Sura he has preferred the word "rope". Sura is the same, subject is the same and the word is the same but as the word has been used as a simile, therefore the rendition has differed in the two paragraphs drastically.

"It was the Town of Yathrib which was torn with civil and tribal feuds and dissensions before the Apostle of God (PBUH) set his sacred foot on its soil. After that it became the city of the prophet: Madina, an unmatched Brotherhood and

the pivot of Islam."it is because they held fast all together by Habillah and continued to flourish. In the second situation it is the tale of Bani Israel who did not keep their part of the Covenant with God and were rendered destitute. And only got some respite when they got into Covenant with men to have a shelter (tent pitched) over their heads otherwise destitution and shame are pitched over them because of the fact that they were divided as a result of non -adherence to the original faith. In both cases Habillah and Hablinnas could be twins as born that may keep man's fidelity to God or may keep to contracting parties bound to the mutual Covenant. The Will of God or Will of People is not applicable in either cases.

Verily, this is My Way,

Leading straight : follow it;

Follow not (other) paths.

Dawn: April 1997

POLITICS SANS MORALITY

One is inclined to agree with Mr. M.H. Askari (Dawn 17-03-99) that essentially the problem of the left over Beharis in Bangladesh is connected with the crisis of 1971 which led to the break up of the country. And it should therefore be dealt by us instead of asking other Muslim Nations for assistance. Prima facie the events of the fateful year and the method adopted to solve a political problem through military means seem to be the sole cause for the debacle and ultimately for the Fall of Dhaka. Many of our writers and intellectuals confine themselves to those events and therefore hold the Military Junta of Yahaya Khan and his aides and cronies responsible for The Fall. Of course they were, as they did provide the precipitative cause for it. Such an approach will only highlight the factors which led to the

immediate 'Fall' and capitulation of the East Wing which was Pakistan before 16-12-1971. Political thinkers are of the view that politics has no roots without History and in turn History has no fruit without politics. It will be rather in our own interest to find out the root cause of and factors responsible for generating the separatist movement in the erstwhile Eastern Wing of the full-fledged Pakistan: I mean the Pakistan of 14th August 1947. If we lose sight of those factors and ignore them, we shall be committing an intellectual error of a magnitude of unpardonable extent as it would certainly be detrimental to the collective national interest of the present day Pakistan, as our policy makers or self styled custodians of national agenda are still not inclined to learn lessons from the past political blunders of our own making or seeking. They with a shrug of shoulder say that all was conspiracy hatched by our adversaries or enemies and in this way^e they try to absolve themselves of all the charges and its consequences. But history is ruthlessly cruel and impartial whether one learns or refuses to learn from it but it does teach its lesson to the detriment of such incorrigible players in its wake.

Can we be oblivious or ignorant that our Commander and Martial Law Administrator Lt: Gen: Amir Abdullah Khan Niazi practically beseeched his Indian counterpart Lt: Gen: Arora to rush to his rescue as an erstwhile comrade-in-arms of the British Indian Army? Can we forget the scene of the surrender? Were we not shocked to see the shameless broad smile on the face of the self-proclaimed Tiger? Shekih Mujib did not relent to $\frac{1}{2}$ point of his six points as he was afraid that Bengalis would bury him in Paltan Maidan if he did so. Niazi did practically bury the Pakistan of 1947 and its national pride in Ramna park of the same Maidan on that fateful day of 16th December 1971, he did so with impunity. Allama Iqbal was right when he said "*Qome frokhtand wa che arzan frokhtand*, i.e. *we sold a nation and sold it so cheaply*. It was about Kashmir. The Muslim Bengal we surrendered not only cheaply but shamelessly. And again the great Allama, *Hameeyat – naam hay jiska, Gayee Timur kay gar se*. i.e. *The sense of honour has totally disappeared from the house of Timur*. This great Indian Muslim thinker a couple of months before his death, had perhaps been right to observe about some Muslim political leaders as he said to Mr. Jawahar Lal Nehru that they were

politicians and you were a patriot. He must have said that about such political elements who surrender their honour in broad day light and they are not ashamed of the ignominy. Our politicians are only politicians. Had they not been so, they would not have allowed things to deteriorate to the breaking point. Even if that was to be accepted as a *fait accompli*, but it would not have called for celebrating 16th December as a day of national unity, as we did last year believing wrongly that nukes make nations.

East Pakistan declared herself as Bangladesh on 25-3-1971 and attained statehood on 16-12-1971. The Muslims of the India passed the Lahore Resolution on 23.3.1940 and attained Pakistan on 14-8-1947. If we compare the pace, the Constitutional processes take longer periods than the coup processes which have become a part of our national political life since October 1958. This coup-gemony has basically been responsible for all our national ills whether it was military or civil. This coup mentality is not confined to military juntas. It is a trend and mentality that manifests itself in adhocism with regard to national problems and whenever they land in the quagmire they find an scapegoat to save their skins.

General Niazi surrendered with ninety thousand comrades and colleagues and Mr. Z.A.Bhutto rescued all of them as a result of Simla Agreement. The poor Beharis who were also partners in the great feat were left in the lurch and abandoned to suffer in the throes for 28 years and perhaps forever as our Foreign Minister has categorically refused to accept them as Pakistanis. The Foreign Minister has taken a legalistic view about their national status as East Pakistan was Pakistan before the surrender and after that it has attained a separate statehood as Bangladesh. Since then and from that day all the ex-citizens of that wing have legally become the citizens of the successor state and therefore Beharis cannot claim exception. Some writers feel that the Beharis desire to retain an identity of their own, therefore they did not merge their identity with that of the Bangladeshis. To put the things in correct perspective, they did not even merge it with that of the Pakistanis as they claimed to be the scions of the thirteen horsemen who captured those areas centuries ago and therefore they could not compromise this false arrogance of theirs with the indigenous and local people and with their language, script and in the ultimate analysis with

their culture. They rather endeavored to impose their cultural supremacy after having obtained political ascendancy. The making of Urdu the only state language of Pakistan was an ill-advised decision which provided the first cause for bringing in play the dormant passion of the Bengali Nationalism. So 21st February became the corner stone of Bangladeshi movement which ultimately become the rallying and pivotal force to spur the subsequent movements. Last year I was in Dhaka on that day and could see and feel the magnitude of its vitality and impulse that was so alive and vivid.

The desire to retain an identity of their own is not something novel or unique only to the so called Beharis in Bangladesh. It is neither odd nor peculiar to them. Every community, sect, tribe, cast, nation, nationality or ethnic group all over the world do possess similar desires for not only retaining its identity but do express a natural instinct to preserve that identity, to defend it and to fight for it. It is a basic human urge and the right of every such group or section of humanity to live honorably within the boundaries of a given state or community as members of the greater society or civilization.

Even the Holy Quran says that mankind has been distributed in a large number of tribes, principalities and groups so as to be identified and that they may not suffer to lose their tribal, regional, national, linguistic and cultural mark and entity. Therefore to regret and say that had Beharis merged their identify with that of Bangladeshis, their travails would have been over is hardly tenable in the light of such Quranic injunctions. Such a suggestion also runs counter to the concept of the Two Nation Theory, as this theory envisaged the Indian Muslims to be a separate Nation vis-a-vis the Hindu Community. Therefore Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah proclaimed that Indian Muslim are geographically a Nation and I want to make them politically a Nation. They are still so despite having two Muslim States of Pakistan & Bangladesh.

President Rafique Tarar, in his address to the Joint Session of the Parliament on 11-03-1999 has said that the Two Nation theory is still alive and very much in evidence. And that Pakistan is a manifestation of this theory which Inshallah will always remain enshrined in the pages of history.

It is really heartening to note that the President of our Islamic Republic after quite a long

time has spoken the historical truth and held the concept of the Two Nation theory as the basis for the creation of Pakistan as against the much trumpeted Ideology of Islam or that of Pakistan itself. A section of Muslim orthodox religious scholars which was opposed to this theory of two nations and as such opposed Pakistan tooth and nail when it was in a conceptual form. When Pakistan emerged as a sovereign Muslim State on the map of the world, they perhaps could not reconcile themselves with the solidity of the state-hood, therefore they started harping about the Ideology of Pakistan and that has now been enshrined as the oath of office to be administered to all elected Representatives, Presidents, Prime Ministers, Governors and to all state functionaries. It is really a pleasant surprise that the President spoke so vehemently and vigorously about the theory instead of the ideology. Otherwise an autocrat President is on record to have said that he was Muslim first and Pakistani next. Such statements have diluted the state and put the Islam of his sect above the state. Thus making the allegiance to the state subsidiary and not primary. So the Pakistani stood divided into Muslim, Hindus and Christians and Muslim in turn became Sunnis, Shias, Deobandies, Brelvis,

Ahli-Hadith and etc. It encouraged Sectarianism and Communalism, generating violence, terrorism and strife at the cost of law and order and tranquility in the society resulting in the disappearance of the writ of the government.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has also realized that our political and social ills have been generated by the elements who did not see eye to eye with the creation of the Muslim state in South Asia, and after its emergence they have become the self proclaimed ideologues, theoreticians' muftis, mufassirs and even mentor of it. Had the same been realized by our first Prime Minister, the tragedy of the separation of East Pakistan and its conversion into Bangladesh could have never been enacted.

When Mr. H.S. Suhrawardy in his first speech in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan on 6th march 1948 pleaded for fair play and justice to all nationals of Pakistan including the non Muslims as he was convinced that a communal approach in the state affairs would ultimately lead the Muslims to sectarianism and strife of colossal magnitude which could be even detrimental to the existence of the state itself. They passed a resolution asking him to take residence within six months in Pakistan, otherwise his seat would be declared vacant. After

that when he went to Dhaka in June 1948 with the intention to take up residence in Pakistan, he was served with a notice of extradition asking him to leave within 24 hours. The order not only extradited him but prevented his re-entry for six months. All this was done by the then Chief Secretary Mr. Aziz Ahmed at the behest of the Central Government. They could not unseat Mr. Suhrawardy as long as the Quaid-i-Azam was alive. They did so on 2nd March 1949. So Begum Shaista Suhrawardy Ikramullah lamentingly says, "with the establishment of Pakistan his usefulness was over. He had organized and led the largest Muslims majority province to vote for the Muslim League and then creation of Pakistan". Jinnah was dead and the leader second only to Jinnah in popularity was ousted from the mainstream politics. This was the first act of alienation of the majority province from the national politics. So there was no one to advise or offer a wise counsel to Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan and he acted upon the advice of the mediocres and fell prey to the political dwarfs and was assassinated in Oct 1951. With his elimination all the subsequent acts further alienated the Muslim Bengal.

