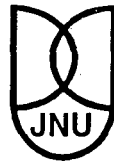


**ROMANTICISM IN THE POETRY OF NAZIK AL
– MALAIKA, FURUGH FARRUKHZAD AND
PARVEEN SHAKIR : A COMPARATIVE STUDY.**

Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of the Degree of

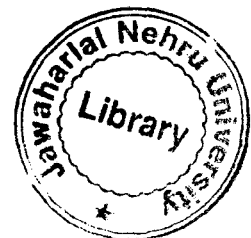
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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CERTIFICATE

Certified that this dissertation titled "*Romanticism in the Poetry of Nazik al - Malaika, Furugh Farrukhzad and Parveen Shakir : A Comparative Study*", submitted by MIRZA NEHAL AHMAD BAIG for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.), has not been previously submitted for any degree of this or any other University. This is his original research work. The Centre recommends this dissertation to be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

Mirza N. A. Baig

MIRZA NEHAL AHMAD BAIG
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Dr. F. U. Farooqi
Supervisor


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Chairperson



to my sisters

Preface

To the cultural historians, late 18th and 19th century can stand for two great antithetical systems or fashions: the first, classical or enlightened and the second, romantic. The romantic touch is extremely visible in all arts—from painting to poetry and architecture to interior decoration. What we call the romantic temperament is the sensitive, emotional, preferring colour to form, the exotic to the familiar; eager for novelty, for adventure, for the vicarious adventure of fantasy; love for the struggling, the unestablished, the untried. Briefly 'romanticism' may be defined as a literary attitude in which imagination is cogitated about of greater import than formal rules and reasons (classicism) and than a sense of fact (realism). And poetry, a creative and expressive art, is one of the greatest literary genres in which the romantic syndrome is readily recognised. Romanticism—as a literary movement—first started in Europe and it took no less than a century for it to enter the East, in true sense of the term.

The three women poets—Nazik al-Maláika, Furugh Farrukhzad and Parveen Shakir—constituting the topic of the work in hand, characterise not only three non-identical languages but also three different countries. Notwithstanding the variance in their upbringing and age vis-à-vis their respective socio-cultural milieus. They appear to belong to the same tradition, uphold identical trend and dream more or less alike. In their poetry, there are heightened feelings of romanticists: pessimism, agony, bewilderment, imaginary (or true) love affairs, romantic depression, self alienation, exaltation of pain and suffering, etc., to name a few.

Despite such a striking and marked similitude there hasn't been any work to the best of my knowledge, so far, taking even two poets among them, not to speak of all the three. The panegyrists of Parveen Shakir's passionate poetry in Urdu are deprived of somewhat equal power, pungence and passion of Furugh Farrukhzad and Nazik al-Maláika in Persian and Arabic respectively. And very few, infancy, can claim to have understood the intricacies and ramifications of such powerful a poetry, for the poets' media of expression is not the same. The luminaries and trend setters—in one sense or the other—of modern Arabic, Persian and Urdu poetry are brought together in the present work so that interaction of three different Eastern literatures can be made for the guideline of further research. Admittedly this is no more than tip of the ice-burg as far as the vast poetry of Arabic, Persian and Urdu literature is concerned. But I do hope this would be of some help, no matter at the level of reference alone, for those who want to study the poetry which is linguistically different, but thematically similar to a considerable extent.

I would like to acknowledge here and express my gratitude to my supervisor Dr. F.U.Farooqi who always encouraged me and helped me accomplish this research. My deepest respect and gratefulness to my teachers especially Prof. Syed Ahsanur Rahman, whose motivating and inspiring complements, besides able guidance, gave me a boost to learn Arabic language and pursue higher studies.

This work is a very dear part of my life in at least one sense that it is the actualisation of my Abbajan's wish which had entered the realm of my longing and yearning that I gained some understanding of Arabic. I pray for the longevity and health of my parents whose supplications to Almighty have remained with us always. My eldest brother, my mentor, Mahmudul

Hasani (Lecturer in English in a Bihar university), who I feel most intimate with, has always remained a source of inspiration. This work is an attempt in a tongue not native to me, and if I could explain things in it, I owe it to him, whose writing skill I find my nature most in harmony with. Chhotay Bhaijan (Mirza A. B. Baig for others having done Ph.D from JNU and presently working with the BBC World Service), with his affection and amity, not only encouraged me overlooking my weaknesses but also made me feel at home by giving some sort of camaraderie in this Kafkaesque 'island' i.e. JNU. Any amount of thanks to my other siblings (sisters) would be no more than a drop in the vast ocean of their prayers, love and caring.

I am beholden to all my friends, past and present classmates and counsellors who have helped me, in one way or the other, in the preparation of this work. My classmates—Reyaz, Shahid, Zeyaur Rahman, Shamshad, and Ajmal—always cheered and stirred me. Farogh Ahmad Jami and Amir Ayub my first ever cronies during school and college days—I miss both of them a lot at this moment of glee and gaiety. Miss I also Priyanka, Anju and Divya. Mosharraf Ali, Qaiser Ahmad and Ali Asghar provided me with mandatory camaraderie—thanks also are due to them.

Such works do create some strains and stresses. My thanks are therefore extended to my family members and close friends who have born with my irritabilities whilst this work was taking shape. I am bounden to them all.

Mirza Nehal Ahmad Baig

July 17, 2000

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Chapter I

Romanticism

and

Poetry

*" Si Je ne vauX pas mieux, au moins je suis autre"*¹ (I may not be better than anybody else, but at least I am different.)

This statement of Rousseau's 'Confession' might well serve as the battle cry of the entire Romantic Movement. Goethe, famous German writer and scientist, once said, "In Voltaire we see the end of a world; in Rousseau the beginning of a new one"² Many of the basic ideas in modern democracy stem from the rhetoric he first set down; and it was he who generated the Romantic Movement in literature.

In 1750, Rousseau (1712-78) had won a prize with an essay contending that unspoiled nature is good and that what passes for progress is actually corruption. In essence, he argued that 'natural man' is happy and good and that society, which abuses the benefits of civilization, tends to deprive him. These ideas were nothing but Rousseau's revolt against the apathy and lack of concern to human beings' perennial ordeal and perpetual affliction exhibited by feudal aristocrats of his age. The opening sentence of his 'Social Contract' reads: " Man is born free; and everywhere he is in chains".³ Rousseau voices a theory of liberty in the same book:

"To renounce one's Liberty is to renounce one's quality as a man, the rights and also the duties of humanity"⁴

¹ Rousseau, J.J.: Les Confessions. Nouvelle Edition Garnier Freres, Paris p. 1

² As quoted in Reader's Companion to World Literature, p. 460.

³ Rousseau, Social Contract (London, 1895). P. 100

⁴ Ibid, p. 105

Rousseau's infinite introspections amid the solitudes of the heart were unaccustomed and untried to the 18th century. The multitude of his readers responded and saw eye to eye to his glorification of 'sensibility', 'feeling,' 'passion', In 'Confessions,' Rousseau accomplished what his contemporaries were apprehensive of doing; he talked of his intimate self, of the inner workings of his spirit, of matters which were considered taboo, such as his sexual experiences and feelings. It may rightly be propounded that he inspired a new cult; " I feel therefore I am", against Rene Descartes' *Cogito ergosum* i.e., I think therefore I am."

Rousseau's eloquence, his avowal of and insistence upon the thoughtful man and the man of natural feelings, and upon notability and importance of the individual impacted upon and transformed the literature of Europe in general and that of Germany, France and England in particular. The beginnings of the Romantic Movement lie in various manifestations of pre - Romanticism during the later part of the period of neo-Classicism. The term pre-Romanticism refers to the 'Rousseauistic stream of sensibility' which accompanied the decline of 18th century neo-Classicism. Rousseau's assertion of man's natural goodness, social equality and social contract, together with the sentimental idealism and portrait of a split personality disturbed orthodox religion as well as political, moral and mental philosophy.⁵

⁵ Encyclopedia Britannica, p. 561.

In popular usage 'romantic' has come to mean any behaviour or set of judgements that violates the dominant cultural conventions.⁶ Thus, 'Rousseauistic stream of sensibility' became a paradigm, a precedent and precursor to the early 19th century Romanticism.

Rousseau, regarded as the 'first to break openly with the doctrines of the Enlightenment, sets forth in his works and life almost all the ingredients of the new movement'.⁷ The new conception of man, nature and the good life first achieved a broad and blanket expression in Rousseau, ergo he is known as the 'father' of Romanticism. Running counter to what Enlightenment and Classicism stood for, Rousseau started another tradition in his 'Confessions' and made use of introspection as a means of finding out what the creature man was really like. The unconscious and unreasoning part of our nature was seen at work not only in individual but also in societal comportment and deportment, and not only in art, law and morality, but also in spiritual and doctrinal matters. The development of this awareness, from Rousseau through the poets to Arthur Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Dostoyevsky and Freud, is considered to be the most fundamental bestowal of the Romantic search. It is a logical refutation of the prejudiced view that Romanticism sought merely to pit 'the heart'

⁶ International Encyclopedia of Communication, p. 485.

⁷ Collier's Encyclopedia, p. 163.

against 'the head'. It evinced that neither the heart nor the head was independent of the other, but are complimentary.⁸

To historians, the rise of Romanticism is identified with the Industrial Revolution, or with the American War of Independence and the French Revolution, both of which produced significant and indicative Declaration of Human Rights. The French Revolution not only shook federalism throughout Europe, but also hastened the decline of patronage and resulted in the liberty and Bohemianism of the artist, not excluding of the poets. The cultural historians consider the early and mid -18th century and the early 19th century as the period which stand for two great antithetical styles or fashions---classical or enlightened and the romantic. If the same is exhibited through a graph, the ascending lines of Romanticism would cross the descending lines of classicism in Germany, England and France one after another respectively.

18th century, for the most part, was marked by a dogged and pig-headed clinging to a new-classical tradition which had ceased to be really productive. The different genres of literature had lost all its charm and vigour. And it is in this backdrop that Rousseau, equally radical in politics, literature and human sensibility in general, became a precursor of a new movement. This new Rom, Movt, was but the outcome of a conscious and designed revolt against the then enfeebled and worn out

⁸ Collier's Encyclopedia, p. 166.

tradition of Classicism. Instead of portraying great or typical characters, writers would rather go for plebian and eccentric ones; instead of availing oneself of some lofty poetic diction they would opt for common speech of actual people; instead of confining themselves to few established verse forms they would experiment with every conceivable type of metre and rhyme scheme; instead of trying to be objective they would bask in their own *sui generis* personalities. By dealing openly with taboo themes like incest, they would overthrow the archetypes of both conformity and decorum. Thus the romantic generation was indeed very conscious of breaking sharply with its parents and grandparents.

'Romanticism' designates a generally accepted period, especially in literature and the arts of Western cultural history, roughly from the late 18th to mid-19th century. But today, as much as ever before, the words 'romantic' and 'romanticism' evoke all manner of varied responses ranging from abhorrence and nausea to warm and passionate approval. A. O. Lovejoy, an American scholar, once observed that the word 'romantic' has come to mean so many things that, by itself, it means nothing at all. The variety of its actual and possible meanings and connotations reflects its complexity and multiplicity. In 'The Decline and Fall of the Romantic Ideal' (1948), F. L. Lucas counted 11, 396 definitions of 'romanticism'. Barzun's usage of the term is so many and so much varied that it appears as if it can mean many things according to personal and individual needs. His

synonyms for 'romantic' are: 'attractive', 'bombastic', 'conservative', 'emotional', 'exuberant', 'fanciful', 'formless', 'futile', 'heroic', 'irrational', 'materialistic', 'mysterious', 'Nordic', 'ornamental', 'realistic', 'stupid', 'unreal' and 'unselfish'.⁹

In connection with literature, there is generally no accepted definition of the word 'romantic'. However the Oxford English Dictionary says, it is 'characterized... by, invested.... with romance or imaginative appeal', where romance appears to mean 'redolence or suggestion of association with, the adventurous and chivalrous', something remote from the scene and incidents of ordinary life. In European literature, the Rom.Movt, more or less began in the late 18th century and lasted into the 19th century; although there are examples of what is called the 'romantic spirit' in the Middle Ages or in 'the man of the Renaissance'. Indeed the men of these two periods have many points of resemblance:

"both periods called forth man of strong passions and heroic character determined to create a new order on the ruins of the old; both were epochs of great production in all the arts and also of great failures and tragedies; both were marked by intense individualism and diversity".¹⁰

For Sir Herbert Grierson, there are three "Romantic Ages": that of Plato etc; 12th -13th century 'romance'; modern romanticism.¹¹

⁹ Cuddon, A Dictionary of Literary Terms p. 186.

¹⁰ Collier's Encyclopedia, p. 163.

¹¹ Encyclopedia Britannica, p. 561.

There are three major traditions in the development of poetry, viz., classical, romantic and realistic. Of 'romantic' tradition, The World Book Encyclopedia says:

"...(it) comes from the poetry in the Romance languages, which spread from France to England during the Middle Ages. Minstrels recited the deeds of Charlemagne and King Arthur. In France, troubadours composed intricate love songs...In England, Edmund Spenser revived allegory, elaborate versification, and pageantry in his romantic epic 'The Faerie Queene'. The poetry of Shakespeare shows some other aspects of the romantic spirit, especially looseness of form and imaginative richness".¹²

Christopher Gillie too sees the beginning of this tradition in tales, in one of the Romance languages, which developed special characteristics such as loose, episodic construction, extravagant incident, and miraculous occurrences. He says:

"Heroic adventures of knights following their vocation of dealing justice and protecting the weak became prominent in the tradition, as in the cycle of legends about the court of Kings Arthur; so do tales of passionate lovers who defy all circumstances and other loyalties for the sake of the one reality of their love for each other -- hence the phrase 'romantic love'. Such tales passed from

¹² The World Book Encyclopedia, p. 528f.

France to England and....came to be known as 'romances'¹³.

This 'Romanticism' gave way to revived classicism in the later 1600's and 1700's . Then it burst forth again during the late 18th century in the mystical writings of William Blake and in the love and nature poetry of Robert Burns, to reach its epitome in Wordsworth, Coleridge. Byron , Shelley and Keats.

Definition of Romanticism:

The fact, that local and personal variation of 'Romanticism ' were so great and at times so extreme, makes it beyond the bounds of possibility to propound a critical theory on the word. Here are a few examples as to how the men of letters perceived this term:

- ◆ Goethe identified 'classicism' with health and 'Romanticism' with sickness;
- ◆ Hugo identified ' Romanticism ' with liberalism and revolt;
- ◆ Delacroix with a metaphysical interpretation of the world;
- ◆ Berlioz with heroism and expressionism;
- ◆ Goutier with youth;
- ◆ Nerval and Holderlin with Dream;
- ◆ Musset with disenchantment;
- ◆ Herder with Magic;
- ◆ Schlegel with yearning and nostalgia;
- ◆ Boudlaire with "a manner of feeling";

¹³ Longman Companion to English Literature, p. 752.

