

Some Prominent Literary Figures of Khowar Language During the 20th Century

By

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Shahzada Hisamul Mulk

Father of modern Kohwar

By Sher Nawaz Naseem

"The late Shahzada Hisamul Mulk was a man who loved Kohwar very much and took the initiative in his lifetime to put it into a written form, and all his efforts for the development and shaping of this language will always be remembered in the years to come" said Professor Israr-ud-Din of the University of Peshawar, paying tribute to this great literary stalwart.

Touching the personality of a man belonging to the former royal family of Chitral, this article perhaps will invite criticism from some people of the area but the services of Sir Nasirul Mulk in the field of education and the late Hisamul Mulk for the Kohwar language cannot be denied. It was the prophetic genius of the late Nasirul Mulk, who while laying the foundation of Government High School Chitral in September 1939 near Chitral Fort, sensed the danger of this institution and declared it a "bomb" for the Fort. Later his prediction was confirmed when the young, people educated at this insti-

tution rallied around the banner of the Pakistan Movement, leading the state to join Pakistan.

Having a good command of Persian literature Nasirul Mulk also took an interest in the Kohwar Language. The credit for infusing a new spirit into young however, goes to the late Shahzada Hisamul Mulk. He established the Kohwar alphabet and made efforts to introduce it at primary level in various schools of Chitral. This met with failure because of unfavourable circumstances. According to Sam-samul-Mulk, the son of Shahzada Sahib, he was studying in Islamia College in Peshawar, when Mr. Abdul Qadir, then the director of the Pushto Academy, asked him to design a script for Kohwar. With the help of his late father Hisamul Mulk, a prominent educationist, the late Ghulam Umar and Professor Israr-ud-Din, he prepared a Kohwar grammar and it was published by the academy. After the publication of this grammar Shahazada's interest in his mother tongue increased and he began to write many articles on various topics touching different aspects of Chitrali culture.

The late Hisamul Mulk was born in

1902 and was the third son of Sir Shujaul Mulk. According to the royal tradition he was fostered by the family of Feroz Khan, grandfather of the famous Kohwar poet, Baba Ayub. He studied at Islamia Collegiate School and his B.A. from Lahore as a private candidate. He began to involve himself in the affairs of the state and took part in the Afghan war of 1919. Fighting in close co-ordination with the British Indian Army units, he not only threw back the enemy but captured the strong Afghan defences at Birkot along with a large amount of booty, including many weapons.

In 1926, he was appointed governor of Mastooj in Chitral and became President of judicial Council Chitral in the next year. He carried out the responsibilities of the state Chief Secretary during 1928 and was given the assignment of the governorship of Drosh in 1929. When the possibility arose of the out break of war and a possible Soviet invasion seemed to threaten the security of the state the ruler Sir Nasirul Mulk (his brother) appointed him defence minister.

In order to improve relations with Afghanistan, Shahzada went to Kabul leading a delegation in 1939. It was agreed in Kabul that timber would be allowed to float from Chitral to Kabul along the Chitral (or Kunar) River and goods from Afghanistan would be transported to Chitral via Jalalabad. However, this agreement annoyed the British as it was against their interests. Hisamul Mulk was confined in Loralie Jail for about three years. Following his release he was appointed governor of Drosh again. When Pakistan came into being in 1947 he decided to spend the rest of his life at home and give his attention to the promotion of Kohwar.

Shahzada laid the foundation of *Anjuman-e-Taraqi-e-Chitral* in 1956, and remained its president until his death in 1977. Under the auspices of this organisation, *mushairahs* and literary gatherings were held from time to time and produced devoted workers. He translated the Holy Quran into Kohwar but was unable to publish it in his lifetime. *Gulshan-e-Chitral*, *Tamadun-e-Chitral* and *Khawn-e-Chitral* are his famous contributions to Kohwar and Chitrali culture. All his written materials have been placed in the library of Anjuman-e-Taraqi-e-Kohwar and will be published soon. He also wrote a book on prayers while completing a jail term in Baluchistan. It is said

that he recited *Kohwar Na'at* for All-India Radio in 1936.

With the help of Shahzada Hisamul Mulk the role of the monthly *Jamhoor-e-Islam Kohwar* published by the Press Information Department in Peshawar, cannot be denied. *Jamhoor-e-Islam* has enabled Kohwar speakers to add more to their language when it is still its nascent stage. The credit to operate this channel goes to Kazi Sarwar, who then worked for the Press and Information Department. He realised the importance of Chitral and took many steps to expand publicity of this area so that it could become an integral part of the country despite its geographical isolation. When the *Kohwar Jamhoor-e-Islam* was started in 1969 it was a section of *Jamhoor-e-Islam* in Pushto. Later *Jamhoor-e-Islam* became a separate monthly journal and while the Pushto journal became the monthly *Abasin*. The Kohwar language *Jamhoor-e-Islam* was well received and according to Kazi Sarwar, it helped in reviving Kohwar and enlivening its literature. At the same time it created enthusiasm among Chitralis giving them positive publicity which was totally unknown before.