Mr. Suhrawardy accepted the Parity Formula against the wishes of people of the that wing and apparently put at stake his political career. But he was basically a leader of the masses and could persuade them to follow their leader. Mr. Suhrawardy was also a genuine statesman and could easily transcend petty political considerations. Whenever faced with dilemmas of the kind he acted in the best national interest without much ado as the art of statecraft was the cardinal principle to guide him in such situations. But by accepting the parity formula the country got its first Constitution. When he became the Prime Minister he tried to apply this formula in all walks of National life: trade, services, funds, development plans etc. This was not liked by the Elite (Establishment, Landlords, Islamists, Traders and Émigré) and he had to resign. In his tenure of 13 months as Prime Minister, Mr. Suhrawardy made a mandatory constitutional provision for holding the first general elections in the country in Feb/ Mar 1959.

I had the honour to have received, garlanded, met and have remained with him throughout his tour in Quetta in Oct 1958. I still vividly recapitulate his prophetic speech of 5th Oct

1958 which he delivered in the lawns of Quetta Municipality. He said that he had to accept the parity between the two wings so that a democratic rule was ushered and he denied the charge that he had anything to do with the formation of the One Unit in this Wing. He said that the One Unit was wrong but its undoing would be catastrophic. He in that public meeting predicted that the conspiratorial elements which have made the One Unit would one day undo it and that would lead to the disintegration of the country within one year. The One Unit was undone in Oct. 1970 and East Pakistan became Bangladesh in December 1971. He was sure that his Awami League would win the majority in those elections of early 1959 which were never held as Martial Law was imposed in mid night of 7/8 Oct. 1958.

Mr. Suhrawardy was abdoed, imprisoned and exiled. He died in Beirut on 5th Dec. 1963. Before his death he told Mr. A.K Brohi that he would have given up politics and taken seriously to the legal profession as a whole timer as he did not have enough money to bear the educational expenses of his only son. "But Mr. Brohi I cannot let down the people of Pakistan who have reposed so much confidence upon me", as he knew that

with his disappearance from the political scene the link between East and West Pakistan would be severed. Mr. Suhrawardy concludes his memories as under:-

“By all accounts there is a general stagnation and the question remains how it can be ended. The general theory is that when constitutional avenues are blocked, people find a way to adopt unconstitutional measures, in short, a revolution. Whether such a revolution is possible in view of the tremendous disparity between the armed forces and the people is doubtful. One contingency which we were probably approaching was the mass upheaval in East Pakistan against West Pakistan which would have included the army, the West Pakistani industrialist and even the non Bengali refugee element. This would have led to the bloody riots and murders would have been based on sheer hatred. I have succeeded in stemming this, but we have yet to see if it is entirely extinguished. If not, desperation may once more light the smoldering fire and destroy me in the process as well”. But he did not live to see the conflagration which was to burst forth from those smoldering fires and the convulsion and the violence of 1971.

The perpetual intrigues of the elite to keep away Mr. Suhrawardy from the corridors of powers resulted in perpetual alienation of the Muslim majority of 56% from the national mainstream. Mr. Suhrawardy like the founding father Quaid-i-Azam believed that though Pakistan was achieved by the Indian Muslims yet in the age of liberalism the modern concept of secularism and democracy must be the guiding principles in the art of statecraft. The Quaid-i-Azam in his famous policy speech delivered in the Constituent Assembly at Karachi on 11th August 1947 has boldly and without mincing any words declared that "in the new state of Pakistan religion would have nothing to do with the business of state." They censored this part of the speech as they did have the audacity to do so. But the Dawn and its Editor the famous bold Journalist Mr. Altaf Hussain refused to accept the press advice and published the speech unabridged, otherwise the basic principles enunciated by the creator of Pakistan would have been lost from the annals of our chequered and turbulent history. But who cares for the dead, there is a proverb in Baluchi that the dead bequeathed his will and the alive exerted their heart desire. So the first Prime Minister in collusion with Islamists

and land Lords made out the Objective Resolution the corner stone of the statal affairs, which was adopted in the preamble of the constitution, and that has now been made an operative part of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan .

They argue that in Islam *din* and *siyasat* are complementary to each other and therefore they cannot and should not be separated and any endeavor towards the secularism is being dubbed as anti -religion as the term secular has erroneously been interpreted by Islamists as *la-din* (irreligious) . Allama Iqbal also says' "*juda ho din, siyasat say to rehjati hai Changezi*, i.e if *din* is separated from politics, then *Changezi* prevails" This is the only correct and happy interpretation of the applicability of *din* in *siyasat* as here it has succinctly been implied as ethics in politics. So any politics that is devoid of ethics would lead to *Changezi* or Machiavellianism. I do not wish to go further about the theocracy and secularism. It is a full subject and requires full deliberation. But one thing is very clear that all rulers who have attempted to exploit religion in politics in the sacred name of Islam during the 52years have been practicing a politics which has been devoid of ethics totally. They have either practiced *Changezi* or Machiavellianism and

in effect have eroded the Authority of the State, diluted the writ of the Government and have put the civil society in anarchy. So let us agree that unethical is irreligious and not secularism. Now it is high time that as a matter of policy and practice our rulers have to accept that ethics in every sphere of life is a must. And we must adopt it as an imperative in national politics and statal affairs. Can't we make a beginning of it in our dealings with Bangladesh and the repatriation of Beharis on the mora! and ethical basis?...

Dawn: June 1999.

90 days: 3rd February 97

100 days: 13th February 97

The 90 days exercises in our Islamic Republic of Pakistan having been under-taken in the last quarter of the second millennium (A.D) remind me of similar exercises of 100 days which were undertaken in the Assyrian Kingdom of second millennium (B.C) to save the king from the wrath of the gods.

The Assyrian King-commander Tiglath-Pileser after having launched a number of campaigns against the vexatious Aramaeans and consolidating his position dies in 1077 (B.C). But ironically in our case the commander after having launched a successful campaign against the vexatious Palestinians in Jordan, embarks upon the first exercise of 90 days apparently to appease the gods on 4th /5th July, 1977 but with no intention to

save the king, rather with pretensions to save the Republic (for himself but in the name of Religion). This co-incidence though separated by 3000 years in time and thousands of miles in space has a striking similarity in character and approach. Therefore, I would like to re-produce verbatim the following from the History of the World (with courtesy of Time-life series)

“Assyria was mainly a nation of serfs who were attached to the land that they farmed, they could be sold along with that land. They owed allegiance to the local village. The village, in turn, was tied to a city by the obligation to pay taxes, participate in religious festivals and obey administrative mandates. The cities, chief among them Assur, Nineveh, Eribil and Nimrud were under the authority of the king.

“In theory, the Assyrian king possessed absolute power in all aspects of government-economic, diplomatic, political, military and religious. Although he was acknowledged as human, he was thought to be the earthly delegate of the gods, especially of Ashur, the principal deity, who was represented by a winged disc. Because of that status, the monarch was aloof from other mortals, only the superintendent of the palace had

regular access to his presence. Even the crown prince was allowed an audience only when they appeared in court before their ruler. For the king, satisfying the gods was no easy task. He was constantly subjected to such arduous rituals as fasting or retreating for a week at a time into a crude reed hut, *sometimes, the omens indicated that the gods were direly displeased. The most evil sign was an eclipse, lunar or solar, which was taken to portend the death of the monarch.* In such cases, the king abdicated his throne temporarily in favour of a surrogate who assumed responsibility for whatever had angered the gods. At the end of 100days the real king returned, and both the substitute and substitute's wife were executed, presumably to give the gods the death of the king that had been foretold."

Once again on 4th /5th November, 1996 the supreme Commander and the President of the Islamic Republic apparently with a view to saving the system, embarks upon a similar adventure to pacify the gods and promising to hold the elections through the surrogates within 90 days: exactly on 3rd February, 1997.

"The Indian astrologers had once forecast the end of the World on 3rd February, 1962 unless

the gods were adequately propitiated” as the renowned columnist Khushwant Singh says in his column “Doomsday in Yogiland”

And what did they do to appease the gods?
In his words:

“On the evening of 3rd February 1962 (to be exact 5.35 p.m.) eight planets joined forces in the Capricorn and declared war on the earth. Precisely at that time thousands of sacrificial fires were lit all over India. Yogis in loin cloths and ashes, sadhus with matted hair, pundits with their foreheads smeared with sandal-wood paste began to chant litanies from the sacred texts. The battle was on “Wicked planets versus the holy men of Hindustan”.

The first mid-night exercise of 4th /5th July, 1977 undertaken by the Commander and the 5th and so far the last exercise of 4th/5th November, 1997 mid-night undertaken by the Supreme Commander seem to emanate from the same source of hope and fear as the selection of dates in either cases belies any doubt about the intent and the purpose. But the gods in Washington D.C are not like their Assyrian counterparts who could be fooled into accepting the substitute for the real. The gods of IMF and World Bank do not deal in

counterfeit currency as their touch-stone has become marvelously sensitive after the dismemberment of the Soviet Union and it seldom goes for a coin that is not up to the mark to the latest standard of free market economy and new world order.

Quetta Times February 1997.

P.S *The Safavid King Abbas when felt insecure, "In August 1593 he was advised by his astrologers that the stars boded ill for the ruler of Persia, since Mars and Saturn were in quadrature in the ascendant. Resourcefully, Abbas stepped down from the throne and had a condemned heretic, an adherent of a small outlawed religious sect, proclaimed shah in his place. The heretic ruled under the close surveillance for three days. On the fourth day, when the zodiacal aspects were declared to have become more favourable, the substitute shah was executed and Abbas resumed his reign once more."*

History of The World AD1600 to 1700.

Chapter Five

Short Stories

The Grave And Winter Moonlight

This is a cold night. The place we are destined to go is far away... It is a moonlit night but... the goreech (north wind) is also harshly blowing... to go or not to go... It is not Hamletian... Father asks me.

“Sony! Are you ready, don’t you accompany me,? It is Mahmadaan’s son’s marriage.”

“Yes Master, I am joining you in a moment, please wait a minute. Let me wear my *shal* (a warm cloak made of camel wool). It must be a biting cold in the open.”

How pleasant it was to walk through these oases and palm groves of date trees in the moonlit nights of summer. It is so romantic and even elating! O, what an attraction it is when the date ripens and the *hamein* is in full bloom... The palm

trees seem decorated in their multicoloured branches of dates like brides with their jewelleries, so symmetrically arranged by the creative hand of mother nature. But to-day the winter moonlight and the blowing slaps of *goreech* (north wind) make us shiver to our bone marrow.

Our north wind is wild like the west wind of Shelley. It is the destroyer and the preserver and its wild spirit is the carrier of dormant pollens for the creative spring of life. The very breath of the autumn being its herald and,

*The trumpet of a prophecy! O wind,
If the winter comes, can spring be far
behind?*

I believe in it and believe the prophecy of the romantic poet. I do share the impulsive strength in the uncontrollable boyhood of mine but alas! I am not free and again in pray with him:

*As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need
O! lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life ! I bleed!*

O! the wind is blowing so cold and harsh here! what about Shalkot (Quetta).

The snow must have fallen and covered the earth, the mountains and rooftops. And the moonshine mingling with the glittering and

radiating snow over Chiltan must be enchanting like the moon itself but the blows of this cold and savage wind won't permit anyone to enjoy the beauty of nature.

