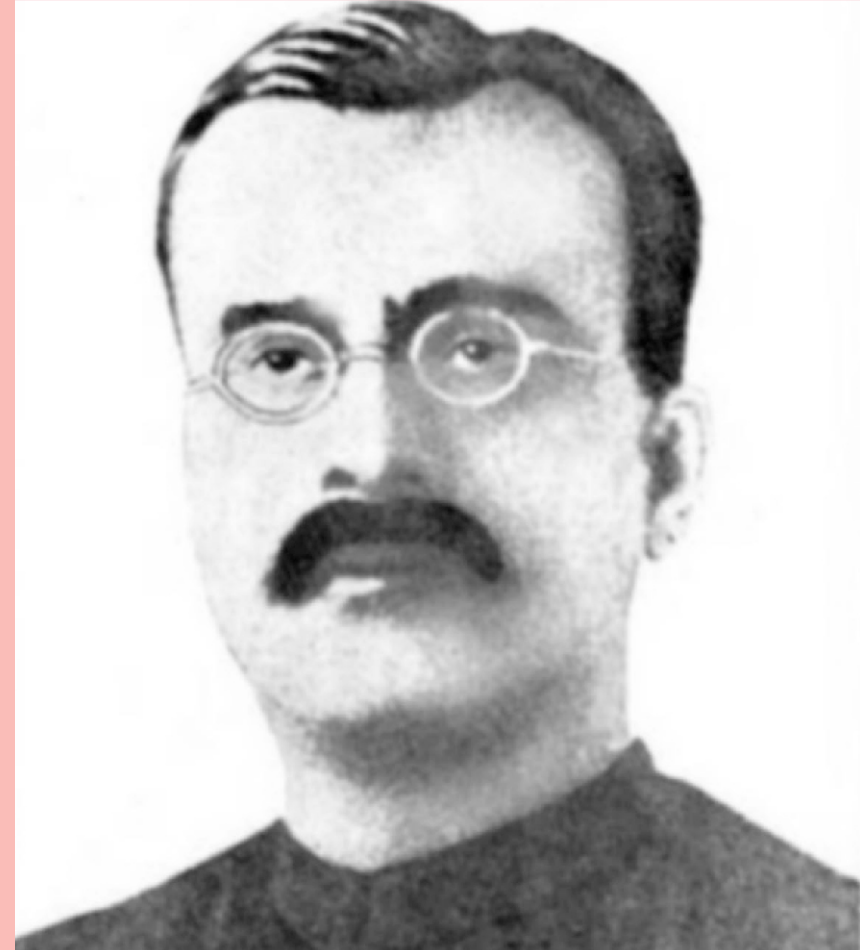


Makers of Indian Literature

Chakbast

Saraswati Saran Kaif



Chakbast (1882–1926) was an Urdu poet. He was born in a Kashmiri Pandit family and settled in North India in the 15th century A.D. After the death of his father in 1887, the family moved to Lucknow. Chakbast was educated in Lucknow, and he became a successful lawyer. Chakbast made a thorough study of Urdu poetry. He defended Daya Shankar Kaul Nasim when it was suggested that he was not the author of the epic *Gul Bakawali*. He was actively involved in social and political affairs, and was a strong proponent of Home Rule and actively participated in the Home Rule Movement.

Chakbast was primarily a poet but his prose is also considered at par with his poetry. Chakbast's premature death was a great loss for Urdu but whatever he left is exemplary and is considered among the gems of Urdu literature. He was strongly influenced by Ghalib, Mir Anis and Aatish. He began his poetic career with a *nazm* in 1894, and ended, in 1925, with a *nazm* again. His famous poems are: *Khak-e-Hind*, *Ramayan ka ek scene* musaddas, *Nala-e-Dard*, and *Nala-e-Yaas*. He also wrote a masnavi *Gulzar-e-Naseem*, and a play *Kamla*. *Kulliyate-Chakbast* and *Maqalaat-e-Chakbast* is the complete collection of Chakbast's works in poetry and prose

Saraswati Saran Kaif (1922-2007) was born at Mainpuri township in Etah district of Uttar Pradesh. Kaif was a poet par excellence of Urdu and Persian. He also had knowledge of Sanskrit, Punjabi, Arabic and French. His works include *Lazrat-e-Karb*, *Khumar-e-zeeest* both anthologies and *Shaoor Lashaoor*. He had published more than 31 books on various subjects in Urdu, English and Hindi.

Line drawing: Syed Nasim Zaidi



SAHITYA
AKADEMI



₹ 50/-

Chakbast

Saraswati Saran Kaif



Chakbast

Makers of Indian Literature

Chakbast

Saraswati Saran Kaif

The sculpture reproduced on the endpaper depicts a scene where three soothsayers are interpreting to King Suddhodhana the dream of Queen Maya, mother of Lord Buddha. Below them is seated a scribe recording the interpretation. This is perhaps the earliest available pictorial record of the art of writing in India.

From: Nagarjunakonda, 2nd century A.D.

Courtesy: National Museum, New Delhi



Sahitya Akademi

Chakbast: A monograph in English by Saraswati Saran Kaif on Chakbast, a noted Urdu poet, Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi: 2017, ₹ 50.

5

SAHITYA AKADEMI

Head Office

Rabindra Bhavan, 35, Ferozeshah Road, New Delhi 110 001

Website: <http://www.sahitya-akademi.gov.in>

E-mail: sales@sahitya-akademi.gov.in

Sales Office

'Swati', Mandir Marg, New Delhi 110 001

Regional Offices

172, Mumbai Marathi Grantha Sangrahalaya Marg, Dadar,
Mumbai 400 014

Central College Campus, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Veedhi,
Bengaluru 560 001

4, D.L. Khan Road, Kolkata 700 025

Chennai Office

Main Guna Building Complex (second floor), 443(304),
Anna Salai, Teynampet, Chennai 600 018

© Sahitya Akademi

First Published: 1986

Reprint: 2017

ISBN 978-81-260-5????

₹ 50

Printed by Wellwish Printers, Delhi.

Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	7
Life	13
Views	31
Literary Creation	50
Conclusion	88
Roman Transliterations from Urdu	90
<i>Bibliography</i>	113

Introduction

Urdu Culture

Braj Narain Chakbast is generally known as a poet of patriotism. This is the truth but not the whole truth. The tradition of patriotism is fairly old in Urdu literature and limiting the poetry of Chakbast to patriotism is tantamount to throwing it in the archives of literature. His poetry contains many elements besides patriotism. Moreover, he is one of those few poets whose personality is directly reflected in their poetry. Hence for understanding Chakbast a four-fold background knowledge is essential—the literary tradition of Urdu, the Lucknow culture, characteristics of Kashmiri Brahmins and the political and social milieu of the poet.

Every language, besides presenting a literary tradition, also reflects a certain culture. In the case of Urdu the cultural aspect is more prominent than even its literary aspect. The identity of Urdu consists in blending Iranian ebullience with Indian tolerance and acceptance. It is a strange blend but it has been made to perfection under the influence of Sufi saints and liberal-minded medieval monarchs who had great faith in sufism. It is also a fact that appreciation of this particular amalgamation of the values of self-sacrifice and softness required a higher plane of consciousness. That is why for centuries the Urdu tradition remained limited to the educated people and in this course developed such finesse as could be maintained only by a keen mind and acute aesthetic sensitivity. Even during the last two centuries when this literary tradition permeated to the lower strata of society its finesse was maintained. Not only in the matter of prosody, imageries and figures of speech high standards

were set up and strictly adhered to but even the flow of words and ring of sound were meticulously attended to.

It can be asserted with confidence, as Maulana Shibli has done, that the Iranian poetic tradition adopted a softer and more attractive form in Urdu. Actually the Persian poets of India had already expressed the mystic and self-sacrificing tradition of Iran in more touching and softer tones and also with greater craftsmanship. Urdu poetry in its earlier stages besides having the main source of Persian, also borrowed the softer tones of the mystic-erotic poetry of Braj Bhasha.

It is natural for a tradition of finesse to be developed in selected centres rather than in a wider field and in a diffused manner. Capital cities like Delhi, Golkunda, Bijapur, Aurangabad, Lucknow, Patna, Hyderabad and Murshidabad had concentrations of poets and linguists who discussed every point threadbare and competed with one another in excellence. Hence high standards of finesse kept developing.

Secular Approach

The other notable aspect of Urdu culture was heterodoxy. Although the overwhelming majority of its promoters has been Muslims, its anti-ritualistic mystic approach, bordering on secularism, has been attracting non-Muslims from the very beginning. In fact even the Indian-Persian era of poetry saw hundreds of poets and scores of prosodists, grammarians and prose writers who were non-Muslims. This was, perhaps, owing to the fact that Sufi shrines were never closed on Hindus and Sufis directly influenced the Persian and Urdu poetic traditions. Thus Urdu, from the very beginning, has been a unifying force although it operated only in higher and educated classes. And we can also say confidently that as a vehicle of secular approach to life Urdu has been scoring over every other Indian language. If one looks at the Urdu spoken in the households of middle and lower middle classes among the Muslims in the cities and towns of North India one wonders at the plethora of purely Indian words, idioms and other modes of expression. Only a few Islamic

words like *Allah, Rasool, Ali, Jannat, Dozakh*, etc., scattered here and there, betray that it is a conversation among Muslims. This spoken form of Urdu is more Indian in content than the Urdu used on formal occasions by even non-Muslims.

But the Urdu spoken in the households of middle and lower middle classes of Muslims and certain other communities of North India maintains at least 80 per cent of the finesse that one finds in standard prose writings in the matter of smooth and appropriate diction with a lot of chaste idioms and proverbs. It shows that in the last two or three centuries Urdu has developed not only as an effective medium of expressing emotions in their various aspects and almost all levels of sharpness as well as highly philosophic reasoning, but also as a distinct culture. It means that if a man uses a tolerable standard of Urdu in his everyday dealings one can expect a high standard of grace and courtesy in his behaviour. For various reasons Urdu culture seems to be somewhat diminishing after the first half of this century but it is still very much in evidence and one can find a lot of persons in North India who have not had any formal education in Urdu and still insist on using chaste Urdu in their social communication because they wish to show good taste in their behaviour.

Lucknow Culture

Needless to say seats of government are the greatest centres of the contemporary culture in as much as these attract the cream of population. Urdu culture too developed mostly at Delhi and Lucknow and in a little lesser degree in other state capitals like Hyderabad, Mysore, Arcot, Bhopal, Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Lahore, Patna, Murshidabad and several other places. Even among these places Lucknow developed this culture to a greater degree than other centres for obvious historical reasons.

The Lucknow culture was initiated mostly by the Delhi litterateurs who migrated to Lucknow in search for peace and sustained livelihood. It is true that by the time Lucknow developed as a centre of culture, the kingdom of Avadh had become as much subservient to the East India Company as the Delhi

kingdom had. But the Delhi kingdom was also harassed by the Jat and Maratha raiders and hence was financially much weaker than the Avadh kingdom. Moreover, the gentry of Delhi had nightmarish memories of the devastating invasions of Nadir Shah and Durrani. Hence the semblance of peace, coupled with a feeling of helplessness which came in the wake of the East India Company rule in the 19th century, showed somewhat divergent results in Delhi and Lucknow.

A good part of the Delhi gentry was attracted more to religion and mysticism than pursuits of pleasure. But in Lucknow pursuits of pleasure became the first priority. Courtesans became very popular there and their reception rooms became the most effective schools where not only the gentlefolk but also the middle class people came to develop higher tastes in aesthetics poetry and music. Even the persons having had acquired fame for their scholasticism saw nothing amiss in visiting the reception rooms of courtesans of higher status.

It was not only in abstract things like music and poetry that Lucknow provided scope for development. In other departments of life too like the culinary art, perfumery, cloth-making, floral decoration, embroidery and pottery wonderful exquisiteness was shown. Actually at times tastes were developed to absurd proportions. Several noblemen even some middle class persons, sprinkled rose water in their courtyards in summer evenings to cool off the heat of the day And we are told of a chef who, when his sick employer was advised by a *hakeem* to eat only *khichri*, prepared 21 types of *khichri* and 14 sorts of chutney for a single lunch.

In social dealings very high standards of courtesy were set up. Not only in social gatherings but within the households too everyone showed extreme respect to elders, even to the person only slightly older than oneself. In this regard too sometimes things were done to an absurd proportion For a few years in the early 19th century an institution of *banke** came into being. Some young persons of noble birth developed individual

* Like dandies of the 19th century France.

conspicuous styles of dress and behaviour and did not tolerate the slightest insult, real or imaginary. Sometimes in their extreme arrogance they fought and sometimes killed each other. However, if the fight ended only in injuries to the fighters they accompanied each other to their respective houses as a matter of courtesy, shuttling between the two houses for hours.

Joviality and Amity

Two very distinct features of the Lucknow culture were joviality and communal amity. These features are found in every *darbar* town but nowhere so conspicuously as in Lucknow. Wit, satire and puns were used on every conceivable occasion, particularly by young men. The way joviality was adjusted to the highest standards of courtesy was an art practised by almost every educated person of Lucknow. Even invectives were expressed in a way compelling the victim too to smile. It is no wonder that the first literary periodical in Urdu totally devoted to humour—perhaps the first such periodical in any language of India—was published in Lucknow under the title of *Avadh Punch*.

So far as religious tolerance is concerned Lucknow can claim the first position in the country even now. During the hey-day of the Lucknow culture this tolerance was at its zenith. The Hindus stuck fast to their religious beliefs and practices and so did the Muslims but no one even indirectly criticised anything in each other's beliefs—at least on the face of the believers. Inter-communal family relations were developed between families and were continued for generations. In such cases both families participated in all ceremonies in each other's household like marriage, child-birth, death, etc. although the Hindus stuck to their practice of not consuming the water or cooked food touched by any Muslim, even the fastest friend. A Lala would play chess with a Mirza at the latter's house without a sip of water for hours; the Mirza did not take offence, the only thing he did was not to drink water before the Lala. At marriages and other ceremonies in the households of Muslim gentlefolk special kitchens run by Brahmin cooks were arranged for the Hindu

friends. There were at least two occasions when religious beliefs were shelved—at least partly—in order to maintain friendly relations. At Muharram several Hindus took out *tazias* and on Holi some Muslim young men enthusiastically participated in the sprinkling of coloured water.

This was the double-distilled culture that permeated the whole personality of Braj Narain Chakbast.

Life

Kashmiri Brahmins

Kashmiri Brahmins have played an important role in the social life of Uttar Pradesh. In their place of origin they, even being in almost a negligible minority, had been occupying almost all administrative and other important positions in the past. Sometime ago a considerable number of Kashmiri Brahmins migrated to the plains, particularly to Uttar Pradesh. In this region they almost at once ascended to the top rung of society, particularly on the judicial side. Several families of Kashmiri Brahmins domiciled in U.P., like the Nehru's, Sapru's, Katju's, Gurtu's, Kunzrus', Mulla's, Dar's, etc., have made important contributions to the regional and national life.

They are mentally alert, extroverted and fond of good life. These qualities helped them in being free with the Muslims and British rulers. All Kashmiris domiciled in U.P. have made it their home. Nevertheless they have maintained their cultural identity and their caste organisations were set up quite early and are still effective pointers to their private lives. As a community they are educated and sufficiently well-off people (I have not seen any poor or uneducated domiciled Kashmiri Brahmin), although they have not dominated trade and industry like the Marwaris and Gujaratis. They like to adopt intellectual professions like law, medicine and education.

Braj Narain Chakbast had all these elements in his personality. He was born on January 19, 1882 at Faizabad. His father, Pandit Udit Narain Chakbast, was a deputy collector, almost the highest post which any Indian could expect. Even otherwise his family was well-off and had considerable property but, according to Dr.

Afzal Ahmad, a biographer of Chakbast, Pandit Udit Narain sold off everything in his life time. There is no account of why the property was sold off; we can only surmise that it was done owing to reckless pursuits of pleasure. Wine and women were the weaknesses of the gentry of those times—particularly those of Lucknow. All biographers of Chakbast, as well as the daughter of the poet, Mrs. Maharaj Kumari Kak*, say that Braj Narain never drank liquor and never visited a courtesan. Such total abstinence seems all the more unusual when we see that he was very intimate with the pleasure-loving gentry of Lucknow as well as with the European officials for whom drinks were a part of culture. A psychological explanation can be found in that the poet as well as his elder brother had to face great financial difficulties at the death of his father and had a natural aversion to the things which caused the family's misfortune.

Pandit Udit Narain too was a poet. Actually every educated person composed a few verses in those days. Pandit Udit Narain had a *takhallus*—"Yaqeen"—and was a disciple of Ratan Nath Bakshi "Dariya" Lakhnavi. Kali Das Gupta "Riza", a compiler of the works of Chakbast, has found only 22 verses of "Yaqeen" besides the one mentioned by Dr. Afzal Ahmad. It shows that Pandit Udit Narain "Yaqeen" did not take up poetry seriously.

Birth and Childhood

At the time of the birth of Braj Narain his father was posted at Patna but Braj Narain was born at Faizabad at the residence of his mother's, brother, Pandit Lalta Parshad, in the Rath Haveli locality of Faizabad. Lalta Prashad must have been the elder brother of Braj Narain's mother as he bore the responsibilities of his sister in a paternal manner. In 1887 Pandit Udit Narain died. It is assumed that he must have been about 44 at the

* All references to Mrs. Maharaj Kumari Kak are based on an interview the author had with her on January 23, 1983. Her name is Maharaj Kumari, not Maharaj Dulari as given in the books of Afzal Ahmad and "Riza".

lime of his death. After 1887 Pandit Lalta Parshad, who was in some service at Lucknow at that time, provided for his sister and her two sons till the latter were of age.

The childhood of Braj Narain passed in rather indigent circumstances. His uncle had a limited income and had to provide for two families. Hence the schooling of Braj Narain started late. In 1890 a *moulvi* was engaged to teach the child Urdu and Persian. In 1895 he was admitted to the Kazimeen Middle School from where he passed the Middle Examination in 1897.

In 1898 Braj Narain was admitted to the Jubilee High School because his elder brother, Maharaj Narain, got a service in the municipality in 1897 and the financial condition of the joint household got better. It is assumed that after 1897 or thereabout the two brothers lived independently of their uncle. All biographers speak of a joint household of the two brothers up to the last but no mention of Lalta Parshad is found after Maharaj Narain entered service.

Chakbast passed the Matriculation Examination in 1900 and was admitted to the Canning College from where he passed F.A. in 1902. There was one year's break in his education owing to a prolonged illness. He was admitted to the Canning College again in 1903 and passed B.A. in 1905 and LL.B. in 1907. In the same year he started legal practice as a junior to a renowned lawyer of that time, Shahanshah Husain Rizvi.

So far as the poetic talent of Braj Narain Chakbast is concerned there is no difference of opinion. We shall discuss at the proper place how exquisite his poetry is from different viewpoints. What is difficult to decide is how much interest he had in poetry. The quantity and nature of his compositions indicate that on the whole he took up this vocation rather casually. But we shall discuss even this point later.

He started composing poems from the age of 12 and during his student days wrote articles on Hali, Iqbal, Dagh and several other literary personalities, and also wrote in those days a long poem against Lord Curzon, Viceroy of India. These writings have acquired a permanent place in the history of Urdu literature. He brought out a new edition of *Masnavi Gulzar-e-Naseem*, the

famous work of Daya Shankar “Naseem” with a detailed introduction challenging many a rumour about the work and its author. This introduction aroused in its wake a controversy between Chakbast and a renowned author and journalist of that time, Maulana Abdul Haleem “Sharar”.

Early Years

It is said that Chakbast began composing verses from the age of nine. But there is no written record of these verses. However, in 1894 he recited his first poem in a session of the Social Conference of Kashmiri Pandits. The poem, entitled “Hubb-e-Qaumi”, contains 12 verses. Most probably Chakbast’s tutor or some other elderly person had revised the poem to remove defects of prosody or idiom but the diction contains internal evidence to prove that the poem was written by Chakbast himself for it is just versification but the lack of defects of diction in it amply speak of the internal rhythm Chakbast had from the very beginning.

In 1898 Chakbast wrote two poems in the *musaddas* (six-some) form which had been given currency by the *marsia* composers and the poets of the new generation in the last quarter of the 19th century. The first one contained nine stanzas. It was a description of the morning scene in the style of “Anees”, the top *marsia* composer. The success of this poem encouraged him to write a longer poem, containing 52 stanzas, for the current session of the Social Conference of Kashmiri Pandits. It could not be recited in that session. Later, in 1905, it was recited in the session of the same conference with an addition of nine stanzas.