The late Hisamul Mulk can be considered the father of modern Kohwar and Kazi Sarwar has pointed out his valuable services to the people of Chitral and to the Kohwar language. Recalling his impressions of Hisamul Mulk, he said, "He was a great lover of art, literature and good and beautiful things in life. He had a refined taste for all that was sublime. He loved his country and people and always had high hopes for their welfare, peace and prosperity. On more than one occasion I had the unique honour of being his guest in his ancestral palatial house in Drosh. His warm-hearted hospitality, friendliness and regard for his guests can hardly be described in so many words. He was a noble soul who served his people well and left behind a rich heritage which will always be treasured by his grateful countrymen. May his soul rest in eternal peace".

Kohwar is now spoken by 3,500,000 people in Chitral, Gilgit and other parts of the country. *Anjuman-e-Taraqi-e-Kohwar* Chitral, *Anjuman-e-Taraqi-e-Kohwar* Ghezoor, Gilgit and other literary societies are proof of the development of this language. It is all due to this great man who is not today among us to see the flower planted by his own hand in his lifetime, now become a fragrant blossom.



The late Shahzada Hisam-ul-Mulk of Drosh, Chitral

Baba Ayub, ghazal-producer

By Sher Nawaz Naseem



THE famous German poet Goethe once said, 'When you love a woman you produce children, when I love a woman I produce poems.' But Baba Ayub, a gifted Kohwar poet, is a man who loves both men and women and produces ghazals.

Born in a well-to-do Rezakhel family, in 1919 at Drosh, Chitral, he got his early religious education at home. His father, Hakim Musharaf Khan, was an outstanding figure in his lifetime. His grandfather, Baba Feroz Khan, was awarded land at Chumorkhown, Chitral, being foster-father of Shahzada Hisamul Mulk, the then governor of Drosh. The late Hisamul Mulk had immense love for Kohwar language and made a great contribution towards developing it on the one hand and promoting Chitrali culture on the other.

Baba Ayub was brought up with love, affection, and care. An abundance of wealth allowed him to lead a luxurious life. He was a good polo player and there was none to match him in hunting. He had great command over the roaring rivers as a swimmer. Being close to Shahzada Hisamul Mulk, he began to take great interest in his native language, and appeared to be anxiously awaiting for Kohwar to flower. Under the former's patronage and guidance, he began to write in Kohwar, and selected it as the linguistic means of expressing his feelings and giving his message to the people.

In 1963 he for the first time, took part in a Kohwar mushaira, held in Chitral and became known to the public as a poet of ghazals. When a Kohwar programme, only of fifteen minutes duration, began to

be broadcast over radio in 1965, he contributed to it with his na'ats and ghazals, and received appreciation from the people. In the early stages of his life, he was not allowed to suffer from hardships, miseries and sorrows by his parents. Therefore, his poetry is free from the bondage of negative approaches. He speaks of love, courage, faith, unity, peace, brotherhood and understanding. He has a keen desire to serve the people and says:

دریغا پر امان آردمان بیرو
غم گین ہر دریانتے درمان بیرو
مہ سارہر زانو اورت قائدہ تدریس
بیابانا چھاغوسوم اسی کان بیرو

Alas: Would that my desires, to heal the wounds of others, were fulfilled. If I were a shady tree in a desert, I would have been a source of consolation to all (who seek rest under the shady trees).

He belongs to a well-off family but he is not unaware of the surroundings in which his fellow beings live in adversity, deprived of all basic amenities of life. He lauds the role of the philanthropists and condemns those who collect wealth by hook or by crook to deprive the needy of their rights. He says:

ہر ہاتے سخی روڈو متار جوٹے
صند لاسر دوری کی نو ہائی دابوٹے

صریصو دولتاری کوستے کیہ قائمہ
گور ددغو وارغانو غون مردار جوٹے

The man who is generous has a high place in society. The sandal, without fragrance is, no more than a wood. The wealth of a miser is like that of a donkey's corpse (which finally goes to vultures).

Baba Ayub is a poet of ghazals. He is famous for using simple language. He is the poet of the man in the street. All his poems reflect his inner feelings towards the attitude of his beloved, to whom he had complained of neglecting him. Despite her disregard, he has many words of praise for her. The story of his ghazals revolves around her shining face, arched eyebrows, waist-length scattered black tresses, moving like a cloud with a cool breeze and her lips like a bud of rose that is ready to burst into blossom:

لعل مر دو چھادرا ہائی اسی حور اوشوئی
دو کاس دی ہر و پردشہ کھور اوشوئی
قاتلوغچ ہرودی درون ویشو و غون ا
آفرین ہس کی جام نانوژور اوشوئی

The pearl (my beloved), when it appeared before me, I found her a heavenly nymph. The glittering moon was matchless to her mirror-like face and her eyebrows are like an arrow. Salute to the mother who has given birth to such a beautiful one.