And that moon of our college with beauteous enamoring eyes must have confined herself in her room, reading her course books. I am sure she will surpass all her lady friends! But the lady of the long dark tresses is also very brilliant; one of them must top. The moon and cloud always collide but the light triumphs finally: cloudiness is temporary, light is lasting.

"Dear Chakoo, are you stumbling or kicking something?"

"Papa! I am looking the moonlit, its rays through the branches and the leaves of palm trees are so attractive!

"Yes, you may look the attraction of the moon but also watch your steps, lest you land in a pool of water. In winter water is not required and they don't train it and it can run anywhere and makes itself abundantly available."

In the river belt the pebbles seems to have frozen together but I don't blame that the villagers have tied the stones and let the dogs loose as the villagers and dogs are far away. Beautiful are those

regions where these days snow falls. It falls for a noble purpose as Milton has said on the morning of Christ Nativity:

*Only with the speeches fair
She woos the gentle air
To hide her guilty front
With innocent snow.*

The nature covers herself and conceals her deformities of guilt to receive the Lord as tomorrow is the day of His descent to earth. I was also born the same day of 25 Dec: but mine is a simple birth like many others. The nature is indifferent here except the elarion of North wind over the dreaming earth .

Tomorrow is the day of resurrection of that great soul who humanized all those who were shackled, enslaved and were dehumanized corps but he made them to rise again and attain their last liberties. Jesus of Nazareth is the only person in the history to have over- come fear, so all were afraid of him, of his teachings, of his courage, of his faith in Himself, of his conviction in human destiny. He was against all self- proclaimed deities, kings, rabbis and clerks. He was led to the gallows, was made to carrying his own crucifix and make the cross eternally sacred and the

crusade to fight oppression in all its dimensions till the eternal liberation of human soul.

And what about that old man who drank the cup of Hemlock and attained eternity in the realm of immortals. He taught the intellectuals the eternal truth that only those can live who learn to die for what they live; know they must for what they are living. Knowledge is wisdom and wisdom visits that intellect which knows what it does know and what it does not know. Who followed and fall in their foot steps ? Many have. Where did they end ? Where . all such men of destiny are destined to end. Man is the measure of all things. In this measure one sets the gallows, other dances on it in iron fetters and shackles. One offers the cup of Hemlock other drinks it. Who survives and who perishes: History is witness to that.

Oh!

“What is the matter Sony?”

“Papa I was immersed in the beauty of this cold moonlit night”

“E t, my son they say moonlit nights of winter and the youthfulness of widows are things seldom to enjoy.”

“Father I am looking at that from quite a different angle. I am seeing the beauty of the

mother nature, how fair she is! The moon has spread its white and fair sheet all over on everything and covered the entire face of everything on the surface and surroundings.”

“I didn’t know you are thinking like a poet. Since when ?”

“Daddy! Don’t you agree with me ?”

“I do Sony, must you observe, note and express yourself objectively”

The moonlight is spread all over and in all dimensions uniformly, on the stagnant pond water, on the drying palm trees, over the graveyard, over the graves, intact and damaged both, all and every grave is equally lit by its light; on the powerful dome which they say whenever thunders the other domes shake and sink in the ground, but moonlight has equally spread its white sheet over it too. It is true that the powerful always over runs the weaklings, but it is not the truth itself. Looking this very graveyard, there is a grave which is a mausoleum to us. Some say he was weak and chose to fight the powerful so he lost as he was destined to lose.

The grave stone speaks a lot of his national pride. It was that pride which he did not compromise. Beneath tons of mud and heavy earth

he must be thinking who was a greater king, he or the Corporal Qajar King. In this entire dead valley of dead man he is the only surviving soul. He was weak because he was leader of a people who neither concede to follow anyone nor allow anyone to lead. He was master of a town whose inhabitants neither accepted him nor opposed him. They did not even raise a dirge over the demise of the nation. The British and Qajar emperors got in league, destroyed its fortification but failed to smash his will to fight. He was exiled to rest in this valley of sweet dates and sweeter grapes where a millennium ago they used to extract sugar and wine from dates to be know as Fananzbur (the land of sugar). The Shah is buried here in Shapataan (Shah- pataan: the largest container of dates). It is testimony to history that only those survive who die to resurrect. Khalil Gibran says there were three sons of freedom: one was crucified, the other went mad and the third is still unborn. But seeing this grave here in this moon lit atmosphere with blowing wind I have a strange feeling. I believe that the third son of freedom has been buried here before his birth to become a seed, a dormant seed to be lifted by the North Wind of

revolution. And the prayer may find its answer once more:

O! lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!

A heavy weight of hours have chained and bowed

One too like thee- tameless, swift and proud.

These are the men, salt of earth, they are beacon light to lead us in the dark nights of tyranny and oppression but for them who have the eyes to see the light of liberty; for those who are looking towards the rising sun of truth and the right; and verily not for them who have turned their faces putting the sun behind them; and are running to chase their own shadows.

“Papa, is it not the residence of the bridegroom.”

“Of course my dear it is their residence.”

“We reached our destination so soon!”

They have rightly said: to traverse the way and do the work is the secret of accomplishment.

Panjgur: Dec: 1961

From Sickle to Scoop

Master, please! Don't you know that uncle? He is a very good person. Now he is quite old, he can hardly work but he does not either leave the place or the work. He is very faithful and loyal. In good old days, masters used to reward their loyal and faithful slaves to become the head of their estates and properties to manage it for them. But gone are the days of the masterdom and slavery..... yes! you are right those days have gone but masters and slaves still exist; only the colours have changed. Do you know one thing? This old Nako and master of this place of entertainment were both attendants to serve the customers. One rose to become the master, the other is still the same attendant and the servant of his erstwhile fellow attendant. Now his servant, in fact yes, but rather that of his stomach. How nice it would have been if

we were without stomach. What do you say.....?

Perhaps, yes, without a stomach human kind must be what it is not, he could have lost his human being-ness.

One tends to agree, he would have lost it but would not have been belittled to this extent which is degrading him to dehumanize.

The Baluch says that God may not make one dependent upon his kith and kin. Dependence and deprivation are devastating to human soul. Master! It is the tummy that renders you helpless and you jump in the mire to crawl for a loaf to live, and prostrate to pray for death. Man still lingers to live. Time passes and man passes away with desires unfulfilled. The Nako spent away his vigour of youth to turn gray without realizing his heart's desires of adolescence, reaching the autumn of life and march to this winter of his age finding himself in the twilight of uncertainty and discomfort. This old man even in this twilight of his age sometimes encounters such rascality of rich youngsters that one forgets the gangsters of ranches. I had many a time to pick up a fight or so for his sake or merely to save him from their clutches and fists. ___ Sir!

laugh you may, notorious are we for gangsterism while the real ones roam scot free. Repute is a matter of luck, good name or bad name are ordained by luck. Whatever falls to one's share is not a mere chance or per choice. It is a matter very much connected to the earth or station in life. Wretched of the earth are we, so wretchedness, poverty and improvisation have fallen in our lot to bring with them for us bad name of wickedness, vandalism and wreckage of all sorts. Otherwise these people are the dirtiest of all creatures, but for their wealth and glitter of falsehood which they procure through foul play. They even smell foul; they emit foul, they ooze foul and utter foul. They call you names and abuse you for no reason or rhyme but still being fair. Fair they may be in dress they are, in colour sometimes, but underneath the dirtiest, smelling like decomposed carcass. If I had to pick up a bone with these rascals to save or avenge the honour of a poor old attendant I am to blame not they. I am the *dada* (miscreant) because they are the *undata* (sustainer). My conscience is clear, so no pangs and pricks to pinch my heart.

Oh, wonderful, have a look outside, it is raining. Rains have come after many days. During the last couple of days the clouds were dark and

heavy. It was very hot and humid. It was a prelude to rains but why did they fail?

Let us go and sit in the balcony. The clouds are dangerously black and loaded with heavy rains. I am sure it will be torrential -----
Sir are you hearing the shower of rains echoing with its musical lay. It is going to be a tempest. I am afraid, we can't go home. It will block us. Though we don't have a stream or a river to block us. The one we have that is already bridged. In our country, don't you feel it used to be so good, of course marvelous to have rains falling on the earth. It was scorched and thirsty. The first drops of rains bring such an aroma of earth that brings all the kids of the village to sing and dance to the pleasant tunes of nature. But here the rains are a blight as they raise all the dirt and emit the foul smell of garbage and dumps of sewage here and there. An uneasiness encounters you everywhere; you can't sit and cannot eat in that odor of stinking and abhorrent smell of decaying blackened earth.----

Alas! Master; I have left my motherland far away. I have abandoned my land of birth and have landed myself in this mire and marsh of unhealthiness that now it is impossible for any one

of us to retrieve himself and go back to the land of *Sheer o Khurmag* (land of milk and dates).

Master, no, it is not like that, that we simply don't want to get out of this mire. We may say so but only on lips. In our heart of hearts it is not so. God knows better. He is the revealer of secrets of all hearts. The old ones used to say "O, my native land I love your dried woods even" but, master not with empty stomachs. Waja you talk of the crest bread and salted fish. That even sometimes one cannot get. If one gets it, he gets it at the cost of his honour, he in effect loses the inner zest to raise his eyes.

The rain and thunder this night are presenting wondrous sights here for both of us to witness and enjoy, but with each lightning and thunderbolt my heart leaps into despair.

Our alley is the lowest of all in the vicinity. It is in a depression. All the water of rain must have pooled there. There is no way out for it to drain as no system been provided by civic authorities; the water stands to stagnate and breed mosquitoes to our detriment. Flies and, all sort of wasps breed to bite us to the disease of diarrhea and cholera. Our bad luck seems to be chasing us to this end of the world. In this cosmopolitan metropolis of high rises

and white houses, clubs and casinos, where the nights look brighter than hazy days of ours. They call it the city of lights, we are plunged to the darkness of yore, we live in shacks and huts with the kerosene oil lamp to light our abodes, there we used date palm wood to cook our food and here we use the pasted dung of cows and buffaloes. It produces such a bad smelling fume that we wish for our old fuel to burn. But we still feel to be fixed to this place with a glue of everlasting endurance that will keep us pasted to it till eternity.

They say bad luck comes out of one's own seeking. Once you jump in the swamps the more you struggle the more hopeless you become. Ours is a similar situation. The working class all over is facing the same fate: be it the factory, land or mine he leads the same miserable life. There we were in a marsh of sand and here we are in a marsh of mud. With every gesture to come up, we sink more in the quagmire and lose hope of rescue.-----

Sir, you are the master I can't argue with you. Had I been knowing this much at that time I would not have landed my self in this irredeemable situation. Poverty is the worst enemy I have ever come across. Had we not been poor, we would have never been in such a disappointing situation.