Chakbast was fortunate to be associated with Pandit Bishun Narain Dar, a prominent lawyer, Congress leader and litterateur, from his early years. It was, perhaps, on this account that the late schooling did not result in waywardness in the case of Chakbast; rather it provided him with correct channels for developing a high taste for Urdu and Persian poetry. Dar also recommended

the name of the talented boy to his own *ustad* (literary guide), Marhamat-ud-Daula “Hakeem”, for guidance in poetry. This must have been just after Chakbast recited his first poem, for even with ample natural talent at least three years of intense study and association of litterateurs of high calibre are required to enable one to write poems like the above-mentioned ones. Hakeem was a son of the renowned poet Aseer. Thus Chakbast got the best technical guidance in poetry. Hakeem died in 1903 but gave the young disciple’s charge to his younger brother, Afzal-ud-Daula “Afzal”. In 1899 Chakbast wrote a poem in condemnation of liquor but sent it only in 1903 to his new preceptor, Afzal, who sent it back to Chakbast with the remark that the poem needed no correction or improvement. In 1900 another short poem, describing the rainy season, was written by Chakbast—perhaps to see if he could write poems in the new, naturalistic style developed by Hali and Azad.

By this time Chakbast was fully confident of himself and in 1901 he wrote an elegy at the death of Mahadev Govind Ranade, a great social reformer and the first Indian judge of High Court. This is also in the *musaddas* form and is the first elegaic poem written by Chakbast.

It seems that in 1902-03, which was a period of break in his education, Chakbast accentuated his literary and social activities. In 1903 he founded the Kashmiri Youngmen Association and the Bahar Library and also wrote another long poem for the session of the Social Conference of Kashmiri Pandits. In 1904 he wrote two long poems of quite opposite nature. One was a shower of invectives on Lord Curzon, Viceroy of India, who had made some derogatory remarks about the culture of India in his convocation address at Calcutta University. This poem was written for *Avadh Punch* at the request of its editor, Sajjad Husain. The other poem was an elegy at the death of the poet’s friend and classmate, Partap Kishan Gurtu, but it was published nine years later in *Al-asr* magazine. In 1903 and 1904 he also wrote some articles on litterateurs like Naseem, Sarshar, Tribhuvan Nath “Hijr” and an article against caste restrictions.

Literary Controversy

The year 1905 was a stormy year in the life of Chakbast. Although he passed B.A. and joined L.L.B. in this year he had many distractions. His first marriage with the daughter of Prithvi Nath Nago, a government employee, took place in this year. He wrote only two short poems in this year but these are among his best poems. He also wrote articles on the poet Dagh and an old Kashmiri poet of Persian, Lachhi Ram "Saroor". But the real distraction was the controversy with "Sharar". Chakbast brought out a new edition of Daya Shankar "Naseem's" *Masnavi Guhar-e-Naseem* with a long preface which eulogised "Naseem" rather too much as is natural for a man of 23. "Sharar" condemned Naseem and his *Masnavi* in equally forceful terms. This raised a controversy which raged throughout the year 1905 involving many critics outside Lucknow. Some opponents of Chakbast treated the matter with rather a communal bias but the Lucknow Muslims by and large stood by him—*Avadh Punch* and its editor, Sajjad Husain, started a campaign of derision against "Sharar" and Chakbast had to write anonymously a lot for this campaign—and Maulana Hasrat Mauhani took a perfectly balanced attitude in this matter. Early in 1906 "Sharar", who was not at all a communal-minded man, admitted that his stand was wrong. Thus the matter ended with all-round goodwill.

Ample credit should be given to the Urdu literary world of those days to have ended the controversy with nothing but thorough clarification of many points in literary appreciation : any immaturity of thought might have left a trail of communal hatred in the wake of this controversy. In this controversy "Sharar" and Chakbast wrote two articles each; Sajjad Husain wrote four notes ; Ahmad Ali "Shauq", Naqqad Lakhnavi, Zamin Kanturi, an anonymous writer under the pseudo name of Hawakhah-e-Naseem and the editor of *Qulqul* magazine supported Chakbast. Hafiz Jalil Hasan "Jalal", one "Naqqad" writing in *Deccan Review*, Mazhar-ul-Haq of Delhi and Hakeem Barham took up cudgels against Chakbast. Particularly notable is the attitude of "Shauq", a very prominent *masnavi* writer, whose *masnavis*

Chakbast had earlier criticised but who did not let this fact fog his judgement.

In 1906 Chakbast continued with his penmanship and wrote "*Ramayan ka ek Scene*", his very famous poem, besides a review of "Bharat Darpan", a *musaddas* of Braj Mohan Dattatreya "Kaifi". In this year he also acted feverishly to end an annual fair of Kashmiri Pandits, called the Yajna of Rishi Pir. The fair was held in the memory of a Kashmir saint whom the Hindu called Rishi and the Muslims Pir. Since some objectionable practices had developed in the fair, Chakbast—educated in an atmosphere of Victorian morality—pleaded with the members of his caste to end the fair and succeeded in his efforts.

But in this year he also met with a tragedy. His wife gave birth to a male child and died thereafter. The child too survived only for a few days.

Turning Point

In 1907 Chakbast passed the examination of LL.B. This year proved to be a turning point in his life, In this year he was married to Khima Devi, daughter of Pandit Suraj Nath Agha, government pleader. His literary activities in this year were nil. Only one article on Dadabhai Nauroji was published in January, 1907. Obviously it must have been written in the previous year. We can presume that the death of his first wife must have given him a rude shock and he must have realised the need for contributing to the family earnings.

Up to this time his elder brother was the sole supporter and the way Chakbast immersed himself in literary activities is an ample proof that his brother and sister-in-law treated him like their own son. These relations remained intimate up to the last. Mrs. Maharaj Kumari Kak, daughter of Chakbast, says that her father gave his earnings not to his wife but to his sister-in-law. In those days respectable households insisted on joint families comprising the families not only of brothers but of cousins too if they lived in the same city or town. There was a joint kitchen and the eldest lady of the house looked after the needs of every

member of the family. Her orders were obeyed by everyone and she was the recipient of every bit of money which different earners of the joint family wanted to contribute towards the household expenditure.

Hence it would be absurd to suggest that any sort of family friction resulted in Chakbast paying more attention to earning money. Maybe his sister-in-law asked him as a loving, elderly lady to act in a more responsible manner, or it might have been his mother. But most probably Chakbast himself realised this need; and for two or three years we do not find Chakbast taking any prominent part in literary or social activities. During the training period, i.e. the later half of 1907, he must have read nothing but law books and written nothing but complaints, petitions and written statements for civil suits under the guidance of Shahanshah Husain Rizvi.

In 1908 too the situation remained almost the same. Four couplets are all that can be said to be the product of this year (these might have been written in 1909). Two are considered to be a part of a *ghazal* for a *mushaira* held on May 7, 1908. It is not certain whether Chakbast himself participated in this *mushaira*. The other two couplets are independent creations expressing the frustration every lawyer feels at the start of the practice.

Legal Practice

Chakbast started practice in early 1908 as a junior to his trainer, Shahanshah Husain Rizvi. In the first few months he prepared cases in the office of his senior; later he established his office in his house in Kashmiri Muhalla. Obviously he had almost no visitor to his office for some time. The following quatrain shows how Chakbast laughed at his plight :

*The chair dwindles (as its legs are uneven)
The table looks as if picked up from refuse
Neither a clerk nor a client is ever seen
Oh how peaceful and solitary my office is !**

* Original in Roman Script at end of text.

In 1909 the efforts of Chakbast seem to be concentrated on promoting his legal practice. Only one *ghazal* has been found to be the product of this period. The *ghazal* is generally known to have comprised only 10 couplets but Kali Das Gupta "Riza" has discovered 17 more couplets. It seems that in a particularly creative mood he sat down and wrote 27 couplets for a *mushaira* but selected only 10 to recite at the *mushaira*. Strangely enough this *ghazal*, which can be said to be almost his first *ghazal*, contains the most famous couplet of Chakbast, besides a few other oft-quoted ones. Here it is :

*What is life ? only an arrangement of nature's elements,
What is death ? disintegration of these components.*

It seems that in 1910 the dark period of his legal practice was over, for in this year he wrote, or tried to write, 14 *ghazals*. He never composed *ghazals* unless he was invited to recite in a *mushaira*. This means that he entered a phase in his practice in which a lawyer is known sufficiently in courts and has to extend his out-of-court activities to be better known to the public for professional reasons. Later, when he compiled his collection of poetry he made a strict selection. We find two couplets each of six *ghazals*, three couplets in another *ghazal* and four couplets in four *ghazals*. He wrote an article on Bishun Narain Dar with whom he had been associated from his boyhood days. He also wrote for a magazine the account of a *mushaira* held at the residence of Pandit Lalta Parshad. Probably this Lalta Parshad was the maternal uncle of Chakbast and the latter must have collected the poems recited therein.

In 1911 his literary activities saw their peak period. He composed 15 *ghazals* and two long poems in this year. One poem was an elegy on the death of a young relative and the other was recited at a public meeting at which Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and other leaders made appeals for donations for the Banaras Hindu University. This poem was published in a pamphlet form by Rai Bihadur Parag Narain Bhargava, proprietor of the Nawal Kishore Press, who donated the income therefrom for

the Banaras Hindu University. Next year Chakbast wrote only one *ghazal* but three long poems—one was an elegy at the death of Ganga Parshad Varma, a great public figure, the second a very long poem for a conference of Kashmiri youth and the third a short poem on a Hindu theme, “cow”. Two other poems on Hindu themes—Krishna and the Vedas were most probably written sometime around 1912. It seems at this time the poet felt the need to introduce the Hindu culture in Urdu poetry. Being an admirer of Bishun Narain Dar, who was a Congress leader, Chakbast had been a nationalist from very early in his life but his full association with the national movement took place only after 1913.

Period of Success

By 1914 Chakbast had acquired sufficient success in the legal profession. He shifted his office from his house and brought it in a building facing the Christian College. Next year he changed his residence too and the joint family shifted to a bigger house in a more sophisticated locality, Golaganj. In 1914 Dr. Annie Besant started the Home Rule movement (though its formal announcement was made a year later). Chakbast became its active supporter. He also appeared in the front rank of nationalists in this year. He wrote no *ghazal* in this year but wrote two poems—one of them very long—in the true nationalistic spirit of those times. The long poem was on the sad plight of the persons of Indian origin living in South Africa. This is, perhaps, the most popular poem of Chakbast and was published as a pamphlet and also appeared in *Zamana*, a prominent Urdu magazine. The other poem was a farewell to the Indian soldiers going abroad to participate in World War I. It must be remembered that all nationalists, including Mahatma Gandhi, supported the war efforts at that time in the hope that the British government would appreciate the gesture of Indians and would grant them self-rule.

Next year Chakbast wrote four *ghazals* and two elegies—one at the death of Gopal Krishna Gokhale and the

other at the death of a young relation. It seemed that in this year there was very little of political and social activities and, secondly, as Chakbast had changed his residence we can presume he paid more attention to his legal profession.

In 1916 he again emerged as a big nationalist poet. Two poems supporting the demand for Home Rule, two patriotic poems for children, three elegies—two on the death of Bishun Narain Dar and one on that of Iqbal Narain Masladan— were written by him besides *ghazals* for two *mushairas*. He also visited Dehradun in this year in connection with a court case and wrote a poem in the *Masnavi* form in praise of that town. In this year he withdrew from the Kashmiri Young-men Association. Chakbast had been actively associated with this body for nearly 12 long years but he dissociated himself from it owing to internal dissensions. After the withdrawal of Chakbast the association broke up. In this year the first widow remarriage was performed among Kashmiri Brahmins. Naturally, as a man of enlightened views Chakbast lauded the people who had shown initiative in this regard and wrote a poem in support of this social reform. There was a hue and cry from the orthodox members of the community and a poet wrote a rejoinder to Chakbast’s poem, stanza by stanza.

The year 1917 again saw Chakbast in his writing mood. He composed *ghazals* for six *mushairas* and also five poems. Perhaps his famous poem on the Imambara of Asifuddaula was created in this year, Dr. Annie Besant was put in detention in this year and Chakbast wrote a hard-hitting poem on this. He wrote another forceful poem on the subject of Home Rule. He also wrote two poems by way of apology for not attending certain functions. Another didactic poem for girls of his community was also composed in this year.

By this time Chakbast had reached the top of his legal career. In 1918 he again changed residence and shifted to another house in the same locality. Known as *Marble House*, it was owned by Mirza Samiullah Beg, a legal luminary of that time. Chakbast lived here up to the last. This house was adjacent to that of Pandit Jagat Narain Mulla, father of Anand Narain Mulla. In the

month of October this year he started his Urdu monthly magazine, *Subh-e-Ummed*. This magazine was mainly political but it contained a literary section too. Chakbast also gave in every issue selected couplets of old masters such as Ghalib and Atish. Chakbast was its editor and Pandit Kishan Parshad Kaul its manager. The magazine continued publication at least for four years. It is a good record of the political and social views of Chakbast. Considering those times it was a perfect example of dauntless journalism. It is said Pandit Jagat Narain Mulla, whom Chakbast considered his elder, once advised him not to indulge in fiery writings but Chakbast politely but firmly refused to heed the warning.

Death

Chakbast died on February 12, 1926, of a paralytic stroke. He had gone to Rai Bareli in connection with a case. While on his way back to Lucknow, at the station he along with the pleader of the opposite party, Mr. Mohammed Ayyub, and some other persons connected with the case who were also with him ordered for tea. But he was fated not to have it for as soon as he lifted the cup he suffered a stroke. He was immediately brought to the waiting room and a doctor was sent for who diagnosed paralysis of the right side. A telephonic message was sent to his elder brother, Maharaj Narain, who reached the railway station of Rai Bareli at about 7 p.m. but as soon as he entered the waiting room Braj Narain Chakbast breathed his last.

His body was brought to Lucknow at about 11 p.m. Next day the cremation was performed. The whole city mourned his death. The condolence meeting of the Bar Association was addressed by the Chief Justice of the Chief Court, Mr. Stuart, and also by the District Judge. All courts were closed for the day to mourn his death. Several poets wrote elegies and chronograms at the death of the great poet.

According to Mrs. Maharaj Kumari Kak, her father had been apprehensive of death for two or three years before the fateful day. He had consulted a palmist about his financial prospects.

The man had said, “Why care for earnings ? There is a lot of fame in your destiny but your life span is short and you will die out of Lucknow.”

After this, says Mrs. Kak, he remained pensive most of the time and on every birth anniversary asked how old he had become. He stopped accepting cases outside Lucknow. However, his last client kept pestering him till he agreed to go to Rai Bareli to plead his case.

About his death the members of his family and several friends suspected that it was a case of murder. They held that the opposite party having lost the case put poison in his *pan* (betel leaf). But there is no evidence for this. Had there been the least reasonable doubt the police would have investigated the case, for Chakbast was a prominent person.

Balanced Personality

Chakbast, as has been said in the beginning, had all the attractive features of the Kashmiri culture, the Lucknow culture, and the Urdu culture in his personality. Essentially extroverted in temperament, he depended mostly on his in-born intelligence and sensitivity. This helped him in developing a balanced personality on a very high plane.

His tastes were refined and dignified. In the Lucknow culture a lot of emphasis is laid on *vazadari*. This can be defined as insistence on a set of individual ways—within the generally-accepted sophisticated culture—in all departments of life like food, dress, routine of work and leisure, and manners of gait and speech. Chakbast stuck to his own *vazadari*. In the first place he stuck to abstinence which he adopted as a value in his childhood, probably as a reaction to the undoing and early death of his father owing to the latter’s pursuits of pleasure crossing their reasonable limits. Chakbast never drank, never visited a courtesan, and never indulged in gambling. We also do not find any love affair in his life accounts.

It seems that, probably unknowingly, he diverted his erotic tendency towards the development of sensitivity, reason and

knowledge in the way of yogins. Only this psychological explanation can answer the question as to how at an early age he was able to sit in judgement on poets like Dagh and Iqbal and to clash with top literary personalities like Sharar and Hali.

He did not like ostentation. According to Mirza Jafar Husain, who had personally seen him, Chakbast led a simple life. He attired himself in a *sherwani*, *churidar pajama* and round, black felt cap. This was the common dress of Hindu respectables in the early 20th century in U.P. But his simplicity of dress was limited to the common style. The material of his dress was always fine. According to Mrs. Maharaj Kumari Kak not only the material of his formal dress was fine but even the *dhoti* he wore in the house was very fine ; he wore his vest inside out as he said he could not bear the vest seams touch his body since these hurt his skin. Mrs. Kak also says he was used to rich and tasty food although he did not eat a lot.

In the matter of fraternal love Chakbast exceeded even the standards of those times. We have already seen that he handed over his income to his sister-in-law. It should not be presumed that his elder brother did not contribute to the family earnings. After all he was a municipal employee and ended his career as executive officer, which is by no means an insignificant post, and also supported the family after Braj Narain's death. But this much can be said with certainty that it was the younger brother who was the main supporter of the joint family for the last one and a half decades of his life. An extreme instance of the fraternal love was that Maharaj Narain's daughter was named Braj Kumari and Braj Narain's daughter was named Maharaj Kumari. The matter did not end with mere nomenclature. Braj Kumari in her school days really believed that she was Braj Narain's daughter. Mrs. Maharaj Kumari Kak says once Braj Kumari, —impatient with the time the *thela* took in getting her to her house—was returning on foot from the school. A Kashmiri gentleman was rather surprised to see a girl of a respectable family on foot and asked her who her father was. Braj Kumari said : "Pandit Braj Narain".

Mother's Contribution

I think the credit for the genial atmosphere in the joint family should go to the mother of the two brothers. Braj Narain had great love and regard for her. According to Mrs. Kak every day he found time to have a little chat with her. It is notable that Braj Narain handed over his income to his sister-in-law, not to his mother. It showed that the old lady had given all household management to her eldest daughter-in-law who was almost the sole manager thereof because the menfolk did not interfere in the domestic management.

Braj Narain spent his evenings in literary, social or political circles but on holidays he spent the whole day with the members of his family. He was very jovial when with his nephews and nieces. Maharaj Kumari was the only child of Braj Narain but Maharaj Narain had many issues. Braj Narain was very close to Braj Kumari and humoured her when she was in a difficult mood. Mrs. Kak says once Braj Kumari was down with dengue fever and was in a rather irritable mood. Braj Narain composed a humorous poem on her condition and made everyone, including Braj Kumari, laugh. Mrs. Kak remembers three couplets from this poem. These are reproduced here :

*I have great love for dengue
It jumps up to 104 degrees
Give me khichri give me khichri
And put in it a little oil
I won't have pomegranate or milk
I must have chutney and pickles.*

Imagine a famed poet of Urdu writing this ! It only shows he became a child when dealing with children.

As a social reformer Chakbast had special sympathy for women. Besides his writings on this topic—which will be discussed later—he organised a club for Kashmiri women. It was known as the Kashmiri Club.

Another trait in which his utterances and behaviour fully

coincided was independence of thought. He preached it in I his writings and practised it in his life. Maharaj Kumari Kak I asserts that though he was very intimate with the members I of his family he never tried to impose his political and social I views on them although as the principal breadwinner he I could have done so at a time when family discipline bordered I on regimentation.

He was careful in every department of life. His carefulness about health made him almost a health fanatic. And I yet when an occasion arose for putting his principles into I practice he showed remarkable courage. An incident related I by his daughter illustrates this. Once when the wife of a relation, Braj Kishan Gurtu, died of T.B. no member of the community went even to offer condolences, much less acting as pall-bearer as it was a much dreaded disease at that time. Only Chakbast went to Gurtu's house and induced other young men to shed fear, and thus the bier of the woman was taken to the cremation ground. Chakbast also prevailed upon his wife to go to the bereaved family to offer condolences.

And when it was a question of helping the needy he some-times did so in a secret manner. Mrs. Kak says the members of his family knew that he had a wide circle of Muslim friends but none knew that he regularly helped some Muslim widows. The fact came to light only after his death when several widows visited the family and said they too had been rendered helpless.

Imagine some self-styled critics branding such a man as communally motivated ! Really there is nothing contradictory in the behaviour of a man who takes a lot of interest in the affairs of the members of his community or upholding certain values of his co-religionists and at the same time works for the development of his nation or that of the humanity as a whole. Chakbast regularly participated in the conventions of Kashmiri Brahmins, founded clubs for young men and women of his community, supported the cause of the Banaras Hindu University and also plunged headlong in the movement for achievement of Home Rule.

Sophisticated Manners

In the true tradition of Lucknow Chakbast showed great regard to his senior in profession, Shahanshah Husain Rizvi. According to Mirza Jafar Husain, he met Chakbast at a *majlis* (Shia congregation at Muharram to mourn the death of Imam Husain) held at the Imambara of Ikramullah Khan and was told by the latter that he attended that particular *majlis* regularly every year because it was founded by Shahanshah Husain Rizvi.

Mirza Jafar Husain also says that Chakbast was extremely popular in the circles of lawyers and litterateurs. He was fond of meeting people and hence all prominent persons knew him very well. Once befriended, he became informal and intimate instantly. Despite all exuberance and informality his behaviour always remained within the four walls of decency. He never uttered any indecent or rustic word and never indulged in any activity which might have lowered his prestige. All the same, the circle of his intimate friends was limited and even within it he had different degrees of intimacy with different persons. But the circle of his admirers, comprising poets, lawyers, clients, and prominent persons of the city, was very wide and his friendliness was not affected by religious or communal considerations.