Baba Ayub has great love for his own

culture and traditions. In his poems he has painted the values, norms, customs, usages and ways of life of the people. One of his poems reveals his intensity of love with a Chitral-made overcoat (*shooqu* in local parlance), which he himself is proud to wear:

غیرت داربپ گینان یادگار مہ شوق
مہر گین نان تان ہوستار مہ شوق
قومی لباس کیچہ چھاغدار مہ شوق
خود یا مٹراغ بر خود دار مہ شوق

The overcoat is a sign of memory of my forefathers and my loving parents had made it with their own hands. As a traditional dress, how attractive it is looking and provides a sense of pride and self-respect.

Baba Ayub, as a poet, is involved in activities meant to promote Kohwar language, with great spirit and zeal. He has been president of Anjuman-e-Taraqi-e-Kohwar, Chitral, for two years. In February 1986, he went to Sind on a two-week visit, at the invitation of the Academy of Letters. On his return, when he was interviewed by the Radio Pakistan Kohwar programme, he claimed similarities between Kohwar and Sindhi language.

Mirza Fidaus Firdausi

By Sher Nawaz Naseem

THE LATE Mirza Firdous Firdousi was born in Jughoor, Chitral, in 1885 and received his primary education from a local religious institution before proceeding to Peshawar to study Persian there. His practical life began with humanitarian service when he was appointed as a vaccinator in Civil Hospital, Chitral. It did not last very long because his ultimate mission was not to immunise the body but to heal up the wounds of the mind and to give relief to the soul of the people. However, this would not have been possible for him without his poetic talent.

He served as a courtier of the Nawabs of Dir, Jehanzeb-Khan, Shah Jehan and the Prince of Drasun, Chitral, between 1918 and 1949. He returned to Drosh, Chitral, and formed a close association with Shahzada Hisamul Mulk, the then prominent literary figure of Chitral. He stayed there till 1964 when he left for Peshawar. After a protracted illness, Mirza Firdous died in October 1973 and was buried there.

Mirza Firdous began his writings at a time when Persian was declining in influence and Kohwar appeared to attract the people as a means of expression both in poetry and prose form. He had a wide vocabulary at his command to design his poetry with beauty and charm.

Most of his *ghazals* and *nazams* are filled with words derived from Persian, reflecting the age in which this language dominated the cultural and intellectual aspects of the life of the people. The following every first line is in Persian and the second is in Kohwar:

زلف پیچ و تاب تو، دام گلگیر من —
مہ لہو کی چمنخیز غمخیزوچی، بھوہرہ تہ قضی لوتر کی ہوتی

"Your curly and entangled tresses are like a trap in which my throat is looking to be entrapped."

بہتر است فرزند کسی، صالح از ارجمند
از بی شرم غوث یکو سارجم ای طرار زرد کی ہوتی

"The son having trust, good conduct and a refined character is a blessing (from God). An intelligent daughter is far better than a son who is dull and nothing to work."

میں ناملہ در کون تو، ترکہائی ہوں بہ جستجوی تو
نویا شیم کبیری کبیری، مہ جو نیچ شکر کدی ہوتی

"(O, my beloved), where you are? I am weeping and looking for you. (If this sorry state of affairs will continue) my eyes will lose their sight."

When Sardar Hizbullah Khan, the then Political Agent of Chitral, held a Kohwar *mushaira* in 1963, Mirza, for the first time, recited his poems at the gathering. He wrote *ghazals* and songs for the Kohwar programme and extended his full support to Jamhoor-e-Islam Kohwar.

The chief quality of his poetry is that every line of his *ghazals* captures the whole picture of his life and strives to explain it in words. He underwent great distress and despair. Adversity in his life led him to write the following lines:

دنیو شرتیو کا پریشانی، تو پائشیں پرشکوشان تہ نی
برونی ہش کا لہو بہجونی، بہچو نشان تہ نی

"How could you see happiness in this world because before you, many had met with the same fate. In this world every one had to die and there is no sign of life for you either."

Rightly a wise man has said "The chamber of sorrow is the house of God," and "The corn is cleaned with the wind while the soul with adversity." Mirza Firdous experienced a life full of adversity and his heart was purified and his poems were released from the base of evil thoughts. He adopted a didactic tone and preached of love and morality. He writes:

خواری کی ہم کو رتا وجم خوںے ہر بندو دوست
کی خوںے تہ شوم کی آوشوئی کہے نادر خور دشمان تہ نی

"If you are excellent in your dealing with the people, you befriend — everyone, and if you treat them with harshness you could invite hostile elements."

He lamented how love, trust, confidence and affection were disappearing from the heart of the people. According to him sincerity, honour, respect and the spirit of goodwill had lost their credibility.

شکیسان یاد وفادار، ایسان اغیار ہتے روخ
ہش کوسادہ ہمدون، کور کیو گمان تہ نی

"When you are looking for loyal and faithful people you find them in reverse, and do not think of trust and promise because there is none to abide by them."

Mirza Firdous decorated and beautified his poems and writings with similes and metaphors. His style is simple but he never hesitated to use Persian and Urdu words whenever and wherever he deemed it necessary. His correct manner of expression and proper use of language have given a fine colour to his poems. His readers can enjoy his poems without feeling a burden on the mind.