The day I left my country I could never think to be so hapless.-----

Master! Please don't ask me about it. It is a very long story. I promise to tell it to you but let us pend it for another evening. If I open the old dapter (record) this night shall dawn----- you are right the night must dawn. It always does so. But the night of the poor persists in its darkness with a perpetuity of its own. Like his luck it seldom sees the light of the day. We are still surviving in the hope that one day the sun will also rise for us.

You think it is not possible without struggle.----- I work for twelve hours and work hard to achieve a better living. I am in the same position in which I used to be. I have seen nothing better, there I had a sickle in my hand and here I handle the scoops. It is the only difference that I am experiencing. There I did not own a small piece of land to cultivate and here I do not own a second hand truck to drive.

I am older than you in age, you were just a kid when I left the country, I thought may be luck would change with change of the place. Bad luck accompanied and persists not to part company----- Waja! You may say whatever pleases you.----- It is not luck. It is because of objective conditions;

social relations ---- uneven distribution of wealth, monopoly of a class over the production and distribution of wealth. I am an illiterate person, I believe that I wished to leave my bad luck in backyard of rural background but it followed me here in this industrial hub of Pakistan.

There was a union leader in our factory where I worked, he used to discourse like you and insisted in his speeches that unless workers organized themselves as a class and struggled relentlessly to achieve what is theirs, they would be suffering in the pangs of poverty and improvisation. I remember him, his words still ring in my ears: "the fat which the masters are putting on and the bulging bellies of the Seths are our muscles and fat that we melted and they apportioned to themselves. It is the sweat and the blood of the worker that have granted to industrialists the wealth and the comfort."---- Yes, sir! I knew that he was right but now I know with certitude that this is the right and only the truth about our relations and the prevailing reality.-----
-- Oh! Master, please don't ask me about him. It is now an old tale, that has been told many times. It is a gone story. Everybody has forgotten him. He was targeted because of his conviction and commitment

to the collective cause of the workers. He was betrayed by his fellow workers in the crucial phase of our struggle . I disgustingly felt disheartened. I left them. Whenever I am disheartened I give up. It is a strange habit of mine: I left my native place when I got disgusted.

I know you must be pitying me and must have been moved by my sighs and moans.----- God help me. It was so painful and devastating that I pray one's enemies be spared by Almighty God to suffer in those unfortunate events which I found in such a tender age.--- I am vividly visualizing that fateful day. I was holding the end of the palm mat over which my father was cutting the dates bunches and throwing on it. He was so happy that the date crop that year was fabulously rich, that he would clear all his debts. He was rather shouting on seeing this rich crop over the date trees. He did not know what the next moment is holding for him in its bosom. Suddenly the support of the rope to his back broke and fell to the ground, smashed with broken skull and all bones of his body shattered. We lost him instantly. We were orphaned and our mother widowed. Our widow mother used to grind wheat to feed us and bring us up.

Sir, you are a great man! You talk of literacy for us the poor. Poverty is such a malign disease that they say rather pray that it may not visit an abandoned old depleted building.---- They used to ridicule us the poor and say that even literacy is of no use to the sons of poor as it can hardly improve their social being. And for me how could I go to the school, I was the helpmate of my mother. I used to bring the wheat and barley for grinding and taking back the flour to the households. As I grew older I became *baddi* (domestic servant who works only for left over food and clothes).

Look the Nako, he is listening so attentively. It is my bad habit to talk so loudly and talk too much. Of late I have never been so eloquent and articulate. You are the son of my master, I had to open my heart and mind both and emitted all the sorrows and sorries to you to lessen the burden that I am carrying for so long.

Master pardon me, if you are getting bored I will stop---- OK if you feel good to listen the tale of our woes I will continue. They say that deer leaps on its own, if you put a bell on its neck then you cannot restrain it going into bouts of leaping. Mine is a similar situation.

My dear master! When I grew in age and could do some harder work, I chose the labour of my ancestors that is to work on dates farms. I become a Shareek (the worker who shares the product of crop on 1/3 rd or 1/4th basis of annual and biannual produce of dates and that of lands). I thought that would be better as I would be getting my due share of the produce regularly but found in equally miserable and depressing. On every alternate day the shareek brings green manure for lands, firewood for master's household; fetches water, husks the rice and irrigate lands and clean the water courses. God knows what else he is required to do. It is a long time I can't list all services that a Shareek is required to perform. In nutshell he is overworked but under fed. You are right all the labourer are in the same situation. But until I experienced it I did not believe it. Seeing is believing. When I was a Shareek my heart desire was to have a small piece of land and to have cultivated it and raise a few palm trees with my own hands, could have got rid of taunt and abuses of the masters.

No sir, I could not make a saving to purchase a piece of agriculture land. I did purchase one fourth of a land to have half of the produce as

¼ I was getting already as share of my work and service. But I could not pay the price for many years and had to abandon it.

Waja! I cannot understand these problems as you do but as a matter of fact there I did not own a small piece of land and here I do not own an old second hand truck. Of course one all the time desires to be better off. The same desire brought me here to earn a better living. I thought that there the profession of tenancy did not do anything good to my fore-fathers and it would be the same to all. In this industrialist city, one, I thought, can earn as he wishes and be relaxed, would work for a week and eat for a month. Alas! My experience was totally adverse. I told my self that I have missed both trains and have been left in the lurch. With great difficulty I would find work in the cement company.---- Now -a- days the work conditions are better. Those days we had to work for twelve hours continuously, these days it is eight. The wages were very low. There used to be so much dust that many have gone blind. Had I been there for a couple of years more I must have lost my eye sight.

Waja, Union of Workers! We had one with a sincere leader whom his own colleagues, as I said

earlier, betrayed and got his head money to become shopkeepers and truck owners. Sincere workers like me are engine operators, truck drivers or cleaners. There I had the sickle, here I have the scoop or handle in my hand.

Master! It has stopped raining. I will get a taxi for you ----- May God bliss you!

Karachi August 1966.

DAZO DUZZ *

I had just seen the fresh receipt; was wrapping the folder and was about to push the electric bell to call the peon for taking away the papers, that Reader Dur Muhammad entered my office wearing an unusual smile on his face. I was rather surprised that the man was not walking with his peculiar gait and his way of offering the morning greetings was not the same as it used to be. His greetings, gait and smile were neither synchronizing nor were in harmony as those used to be; all the three were changed and something seemed to have de-harmonized his original traits which were a part of his personality. Before that he used to enter in the office in a waltzing manner wearing a broad smile on his face which sprouting

• *Dazo The Thief*

from his lips spread on his face up to the tips of his ears and sometime it could be discerned on his neck. That day the smile was limited to lips and did not spread a bit beyond.

It was not reflected in his eyes even which were normally the first to convey it, his face used to be a glow with it and his offering of the salam was almost imperial.

I was here since one year serving as the Assistant Commissioner of that sub division. The readers on their own and to the best of their wisdom assume the role of the advisors to the A.C's in all the matters; may it be law and justice; administration, reforms, development or political affairs and border dealings. They took themselves very seriously and have declared themselves to be the only experts available to offer their best counsels to the new appointees and particularly to the young officers their advices which were more patronizing and elderly in a way.

I looked at him with a rather sarcastic smile and asked him casually "Durand! I feel you must be carrying a news of utmost interest (I used

to pronounce his name Dur Mohammed in Baluchi way as Durand)". He said with a bit of shock and disbelief, "E.C. Sahib! Dad Mohammed has come and *he has brought the money.*" The last part of his sentence was uttered with stress but not without strain in his tone. The people of that area call the A. C. as E. C. and the D.H.O as DeeChoo.

was not sure as to who was that Dad Mohammed and what sum of money he had brought. For a few seconds neither of us spoke a word. Then I asked as to who was that Dad Mohammed and which money he had brought.

"Sir, don't you remember that widow Dur Naz who appeared in your court as few weeks back. It is her money, the money of her camels, which this man has brought". Then I could recapitulate the events but to my mind the man who was supposed to bring the money was not Dad Mohammed but he was Dazo Duzz (Dazo the thief) as popularly known. The Jirga had sent its award unanimously to me finding the accused guilty of the charge and recommended to sentence him to rigorous imprisonment for three years as he was found guilty to have taken away the camels of widow Dur Naz.

But Dazo never accepted the charge and he sworn on Quran that he had not stolen the camels. The husband of the widow owed him some money which he did not pay back to him and as such he was left with no alternative but to take away his two camels in lieu of that debt. He deposed that the husband was alive when he had taken away those camels and sold across the border and that he then was in full knowledge of it. The widow was neither acknowledging the debt nor was accepting the episode of the thief that the camels had been taken away by him in lieu of the loan which the deceased could not pay.

The widow lodged a complaint of theft against Dazo Duzz in the court of A.D.M/F.C.R for relief. The jirga had found Dazo guilty of the charge but had preferred to keep quiet about any compensation to be given to the complainant for her stolen property. The woman was apparently not pleased with the award and was making hue and cry.

By the way in that area commission of theft was very infrequent. It was the first offense of this nature which was being tried in my court, even that theft had allegedly been committed before my arrival to that sub division. I found that quite a

number of cases had not been disposed of as the post was vacant for a long period of time. As I proceeded to try the cases I found that it was the only case of theft to be adjudicated.

Perhaps because of that rarity of the offense of theft Dazo had attained the notoriety and obtained the name of Dazo Duz with the nickname Duzzan Shah (The chief of thieves). Dazo embarked upon this adventure first by stealing the eggs from the household, of the neighbours. The chowkidar of the Dakbungalow whenever was faced with the problem of feeding the late - at - night-arriving guests in the rest house he had to ask child Dazo to bring a few eggs to make an omelet to the guests. And the child Dazo did a quick job and brought the eggs immediately for serving the late-coming guests who were obliged to pay a good price for such late meals and in addition to it both of them used to get a good tip, so the theft become quite lucrative to both of them.

Later on as he grew in age, he began to bring chickens to the chowkidar to entertain his guests. He never indulged in stealing of goats or sheep. He directly jumped upon the camel back and drew them across the border where those were in high demand. The Baloch says that one cannot steal

a camel crawling on one's limbs. So he was caught and booked for the theft of those camels and the widow approached the Sarkar (Government).

"Durand, aren't you talking about that young man with a well cut beard and long mustache who was brought to the court on the charge of theft?" "Yes Sir! exactly, I am talking of that man."

"Don't tell me. I think his name was Dazo."

"Yes Sir, because of his bad habits of theft Dad Mohammed was contemptuously called Dazo or Dazo Duzz".

"Now you are re-converting him to Dad Mohammed."

"Sir, pardon me for not agreeing with your good-self. That day I was foolishly insisting not to let him out without a written agreement of payment as I was sure that he would not turn up. I was feeling rather sorry for the widow whose money would never be brought by the scoundrel."

"And I said on that day that it is the word of a man that matters. It is of no consequence whether it is given verbally or in writing as the word is kept by those who mean it. My sixth sense told me that the man meant to keep it."

"Sir you were right."