Several other writers also hold that Chakbast was friendly with everyone. However, "Firaq" Gorakhpuri, in a radio broadcast in 1941, described his meeting with Chakbast in the Congress session of 1916 and said Chakbast gave an impression that he had no feeling of sympathy with or sincerity towards any individual. Obviously this is a wrong evaluation. Maybe Chakbast did not satisfy the standards of openness and intimacy/animosity held by Firaq—for Firaq had been, till his last day, capable of inviting to lunch any person after five minutes of introduction and also of hurling obscene jokes after five minutes of introduction.

Chakbast was too sophisticated to have indulged in indecencies. But when he was in a jolly mood he sometimes hit hard, even if unintentionally. We have already seen the way he wrote about Lord Curzon and Sharar. He also wrote two extremely biting stanzas ridiculing the Ali brothers who had

issued a statement at Karachi which amounted to apology. According to Najmuddin Shaheb, Chakbast spent his spare time in courts talking to persons of literary taste. Once a *munsarim* of the small causes court sent to him a hemistich which made almost no sense and requested him to complete the couplet. Chakbast completed the couplet in a few minutes and did it in such a way that made a cruel sally at the sender, I give the couplet in original, since humour in poetry, being essentially based on the multiplicity of shades of words, is untranslatable. Its second hemistich was sent by the *munsarim* and the first was fitted by Chakbast:

*Khafifa adalat men ullu ke patthe,
Rag-e-gul se bulbul ke par bandhte hen.*

In Urdu the small causes court is known as *khafifa adalat*. The couplet has been so much in use that almost everyone in the thirties of this century had heard this couplet without knowing who composed it. *Khafifa adalat* was sometimes replaced by *suna hai ki Meerut* or *suna hai Aligarh* according to the context of its use.

16
Chakbast
WELL Typeset
FINAL PDF 02-05-17

Views

Question of Priorities

The views of every creative artist are not relevant so far as the evaluation of his work is concerned. But in the case of Chakbast it is necessary to gauge his views as poetry was not an end in itself for him. It was used by him, at least in his mature years, for pursuing his socio-political objectives. It should be noted that he could have been a prolific writer had he chosen to be so. He wrote his first presentable poem at the age of 12 and at 16 he wrote two poems and one of these contained 156 couplets (he added 27 couplets to it seven years later). In his early twenties he proved himself to be a first class critic with immense self-confidence and also brought out an authentic edition of *Gulzar-e-Naseem*. Such writings have been done by scholars generally in their forties or late thirties. In 1905 he wrote a very mature poem, "Mazhab-e-Shairana" and in 1906 was written his immortal poem, "Ramayan ka ek Scene".

Naturally one expects such a writer to have written volumes in his later years, even allowing for the fact that he died at the age of 44. What we find is that in 31 years of creative writing (1894-1925) he produced only 2,025 couplets. He did not write anything from 1907 to 1909 except very few *ghazal* couplets. That is understandable since a new lawyer has to spend every minute in establishing himself professionally. From 1910 to 1912 there was a spurt in his creative writing but this was mostly in his newly-found field of *ghazals*. We cannot explain this switch-over except in terms of his efforts to popularise himself in the general public by attending every *mushaira* for achieving greater

professional success. By 1912 he was fairly established as a lawyer. We find thereafter, as his creative outcome, more political poems than *ghazals* although—as we shall see later—his *ghazals* had shown by that time such a high degree of magnetic individuality that he should have concentrated on *ghazal* if he wished to make his mark in poetry. He almost ignored *ghazal* by writing it only for *mushairas* and only re-entered the field of thematic poetry for promoting his *sozio-political* objectives.

I do not agree with the view that his small out-turn of poetry was owing to the fact that he had to devote all his time to earning money for supporting a big joint family. This assumption is based on an apologetic sentence written by Chakbast to Daya Narain Nigam, editor of *Zamana* magazine, to the effect that he was unable to write due to his professional pre-occupation. But let us see if it was really true. Firstly, his elder brother, executive officer of the municipality, earned enough to support a big family, if only in a modest way. Secondly, a man caring only for money devotes almost no time to anything except his professional work. There are lawyers who concern themselves with nothing except courts and law reports and commentaries. Chakbast did not do so ; he almost plunged headlong in the political activities of his times up to, say 1918 (thereafter he almost retired from politics as he did not find the new developments to his liking). But at this time he devoted his energies to journalism to popularise his views. Also, all through his life he worked hard for social reform, particularly among Kashmiri Brahmins. This shows Chakbast had never been obsessed with money.

It is certain that his mentors and guides were prominent lawyers and public figures like Bishun Narain Dar, Ganga Parshad Varma, Iqbal Narain Masladan ; his ideals were M.G. Ranade, G.K. Gokhale and Annie Basant; and he had admiration for persons like B.G. Tilak and M.K. Gandhi. He praised all these persons in prose and poetry. At the same time we do not find him indulging in praises for any contemporary literary figure—whatever praises he showered in his earlier years were on the past literary figures like Naseem and Sarsbar. We also find his writings in *Guldasta-*

e-Avadh Punch about contemporary writers but it was done in a rather patronising way.

Obviously, like his friends, philosophers and guides, Chakbast gave a high place in life to culture and literature, but certainly not the highest place. His first priority was political and social advancement and he used his creative talent mainly, if not exclusively, to serve the causes he considered supreme.

Liberal Nationalist

Chakbast was an ardent nationalist of the moderate school. He was firm in his beliefs and dauntlessly aired them but he was not dogmatic in any way and openly appreciated the qualities of those with whom he did not see eye to eye. On the other hand he did not hesitate to criticise an action of even those whom he had earlier praised lavishly. His poems about Annie Besant border on devotion but he openly criticised her in his magazine when she made an attack on the Servants of India Society. He had been always an admirer of Mahatma Gandhi but he frankly opposed the non-cooperation and Khilafat movements and wrote in *Subh-e-Ummed* (June, 1920), “We heartily appreciate the personality of Mahatma Gandhi but we are sorry to say that we are not prepared to endorse his line of action.”* Tilak was an extremist (extremists of those days were politicians and should not be confused with the gun-wielding extremists of the present time) and his extremism and his indifference never met with the approval of Chakbast: but when Tilak died in 1920 Chakbast not only wrote an elegiac poem but also wrote in his magazine (July, 1920), “We do not claim to have followed in toto Mr. Tilak’s line of political action but the national life was adorned by the courageous actions of his political career.”

Chakbast supported the war efforts during World War I, as did every nationalist at that time but he was disappointed at the subsequent attitude of the British government. During this period he was a whole-hearted supporter of Annie Besant

* Original at end of text.

and her Home Rule movement and reacted sharply to her detention. But any sort of popular agitation or non-cooperation was unacceptable to him. He did not even think on those lines. He regretted the split in the Congress but put the blame for it on its extremist wing and supported the formation of the Liberal Federation even going against the principle of acceptance of the majority decision. He resented the atrocities committed in the Punjab in 1919 but approved of only the way the Liberal Federation protested against these. He wrote in *Subh-e-Ummid* (January-February, 1920), "The resolution passed by the moderates' conference regarding the need for justice to the oppressed of Punjab is very comprehensive and forceful and is a resentful shout to awaken the present rulers from their deep slumber. How much better would it have been had a resolution of a similar type been adopted on the platform of the Congress."

If Chakbast did not write a heart-rending poem on the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy the fact should be viewed against his mental conflict on political issues. In the columns of his magazine he repeatedly wrote that the mere dismissal of General Dyer could not meet the ends of justice.

Chakbast fully represented the social awakening of his time. In the matter of giving women equal rights he perhaps aired the views adopted one or two decades later for he stood not only for general education for women and an end to the *pardah* system but also for their social freedom. He supported remarriage of widows among the Hindus as has been mentioned already. In the very first issue of his magazine (October, 1918) he extended full support to a bill presented by Mr. Patel for legal recognition of inter-caste marriages among the Hindus and wrote, "To oppose this bill is to justify the social oppression perpetrated for centuries." He further wrote in this connection, "Even if we concede that inter-caste marriages go against the Hindu Shastras, it is certain that the law of moral and social independence written by the angel of nature on the forehead of every person is no way less venerable than the Dharma Shastras."

Chakbast was not a socialist of any sort. But on economic issues he had a very open mind and his sympathies always lay

18

Chakbast

WELL Typeset

FINAL PDF 02-05-17

with the poor people. In the March 1921 issue of *Subh-e-Ummid* he commented on the Central Budget and criticised the increase in the military expenditure. At the same time he opposed the increase in the railway fares and the import duty on sugar since these were likely to cause hardship to the poor; but he also wrote, "No doubt increases in the income tax and the import duties on foreign liquor, tobacco, motor cars, watches, musical instruments will not affect the common man. These increases will be borne by the wealthy classes whose luxurious life will be affected a little."

Chakbast was no economist and his observations may look naive but these certainly show his concern for the common and oppressed man.

It is also interesting to note his ideas about the importance or otherwise of wealth. These emerge here and there in his social poems. He considers wealth essential but he thinks acquisition of wealth should not be an end in itself and also wealth should not be acquired for show. In the poem "Muraqqa-e-Ibrat" a few couplets bring out these ideas. After rejecting the ascetic view of considering wealth an evil, he says :

*Wealth is now the adornment of the palace of culture
They say it is the candle which lights its main room*

.....
*Wealth in itself is not hostile to courtesy and good manners
What crosses the limits is the lust for it.*

He says the following about those whose sole objective is wealth:

*These pitiable persons are deprived of the wine of comfort
They are not the owners of wealth, they are only its slaves*

And he goes on to say :

*I call only that thing wealth which helps the needy
And which cures the heart ailment of the poor*

In another poem. "Dard-e-Dil", he castigates showy persons in these words:

*For showing themselves off they can give up life
They are ready to die at once if they get a silver grave*

Stand and Religion

Although Chakbast has been generally acclaimed as a nationalist and non-communal poet, there are a few persons who see a tinge of communalism in his outlook. The view of these persons is certainly based on wrong premises. But it is necessary to show the erroneous element in such suspicions.

Chakbast has not given in his prose writings his views on religion in general or his own faith. But there are found a few references in his poetry—mainly in his thematic poems— which indicate his beliefs in this regard. I try to bring these out.

It is certain that he was not an atheist. All the same, he condemned the showy aspect of religious practices as the following couplets indicate.

*If one's heart does not shine like a mirror
One cannot be called a Brahmin by merely wearing the
sacred thread*

.....
*Those whose actions do not reflect the finesse of religion I should
not be allowed to defile this 'havan' by their presence*

.....
*When I gave up idol worship to worship the truth
Brahmins began calling me the founder of heresy*

The essential feature of religion, in his view, is the service of man and the upholding of human freedom :

*There is only this difference in my religion and that of the ascetics
That what I call human love they call fear of God*

.....

*How can he give ear to the wails of men
The shaikh is always busy with remembrance of God*

And Chakbast considers it absurd that there should be religious controversies ;

*It is not proper to quarrel over the features of religion
The existence of 72 sects is just childishness*

But Chakbast did believe in the Vedic pantheism which was later developed as Vedanta and Sufism. He says:

*The Vedas give this lesson of unity in diversity
That there is the same light in the sun and sandgrain*

Certainly Chakbast wrote a few poems on Hindu religious themes like the Vedas, cow, Krishna and parts of Ramayana and he wrote nothing on Islamic themes. But this fact does not necessarily mean that he was a communal poet, Chakbast had more Muslim friends than Hindu ones and no Muslim at that time thought that there was anything communal in the above-mentioned poems of Chakbast. They were more clear-headed than some present-day critics who see ghosts every-where ; they knew that communalism did not consist in praising certain features in one's own religious beliefs. Hali wrote "Madd-o-Jazr-e-Islam" and 90 to 95 per cent of Muslim poets write *naats* (praises of the Prophet) and almost every Shia poet writes something on some Karbala incident. Do these facts prove that these poets are communal-minded ? Communal mentality is betrayed only when one directly or indirectly declares that that one's own religious beliefs or certain features of ones* own community are better than those of other communities. Chakbast never did it; not even one couplet from his collection can be construed to imply any sort of criticism or derision of any other religious community.

On the other hand, like Akbar Ilahabadi, he wanted both Hindus and Muslims to adhere to their beliefs and derided them when they fail to do so:

*The Hindu-Muslim differences ended like this at last
These forgot their idols and those forgot God*

.....
*It is futile to complain against national disunity
After seeing the manners of Hindus and Muslims*

Nasikh-Naseem Story

Some persons doubt the non-communal outlook of Chakbast on the basis of a story he has given, without revealing its source, in the preface of *Masnavi Gulzar-e-Naseem* which he brought out. He says that poet Nasikh (rival of Atish who was the preceptor of Naseem) said to Naseem at a *mushaira* that he had composed a hemistich but could not compose the matching hemistich to complete the couplet. The hemistich was:

The Shaikh built the mosque while destroying temple.

Naseem at once provided the matching hemistich:

Then there was at least a figure now the place is desolate.

It won a general applause for young Naseem including that of the middle-aged Nasikh. No doubt the second hemistich, fully in accordance with the Urdu tradition, gives a nice poetic colour to the flat and unsavoury statement in the first hemistich.

According to Chakbast Nasikh had made a communal sally but Naseem made it ineffective in a pleasant way.

Dr. Shabih-ul-Hasan, in his book on Nasikh denies the very occurrence of this incident. He says Nasikh could not have sought help from a youngster— like Naseem and moreover, the couplet had been composed much earlier by Meer Ala Ali in the following form:

*Why did the ascetic break the idol to turn the temple into a
mosque
Then there was at least a figure now the place is desolate*

Dr. Shabih-ul-Hasan says Chakbast concocted the story. Chakbast said he had heard this from elders ; he would have done much better if he had given the name of his informant, but perhaps being young he did not think it necessary to give proper references. However, it is unjust to accuse him of concoction. Old men, on account of their failing memory, sometimes confuse the past incidents and a distorted story might have been passed onto Chakbast. The story may be true too. It is not unusual for elders to put embarrassing questions to youngsters just to enjoy the latter's discomfiture and there is no malice involved in these. Certainly the conclusion drawn by Chakbast, that Nasikh had made a communal sally, is wrong and rash. But it does not prove that Chakbast himself was communally motivated.

Some base their accusation on the fact that Chakbast supported the cause of the Banaras Hindu University. But this too does not prove any communalist mentality. He supported the cause of education everywhere and whenever he mentioned the name of Sir Sayyid Khan (founder of what has now become the Aligarh Muslim University) he did it with unstinted praise. He did oppose the Khilafat movement. However, he made it clear in his editorial notes that he fully supported the cause of the Turks but was opposed to the idea of law-breaking and non-cooperation with the government.

It can be said with full confidence that there has not been a more anti-communalism litterateur and journalist than Braj Narain Chakbast.

More noticeable is Chakbast's attitude towards culture and art because of two factors. Firstly, he was immersed in art and culture and said everything with authority ; and, secondly, his observations held good not only in his own time but are relevant to the present-day conditions too. Perhaps the second factor is due to the fact that Chakbast has never been projected as a thinker and hence his observations re-mained almost ignored. For most of commentators Chakbast was a sincere and charming poet of patriotism and nothing more. No doubt there has not been a greater poet of patrio-tism than Chakbast, as we shall see later. But there are a good many other manifestations of

individuality in his beliefs and approach which deserve notice. We begin with his approach regarding the progress of art and culture.

Old and New

Chakbast took up his pen at a time when the political domination of the British began to give rise to cultural domination. It would be wrong to attribute this phenomenon to any conscious effort on the part of the Britons. Its reason was two-fold : extreme isolation from the public life of those fully conversant with the traditional knowledge and culture; and the common people's natural attraction to the culture of the ruler and disappointment with the tradition which was known to the common man only in the form of ritualistic practices. The result emerged in the form of strong social movements, particularly among the Muslims, to adopt everything in the British culture provided it did not go against definite religious injunctions. In north India this cultural reorientation was led mostly by such persons as did not know English and hence could not grasp—despite their sharp intellect and cool reasoning—the British culture in its true sense. The social movement led by Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan and the literary movement started by his supporters, Hali and Moham-mad Husain "Azad", mainly suffered from this drawback.

This mentality led to immediate reaction in diverse ways. We shall limit our discussion to the kinds of reaction observed in the field of Urdu literature. Three great poets—Akbar Allahabadi, Chakbast and Iqbal—emerged at this time. The main import of the poetry of all the three was the furtherance of their ideas of society, and everyone of them reacted to the mentality of unreserved praise for the western culture. Akbar Allahabadi tried to sustain the lost cause of orthodoxy through the medium of humour. The cause was finally lost although the humour of Akbar enriched Urdu to a great extent. Iqbal put forward a philosophy that envisaged a future world on the basis of "pure" Islamic principles. Chakbast chose the path of shaping

the course of social action and thought on the basis of making a perfect blend of the new ideas and the old heritage. I am not really able to decide which of these three should be placed above the other two. All of them were sincere and equally talented. Hence I place all of them on an equal footing.

If among these three pioneers of social consciousness in Urdu poetry Chakbast remained the least noticed it is not a matter of surprise. Both Akbar and Iqbal relied mainly on poetry to disseminate their respective views of society simply because these views could not be practised in life and neither of them could factually dissociate himself from the western culture which both of them opposed in principle. Hence they gave their full attention to poetry and each of them wrote a lot. Chakbast composed poetry only to give a fillip to his political and social activities and hence he wrote poetry in a meagre quantity. Secondly, whatever Akbar and Iqbal said was more noticeable by its very nature. Akbar had the help of wit and Iqbal had that of fancy. Chakbast said those very things which formed the current enlightened opinion and the people agreed with these observations so much that they felt no need to remember these.

Yet a good many verses of Chakbast remain embedded in the memory. It must be taken as a tribute to his artistic excellence and sincerity of purpose reflected in his poetry. We shall consider this fact later. Here we must consider the views of Chakbast about society and art, because with the passage of time such analysis has become necessary.

On Education

Chakbast stood whole-heartedly for the spread of education on the pattern introduced by the British rulers. He supported Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya's efforts for the establishment of the Banaras Hindu University and also respected Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan for his efforts to educate the Muslims in the modern manner. He bitterly opposed that aspect of the non-cooperation movement which enjoined upon students to leave schools and colleges and he welcomed the cool decision of Pandit Malaviya

in not letting the students of the Banaras Hindu University give up their education. He wrote in the January, 1921 issue of *Subh-e-Ummed*, "Mr. Mohammed Ali certainly agitated the minds of Aligarh students by coating the political issue of non-cooperation with the varnish of religion. But this magic did not work for a long time in the Aligarh College. In the end the result was that most of students there repented their action and returned to the college. There were several assaults on the Banaras Hindu University too but the courageous far-sightedness of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya kept the political sanity of the students intact. In our opinion the example of the Hindu University exercised such a great influence that the students of this province regained their sense and the initial zest for non-cooperation did not find favour with them."

In his poems, particularly those written for the sessions of the Conference of Kashmiri Pandits, he often stressed the need for acquiring the modern type of education and for serving the caste and the country through it. He wrote a poem on the inauguration of the Ganga Parshad Library at Lucknow and a stanza therein reflects his intense love for education :

*From this place the riches of knowledge will be given out night
and day
We have decided upon giving this aim in his name
Brahmins may come from temples and Sayyids from Kabah
All of them will get the wealth of life's satisfaction*

He was a crusader for social reforms like widow marriage and education and social freedom for women. It goes without saying that such reforms were the outcome of the impact of the western culture and any person who stood by these could not have been a revivalist. However, he expressed himself vociferously against the mentality of blindly following the western culture and wanted the Indians to maintain and take pride in the vital and fine elements of the culture of the country.

In the *Subh-e-Ummed* of November, 1918, he wrote (under

the caption of "Urdu Poetry"), "When our compatriots accepted the domination of a foreign nation they had to wear two chains. Whatever restrictions were imposed on them under the laws made by the ruling nation should be considered the chain of iron.... But much more regrettable than these apparent restriction was the mental slavery which made our minds and hearts accept the currency of the foreign domination and showiness of the western culture and we forgot our national dignity. I shall call it the chain of gold which we put on very willingly and began to take pride in our bondage."

Despite his zealous support to education he further wrote in the same article, "It will be a national ungratefulness to ignore the gradual awakening brought about by the English education in our nation. But there has been a very undesirable effect of this education on our national morality. It was that education became a mere means of earning the livelihood."

I wonder why this same evaluation of the western system of education did not register itself in the minds of the intelligentsia of his time ; and still more astonishing is the fact that even the present-day educationists do not think in terms of the weakening of the connection between education and livelihood, impliedly support the popular tendency of connecting higher knowledge with higher income and do not realise that the main object of higher education should be self-fulfilment rather than economic gain.

Chakbast and Hali

Perhaps the greatest target for the serious criticism and strong attacks made by Chakbast in this regard was Maulana Altaf Husain "Hali". In the preface of the edition of *Gulzar-e-Naseem* brought out by him, Chakbast says, "Maulana Hali, in order to follow the western poetry, reads translations of English poems. It is not possible to maintain the elements of fine imaginative flights of thought in the translation made in a foreign language and the handiwork of similes and metaphors is broken up. Hence he (Hali) considers that the basic principle of the western poetry is

to versify simple prose. On this premise whenever he comes across a little complication due to finesse and depth of observation he considers it meaningless.”