تو عقیق بینی جام + تو یاقوت رومانی جام
تہ دوری کی مشک بھیرو + تہ ہوست الماس نورانی جام
مالو خاؤن ہش بیمار + تازہ ہمدوست تہ چانی جام

"(O, my beloved), you are a high value because you are a beautiful ruby and Yemenite cornelian.

"You are looking to have musk scented and your hands are beautiful like pearl.

"The wealthy people are not feeling well (and usually are sleepless), but do not mind to be poor with good health and free from worries."

A collection of his poems is presently being printed. But alas, Firdous is not with us to see the product of his hard labour, for which he worked day and



Mirza Firdous Firdousi

night untiringly. His collection in printed form perhaps will give eternal rest to his soul. It is to be hoped that those reading his poems (when available) will be enab-

led to explore the world in which he appeared, to grapple with adversity and wrestle with the hardships of life through his mental and physical force.

Ustad Amir Gul Amir

By Sher Nawaz Naseem

The art to play sitar, the talent to create poems and the voice to produce music — these three elements combined into one have constituted the charming, magnetic and well-known personality, Amir Gul Amir. Amir means head and Gul means flower, thus "the head of the flower." Amir Gul has a great affection for flowers, their beauty and colour. According to him, it was flowers that changed the direction of his life and brought him into a world in which he, as a noted artiste has become a shining star. He even uses flowers as a plume to decorate his cap.

Recording his impressions of how he began writing poems and songs, Amir Gul says that in 1936, when he was coming home from his office, he saw a flower on the way which stirred his heart suddenly and thus he developed his love for them. Flowers and lover are the main features of his poems, without which his heart would be barren and no seed of affection could flourish. He does not differentiate between flowers and his beloved. To him both are interrelated and cannot be separated. The following line indicates how he express the relation between his beloved and a flower:

نہ سیر ویرگی گلجو رتے مردو ستیام گلجو رنگ نہ ہیرگی

"In Persian Gul means flower and my beloved too has the same name and I am the head of that flower."

He was born in 1922, in the village of Oveer. He first settled at Morder village, and then migrated to Chitral proper, where he is now permanently residing. He eventually started writing poems and singing songs. He works with the same spirit to amuse his readers and to provide enjoyment for his listeners in spite of his age of 65. As a soldier of the British army, in the Second World War, he fought for the Allies at the battlefronts in Burma, Maldeve, Malaya and Sri Lanka. A handsome youth, he attracted a Christian lady and married her, but she died after three years of marriage. Amir Gul has married seven women and from the last one has had children.

People throughout Chitral and other parts of country, known him not as a poet but as a gifted singer. He is called the "Nightingale of Chitral" because of his high artistic performance. In his youth he was a good dancer. In musical gatherings, his admirers anxiously waited for his quick response to the thrilling music. Sometimes he sprang out in surprise and his leaping feet led to thunderous applause. Once he occupied the floor, it was not possible to stop him until the flute and sitar players were exhausted. He has written poems and national songs and has recorded it in his own voice for the Koh-war programme of Radio Paksitan Peshawar.

Amir gul has a high regard for his beloved. He compares his beloved with a flower and finds her superior to all things. To him life has no meaning without the presence of his beloved, and it is only she who can sustain him as a living being. He says:

صبر اور گلشن کو سستم گبوری دی لہریتام
مشکی تان عشقو گبوری ہمش کیر باغانو لہریتام
نہ ہاتے دور لہریتام، نہ ہاتے رنگ ونگر ہریتام

"I visited many gardens and deserts and found countless flowers, but I failed to trace my own flower, its colour and fragrance, in any garden."

قطع ہونے دینو افس، تہ سارہ غیر مال کی
زور اسم شہین گمان، زندگیو مسال کی
ہا سے زندگی کیر حاجت نہ سہم کی وصال کی

"All my ambitions, without you, are cut off from the rest of the world. I look alive but am without soul and out of your company, life (to me) is nothing."

He fell in love once but circumstances were not favourable for him. His desires were left unfulfilled and the journey towards his destination met with failure. The repeated negligence of his beloved inflicted injuries on his heart but he was not unhappy with this and took pleasure from the bleeding wounds. To express his feelings in poems and songs is the only way to heal these wounds. He writes:

ای ویکو شہ زانکارہ تالیہ شہ بیچہ شیر
اے عالم کلبچی لاکھم سوتان پانزا آوا
عشور جنو ناگتھی، زودنی آخارا آوا
اچھو پولو خا ہرتم، گبوریان غلارہ آوا
سزہ جادو سر سورا ہاروشن کارگر بیچہ شیر
دشو کھیر زہم مسدا رید سارا آوا

"My body is filled with a smokeless fire. O, oppressor (beloved) how long I will keep this (fire) in my heart. I developed love like a mad person without considering its consequences. While searching my flower (beloved) I came across with the thorn. The magic of beauty has influenced me to such an extent that I am playing according to the tune of a juggler."