- ◆ Blake with " Imagination, the Divine Vision"
- ◆ Coleridge with Imagination ; and
- ◆ Wordsworth with Illumination or intuition.

Describing what he called Symbolic, Classical and Romantic forms of art, Hegel appears to accord the highest status on the third as synthesis in his dialectic. He further relates 'Romanticism' with Transcendental Idealism by stressing the inwardness of the Romantic art. Hegel sees 'the world of Inwardness celebrates the triumph over the outer world'.¹⁴ In general the writers and artists of the Romantic period took subjectivism to its pinnacle. The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Literature, regarding the revival of 'Romanticism', says :

"In literature and art the classical, intellectual attitude gave place to a wider outlook which recognized the claims of passion and emotion and the sense of mystery in life, and in which the critical was replaced by the creative spirit, and wit by humour and pathos".¹⁵

Collier's Encyclopaedia says:

".... the great cultural change from Classicism to Romanticism.... acquired the name Romantic because interest shifted from the noble, elevated, "Classical"

¹⁴ As Quoted in Encyclopedia Britannica, p. 561.

¹⁵ Concise Oxford Dictionary of English let., p. 497.

style and subjects to the popular, "realistic", Romantic style and subjects".¹⁶

International Encyclopedia of Communication puts forth :

"In popular usage, 'romantic' has come to mean any behaviour or set of judgements that violates the dominant cultural conventions".¹⁷

In Dictionary of Literary Terms, Henry Shaw opines:

"Romanticism may be called a literary attitude in which imagination is considered more important than formal rules and reason (classicism) and than a sense of fact (realism).... In effect, Romanticism is a literary and philosophical theory, which tends to place the individual at the centre of life and experience and represents a shift from objectivity to subjectivity ".¹⁸

And says Crane Brinton in 'The Encyclopedia of Philosophy':

"Romanticism is not only a complex cluster of ideas; it is one that arouses strong feelings among critics and historians, and that has had its ups and downs in the estimation of the various cultural generations since the late eighteenth century".¹⁹

¹⁶ Collier's Encyclopedia, p. 162.

¹⁷ International Encyclopedia of Communication P. 485.

¹⁸ Dictionary of Literary Terms. Henry Shaw, p. 327.

¹⁹ Encyclopedia of Philosophy, p. 209.

Romanticism is both a specific literary movement and a general manner of thinking and writing. Lyrical poems are best suited for it, because romanticism is basically an emphasis on individuality and the lyric is the ultimate means in direct personal expression. Such poems are usually short and many have a song-like quality. The poet expresses his personal reactions to the things he sees, thinks and feels.

It would be schematic but nevertheless illuminating to note that a Classicist believes that the individual exists for the sake of culture, one's task being to maintain it; but to a romanticist, culture exists not merely for the sake of individual but also to support the individual's need to transcend that culture. Among the important signs of intrinsic Romanticism are: preference for simplicity and naturalness; a love of plain feelings and truth to commonplace reality, especially as found in natural scenes; a rejection of the artificialities that inevitably develop in the urban centres of an advanced civilization. Seen in historical perspective, 'Romanticism' has been engaged in an analytic dismantling of the superstructure of Western culture.

In plain words, 'romanticism' is opposed to 'classicism'. And the opposition and fluctuation between these two styles is found in from painting, sculpture and architecture to music, dance and literature. The entire history of all the arts – no less that of the poetic literature – can be summarized as a regular swing of the pendulum between classicism

and romanticism, notwithstanding the fact that characteristics overlap each other and are not mutually exclusive. Neither classicism nor romanticism is found in an absolutely pure state, nevertheless 'classicism is social, formal, intellectual, logically organized and static, whereas romanticism is individual, informal, emotional, and dynamic'.²⁰

Friedrich Schlegel is considered to be the foremost theoretician of this movement, who admired the balance of nature and spirit in classical German art--the result of a harmonious reconciliation of opposites.²¹ It was he who is generally held to have first established the term 'romantisch' in literary contexts. Though not very clear, as to what he himself meant by it, he said that 'which is romantic depicts emotional matter in an imaginative form.' His brother August Schlegel implied that romantic literature is in contrast to that of classicism. As far as France is concerned, Madame de Stael knew the Schlegel brothers, and she appears to have been responsible for disseminating the term 'romantique' in literary contexts.²²

Many hold the theory that it was in England where the Romantic Movement really cropped up from with Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Keats. For all practical purposes, it is not a very sound viewpoint, as quite early in the 18th century one can discern a definite shift in sensibility and feeling particularly with respect to the natural order and

²⁰ Reader's Companion to World Literature, p. 117.

²¹ Princeton, Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics, p. 719.

²² A. Dictionary of Literary Terms. Cuddon, p. 587.

Nature, especially in France and Germany. The truth seems to be that romanticism---

- a) does not occur simultaneously in all European literatures;
- b) varies in its literary aspects from country to country; and
- c) as a word, has not the same meaning every where.

Though it has no fixed and absolute meaning, nevertheless, universally it proposes absolute creative freedom, spontaneity, 'sincerity', and a sort of emotional engagement on the part of the poet.²³

According to Goethe, it originated in discussion between himself and Schiller, a German poet. But Christopher Gillie is of the opinion that the German critic A. W. Schlegel (1767-1845) and the French writer Madame de Stael (1766-1817) has most to do with its popularization.²⁴ The term 'Romantic Age' is applied to a phase of English poetry 'which began in 1789 with Blake's 'Songs of Innocence' and ended with death of Keats and Shelley'.²⁵ English romantic revival is concerned to be the work of a number of writers between 1790 to 1830 especially the six poets viz., William Blake, William Wordsworth, S. T. Coleridge, Byron, Shelley and John Keats.

²³ Cuddon, p. 719.

²⁴ Longman Companion to E.L., p. 753.

²⁵ C.M. Bowra, p. 271.

These six poets had certain qualities in common which set them apart from their predecessors of 18th century; hence these can be said to be some of the features of romanticism:

- i) They cultivated imaginative freedom, which encouraged them to use a variety of poetic forms.
- ii) Each tended to express the feelings of man in solitude as opposed to those of man in society.
- iii) They had in common a tendency to be 'inward-turning', though this tendency varied from poet to poet. Here, Byron is a case in point, whose best poetry—the satires-- are outward looking.
- iv) They responded vividly to natural environment.
- v) They tended to use the language with more freedom and informality in comparison to the 18th century poets.
- vi) All of them profoundly affected by the great historical fact of the French Revolution, and by its various immediate aftermaths.
- vii) They were passionately interested in problems of growth and process, both in life and art. Their common qualities, for example, looseness of form, reliance on the imagination, and introversion, are commonly accepted as "romantic".

For M . H . Abrams, the 'Age of Romanticism', "is a title imposed by later historians on the four decades after 1790.....an era that was distinctive, vital and innovative, and had identified its distinguishing features by the term ' the spirit of age'²⁶

²⁶ W. Wordsworth and the Age of Eng. Romanticism, p. vii.

Commentators on 'the spirit of age' especially Shelley, Hazlitt and J .S. Mill concurred that this spirit manifested ways of thinking, imagining, and feeling formed by the outbreak, promise and outcome of the French Revolution. Shelley described it as 'the master theme of the epoch in which we live'.²⁷ As a young man, Wordsworth had first hand experience of F. R. and he never lost his commitment to the social and political causes of the day. In his autobiographical poem, 'The Prelude' Wordsworth remembers it as:

Bless was it in that dawn to be alive,

But to be young was very heaven!

To Wordsworth, as to most young intellectuals of his time, the Revolution had tragically failed; but Thomas N. Talfourd, a cultural commentator, astutely observed in 1815 that 'it was the crisis precipitated by this failure---a moral and imaginative, as well as political crisis --that in fact evoked and shaped the new literature of the age'.²⁸

William Hazlitt, in his famous book 'The Spirit of the Age'(1825),asserted that Wordsworth's Lyrical Ballads (1798) and his other early poems were a revolution in poetry, equivalent to the F.R. in politics, in that they transferred to their stance and subject-matter the political principles of human equality and fraternity. Hazlitt noted that Wordsworth's poetry deals sympathetically not only with 'peasants,

²⁷ Quoted in W. W A of E. R., p. vii.

²⁸ WWAER, p. viii.

peddlers' but also with 'contrites, female vagrants, gypsies...idiot boys and mad mothers'.²⁹

The period, which the above mentioned Romanticists belonged to, had some features like those of the late 20th century world: the world of big industrial cities, of rapid historical change, of quick transmission of news, of the exploitation by an amusement industry of a public taste that was intellectually apathetic and nervously restless.

Wordsworth and his friend and collaborator over the 'Lyrical Ballads', Coleridge believed that poetry could purify society from the malignant effects of the forces that were afflicting it, but that in order to do so poets must become more aware of elemental forces both in human beings and in their surroundings than they had hitherto been in. Wordsworth was the voice of common humanity in all men. He directs his readers to 'humble and rustic life', because, amongst other things, simple countrymen 'hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived'.³⁰

The first flare-up of English romanticism marks an attempt at poetic reform and is encompassed by the three editions of 'Lyrical Ballads' (1798, 1800, 1802). Wordsworth describes a poet as 'a man speaking to men', a man 'endowed with more lively sensibility,

²⁹ WWAER., p. ix.

³⁰ Longman Companion to English Literature, Gillic, p. 345.

enthusiasm and tenderness and who has greater knowledge of human nature'. He defines "poetry" as 'the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity'.

All the poet of this period, especially Wordsworth and Shelley, had one faith in common – their belief in the divine truth of poetry. Alexander Pope looked on poetry as a superior method of telling philosophical truths – 'what oft was thought but never so well expressed'.³¹

These poets relied on imagination and intuition to lead them to the ultimate truth. To express their passionate beliefs, they turned back to lyrical forms of poetry, condemning the 'heroic couplets' of Pope's days. They deliberately used simple words, created a fresh set of poetical associations and used unusual images and varied verse-forms. Initially they were somewhat disliked and jeered at by the reading public due to their avant-garde approach to poetry, but in the end their school prevailed. Wordsworth is aptly called as 'the poet of nature', for he saw nature and mankind with new eyes and his whole poetic work is an attempt to create that vision. In other words, his task was to shed a light of imagination over simple and natural objects. His poems broke with tradition and sought their subjects in simple tales of country life, the sayings of countrymen and children, the doings and feelings of the down-trodden masses. He employed the language of

³¹ Quoted in An Introduction to English Literature, Mulgan and Davin, p. 94.

everyday speech---'purest poetry is written in the simplest words.' The following lines show strength of feeling and imagination which his poetry depends upon:

*The moving accident is not my trade;
To freeze the blood I have no ready arts;
'Tis my delight, alone in summer shade ,
To pipe a simple song for thinking hearts.
O Reader ! had you in your mind
Such stores as silent thought can bring ,
O gentle Reader! You would find
A tale in every thing.³²*

'The Table Turned' by Wordsworth opposes to the exercise of reason and stresses on the faculty of 'imagination'--the hall mark of the romantics:

*Enough of science and of Art
Close up those barren leaves;
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.³³*

Coleridge's chief contribution to 'Lyrical Ballads' was "The Rime of Ancient Mariner". He took the supernatural and ghostly for his field,

³² English Verse: Voice and Movement from Wyatt to Yeats, Cambridge University Press London 1967, p. 188.

³³ English Verse, p. 188.

and considered that chief aim of poetry is to convey the mystery of life. He was one of the most important minds of his age. T. R. Barnes, in the context of Coleridge's masterpiece, says about the poet that 'the unhappy unsettled life, the opium addiction, the countless plans never ever carried through , make him a kind of type of the Romantic artist.....'. And in Gillie's opinion: 'It is with Coleridge , more than with Wordsworth, that English literary thought, becomes distinctly Romantic'.³⁴

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It is worth mentioning that unlike German romanticists, who were conscious of their aims, their English counterparts, on the whole, remained unaware of their romantic trends and refused to apply the term romantic to their own production.³⁵ For Coleridge, the poet brings the whole soul of man into activity. The understanding value of his literary thought is its psychological depth . In 'Dejection: An Ode', he says :

O Lady ! we receive but what we give
And in our life alone does Nature live.

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For him, poetic truth is not that of the object, but a union between the subject and the object, of the union of the poet and nature.³⁶

³⁴ Longman's Companion to E.L., p. 348.

³⁵ L.C. to E.L., p. 349.

³⁶ Gillin, p. 350.



Lord Byron (1788-1824) is considered to be the first of the three who constitute a new generation of Romantic poets---other two being Shelley and Keats. But courtesy to 'Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics', Byron regarded himself as a neo-classical poet, continuing the tradition of Pope; (though) to the Germans and the French, he became the very personification of romanticism".³⁷

Byron's claim notwithstanding, he belongs to the romanticist stream of thinking. His 'Don Juan' introduces to literature the 'semi autobiographical *homme-fatal* prototype of the melancholy antihero torn by unbearable guilt feeling,' who haunts French romantic literature between 1820 and 1860.³⁸ Says T.R Barnes:

"Byron enacted in his early life the part of the romantic, outcast, rebel poet and become a symbolic figure throughout Europe".³⁹

'Don Juan' remains one of the greatest of English satiric poems. Byron died at the age of 36 ; he was a disillusioned man, young but already despising the pleasures of the world.

While Byron was inspired by 'dislike for the follies of mankind,' Shelley (1792-1822) was inspired by love. A pantheist, his love was not restricted to human beings; but extending to every soul, to flowers and to the elements---to the whole nature. Mulgan and Davin opine:

³⁷ Princeton Eney. Of Poetry and Poetics, p. 720.

³⁸ Princeton E. P.P., p. 720.

³⁹ Barnes, p. 196.

"In all English poetry there is no equal to the pure inspiration and lyricism of his writing. His thought and philosophy remained youthful and Utopian".⁴⁰

A few passages from Shelley's 'Ode to the West Wind' would prove the worth of its lyricism and his pantheism:

"Drive my dead thoughts over the universe

Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth!

And , by the incantation of this verse.

Scatter , as from an unextinguished hearth

Ashes and sparks , my works among mankind!

Be through my lips to unawakened earth.

The trumpet of a prophecy ! O , wind ,

If Winter comes can Spring be far behind?"⁴¹

To Shelley, the world of imagination is more beautiful than the world of reality, for the flower in the dream are 'fairer than any wakened eyes behold'. Shelley was a revolutionary---at least that he ardently desired and earnestly recommended social change; that he attacked the monarchy and church. Meanwhile, he did not skimp on 'reason' ; for 'reason', wrote Shelley in 'Defense of Poetry', 'is to the imagination

⁴⁰ An Introduction to E.L., p. 102.