It should be noted that Hali in his *Muqaddama-e-Sher-o-Shairi* has made a lot of criticism against *Guhar-e-Naseem*. Chakbast in his youthful rashness hit Hali right and left. He was motivated and encouraged in the anti-Hali campaign by the magazine *Avadh Punch* which took Hali's observations as sallies against the Lucknow school of poetry and diction. A little before the publication of the above-mentioned preface of *Gulzar-e-Naseem* Chakbast made the following observation about Hali in an article on Sarshar published in the May, 1904 issue of *Kashmir Darpan*, “Hali tried to paint the picture of English poetry on the mirror of Urdu but as he let go the brush of close observation he distorted the face at a thousand and one places. On the other hand, Sarshar adorned the beautiful bride of Urdu with English jewellery but did not let imbalance creep in at any place.”

In 1903 he had already ridiculed Hali in an article in the *Avadh Punch*.

Fourteen years later Chakbast adopted a sober tone but his opinion on the postulates of Hali remained the same. He wrote in the article on Urdu published in the November, 1918 issue of *Subh-e-Ummed*, “The contribution of Maulana Hali for the betterment of Urdu will be always remembered. Perhaps the late Maulana was the first man to raise the voice that Urdu poetry too should change its attire according to the changing time. This was no ordinary thing to say. But the standard of English poetry which the said Maulana set up with the help of his English-knowing friends and on which he tried to bring Urdu poetry was not devoid of the above-mentioned defect (sacrifice of emotion and total reliance on the thought content). The effect of this defect is found often in the poetic compositions of the Maulana.”

I do not agree with the observations of Chakbast on the views or poetry of Maulana Hali. On the other hand, I think the Urdu world has not done sufficient justice to Hali and has almost considered him as a second-rate *ghazal* composer. It is nearly

impossible to maintain effectiveness in simplicity and Hali showed that he had an extremely fine sensitivity because he achieved this end perfectly. But the observations of Hali on Urdu poetry were certainly one-sided and by giving extensive excerpts from the writings of Chakbast I wish only to bring into bold relief the ideas of Chakbast about culture and its evolution.

Let us note a little more of Chakbast's observations on poetry. In the above-mentioned article on Urdu poetry he writes, “In the compositions of Urdu poets of yore several such thoughts are found as are unacceptable to the modern taste or which can be called indecent from the present-day standards. But we should not ignore their poetic beauty just because we are fed up with the depravity of their thoughts.”

It is rather surprising that at an early age Chakbast had formed his opinions firmly and these did not undergo any change up to his last days. Even considering the fact that he died in his early middle age such consistency seems surprising. Perhaps it was due to the careful guidance given to him by Bishun Narain Dar and other enlightened and learned elders. The above quotation is from an article written in 1918. The same line of thought is pursued in the article he wrote in the *Zamana* magazine of July 1905, on the death of the poet Dagh. He says, “But these (poetic) thoughts, emotions, etc. are of two kinds—high and low. On the whole, by the high type of thoughts, emotions, etc. we mean the spiritual side of the human nature and by the low-type the animal side... That false element which can be called the soul of poetry is not there in the poetry of Dagh.”

Fighting One's Own Prejudices

I am again constrained to differ from Chakbast. There are no ‘high’ and ‘low’ in poetry; there is only ‘deep’ or ‘shallow’ in it. And here too nothing is condemnable, one has to adopt an outlook according to the occasion. Can you afford to go into the intricacies of psychology while describing a battle scene? But Chakbast's criteria of literary criticism were very modern. In his time. What we should consider is the fact that his Victorian

concept of morality did not come in the way of appreciation of artistic beauty. We have already seen it in one of his quotations.

Another appreciable quality of Chakbast's observations is that he never fights shy of admitting the good points of those whom he criticises. In other words, his attempt is always there to give a balanced judgement. His appreciation of the contribution of Hali has been quoted already. Despite his poor opinion of the poetry of Dagh he says in the article written at the great poet's death, "Every couplet he has composed is full of emotional impact."

He has been the greatest advocate of *Masnavi Gulzar-e-Naseem*. This *Masnavi*, right from the time of its writing to the present time, has been compared with the great *Masnavi Sihr-ul-Bayan* by Meer 'Hasan'. Chakbast too compares them but does so very judiciously and says in an article on *Naseem* published in *Kashmir Darpan* of February 1904, "If you want to enjoy simple and fluent diction read Meer Hasan's *Masnavi*; if you like close observation and charm of diction go through *Gulzar-e-Naseem*." He further says, "But it is no injustice to say that the pathos found in Meer Hasan's work is not there in *Naseem*'s work."

It will be worthwhile to quote from his poems to bring out his ideas about modernity. In a poem titled "Dard-e-Dil" which was written for a session of the conference of Kashmiri Pandits, he chides those England-returned persons who became totally westernised:

*Those who have performed the great pilgrimage of Europe
Are proud of being strangers in their own land
Are hostile to compatriots and friendly to foreigners
They have artificial looks, affected manners*

*They have charm and beauty in their manner of talking
Their only drawback is the colour of their skin.*

.....
*They are not concerned with the European civilisation
They have devoted themselves to pomp and show
Where are the sparks of patriotism in their hearts?
The sparks which enlivened in the west the bodies that*

*are essentially dust
They have learnt only this culture from Europe
How to dance and how to enjoy life.*

In another poem, "Muraqqa-e-Ibrat", written for a session of the Conference of Kashmiri Pandits in 1898, he wrote:

*Whenever there is a talk of freedom and reform
The only thing we hear is imitation of Europe
But these people do not possess those qualities
Which have resulted in the civilisation of the west
They do not have patriotism in their blood
They have desires but do not have hearts.*

.....
*Those who were pioneers of reform in Europe
They shed their blood for the national freedom
A lot of the flowers of youth withered
But their garden saw no season of fall
Those persons were martyrs, full of sincerity
They watered the garden of their nation with their blood.*

These verses amply prove that he considered nothing worth emulating in the western culture except the spirit of patriotism and sincerity of purpose. He considered it ridiculous to copy the west in the superficial manifestations of culture like dance, dress and demeanour.

Advice to Young Women

In 1917 he wrote a didactic poem, entitled "Phoolmala" for young women of his community. Several couplets in this poem express his views on the questions of progress and imitation of the western culture:

*They call showiness by name of progress and reform
You should not be deceived by gestures like this*

.....
It is all right to emulate Europe but remember

You should never destroy the national honour

*I congratulate you on your European make-up
 But do not erase the nation's features from your faces*

*Those who want to make a showpiece of you
 Do not oblige them by accepting this indignity*

*The temple of freedom is meant for worship
 Do not make it a centre of merriment*

In his *ghazals* too Chakbast sometimes gives vent to these feelings. Here are two couplets of this category :

*Kudos for the new culture ; it didn't let the mind be
 ashamed*

And put a garb of logic on acts of shamelessness

*The visit to Europe turned the minds to such a state
 That people forgot even the climate of their land*

Lest these quotations lead one to consider Chakbast an orthodox person let me repeat that about the same time he challenged all orthodoxy by supporting the social reform of widows' marriage. He was against a blind faith in old practices and also against a blind faith in the European culture; he advocated a sensible approach to social progress, gleaning the best from both cultures and blending these into a coordinated culture.

But it will be also wrong to conclude that Chakbast had any vision extending to the future. He was completely a man of the "present". Had he been able to foresee the future even remotely he would not have whole-heartedly condemned the non-cooperation movement of Gandhiji—particularly when he had great respect for the integrity and the spirit of self-sacrifice shown by Gandhiji.

He was sceptic about the development of science and technology. In the March, 1920 issue of *Subh-e-Ummed* he wrote,

"An academic body of France has announced an award for persons inventing means to have links of knowledge with planets and stars. Sober persons are surprised at it..... In our view this announcement should be postponed at least till there is a final settlement on the 14 points of President Wilson." Such observations need no comment in this space age.

He did not accept readily even air travel, newly-introduced in his time, and reacts to it in a half-mocking way. In the *ghazals* he composed in 1911 we find these three couplets :

*Man is not content with enslaving water and fire
 He is attempting to enslave the air too*

*They fly in the air and observe God's world
 Even angels do not do what men are doing*

*The newly-invented boat has given wings to culture
 Man utilises air like flowing water*

In the last couplet the reference to wings is made in a mocking tone by using the idiom "*par lagna*" which means "showing off". The second couplet too implies a double meaning of the word "*hawa*" which means both "air" and "greed". In this couplet the implication of the second meaning is necessary, otherwise the couplet will be meaningless because angels do fly.

Perhaps Chakbast subsequently changed his view on the aeroplane but there is nothing to prove or disprove it.

Literary Creation

Coordinated Loyalties

It has been already mentioned that Chakbast, although knowing that he had a remarkable talent for poetic creation, did not give poetry the first priority and mostly used his talent for furthering his political and social objectives. I have no hesitation in saying that he sacrificed poetry at the altar of patriotism. Naturally patriotism forms a major part of his poetry. But first let us discuss his concept of patriotism. We shall not discuss the political aspect of his patriotism; we have already discussed it. But it is necessary to acquaint ourselves with the psychological aspect of his patriotism.

In several of his poems the word '*qawn*' creates confusion. In Urdu some people use it to denote nation, others to denote caste or community. Chakbast has used it in both senses. In his early poems, written for the Conference of Kashmiri Pandits, it was used for the community of Kashmiri Brahmins, in the poems of his later years the word was used for the Indian nation. Even if there had been no such confusion the secular-minded people today may ask how a casteist can call himself a patriot.

There are two concepts of patriotism. One approach is to give up all other considerations and sacrifice everything for the benefit of the nation. The Indian revolutionaries of the first quarter of this century are perfect examples of such types of patriots. Everyone of them made considerable sacrifices for the sake of the motherland and cared nought for his old parents or his wife or children. The other concept is that of coordinating the loyalty to the nation with other loyalties, which implies the elimination of the element of sacrifice because if you make

sacrifices for a certain cause you will harm some other cause you are connected with. Such people as are patriot in this way also perform their full duties to their families, their communities and their towns or provinces.

Chakbast, as has been said already, was a liberal or moderate in politics and had had the latter concept of patriotism in his mind. He worked hard for professional success in order to earn more money for his family ; he also worked hard to improve the social atmosphere in his community; he also did everything he could do for strengthening the Hindu culture and, lastly, he did everything he thought necessary to help fellow Indians get the right of self-rule. But he did not let the smaller loyalties come in the way of the larger loyalties. If we are not clear in our minds on this matter we may get confused in judging the patriotism of Chakbast.

The poetry of Chakbast is essentially the poetry of patriotism. The greatest proof of this postulate is the fact that although the politics of the country had changed its course even in the life time of Chakbast and, consequently, the concept of patriotism had changed too, his poems kept inspiring the freedom-fighters for a long time. His sincerity in love for the country was infectious and no one cared to consider whether Chakbast himself was a freedom-fighter (in the later sense) or not. During the last three decades of the struggle for freedom the poems of Chakbast continued to be included in the anthologies published to bring about mass awakening.

Output of Patriotic Poetry

It is interesting to examine the patriotic element in his collection of poems from the statistical angle. The total number of poems written by him is 45. Out of these, 12 poems are devoted totally to the theme of patriotism. These contain 365 couplets in all which make up 22.9 per cent of his total *nazm* couplets. Then there are seven other poems— elegies for patriots—which are devoted to patriotic feelings and must be included in the list of

patriotic poems. These seven poems consist of 244 couplets which constitute 15.74 per cent of his total *nazm* couplets. Thus the overall per-centage of the patriotic couplets among his *nazm* couplets is 38.64. I have left out of this count the stray couplets expressing patriotic feelings contained in other poems. This shows that patriotism was the overwhelming element in the thematic poems written by him.

Chakbast wrote a lot of *ghazals* too although, unlike most Urdu poets, he wrote more of thematic poems than *ghazals*. The number of his *ghazal* couplets is less than a quarter of the total number of his couplets—477 out of 2,025.

Ghazal couplets, by tradition, are chiefly devoted to the emotion of love. The next prominent feature of *ghazal* couplets is pathos. The rest is taken up by philosophical observations or moral teachings now and then. Patriotism, like religion, is not considered a proper theme for the *ghazal* poetry in a direct manner. Chakbast, although he cared very much for tradition, did not care for this inhibition and freely included the topic of patriotism in his *ghazals*. He wrote a total of 58 *ghazals*—several of them extremely short—containing a total of 477 couplets. Among these, 25 contain couplets inspired by patriotism—six *ghazals* are almost completely devoted to patriotism. The total number of his *ghazal* couplets on patriotic themes is 80 which forms 16.77 per cent of his total *ghazal* couplets.

The total number of his *nazm* and *ghazal* couplets is 2,025. Out of these, 689 or 34.02 per cent are devoted to patriotism. No other poet of Urdu stands anywhere near Chakbast in so far as patriotic poetry is concerned. I do not think there are more than a few poets in other languages too who can vie with him in this field.

Qualitatively the patriotic poetry of Chakbast is much superior to that of other poets. In these poems we see an ardent patriot in every mood—ebullient, frustrated, sorrowful, inspiring, chiding, etc. Let us see some examples. In 1918 he wrote a poem entitled *Nala-e-Dard* when moderate leaders left the Congress. Chakbast justified their action in his magazine. All the same, his heart bled at the national disunity and he said:

27

Chakbast

WELL Typeset

FINAL PDF 02-05-17

*The shape of the garden is changed these days
When buds and flowers will evaporate like dew
If this is the way things are to change
There will be turmoils that stun everybody
O moral courage, it is time for taking a test
For our dear compatriots are getting angry with us
The unhappy mother cries and none listens to her
Heart from liver and brothers from brothers are separating.*

What is particularly noteworthy is the fact that though the poet does not think very high of the new Congress leaders — and says so in the earlier part of the poem—he still terms the two factions as brothers and declares the disunity bad for the country.

In 1914 he wrote a poem to bid farewell to the Indian soldiers leaving for the European battlefields. The poem is a fine example of stirring and inspiring poetry. Here is a stanza from it:

*O heroes of the nation, return after showing your prowess
Come back after erasing the pride of haughty Germany
Come back after shaking the base of the Kaiser's throne
Come back after letting the rivers of blood flow in Berlin
This is the Ganga where warriors should bathe
They should cross the ferry on the boat of sword.*

Controlled Inspiration

When you inspire soldiers you have to tell them to destroy the enemy. But the metal of the poet and the type of his patriotism reflects the tradition of the *Kshatriya Dharma* of India when he says:

*Although the pelf of the Kaiser must be eliminated
Your sword fire should not consume the garden of culture
In the temple of your heart let the lamp of grace remain burning
“Your swords should not be stained with the blood of the innocent*

*This (barbarity) makes nations destroy themselves
Murder of the innocent is hell for a soldier.*

Another example of ebullient, inspiring poetry is provided in his poem "Watan Ka Raag" written in 1917. Here is a stanza from it:

*If our captors put us in fetters
We shall inhabit the prisons gladly
Even if the prison guards fall asleep
We shall awaken them by this chant
It is futile to demand thorn instead of flower
We don't want paradise in exchange for Home Rule.*

Here in his poetic zeal Chakbast has transcended the limits imposed by his creed of constitutional struggle and has supported and praised the method of passive resistance which Gandhiji had introduced.

In the poem "Faryad-e-Qaum", written in 1914 on the plight of Indians in South Africa, Chakbast adopts a tone of impatient urgency and addresses his compatriots in this manner:

*If you keep lying low how will you hold your head high
How can you defeat the enemy of the nation
How can you wipe off the disgrace of (submitting to tyranny)
What stones will you relate to your children
Their mothers will keep them telling
"In your veins runs the blood of the shameless ones."*

Chakbast utilises humour too for the purposes of patriotism. In the poem castigating Lord Curzon, Viceroy of India, for the convocation address given by him at the University of Calcutta, Chakbast says:

*O my God, what an unfavourable wind has blown
To have brought here this refuse (the Viceroy) from London
There are still a few brave fighters here*

*Who roll up their sleeves against you
You will not forget till the doomsday
The shouts of Gokhale at you and the admonitions which
Mehta gave you.*

28

Chakbast

WELL Typeset

FINAL PDF 02-05-17

We have seen that Chakbast adopts every sort of approach while dealing with patriotic themes, including pathos. Note his pathetic tone in the elegy he wrote at the death of Bal Gangadhar Tilak in 1920. He was opposed to the political methodology of Tilak; but he considered him a great patriot and opens the elegy like this:

*Death has struck a great blow under the cover of night
Is it the glow of morning in the land or the dust of mourning?
The battle is dampened; the leader is asleep
There is no more the lion's roar, the lair is empty
Helplessness is overwhelming, the fortune is lost
The nation has nearly dropped its sword.*

I close this topic with two of his *ghazal* couplets devoted to patriotism:

*A wizard has made me landless in my land,
Neither India belongs to me nor I belong to India.
The desire for national freedom in my heart is like,
The reflection of stars in the water of the Ganga.*

Views on Life

Chakbast has been rightly hailed as a predominantly patriotic poet. But the matter does not end here. Despite his meagre efforts at poetry and his insistence on treating poetry as a means and not as an end, there are elements of individual thinking in his *ghazals* and *rubais*. *Ghazal* leaves the imagination of poets free and hence if there is any individual view of life in a poet it comes out in some of his *ghazal* couplets.

Philosophical observations in *ghazal* have a long history. Since

the time of “Hafiz” Shlrazi philosophical utterances have been constantly finding place in Persian and Urdu *ghazals*. At this juncture it is essential to note the difference between the traditional and the individual philosophical thoughts. Sufism has been influencing Persian and Urdu poetry for over 700 years—even before Hafiz. Sufism is a complete and powerful philosophy but it was not developed by poets. Despite the bulk of poets more or less adhering to this philosophy their enunciation of the components and corollaries of this philosophy cannot be termed as philosophical observations because these are things that have been taught and subsequently found correct. True philosophical observations are those utterances which come out as a result of individual observances of life.

Truly philosophical observations, like those of Iqbal, require clearcut enunciation of principles. But we cannot draw a sharp dividing line between philosophy and non-philosophy. There may be occasions when the traditional philosophy is presented in such a way that a new aspect manifests therein; in such a case the observation should be termed philosophical. Also, sometimes philosophical queries may be posed in a way as to suggest particular answers. These queries too should be recognised as philosophical observations.

Chakbast has not been accepted as a philosophical poet. He himself did not consider himself one. There is no piece of writing by him explaining any basic problem of life. He believed in the strength of Hinduism and, in politics, in the creed of nationalism based on constitutional, democratic action. These things he learnt from others and he also taught these to others. But this much can be said with confidence that had Chakbast not given first priority to his social and political mission and had he chosen to develop his personal views of life he would have been a philosopher poet because his individual thinking is clear and unambiguous. Some of his couplets have been quoted often on account of their novelty of approach but as yet no effort has been made to assess his views on life.

This is in spite of the fact that about 15 per cent of his *ghazal* and *rubai* verses show individuality of thought and approach. As

29

Chakbast

WELL Typeset

FINAL PDF 02-05-17

I see it, Chakbast in these observations looks like a tough soldier in the battle of life. He is inspired by reason and a robust view of life which is the speciality of the British philosophical thought. At the same time he cannot shut his eyes to the hard realities of life. This, perhaps unconsciously, leads him to accept a philosophy of contradictions. Besides these three predominant notes there are secondary notes of realism bordering on materialism (despite his belief in the Vedic monism), traditionalism and ethical urges. Humanism and aesthetics also emerge occasionally in his *ghazals*.