Amir Gul Amir represented a cultural delegation from Chitral to attend the Lok Virsa (Folk Heritage) Mela held in Islamabad in April this year. He demonstrated well his artistic skill and was awarded the fourth position in Pakistan. He was also invited by Radio Pakistan and Pakistan Television Corporation after his return to Peshawar, where he performed Chitrali music and was much appreciated.



Rahmat Akbar Khan Rahmat

By Sher Nawaz Naseem

REHMAT AKBAR KHAN REHMAT is a famous poet of Chitral who has rendered valuable services towards promotion and development of over the past 30 years. This Kohwar Chitrali language is spoken by 3.5 million people in Chitral, the Northern Areas and other parts of the country.

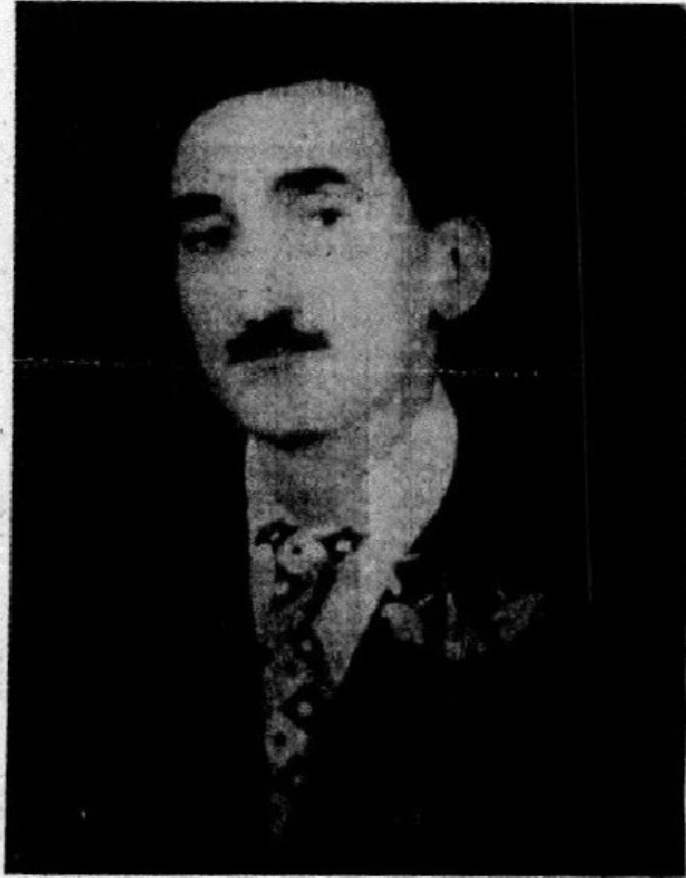
Kohwar is still at an early stage of its development, but during the period of its evolution it has produced a number of poets of high calibre with immense powers of imagination at their disposal. The more remarkable among them are Mohammad Siyar Mohammad Shakoor, Tajammul Shah, Mirza Mohammad Ghurani, Mohammad Nasrul Mulk, Mirza Firdous Firdousi, Baba Ayub, Rehmat Akbar Khan Rehmat, Prof. Israr-ud-Din, Wali Zar Khan, Wali, Gul Nawaz Khaki, Mohammad Irfan, Ameen-ur-Rehman Chughtale, Sher Wali Khan Aseer, Gul Murad Khan Hasrat, Inayatullah Faize and Mohammad Chengiz Khan Tareeqi.

Persian was the state language of Chitral (formerly a princely state) till its accession to Pakistan in 1952. In the mosques and schools, it was a medium of instruction throughout the area. Therefore, it greatly influenced the Kohwar language. As a result, Kohwar has derived 40 per cent of its vocabulary from Persian, with some changes in pronunciation and grammatical structure. Naturally, the poets and writers of this period were unable to escape the influence of Persian. Whenever they composed a poem, they preferred to write in Persian, because the Kohwar dialect was not on written records, in contrast to Persian, with its rich historical and cultural background.

Rehmat Akbar Khan Rehmat, born in 1936 at Dam Chappali, sub-division Mastuj, Chitral, is a man whose father, Hakim Farman Akbar Khan, was a close associate of the then rulers of Chitral state. Farman Akbar was awarded a vast amount of fertile land for his contribution and services to the state. Mohammad Iqbal Khan, the uncle of Rehmat Akbar Khan, was a famous poet in Persian—it is said that his verses were published in New Delhi.