⁴¹ The Complete Works of P.B. Shelley, 2nd ed. 1839 p. 618

as the instrument to the agent, as the body to the spirit, as the shadow to the substance".⁴²

John Keats, (1795-1821) about whom Shelley wrote that ' he is made one with nature', could see barely 26 springs of his life, and died of tuberculosis. Other poets who have died young have owed some part of their fame to their premature end. But Keats' works have a beauty that is absolute and does not revolve for its fame around the untimely and tragic life of its author. His greatest poems, by common consent, are the four Odes: on the Nightingale, Autumn, the Grecian Urn, and Melancholy. In these poems he expresses, and harmonizes, the themes of beauty and death, the immortality of art, the relentless passing of time.

Keats' search was for beauty in nature, in mankind , and in art. He cultivated a wealth of detail that fills every line of his poetry with richness and beauty. 'The nearest parallel to his work in English poetry', claims Mulgan and Davin, 'is to be found in Shakespeare's sonnets. With this exception there is no English poet who brings together so many riches into a single line or stanza."⁴³ For example the very first line of Keats' 'Endymion' reads: 'A thing of beauty is a joy for ever', and likewise, "'Beauty is truth, truth beauty",-that is all ye know

⁴² As quoted in Gillin, p. 349.

⁴³ Introduction to English Literature p. 103

on earth, and all ye need to know',⁴⁴ are the lines which Ode on a Grecian Urn ends on. These lines have achieved eternal fame.

Romantic Themes :

What the romanticists in general and aforementioned six English poets in particular stand for, can be termed as romantic themes. To mention some other themes ; first is alienation , which results from the conviction that one's culture has failed. Alienation can be expressed in the form of sickness: melancholia, despair and suicide to name a few, are all common themes in the works and lives of romanticists. The effort to escape from that depression took the form first of satirical or ironic attacks on the failed culture and second of a realization that mere attack is not enough, that the failed culture must be transcended.

Closely related to alienation were two other romantic themes that spread throughout Europe, viz., 'historicism' and 'realism'---which are but two sides of a coin. History proves that cultural transcendence is possible. And realism which has appeared in romantic works right from the start, rests on taking a historical attitude towards one's present. Whereas ' historicism' is an uncovering of what had gone in the realm of amnesia, 'realism' is an uncovering of what the widespread popular culture has been oblivious to. On that account, 'realism' brings to public attention factors and attributes of present-day

⁴⁴ Complete Poetical works : Keats, p. 47.

life. The fantastic release of imagination, a persistent romantic tradition, is best understood as psychological realism. It challenges and undermines the reason and sets free both the will and the subconscious mind. 'Realism' treats candidly the outward details of daily life and the inward thoughts and feelings of personal life. Walt Whitman, an American poet, led in the development of free verse and psychological realism. Robert Frost, another famous American poet and T. S. Eliot belonged to this tradition.

The historians and critics of art and literature consider 'continuity' as another great romantic theme. To the romanticists, the continuity of life and flow, growth, development – in a word a process – has always been denatured, indeed destroyed, by the dividing analytical mind.

Leading romanticists found their way into the church. Dissatisfaction with the present had driven them toward self-deification and the future.

J. M. Cuddon in 'A Dictionary of Literary Terms' mentions some other aspects of romanticism as it began. Some of the features might get repeated, nevertheless, it is advisable to put them in some order:

- i) an increasing interest in Nature, and in the natural, primitive and uncivilized way of life;
- ii) a growing interest in scenery, specially its more untamed and disorderly manifestation;

- iii) an association of human 'moods' of Nature---and thus a subjective feeling for it and interpretation of it;
- iv) a considerable emphasis on natural religion;
- v) emphasis on the need for spontaneity in thought and action and in the expression of thought;
- vi) increasing importance attached to natural genius and the power of imagination;
- vii) a tendency to exalt the individual and his needs and emphasis on the need for a freer and more personal expression;
- viii) the cult of the Noble Savage.⁴⁵

For the romanticists, 'imagination' is fundamental, because what matters most in poetry is its truth to the emotions or sentiment. They thought that to curb it was to deny something vital. They saw that the power of poetry is strongest when the creative impulse works untrammelled. It is the imagination that uncovers the reality masked by visible things. Or in other words, they believe that the imagination stands in some essential relation to truth and reality. William Blake says:

"This world of imagination is the world of Eternity; it is the divine bosom into which we shall all go after the death of the vegetated body".⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Cuddon, p. 588.

⁴⁶ Quoted in CM Bowra, Romantic Imagination, p. 3.

He goes to the extent of saying that 'one power alone makes a poet: Imagination, The Divine Vision'.⁴⁷ Coleridge believed that the imagination, working with intuition, is more likely than the analytical reason to make discoveries on matters which really concern the human beings. Nothing had full significance for the romanticists unless it appeared in a particular form. Blake writes:

"To Generalize is to be an Idiot. To Particularize is the Alone Distinction of Merit. General Knowledge; are those knowledges that Idiots possess".⁴⁸

Keats saw the imagination as a power, which both creates and reveals, or rather reveals through creating. For Wordsworth, the imagination must be subservient to the external world, because that world is not dead but living and has its own soul. He explains that the imagination:

"Is but another name for absolute power
And clearest insight, amplitude of mind,
And reason in her most exalted mood".⁴⁹

C. M. Bowra in his book 'The Romantic Imagination' states precisely the business of the romanticists:

" to create, and through creation to enlighten the whole sentient and conscious self of man , to make his

⁴⁷ Bowra, p. 14.

⁴⁸ Quoted in Bowra, p. 11

⁴⁹ Quoted in Bowra, p. 19

imagination the reality which lies behind or in familiar things, to rouse him from the deadening routine of custom ..., to make him see that mere reason is not enough and that what he needs is inspired intuition".⁵⁰

Romanticists, no doubt, insisted passionately on the imagination, but demanded that it should be related to truth and reality. Not all poets were as fortunate as Wordsworth and Keats in finding that their discontents could be cured by the contact with the nature; others were content to dream dreams on the chance that they might some day prove to be true. But C. M. Bowra opines that the 'Romantic spirit may be a dangerous poison when it is allowed to work too freely'.⁵¹ Another shortcoming is that the romantic outlook insists that a man must exploit his individual vision and special inspiration. In other words, it places little trust in the prevalent forms and techniques and tradition means little to it. To add another drawback, the Romanticists primarily swear by and bank on inspiration. And inspiration, left to itself, is undependable. Those who hinge all their expectations and cravings on it, and shape their lives by it, 'may find themselves suddenly robbed of its strength and unable to regain it'.⁵²

Another flaw which threaten the Romanticists, 'lay in their conception of the Beyond, of that other world which they found in vision by using the imagination'.⁵³ A more serious fault with some

⁵⁰ Bowra, p. 24.

⁵¹ Bowra, p. 275.

⁵² Bowra, 275.

⁵³ Bowra, p. 276.

Romanticists is that their discontent with the actual world is so great that in their desire for escape they partially visualize an order of things which is beyond understanding. Moreover, they affected a poetry of melancholy and often wrote songs of a melting sweetness, in which images of grief are wedded to a haunting melody. Sometimes they try to convey more than the words could carry.

Nevertheless, every successful achievement in the arts come from some limitation on the artist's work. In order to do one thing he must eschew another. Likewise, the Romanticists won their triumphs by confining their art to certain fields of experience and leaving out much else which has often belonged to the vast domain of poetry but did not really concern them. And such a process appears inevitable to the progress of this genre. The poet must do something new but he cannot do it without casting aside what he thinks outworn. The Romanticists began as revolutionaries and were determined not to write like their immediate predecessors. They had broken too violently with tradition to accept line for line its account of another world. Rather, they are concerned with a mystery which belongs not to faith but to the imagination. It is not something outside themselves, which they try to actualize, rather something which they create largely by their own efforts. Their test of beautiful was the effect which it made on them. They recognized it when it mastered their senses and exalted them to some vision beyond.

It would be myopic a view to complain that by their devotion to the mysteries of life, the Romanticists failed to appreciate life itself. Admittedly, all poetry lives by wonder, by the delight of discovery and the exaltation which it brings, and the Romanticists certainly stressed the virtues of wonder and gave to it a special prominence in their work. The love of the intrinsically strange, because it awakes wonder and creates a peculiar enchantment, came to be regarded as the primary task of poetry.

Keats' saying in 'Lamia', "Do not all charm fly/At the mere touch of cold philosophy?",⁵⁴ seems to exalt sensations at the expense of intelligence. The essence of Romantic poetry is that in catching the fleeting moment of joy it opens the doors to an eternal world, as is said by Blake in his famous poem 'Eternity' :

He who blinds to himself a joy
Does the winged life destroy;
But he who kisses the joy as it flies
Lives in eternity's sun rise."⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Complete poetical works, Keats, p. 155.

⁵⁵ Blake: The Complete Poems, 2nd ed., W.H. STEVENSON, Langman, London 1989, p. 162.

Chapter II

Development of Romanticism with special reference to women poets in:

[A] Modern Arabic Poetry

[B] Modern Urdu Poetry

[A] Modern Arabic Poetry

European oriental studies, emigration of the Arab east, especially Lebanese and Syrians to the North and South Americas, and spreading of Western literatures in the Arab world, all collectively effectuated various new literary trends and inclinations. These trends changed to a considerable extent the picture and shapes of Arabic literature, caused a commotion and aroused it from long slumber and continuous unquestioning adoption of old concepts, ideas, language and above all styles. Consequently, the first half of 20th century is characterized by a great mixture of trends in Arabic poetry--- some of them overlapping the others, and some gaining more currency than the others. Thus, the vast history of recorded Arabic poetry--- from the Jahiliyya poets Imraul Qais and Zuhair bin Abu Sulma to 20th century poets Hafiz Ibrahim and Ahmad Shauqi--- can be termed as classical or neo-classical poetry. The essential or marked features, which such a poetry is attached with, are almost common, though with slight variation in degree and intensity, in most of the literatures. In the first half of the 20th century, there came into existence around four literary trends, dwarfing rather censuring the neo-classicism, viz; Romanticism, Symbolism, Surrealism, and later in the fifties neo- Realism or Social Realism. Arabic poetry, thus, has gone through nearly the same order of development of the main European movements.

The second decade of 20th century witnessed the Romanticism gathering strength in Arabic literature, and the credit goes to Jubran Khalil Jubran (Kahlil Gibran, for the West; 1883-1931). The movement after having established itself fully in the works of Jubran and other Romanticists of the Mahjar entered the Arab east. By the end of third decade, several Romantic poets, the greatest number of whom were from Egypt, rose to fame in the Arab world. Arabic romanticism, in its origin, was not like European romanticism. In no way it can be authenticated that political causes were the main driving force behind this movement in Arabic literature, as was in the case of French and English romanticism. The disturbed political conditions in Egypt can not account for the simultaneous rise of Romanticism in Sudan, Tunisia and Labanon. Nor can it link the rise of Romanticism in Egypt with the earlier Romanticism of the Mahjar.¹

In other words, the Romantic movement in Arabic literature came about without the backing of a philosophy (excepting, to some extent, in Jubran) and certainly without anything similar to the French Revolution. Salma Khadra Jayyusi puts it this way:

"It (this movement) lacked an indigenous basis similar to the thought and ideas that underlay the European Romantic movement..... It never acquired a poetic creed with

¹ Khouri and Algar, *An Anthology of Modern Arabic Poetry* (London, 1974) pp. 9-11

defined principles.... It simply happened... In fact, it is perhaps one of the simplest Romantic movements in the history of any poetry".²

Romanticism must have been a reaction to a general change of mood in the Arab world. As a matter of fact, the Romantic current in Egypt became strong with the call of the Diwan group of al-Aqqad (1889-1964) and al-Mazni (1889-1949), for poets to write about rational experiences. It directed itself, right from the outset, towards the destruction of the neo-Classical school of poetry of al-Barudi (1838-1901), Ismail Sabri (1853-1923), Hafiz Ibrahim (1870-1932) and Ahmad Shauqi (1868-1932). Its direct and conscious concern was an artistic one. The first theories, in fact, it professed in Egypt and Mahjar were :

- i) that poetry should be the expression of the inner self; and
- ii) that it had no further use for the neo-Classical school and its methods.

Of the two major Romantic streams, the north Mahjar one influenced the Arab east stream, which got going a bit later. North Mahjar Romanticism, which dominated the whole movement, 'began as a healthy and positive expression'.³ Jubran and other North Mahjar poets adopted more universal attitudes towards man and life. On the other hand, romanticism in Arab east

² Jayyusi, Trends and Movements in Modern Arabic Poetry Vol. II, Leiden, E. J. BRILL, 1977, p. 361.

³ Ibid. p. 362.

was mostly 'introverted, individualistic, negative and pleasure seeking, and had no direct bearing on national questions as such'.⁴

It would be mean here to underestimate the Western influence on Modern Arabic poetry. The influence has not only been in subject and content but also in form and style. Romanticism, blank and free verses influenced, rather guided to a considerable extent, the three important literary movements or schools one in America and the other two in Egypt.

One: Mahjar literature in North America; the Arab émigrés fled to the Americas from insurrection in Syria and Lebanon 'in search of material prosperity and political freedom'.⁵ This group founded a school called the Pen Association (al-Rabitah al-Qalamiyyah) in 1920 and published their own newspapers and magazines. Many of them were influenced by American literature, especially of Edgar Alen Poe, Walt Whitman and H.W. Longfellow .

Two: School of the three pre-Romantic poets, namely al-Aqqad, al-Mazini and Shukri, who constituted what is known as the Diwan group. Shukri studied in England and returned home wanting to change the world.

Three: The Romantic school founded by Ahmad Zaki Abu Shadi, a physician by profession, who developed a keen interest in English literature especially the romanticists in Wordsworth, Shelley and Keats. He formed in Egypt a

⁴ Ibid. p. 362.

⁵ Khouri and Algar, op. cit., p. 9

group of like-minded poets, known as the Apollo group (1932) named after his literary journal Apollo which encouraged 'strophic verse, English sonnets, blank verse and free verse'.⁶ To actualize Abu Shadi's dream, there were other poets like Ibrahim Naji (1898-1953), Ali Mahmood Taha (1901-49) al-Hamshari (1908-38), Khalil Mutran (1872-1948) Ahmad Muharram etc. There was another, though no so familiar, literary circle called "Usba al-Ashra" formed in the early thirties by Ilyas Abu Shabaka (1903-47).⁷ This group too waged war on imitators and traditionalists. Their platform and mouthpiece was newspaper *al-Marid*. In the introduction to one of his diwans '*Afai al-Firdaus*', Abu Shabaka made his verdict that poetry cannot be defined, for it is an organic being that cannot be measured by theories. Poetry is an expression of life and life has no definite identity or boundaries.⁸

However it would be unfair here not to name another school which came into existence in south America in early thirties named '*al-Usba al-Undulisiyya*' (the Andalusian League). Rashid Salim al Khouri, Fauzi and Shafiq al-Maluf, to name a few, were its pioneers. Nevertheless, there are quite a few individuals who are called Romanticists, without being aligned with any of the above-mentioned schools or groups. Though they wrote independently maintaining their individual identity, nonetheless, their works do fall under the spirit and temper of Romanticism. Briefly they include Nazik al-Malaika, Hussain

⁶ M.H. Bakalla, *Arab Culture through its Language and Literature*. (London, 1984.) p. 196

⁷ Dr. Yasin al-Ayyubi, *Madhahib al-Adab* (Beirut, 1984) p. 281.