Chakbast’s observance of life begins with ebullience. Here are some examples:

*It is only the listlessness which is known as old age
And what is called youth is the youth of temperament
This is the zeal for life, and that is moroseness
Nothing else are the springtime and fall of the world garden*

.....
*My wine is youth and my tavern is my heart
I have neither the wine-jar nor bottle nor cup*

.....
*A conscious entity brings out both miracles
Flow in the waves and youth in man*

.....
*I have my place in friends’ hearts, I remain happy
This, only this is my paradise.*

Acceptable Ebullience

It is to be noted that this zest for life is not uncontrolled or irresponsible. This ebullience is pleasing not only to oneself but to others too. However, the hard realities of life force one to observe, like the Buddha, the depressing nature of the existence. Chakbast sees it and expresses it without borrowing from any other philosophy. In fact I feel the first vibrations of pure pathos—so much in vogue today under the influence of existentialism—in the poetry of Chakbast. Here are some examples:

*Whereto should I flee from the arena of existence
I am unable to find a new earth and a new sky*

*If one has dreams of life in the sleep of death
It is futile to die being fed up with life*

*The life is a tale of hard days
The cup of life is for taking poison*

*When we came to the world from the state of non-existence
We did not know that the craze for life will enter our head*

*I do not know why the chant of unhappy life does not end
The body is certainly bound to earth but not the soul.*

The logical outcome of this diversity of feeling is the acceptance of contradictions of life as a reality. I do not think Chakbast had read either Hegel or the Vedantic philosophy. His own observations led him to compose such couplets as the following:

*It is heresy to accuse Him who has created the heart
Only the desire created by the heart is blamed*

*O nightingale, look at the garden with sober eyes
The signs of the fall have burst out from the flowers*

*O owner of rubies and pearls don't tread underfoot the flower
It is meant for adorning the turbans of poor men*

*The bud laughed and said how funny the world is
That which is called the life of the flower is my death*

*The shroud of the bud was torn to dress the flower
Now it is clear how sorrow gives birth to gaiety*

*I reflect as I see the stars at night
The sorrow spots of the sky are the candles of earth*

This state of mind gives birth to realism bordering on materialism. Chakbast never accepted materialism as his personal philosophy, but he says;

*While living in the world the wish of giving up desires
Is like running away from one's own shadow*

*What is life? An arrangement of nature's elements
And what is death? Disintegration of these components*

*After death what is the use of the memorial ?
As we have seen our end the same our tomb will see*

But I am surprised how this realism made Chakbast say a thing which was later confirmed by Carl Gustav Jung in a scientific way:

*The electric charge of our thought will remain in air and water
This handful of dust (body) is perishable and may end*

Agnosticism with Ethics

At the same time an attitude of curiosity and a subsequent attitude of agnosticism develops. Here are some examples from such *ghazal* couplets of Chakbast:

*Those who know doubt the existence of God too
Alas for those who call a man God*

*If this world and the other world were manifestations
of His power*

Why have I set foot in this world

*I have seen the end of the intoxication of life's wine
Let us see what shape the death's hangover takes*

*The mystery of will and determinism remains unsolved
The policy of God is still hidden behind the curtain*

For all his realism Chakbast never lets go the thread of morality and ethics from his hands. This note is very clear in his couplets:

*He is high in the rank of courtesy
He is the light of the eyes of civilisation
For man humility is a great quality
Only he is great who bows before the lowly.*

*After destroying the qualities of righteousness and respectability
We blame our hard luck for our condition*

*The teacher of world does not give a test to those
Who learn the lesson of this life with eyes open*

*Only he has tended the garden of love
Who has considered his very labour the fruit of labour.*

Two other elements are very clearly discernible in the *ghazal* poetry of Chakbast. These are humanism and aesthetics. It is worthwhile to see a few examples showing these elements:

*A feeling heart, inclination to love and desire for righteousness
Only this is humanity and this is the shape of humans*

*In this ocean of life look at the pearl with the eyes of mussel
And look at the orphans with motherly glances*

*I kept my heart acquainted with the service of man
And kept my heart's mirror polished with love*

And here are a few examples of the finesse of thought:

*I live on the shoulder of breeze like the bird of odour
My nest does not prove a burden to any bough*

*There is no destruction for the colour and smell of love
The springtime of the mortal world may come and go*

*The blackness of my enemy's heart made my heart clean
There the dust gathered and here the quality of brilliance came up*

*Consider it a seal of nature on the document of beauty
When a flower appears from a clod of earth.*

I have found two couplets of Chakbast reflecting the Hindu concept of reincarnation and a single couplet reflecting extreme radicalism in which he talks of burning down the world in order to reconstruct it. I think these should be taken as exceptions and should be ignored.

On the whole, the philosophy of Chakbast is realistic and there is no element of mysticism therein. All the same, a tone of sobriety, reason and social responsibility rings throughout his observations.

Portrayal of Nature

A strange misconception about Urdu poetry is that it is essentially introverted and lacks in unison with the nature. Certainly the dominant note of Persian and Urdu poetry has not been admiration of the nature for its own sake. But there has been description of the nature as a support to the human feelings from the very beginning. Not only in the *masnavis* there have been descriptions of natural scenery but in *ghazals* too scenes of gardens, forests, deserts, rivers and seas have been interwoven with erotic and ecstatic feelings. Later on, with the development of *marsiya*, description of the nature was given a definite place in the form of *chehra* (introduction). Anees and Dabeer, the two

top *marsia* composers of the 19th century, excelled in describing natural scenes and embellishing these with attractive and exquisite similes and metaphors.

In the last quarter of the 19th century a movement started under the leadership of Hali and Mohammad Husain "Azad" for introducing the robust elements of English poetry in Urdu. Since English poetry excels in description of the nature a lot of poems describing natural scenes were written. But this trend suffered from a great weakness. It was simple to the extent of being flat while the Indian mind wants everything with a blend of imagery.

Chakbast had been greatly influenced by the style of Anees and wrote almost all his poems in the *musaddas* (sixsome) form with the same torrential flow of diction as shown by Anees. He begins his poems written for the sessions of the Conference of Kashmiri Pandits with long introductions comprising natural scenes. These introductions are appropriate because the Kashmiris are wont to love Kashmir and the mere mention of Kashmir brings before the mind's eye the most beautiful natural scenes. An example of Chakbast's way of dealing with the subject of description of nature is given here in the form of two stanzas from one of his early long poems, "Muraqqa-e-Ibrat" written for the 1898 session of the above-mentioned conference;

*Those hill birds on the banks of hill streams
That cool breeze, those merciful pearl-dropping clouds
Those nice-coloured fruits, those lush gardens
Where lengthy sickness is cured in a moment
This garden of my land is a picture of paradise
It is a proud creation of the gardener of the world (God)*

.....
*The green belt (of Kashmir) is a world of light
Every bough seems the bush of Divine Light on Mt. Sinai
Bunches of grapes look like clusters of stars
Even thorns there look like eye-lashes of hours
No singer can produce such beautiful voice
As the flow of water in the rivulets produces.*

Occasionally Chakbast tried to write descriptive poems in the new style of Hali and Azad. An example is his poem on the rainy season written in 1900. It is a short poem of 12 couplets but stands nowhere near the long poem of Hali on the same topic. Hali describes every possible detail of the season in a perfectly integrated style. We feel, while reading the poem, that we are transported to the Lahore of the 19th century in the rainy season. The couplets of Chakbast are rather disjointed and he has introduced the *ghazal* element in the poem by bringing in a number of liquor themes. Obviously this was not the style of Chakbast. It is also one of his earliest poems and can be described as an experiment which was not successful. His own style of nature's description is discernible in his poem in praise of Dehra Dun, which was written in 1916. A sustained though forceful description, blended with philosophical musings is the speciality of this beautiful poem. Here are a few couplets from it as examples of the style of Chakbast:

*The whole city is free from dust and dirt
Wherever you cast your glance there is greenery
All stones and bricks are draped in green
Instead of dust one sees in the air the colour of grass
How can autumn affect this abode of freshness!
For mountains are protecting it in their dressfolds
It has shady trees, green bushes, irrigated land,
Cool and gentle breeze and clear streams of water
There is no dearth of the paraphernalia of freshness
The spring season has come to stay in this garden.*

Classicism

Before trying his hand at the new style of natural poetry of Hali, Chakbast wrote a poem of pure natural description in the ornate style of Anees. He was more successful in this and he maintained this style with a little decrease in ornateness in the

other poem wherein he described natural scenes. This poem, entitled "Jalva-e-Subh", describes the scene of morning. Some couplets are given here as examples. He begins with a torrent of similes:

*There was a wonderful state of light in the river of sky
The sun was gyrating like a whirlpool
As the waves of its rays heaved like sparks
The stars constantly vanished like bubbles
The flood of morning was raging from east to west
And at last the boat of the moon sank down.*

Then there is pure description albeit with the magnificent fluency of old masters like Anees and Dabeer:

*That state of the morning! That state of the garden!
Flying birds were singing in unison
The morning breeze was blowing constantly
The greenery was resting under the sheet of dew
From every side came chants of nightingales
And the morning breeze was opening the knots of buds.*

The classical style of the description of nature almost always turned the nature into a worshipper of God. The poems of Nazcer are replete with such examples in which, even when enumerating birds, he described all of them singing praises of God. Chakbast too has brought in this aspect of classicism and goes on to say :

*In the morning garden birds in a state of ecstasy
Sang jointly the praises of the gardener of the world
Here and there boughs bowed as if in prayer
And the dew drops told the beads of God's name
The buds too recited the praises of God
When they broke into flowers they said God is great.*

Chakbast seems to be wedded to nature. He wrote poems

purely for describing natural scenes, for arousing patriotic feelings as in the two poems written for children and, as introduction, in the *marsia* style, to long poems. There is not anything much remarkable in these; others too did so. His remarkable love for nature is seen when descriptions of nature appear at places where one least expects them. For example, in the poem full of invectives against Lord Curzon he begins with a description of the morning scene in the style of the *tashbeeb* of *qaseeda*:

*The multiitude of stars in the sky in the dark night
Vanished as the earth took a turn
Lo! the morning star shone in the east
And the bride of the morning light unveiled herself
The guard of paradise opened its gates
And the paradise garden sent out its flowers' smell
The old firmament woke up at the crowing of
The cock who had heard the sly cat coming
When the morning breeze tickled its sides
The green lawn turned on its side charmingly
The garden is presenting a scene of fairyland
Are these flowers or a multitude of fairies?*

Still more remarkable is the fact that even in elegies he brings in this element. A stanza in the elegy written at the death of Ganga Parshad Varma is given as an example:

*The trees are green and water flows in channels
Rays of the setting sun are illuminating the fountain
There are newly-bloomed flowers and the fine turf*

*It is the evening time and there is a gathering of friends
But where are you, the lover of this garden,
The spring season has come here to meet you.*

In the elegy written at the death of Tilak there is the following stanza:

*Was it the news of your death or the death of Maharashtra?
Not only men but even stones were mournfully silent
The leaves drooped and the forest trees withered
And the gushing rivers held back their flow
The cool, refreshing mountain breeze stopped
And for some time stars lost their lustre.*

In view of these poems I am constrained to differ from Al-e-Ahmad "Saroor" when he says that Chakbast had only a superficial love for nature.

Pictures of Emotions

Emotion is the basis of poetry. We seek great ideas in the works of great poets. It is all right. But even a great poet must be first a poet and only thereafter should strive for greatness. It means that a strong emotional base is necessary for every sort of poetry, great or small. With Chakbast this base is very stable.

Emotions are of various kinds—glee, anger, wender, hatred, pathos, love, etc. Generally all emotions are infectious to some extent. In normal conditions we feel pleased when we see others laughing and we get tense when we see someone gnashing his teeth. But the most infectious emotion is that of pathos. Unless you are abnormal or unduly anxious about yourselves you cannot ignore the shrieks of an afflicted one. That is why in every epic the most remembered parts are those dealing with wails and the most remarkable poems are the pathetic ones.

Urdu poetry has predominance of pathos but is not limited to it. Other emotions too are dealt with effectively. It is true that Urdu has had, as yet, no all-pervading creative artist like Shakespeare who provokes every sort of emotion with equal dexterity. Even great poets like Ghalib and Anees lag behind Shakespeare in this regard. All the same, they have successfully portrayed a considerable number of emotions—some of them contradictory to each other—very effectively.

Chakbast can vie neither with Anees nor with Ghalib in dealing with the variety of emotions. But he is not much behind

them for we find him dealing with different sorts of emotions with natural ease. From the very beginning he had been influenced by Anees. I think even now if an Urdu poet wishes to learn the technique of portrayal of emotions he should look to Anees. Besides, Chakbast had great regard for poets like Atish and Ghalib who portrayed various sorts of emotions with rare self-confidence.

Despite his taking up his pen with the object of serving the nation and his community, Chakbast is very remarkable when he deals with pathetic feelings. The reason is obvious. A mere versifier might have completely given up pathos as it is supposedly conducive to inaction. But Chakbast was an extremely sensitive man and hence his heart melted at the smallest tragedy. This accounts for the fact that out of the 45 poems he wrote, eight were elegies at the deaths of friends and leaders and two on collective tragedies—one on the split of the Congress and the other on the termination of an organisation of young Kashmiri Brahmins.

It is not only quantitatively but also qualitatively that Chakbast's pathetic themes are significant. A few examples will illustrate this fact. A stanza in the elegy written at the death of his friend, Partap Kishan Gurtu, in 1904 runs as follows :

*O you, lover of the sleep of death, do you know
What wails and cries are ringing by your side
What heart-rending shrieks and what breast-beating
Who has torn his clothes and who is dashing his head
Who is convulsing in agony, who is fed up with life
Who has scattered her hair ? How tragic is all this!*

In the elegies at the deaths of leaders too Chakbast has introduced an element of personal tragedy besides the portrayal of national tragedy. A stanza from the elegy of Gokhale is as follows :

*Everyone has to fall in the snare of death
But my heart still does'nt reconcile itself with your death*

*They call such a grief enormous as mountain
The death liquidated us by liquidating you
It is the bier of India (not yours) that emerges from your house
And the marital bliss of (the bride of) the nation is being
consumed on your pyre.*

The poem read at the last session of the Kashmiri Youngmen Association lamenting its disintegration begins like this :

*To whom to say and how to say what I want to say
I have to relate the last tale of sincerity
The hopes which we began to nurse in our childhood
I have to tell of their end
I am not oblivious of the ailment of the community
But while I gave medicine then, now I (only) pray
How I can tell what afflictions I had in the end
The disintegration of the community grew and I just looked on.*

The poem entitled “Ramayan ka ek Scene” is a high mark in the portrayal of emotions. In this respect it can vie with the most moving *marsiya*. The scene is of the meeting of Rama with his mother before his sojourn in forests. Says Kaushalya, mother of Rama:

*Had I been born in a poor family
I would not have had such afflictions
Power and pelf would not have bitten me like snake
You, my darling, are not less than any kingdom to me
I shall be happy if someone burns down this crown and throne
What shall I do with the kingdom when you are not there.*

The *ghazals* of Chakbast are marked for their philosophical and patriotic qualities and the element of pathos in these is less than what an average poet of Urdu introduces in his *ghazals*. Yet there are several *ghazal* couplets with deep pathos. Here are some examples:

*I remained unhappy and a failure, I had a bad luck
Every bough that I put my hand on broke down*

.....
*If I get a little space in the graveyard of the poor
I shall like to build a small grave for my sad heart*

.....
*Let no one's luck be so unfavourable (as mine)
For every flower that I pick turns into a stone*

.....
*The world gave me the robe of honour of funeral shroud Why,
o bride of death, do you still keep away from me ?*

.....
*Just like moonlight in the graveyard of the poor
Is the condition of my smitten heart in happy moments*

.....
*The cover of night is good for my house of sorrow
For this house looks more desolate in the morning*

Stirring Poetry

As already said, Chakbast excelled in pathos but his emotional poetry is not limited to pathos. He is an excellent poet of surging emotions. In the matter of eulogising his heroes or challenging the enemy or inspiring others for action he is almost unparalleled and many couplets of his ebullient poems had been learnt by heart by a whole generation after his death. We have seen some examples of such emotions in the pages dealing with patriotism. Here are some other examples. In the poem hailing Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya and others who were touring the country for collecting funds for the Banaras Hindu University he says :

*These are no such beggars as beg for themselves
They are not captivated by worldly greed
They are not rich but have a wealth of heart
Don't call him a man who does not help them*

*They have given up all their personal wealth
And have adopted asceticism for your benefit.*

In the same poem he adopts a tone of prophetic warning. Here is a stanza:

*What is this famine, this plague, these epidemics
The wrath of God has descended on your nation
Whenever a community gets astray from the right path
It is punished some day in this manner
This is the way a nation gets ruined
And this is how afflictions of the poor spell devastation*

In the poem on the condition of the Indians in South Africa entitled "Faryad-e-Qaum" Chakbast adopts a shrieking tone of emergency in his appeal for action to help the afflicted ones. Here is a stanza:

*Where are the chiefs of the country, leaders of the nation?
Every wall and door calls them for succour
From the earth of India emerge signs of turmoil
The earth shakes, blood is flying like dust
The land of Chittor has moved from its place
For several days has been shaking Akbar's grave.*

A bold, enthusiastic declaration of the nation's determination for achieving the Home Rule is made in the poem entitled "Awaza-e-Qaum", written in 1916. Here a stanza is given for providing an example of the tone adopted by Chak-bast in this poem:

*The world cannot suppress this holy zeal
The heat of the blood of our veins can't be ended
This is a fire no water can extinguish
Having come in the heart once, this desire cannot go
It is futile to demand thorn in exchange for flower
We shall not accept paradise in place of Home Rule.*

At times fury is discernible in his tone, for example, when referring to the orthodox elements in his community dead set against any social reform- The poem entitled "Barq-e-Islah", written in 1917, shows Chakbast as a herald of victory in the field of reform as it hails the first widow remarriage in his community. The whole poem is devoted to admiration for reformers and condemnation of the orthodoxy. Here is a stanza:

*Innumerable poor (girls) wasted away their youth
This community is guilty of this crime
Those who are devoted to old practices
Are considered now a shame by the world
There is no morality in oppressive stances
Innocents shouldn't be bound in chains.*

When in desperation Chakbast does not fight shy of using invectives. In the poem entitled "Nala-e-Dard" written at the time of the moderates' separation from the Congress, he refers to the dominant extremists like this:

*Who will lead the nation, I wonder
Every member of the nation's caravan is a leader
Spirit of service, honesty, decorum
All these qualities are sacrificed for self-projection
The beggars are clamouring for coming up
For the nation is to give away robes of honour
Those who watered the nation's garden with their tears
Are going to be branded as insincere
Those who care more for the wind direction than for the
destination
Are going to be the oarsmen of the nation's boat.*

His poem against Lord Curzon has been already referred to. And we have also seen its invective tone. It also contains rather ribald humour as an example of which three couplets are given:

*Now it is proper that you fly out of the cage
We shall be happy, so will be you and the trouble gone
If you agree to go, by your life
We shall raise subscription to buy you ticket for U.K.
And if you do not wish to take this obligation
We shall send you as a bearing packet.*

While ridiculing others Chakbast was also capable of laughing at himself. In the early days of his legal practice he wrote:

*When the angel of death came in my dream
My unhappy heart thought it was a client.*

Reflective Poems

Chakbast had neither the time nor the inclination for reflective sort of poetry. No doubt, his imageries are original whatever the subject he may choose for poetic composition. But his purpose remained to say the pre-conceived subject in the most effective way. However, being a poet by nature, he could not shed totally the reflective element from his compositions. In the poem entitled "Dard-e-Dil" which he wrote for the session of the Conference of Kashmiri Pandits in 1912, there occurs a stanza showing that the motive force of poetry, which remained mostly latent in his heart, sometimes found its way out. The stanza reads "

*Neither am I a poet nor a spiritual head nor a magician with words
In the variety show of nature I am dumb-founded like a picture
It is a condition of heart which comes out in words
My wails and cries do not need rhythm
I have no desire for fame or recognition
My heart is, like Joseph, disinterested in getting a buyer*

Generally, people see only the typical eastern humility in

such verses. That humility is there but to me the most remarkable is the line which says, "In the variety show of nature I am dumb-founded like a picture." This is how a poet's mind sees itself.

Such "dumb-foundedness" is the precondition for the nature to set itself on the screen of your heart. Unless the screen is spotless you can have no image on it. The poems of Chakbast sometimes show a wonderful quality of gulping down the images of nature not for reproducing them before others but precisely for oneself. His poem on the Imambara of Asif-ud-Daula is a high, class reflective poem. After inviting the tourist to look at this building in a moonlit night in complete silence he goes on to describe it as he himself sees it:

*How clean and delicate seem its walls and doors
And the moonlight enchants the eyes
We seem to think earth has nothing to do with it
It is held aloft by the fresh breeze
Suddenly the bewildered eyes seem to think
That clouds, properly moulded, came down to the earth
My self-forgetfulness asks how it has come to this world
For it is the brilliant dream of a master painter
I see a wonderful and attractive scene
From afar I am seeing a picturesque world.*

This sort of reflection is certainly not the colourful description of nature but it is still connected with the nature—as absorbed in the mind through a sense organ, the eye. In some other poems, like "Maazirat," written in 1917, we get similar observations. But the poet sometimes goes in still deeper reflections. In the poem entitled "Mazhab-e-Shairana" the poet identifies himself with the whole creation and says:

*What they call clouds is a tavern for me
And the flower of the garden my wine cup*

*The beauty of the garden is my state of intoxication
The call of cuckoo is my cry of ecstasy*

*The river is my mirror, the waves my locks
 And the morning breeze is the comb of my hair
 Every particle of dust is my friend and companion
 What is known as the world is my mansion
 I am my own friend and my own foe
 No one is my friend and none is stranger to me
 The fun is that I am both the lover and the beloved
 After whom I am mad is mad after me
 What is self and what is God ?
 In the world it is only my beauty everywhere
 I have got a light that everyone cannot get
 But he who can see dashes moth-like towards me
 The poet's remarks are no less than the ravings of a mystic
 ascetic
 My tale is one which every man cannot understand.*

Chakbast achieved this high mark of self-realisation in 1905, when he was only 23. Wherefrom did he get it ? There was very little in Urdu poetry which could have given him this fantastic idea. The only possibility, a very remote one, is the study of the poetry of Ghalib. Some verses of Ghalib reach near this level, but not in such clear-cut terms as remind one of the utterings of insane mystics like Mansoor Hallaj or Sarmad. Chakbast too did not develop this trend in his subsequent poetry and hence we are unable to trace its source. The only source is indicated in a fairly late poem entitled "Jalva-e-Maarifat" or the philosophy of the Vedas which Chakbast wrote on a friend's request for the purpose of being used as inscription in a library of religious books. He says therein:

*That which creates the youthful gusto in man
 Is the same element which gives flow to rivers
 The same is colour in flowers, air around mountains
 Blood in the veins of rose, piercing quality in thorn
 It is pride in the beauties, zest in lovers,
 Light in the candles, heartburn in the moths
 It takes the form of colour and smell in gardens
 And has rained in the form of clouds on mountains.*

Obviously at a very early stage Chakbast had digested the gist of the Vedantic philosophy which is a well-known source for such realisations. The self-confidence with which these poems are written rules out the possibility of superficial repetition of the old sayings. Then what could be the reason for ignoring this remarkable element except a determination for sacrificing everything at the altar of patriotism and social reform? Was the sacrifice worthwhile? Who can say yes or no definitely?