Rehmat, under the patronage of his father, received his early religious education at home. He began to study Persian literature, when Mulvi Mohammad Nasir Shah tutored him. In a short period of time he gained command over the language. He wrote an elegy (marsia) on the death of his uncle Mohammad Iqbal when he was only 12, thus entering a world he had discovered for himself. One of his early poems, in which he has recorded a dialogue between the lover and the beloved, is reproduced below:

گفتا کہ چہ را علیکی گفتیم کہ آہ کہ شمیمہ
گفتا کہ چیت آہ گفتیم کہ درد دہر خوشتر
گفتا کہ حالت بدن گفتیم کہ جیلہ تازک
گفتا کہ آفرین دہر گفتیم کہ نیم مہر وہ
گفتا کہ پوہیز این گفتیم کہ تیغ زبان
گفتا کہ چیت ملاج گفتیم کہ کلام خند
گفتا کہ چہ بد شہادہ ای گفتیم کہ مفتق ہا ہا
گفتا کہ تا بچے گفتیم کہ ہستم زندہ



Rehmat Akbar Khan Rehmat

Along with Persian, he also began to write poems in Urdu. But the right sort of environment, literary circles, encouragement and incentive were lacking. At the same time, Persian was loosing its grip over the minds of the people, with the introduction of Urdu as a means of education and correspondence. Rehmat Akbar Khan Rehmat, therefore, decided to bid farewell to Urdu and Persian for ever. According to the advice of some of his friends, he selected Kohwar, his own native language, as a means of expressing his power of imagination, and it he could reach the public and become known as a poet of high standard.

When *Jamhoor-e-Islam Kohwar*, the government-sponsored monthly journal in Kohwar language began to appear from Peshawar, his writings appeared on its pages and received tremendous appreciation from the people. His wide (unpublished) collection of poems touches various aspects of human lives and reflects the poet's own talented genius.

It is unfortunate for him that lack of financial resources has shrouded his collection in obscurity, and all his good work will face oblivion unless it is published by the government or some other organisation. Such a positive step would make his poems a source of guidance to the people on the one hand, and preserve a big portion of Chitrali culture on the other.

Like many others, Rehmat Akbar Khan is not a traditional poet. His talent presents a variety of pictures and societal situations. He has a close insight into society. He disdains exaggeration and puts the facts before the people. It is the main feature of his poetry that what he saw, felt and observed, he recorded faithfully. He writes:

شہریشی انور میں برادر گیان منان ہوشیار
زندہ وہب نمونے آہلیکو پورمان پاشیار
تو جہا غم کو بچے شاد ہوست ہن ہوشیار

(How unfortunate) that I saw brothers who thirst for each other's blood. When the daughter offered respect to her mother, she used to pinch her ringlet. It is a matter of shame the son has a stick in his hand to beat his father with.

From the very beginning, Rehmat developed a love for nature. The stars, the moon, the sun, the mountains, the streams, the clouds, the rose, the sea and the green fields are the components without which his poetry would be incomplete. He records his feelings in such a manner:

بیلو شہرین ہوازا، آہر نغان کجولو
کیجہ برہم کلاب برہم شہر شہر پشمان کجولو
نہ پھر رتان ودیا، گیدری مغروریا
گلان کی ہانی شہر و شہا، پوجہ جوری جیلان کجولو

In the sweet voice of the nightingale, there lies an episode of sorrows. How those roses are unkind to us which disappear after giving short-lived pleasure. The flowers, perhaps, are proud of their temporary beauty, but unaware of the wind that is expected to come in the autumn to take the beauty off.

He uses a simple language, and readers have no complaints against him. He is proud to say that Kohwar has a rich vocabulary. Therefore, he avoids borrowed words in his writings. With his pleasing countenance, he gets words of appreciation from everyone. With a soft-spoken and mild temperament, he is famous for his traditional hospitality. Nobody visiting Mastuj could think of returning without enjoying his hospitality and sharing some moments of pleasure with him.

His life is full of social activities. He is president of the Anjuman-e-Tarraque-e-Kohwar, sub-division Mastuj, Chitral.

Gul Nawaz Khaki

By Sher Nawaz Naseem

Gul Nawaz Khaki, a renowned Kohwar poet, was born in 1936, at Singoor, Chitral, and got his early education in his home town. As a government employee he served in many departments but his independent temperament never compromised with the rude and authoritarian attitude of the officials. His heart suffered very much when he noted that how inhumanly subordinates were treated and forced to work, not as a respectable human being, but merely a tormented soul. He maintained high principles and never bowed his head before others for few words of admiration. He quit service in 1975 for this reason and decided to lead a private life at home.

Gul Nawaz is a very sensitive poet. He sees life from different angles, noting its hard realities. He grapples with agony, anguish and sorrows but his strong and invincible courage does not let him surrender. The many ups and downs in his life force him to speak, as a poet, not from his head but from the core of his heart. The following few lines of his poems will perhaps be enough to disclose the world from which he comes:-



ner. He received tremendous appreciation from the lovers of the "request programme." His ghazals, poems and songs are read and heard with great interest in educated circles.

In 1968, he was appointed by the Border Publicity Organisation, Peshawar to edit Jamhoor-e-Islam Kohwar, the only journal in the Chitrali language. He worked with missionary zeal and spirit and made great efforts to encourage young writers. I remember, when I was in 10th class in 1973, I wrote a short story and it got published. When I went to his office to collect my remuneration, he patted me on the back, and served me with tea and encouragement. It was from that time that my interest to write Kohwar began to grow. He considered it a mission to develop the Kohwar language. By dint of his hard and painstaking work, the Kohwar language has today produced more than one hundred poets and writers of high standard.