⁸ Jayyusi, pp. 427-28.

Mardan, and al-Jawahiri from Iraq; Nadim Mohammad and Umar al- Nass from Syria; al-Gosaibi from Saudi Arabia, Mutlaq Abd al-Khaliq from Palestine, Abual Qasim al-Shabbi from Tunisia; al-Tijani Yusuf Bashir from Sudan.⁹ Furthermore, in some poets, a neo-Realistic trend aligned with a few Romantic attitudes in their poetry, while some were semi-Romanticists. Notable among them are: Badr Shakir al-Sayyab and Abad al-Wahhab al-Bayyati of Iraq; Salah Abd al-Sabur of Egypt; Anwar al-Attar of Syria; Fadwa Tuqan, Jayyusi and al-Anisa Dananir of Palestine; al-Akhtal al-Saghir of Lebanon; al-Majdhub and Hamza al-Malik Tambal of Sudan.¹⁰

Khalil Jubran is considered as the pioneer and explorer of Arabic romanticism, and his leadership is same as that of the great scholars of European romanticism. Ihsan Abbas in his book " Fann al-Shir" briefs the constituent factors or formative elements of Mahjar's romanticism:

"This school has idolized the return to Nature, and deified the chant or tone. It is filled with nostalgia; with sorrow and suffering; with estrangement from city life; with the revolt against the traditions and law. It held sacred law of love and took the heart as the calm leader,... rose against the form and attached importance to the content, demolished the (mere) philological form, and fell back on analysis..."¹¹

⁹ Jayyusi pp. 361-474.

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ as quoted in Dr. Yasir al-Ayyubi p.280.

Jubran wrote both in Arabic and English with equal ease and expertise--- his magnum opus, 'The Prophet' being written primarily in English. During the first three decades of 20th century, the experimental side of poetry in the Arab world was influenced more by the contribution of Mahjar in general and Jubran in particular. Most of the Romantic poets, notwithstanding the influence of their own poetic and local cultural traditions, show the influence of either the Mahjar poetry or of Western literary sources. The Diwan group, which filled the literary world in Egypt with their theories of poetry and their attacks on the neo-classical school, were unable to support their arguments with good examples of their own poetry.

Abu Shadi, the man behind the formation of Apollo group, is indeed an innovator in modern Arabic Poetry. He is admired by the virtue of his courage and the nobility of spirit his poetry displays, and by the fundamentally passionate mind behind it. He was for a new kind of poetry stressing for a change in both form and the content. As far as aggrandizing and ennobling the Nature, in which the romanticists found inspiration and ecstasy and solace and refuge, is concerned, Mutran's poem 'al-Masa' (The Evening) is worth mentioning and a hall mark in this direction.¹² This is an ideal *qasida* which carried not only the romantic title but also theme and treatise, and especially the love embracing the Nature. Mutran sees the Nature as a mirror to his doleful and grieved self and he compares Nature's panorama and proceeding

¹² Ibid. p. 291

and his feelings and sentiments. In almost all the Arab romanticists there is a veneration of nature and a mystical fusion with it.

Two poets, al-Shabbi (1909-34) of Tunisia and al-Tijani (1912-37) of Sudan, deserve special mention here, not because both of them could see hardly 25 springs of their lives, but because in this tender age they won a name to be enlisted in all time great Arabic romanticists. Their poetry shows a definite emotional struggle of a rare quality between the despair they felt and the great and virile love of life which characterized their temperament. They are to Arab romanticism what Shelley and Keats are to English romanticism -- all these great poets breathing their last quite prematurely.

Though it would appear to be repetitive, nevertheless it is advisable to brief the Arab romanticists' features as follows :

- ◆ capacity to achieve tenderness, a compassion, a personal touch;
- ◆ melodiousness of the verse;
- ◆ creative approach to the words, adjectives and images;
- ◆ to love country life and idealize the village;
- ◆ a latent Romantic element__ nostalgia ___is traditionally present among all the Arab Romanticists;
- ◆ suppressed emotionalism, death, parting, fatal illness, poverty, frustrated endeavour.

Modern Women Poets

Cutting the long story short, it is stipulated to deal specifically with some women poets who did not lag far behind their male counterparts, as far as the Romantic movement is concerned. Most of them responded to the Muse only after the World War II. However, the modern women Romantic poets of first generation include : Nazik al-Malaika (b. 1923), Fadwa Tuqan(b. 1917), Salma Khadra Jayyusi (b 1922), al-Anisa Dananer. While the first is from Iraq, the rest are Palestinians by birth and lived mostly in Jordan (occupied West Bank). They could not remain unperturbed by the sorry state of affairs and the plight and predicament of their fellow citizens. Al-Malaika had her early romanticism interfered not only with her own country's problem under the royal regime, but she also penned several poems---as did her contemporaries---regarding the hardships of Palestinians, in the aftermath of prejudiced and unjustifiable division of the State and subsequent wars between Arabs and Israelis, which further aggravated the plight and pain of the former.

The period, which represented the rising of Iraqi women poetry, was the final years of monarchy in Iraq. Internal factor and external pressures anticipate change and innovation. And the poetry was the first of cultural, social and political phenomena that changed its form and content.¹³

¹³ Gilganes, 1-2-95, p.31.

The new generation of poets called for a new poem, known as the free verse (al-Malaika and al-Sayyab being its champions and pioneers) characterized by ignoring the two-hemistich system and the one rhyme poem of neo-classicists. During that period, woman poets like Rabab al-Kadhimi, Atika al-Khazraji, Fatina al-Naib, and of course Nazik al-Malaika emerged in Iraq's cultural and literary life. 'Most of these poets wrote', at least at the start of their literary lives, 'the two-hemistich subjective and romantic poem, while preserving the unity of meter and rhyme'.¹⁴ But sooner they started experimenting with rhyme ___ wrote stanzaic poems which preserve the unity of metre but the rhyme differs in each stanza. Like the women of her own generation, al-Malaika was tired of woman's position. She along with Fatina al-Naib called for her liberation and condemned many customs and traditions.¹⁵ These poets made use of opportunities to side with the revolution and the revolutionaries. Nazik al-Malaika won the herald of this new literary movement (free verse) whose first manifesto was published in her second diwan '*Shadaya wa Rimad*' (Splinters and Ashes) in 1949.

Among the leading woman romantic poets, she would come before any one else. John A. Haywood, describing her poetry, says: "Sensitive and sad, hers is the poetry of an oriental woman who finds life frustrating and disappointing. She is preoccupied with the pain, the tomb, the death the savior".¹⁶ Since Nazik al-Malaika

¹⁴ Gilgamesh, 1-2-95, p.32.

¹⁵ ibid,

¹⁶ Haywood, Modern Arabic Literature (London, 1971), P. 185

would cover the subsequent chapters, it is recommended to talk of other woman poets here.

Fadwa Tuqan (b.1917, Nables, Palestine) is, with al-Malaika and her compatriot Jayyusi, among the most distinguished woman poet in the modern Arab world. John A. Haywood says that she 'is a poetess of sorrow, pain and loneliness, of the individual, and of her country'.¹⁷ But by the end of mid-sixties her poetry became involved with the political struggle of Palestinians. Most of her works reveal a pessimistic and rebellious spirit, influenced by the Palestinian tragedy. Among her famous diwans are: '*Wahdi maa al-Ayyam* (Alone with the Days: 1955) '*Atina Hubban*' (Give us Love: 1965), '*Amam al-Bab al-Mughlaq*' (Before Closed Doors: 1969) to name a few.¹⁸ One of her poems would reveal the kind of Romanticism she is adhered to:

I Won't Sell His Love.

What chance
Sweet dream like chance
Joined us here in this distant land
Here two strange souls we
Were united by the Muse
Who carried us away
Our souls becoming a song
Floating on a Mozart air

¹⁷ Ibid. P. 189

¹⁸ Bakalla, op. cit., P. 208.

In its precious world.

You said : How deep your eyes

How sweet you are

You said it with hushed, echoing desire

For we were not alone

And in your eyes an invitation

And in my depths intoxication

What intoxication

I am a woman so forgive my heart its vanity

When your murmur caresses it : How deep your eyes

How sweet you are.....

He is my countryman I won't squander

His heart

He is my countryman I won't sell

His love

For the world's treasures

For the shining star

For the moon

Yet intoxication grips my heart

As in your eyes drift love's shadows

Or invitation glimmers

I am a woman so forgive my heart its vanity

When you murmur caresses it : how deep your eyes

How sweet you are.¹⁹

'*Madinati al-Hazina*' (My Sad City: 1967), by Fadwa Tuqan, is highly representative of the Palestinian reaction to the June 1967 defeat in the famous six-day war. She says :

The tree will grow

The tree and the branches,

Under the sun it will grow and become green.

Its laughter

While it faces the sun, will burst into leaf.

Then the birds will arrive.

Certainly they will

They will!²⁰

She sees the Arab nation as a tree. Although the trunk of the tree has fallen down, as a result of the defeat, its roots are still deep in the earth, safe and strong and able to give life to another trunk. Salma Jayyusi and Anisa Dananir too treaded more or less the same path in their poetry.

Saniyya Saleh (b.1935, Misyaf, Syria,) belong to the second generation of women poets; others being Mona Saudi (b. 1945 Jordan), Aisha Arna 'out (b. 1946 Syria), Nadia Tueni (b. 1935 Lebanon), and Fawziyya Abu Khalid (b. 1955 Saudi Arabia). Saniyya Saleh's two famous works include : '*Al-Zaman al-*

¹⁹ Translation quoted from An Anthology of Modern Arabic Poetry, Eds. Mounah A Khouri and Hamed Algar, pp. 203-205.

²⁰ Khalid A. Sulaiman, Palestine and Modern Arab Poetry, pp. 138-39.

Zayyiq (The Pressed Time : Beirut 1964) : and 'Hibr al-Idam' (The Ink of Execution: Damascus, 1970).²¹ Her poem entitled 'Exile' reads :

"For grief
he wore those colorful bells,
a mask of joy.
He bound his stories
to his tongue's tip
so they would not betray him
at the crucial moment.
And he walked
lightly
in jewel-studded shoes--
alone as the night
with no stars waiting
but my eyes.
Bird, hovering over the horizon
remember
bullets are every where ____
Remember
me
the perpetual traveller ____
All my life
I have willed to go forward and have not
advanced beyond
the borders of my grave."²²

²¹ Bakalla, p. 215.

Her poem 'Tears' is another example of the trend she was in harmony with:

"There is a scream that binds my heart to
the throat of the Earth
And that foam is
my lost voice.

My robe illusion
My necklace of counterfeit stone
All that is the world my be
deceit
but my tears.

I am the woman bleeding the sharpened years
I come and go behind
Tall windows.
A woman in veils about to flee
My childhood smashed by this
nightmare".²³

Atika al- Khazraj of Iraq says, about herself, about the women in general:

" I sacrifice myself to you, spoiling sweet
Isn't there a stop for my subjugation before you?
I'm your captive as long as I live
I'm the delicate slave".²⁴

²² As quoted in Bakalla, pp. 215-16.

²³ Abid P. 216.

²⁴ Gilgamesh (1.2.95), p. 36.

Dunya Mikhel, another modern Iraqi poetess, is distinguished with her compound sentences that appear like a closely-linked chain :

"In every grain of sand I have a wish.

In every wish a cloud.

In every cloud a heart.

In every heart is you.

In every you is the sun.

Dismiss the sun from my heart

Or teach me the act of absence."²⁵

Sajid al- Mousawi of Iraq is among the best poetesses of late 20th century. Her first diwan 'child of the palm tree' appeared in 1979. Her poetry is full of dreams and desire, as she says in one of her poems:

"In the evening I woke up to an obsession stroking my face

Taking me to a heaven floating over drowning seas. / I stretch fingers
trembling amid fear.

And catch a sweet voice running away with its bells and vanishing."²⁶

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid. p.34

[B] Modern Urdu Poetry

The poetic quality of Urdu language has been acknowledged even by its detractors who love to quote Urdu couplets in public and listen to ghazals in private. The mesmerism of mushairas persists, besides of course, the ubiquitous Urdu lyrics and dialogues in the Bollywood. The passion, power, punch and pungency of Urdu poetry have led many to mistake the language for its poetry and vice versa. Urdu poetry has stronger tradition behind it than Urdu prose. It flourished in cities like Hyderabad, Delhi and Lucknow, rapidly attaining its zenith in Mughal times under the patronage of Muslim rulers who often employed poets. But the contribution of women continues to be the Cinderella of Urdu literature even in the age of feminist interpretation of every thing under the sun. The patriarchal oak had hitherto smothered or overshadowed the green shoots of female voice in Urdu poetry. Ghazal literally means a tete-a-tete with a woman. It is an expression of love, heartache, of dejection and frustration, of longing and languor. The image of woman has been of a feckless beloved, endowed with heavenly beauty, reigned : fair of face, doe-eyed, dark-haired, tall and willowy, a woman who vacillated from indifference, shyness and modesty to wanton willfulness and cruelty; for her the poet was willing to die.²⁷ It is worth-noting here that every thing was looked at from the male perspective, for the poets in ninety-nine of hundred cases were men.

²⁷ 'We sinful women' Rukhsana Ahmad Rupa & Co. New Delhi 1990, p. 2.

Women, from the so-called dark ages to the time of modern science, have been victims of patriarchal society. The writing of poetry by women was considered a morally reprehensible act. But now things have changed, and especially in the second half of 20th century, a group of women poets have emerged, who seemed all set to part company with the over whelming and baneful male perspective, and lingo. This has led Rukhsana Ahmad to believe that the most innovative the most radical and the most interesting poetry of our times is being produced by women and not by male poets²⁸, which is debatable.

Historical backdrop of Modern Urdu poetry:

Semantically Urdu a Turkish word, stands for 'horde'. It was only in the 19th century that it came to denote a particular language. Urdu belongs to Indo-Aryan stock. The Muslim conquerors mixed with it Persian and Arabic and made a new language. The Adil Shahi and Qutub Shahi dynasties of Bijapur and Golconda in 14th century patronized it. By the end of 17th century Deccan was conquered by the Mughals, who often employed poets at their courts. Urdu, which was also known as Dehlvi, Hindi, Anduvi, Rekhta, Zabane Urdu-e-Mualla in its formative stage, was first used by Amir Khusru (l. 1325) in his romantic poems, where he employed both Persian and Braj basha in alternating lines.