Hastiness

Chakbast spent all his life in Lucknow and imbibed in full measure the spirit of Lucknow. The poets of Lucknow are well known for their fastidiousness about the style and are ruthless in their criticism of poetry or prose so far as the correctness of usages and idioms and sustenance of the poetic logic is concerned. Chakbast himself criticised not only the views of Hali but also the compositions of Dagh and Iqbal without remorse. During the controversy about *Gulzar-e-Naseem*, Chakbast is believed to have made in anonymous articles published in *Avadh Punch*, severe criticism of the language of Abdul Haleem "Sharar". At least he supported by his silence the severe criticism of Sharar made by Sajjad Husain, editor of *Avadh Punch*.

However, no one is above mistakes and every person, in moments of hurry or forgetfulness, commits such mistakes as he or she would not have ignored while judging others. The critics of Lucknow including Chakbast, are no exception to this rule. It will be a futile attempt to justify everything that Chakbast said. He did commit certain obvious mistakes of diction. For example, at several places he uses the verb *dikhlaanaa* (to show) when Lucknow poets had long ago since the time of Nasikh given up words like *dikhlaanaa* and *batlaanaa* (to tell) and used in their place *dikhaanaa* and *bataanaa* respectively. Another lapse is the shortening of the final long vowels in Persian and Arabic words. According to the standards set by his time such concession was limited to the words of purely Indian origin. For example, it is all right to pronounce *aeee* (she came) like *aai* but it is improper

to pronounce *baaqee* (remaining) like *baaqi* even for fitting in the required meters. Chakbast has shortened the final long vowels in many Persian and Arabic words like *sargarmee*, *taazgee*, *shaadaabee*, *khudraaee*, *Haahee*, etc. He has also allowed the defect of *taaqeed* (jumbled word order) in hemistiches like *jagah se apni he Chittaur kee zameen sarkee*. Some words have been used in a way which is correct lexicographically but not according to the Urdu usage. For example *lage hen zakhm tarapne ka intizaam naheen* (though I am wounded I am not allowed to convulse). Here the word *intizaam* is used which in ordinary usage of Urdu means 'arrangement' and would be absurd here if taken in this sense. Some imageries of Chakbast are defective too. For example, in the poem entitled "Barsaat" there is a couplet:

*Everywhere on walls and doors grass is growing
It is the end of the summer and the beginning of the rains*

Such a couplet cannot be called poetry by any standard. The two hemistiches have no connection. Then, the imagery is wrong too; grass does not grow on walls in the beginning of the rains, it does so almost in the middle of the season. Also, the word *intihaa* in such contexts is ordinarily used to denote "extreme" rather than "end". It goes without saying that if the word is taken in the sense in which it is used ordinarily the couplet will lose its meaning; how can there be extreme heat when rains have begun?

But let no one think that Chakbast was weak in the style of diction or that he had great ideas but bad language. Nothing would be farther from the truth. Chakbast had poetry running in his veins and had no difficulty with smooth and also forceful flow of language even in those poems which he wrote when he was in his teens. It has been already explained that he had no time to revise his verses again and the above-mentioned drawbacks, although very much real, are no indicators of his ignorance or incapacity; these must be taken as the outcome of oversight.

Exquisite Imageries

The above conclusion is drawn on the basis of the evident beauty of diction and novelty and appropriateness of imageries found everywhere in his poems. The examples already given while dealing with the various aspects of his poetry amply bear this fact. Here I wish to give some specific examples of his dexterity with diction and the force of novel imageries. In the poem entitled "Khak-e-Hind" he says:

*Every morning it is the duty of the bright sun
To plait the locks of the Himalayas with its rays*

The beauty of this imagery will not be fully clear, particularly to the non-Urdu-speaking readers, without a little explanation. The word *chotee* is used both for the plaited hair of maidens and the top of mountain. The beauty of icy mountain tops shining in the morning sun needs no elaboration. Also remember that rich ladies in old Lucknow used brocade ribbons for plaiting their hair. Now compare the two pictures to realise the high mark of the poetry of Chakbast.

In the elegy for Ganga Parshad Varma there appears a couplet:

*When the breeze rustles in moonlit nights
We hear the throbs of the nation's heart*

So far as my knowledge goes such a subtle imagery had never been used in Urdu before Chakbast.

Here is another example. In the elegy for Gokhale Chakbast says:

*When your body was made by the decree of God
The ashes of some martyr were used to make your heart*

I wonder if it is possible to explain more effectively the restless, self-sacrificing, courageous and sincere heart of a patriot like Gopal Krishna Gokhale.

Or look at the following couplet from a poem describing the gaiety of a marriage ceremony which the poet was not able to attend:

*My wistful imagination is beholding the marriage scene
When night is scattering flowers of silver.*

One notes here that the simile of stars with silver flowers is entirely new and the appropriateness of this beautiful simile makes itself more clear when we remember that in traditional marriage in north India the head of the family of the bride-groom, when bringing the new couple from the house of the bride, flings away handfuls of silver coins to be looted by street urchins.

Sometimes the very simplicity of expression proves more effective than innovated imageries. Such a stage in composing poetry is reached only by skilled poets and is termed in Urdu as *sahl-e-mumtania* (prohibitive simplicity). Chakbast achieved this stage by expertise and sincerity of feelings. In the poem written for dedicating the collection of his poems to Bishun Narain Dar Chakbast says in the end:

*This is not the heart wound of the type which the world sees
I do not choose to make a show of my lamentations for you*

In the same poem there appears a hemistich:

This (your) image has been lighting the temple of my heart.

Allegories*

Another novel imagery is provided in the poem entitled “Awaza-e-Qaum” written to support the demand for Home Rule. After saying that adversaries accuse us of disunity and say that India is like a rainbow, which has no single colour, the poet says:

*If your loving eye adores the Home Rule
All colours will merge to make one light*

It is clear that this allegory was impossible in Urdu before poets learnt of the colour shaft of the prism in the science room of schools.

Talking of allegories we see Chakbast using the special technique of providing sustained allegories to illustrate a certain feeling. In the elegy for a friend entitled “Ek Jawanmarg Dost” he describes the condition of the widow in an allegory contained in a whole stanza:

*As if one is enjoying a charming melody in dream
Which captivates and enchants the heart
And then this exhilarating song is stopped
And on opening the eyes only darkness of night is seen
Imagine what the state of that afflicted heart will be
His wakeful state will seem a dream to him.*

Similarly in the elegy of Mahadev Govind Ranade the poet uses two sustained allegories to describe the catastrophe —one, the sudden extinguishing of a light which has been giving hope to a caravan which lost its way in a forest; the second, the sudden death of the experienced captain of a ship by lightning during a storm. The first allegory takes two and the second takes three stanzas. It seems Chakbast gave up the technique in his later poems. Personally I think it was a charming technique though it lacked in crispness.

The most charming allegory, however is in a stanza in the poem entitled “Jalva-e-Subh” which describes the morning scene as similar to the one witnessed when Moses saw the light of God:

* I have found no other word more appropriate to denote the complete parallel world of similes or metaphors referred to herein after that ‘allegory’ though the exact meaning of the term is not the same.—
“Kaif”.

*Before the eye was the scene of the Aiman valley
Every tree and bough seemed the tree of mount
Tur In the fire of flowers was seen the divine light
And the birds were lost in ecstasy like Moses
Every bough looked like the white hand (of Moses)
In the hand of the flower-picker of morning was the flower of
miracle.*

Chakbast is very sensitive while choosing similes or meta-phors and these fit in the subject he is taking up. Such care makes the reading very smooth and natural. Compare the above series of Islamic imageries to the similes used in his poem entitled "Gaai" (cow) :

*Whether you are black or white my eyes say
That is the evening of Vrindavan and this the morning of
Mathur*

The pen pictures drawn by Chakbast are perfect not only in his portrayal of pathetic or enthusiastic scenes. His aesthetic sensitivity is able to create perfect motion pictures. Here are four lines from the poem on Lord Krishna :

*The lively and pretty damsels of Gokul
Are coming with pitchers of Yamuna water
Their hearts frolic in youthful exuberance
They only giggle when their feet slip*

I close this topic with the forceful, lively description with smooth and flowing onomatopoeic word clusters in the opening stanza of the poem written for giving a sendoff to Indian soldiers;

*They are going to the battlefield with sword and funeral shroud
They, sword smiters, throwers of lightning, destroyers of forts,
they go.*

The second hemistich in original reads: "*Teghzan, barq fagan, qila shikanjaate hain.*"

There should be no doubt that the verses of Chakbast are sheer pleasure if read without accepting his message. This condition is hypothetical because Chakbast's sincerity is infectious and no sensitive reader can reject his message.

Prose Writings

Although the prose writings of Chakbast are not much talked of I think these are no less important than his poems. His pen was as facile in Urdu prose as it was in poetry. From the very beginning he had been writing articles for *Kashmir Darpan*, a magazine brought out by the community organisation of Kashmiri Brahmins. Some time later he also wrote for prestigious literary magazines like *Zamana*, *Adeeb* and *Urdu-e-Mualla*. He also wrote in a humorous vein for the humour magazine, *Avadh Punch*. Later, when *Avadh Punch* closed down Chakbast wrote several articles about the contributors of *Avadh Punch* for the commemorative volume for the magazine *Guldasta-e-Avadh Punch*, but the bulk of his prose writings is contained in the volumes of the magazine he himself brought out. It was *Subh-e-Ummed* which started in October, 1918, and continued publication for three or four years. It was so because most of the matter in the political magazines in those days was written by the editor himself.

The contents of his prose writings have been already discussed. Here I want to say a few words about the style of his prose writings.

In Urdu even to this day prose has not been able to free itself completely from the ornate style of yore. Certainly, the rhymed phrases and the plethora of words semantically connected with the main topic is nowhere to be seen now. But even in serious literary criticism we find a multitude of similes, metaphors and allegories which often only serve to blur the main theme and I have a doubt that quite often this style is adopted to conceal the weakness of the grasp the critic has on the subject of his criticism.

On the other hand there are several other prose writers who have adopted an extremely simple style bordering on insipidity and boring monotony.

At the time of Chakbast Urdu prose had just started as a regular literary medium. Till the middle of the 19th century we find either *dastan* (the old type of interesting tales of genii, fairies, miracle-performing ascetics, wizards, beautiful princesses and handsome princes) or letters and prefaces of books. In all these writings a top-heavy style was adopted. It was based on rhymed phrases, a high-sounding vocabulary and a plethora of imageries only remotely connected with the main topic. In letters the purport was firstly hidden in a thick garb of similes and metaphors and, secondly, sandwiched between tonnes of verbiage at both ends; this verbiage was indulged into only to show off the writer's knowledge of Persian and Arabic. In the prefaces of books you came across the same showy verbiage and knew nothing about the book itself.

Ghalib introduced a free, effortless and sincere style in letter writing but the really realistic and attractive style of the prose was introduced by Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan and his supporters. Even among these supporters there was Mohammad Husain "Azad" who was fond of a new kind of ornate style in which words were simpler as compared with those of the *dastans* but a greater element of poetry was introduced by using similes, metaphors and allegories to an extent which frequently proved burdensome. But other writers of this group—Sir Sayyid, Nazeer Ahmad, Zakauillah, Hali and others—adopted a sober and reasonably rhetoric style which is considered the ideal style even today.

Lucknow Style

Apart from it, in Lucknow there developed a prose style which was more ornate and heavy than that of 'Hali' but it was much easier than the old style. The top exponent of this style was Pandit RatanNath "Sarshar" whose immortal work, "Fasana-e-Azad", gained popularity mainly on account of its style of writing. Despite being more persianised and arabicised than the

style of Hali it was so lively and ebullient that even moderately educated readers found it absolutely grasping.

Chakbast was much influenced by the creative talent of Sarshar but, strangely enough, it was only occasionally that he seems to go after the ebullient style of Fasana-e-Azad. At the same time, he seems to have liked the picturesque style of Mohammad Husain "Azad" and at some places we see the glimpses of this poetic prose style in the writings of Chakbast. It is difficult to show the style of prose writing in translation but imaginative readers will not find it very difficult to feel the essential characteristics of the prose style Chakbast adopted.

In an article published in the 27-8-1903 issue of *Avadh Punch* Chakbast ridiculed Hali for the latter's criticism of "Gulzar-e-Naseem" and has adopted to a certain extent the ebullient and light prose style of Sarshar. Here is the translation of a few lines therefrom : "One day I was lost in a stroll in Gulzar-e-Naseem (literally : the garden of 'Naseem') when two or three gusts of cool breeze struck me. The spring season so much intoxicated me that I slept. But vow! as I slept my fortune awoke. In the world of dreams I saw such a scene as proved an eye opener. What I saw was that it was the pleasant time of morning and I was taking a stroll in a garden that looked like paradise and was decorated like a bride. In a corner of this there were placed two or three chairs but these were unoccupied. There was a complete silence, only a nightingale—reciter of a thousand tales—was sitting on a branch of a rose tree and was chirruping merrily."

In an article on the topic of history (published in the magazine *Risala-e-Tahzeeb* and included in *Mazameen-e-Chakbast*) Chakbast has adopted the ornate style of Mohammad Husain "Azad". Here is an excerpt from it:

In short, a travel in the world of history provides a wonderful wealth of spiritual ecstasy and cleanses the mirror of intellect. As soon as one sets one's foot in this world the sun of experience comes out shedding such a brilliance as gives light to the eyes of the heart. In this world one sees the great highway of civilization and progress. Its one end is the beginning of God's creation and the other is the end of the existence. At its halting places are seen the beautiful streams. At some places one sees

those persons sitting in monasteries who spent their lives in search for religion and philosophy and lit such lamps by their brilliant minds as cannot be put out by gusts of opposing winds and whose light even to this day shows the proper destination to many a castaway. At other places one witnesses those enchanting gatherings which are full of great artists, prosodists and poets and where the bouquets of literary finesse are spreading their odours and the wine of poetry is passing round. At still other places one sees the awesome images of those strong-bodied and lion-hearted young persons whose faces shed the light of bravery and the water (brilliance) of whose swords has been irrigating and keeping in full bloom till this day the gardens of the glory and prestige of different nations.

Like Court Arguments

But the style adopted in most of his prose writings was more or less that of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan. In my opinion he did not copy it from any prosodist. It came naturally and effortlessly to him because from the very beginning Chakbast had been influenced by great lawyers like Bishun Narain Dar and was impressed by their style of arguments in courts. Subsequently he himself became a lawyer and spoke in courts and wrote in magazines in the same style.

While arguing a case in a court a lawyer has to be cent-per-cent logical and sequential because he has to appeal to the reason of the presiding officer. At the same time he has to put in a splash of rhetorics and ornateness because he has to impress his client and others present in the court room. Sir Sayyid and his supporters too had to face a similar situation— the court room in their case being the general body of educated Muslims. Hence the style of Chakbast tallied with Sir Sayyid's style. In order to complete the illustrations of styles I give below the translation of an excerpt from his magazine, *Subh-e-Ummid* of January-February, 1920 :

In view of the atmosphere of the Congress sessional Amritsar, most of the sincere minds wonder what the fate of this splendid

national organisation is going to be. The style of the resolutions and speeches there, even after the publication of the reform law and the royal declaration, makes it clear that the present captains of the ship of the Congress are not performing their duty with intelligence and efficiency and consider the worship of popular turmoil the zenith of their political careers. The only way left to attain a position in the durbar of the Congress is to bid good-bye to moderation and diplomatic sobriety and to flaunt only glibness of tongue and to incite feelings. Notwithstanding the question whether the resolution on the recall of Lord Chelmsford was proper or not, the speech made by Mr. Sathyaraurthy in favour of this resolution indicated that he did not consider the national parliament of India (the Congress) any better than a roadside crowd. For such leaders political training, experience and sincerity of purpose are out of currency.

Chakbast also wrote humorous prose and adopted two styles in such writings. His articles published in his name are full of exuberance and ebullience, albeit with modesty. Here and there a sharp phrase occurs but the bulk can be read with a soft smile. But in his anonymous writings—particularly in such writings as appearing in *Avadh Punch*—he adopted a tone which a sober person will never adopt. The jokes are very sharp and “sometimes border on vulgarity. The only defence that can be put up is that he wrote in the style when he was not even 25.

Clarity and unambiguity are seen in every line that Chakbast wrote. In his predominant style—that of forceful argumentation—this quality is essential but even in his ornate writings there is not even one phrase which does not make its sense clear at once.

Drama

Chakbast also tried his hand at drama writing and wrote a very long drama, *Kamala*. It comprises over 120 printed pages. It was first published in 1915 by his journalist and litterateur friend, Kishan Parshad Kaul. But it went into oblivion very soon. In

1971 it was again published from Allahabad with a preface by Dr. Atiya Nishat. Again it has gone out of market.

Perhaps Chakbast himself did not think much of this drama. For writing dramas one has to at least be a regular theatre goer if not an actor. Chakbast, a puritan from head to foot, could never think of witnessing a theatrical show as the educated gentry of his time considered it below their dignity to witness any “vulgar” love scenes. Perhaps the only motivation to Chakbast for writing a drama was that drama was considered part of sophisticated literature in English.

We cannot think of any other motivation. Chakbast was a great protagonist of social reform but this drama does not seem to be aiming at any particular social reform in an unambiguous manner. Moreover, I very much doubt whether his typically middle-class mind could ever accept drama as a medium of social reform. Drama was at that time, as cinema is at the present time, an entertainment for the masses who were more uneducated at the time of Chakbast than they are at present.

Anyway, this drama was a failure—the only unsuccessful writing of Chakbast. Its foremost defect is its length which makes it unstageable. Then, its plot is rather confused and directionless. It is the story of a girl, daughter of a very rich but utterly uneducated, orthodox and ill-tempered landlord. Her brother is an England-returned man who can tolerate nothing that is Indian. The husband of Kamala’s sister, Vimala, is a rogue who makes an agreement with a vagabond that the latter will be got married to Kamala and thereafter would give half of the expected dowry to him (the intriguer). These conflicting interests lead to the ouster of Kamala from her household and her subsequent suicide and also her intriguing brother-in-law’s death by snake-bite.

There are other defects in the piece besides the confused, complicated and aimless plot. The characterisation is quite tolerable although static but the dialogues are thoroughly unconvincing and loose. Every word uttered by Kamala’s England-returned brother is such as one would not hear any-where. It is surprising why foreign education has been so

much ridiculed by Chakbast in this drama when earlier he had taken up the gauntlet against the orthodox members of his community for the defence of Bishun Narain Dar at the latter’s return from England in face of the threat of excommunication of Dar. The dialogues also lack crispness.

44

Chakbast

WELL Typeset

FINAL PDF 02-05-17

Conclusion

Critics in general have considered Chakbast a poet of patriotism and a protagonist of communal amity. We have already seen that these elements are predominating in his creations. But to confine the evaluation of Chakbast to these features is doing scanty justice to him.

In the later years—particularly after the attainment of independence by India—even the patriotism of Chakbast was not considered up to the mark for the simple reason that he was a moderate and a liberal and could not reconcile himself with the idea of mass action. In his time there was no talk of socialism in the political arena of the nation. Had he lived for another 25 years he would have got a further shock—the shock of socialism—and, notwithstanding his sympathies for the poor, in all probability he would have started a campaign against this creed too.

However, contemporary standards are irrelevant when we judge a litterateur of the past. Even political historians will show only their immaturity if they do not see things in the perspective of the time of their occurrence. No one can deny the historical fact that the way India has achieved freedom and has decided upon the direction of development thereafter was not the work of the moderates—it was certainly due to the stewardship of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. But no one can deny this fact too that even for the subsequent methodology of the Congress the groundwork was prepared by the moderates. Even in the matter of the drawing up of the Constitution of free India moderates have made no insignificant contribution. Hence to hold in contempt everything moderate and liberal will be betraying an immature mind at present. Certainly, it was natural

to be impatient with liberals at the time of the fight for freedom; but now we are expected to be more cool-minded.

And here we are not directly concerned with the political history either. We are expected here to judge the place to be given to Chakbast, firstly, as a poet and, secondly, as a social-minded poet.