Gul Nawaz is a romantic poet, yet deviates from the established pattern. As a poet he believes in the theory of inspiration. Romantics are inspired and write on the spur of the moment. He is unique and matchless in his metre, diction, style, rhyme scheme and language. His poems do not exceed more than fourteen lines. He uses Persian and Urdu words to dress and decorate his poems. The following lines are an example of his simplicity, style and diction:-

اشروؤ طوفانان سوم، اشوک کومان
هردی اربانان سوم، اشوک کومان
سوم هوسین تھوس آسوم مان گروان
هچرو آرانان سوم اشوک کومان

"I am playing with the storms of my tears and with the countless desires of my heart."
"I am playing with the remaining edge of my shirt because of collar has been torn out with my own hands."

گہی گانز گدیری، زمانق سوم دعی
بشہ بٹ ماریان سوم گہی غیرمانہ آوا

"Sometimes I am looking mad and sometimes I am wrestling with the billows and whirlpool of stormy rivers."

منہ یہ عالما مزہ، نہ کی آفس تے جھان
تے ہردی پولی پھیرن، جہان اربان واکول

"I feel no pleasures in this world nor expect any good of the life hereafter because my vexed heart has no courage to dream of a better world."

When radio Kohwar programme began in 1965 Prof. Israrud-Din called him to contribute to it. He wrote many poems, ghazals and features for the programme, and played the role of an actor in the dramas. He was an artist of good repute and recorded more than a hundred songs; thus becoming known to the public as a croo-

داڑیئے انداؤ صد سور، روتزیکویشارموک

رنگ پلوع جھانز غیلو، تہوشکی قدم گایمان

چھوچھن گبوریان سورین، ہردی اشرہ اشرہ اشرہ

خانکی پراٹھاروساری، مونا کھیوتہ نم گایمان

"I have fallen prey to fever and don't ask how I am shivering. Stepping towards you, the colour of my face is like the falling leaf of an apple. There is no need for Khaki to get humidity from the dew because my heart itself is a source which sprays the flowers in the morning."

He again writes:-

پلے اوڑ گروک کورک جیہ شیرانگارو صفت

ظالمے، پلے پھیرو، کیہ دے پروانان تو آرو

مہ شوکھور لوؤ خویان، بیٹے تان وعدان دوشی
پچھان بخور غیجھانے، مہ قھورا پھران تو آرو

"To burn everything is the main characteristic of fire but let me ask you why you have put to ashes so many innocent moths. My Beloved! You, despite your promise, have covered your inebriated eyes with your tresses (depriving me from a look)."

His poetry is original and subjective. He records his own opinions, suggestions inclinations, and temperament. His descriptions are direct, vivid, graphic and precise. His collections are charged with poetic delicacies and colour. His reflections are profound and appeal to the heart. He knows well the art of creating beauty, novelty and variety by using appropriate words.

تہ ہر دی مہ یار، بیروچہ یار آرانو

تہ ستمو آراو، بیرو بے زار آرانو

لوڑا و پاریند ہر ساعت کی تہ پشیمان

اٹارسی موخو روشیو چردیا غبار آرانو

"(In my life) your heart is with me but I am not one of those to be spared your cruelty. When I look at you at the mirror, the estrangement in my heart vanishes with the effect of the light of your moon-like face."

Gul Nawaz is a poet of great repute. It is not possible to cover the whole range of his poetry in a short article like this. His humorous and pleasant character has rallied countless admirers around him. He is an author of a book "Mir-e-Karawan", the first ever written in Kohwar, on the founder of the nation, Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, which was published in 1976. He is also compiling a dictionary in Kohwar language.

In a civilised and cultured world such talented people as Gul Nawaz Khaki are respected, honoured and decorated with medals and provided with financial aid in order to boost their morale to continue their work for a better world, free from exploitation and injustices. But it is unfortunate for Gul Nawaz that there is none to help him at a stage where he is struggling hard for his existence.

Amin-ur-Rehman Chughtai

By Sher Nawaz Naseem

ONE OF THE CRITICS of English poetry has said about John Milton that "Milton writes for Milton." This is truly applied to Amin-ur-Rehman Chughtai in Kohwar poetry because of what he calls his *mushkilpasandi*, derived from the style of the great Urdu poet, Mirza Assadullah Khan Ghalib. Amin-ur-Rehman, at an early stage of his college life, studied the work of Ghalib, and both his Urdu and Kohwar poems reflect the influence of this renowned poet of the sub-continent. Sometimes Amin uses simple words and sometimes his poems carry words from Urdu and Persian to fashion his poems with poetic and scholastic colour. As a poet, his observation is objective, his experience rich, his thinking and imagination deep, leading him to produce poems which are not easily understood by the common reader.

There is no doubt readers enjoy his poems while reading but to reach to the base of the meaning is beyond their approach. He advocates to accommodate and adjusting words other than Kohwar words to develop the language. According to him no language can escape from the influence of other languages and changing conditions.