“Now don't you realize that throughout ages madmen like Dazo have kept their words; sane and serene took advantage of that.”

The Siyahkar*

The report of the tribunal was quite comprehensive. It had fully examined the witnesses; discussed all the aspects of the case and had unanimously found that Daulat Khan on finding his sister-in-law in an objectionable intercourse with an outsider had killed both of them.

Sahti was married to his younger brother Mohabat Khan a couple of years ago. Six months after his marriage he went to Dubai to earn a better livelihood. After one and half year he informed his family that he would be coming home on two months leave on the 15th of next month. Only four days were left to his arrival that Daulat Khan found Sahti and that man in the process of that black act

and axed them down.

The investigation report indicated that on seeing his sister-in-law and the guest in the illicit act he could not restrain himself and axed them down instantly to defend

the honour of the family. The tribunal in one voice termed it to be an honour killing, thus recommended to the court of the D.C to award a light sentence to the accused as the couple was guilty of Siyahkari.

I read the case file thoroughly; examined each document minutely and evaluated the statements of all the evidences meticulously so as to find the real motive of the murders. I found that one of the witnesses has deposed that 'the paramour' had left his hamlet that very evening and had come there to purchase some fodder for his camel. The traveller asked him to do the favour as he was not sure that he could be able to get it on his way further. Daulat Khan gave him the fodder which he put on camel back. Then the traveller sought their permission to go. But Daulat Khan asked him to stay with them as it was cloudy and the moon has already set, and in dark nights in those area it was dangerous to travel. He could pass the night and could leave early in the morning. The man was not

apparently inclined to accept the offer but Daulat Khan again asked him emphatically to stay lest he fall prey to a beast in the way. It was then that the camel-man stopped. All the men had their meals together and later on they dispersed to reach their abodes. It was only late in the morning of the next day that they came to know of the sad and shameful episode of the adultery and its aftermath.

I could hardly believe that a man who had come to stay for a few hours could so instantly and easily develop a relation into illicitly with a woman whom he had perhaps met for the first time. So I decided to summon the accused along with all the witnesses. The accused deposed that his sister-in-law was of loose character. He had been indulging in the nefarious activity the day his brother left for Dubai. Women of village were gossiping already about her bulging belly. They whispered among themselves and were surprised as to why Sahti was getting so fat. Some said it was the money of her husband and some felt she was eating too much as she was seen all the time chewing something like a cattle. They thought it was natural to put on weight and grow a belly. But no one guessed that she had blackened her face. She herself provided me with a God - given

opportunity that night with that alien, otherwise we could give no explanation to our brother for the illicit pregnancy of his wife.

Nowhere in the case file either the accused or the witnesses had mentioned the pregnancy of the deceased Sahti. This was a new and important piece of evidence to me or rather to the whole case. It suddenly gave a new dimension to the case and a new colour to the crime and its motive. The accused was himself saying that he was perturbed as to what would have been the reaction of his brother on having seen his wife in a state of illegitimate pregnancy.

I thought he was right as the Baluch proverbially say that beautiful wives and milk giving cattle are not things that could be pledged to others.

Daulat's father, who was the main witness and pleader to his son whom he eulogized as the avenger of their family honour, on his own jumped into the argument and said, "Sir, my daughter-in-law was herself corrupt morally. God knows since when she had started blackening her face and had been with how many men in performance of her sordid misdeeds to the detriment and dishonour of the entire clan. Had she not been caught red-

handed with that traveller, she would certainly have presented my loving son with a bastard baby. The dinbos (TBA's) who saw and bathed her body were saying: Had she not been dead she would have given birth to her baby within three days or four. Sir, thanks God we were saved of another undue murder of the unborn baby."

I was flabbergasted to hear that how can a woman with such an advanced stage of pregnancy can indulge in illicit sex, whereas in her situation she would have refused her lawful husband the legal right of conjugation. I, therefore, could not believe that the one night guest could be the cause of Sahti's murder. I decided to send the case to the Crime Branch for re-investigation.

Now two reports were lying on my desk: the first one is the *de novo* report of the crime branch and the second one is the daily crime report from the same agency. The first one is a comprehensive report that has been submitted to me after thorough and objective investigation. The report clearly indicates that it has been found beyond any shadow of doubt that Daulat Khan has himself allured Sahti his sister-in-law into an illicit relation and on finding her pregnant he must have got perturbed particularly when his brother was to

reach within a couple of days. He was sure that on finding his wife pregnant he would force her to divulge the truth and that would be the end of him and Sahti both. To conceal his black deed he chose to murder the bride of his brother with an unborn baby in the womb along with that unfortunate camel-man before his brother's arrival to the village.

The second report informs that Mohabat Khan has killed his brother Daulat Khan as he has also through his own sources confirmed that his brother had developed illicit relation with his beautiful young wife during his absence from country.

The Legal Heir

That day I came earlier to my office as it was the court day and I had to study some case files. As soon as I settled to carry on with it, the buzzer of the phone disturbed me rather. I picked up the cradle, my PA was on line and was requesting me beseechingly to meet the two ladies who had dropped to his residence for giving a sensitive and critical information regarding a case which was to come up for hearing the same day. I was rather perplexed and not prepared to see anyone as it was not the day for visitors and more over in early office hours no visitor was supposed to request an interview. I told Mumtaz to fix their interview for the next day. He repeated his request in more an emphatic vein and informed me that the ladies were saying that it was a matter of life and death to them, if they failed to reach the Sarkar the

same day, everything would go waste. I reluctantly conceded.

They were young women of a good family and had with them a two year old girl child. They were very confused and did not know how to begin the tale of their woes. They were so much scared that their colour had turned pale. I asked them to be easy and feel free to say whatever they wanted to say and say it without any fear. My consolation worked. Both of them wept and cried and said in unison, "Sahib, we are to seek justice from your Dargah (majestic court)".

I said, "the real Dargah is that of God and true justice is done there. We are his servants trying to do our best."

"But sir, God has granted this seat of justice to you to be fair and just." They uttered these words with choked emotions.

"Come on, tell me what is your problem," I inquired from them in a very sympathetic tone so as to encourage them to speak up their mind as truly as possible.

One of them spoke: Sahib, I am Nooran, she is my sister-in-law Gul-i-Khandan (The smiling flower. I founded the flower was withering and the smile has already faded), the widow of my Shaheed

brother Mir Khan and the little girl their orphan. This unfortunate child was not born that the enemies of my brother killed him. We have come to know that the Jirga has given its decision and had sent the same to your court. They say that the legal heir of the deceased has pardoned the murderer and that the both parties had compounded the case.

“Sahib, what sort of justice is this. They kill themselves and forgive themselves. Sahib! Justice, please justice,” she went into sobbing and could not continue her plea.

I was a bit baffled as to how the murderer and the forgiver could be the same one. I asked her who murdered her brother.

She told me that her brother was murdered by Sopak when he was taking the rain water to irrigate his lands and that their step-brother Sohbat khan had pardoned the murderer, the step-brother is the only male heir of the family.

I assured them that God is great and I will see the case thoroughly and justice will surely triumph. But they apparently were not convinced. They were continuously sobbing and could not come up with details. I thought that they wanted to say more but were scared to divulge the facts they

knew. I asked my PA to take them to his office and take them in confidence and whatever they narrate reduce it into writing and submit it to me. I thought because of language they are unable to speak fluently and frankly.

The widow spoke consequently and said, "we cannot give the true details because of our male guardians. If they come to know that we have revealed the true episode they would certainly harm us". I asked them that then you must send a male member of your family. Hearing this they were unbelievably shocked and one could feel the pain in their weeping eyes and grieved faces. I was feeling awkward for saying so.

The lady after a pause in a hurtful voice was saying: the first male member for us was my husband whom they killed: the second male member is the step-brother of my deceased husband. And he himself is in league with the murderer.

As a male legal heir the step-brother could compound the case and even pardon the offender. But frankly speaking I could not get the idea of being in the league with the other party. I asked them how could he be in league with the murderer of his brother. Then the other lady the real sister of

the deceased argued that had their step-brother not being in league with the murderer, he would not have pardoned him with-out blood money or without getting a *bazoo* (a girl from the family of murderer in marriage). At this point she became emotional and said aggressively, "no man of worth will ever permit a murderer to go free. When vendetta is the valour of our values. If the man has failed the woman would accomplish it."

I said, "I know that as I am a member of a similar society. I again tell you that to find the truth and reach a true conclusion nothing will be left unattended."

I was examining the papers of the case and to my utter surprise and shock finding nothing substantial that could implicate the accused. No proper investigation report was available in the case file nor any statements of witnesses were appended . There was only a complaint in the form of an FIR submitted by Sohbat Khan to the Tehsildar stating that his brother was murdered by Sopak on such date during a scuffle over the use of rain water for irrigation of their lands. The levies arrested the accused Sopak who made a confessional statement to the Tehsildar that he committed the murder. He deposed that deceased

Mir Khan was in the habit of using the rain water for his lands and did not allow the water to flow to his land. On that day he asked Mir Khan not to use the water as it was the turn of his land. Mir Khan did not listen. He blocked the water course and diverted the water to his land. I tried to stop him. In the course of this altercation and scuffle he took out a dagger to attack me. Seeing my life in danger I took out my pistol and fired two bullets to frighten him. I did not want to kill rather wanted to save my life. It is his bad luck that he was fatally wounded and died afterwards.

The AC sent the complaint of the deceased's brother and the report of the Tehsildar to the tribunal to investigate and find out as to whether the accused is guilty or not. The tribunal did not proceed to investigate and sent a composition deed duly signed by them with the recommendations that as Sohbat Khan has pardoned the accused of the murder of his brother Mir Khan and have mutually compromised therefore the composition deed maybe accepted and accused Sohbat acquitted.

The accused in his statement to the Tehsildar taken the plea of self defence and therefore, *prima facie* there was sufficient reason to

believe that he was right and he could have on this plea been absolved of the charge. Then why to resort to compromise. Only one possibility of vendetta could have been the cause.

The glaring fact which disturbed me was the apathy of the tribunal. It did not make any investigation at all. It even did not bother to record the statement of the complaint or that of the accused. No medical report or and nothing about the instrument of the murder was available in the case file. Only it was said that both the parties are present. The accused and the legal heir of the deceased accept the compromise which they have reached voluntarily and with-out any coercion or compensation

نہ مدعی نہ شہادت حساب پاک ہوا
یہ خون خاک نشینان تھا زرق خاک ہوا

(There is) no complainant nor any witness, so no scores to settle;

It was the blood of the earth dwellers, it settled in the earth.

I felt that all the parties are bent upon concealing the facts. For what, that was the

problem. The file did not reveal any thing to give the slightest lead or clue.