²⁸ Rukhsana, p. 6.

With the appearance of first definite school of poetry in the Deccan during 15-16th centuries, the ghazal gained popularity after Mathnawi (Episode). The poets did not follow any fixed convention, nevertheless there was sincerity of emotion. The medieval poetry, of Vajhi, Lutfi, Quli Qutub Shah, etc., is mainly mystic and narrative. With Vali (1668-1741) in early 18th century, the ghazal found firm roots in the soil of Urdu. The writings of Urdu poets of late 18th century, prominent among them being Dard (d. 1786), Sauda (d. 1781), Mir Hassan (d. 1786) and Mir Taqi Mir (d. 1810) depict the feelings of helplessness, pessimism and general frustration and melancholy coloured with the temper of age.²⁹

Mid-19th century was a difficult age when attitudes underwent a change and readjustments became necessary. While Momin and Zafar expressed their sentiments as their predecessors did, Ghalib (1798-1869) made an intellectual and analytical appraisal of reality. A new chapter of poetry opened in the last decades of 19th century, under the auspices of '*Anjumane Punjab*' Lahore, with Azad and Hali (d. 1914). But it is Ghalib, who is unanimously considered as the greatest poet of 19th century. By and large, the poetry of 19th century is a continuous stream of social and political awareness, reflecting in its clear depths changes in attitudes and the shifting reality of life.

²⁹ Dr. K. Madanna, p. 475.

But the poet who notably turned the ghazal to new purposes was no other than Iqbal (1873-1938), the greatest Urdu poet to arise since Ghalib. His voice redefined not only the poetry in all its ramifications, but also do's and don'ts of life from a humanistic-moralistic point of view. He has exalted 'the self', or in other words 'the realization of self' to new heights.

In Urdu, Iqbal wrote chiefly short pomes, lyrical, religious (Islamic) and satirical. He went through an early phase of obsession to English models, such as description of Nature, attachment to the ideal. Iqbal moved toward a Love that was a disembodied force, that meant also idealism, or enthusiasm, or elan vital. In his 'Love', there is an emotional attachment to the goal. To him, death is only a stage of life, not an end, and 'love' goes beyond death. In the words of V.G. Kiernan, 'Iqbal left no true inheritor either of his philosophy or of his manner'. But Faiz, who appeared on the literary scene just when Iqbal was departing from it, is 'the most gifted' poetically of those who have come after.³⁰

The major voices of the post-Iqbal period comprise of the poets of the two important schools which came into existence in late thirties of last century, viz; *Progressive Writers Association*, and *Halqah-e-Arab-e-Zauq*. Progressive literature, in simple words, is nothing but a rebellion from the tradition, a dream of a new world and a cry for the change of outworn, retrogressive and

³⁰ VG Kiernan, Poems by Faiz, p. 37

meaningless values. Its flag-bearers were rebel of political and social system, and disillusioned from the so-called literary values and techniques. Sexual freedom was their points of attraction. But sooner, the movement took political rebellion and socialist and popular revolution as its primary belief. Their slogan was something like---Down with Freud and Marxism Long Live. Famous, progressive poets include. Faiz, Firaq, Sahir, Majaz, Jan Nisar, Makhdoom etc.

Faiz (1912-85), according to Gopi chand Narang, 'was an admirer of the classical imagery of both Ghalib and Iqbal'.³¹ He raised his voice in support of freedom of expression, democracy and peace. The experiment of Faiz to use the ghazal imagery with ultimate skill and involve it in his socio-political themes, made a profound impression on the rising generation of poets. As far as Firaq (1896-1982) is concerned, the entire field of human yearnings and sufferings form his canvas.

In a nutshell, the Progressive poets, began their poetic journey as a romantic, or on a romantic note. They travelled in stages from romanticism to revolution — another from of romantic temperament. In their hands, love and beauty assume the ring of the universal experience and trials and individual travails. become part of the much wider canvas. Akhtarul Iman (1915-95), treading the path of Faiz, the very symbol of Urdu poetry during the last 50 years, seems to

³¹ GC Narang, Urdu Language and Literature p. 101

follow romanticism as a movement. Like the English romanticists, he expresses personal feelings, innermost conflicts, disappointments and reconciliations through his poems with considerable social awareness. He endeavours to make others share his agony, his joy and expectation. His poetry strives to express both an understanding of external life and the sense of complexity of the individual's inner life; the struggle between dream and reality.³²

It will be schematic to say that Progressive poets were proponents of content and theme; while members of the new group '*Halqahe-Arabab-e-Zauq*, were promoters of form and style. Whereas the former group endorsed the elements which form what is called the 'Realist' trend, the latter one championed 'romanticism'. Thus the poets who were responding to their individualism, inventing new forms and techniques and giving lip and words to their heart, got disengaged from the 'Progressive' trend. Therefore, in 1939, '*Halqah*' was founded in Lahore by Naseer Ahmad Jami, and those who wished to write new poetry joined it. The new group, commonly referred to as Modernists or Experimentalists, drew to its fold, besides Meeraji and N.M. Rashid, the poets Tasaduq Hussain Khalid, Dr. Tasir, Yusuf Zafar, Insha, etc. The gains of this trend are more on the technical and formal side. These Modern poets 'urged for an expression of the individual rather than as

³² Narang, p. 119.

instruments for social reform.³³ Moreover, Verse libre (free verse) is considered to be the hallmark of the romanticists. Unlike the English models, the new verse-libre in Urdu was predominantly metrical and to that extent 'did not do much offence to the traditional poetic aesthetics'.³⁴

To the poets of new generation the freedom of mind was the significant basic value, and the writer should not be constrained by and contingent upon any sort of external control. "During the late 1950's and early 1968" says Narang, "Jadidiyat, the Modernist Movement steadily gained popularity and swept the whole of the subcontinent, become a forceful literary movement".³⁵ Emphasis on self, interiorization and indirect expression has been the predominant feature of Modern poetry during the last 4-5 decades. Famous Modernists in Urdu poetry include : Nasir Kazmi, Majeed Amjad, Ibn-e-Insha, Ada Jafri, Wazir Agha, and younger poets like Saqi Faoqi, Kishwar Nahed, Iftikhar Arif, Joan Alia, Parveen Shakir etc. from Pakistan; Khalilur Rahman Azmi, Bani, Baqar Mehdi, Balraj Komal, Amiq Hanfi, Hasan Naim, Khurshidul Islam, Shaz Tamkenat and youngers like Shahryar, Nida Fazli, Bashir Badr, etc from India.

'The main contribution of modern poetry; says Narang,' has been the rejection of preconceived ideas and trite subjects' This poetry has opened 'new vistas for creative and emotive use of language encoding deeper meanings or

³³ Narang, p. 116.

³⁴ Za'idi, p, 376.

meanings of meanings. The distinguishing stylistical features of this poetry are 'the ambiguity and obliqueness of style, search for fresh imagery and the use of, metaphorical, symbolic and mythological idioms.' This is a poetry of 'free mind, unfettered and unimpeded, and with its present boldness of experimentation and growth'.³⁶

Modern Women Poets

Without elaborating any further the theme and technique of modern poetry, it is imperative to see the emergence of feminist trend. Or to put it more aptly emergence of woman poets in modern Urdu poetry, because the term 'feminism' is vague, elusive and largely relative. In its broadest sense, it is an awareness of the disadvantages and constraints faced by women in traditional society and a recognition of their need or the desire for freedom and change.

The long years of feudalism, coupled with the persistent repression of martial law regimes in Pakistan, fanned and fuelled the smouldering spark of anger. Women poets may or may not have studied Western feminism, but they did share a dissatisfaction with the status-quo, not so much concerned with the academic or theoretical aspect of gender bias as with its patriarchal aspect, its blatant and ugly manifestation in the everyday life of a woman.

³⁵ Narang, p. 115.

³⁶ Narang, p. 126.

Thus, the last three decades witnessed the poetry of protest, on women's part, at times vitriolic, often gloomy and always self-confident. They include : Ada Jafri, Fahmida Riaz, Zehra Nigah, Kishwar Nahed, Parveen Shakir, Sara Shagufta, Neelma Sarvar, Ishrat Afreen, Shabnam Shakil etc. from Pakistan and less powerful Sajida Zaidi, Zahida Zaidi, Shafiq Fatima Shera from India.

Ada Jafri expresses pain and desire to begin with, but protest becomes increasingly evident in her later publications, as was her fight for equality of rights. She, however like Parveen Shakir has chosen to confine herself to poetry which is apolitical, sentimental and conformist. Women in Zehra Nigah's poetry, escaped the suffocating social conditions, but often felt the pain and loneliness of the tiring and unending journey towards freedom. In Kishwar Nahed's poetry, women are 'not lost in a romantic dream world', rather they are bold and truthful. Fahmida Riaz's poetry too is extremely bold and she expresses emotions previously considered taboo. She, like Kishwar Nahed, protests against 'patriarchal society which stifles her emotions and desire in the name of religion, law, society and moral values.' In the past few decades, especially in Pakistan, women are expressing their pain and call for social justice more openly. Ishrat Afreen has also attached the exploitation of rural women in the subcontinent. They all have given a new meaning of human relationship.³⁷

³⁷ A Celebration of Women, ASR Publications, Lahore Pakistan, 1995. Pp. 201-2.

Unlike her contemporary poets, there is no radical slogan-chanting and ranting in Parveen Shakir's poems. Instead of denigrating and bad-mouthing everything male, she tries to make men and society realize their excesses and enlighten the women about their real and rightful position, if not power. She is basically a confessional poet. Since Parveen Shakir is the very topic of this work, so here she will be put aside, to be dealt with in detail in the subsequent chapters.

Some critics are of the view that women adapt themselves to the norms and traditions of a patriarchal society. This has been proved untrue by these women poets. Each and every one of them rejected these norms and values at least up to the level of their poetry---some of them being more vocal than the other. They have tried to reveal their true 'selves'. This is a poetry of truthfulness---romanticism in the broad sense of the term.

Ghazals by them are a blend of classical and modern traditions in Urdu poetry. Their 'azad nazm' (blank verse) innovations are refreshingly new. Kishwar Naheed is perhaps the most prolific poet of her generation. Her poems range from traditional love poems written in the early years to those dealing with hysterectomy, male chauvinism, censorship, American intervention in Pakistan and a host of feminist issues. She seems to be aware of the rough paths women have to tread on to reach their goals. Protest is an

important element in her poetry and she encourages others to raise their voice also.

Her themes are self-evident in her poetry, like in "Who Am I ?" she says :

I am not that woman selling socks and shoes

I am the one you needed to bury alive

to feel fearless as the wind again

For you never know

that stones can never suppress a voice.

I am the one you hid beneath

the weight of traditions

For you never know

that light can never fear pitch darkness.

I am the one from whose lap you picked flowers

and then poured flames and thorns instead

For you never know

that chains can not hide the fragrance of flowers.

In the name of modesty

you bought and sold me

I am the one you gave away in marriage

So you could rid of me....

For a long time you have profited by my shyness and modesty

Traded so well on my motherhood and fidelity,

Now the season for flowers to bloom in our laps and mind is here.

Semi-naked on the posters.

I am not that woman selling socks and shoes.³⁸

The first few lines of her another poem "Nightmare", reads :

"The goat awaits slaughter

and I wait for the morning

for every morning I am slaughtered at my office desk

for telling lies

This is my price".³⁹

Kishwar Nahed feels pride in saying:

"Punish me

for I have written the significance of the dream in my blood

written a book ridden with an obsession

Punish me

For I have spent my life sanctifying the dream of the future.⁴⁰

The condition of women in the patriarchal society is evident in her two lines :

"The grass is also like me

it has to unfurl underfoot to fulfil itself".⁴¹

Her one of the most famous poems is "We sinful women":

"It is we sinful women

who are not awed by the grandeur of those who wear gowns

who don't sell our lives

who don't bow our heads

³⁸ Tr. Rukhsana PP. 43-45.

³⁹ Tr. Rukhsana, p. 47.

⁴⁰ Tr. Rukhsana, p. 55.

who don't fold our hands together..”⁴²

Fahmida Reyaz has been a controversial poet. Her first book '*Pathar ki Zaban*' shows an understanding of the psyche of a girl from a lower middle class family. Her second book "Badan Dareeda" (The Body Lacerated) caused tremendous controversy because of its 'uninhibited and vigorous exploration of female sexuality.'⁴³ Fahmida rejects the passive virginal model (as a woman is depicted in traditional Urdu poetry) in favour of a living, throbbing, vocal and passionate reality. Her poems resonate with music and her success as a lyricist is widely acknowledged. Her published works are: "My Crime is Proven", "Will you Not see the Full Moon?", "Sun," "Stones that Speak" and "I am a Statue of Clay". Fahmida has tried to transcend the checks and bounds of a traditional society like hers by depicting the hitherto undepicted themes in such a bold manner. Her poems "Stoning" and "Virgin" are the cases in point. A small poem "Tasveer" (Image) reads:

Deep in the recesses of my heart hangs a picture of myself
God knows who painted it and when
There it remains hidden from me and my friends
My heart shudders at the comparison with myself.⁴⁴

Fahmida and the poets of her ilk have proved that it will not only be romantic and love literature that would be considered representative of women's

⁴¹ Tr. Rukhsana, p. 41.

⁴² Tr. Rukhsana, p. 31.

⁴³ Ibid.p.23

experiences. She has come out of the concept of women in Urdu poetry i.e., of an ideal with rosy cheeks, shining black eyes concealed shyly under long dark eyelashes and a shapely swaying body. In "*Chadur and Char-Diwar*" she says:

"Sire ! what use is this black '*chadur*' to me?

A thousand mercies, why do you reward me with it?

I am not in mourning that I should wear it

To flaunt my grief to the world.

I am not a disease that needs to be drowned in secret darkness

I am not a sinner nor a criminal

That I should stamp my forehead with its blackness".⁴⁵

In her poem, "*Aurat aur Namak*" (Woman and Salt), Sara Shagufta talks of the 'honour', and 'respectability' of the fair sex with a sarcasm:

"There are many types of respectability

the veil, a slap, wheat,

stakes of imprisonment are hammered into the coffin of respectability .

From house to pavement we own nothing

respectability has to do with how we manage

respectability is the spear used to brand us

the selvedge of respectability begins in our tongues

If someone tastes the salt of our bodies at night

for a life time we become tasteless bread..."⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Tr. Rukhsana p. 85

⁴⁵ "Resistance Literature" Pakistan Academy of letters Islamabad, Pakistan, 1995, p. 322.

⁴⁶ Rukhsana, p. 103.