If Chakbast could not attain a position in the front rank of Urdu poets much fault lies with himself. He had poetry running in his veins but he did not respond to his inner call as he should have done. He could have written volumes; he wrote very little. He could have developed his individual views of life and could have opened new vistas for philosophy in Urdu poetry; he preferred to propagate only those things which he had learnt from his friends, philosophers and guides. He had a deep insight into artistic motivation and could have developed his critical faculty to have started a certain school of thought in Urdu literature; he limited his comments to casual evaluation of a few litterateurs of his time or of the immediate past.

Even so, he has left much in his meagre writings besides patriotism and communal harmony. A few glimpses have been given in the preceding pages. Still more points can be brought out by critics and scholars if they pay a little more attention to this unique poet than what they have been giving to him till now.

Unfortunately, what we are doing seems to be just the opposite of it; it seems we are bent upon eliminating Chakbast once for all. Everyone declares that Chakbast was a great poet of patriotism and a fine poet at that. But we ignore his poems when it comes to teaching children sing patriotic songs. The real wonder is that we prefer some early and artistically weak patriotic songs of such a poet as had subsequently shouted from the house top that nationalism is a great impediment to the advancement of the humanity.

Are we doing any justice to either this or that poet?

Roman Transliterations from Urdu

Page 19

*Kursi se ayan jumbish-e-yakpai hai
Mez aisi hai jaise ki pad pai hai
Munshi ka khatar hai na muakkil ka guzar
Office bhi ajab gosha-e-tanhai hai.*

Page 20

*Zindagi kya hai anasir men zahur-e-tartib
Maut kya hai inhin ajza ka pareshan hona*

Page 26

*Dengu se hai mujhko pyar
Hojata hai degree char
Khichri lana khichri lana
Usmen rhora tel milana
Main nahin khati dudh anar
Mujhe chahie chatni achar*

Page 32

(Prose) Ham Mahatma Gandhi ki shakhsiat ki dil se qadr karte hain lekin hamain afsos hai ki ham unke tarz-e-amal par suad karne ko tayyar nahin hain.

(Prose) Hamain Mr. Tilak ke amali political maslak par qadam-ba-qadam chalne ka daw a nahin raha lekin uuki zindagi ke mardana jauharon se qaumi zindagi ki zinat thi.

Page 33

(Prose) Punjab men mazlumon ki dad rasi ke babat jo tajviz moderate conference ne manzur ki hai wuh nihayat jamia aur purzor hai aur hakim an-e-waqt ko khwab-e-khargosh se bedar karne ke liye awaza-e-nafrin hai. Kya achchha hota agar Congress ke platform se bhi isi shan ki tajviz manzur ki jati.

(Prose) Is maswide ki mukhalifat karna saikron barson ke zulm ko rawa rakhna hai.

(Prose) Bafarz-e-muhal agar yih taslim kar liya jai ki azdavaj-e-mushtarak waqai taur par Hindu dharm shastr ke khilaf hai to aisi halat men ikhlaqi aur social azadi ka qanun jo qudrat ke farishte ne har insan ki peshani ki lauh par tahrir kar diya hai wuh dharm shastr se kam qabil-e-waqt nahin hai.

Page 34

(Prose) Beshak income tax men izafa karna, wilayati sharab, tambaku, motor car, ghari aur bajon waghaira par raahaul ka izafa karna gharib awam-un-nas ko na khalega. Aise izafe ka bar daulatmand tabqe ke zimme rahega jinki aishparasti men zarur thora sa khalal waqai hoga.

*Daulat se hai ab zinat-e-kashana-e-tahzib
Kahte hain ise shama-e-jalaukhana-e-tahzib*

.....
*Zar ap nahin dushman-e-ikhlaq-o-adab hai
Jo had se guzar jati hai wuh iski talab hai*

.....
*Mahrums ma-e-aish se yih khasta jigar hain
Malik yi nahin zar ke faqat banda-e-zar hain*

.....
*Daulat wo hai majbur ki jo uqda kusha ho
Aksir ho dard-e-dil-e-bekas ki dawa ho*

.....
*Jan se shauq-e-numaish men guzar jaen abhi
Qabr chandi ki jo mil jae to mar jaen abhi*

Page 35

*Dil surat-e-aina jo raushan nahin hota
Zunnar pahanne se barahman nahin hota*

*Jinke emal men mazhab ki latafat nahin khak
Unke qadamon se na yih pak havan ho napak*

*Haq parasti ki jo main ne but parasti chhor kar
Barahman kahne lage ilhad ka bani mujhe*

*Hamare aur zahidon ke mazhab men farq agar hai to is qadar
hai*

*Kahenge ham jisko pas-e-insan wo usko khauf-e-khuda kahenge
Ashna hon kan kya insan ki faryad se
Shaiikh ko fursat nahin milti khuda ki yad se*

*Wajib nahin mazhab ke masail men bhi hujjat
Bazicha-e-atfal hain haftad-o-do millat*

Page 36

*Ain kasrat men yE wahdat ka sabaq ved men hai
Ek hi nurhai jo zarra-o-khurshed men hai*

*Nifaq gabr-o-musalman ka yun mita akhir
Ye but ko bhul gae woh khuda ko bhul gae*

*Qaum ki shirazabandi ka gila bekar hai
Rang-e-hindu dekhkar tarz-e-musalraan dekhkar*

Page 37

Shaiikh ne masjid bana mismar butkhana kiya

Tab to ik surat bhi thi ab saf virana kiya

*Tor but zahid ne kyon masjid ye butkhana kiya
Tab to ik surat bhi thi ab saf virana kiya*

Page 40

(Prose) Mister Mohammed Ali ne adam-e-rifaqat ke political mas'ale ko mazhabi varnish ka rang de kar Aligarh ke talibilmon ki tabiaton ko hafte do hafate ke liye zarur barange khta kar diya tha. . .Magar Aligarh college men bhi yih jadu ziyada der tak na chal saka. . . Akhir men natija yih hua ki kasirhissa talib-ilmon ka dua-e-tauba parhkar college men sharik ho gaya . . . Hindu university par bhi kai hamle hue magar Pandit Madan Mohan Malvi ki mardana durandeshi ne talibilmon ke political havas bigarnen a diye aur hamara khayal hai ki Hindu university ki misal ka aisa zubardast asar hua ki is sube ke talibilmon ki ankhen khul gaeen aur adam-e-rifaqat ka ibtidai josh unke khun men taraqqi na kar saka.

*Daulat-e-ilm Iutegi isi dar se dinrat
Ham ne sochi hai yahi nam pe uske khairat
Dair se aen barahman ki haram se sadat
Sab yahan paenge sarmaya-e-taskin-c-hayat*

Page 41

(Prose) Hamare azizan-e-watan ne jab ghair qaum ki itaat qabul ki to unhen bhi do qism ki zanjiren pahanni parin. Farmanravaon ke qanun ke parde men jo pabandian unhen bardasht karna parin unhen Iohe ki zanjir samajhna chahiye... Magar in zahiri pabandion se bahut ziyada qabil-ibrat khayalat ki ghujami thi jisne ghairqaum ki hukumat ka sikka hamare dil-o-dimagh par jari kar diya, Hamare jazbat-o-khayalat maghribi tahzib ke masnui aur numaishi rang men giraftar ho gae aur ham apne qaumi hifz-e-maratib se bekhobar hogae. Main is khayalat ki ghulami ke silsile ko sone ki zanjir kahunga jise ham ne khushi se pahan liya aur apni giraftari par naz karne lage.

(Prose) Angrezi talim ne mulk men rafta rafta jo bedari paida ki hai use bhul jana qaumi ahsan-faramoshi hai magar is talim ka ek sarihi asar hamare qaumi ikhlaq par bahut kharab para. Wuh yeh tha ki talim mahz zariya-e-muash hogae.

Page 42

(Prose) Maulana Hali maghribi shairi ki pairavi ki fikr men angrezi nazmon ke tarjume parhte hain aur chunki ghair-zaban men tarjuma hone se un nazmon ke nazuk khayali aur baland parvazi ke jauhar tashrif le jate hain aur istiaron aur tashbihon ki pechidgiyan qayam nahin rahtin lihaza yih khayal karte hain ki maghribi shairi ka usul yih hai ki ibarat-e-sada nazm kar di jae aur is khayal ke muafiq Urdu ke jin ashar men ap nazuk khayali aur barik bini ki vajah se kisi qism ki pechidagi pate hain usko be-mani aur mahmil qarar dete hain.

Page 42

(Prose) Hazrat-e-Hali ne Urdu shairi ke aine par angrezi khayalat ki tasvir utarni chahi magar chunki barik-bini ka qalam hath se chhut gaya lihaza tasvir ka har jagah se chehra bigar diya. Barkhilaf iske hazrat-e-Sarshar ne Urdu ki urus-e-zebashimail ko angrezi zavar pahnaya magar kisi muqam par bad-unvani ka saya na parne diya.

.....

(Prose) Urdu zaban par Maulana Hali kajoahsanhai uski yad dilon men hamesha taza rahegi. Maulana marhum ghaliban pahle shakhs the jinhon ne yih awaz buland kee ki zamane ke sath Urdu shairi ko bhi naya libas badalna chahiye aur yih mamuli bat na thi. Magar apne angrezidan ahabab ki madad se angrezi shairi ka jo meyar Maulana Mausuf ne qayam kiya aur jis ke sanche men Urdu shairi ko dhalna chaha wuh is aib se khali na tha jiska abhi zikr kiya ja chuka hai (yani jazbat ko nazarandaz karke mahz khayalat par takiya karna). Is aib ka asar Maulana ke naye rang ke kalam men kasrat se paya jata hai.

Page 43

(Prose) Qadim Urdu shuara ke kalam men bahutere aise khayalat milenge jinhen maujuda zamane ka mazaq qabul nahin kar sakta ya jo maujuda meyar ke mutabiq paya-e-tahzib se gire hue hon. Magar khayalat ki pasti se tang akar hamen unke shairana jauhar ko na bhuljana chahiye.

.....

(Prose) Magar in (shairana) jazbat khyalat waghaira ke do qismen bain, adna aur ala. Ala jazbat-o-khayalat se bahaisiyat-e-majmui fitrat-e-insani ka ruhani hissa murad liya jata hai aur adna jazbat se haivani hissa Wuh jauhar-e-aali jo shairana zaban ki jan bai Dagh ki zaban men maujud nahin.

Page 44

(Prose) Jo sher uski zaban se nikalta hai tasir men duba hua nikalta hai.

.....

(Prose) Agar kalam ki sadagi aur betakallufi ka lutf uthana hai to Meer Hasan ki masnavi dekho. Agar barik-bini aur mani-afri ni ka rang pasand hai to Gulzar-e-Naseem ki sair karo.

(Prose) Magar itna kahna nainsafi nahin ki jo soz-o-gudaz Meer Hasan ke kalam men hai wuh Naseem ke kalam men nahin.

*Hajj-e-akbar se jo Europe ke hue hain mumtaz
Hai watan men bhi gharib-ul-watani par unhen naz
Bair yaran-e-tariqat se hai ghairon se hai saz
Wuh banai hui cbitwan wo anele andaz
Lab-e-lahje men lagawat hai tarahdari hai
Ik faqat rang pe qabu nahin lachari hai*

.....

*Unko lahzib se Europe ki nahin kuchh sar-o-kar
Zahiri shan-o-numaish pe dil-o-jan hain nisar
Hain wo sine men kahan ghairat-e-qaumi ke sharaar
Jin se maghrib men hue khak ke putle bedar*

Sair-e-Europe se ye ikhlaq-o-adab sikha hai
Nachna sikha hai aur lahu-o-Iaab sikha hai

.....
Azadi-o-islah ke jab ate hain afkar
Taqlid ho Europe ki yahi rahti hai guftar
Maujud magar inmen wo jauhar nahin zinhar
Maghrib men jo tahzib-o-taraqqi ke hain asrar
Wuh hubb-e-watan khun men shamil nahin rakhte
Go walwale rakhte hain magar dil nahin rakhte

.....
The khitta-e-Europe men jo islah ke bani
Azadi-e-qaumi pe lahu kar gaye pani
Murjha gae kitne hi gul-e-bagh-e-jawani
Is nakhl se par durraha rang-e-khizani
Sargarm-e-shabadat the wo isar ki khu se
Sincha chaman-e-qaum rag-e-jan ke lahu se

.....
Nam rakkha hai numaish ka taraqqi-o-reform
Tum is andaz ke dhoke men na ana hargiz

.....
Naql Europe ki munasib hai magar yad rahe
Khak men ghairat-e-qaumi no milana hargiz

Page 46

Rang-o-raughan tumhen Europe ka mubarak
lekin qaum ka naqsh na chehre se mitana hargiz

.....
Jo banate hain numaish ka khilauna tumko
Unki khatir se ye zillat na uthana hargiz

.....
Pujne ke Hye mandir hai jo azadi ka
Usko tafrih ka markaz na banana hargiz

.....
Nai tahzib ke sadqe na sharmane diya dil ko
Rahe mantiq ke parde men karishme be-hayai ke

Hua mizaj ka alam ye sair-e-Europe se
Ki apne mulk ki ab-o-hawa ko bhul gae

(prose) France ki ek ala anjuman ne yih ishtihar diya hai ki jo shakhs sayyaron se silsiia-e-waqfiyat paida karne ka zaria daryaft karega use inam diya jaega. Duniya ke sanjida -mizaj log is jiddat amez tahrk se hairan hain....Hamari rai yih hai ki kam se kam us waqt tak ishtihar ka elan multavi kar diya jae jab tak President Wilson ke chaudah maqulon ka faisla na ho jae.

Page 47

Ab-o-atish ki ghulami par bashar qania nahin
Ho rani hai fikr taskhir-e-hawa ke waste

.....
Hawa men ur ke sair-e-alam-e-ijad karte hain
Farishte bhi nahin karte jo adamzad karte hain

.....
Par lage tahzib ko kashti-e-nauijad se
Khidmat-e-ab-e-rawan leta hai insan bad se

Page 51

Kuchh ajab rang-e-chaman badla hua hai ajkal
Ghuncha-o-gul surat-e-shabnam hawa hone ko hain
Gar yahi hai gardish-e-dauran ka rang-e-inqilab
Hosh ur jaenge woh fitne bapa hone ko hain
Jurrat-e-ikhlaq tere imtuhana ka waqt hai
Khud azizan-e-waian hamse khafa hone ko hain
Madar-e-nashad roti hai koi sunta nahin
Dil jigar se bhai se bhai juda hone ko hain

.....
Han dileran-e-watan dhak bitha kar ana
Tanlana jarmao-e-khudbin ka mita kar ana
Qaisari takht ki bunysd hila kar ana
Naddian khun ki Berlin men baha kar ana

Yahi Ganga hai sipahi ke nshane ke liye
Nao talwar ki hai par lagane ke liye

.....
Go ki duniya se mite shaukat-e-qaisar ka suragh Shuala-e-tegh
se murjhae na tahzib ka bagh
Gul na do dil ke shivale men hamiyat ke chiragh Begunahon ke
lahu ka na ho talwar pe dagh
Rasta hai yahi qaumcn ki tabahi ke liye
Khun masum ka dozakh hai sipahi ke liye.

Page 52

Pinhane wale agar berian pinhaenge
Khushi se qaid ke gcshe ko ham basaenge
Jo santari dar-e-zindan ke so bhi jaenge
Ye rag ga ke unhen khwab se jagaenge
Talab fuzul hai kante ki phul ke badle
Na kn bihisht bhi ham home rule ke badle

.....
Jo dab ke baiih rahe sar uthaoge phir kya
Adu-e-qaum ko nicha dikhaoge phir kya
Jafa-o-jaur ki zillat mitaoge phir kya
Turn apne bachchon ko qisse sunaoge phir kya
Rahega qaul yahi unse unki maon ka
Lahu ragon men tumhari hai bebayaon ka

.....
Ya ilahi ye chali bad-e-mukhalif kaisi
A gaya ur ke jo London se ye kura karkat
Hain magar mulk men do char tahamtan yan bhi Astin tere
muqabilmen jo lete hain ulat
Yad rakh hashr talak bhi na tujhe bhukgi
Gokhale ki wo chithar aur wo Menta ki dapat

Page 53

Maut ne rat ke parde men kiya kaisa war
Raushani subh-e-watan ki hai ki matam ka ghubar Marika

sard hai soya hai watan ka sardar
Tantana sher ka baqi nahin suni hai kachhar
Bekasi chhai haitaqdir phiri jati hai
Qaum ke hath se talwar giri jati hai

.....
Watan men bewatan mujhko kiya hai ik fasungar ne Na main
Hindostan ka hun nahai Hindostan mera
.....
Dil men is tarah se arman hain azadi ke
Jaise Ganga men jhalakti hai chamak taron ki

Page 54

Burhapa nam hai jiska wo hai afsurdagidil ki
Jawani kahte hain jisko tabiyat ki jawani hai

Page 55

Yih dil ki tazgi hai wo dil ki fasurdagi
Is gulshan-e-jahan ki khizan kya bahar kya

.....
Mai jawani hai miri dil mira raaikhana hai
Yan surahi hai na shisha hai na paimana hai

.....
Ik hasti-e-bedar kehain donon karishme
Maujon men rawani hai jawani hai bashar men

.....
Dil-e-ahbab men ghar hai shigufta rahti hai khatir Yahi jannat
hai meri aur yahi bagh-e-iram mera

.....
Kahan ahata-e-hasti se bhag kar jaun
Nae zamin naya asman nahin milta

.....
Ajla ki nind men bhi khwab-e-hasti gar nazar aya
To phir bekar hai tang ake is jine se mar jana

Zindagi talkhi-e-ayyam ka afsana hai
Zahr bhame kr liye umr ka paimana hai

Adam se aye the duniya men kya malum the hamko Rahega sath
sauda zindagi ka dard-e-sar hokar

Khatm hota nahin kyon hasti-e-nashad ka rag
Pa-ba-gil run sahi jism to majbur nahin

Page 56

Wuh nahin badnam jisne dil ko hai paida kiya
Dil se jo paida hui wuh arzu badnam hai

Chaman ko dida-e-ibrat se dekh ai bulbul
Gulon se phut ke rang-e-khizan nikal aya

Gul ko pamal na kar lal-o-guhar ke malik
Hai ise turra-e-dastar-e-ghariban hona

Kaha ghunche ne hans kar wah kya nairang-e-alam hai
Wajud-e-gul jise sanijhe hain sab wuh hai adam mera

Chak hokar kafan-e-ghunchabana jama-e-gul
Khul gaya ranj se shadi ka numayan hona

Ham sochte hain rat ko taron ko dekhkar
Shamen zamin ki hain jo dagh asman ke hain

Rah ke duniya men hai yun tark-e-havas ki khwahish Jis tarah
apne hi saye se gurezhan hona

Zindagi kya hai anasir men zahur-e-tartib
Maut kya hai inhin ajza ka pareshan hona

Bad-e-fana fuzul hai nam-o-m'shan ki fikr
Jab ham nahin rahe to rahega mazar kya

Rahegi ab-o-hawa men khayal ki bijli
Ye musht-e-khak hai fani rahe rahe na rahe

Ahl-e-binish ko to hasti men khuda ki shak hai
Un pe hasrat hai jo bande ko khuda kahte hain

51

Chakbast

WELL Typeset

FINAL PDF 02-05-17

Page 57

Agar kaun-o-makan ik shuabada hai uski qudrat ka
To is duniya men akhir kis liye aya qadam mera

Dekha sarur-e-bada-e-hasti ka khatma
Ab dekhien rang lae ajal ka khumar kya

Afsha hua na jaur-e-qaza-o-qadar karaz
Parda utha na maslahat-e-kirdgar ka

Rutbe men farotani ke bala hai wuh
Tahzib ki ankhonka ujala hai wuh
Insan ke liye hai khaksari jauhar
Adna se mile jhuk kejo ala hai wuh

Khud hi mita ke jauhar-e-iman-o-abru
Ham koste hain gardishe-Iail-o-nihar ko

Zamane ka muallim imtahan unka nahin karta
Jo ankhien khol kar yih dars-e-hasti yad karte hain

Chamanzar-e-muhabbat men usi nebaghbani ki
Ki jisne apni mehnat hi ko mehnat ka samar jana

Dard-e-dil pas-e-wafa jazba-e-iman hona
Admiyat hai yahi aur yahi insan hona

Sadaf ki ankh se gauhar ko dekh is bahr-e-alam men Nazarakar
yatiman-e-jahan ka chashm-e-madar se

*Khidmat-e-insan se dil ko ashna karte rahe
Dil ke aine pe ulfat ki jila karte rahe*

.....
*Dosh-e-saba pe rahta hun manand-e-murgh-e-bu Shakh-e-shajar
ko barmira ashiiyan nahin*

Page 58

*Fana nahin hai muhabbat ke rang-o-bu ke liye
Bahar-e-alam-e-fanirahe rahe na rahe*

.....
*Jiladi dil ko mere qalb-e-dushman ki siyahi ne
Kadurat wan barhi aur yan khule jauhar safai ke*

*Daftar-e-husn pe muhr-e-yad-e-qudrat samjho
Phul ka khak ke tudc se numayan hona*