پکارتا رہا بے آسرا یتیم لہو
کسی کو بہر سماعت نہ وقت تھا نہ دماغ

*The destitute and orphan blood kept on crying.
No one had the time nor mental inclination to hear
(its case)*

The words of the young grieved lady were now perturbing me more than previous: "they kill themselves and forgive themselves" was resounding in my ears. The second dubious aspect was that the composition was done apparently without any consideration. The lady was empathetic upon it. I made my decision, did not accept the recommendations of the tribunal; constituted a new tribunal with the Assistant Commissioner as its head. I specifically directed it to find out the motive of the murder.

Now again the same case file in front of me. The report of the second tribunal is comprehensive and complete in all respects. The statements of the all relevant witnesses on oath

were available. The instrument of murder recovered and produced.

Noor Khan was the chief of the village. He had two sons: Sohbat and Mir Khan; but they were from different mothers. After the death of Noor Khan the property was equally divided between the two sons. The daughters traditionally do not get any share from the father's property. Though they are practicing Muslims; they offer five times prayer with punctuality, keep the fast in ramzan. They decide their civil disputes preferably under Sharia. But vehemently refuse to admit the woman to her rightful share to which she is undisputedly entitled to get.

Mir Khan himself worked on his lands. He developed the lands. He saw to it that these are sowed in time. got water from the scanty rains whenever it was available. He himself went to put the water in the water course, till the whole area of his land was drenched. He personally supervised the work of his Bazgars (tenants). So after every season he could get good crops and a well-earned income. His elder brother Sohbat Khan left all his lands to Sopak and in the winter went to the plains of Punjab. He was becoming an absentee landlord despite small holdings of unirrigated lands. No

doubt lease holders won't develop the lands like the owner. The lessee also did not declare the real income and used to give him a meager part of that.

Whenever Sohbat Khan asked his partner to explain the reason for the low income he took the plea that his brother Mir Khan was the main hurdle as he did not allow him the due share of water to his lands and he was helpless because he is the brother of him. He asked him to be present that winter and see for himself.

When the rain occurred, Sohbat accompanied Sopak to the lands and saw that Mir Khan was already there. He was making preparation to catching the rain water that was about to reach his lands. Sopak alerted Sohbat saying that this was the way your brother takes away water of every rain. Sohbat ordered him not to allow him this time.

When Sopak tried to interfere, Mir Khan explained to him that as it was the first rain of the season, so it would be his right to irrigate his lands firstly as his lands fall on the upper reaches (I consulted the revenue record which confirmed his plea). Sopak looked back to consult Sohbat but he seemed to have sneaked away.

Sohbat has given his pistol to Sopak with instruction to defend himself and has offered him one fourth of Mir Khan's share if he could kill him in the fight which was certain to ensue. Sopak attacked Mir Khan but he overcame him and threw him away in the water course and threatened to bury him if he dared to attack him again. Sopak was frightened and took to heels. Then Sohbat appearing from nowhere taunted him to hold as he was with him. He said, "My loaded pistol is with you, why don't you use it?"

Mir Khan was stunned to hear his brother ordering his death. He raised his head to rebuke his illustrious elder brother. But before he could utter his words, the pistol was fired and he fell to the ground never to rise again.

Sohbat Khan and Sopak are in the dock in my court as proved murderers beyond any shadow of doubt.

The Whore

“Your habit of young age has not grown old!” I said to him while praising his latest model Creseda car, and sat next to him. Asim was on the wheel.

“Habits do not grow old, they attain maturity with passage of time, you are still Chakoo for me and I, Asmi for you”, Said Asim.

“Asmi is a flower and Chakoo is a fruit, both do not last long”, I replied with a retort.

“Did Yasmeen last long with you? No. But dear friend Asmi is still with you. His friendship is eternal isn't it?” he posed a question.

“You are right dear, mutual friendship is not only eternal but even immortal. Love does not last long, even sometimes the love's labour is lost too. And with Chakars a love does not go for long. It is perhaps Hani's curse that perpetually haunts the

lovers who never find fulfillment with their beloveds: be it Jasmine or Josephine. They are always lost in the cold wilderness of separation."

بل بے وفایاں اڑماجھتیاں
پی ہار ! پی ہار ! کاڑانی نام ء

*Let the unfaithful be away from us
Let us drink to the health of all sweethearts .*

He interrupted in my flowing speech and said with a bit of nostalgia "how good were those days when Mureed Buledai used to sing this song and we all listened to that enchantingly melodious voice and music". I added, "And the company that we used to enjoy with the melody and music! But nothing goes forever. Anyhow tell me where are the *peehar peehar* (drinks) in the name of sweet hearts". "Are you alright? why you are speaking Mureed's dialect." He joked.

I also said jokingly "That is the pure Rindi dialect." "The Rindi was gone the day your leader brought prohibition and closed the door of taverns" he said with obvious sarcasm and disdain.

“When one door is closed, hundred others are opened”, I rebutted him this way.

“I agree my dear Chakoo, but those hundreds of doors open for them who are playing in millions. Where will those go who have lost the clue of the diminishing ray of hope?” “Asmi you are the same naughty boy of sixties. Haven't you consulted Ata Shad's poetry?” he has beautifully expressed this dilemma:

وہ فقیہ خود مطلب
جب سے بند کر بیٹھا
شہر مئے کا دروازہ
شام کے اترتے ہی
تجھ کو ڈھونڈتا ہوں میں
ٹوٹا بدن لے کر

*From the day the perfidious jurist
Has closed the door of wine's city
The lengthening shadows of the evening find me
wandering in search of you
with the painful trauma of my aching body.*

We both were reminiscing the past events of our youthful days that Asmi suddenly stopped his car in front of a palatial White House like building.

"Whose house of wealth is it?" I was asking this in a strange amazing tone.

He replied me in the same manner. "It is the house of the wealth undoubtedly, wealth and wealthy both are abundantly found here. It is a place of a *nouveau riche*. It is Majole's property."

"Achcha! My God ! you are talking of Majed ! That chotoo of Agha's garage! I remember till date the thrashing that was given to him by that Baloch Police Inspector. O, my God had I not intervened he would have killed him".

"Why did he beat him?"

"He had sold the tyres of the police jeep but had reported a theft to them. When the policeman found the truth, he got amuck, and the Inspector was almost mad with wrath. I could save his person but could not save his job as the Agha instantly fired him."

"Yes, Sir, he is the same, you know him too intimately perhaps." said he. "I have also served in their area as A. C. He used to be a dol-dol that means petty smuggler." I informed my friend. "I

am sure that we must be convinced by now that whenever one door is closed, hundred others open."

It was amazing but unbelievable for me. The boy who was an apprentice in a small garage of the town and that job he lost because of a theft. Then later the same boy was doing petty smuggling on an obsolete Russian motor-bike. Now he owns such a big house in Defence Society. I was seeing it with naked eyes, yet my mind was not perceiving it in the same way. Though they say seeing is believing.

I asked my friend again to confirm. "I am sure you are not lying with me. Please tell me honestly are you sure it is the same Majed whom they called Majole."

"Certainly sir, rest assure that he is the same one. Now he is Mir Abdul Majed Khan MPA and is in the government party. I hope that you are aware of the fact that all MPAs on the right side have become Ministers. You were away for a long period of time. Thirty years absence from the country is not a joke. You require now thirty years more to catch up with the lost pace of events."

Asim blew the horn. A half - savage armed man with blood thirsty eyes opened the door. He recognized my friend and wished him. I

was rather enamoured with the lightening and flowers beds of those lush green spacious lawns. The fragrance of the flowers had an effect of trance on the nerves. I instantly went into a stupor of old reminiscence: Quetta club of yore with its heavenly flowers and houri-like ladies was again making me float on the clouds of memory. I was seeing that lady of flowers in my fancy vividly for whom we got hold of a club member to see just a glimpse of her beautifully angellike face and beautiful decked flowers in her tresses. These flowers reminded me of the dry petals of the poet's love which was shattered and scattered over the flowing hair of his beloved like the thirsty and dry wishes of him. All went in vain. Those long thirty years seemed to be a moment of love passed with the sweet hearts. It passed so quickly as if it were a moment that were not lived. Life itself is a moment but some people live for hundred years.

I saw at least fifteen vehicles parked in that premises and there was enough space available for parking of an equal number. As we got down a liveried attendant received us and ushered us in the main spacious lounge. When Majed saw me, he immediately rushed to me, hugged me and said, "Mir, since long we have been hearing about your

return. It is our good luck that we are meeting today."

I asked him that how could he recognize me after such a long time. He said, "Nothing has changed in you, your built is the same, hair style is the same old one except the colour which is all black but with few white patches."

"Dear! you are still keeping the long hair with all its blackness" I said with astonishment.

He asked me not to be surprised over the blackness of the hair as it is all coloured. All the other also wearing artificially coloured hair. Their outer and inner colours also differ.

Suddenly from a corner a fellow shouted and said, "Oh! Majed should I pack your cards?" Majed agreed but I forebode him remembering his childhood when he was a good player of majole (knuckle bones) and used to defeat us all. He was rather pleased that I still remember such minute details of our common childhood.

"Majed dear those were bones and these are plastic" said I.

"You are right sir, but majole was exchanged with majole but now plastic get money in exchange, sir do you remember Hussain had a

pat (a huge bag made from leaves of dwarf palm) full of majole."

"Yes I do remember that, you also must be knowing that the Baloch say money is contained in dirty pats (bag of palm leaves)". Asmi joined our discussion and said that these days money is in the well varnished Banks. Then Majed left us and joined his card party.

Left on our own we chose to sit with a retired officer who was enjoying the company of a handsome man who was in his late teens. He was looking his glass of whisky as if he was toying with it. He did not pay much attention to us. Only half-heartedly said hello to Asim. Perhaps he did not recognize me. I purposely coughed as to clear my throat and addressed him with a bit high pitched voice, "Choudhary! they have rightly said that illness leaves one but not ill habits."

He got up to jump and embraced me warmly, "O. it is you Mir Chakar! I had at all no news of your return, by the way when did you come back, everybody is alright. How is bhabi and kids? *Comment allez vous?*"

"*Tres bien, merci!* everyone is hail and hearty. I am glad to see you Mir Hassan and find that age has not withered you."

Asim mischievously asked him. "Won't you like to introduce your companion to the Mir?"

He did not respond as per his habit. Just to tease him I said, "He must have been knighted as the Choudhary for a reason. Isn't it?" He was offended and responded rather rudely, "Choudhary has never shared his *choudrhahat* and nor will ever do so."

Majed shouted upon the waiter and ordered two Black Label for both of us. The waiter opened the large sliding door and there appeared a well decorated bar with all kind of drinks decorated in glass shelves "What a camouflage!" I exclaimed?

"Everything rather everyone is a camouflage here. It is just the trailer, wait for the full show," said Asim.

"Asim yar! Here I am only acquainted with Majed and Hassan. One is playing cards, the other is displaying the yellow card. So the bar is the place to retire per force," I remarked.

"I do agree. It can womb both of us as twins," observed Asim.