Amin-ur-Rehman was born at Tehsil Derosh, Chitral, in 1946. His father, Khalil-ur-Rehman, was one of the associates of the administration of the old Chitral state.

He traces his family back to the great Mughal ruler, Zaheer-ud-Din Babar, and belongs to the Sangeen Ali caste, which played an important role in a shadowed political situation during the period of Raza between 1320 and 1595. In 1963, he passed his matriculation examination from a local school and took admission in Government College and Islamia College, Peshawar, after proceeding there.

Literary activities in these institutions unearthed his hidden potential and he began to write poems in Urdu.

However, his association with the late Urdu poet, Sharar Nughmani, and the famous progressive poet, Ahmad Faraz, remodelled his mind and put his poetic talent on a way completely different from his contemporaries. In his poem "Saqi-Nama" Amin says:

تقاضائے خود آگاہی بہت دشوار ساقی
نگاہ مست کے صدقے بڑا ہوشیار بہ ساقی
دل ہو غمزدہ تو گلشن ہستی بھی زندان ہے
دل خوش ہو تو آگ دنیا تبسم زار ہے ساقی

During the last stage of his studies, health did not favour him. He cut short his education and joined the teaching pro-



Amin-ur-Rehman Chughtai

feccion after returning to Chitral. This area locked within high mountains, kept him away from literary gatherings and his live spirit appeared to be dimming with the passage of time. But nature was there with its full vigour to lead him back to the world of inspiration. In the meantime, *Jamhoor-e-Islam Kohwar*, the monthly journal in the Chitrali language, published by the then Border Publicity Organisation, began its publication from Peshawar. His poems published in this journal, gave him a tremendous reputation. As a sensitive poet, he never spared time to record the unhappy events in human life. Unlike progressive poets he developed a love of his motherland and began to sing the following song:

دشنہ زندگیکہ ٹھینگیالی دی ختم نایوران
زورخ ترائی مہ کاس دورا زندگی حرام نایوران
یورویسے مسس مہ یورخوش استری مہ غیچہ عزیز
پھوٹی وطنو مکم سفان ساری حجام نایوران
زومالین یور تو ریکو قدر تو پری مہ سیران
ڈانڈاوشن پھوران پتہ کچھ بہرا ہی شام نایوران

"In my native land even the slopes look like a plain. Let me walk on this thorny land because without it life carries no meaning.

"I like the stars, the moon and the sun very much, but my love for the soil has superiority over them.

"Nature has burst into flower with the rising of the sun and the evening of the land has close similarities with the scattered tresses of the beloved."

As a poet Amin-ur-Rehman has presented nature in many ways. All his poetic works are loaded with natural objects. Being a literary artist, he released Kohwar poetry from the fetters of traditional poetry and weeded out old-fashioned and outmoded elements, giving a new dimension to it while maintaining its local colour. While praising his lassie he has sought the help of natural elements. In one of his *ghazals* he records:

جلوہ کور دیا نئے ہنوں کرینے ہر دیان تانتے
ادیسے مسرور دستیبہ چھنے پردا مان تانتے
شبوکی لودی ااستری اور سستی اور دواز نغہ
یامت کیاغ دونی لاکھونیاں تہ ہی نامان تانتے

جنہی تہ پریشی رہتی تو کیر قیامت یارب
میر زوری زرا چھٹے کپال، مان کوئی سحران تانتے

کوسے زندگی ہیش تان مہوشتے گران تانتے
بر چھوشتے ہزار رنگ، پردہ کو زو خان تانتے

"Display your beauty and attract the heart of the people. Let the moths turn towards you, snatching the light of the moon.

"The bud, the scent, the stars, the light, the pearl and the songs are thy names and why these have been given to others.

"Your appearance in Paradise will lead to hurt and humiliation of the inhabitants and they will condemn themselves for their low-scale beauty.

"Don't take life to be difficult and let it proceed as usual. Let it blossom into flower in thousands of colours and let the thorn guard it."

Amin, identifying himself with poetry through natural objects, has come close to the creator of this universe. He loves Him and His creatures. He wishes to become a source of relief to those with whom he has a social relationship. He asks His blessings and guidance in this way:

رہ تو بھڑان ایسے شہرہ مہ منار کو
مجتویہ وغار، مہ چنار کو

"Let me be a minaret in a city where people have lost their way. Let me cast a shadow in the (burning) field of love."

Ethnocentrism is a human weakness and everyone loves his own traditions and way of life. Amin too has a great love for his local culture and sustains himself from it. He writes:

حیام استخلاقا حجام تمیزا مہ چھترار کو
نور خال ذوالسیر مہ کھسوار کو

"Let me have good character as the people of Chitral have; let my conversation be soft and tasteful like Kohwar."

Recording his impression about Azad Nazam he says that it is like an abstract art. To him, it is a way, to run away from the field of poetry. He considers similes and metaphors as the basic elements without which poetry is like a flower free from the bondage of beauty and from the clutches of fragrance.