Sara, who committed suicide tragically young after immense personal suffering, rejected the role models and literary images of women more completely than any other poet perhaps. Her poem "*Chand Kitna Tanha Hai*" (The Moon Is Quite Alone) shows how her works are rich in imagery, originality and sheer poetic energy:

"The shadow of the cage is imprisoned too

I become the shadow of my apparel

My hand infused into others...

I dry clothes on the roof of my being

In my distances the eye

I am dressed in my sorrows.

Clad in a garment of fire

Shall I tell you the name of my shade?

I give you the moons of all the nights.⁴⁷

Perhaps the tragic depths of her experience are best represented in her own words---a biographical letter entitled 'The Last Word' is appended to her only collection of poems "Eyes". Sara violated all the conventions and norms in her poetry. Piling image upon image in a multicoloured collage of words, she reflects meaning as if through a prism of deliberate obscurity and defiance. She shuns metrical patterns, repetition, alliteration and smooth Lyrical sounds — the devices commonly favored by traditional Urdu poets---choosing to rely

⁴⁷ Ibid. Pp. 109-11.

instead on clusters of images. Kishwar, Fahmida and Zehra too write this kind of poetry, which constitute a content of feminist struggle or political awareness. They show feminist feeling and conviction, and are non-conformist. Rebellion--a romantic feature---is their unifying idea. On the other hand Ada Jaafri and Parveen Shakir's poetry is apolitical, sentimental and conformist. Acceptance of sexist values and the absence of a social context make Parveen's writing distinctively un-feminist.

Chapter III

Life and Works of

[A] Nazik al- Malaika

[B] Furugh Farrukhzad

[C] Parveen Shakir

[A]

NAZIK AL-MALAIKA

أعبر عما تحس حياتي
وأرسم إحساس روحى الغريب
فأبكي إذا صدمتني السنين
بمخبرها الأبدى الرهيب

*[I give expression to what my life senses;
And sketch the feelings of my alien spirit.
I cry as the years strike me
With their dreadful eternal dagger.]*

Thus reads the first page of 'Ashiqat-al-Lail' (Lover of the Night), Nazik al-Malaika's first poetry collection to have seen the light of the day.

Certain phenomena such as sad tone, pessimism and uncertainty about life and death characterize Nazik's poetry. However, the main achievement she is known for is the part she played in the free verse movement in Iraq with other poets in late 1940's. Its impact was not confined to Iraq but spread to cover all the Arab countries. Nazik al-Malaika backed this movement with both poetry and critical writings.

Nazik Sadiq al-Malaika was born in 1923 into a wealthy family in Baghdad. A long tradition of poetry and letters is found in her family. Her father Sadiq al-Malaika was a poet, so was her grand father.¹ Her mother Salma Abd ul-Razzaq (better known as Umm Nazzar al-Malaika) was a famous poet herself and merely fifteen years older than

¹ MEMW Speak. Fermia and Bezirgan(eds),(Lomdan, 1977). P. 231

her daughter.²Umm-e-Nazzar was first spotted as a poet by no other than the great Iraqi poet Jamil Sadqi al-Zahawi.³ She called the Arab women to struggle for freedom— freedom which would enable them to serve both the self and the nation; to shake out the dust of dark eras; to break the fetters; to smash the shackles.⁴ She was greatly influenced by al-Zahawi. She wrote quite a few poems on nature depicting not the nature-in-itself but her sentiments as she saw in its manifestations. She portrayed the things not as they appeared or as they should be, rather as she felt them.⁵

Nazik al-Malaika, the daughter, luckily got the opportunities which her mother was deprived of. There were now in Iraq several Girls schools – from basic to secondary level. Now the girls and boys were sitting side by side at the higher level and discussing the topics of their interest. The obstacle to freedom---- at least of education ---- existed no more. Thus, Nazik at 5 was admitted in a Kinder Garten run by the Government.⁶ After completing her primary and secondary education, she entered '*Daral-Muallimin al-Aliya*' (Higher Teacher's Training College), Baghdad, and graduated in 1944 with a B.A. degree in Arabic language and literature.⁷ This was the period when she studied thoroughly and mastered both classical and modern Arabic literature. She learnt the language with all its ramifications: morphology, syntax, rhetorics, prosody etc. Moreover she acquired some knowledge of English literature especially of modern poetry in addition to her vast study of Arabic. Meanwhile, a few of her poems published in different magazines and journals of Iraq, Syria and Egypt.⁸ From 1942 up to 1949 Nazik

² Tabanah p. 54

³ Tabanah P. 40

⁴ Tabanah p.46

⁵ Tabanah p. 48

⁶ Tabanah P.55

⁷ Gilgamesh(1-1989), P.19

⁸ Tabanah PP. 57

studied music at the Fine Arts Institution. At the same time, she began to study the Latin language and continued to do so at Princeton University, America, where she studied English literature. During her sojourn there at Princeton, she published several treatises and papers in American university journal and other literary periodicals. In 1949, she started to study the French language and literature and soon gathered a collection of important French works in poetry and prose.⁹ There was quite a strong inclination in her to painting and photography. She returned from America to Iraq in 1951 and took to study criticism writing prose on literary criticism and making verse afresh.

In 1953, Nazik accompanied her mother to England for treatment to a long and hurtful illness. The tragic death of the mother in a London hospital shocked her deeply. Many of the poems she wrote express the poet's strong and intimate relation with her mother. Her third poetry collection '*Qararat al-Mauja*' (The Trough of the Wave) consists of three elegies she has written about her mother's death. The incident was to make a deeply-felt lasting effect on the maiden's heart.

A year later, Nazik was sent in a scholarship to study comparative literature (English and French) at Wisconsin University, America, wherefrom she awarded two years later with an M.A degree.¹⁰ In 1957, she taught at Baghdad University. Two years later in the wake of famous Revolution (14th July, 1958) in Iraq she left for Beirut, Lebanon, where she published a great deal of her national poetry. When she came back to Baghdad in 1961, she married Dr. Abdal-Hadi Mahbouba, her colleague at the Arabic Department, Baghdad University.¹¹ Nazik was 38 then. In 1964 she moved with her

⁹ Gilgomes p.19

¹⁰ Gilgomes P.19

¹¹ Gilgamah P.19

husband to Basra, where they were instrumental in establishing the University of Basra.¹² In 1965, she traveled then to Cairo, Egypt, and lectured in Arabic language and literature at the Institute of Arabic Studies. In 1970 she left Iraq to teach at Kuwait University until her retirement in 1982.¹³ Currently living in Iraq, she is struggling with paralysis for the past several years.

Besides making a thorough study of English romantic poets and getting affected by them, she got influenced by modern Arabic romanticists too like Ilya Abu Mazi, Mikhael Nuaymah, Khalil Jubran, Rashid Ayyub, Nasib Arida etc. Dr. Ihsan Abbas, in his book '*Fann al-Shir*' (Art of Poetry) briefs the feature of romanticism of Arab poets who had a great impact on Nazik's poetry: Al-Teejani Yousuf Bashir's poetry deluged in spiritualism, asceticism and sufism; al-Shabbi's inclination to childhood and love of women; Abu Shabka's sanctification and celebration of pain and sorrow; Nasib's intense romantic symbols; and Nuaymah's mystic feeling all collectively made indelible impact on her poetry.¹⁴ Adgar Allan Poe and John Keats being the two English romanticists greatly influencing her poetry.¹⁵ By dedicating a poem to Keats (*Ila al-Shair Keats*) in her very first volume ('The Lover of Night') with reference to his 'Ode to a Nightingale', she has tried to prove that life was no different form that of the visionary English romantic poet. Moreover she translated Lord Byron's long poem 'Child Harold's Pilgrimage' (*as al-Bahr*) and Thomas Gray's 'An Elegy Written in a Country's Churchyard' (*as Marthia fi Maqbara Rifiyah*) in her first collection. Two translated poems 'Travel' (*Asfar*) and 'It's not Going to Happen Again' (*Wala Kinnha Satakuna al-*

¹² Ency. Of A. L P.499

¹³ Encyclopedia of Arabic literature, Meismi and starky (eds.) (London, 1998) p. 499

¹⁴ Jalil Kamaluddin, *Al-Shir al-Arabi wa Ruh al-Asr*. P. 139

¹⁵ Jalil Kamaluddin P.155

Akhira) of another English poet Robert Brooke, are found in her fourth volume 'Tree of the Moon'.

Poets of free verse movement seem to be more representative to the radical changes in the nature and function of Arabic poetry and more expressive of the individual experiences and vision of the new Arab poet. "The year 1947", writes Nazik al-Malaika in 'The Case of Contemporary Poetry', "marked the beginning of free verse movement, which was born in Iraq and from Iraq, rather from Baghdad itself, spread throughout the Arab world. Because of the extremists who answered the call, the movement soon seemed about to engulf all other styles of traditional Arabic poetry. The first free verse poem published was one of my own 'The Cholera' composed in one of the classical quantitative Arabic meters al Mutadarik (al-Khabab)."¹⁶ However, the movement was formally launched with the publication of her second volume of poems *Shazaya wa Rimad* (Splinters and Ashes) . A few lines of 'The Cholera' which forms part of this volume, read:¹⁷

طلع الفجر
أصبح إن وقع خطى الماشين
في صمت الفجر، أصبح، أنظر ركب الباكين
عشرة اموات، عشرونا
لا تحصى، أصبح للباكيننا
أسمع صوت الطفل المكين
موني، موني، صناع العود
موني، موني، لم يبق غد

¹⁶ Nazik al-Malaika, *Qazaya al-Shir al-Muasir* (Beirut, 1974). P. 35

¹⁷ *Shazaya wa Rimad* pp. 136-37

في كل مكان جسد ينزبه حزون
لا الخلة اخلاذ لا صمت
هذا ما فعلت كف الموت
الموت، الموت، الموت
تشكو البشرية تشكو ما يرتكب الموت

[Dawn has come.

Listen to the footsteps of the passersby

In the silence of the early morning---listen, look at the procession of mourners.

Ten deaths, twenty....

Don't count Listen to those who are weeping.

Listen to the voice of the wretched child.

Dead, dead, the count is lost.

In every house a body lies , mourned by those who grieve,

No moment of eternity. No moment of silence.

This is what the hand of death has done.

Death, death, death ...

Humanity is complaining, complaining of the deeds of death].¹⁸

“ A copy of the magazine” writes Nazik, “containing ‘ The Cholera’ reached Baghdad in 1947, and in the second half of the same month Badr Shakir al-Sayyab published a collection in Baghdad entitled ‘Azhar Dhabilah’ (Withering Flowers). In the collection was a free verse poem in al-Ramal metre named ‘Hal Kana Hubban’ (Was it

¹⁸ translation from MEMWS. P. 234

Love ?)'.¹⁹ In footnote to this poem al-Sayyab commented that this poem was 'a simple of the verse that varies in metre and rhyme.'²⁰

Nazik al-Malaika admits that the appearances of these two poems did not attract much attention from the readers.²¹ However she went on to proclaim that it was she the free verse started with. Al-Sayyab, on the other hand, made similar claims for him. But the fact remains that some aspects of free verse are found in the few prose poems of Jubran and al-Rihani and the 'blank verse' of al-Zahawi and Shukri. Nevertheless , all these compositions were basically isolated experiments with little bearing on the emergence of free verse. Mounah A.Khouri in his article entitled 'Lewis Awad : A Pioneer of the Free Verse Movement' (published in journal of Arabic literature, vol. 1,1970) claims that this movement developed more consciously at the hands of its first serious pioneer, Lewis Awad.²²

Although, Lewis Awad's work should be put the seal of approval on as the first serious attempt at free verse, but it was undoubtedly Nazik al-Malaika who, first in the introduction to her poetry volume 'Splinters and Ashes' and latter in her book '*Qadaya al-Shir al-Muasir*' (The Case of Contemporary Poetry), laid the theoretical foundations for the development of the new form. She was concerned with freeing Arabic poetry from the regularity characteristic of the traditional forms. In 'Splinters and Ashes', appeared in 1949, a number of such poems are included. In the long introduction to this collection, she

¹⁹ Qadaya al-Shir al-Muasir, p. 36

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid. p. 37

²² Lewis Awad wrote as 29 such poems in and before 1940, whereas Nazik and al-Sayyab wrote their first poems of this nature only in 1947. Khouri and Algar, An Anthology of Modern Arabic Poetry (London, 1974 pp. 14-15

pointed out the importance of the innovations in the poetry and tried to explain the difference between this new style and the traditional two- segment line style.

However, Nazik writes:

“The appearance of ‘Splinters and Ashes’ created a great uproar in the Iraqi press and many heated discussions took place in Baghdad literary circles. Many of the reviewers, wrote angry and scornful commentaries, forecasting that the call for free verse would fall completely.”²³

Acceptance of the new form came about in a quite way. Sooner free verse began to be written by young Iraqi poets and to be published in newspapers and magazines. Thus, the call for the new verse form was being answered and was reaching a wider and wider group. After Nazik’s ‘Splinters and Ashes’ in 1949, al-Bayyati published a volume in March 1950 entitled ‘*Malaikah wa Shayatin*’ (Angels and Devils) which contained poems of free metres. Successively, another collection of free verse ‘*al-Masa al-Akhir*’ (The Last Evening) came of Shadil Taqah, the same year. Then came ‘*Asatir*’ (Legends) by al-Sayyab in September 1950. Since then, collections containing poems in free metres appeared one after the other. Thus the clarion call for the free verse began to resound more strongly, so much so that some of the poets began to abandon completely the old traditional form.²⁴

Nazik al-Malaika has published several collections of poetry, viz.; ‘*Ashiqat al-Lail*’ (The Night’s Lover) 1947, ‘*Shazaya wa Rimad*’ (Splinters and Ashes)1949, ‘*Qararat al-Maujah*’(The Trough of the Wave)1957, ‘*Shajarat al-Qamar*’ (The Tree of the Moon) 1968, ‘*Masat al-Hayat wa Ughniya lil Insan*’ (Tragedy of Life and a Song for

²³ Qadaya al-Shir al-Muasir. P. 38

²⁴ Qadaya. P. 37.

Man)1970, '*Yughayyiru Alwanuhu al-Bahr*' (The Sea Changes its Colour)1977, '*lil-Salat wa al-Thaura*'(For Prayer and Revolution) 1978. Her famous work '*Qadaya al-Shir al-Mua'sir*' (The Case of Contemporary Poetry), a literary study of free verse, its nature, its form and the controversies surrounding it, came in 1962. Among her other publications are: '*Muhadirat fi Shir Ali Mahmud Taha*' (Lectures on Ali Mahmud Taha's Poetry) 1965 and '*Al-Tajziyya fi al-Mujtama al-Arabi*' (Disjunctivism in Arab Society)1974.²⁵

Nazik al-Malaika started writing 'Tragedy of Life' the long lyrics on the pattern of Wordsworth's 'The Prelude', Milton's 'Paradise Lost' and Byron's 'Child Harold's Pilgrimage'. She in her 1200- line ode sees death as calamitous, afflictive and tormenting fate of human beings. The catastrophe and tragic aftermath of Second World War is the back drop. During this very period she started writing poems which published in her first collection 'The Night's Lover' in 1947. This volume and her long lyrics of 'Tragedy of Life' exhibit a phase of dejection, sorrow, escape and rebellion towards the adversity and misfortune in the society.