On entering the bar room I found that on the left hand there was a glass partition which give way for me as I reached it, the room was furnished

with expensive Persian rugs and bolsters. "I think that they hold Farshi Mushairas on this well carpeted floor Asmi!" I inquired from my friend.

"They are rich in terms of money, but culturally very poor. Do you expect from them such things. It is for Mojarah. The Mojarah group is expected any moment" Asmi told me.

"I have heard of this group in Quetta when I was there a few days back."

"Whether it is Quetta or Karachi it is the same thing. This group exists in all urban centres of Pakistan but for those who matter."

Asmi has hardly uttered his last words that a well-dressed, well-mannered young man with a welcome and smiling face accompanied by a beautiful young woman with voluptuous shining eyes entered the room from no where. He directly asked Asim about his Sahib.

"We two are here, find out the third one yourself" he said it with a bluntness that I felt awkward but the young man was least pushed and addressing in the same monotone said, "but his car is parked in the parking area."

"What do the others say?" Asmi inquired.

"They say he was here but they did not know where he was" he replied.

“I think he must have got himself drunk to sleep in a room upstairs. Go up and you will find him I am sure”.

He said to the girl, “Zobi, you please stay here I will find out where is the Sahib”

I felt I was staring at the girl. I offered her a drink, which she politely declined. Either she had a striking resemblance with Yasmeen, my sweetheart of bygone days, or I was visualizing her reflection in the full bosom, juicy lips and voluptuous eyes of this damsel. Today's Zobi and yesterday's Yasmeen were peers of the same age. Though I am no peer of the young man but age wise might have been the same. Yasmeen used to be with me and for me, and unlike of him I was not in search of the Sahib. In those old good days Mojarah group was non-existent. Perhaps because the apartments of dancers at Napier Road were thriving with a clientele of the elite. Neelo and Lado the twin sisters were the favourite of the elite. And once all the would be Governors of the truncated country were found en bloc there before taking there gubernatorial responsibilities the next day. No such groups did sprout in those days and nights to the detriment of the professional dancers .

I saw that the girl was feeling uneasy as we were not conversing. To break the silence I inquired from her as to who was the young man. "He is Mr. Jamil a government officer, of which department, I don't know." She had said that much that Mr. Jamil along with his hitherto missing Sahib made a triumphant entry. Asim introduced him as the director of a lucrative organization. The young man with permission of his boss left the room.

Asim offered drinks to both of them, The Sahib accepted it but the lady declined again but said she would after the first round of the dance. It was then clear to me that she will perform the dance in that Mojarah. But strange no musicians were available for the dance. I asked my friend about their absence, who to my utter dismay informed me that Indian Music cassettes have replaced them. Three decades have taken away a lot from this once- culturally rich city of liberties and lights. It means that even we don't have a live Mojarah in this cultural waste land of ours as the author of "The Waste Land" had once lamented and asked : "where is the life that we have lost in living".

Alas! "live" has been snapped from the living in our rich and versatile culture and now we are forced to thrive only on the "ing".

By now people from all other rooms came to the Mojarah room. Zobi began to dance a waltz like a cobra, her dancing skills were amateurish but her youthful charm and shaking body with sexual gesticulations presented more to those hungry wolves who could only think of devouring a flesh as they were used to stomach the hard-earned money of the tax payer. They were showering hundred-rupee notes on her and were in competition with a desire to excel the other not simply to show off their wealthiness but in this way to gain the favour of the dancing girl for company in the rest of the night.

Zobi was attuned to dancing on Indian Film songs of Mojarah but the atmosphere was not lively rather it presented a hollowness of undefineable pathos to me. One would have had the feeling of being in the company of living men with dead souls. The only living creature with a soul was the dancing girl as her moves, gestures, smiles and attractive contours of her healthy body were all in harmony with her living being and rhythm of her life. Her moonlike face reflecting a moonlit flicker

through her long tresses would have taken any man of imagination and taste in the realm of creativity but that company seems to be in a twilight of life as the ethereal lightness can never dawn on them and they will continue to confine themselves in the dark dungeon with this twilight of artificiality and would perish without witnessing the sacred radiating rays of the morning sun of reality. Even in that multitude and the deafening shouts and shrieks, I had a painful feeling of loneliness as I could not share their lust that loomed all over, taking everyone into its grip of iron fists. By choosing to be apart from them I became part of my self and indulged my self in achieving a new liberty even in the midst of that libertine atmosphere.

During her dance she deliberately or otherwise exposed her breasts projecting twins of marbling sins of sensuousness to which the multitude of dead souls gave a rising ovation and showering thousands of dead rupees note over her nudity. I wished to shower fresh petals of rose to cover her "bulging youthful sins" as those were reminding me of my young love like poet Ata Shad who on a similar occasion once said:

جُنتُ کن سرِیا او جَنگ
 اے نوک باہندیں گُناہاں ماپوش
 آما ہکاں گوناپ ء ترانگ داغ دنت

*O, damsel, merci, --
 Conceal with head cloth
 The bulging youthful sins
 Reminiscence of her moonlike
 Glimpse burns my heart.*

The whole atmosphere was heating, The night blossomed presenting a springliness of its own kind. The dancing damsel kept on dancing. One wished it to continue till eternity. To overcome her fatigue Zobi began to gulp several glasses of wine. And particularly when one bottle was emptied she threw it away

خماریں دیدگ و شفا مہرِیں بہا بدن
 شراب ء بے وفائیں شیشگ انت
 کہ پیچے تو ، پیچے من
 پہ ہشک وہناریں آسراں پُرشنت و بہر بہر بنت

*Whores of long tresses
 And intoxicating eyes
 Are but bottles of intoxicants.
 You had a sip and I one
 Thus emptied, thrown away and shattered.
 O, wonder! If an un-plucked bunch of
 Grapes becomes a life long companion*

I was wondering not for that companion but seeing the *La belle* dame emptying the wine bottles and throwing away *merci sans* to shatter like herself with unfulfilled dreams of self-attainment. Was she avenging herself in that fashion? I thought to myself, that before the intoxicating glare in her drowsy eyes flickers out and she stands emptied and shattered in the midst of dead souls, I must leave, but my friend did not agree.

She sat on a sofa and began to drink from her goblet very slowly. Perhaps it indicated the end of Mojarah. The director was gossiping with Hassan in an inaudible whisper. A few gentlemen indulged in erotic conversation with Zobi and offered her company for the rest of the night. She politely refused them saying to each that she had come for someone else and can't part company for the night.

It seemed that the girl was also new to Majed Khan. She also tried to allure her but she said the same to him too. On seeing his boss failing to convince the whore, an officer of his wealthy department came forward and tried to persuade her. She stuck to her guns. The young officer did not relent. In the last he offered her fifty thousand rupees. She was obviously hurt and got offended. She was telling him in a high-pitched tone, "You are right, I am a whore. Every night I sell my body to you, to him, and to anyone who offers a price. To night I am here for the one person for whom I have been asked to come. So I am for him and remain with him for the night and throughout this period be in his company exclusively. Young man, if you want my company for your boss, don't waste fifty thousand. I am a panjhazari (for five thousand). I do sell my body but don't abandon the companion in the middle of the way as your bosses do. Life long companion for me is not ordained by luck. But fidelity and faithfulness to the companion of one night and strictly keeping to that, is the soul of my profession. Body without soul is like a carcass which stinks and keeps all away but the vultures."

She rose with an unbowed head, walked straight to her companion of the night, took his hand in hers and stalked away as if walking in beauty in that cloudless and starry night of the Karachi of yore.

Shahi Mehman Khana*

The last quarterly meeting of the Revenue Heads of Department was held at Sheeshan this time. They had arranged our lodging and boarding in the Shahi Mehman Khana. The protocol officer while receiving us at Air Port apologetically informed that they could not get rooms in the only five star hotel of the town and that was the reason to accommodate all the honourable guests in the Shahi Mehman Khana .

I asked him, "is it the same Shahi Mehman Khana which is possessed by ghosts?." He said, "I know nothing of the sort. However that's the only Mehman Khana in the town." I thought he was being ignorant just for nothing, otherwise when we were under training every Tom Dick and Harry

• *The Royal Guest House*

knew about it. Or as a good officer keeping it to himself.

As we sat in the car, my lady wife could not suppress her wonder and suddenly asked me, "Is it not the same place about which you have been telling us a number of stories?" To console her I said calmly, "I am coming to this place after quarter of a century, I can't say it for sure. In those days there was no Air Port, now they have daily flights from many a destination. The time and country both have gone ahead. Let us go there and find it ourselves."

"Then tell me why do you still call it Sheeshan? Though since centuries its name has been changed." The lady again asked me a baffling question. I tried to justify myself and explained to her my stance as a good husband, "When we were here for training, we were required to know a lot about the past and present of the area, the people, their culture, language, history and geography; their antiquity, myths and superstitions. They said that in the antiquity the country was known as Sheeshan. I came to like this name. It is somewhat mysterious and enchanting. It also resembles our

Shashan of Balochistan. Look! Shal . Sheeshal, Shashan and Sheeshan wonderfully soft sounding and musically rhythmic to the jingle of an anklet. All of them seem to be the links of a continuous chain which have been broken with a quite a large number of missing links otherwise the humanity must not have fallen apart as of today. These days Chechnya which is being devastated by the Russian hordes, was also known as Sheeshan even before the founding of Russia by Vladimir the Great in the beginning of this millennium; which is breathing its farewell sighs in the midst of a ruthless war of savagery that even the founder of the first empire did not indulge. They even offered to the people and chief of Sheeshan to adopt Islam as their religion but backed out when were told sans prohibition they cannot enter in the holy realm of Islam. So my dear madam I want the humanity to keep to its links of yore, even of antiquity so that we may relink our present through the symbolic names of the past. No doubt it is a wish and the dream of hopes, for a happy and healthy human race which may prosper in harmony and live in peace and tranquillity-----”

I had not finished my monologue that our car entered in the Shahi Mehman Khana. I found it

to be the same one which I had seen 25 years ago for the first time. But it has in some way metamorphically changed and on the first sight it gave the impression of being a new place. Lush green lawns with abundant flower beds, thickets and thistles with creeping herbs of profusely flowering species were scattering an aroma of a such dense scented intensity in the surrounding that one felt to be entering a charmed garden of the other world.

Faithfully I informed my loving wife that it was the same place but she did not respond. I looked at her and saw her lips moving without uttering a word. That after a long pause she said, "I was sure it would be the same old place. I, therefore, recited the Ayatul Kursi to keep the jinnies away so that we could sleep without any disturbance by them." "My dear I have already told you that they are good jinnies and not wicked ones. They don't frighten any one." I tried to console her "I am not at all afraid of them but at the same time I don't wish to be disturbed in my sleep." She said confidently. Just to tease her I said jokingly, "When I am with you, no jin can dare to disturb you and your sweet sleep."

We were still laughing over the common joke that the attendant brought tea for us. I inquired from him that who was the caretaker. He said the old Baba Abdullah. "Is that old Baba still alive?" I asked him with disbelief.