Page 59

*Wuh tair-e-kuhsar lab-e-chashma-e-kuhsar
Wuh sard hawa wuh karam-e-abr-e-guharbar
Wuh meva-e khushrang wo sarsabz chamanzar
Ik an men sihhat ho jo barson ka ho bimar
Yih bagh-e-watan rukash-e-gulzar-e jinan hai
Sarmaya-e-noz-e-chamanara-e-jahan hai*

.....
*Hai khitta-e-sarsabz men ik nur ka alam
Har shakh-o-shajar par shajar-e-tur-ka alam
Parvin hai ye hai khusha-e angur ka alam
Har knar pe bhi hai miza-e-hur ka alam
Nikle na sada aisi mughanni lie gulu se
Ati hai jo awaz-e-tarannum lab-e-ju se*

Page 60

*Tamam shahr hai gard-o-ghubar se khali
Jidhar nigah uthao udhar hai hariyaii*

*Libas pahne hain kul khisht-o-sang sabze ka
Bajai khak ke urta hai rang sabze ka
Asar khizan ka ho kya tazgi ke maskan men
Pahar isko chhupae hain apne daman men
Ghane darakht hari jhariyan zamin shadab
Latif-o-sard hawa pak-o-saf chashma-e-ab
Kami kabhi nahin shadabiyon ke daman men
Thahar gae hai bahar ake is gulistan men*

.....
*Dariya-e-falak men tha ajab nur ka alam
Chakkar men tha gardab-sifat nayyar-e-azam
Uthti thin shuaon ki jo maujen wo sharar-dam
Sayyare hababon ki tarah raitate the paiham
Thi shorish-e-tufan-e-sahar gharb se ta sharq
Akhir ko safina mah-e-gardun ka hua gharq*

.....
*Wuh subha ka alam wo chamanzar ka alam
Murghan-e-hawa naghma-zani karte the baham
Hangam-e-sahar bad-e-sahar chalti thi paiham
Aram men sabza tha tah-e-chadar-e-shabnam
Har simt bandhi naara-e-bulbul ki sada thi
Ghunchon ki nasim-e-sahari uqda-kusha thi*

Page 61

*Murghan-e-chaman alam-e-masti men sahardam
Wasf-e-chamanara-e-jahan karte the baham
Shakhen thin kahin gardan-e-taslim-sifat kham
Tasbih-e-khuda men hama-tan mahv thi shabnam Ghunchon ke
bhi thi vird-e-zaban hamd khuda ki
Ati thi chatakne men sada sall-e-ala ki*

.....
*Wuh shab-e-tar men taron ka falak par jamghat Chhup gaya
ankh se badli jo zamia ne karwat
Dekhna sharq men wuh subhaka tara charoka
Wuh arus-e-sahar-e-rmr ne ulta ghunghat
Barh ke rizwan ne wo jannat ke dariche khole
Aee wuh gulshan-e-firdaus se phulonki lapat*

Chaunk utha pir-e-falak bang lagai aisi
 Murgh ne gurba-e-miskin ki jo pae ahat
 Gudgudaya jo nasim-e-sahari ne akar
 Naz se sabza-e-khwabida ne badli karwat
 Nazar ata hai gulistan men paristan ka saman
 Gul khile hain ki hai pariyon ka chaman men jamghat

.....
 Per sarsabz hai thaton men rawan ab bhi hai
 Dubti kirmon se fawware men ik tab bhi hai
 Gul-e-naukhez bhi hain sabza-e-shadab bhi hai
 Sham ka waqt bhi hai majma-e-ahbab bhi hai
 u kahan hai ki jo is bagh ka shaidai hai
 Tujh se milne ke liye fasl-e-bahar aee hai

Page 62

Maut Mahrasht ki thi ya tere marme ki khabar Murdani chha
 gaeen insan to kya patthar par
 Pattiyon jhuk gaeen murjha gaye sahrake samar
 Rah gaye josh men bahte hue dariya tham kar
 Sard-o-shadab hawa ruk gaeen kuhsaron ki
 Raushni ghat gaeen do char ghari taron ki

Page 63

Kuchh Ichabar hai tujbko ai dildada-e-khwab-e-fana
 Haisar-e-balin ye kya hamgama-e-mahshar hua
 Naaraha-e-dard yih kaise hain yih matam hai kya
 Chak hai kiska gareban kaun hai sar dhun raha
 Hai farapta kaun, di] jinese kiska ser hai
 Bal kisne lash par khoje hain, kya andher hai

Page 64

Ajal ke dam men ana hai yun to alam ko
 Magar ye dil nahin layyar tere matam ko
 Pahar kahte hain duniya men aise hi gham ko

Mita ke tujbko ajal ne mita diya hamko
 Janaza Hind ka ghar se tire nikalta hai
 Suhag qaum ka ten chita men jalta hai

.....
 Kya kahen kis se kahen ham aj kya kahne ko hain Akhiri
 afsana-e-shauq-e-wafa kahne ko hain
 Jin umedon ki larakpan men hui thi ibtida
 Aj unki intiha Jca majra kahne ko hain
 Bekhabar ab bhi nahin ham qaum ke dukh dard se PahJe himmat
 thi dawa ki ab dua kahne ko hain
 Kya kahen kya daur-e-akhir men sitam dekha kiye Barhami
 barhti gaeemahiil ki ham dekha kiye

.....
 Leti kisi faqir ke ghar men agar janam
 Hote na men jan ko saman yih baham
 Dasta na sanp ban ke mujhe shaukat-o-hasham
 Turn mere Jal the mujhe kis saltanat se kam
 Main khush hun phun]c de koi is takht-o-taj ko
 Jab turn nahi to ag lagaungi raj ko ?

.....
 Nashad rahe nakam rahe taqdir hi apni phut gaeen
 Jis shakh pe ham ne hath dhara wuh shakh wahin
 se tut gaeen

.....
 Jagah thori si mi] jae agar gor-e-ghariban men
 Dil-e-nashad ki chhoti si ijcturbat banani hai

Page 65

Yun na insan ka bargashta muqaddar ho jae
 Main agar phul utha lun to wo patihar ho jae

.....
 Khilat kafan ka ham to zamane se le chale
 Ab hai arus-e-marg tujhe intizar kya
 Phailiho jaise gor-e-ghariban men chandni
 Alam ye hai khushi men dil-e-daghdar ka

Mire matamkade men rat ka parda ghanimathai
Udasi aur barh jati hai is ghar ki sahar hokar
.....

Jo apne waste mangen ye wuh faqir nahin
Tama men daulat-e-duniya ki yih asir nahin
Amir dil ke hain zahir ke yih amir nahin
Wo admi nahin inka jo dastgir nahin
Tamam daulat-e-zati lutae baithe hain
Tumhare waste dhuni ramae baithe hain
.....

Ye qaht kya hai ye taoon kya hai kya hai waba
Tumhari qaum pe nazil hua hai qahr-e-khuda
Jo rah-e-rast se hoti hai koi qaum juda
Isi tarah use milti hai ek roz saza
Isi tarah se hawa qaum ki bigarti hai
Isi tarah se gharibon ki ah parti hai

Page 66

Kahanhain mulk ke sartaj qaum ke sardar
Pukarte hain madad ke liye dar-o-diwar
Watan ki khak se paida hain josh ke asar
Zamin hilti hai urta hai khun ban ke ghubar
Jagah se apni hai Chittaur ki zamin sarki
Laraz rahi bai kai din se qabr Akbar ki
.....

Ye josh-e-pak zamana daba nahin sakta
Ragon men khun ki hararat mita nahin sakta
Ye ag wuh hai jo pani bujha nahin sakta
Dilon men ake ye arman ja nahin sakta
Talab fuzul hai kante ki phul ke badle
Na Ien bihisht bhi ham home rule ke badle
.....

Mil gae khak men kitne hi gharibon ke shabab
In gunahon ka hai is qaum ki gardan pe azab
Jo purani ravishon ke liye rahte hajn kharab

Un ki surat se ab ata bai zamane ko hijab
Shan-e-ikhlaq nahin jabr ki tadbiron men
Begunahon ko jakarte nahin zanjiron men

Page 67

54
Chakbast
WELL Typeset
FINAL PDF 02-05-17

Rahnumai kis ki hogi mujhko hairat hai yahi
Qafile men qaum ke sab peshwa hone ko hain
Jazba-e-kbidmat safa-e-qalb aeene-e-adab
Khudnumai par ye sab jauhar fida hone ko hain
Hai talbgaron men ghul kuchh sar uthaya chahiye Qaum ke
darbar sekhilat ata hone ko hain
Aosoon se apnejo sincha kiye bagh-e-watan
Bewafai ke unhen khilat ata hone kohain
Jinko manzil se ziyada hai hawa ka rukh aziz
Qaum ke bere ke aise nakhuda hone ko hain
.....

Ab munasib hai yahi kijiye pinjra khali
Ham bhi khush ap bhi khush dur kahin ho jhanjhat
Tu ho jane pe jo razi to tire sar ki qasam
Karke chanda tujhe ham le den wilayat ka ticket
Aur jo tujhko nahin manzur ye ahsan lena
Bhej den ham tujhe berang bana kar packet
.....

Khwab men jab malik-ul-maut muqabil aya
Dil-e-nashad ye satnjha ki muakkil aya

Page 68

Na hun shair na wali hun na hun aijaz-bayan
Bazm-e-qudrat men hun tasvir ki surat hairan
Dil men ik rang hai hota hai jo lafzon se ayan
Lai ki muhtaj nahin hai miri faryad-o-fughan
Shauq-e-shuhrat havas-e-garmi-e-bazar nahin
Dil wo Yusuf haijise fikr-e-kharidar nahin
.....

Dar-o-diwar nazar ate hain kya saf-o-subak

Sihr karti hai nigahon pe zia-e-mahtab
 Yahi hota hai guman khak se mas isko nahin
 Hai Sanbhale hue daman men hawa-e-shadab
 Yak ba yak dida-e-hairan ko ye shak hota hai
 Dhal ke sanche men zamin par utar aya hai sahab Bekhudi
 kahti hai aya ye faza men kyonkar
 Kisi ustad musawwir ka hai yih jalwa-e-khwab
 Ik ajab manzar-e-dilgir nazar ata hai
 Dur se alam-e-tasvir nazar ata hai

Page 69

.....
 Kahte hain jise abr wo maikhana hai mera
 Jo phul khila bagh men paimana hai mera
 Kai fiat-e-gulshan hai mire nasshe ka alam
 Koil ki sada nara-e mastana hai mera

Dariya mira aina hai lahren mire gesu
 Aur rnauj-e-nasim-e-sahari shana hai mera
 Har zarra-e-khaki hai mira munis-o-hamdham
 Duniya jise kahte hain wo kashana hai mera

.....
 Main dost bhi apna hun adu bhi hun main apna Apna hai koi
 aur na begaaa hai mera
 Ashiq bhi hun mashuq bhi yih turfa maza hai
 Diwana hun main jiska wo diwana hai mera

.....
 Kahte hain khudi kisko khuda nam hai kiska
 Duniya men faqat jalwa-e-janana hai mera
 Milta nahin har ek ko wuh nur hai mujh men
 Jo sahib-e-binish hai wo parwana hai mera
 Shair ka sukhan kam nahin majzub ki bar se
 Har ek na samjhega wo afsana hai mera

.....
 Jis se insan men hai josh-e-jawani paida
 Usi jauhar se hai maujon men rawam paida

Rang gulshan men faza daman-e-kuhsar men hai Khun rag-e-gul
 men hai nishtar ki khalish khar men hai
 Tamkanat husn men hai josh hai diwane men
 Raushni shama men hai soz hai parwsne men
 Rang-o-bu ho ke samaya wuhi gulzaron men
 Abr ban kar wuhi barsa kiya kuhsaron men

55

Chakbast

WELL Typeset

FINAL PDF 02-05-17

Page 71

Ug raha hai har taraf sabza dar-o-diwar par
 Intiha garmi ki hai aur ibtida barsat ki

Page 72

Har subha hai ye khidmat khurshed-e-purzia ki Kirnon se
 gundhta haj choti Himalaya ki

.....
 Chandani rat men jis vvaqt hawa ati hai
 Qaum ke dil ke dharakne ki sada ati hai

.....
 Khuda ke hukm se jab ab-o-gil bana tera
 Kisi shahid ki mitti se dil bana tera

.....
 Phir raha hai nigah-e-shauq men shadi ka saman PhuJ chandi
 ke lutate hue aee hai rat

Page 73

Jiski duniya ko khabar ho ye wo nasur nahin
 Tere matam ki numaish mujhe manzur nahin

.....
 Dil ke mandir ka ujala hai ye tasvir-e-kamal

.....
 Jo Home Rule pe yih chashm-e-shauq shaida ho Tamam rang
 milen ek nur paida ho

Page 74

*Khwab men sunta bo jaise naghma-e-shirin bashar Jis se tari dil
pe ho kaifiyat-e-jadu-asar*

Yih nawa-e-ruh-parwar band ho jae agar

Ankh khulte hi siyahi shab ki ho pesh-e-nazar

Ik ajab alam ho tab uske dil-e-betab ka

Jagne par us ghari ulta guman ho khwab ka

.....
Tha pesh-e-nazar wadi-e-aiman ka tamasha

Har shakh men shakh-e-shajar-e-tur ka naqsha

Tha atish-e-gul men asar-e-barq-e-tajalla

Madhosh the murghan-e-sahar surat-e-Musa

Shakl-e-yad-e-baiza thi har ik shakh shajar men

Aijaz ka gul tha kaf-e-gulchin-e-sahar men

.....
Rang kala ho ki ujla yahi kahti hai nazar

Bindaraban ki wo hai sham ye Mathura ki sahar

Page 75

Shokh-o-tarrar hasin chhokariyan Gokal ki

Chali ati hain surahi Iiye jamnawal ki

Dil jawani ki umangon pe machal jata hai

Khilkhila parti hain jab paon phisal jata hai

Ran men bandhe hue shamsher-o-kafan jate hain Teghzan, barq

fagan qila shikan jate hain

Page 77

(Prose) Ek roz Gulzar-e-Naseem ki sair men mahv tha ki hawa-e-sard ke do tin jhonke aye. Mausam-e-bahar ne aisa mast kiya ki nind agae. Magar wah re main, nind kya aee ki nasib jage. Alam-e-khwaab men woh saman dekha ki ankh keh khul gaeen. Kya dekhta hun subha ka suhana waqt hai aur mera guzar ek bagh-e-mainusawad men hai jo nai dulhan ki tarah arasta hai. Is bagh ke ek goshe men do tin kursian rakhi hui hain magar khali.

Ek sannate ka alam tari hai. Faqat ek bulbul-e-hazardastan shakh-e-gul par baitha chahak raha hai.

Page 78

(Prose) Qissa mukhtasar alam-e-tarikh ki sair bhi ajib ruhani sarur ka sarmaya baham pahunchati hai aur aina-e-aql ko jila deti hai. Is alam men qadam rakhte hi tajrube ka aftarab nur-afshan nazar ata hai jis se dil ki ankh en raushan hoti hain. Is alam men tahzib-o-taraqqi ki zabardast shahrah nazar ati hai jiska ek kinara azal hai dusra abad, jiski manzil par faiz ke chashmejadi hain. Kahin wuh log khaqahon men baithe hue nazar ate hain jin hon ne mazhab aur falsafe ki tahqiq men apni umr sarf kar di hai aur taba-e-nurani se aise chiragh raushan kiye hain jin hen -hawa-e-mukhalif ke jhonke bujha nahin sakte aur jinki raushni men ab tak bahut se gumrah manzil-e-maqsud tak pahunch jate hain Kahin wuh bazm-e-jadu arasta nazar ati hai jisraen bare bare muajiz-nigaron, nassaron aur shairon ka majma hai, nukta-sanjon ke guldaste mahak rahe hain aur sharab-e-sukhan ka daur chal raha hai. Kahin un qavi-haikal, zaigham-manish naujawanon ki pur-ruab suraten dikhai detihain jin ke chihron se shujaat ka nur baras raha hai aur jinki talwar ke pani se ab tak mukhtalif qaumon ke aizaz-o-waqar ka chaman hara ho raha hai.

Page 78

Amritsar ke ijlese-e-Congress ka rang dekhte hue aksar dardmand dilon men yih khayal guzarta hai ki is azim-ush-shan qautni jamaat ka anjam kya hona hai. Qarman-e-islam aur payam-e-shahi ki ishaat ke bad bhi tajwizon aur taqriron ka jo alam raha us se malum hota hai ki Congress ki kashti ke maujuda nakhuda apna farz hosiari aur qabiliat se ada nahin kar rahe hain aur ghaughha-e-am ki parastish ko apni political zindagi kamcyar samajhte hain. Congress ke darbar men waqar qaim karne ka behtrain zariya yahi rah gaya hai ki aitald-pasandi aur mudabbirana matant ko khaibad kah kar mahz charab-zabani aur shorish-

pasandi se kam liya jae. Bila Hhaz is amr ke ki Lord Chelmsford ki wapisi ki tajwiz munasib thi ya nahin, Mr. Satyamurti ne jo taqrir is tajwin ki taid men ki us se malum hota tha ki wuh Hindustan ki qaumi parliament ko bazari majrae se ziyada qabil-e-adab nahin samajhte hain. Political tarbiat aur tajruba-o-isar-e-nafs taksal bahar hain.

57

Chakbast

WELL Typeset

FINAL PDF 02-05-17

Bibliography

1. *Subh-e-Watan* (collection of Chakbast's poems); Indian Press. Allahabad; second edition, 1926.
2. *Kulliat-e-Chakbast*: compiled by Kali Das Gupta 'Riza' Sakar Publishers, Bombay; 1981.
3. *Mazamin-e-Chakbast*: Indian Press, Allahabad; 1955.
4. *Maarika-e-Sharar-o-Chakbast*: compiled by Muhammad Shafi Shirazi; Nawal Kishore Press, Lucknow; second edition, 1942.
5. *Chakbast aur Baqiyat-e-Chakbast*: by Kali Das Gupta 'Riza'; Vimal Publication, Bombay, 1979.
6. *Kamla*: (drama written by Chakbast): published by Kishan Parshad Kaul from G.P. Varma Brothers Press, Lucknow; 1915,
7. *Yatdgar-e-Chakbast*: by A.N. Mulla; Indian Press, Allahabad; 1939.
8. *Chakbast, Hayat Aur Adabi Khidmat*: by Afzal Ahmad; published by author from Chandikhana, Agha Mir, Lucknow; 1975.
9. *Tazkira-e-Bahar-e-Gulshan-e-Kashmir*: by Radhe Nath 'Gulshan'; published from Allahabad; 1939.
10. *Lakhnau ka Dabistan-e-Shairi*: by Abul-lais Siddiqi; Shairi Adabi Dunia, Urdu Bazar, Delhi; 1955.
11. *Muqaddama-e-Shair-o-Shairi*: by Altaf Husain Hali; Ram Narain Lai, Allahabad; 1962.
12. *Deewan-e-Hali*: (collection of Hali's poems) Ram Narain Lai, Allahabad; 1958.
13. *Hayal-e-Javed*: by Altaf Husain Hali; Anjuman Taraqqi Urdu (Hind), Delhi; 1939.
14. *Hayat-e-Sir Sayyid*: by Noor-ur-Rahman; Anjuman Taraqqi Urdu (Hind), Aligarh; 1950.
15. *Harf-e-Ghazal*: by Masihuzzaman; Khayaban, Allahabad; 1957.
16. *Haqaiq*: by Gian Chand; published by author from Hyderabad; 1978.

17. *Urdu Zaban Aur Adab* : by Masood Husain; Educational Book House, Aligarh; 1959.
18. *Hamari Shairi*: by Masood Hasan Rizvi 'Adeeb'; Raja Ram Kumar Press, Lucknow; fifth edition, 1953.
19. *Kulliat-e-Atish* : (collection of poems of Atish) Nawal Kishore Press, Lucknow; 1929 edition,
20. *Masnavi Guhar-e-Naseem*: Nawal Kishore Press, Lucknow; 1908.
21. *Masnavi Sihr-ui-Bayan*: by Mir Hasan; Ram Narain Lal, Allahabad; 1968 edition.
22. *Tarikh-e-Adab-e-Urdu*: (Urdu translation of Dr. Ram Babu Saxena's book made by Mohammad Askari); Raja Ram Kumar Press, Lucknow; 1954 edition.
23. *Mukhtasar Tarikh-e-Adab-e-Urdu*: by Aejaaz Husain; Indian Press, Allahabad; second edition 1940.
24. *Muqaddama-e-Tarikh-e-Zaban-e-Urdu*: by Masood Husain Khan; Azad Kitab Ghar, Delhi; second edition, 1954.
25. *Urdu ki Adabi Tarikh*: by Abdul Qadir Sarvari; National Fine Art Printing Press, Char Minar, Hyderabad; 1958.
26. *Mubadiat-e-Tanqeed*: by Khalil-ur-Rab; Indian Press, Allahabad; 1945.
27. *Bahr-ul-Fasahat*: by Najm-ul-Ghani 'Najmi'; Nawal Kishore Press, Lucknow; 1917.