In the poem '*al- Bahth an al- Saadah*' (The Search for Happiness) , she looked for joy and happiness every where. She sought it in the mansion of the rich, in the monastery of the monks, with the sinners and wicked people, but to no avail. Then she turned to the shore of poetry, but found poets too disappointing her as they see in life nothing but its tragic side. Finally in pursuit of happiness, she reaches the shore of lovers. Here she realizes how fatal is the disease of love and passion. ²⁶ Conclusively, happiness, to her, was but a myth which consoles the miserable whose wishes are unattainable. To

²⁵ Boullata, Modern Arab Poets. P. 138

²⁶ Masat al-Hayat, Divan Vol. 1, pp. 66-137

her, pain is the only fact in this existence which is only made of suffering and exhaustion.²⁷

نحن نحيا في عالم كله دموع وعمر بأسا وحزنا
تتشقق عناه الزمن القاسي بأهاتنا ونسبنا

[We live in a world full of tears

And an age brimming over with pessimism and sorrow

Components of the cruel time gloat

Over our sighs and of us satirize].

'Splinters and Ashes' her second poetry collection, came in 1949. It's call for 'free verse' caused severe tumult and pandemonium in the literary circle. Meanwhile, she wrote critical articles on modern Arabic poetry in the journals. Her third collection ' The Trough of the Wave' appeared in 1957 constituting what she wrote during 1947-53. She admits in the preface to this volume that it took fairly long time to her to publish her work after it has initially been written. The cause of this deliberate delay is her penchant for perfection.²⁸ as it seems from the poem 'al-Vusul' (The Arrival) of this collection:²⁹

ولقد وصلنا ما هنا بحيا الجمال ،
والدفء ، والشمس الأنيقة ، والكون
والإمتداد وعالم يسبح القرون
بحر من الألوان يخلفه الجمال
وتتوج فوق مداه آلاف التلال

²⁷ Ibid p. 161

²⁸ Divan Vol. 2. P. 207

²⁹ Ibid p. 371

*[And we have arrived. It is here that beauty lives,
and warmth, and the elegant sun and serenity,
and expansion, and a world wide enough to contain centuries,
a sea of colours created by the mind's eye
with thousands of shades waving over its stretch.]*³⁰

In the meantime she was already writing poems of 'The Tree of the Moon' which saw the light of the day only in 1968. There was an interlude of around 11 years between her third and fourth collections. The new collection introduces the poet afresh--- an optimist and realist Nazik al-Malaika. The poems of this collection consist of optimistic songs and corporeal and perceptible pictures. In 1970, was published her lyric poems. 'Tragedy of Life and a Song for Man'. The poet in its preface says that it constituted three poetical forms of the one and the same poem. The first was written during 1945-46, the second in 1950 and the third in 1965.³¹

She started writing it at 22. Having read English poets extensively, she was captivated by their odes, and wished there appeared similar odes in her country too. Then she began giving expression to her absolute pessimism and her perception that life was all pain, obscurity and complexity. 'Tragedy of Life' is the true picture of romanticism which got the better of the poet. When her poetic style / stylistics developed a great deal and literary sources became richer, she revised it in 1950 and gave a new little 'A Song for Man', for she now saw the life from a standpoint different from the former one. By and large there was little or no poetic output during 1950-65, as she claims.³² In 1965, she

³⁰ Tr. Gilgamesh p.24

³¹ Divan Vol. 1, p. 5

³² Ibid p. 11

again started changing the 1950-version and finished at an altogether new product. She claims that this third form carries an optimistic tone. An unflinching belief in God and deriving confidence from life replaced her pessimistic views.³³ Thus 'Tragedy of life and a Song for Man' leads one to know the line of development during 1945-65, the first 20 years of her poetic career. Nazik's last two collections '*Yughayyiru Alwanahu al - Bahr*' (1977) and '*Lil -Salat wa al -Thawra*' (1978), are almost entirely in free verse. In the final collection, she has freed herself from her Romanticism and has turned to religion and nationalism, which she sees as closely linked.³⁴

³³ Ibid p. 12

³⁴ Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature, op. cit., p. 499

[B]

FURUGH FARRUKHZAD

Women writers in Iran (formerly Persia) gradually took their place beside men since the beginning of the 20th century. Among these, Parvin-i Itisami (1907-41) has won a high recognition as the first and most distinguished woman poet of modern Persia. Brought up in a cultivated family. She studied Arabic and Persian literature from her father I'tisamul Mulk.¹

The outstanding trait of her poetry is its deep, impassioned sympathy with suffering. However, classical tradition provides the main influence in her poetry. The tenor of her poetry is chiefly didactic. "Parvin-i-Itisami", writes Munibur Rahman, "was not actively interested in the social problems confronting her sex nor did she take part in any movement connected with the rights of women."² Her short life notwithstanding, by sheer power and voluminosity of her poetry, she is ranked among the best poets of the first generation post-Revolution Persia like Bahar Mashhadi, Abul Qasim Lahuti, Arif Qazvini, Iraj Mirza and Ishqi. The other woman poet who rose to eminence after Parvin was Furugh Farrukhzad (1935-67). Though Furugh was not a shaping force in modern Persian poetry, she, as a second generation modernist entered an arena where battle line between the forces of tradition and innovation and past and present are still drawn. Furugh's commitment to poetic statement of frankness and self-revelation flies in the face

¹ Munibur Rahman, *Post-Revolution Persian Verse* (Aligarh, 1955) p. 74

² *Ibid.* p. 75

of an equally long standing and just recently challenged tradition of feminine circumspectness, public modesty and conscious avoidance of attention and competitiveness in a male dominated society. She is ranked with the second - generation post-Revolution poets like Nima Yushij, Ahmad Shamlu, Faridun Tavalluli; Nadir Nadirpur, Mehdi Ikhwan Thalith, etc. She is not only one of the most distinguished Iranian poets but the most controversial too. Before dealing with the life and works of this trend- setter in a predominantly Shiite Muslim society, it would be apt to have a brief look on the development of modern Persian poetry.

Seen in historical backdrop, Iran or Persia has always been highly prodigal with poets. While talking of Persian poetry the mind invariably turns to the richness of its past. Attributes like 'the grandeur of form, the vigour and freshness of ideas, the subtle artistic ingenuities, the exquisite grace of style and manner' engage the attention.³ The development of classical poetry is marked by two most notable trend—the panegyric and mystic .The excessive abundance of panegyric verse can be explained by the fact that right up to the beginning of 20th century, the poet , like all professional people, was drawn to the royal court . In return to the gratitude shown by singing the praises, often unfounded and synthetic, the poet found recognition of his talents in terms of cash and kind. Not only the poets became familiar in Persian society, they were held also in high esteem and their profession bore them good fortune and affluence. In the medieval period, especially during 10-12th century the highest development of

³ Munibur Rahman, oP. cit., p. 1

panegyric verse in Persian poetry is represented, for during this period the greatest court patronage was accorded to the poets.⁴

The centuries that followed mark the decline of this trend. However, after panegyric, the mystic and didactic trends occupy the second important place in Persian poetry. The end of 14th century can be termed as the golden period of Persian poetry, for the few preceding centuries had produced the great epic writer Firdausi (of *Shahnama* fame) ; distinguished panegyrists like Unsuri, Farrukhi, Anwari, Khaqani, Zahir Faryabi; celebrated mystic and didactic poets like Attar, Rumi, Sadi, and Nizami and the eminent lyricist Hafiz. It was the period of profound creativeness and the perfection of poetic technique, followed by long period of stagnation when 'stereotyped ideas recur again and again, originality is seldom noticed and the form of poetry, with hardly anything new to express, tends to become highly decorative and artificial'.⁵

It was not until the beginning of 20th century that Persian poetry rose from its slumber and threw out the yokes of imitation. With the political change which resulted in limiting the despotic authority of the Shah, the revival of Persian poetry said to have begun. Tradition of court poetry was replaced by patriotic verse. Many poets wrote on the evils of absolute monarchy and the merits of democracy vis-à-vis the cause of the people. Bahar (1886-1951) Lahuti (1883), Arif (1882/3-1934) Ishqi (b.1893) and Farrukhi etc. provide a vivid expression of the growing social and political consciousness of the masses. Modern Persian

⁴ Ibid. p. 3

⁵ Munibur Rahman, op. cit., p. 5

literature in general is born out of the struggle of the Iranian nation for a better life. It reflects all the hopes anguish and aspiration of the Iranian people.

Many educated minds felt the need of new literary forms to cope with the time and new themes. Along with the traditional forms of 'Aruz' the need for greater freedom of expression made poets turn to free verse. Though Bahar, Ishqi, Lahuti and Pavin-i-Itisami etc. opened new vistas, but it was Nima Yushij (1897-1959) who actually rebuilt the very foundation of Persian verse. Nima belongs to the new school of poets whose work reflects strong traces of symbolism. However, his most popular work 'Afsane' (Fables) and 'Aye Shab' (O Night) 'reflect the influence of French romanticism especially of Lamartine and Musset.'⁶ Under the influence of contemporary literary and poetic movements in France, some younger writers adapted a free attitude towards rhythm, form and content. They experimented successfully internal rhyme and variation in rhythm. It was Nima, the pioneer of modern Persian poetry, who made a great impact on Furugh Farrukhzad's poetry.⁷

Furugh Farrukhzad was one of the five children of colonel Muhammad Farrukhzad and Turan Vaziri Tabar.⁸ She was born in January, 1935 in Tehran and died in an automobile accident just after her 23rd birth day in February, 1967.⁹ Furugh's premature death shocked the Iranian literary world and even had the effect of changing the minds of some people previously disapproving of her personal life style and unappreciative of her poetic output.

⁶ Munibur Rahman, op-cit., p. 179

⁷ Javedanah Furugh Farrukhzad.

⁸ MEMWS. Op. cit., p. 308

⁹ Javedanah. P. 22

Furugh spent her childhood and adolescent period in a lower middle class family.¹⁰ Her formal education was exclusively at girls' public schools in Tehran: six years of elementary schooling,¹¹ three years at Khusraw Khawar High School, and a brief period at Banuan Technical School where she learnt painting and sewing. Not only did she put her heart in painting like anything, but also excelled in the art of sewing. For sometime she underwent the tutelage of Butgar, a famous painter.¹² However, she never received a high school diploma.

She began composing poetry at the young age of thirteen or fourteen in the traditional ghazal form, but never got them published¹³. In 1951, in her sixteenth year, Furugh married Parviz Shahpur, a government employee¹⁴. A year later in 1952, her first poetry collection '*Asir*' (The Captive) appeared. She was only 17 then. The famous collection with the same name, but including poems composed in 1952 and after, published again in 1955. Her other poetry collection include: '*Divar*' (The Wall); '*Isyan*' (Rebellion); '*Tavallud-e-Digar*' (Another Birth). Her fifth and last collection '*Iman Biyavreem bi Aghaz-e-Fasl-e-Sard*, (Let Us Have Faith in the Beginning of Cold season) published posthumously in 1974. Moreover she had prepared an anthology of modern Persian verse entitled '*Az Nima Ta Bad*' (From Nima Onward) which saw the light of the day in 1968.

Furugh's only child, a boy named Kamyar, was born in 1953, and shortly thereafter the family moved to Ahvaz where as Michal C. Hillman writes, 'she is

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid p. 23

¹² Ibid

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ MEMWS p. 308

still remembered as a daring young woman, petite, attractive, with beautiful eyes, one of the first woman there to wear tight-fitting clothes on the street.¹⁵ Her marriage to Shapur dissolved by divorce in 1954, with the father gaining permanent custody of the child. It was losing her child rather than being divorced which trenched her into deep grief which has a marked effect on a portion of her poetry. Apart from being a sensitive poet of high calibre, she was an extremely talented actress as well as an adroit and gifted painter. Like her poetry, her paintings too make a departure from traditional styles.

In an interview to the magazine *Arish* she stated precisely what poetry meant for her¹⁶.

”اما شعر برای من مثل رفیق است که وقتی بر او می رسم، می توانم راحت باشم.
در دل کنم - یک جفتی است که کاملم میکند - را ضمیمه میکند“

(Poetry for me is like a friend to whom I can freely unburden my heart. It's a mate who completes me, satisfies me.)

She further adds¹⁷:

”شعر برای من پنجره است که دردت بطرفش می روم خود بخود باز میشود، من آنجا می نشینم، نگاه می کنم،
آوازی خوانم، دادی زنم، گریه می کنم، بالعکس درختها تا می میشوند، وی دانم که آن طرف پنجره یک تفاهت و کیفر میشود“

(Poetry is like a window which automatically opens when I go to it. I sit there, I stare, I sing, I cry out, I weep, I become one with the vision of the trees....On the other side of the window there is an expanse, and someone hears.)

¹⁵ as quoted in MEWMS p. 309

¹⁶ as quoted in Javedanah p. 169

¹⁷ Javedanah p. 170

Finally about what she searches in her poems, says she¹⁸:

”من در شعر خودم چیزی را جستجو نمی‌کنم، بلکه در شعر خودم تازه، خودم را پیدا می‌کنم“

(I don't search for anything in my poems; rather in my poems I discover myself)

Shujauddin Shafa wrote a comprehensive preface to Furugh's first volume 'Asir'. In the course of predicting poetic greatness for her, he singles out the poem 'Dar Barabar-e- Khuda' (Face to Face with God) as the leading and outstanding piece in this collection.¹⁹ A few lines read;²⁰

از تنگنای محبس تاریکی
از بنبلاب تیره ای دنیا
بانگ پیر از نیاز مرا بشنو
آه ای خدای قادر بے همتا
دل نیست این دلی که بمن دادی
در خون تپیده آه، رهائش کن
یا خیالی از صوی و هوس دارش
یا پای بند مهر و دغائش کن

From the prison confines of darkness

From the turbid cesspool of the world

Hear my needful clamour.

O able, unique God.

The heart you gave me, it isn't a heart

Beating in blood, free it or

Keep it empty of carnal desires,

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ Asir p. 7

²⁰ Ibid pp. 142-43

Or encumber it with affection and fidelity.²¹

This poem is not particularly typical of Furugh's early poems in its address to God, but its representation of a desperate and longing mood is classic. Her corpus of poems, fewer than two hundred, for the most part short lyrics, composed during a period of around fifteen years (1951-66), demonstrate the truth and consistency of her view of the nature and function of her craft.