"Yes Sir, he is as strong and sound as he was forty years ago," He said. "He has grown in the time of pure bread and butter not with vegetable oil and adulterated food stuffs. Old bones are very enduring," I made a sort of observation and asked the attendant to send the caretaker after the dinner.

When we finished our dinner the old man came, offered his salam in the same old way of reverence and etiquette. I also wished him. "Baba, you are still going strong," I said with affection and he was obviously very pleased and said he, "Sir, the good wishes of kind people like yourself have kept me in this good state of health in the age of one hundred four years." My wife could hardly believe that she exclaimed with surprise: 'one hundred four years!'

Twenty five years ago when I saw him for the first time he was the same slim and stout person. Age does not erode upon him. I felt he must be very bold and daring to have lived all alone in this once haunted place with good health

and stout body for such a long period of time. His longevity in age is becoming eternal even in that atmosphere of frightening years. But as a matter of truth it depends upon the person either to nurture the fears to perpetuate and pervade upon him till his last breath or shun them and throw them away from his mind as and when they attempt to take hold of his psyche. This man seems to have overcome and lives peacefully to the desire of his heart.

I asked him about the ghosts who used to tease and frighten the guests. He informed us that those have disappeared from that very day and that was why this place was so populated and placid.

I said, "well, tonight when the guests have gone to bed and the moon has set we will go and see ourselves. Please also put off all the lights in the lawns and the garden. In the darkness of night I would like to witness with my lady wife those six trees which they call the Sheeshani." "Right Sir" the caretaker said that much and left.

"You say that they are not harmful jins and pious souls. They only put on the lights or remove the blankets or as you say very slowly shake your bed. Then what is the fun of going out. It is a cold night lest we catch cold."

“Cold may catch us but the jins should not”
I joked.

We were about to sleep that the old man knocked the door. We got up and went with him in the darkness to the garden. We had a full round of all the lawns and gardens. As of yore no lights were emitting from the base of those legendary six Sheeshani trees and there top boughs and branches were not forming an umbrella like bower for the ghosts as their eternal abode as the people were believing then, of course superstitiously

The old caretaker was saying with a great sense of gratitude, “Sahib, all this has happened because of your wisdom, virtuous deeds and blessing. Otherwise, as long as I remember in all dark nights the scene of lights coming from the bottom of six trees and making the umbrella on the top was a phenomenon. And lights of the guest rooms were automatically put on.”

“But the jins have never teased you”. “Yes sir, they never disturbed me in my room but I have all over been seeing the phenomenon of the lights with those trees,” the old man stressed to reconfirm the past events of bygone days.

We bade farewell to him and returned to our room. My lady very curiously asked, “what

have you done to make ghosts to run away and leave the place forever?" "I have also some mulla blood running into my vessels. Don't you remember our nani (grand mother) telling the story of one of their grand-grand mothers who used to arrest and bound the jins. What was the name?"

"Bibi Zainab"

"And I am the grand- grand- grand son of the same great lady. Don't you think I must also show some miracles. She used to bind the living jins, I should be able to make the ghosts leave this place".

She was getting more curious and asked me emphatically, " But how did you do that?"

Please listen:

This Shahi Mehman Khana was built here by one of the early Mughal kings where the Dukes, Governors, Princes, Amirs and VIPs used to stay with their paraphernalia. In the summer they came from lowlands to enjoy the cold breeze and moonlit nights and in the winters they came to stay and go for hunting in the surrounding areas and mountains.

Such gatherings of the elite also provided a good forum for social and political intercourse and discussions. Sometime ethnic and tribal feuds and disputes were also deliberated and settled. In a

way it used to be an epicentre of convergence and divergence. Sweet were old affluent days. Nothing is to stay. Time moves and changes.

In the middle of the last century the Britishers established their ascendancy over the plain of the Punjab. Later on they invaded these mountainous regions and brought them under their political sway.

The Shahi Mehman Khana also witnessed this change. The guests and the visitors were of a new class of elite. The great Chief of the Fort was removed by the imperial order and was placed under house arrest in the northern region. But after a few years of skirmishes and negotiations both of them came to terms. The great Amir returned to this fort and capital. But he was not the same ever again. His power and prestige seemed to have been curtailed and lowered. The arrogance, insolence, pomp and show were apparently in the same old fashion.

The Amir had three sons and seven daughters. The eldest son following in the footsteps of the great Mughul intellectual Prince Dara Shikoh took to sufism. The second son was made the Amir. The youngest was appointed the

Commander of the hordes and also the civil administrator of the town.

They were very clannish in their approach. They claimed to be the direct descendants of Amir Timur. They loved their patrimonial traditions and tried their utmost to observe, preserve and keep them. They were conscious to keep their blue blood as pure as possible. But due to political consideration, they established relations through marriages in the sardar family of Jashki tribe. But nevertheless they vehemently refused to give their ladies in marriage to Jashkis. The mother of the grand Amir was a Jashki. Her brother held the important portfolio of Wazir for looking after the affair of the court (Darbar) and fort. Mir Baran had only one son Ramen. He was a Don Quixote of his time. His horsemanship, marksmanship and comradeship were the themes of the poets, and minstrels sang those ballads all over the country.

Amir Samad Khan was the Amir but in name. All the affairs of the so called state were run particularly by his younger brother Ahmad Khan. Mir Baran asked his nephew Amir Samad Khan to accept his son Mir Ramen for his sister lady Rahm Bibi. The Amir flatly refused saying that Timuri code does not permit us to give our females in

marriage to aliens. His uncle cajoled the Amir and said " I am not as such an alien. O Amir I am the real brother of your mother." The Amir was not moved at all and was firm in his refusal.

Ramen and Rahm Bibi were brought up in the same royal surroundings. As small kids they played together with their other siblings. But the two of them developed a deeper relation which culminated in love. Socially there was no bar on their meeting as they grew into adulthood. The other sister have since long been married and have gone away with their husbands to their fiefdoms. Rahm Bibi was unmarried and lived in the premises of the fort in a spacious house with her household slave girls and maids.

When I was the Political Agent in this Agency, chowkidar Abdullah has been telling a lot about the visiting guests of this house, their habits, their bouts, orgies, romance, love hunting expeditions and etc. He narrated once about the visit of Sardar Ahmed Khan along with his handsome maternal cousin Mir Ramen. They reached there in the late evening say about sixty years ago (1939). They were accompanied by a couple of servants. They started to drink just on arrival and also give some to the Baba to enjoy that

in his quarter. They instructed him not to come for the morning tea or breakfast as they would be leaving in the small hour for the hunting. Abdullah tells me that the drink was very heavy, he slept all the night and rose to awaking almost in the noon. When he visited the Mehman Khana, they had already left for their destination. After that neither Ahmad Khan nor Ramen did come back. After five years Ahmed Khan once came. But was not with his party. They told the Baba that Ramen has gone to his country in Jashk. But in fact he was not found anywhere. He remains clueless till date. It looked as if the earth has devoured him or the thin air has absorbed him. Neither any body gave a clue nor they talked about him. He was dead long ago. His father did not also talk about his missing son in the public.

But nothing remains concealed for ever. There are as many stories as are there tongues. They say that Ahmed Khan was in the habit of nocturnal walks to oversee and find for himself as to what others do. Once he was passing near to the house of his sister Rahm Bibi. It was a moonlit night of midsummer. He saw his sister carrying a tray to her terraced bed in the open. It was not only odd but curious as well to him. He hid himself to find out

the reality. After a long while he saw his cousin Ramen getting down from the terraced bed and walking towards the rare gate. He kept it to himself and did not even inform his brother, the Amir.

“Where was the Timuri blood? Didn’t it boil to avenge the ancestral honour”

“Haven’t you heard Allama Sahib who had wonderfully exposed this way of behaviour on the part of vanquished royalty?”

Hameeyat nam hai jiska gayee Timur kay ghar se

The sense of honour has totally disappeared from the House of Timur.

“Their blood surges but in different ways. These Chiefs, Princes, Nawabs, Sardars and Members of Elite all over avenge their honour but in their own way. They don’t declare their Siyahsars (woman folk) as siyahkar (having illicit relations). They die of snake bite, disappear never to return, are taken away by jins or are married to far away regions.”

“O.K they even let the other part to go scot-free”

“ Please listen! My dear lady, you will come to know what happened to them.”

People say that sixty years ago, on that fateful night when Ahmed Khan along with Ramen visited the Shahi Mehman Khana, he put sleeping powder in Ramen's drink and killed him when he was in a deep slumber. Then they cut his body into pieces and buried it under those trees. Everyone was knowing it but all posed ignorant. Till this day everyone has sewed his lips. His father married again and had a number of sons and daughters.

"What happened to the Bibi." A lady must be more curious about the fair part.

"They say she was also married into the Shashani clan to an old sardar to a far away region."

"I feel the episode must be true."

"I am not sure as to whether they had killed Ramen and buried him into pieces in the garden or not but the disappearance of the young Jashki Prince is a fact of history."

One thing I had seen twice with my eyes, the light emitting from the bottom of those trees and formation of an umbrella of that light on the summit. Then I was convinced that human bones must have been buried beneath in the ground.

It was then that I convened the meeting of the elders of that area and explained to them the

cause of this phenomenon of rising and converging lights during the dark nights .

I told them that some dead bodies must have been buried underneath there and there remained only their bones. I was not knowing that either those were Muslim bones or Hindu bones. In case they were Muslims they were neither given the ablution bath nor were offered Janaza prayers. If we dig them out wash them and offer the prayers and bury them in a grave, they will then never come to disturb the guests in the Shahi Mehman Khana. In case they were Hindus they should be ritually put to fire and they would also not do the mischief. They ruled out of their being Hindus. So in consultation with them and with their consensus, the bones were dug out, were bathed, offered prayers and buried in a grave.

Madam this how I helped them and the jins with torches disappeared.
"It means those were the remains of Ramen," she said with certainty.
"God knows better !" I replied.



"Tears of Resurrection" is a remarkable exercise in self expression through English by a modern Baluch Intellectual. Born (1942) in Panjgur, the very heart of Baluchistan, young Hakim had assimilated the very essence of the ancestral value systems of the Baluch society, which later on he discovered fully represented in the Classical Baluchi Poetry. Therefore, he had always wished that the Classical Baluchi Poetry and the folklores should be written and interpreted in its true socio-cultural setting. Ever since Langworth James published (1907) the text/translation of poems from Classical Baluchi Poetry no other comparable work in English has appeared on the subject. It is now for the first time that an elaborate literary evaluation and exposition in English of selected pieces from Classical Baluchi Poetry is being offered to the readers by a qualified modern Baluch writer himself. The author's analysis and observations, expression and exposition under all the themes are as much fresh in contents as they are thought provoking. With all its qualities and limitations "Tears of Resurrection" is a valuable contribution to English literature in Pakistan in general and Baluchistan in particular.

Dr. N.A. Baluch

ISBN 969-8557-00-8