Furugh courageously and unscrupulously breaks all the barriers of social norms and frees herself from all fetters and chains put on women and marches in front of radical modernists like a 'standard – bearer of freedom'²². She said what she meant. And she meant what she felt. There was no inconsistency. No mystical and masked statement. While saying something she did not mince words. Proverbially, she called a spade a spade. Here are a few lines from *Naqsh-e-Pinhan* (The Hidden Dream), which makes her an amorous poet;²³

” آه ای مردی که لبهای مرا
از شراب بوسه های پیروزانده ای
هیچ در عمق دو چشم خاشم
راز این دیوانگی را خوانده ای

فرستی تا ببرتو دور از چشم غیر
ساختی از باد هستی دم
بتری میخواهم از گلهای سحر
تا در آن کیشب تراستی دم

²¹ Tr. MEMWS p. 293

²² Hashmat Moayyad, as quoted in MEMWS p. 310

²³ Asir pp. 115-16

*O, hey, man who has burned
My lips with the sparkling flames of kisses,
Have you seen anything in the depth of
My two silent eyes of the secret of this madness.*

*An opportunity far from the eyes of others
To pour you a goblet from the wine of life,
A bed I want of red roses so that one night
I might give you intoxication.²⁴*

Images drawn from nature appear in these poems as part of a world in which love and the giving are all what matter or seem to exist. She reveals a whole spectrum of moods: anticipation, regret, joy, remorse, loneliness, abandon, sensuality, repentance, doubt and reverie. The *Asir* poems are not joyous mostly, but the readers find in them vitality, sensuality, hopefulness of the youthful speaker emphatically portraying the significance of love.

Furugh was 21 when her second collection '*Divar*' (The Wall) appeared. The '*Asir*' poems depict the psychological state of a 'person in a world of tradition and dogma with no or little hope of a fuller experimental life' whereas in '*Divar*' poems the reader confronts 'the situation of a mind which has tried to break through the traditional restrictions' only to discover a world 'surrounded by a wall, where communication does not become possible simply by the dropping of traditional restrictions.'²⁵ The first poem '*Gunah*' (The Sin) in this collection is a bold apologia of romantic sexual love.²⁶

²⁴ Tr. MEMWS. P. 295

²⁵ Gridhar Tikku, as Quoted in MEMWS. P. 299

²⁶ quoted from Javadanah. P. 295

گنه کردم گناهی پرزلزلت – در آغوشی که گرم و آتشین بود
گنه کردم میان بازوانی – که داغ و کینه جوی و آهنین بود

*I sinned, a sin full of pleasure,
In an embrace which was warm and fiery;
I sinned surrounded by arms
Which were hot, avenging and iron!*

Her third collection 'Isyan' (Rebellion) appeared in 1957 which she later characterized along with 'Divar' as 'the hopeless threshing of arms and legs between two stages in life ... the final gasps of breath before a sort of release.'²⁷

in 1964, appeared 'Tavallud –e- Digar' (Another Birth), her fourth and most important poetry volume. This collection was received with great acclaim by the devotees of modern Persian verse. Furugh, herself, was much pleased by it and felt it represented her first mature work as a poet.²⁸ The poems of this collection exhibit a marked difference in superficial form from her earlier collections. Quatrain stanzas ('Char parah' in Persian) which constituted the basic formal divisions in her earlier compositions, are not found here. Moreover, her poems of the fourth collection reveal maturity both in command of language and in a broadening of concern and vision. The title poem of 'Tavallud –e- Digar' reads:²⁹

” زندگی شاید
یک خیابان دراز است که هر روز زنی با زنبیلی از آن میگذرد

²⁷ MEMWS p. 311

²⁸ Ibid p. 312

زندگی شاید از روشن سیگاری باشد، در نامه رخسار در دهان غنچه
یا عبور گنج رهگذری باشد
که نگاه از سر بر میدارد
بریک رهگذر دیگر با لبخندی بی معنی میگوید: "صبح بخیر"

*Life perhaps is a lengthy street
where a woman walks
everyday with a basket.*

*Life perhaps is lightning of a cigarette,
a moment of rest in love making
the absent look of a passer-by
who tips his hat and
says "good morning"
with a meaningless look
to another passer by.*

²⁹ quoted from Javadanah p. 330

[C]

PARVEEN SHAKIR

In the constellation of woman poets in Urdu, Parveen Shakir stands apart as the most natural and lyrical, one who is more feminine than feminist, who does not need the crutch of feminism and by the sheer quality of her works can vie with the best of her male counterparts. Her poetry speaks for itself. In the preface to her first volume 'Khushboo' (Fragrance):¹ she says:

” وجود کو جب محبت کا وجدان ملا تو شاعری نے جنم لیا۔ اس کا آہنگ وہی ہے
جو موسیقی کا ہے کہ جب تک سارے سر سچے نہ لگیں، گلے میں نوز نہیں آتا! —
دل کے سب زخم کو نہ دیں تو حرف میں روشنی نہیں آتی“¹

(When the secrets and lores of loves were revealed to life, poetry was born. Its genesis is the same, as that of music—the throat doesn't pour forth melody unless all the notes are pure and true. The words, similarly, don't illumine unless the wounds of the heart glow.)

Parveen Shakir feels deeply and has mastered the art of bringing forth poetry out of personal feelings. Nevertheless she as a poet, could not shut her eyes to the grim realities around her. While focussing on human relationships, she finds the journey long and painful at the end of which is self-discovery, coupled with a realization of false relationships. Her

¹ Khushboo p. 18

uniqueness lies not only in looking at things from her own viewpoint but also clothing the ideas in a language which is very much her own. She is basically a confessional poet.

Her family in Karachi, Pakistan, was an immigrant one from India. Her father Shakir Hussain was born in Hussainabad, district Monghyr, Bihar.² In the backdrop of painful partition of the subcontinent, Shakir Hussain, after completing his studies at Patna, migrated to Pakistan. Though in government service, where from he superannuated in 1984, he had some liking of composing verses besides being a social activist.³ After a brief illness, Shakir Hussain died in 1992 leaving his widow and two daughters Nasreen and Parveen, both of whom by then had already undergone the trauma of divorce one after another, desolate. Afzalun Nisa Baigum, Parveen's mother, was from Patna, before the couple migrated to Karachi. One can still find her relatives in Kolhua village, Muzaffarpur and Chandanpatti in Darbhanga districts, Bihar.⁴

Parveen Shakir was born in Karachi on November 24, 1952.⁵ And died in a car accident on December 26, 1994, in Islamabad, survived by four poetry collections and a son named Murad. Her four collections, viz., 'Khushboo', 'Sad Burg', 'Khud Kalami' and 'Inkar' have been compiled together under one voluminous collection entitled 'Mah-e-Tamam'. 'Kaf -e- Aina', her fifth and last collection published posthumously in 1997.

² Nazim jafri, AajKal. Sep. '96, p. 9

³ Aajkal p. 9

⁴ Aajkal p. 9

⁵ Aajkal p. 10

Para, as Parveen was known to her kith and kin, passed Matriculation in 1966 from Rizwiyya Girls School and F. A and B. A from Sir Syed Girls College, Karachi, in 1971.⁶ She obtained M. A degrees first in English and then in Linguistics from Karachi University. Her doctoral work was on the 'role of mass media on 1971 War'. Moreover, she took Masters degree in Bank Administration from Harvard University.⁷ Meanwhile she joined Abdullah Girls College, Karachi, as a lecturer in English in 1973.⁸ Parveen was only 21 then--- at her half-life period of the total 42 years she lived.

Parveen Qadir Agha, to whom she dedicated her fourth collection 'Inkar', writes about the genius in the poet:

"There was something extra ordinary about her. I used to wonder myself how calmly she had taken her fame at such a young age. When we published her collection of works I wondered to myself why things were being done so fast. It was too early. I feared for her and wondered why God was speeding up things for her. My fears turned out to be true. God was winding up her work in this world. Even God was in love with His creation. He wanted her in the Heavens as soon as possible."⁹

Apparently, Parveen Shakir had completed her half life period with phenomenal accomplishment and acquiral. The second half to be followed was turbulent and tempestuous. She married Dr. Naseer Ali, in 1976, who worked in Pakistan Army Medical Corps.¹⁰ The years that followed gave her life new meaning. Life for her no more symbolized in chasing the aromatic and saccharine dreams--- though no wild and quixotic ones. One has to be realistic

⁶ Aajkal p. 10

⁷ Shair Dec. 94

⁸ Aajkal p. 10

⁹ 'Funoon' Lahore Quarterly Ed. AN. Qasmi Jan April 1996. P. 66

¹⁰ Aajkal P. 10

and matter of fact, for life is not bed of roses – it has its share of thorns also. Realistic she was, but was fed up with reality instructors. Nonetheless, she tried to fit in the traditional household of her in-laws, but of no avail, for every rising sun with its rays brought new wretchedness and difficulty and novel pain and affliction.¹¹

Gradually she took recourse to her first love – the books. It was then that she came out with flying colours in Pakistan Civil Services in 1982, and joined as an Assistant Commissioner, Customs House, Karachi¹² Her only son Murad had already born in 1979. To cut a long story short, her matrimony saw turbulent times and passed through years of separation to end finally in divorce in 1987¹³. Her ex-husband remarried. On the other hand she rose to the office of Assistant Collector, Excise and Sales Tax in Rawalpindi in 1988. Meanwhile she got scholarship from Harvard University 1990 and stayed in America till 1993¹⁴. Her final appointment was as a Deputy Director, Central Excise Department, Islamabad, when she left for the eternal abode in a car accident leaving her grey-haired widow mother, divorced sister and apple of her eyes , her Murad, whom she called Geetu, inconsolable. With the dusk of 1994 Christmas, the literary circle had lost a genius, a virtuoso, a kind-hearted mental giant.

Parveen Qadir Agha remembers her:

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid. p. 11

" She was like a flower child, a melody, a fragrance, in fact poetry itself. I did not have to read her poetry as for me she was herself a poem, I would rather read her and understand her...With her around, we never needed flowers. Her fragrance and presence filled the soul. She could feel things around her without any communication as her poetic thought gave her an insight of human nature ... I had loved her because she was lovable. No one could help loving her.¹⁵

On her sudden and premature death, Parveen Qadir Agha further adds, as if bemoaning on behalf of the entire Urdu world:

" She was an extraordinary person. She could not have died a normal death at a ripe old age and be mourned in the due course of events. She had to live forever. God thus ordained an extraordinary way for her untimely death and saved her from the cruelties of old age. She will now live in our memories as a fresh, young and beautiful Parveen Shakir, a flower in full bloom rather than a faded, flower. Such mortals never die.¹⁶

Parveen's first collection 'Khushboo' (Fragrance) appeared in 1976. She dedicated it to Ahmad Nadim Qasmi, whom she called 'Ammu', a great writer himself, her first poetic school. It was he who introduced her to the literary world by continuously publishing her in his journal '*Funoon*'¹⁷ Iftikhar Imam Siddiqui, editor of '*Shair*', considers '*Khushboo*' to be the most popular poetry collection of the last two decades.¹⁸ To Ahmad Nadeem Qasmi, the moving charm and attraction of '*Khushboo*' is all enthralling for in its emotional appeals and wordings people saw a mirror where not only the features but also the post-featural raptures are reflected.¹⁹ Parveen has offered the first poem of this volume to her 'Ammu' There are as many as 246 ghazals and

¹⁵ Funoon, op. cit., p. 66

¹⁶ Ibid. p. 67

¹⁷ Rizwan Ahamad in Baji, Monthly, April 1995, p.25

poems (nazms) spread over 360 pages. Some poems are as short as consisting of only three/four lines, but abounding in message, substance and emotion, as in the following poem *I'tiraf* (The Confession),²⁰ she says:

جانے کب تک تری تصویر نگاہوں میں رہی
 ہوگئی رات ترے عکس کو جکتے تکتے
 میں نے پھر تیرے نقور کے کسی لمحے میں
 تیری تصویر پہ لب رکھ دیے اہستہ سے

*Can't say how long your face remained in my eyes;
 I sat staring and night came in.
 And then, in a flash of fancy
 on your picture I pouted my lips gently.*

In another short poem '*Chand*' (The Moon) she says:²¹

ایک سے مسافر ہیں
 ایک سا مقدر ہے
 میں زمین پر تہا
 اور وہ آسمانوں میں

*[Alike are the two wayfarers
 And share a common fate.
 Alone on the earth am I
 And he alone on the sky.]*

¹⁸ Shair, Monthly, December 1994, p.4

¹⁹ Pakistani Abid. Eds Salim Akhtar and Rasid Amjad (Islamabad, 1995), p. 384

²⁰ Parween Shakir Khusboo, p.20

²¹ Ibid p. 122

She seems to be very sensitive, calm, melancholy and at the same time restless and anxious. Too littler at times made her too happy, as is reflected in her poem 'Pyar' (Love):²²

ابر بہار نے
پھول کا چہرہ
اپنے بنفش ہاتھ میں لیکر
ایسے چوما
پھول کے سارے دکھ
فوشبو بن کر بہہ نکلے

*The spring clouds
Took the flowers face
In their violet hands
And gave it such a deep and hearty kiss
That all the flowers pains
Have turned to perfume
And gushed out.*

Being a student and teacher of English literature, hers was a thorough and deep study of English romanticism, and was influenced by the same as is reflected in her poems. By the time her second collection 'Sad Burg' (Hundred Leaves) saw the light of the day in 1980, her life had taken a new turn, and she was mustering courage from within to take issue with the circumstances.²³ Fed up with the state of affairs, she tried to change it, but to no purpose. Failing flatly at this front, she turned to remodel and transmute herself. Her

²² Parveen Shakir, Sad Barg, P. 278

²³ Aaj Kal(Sep.,1996) p.13

efforts were in vain here also.²⁴ This is what 'Sad Barg' is all about, which is dedicated to her 'Ammi' (mother). Spread over 279 pages, this collection comprises of 140 nazms (poems) and ghazals. She reveals her condition in 'Jeevm saathi se' (to the partner of life) as:²⁵

”دھوپ میں بارشیں ہوتے دیکھو کے
حیرت کرنے والے!
شاید تو نے میری ہنسی کو
چھو کر
کبھی نہیں دیکھا“

You wonder at this
Curious spectacle
Of rain in the sun!
Perhaps you never touched
My laughter ?

Last poem of this collection 'Katbah' (An Epitaph), further reveals her identity.²⁶

”یہاں پر وہ لڑکی سو رہی ہے
کہ جس کی آنکھوں نے نیند سے خواب مری لیکر
دہائی کی عمر تک جگے ہیں گزار دی تھی
عجیب تھا ایشیا راس کا
کہ جس نے تقدیر کے تنگ حوصلہ مہاجن کے ہاتھ
بس ایک درپوچہ نیم باز کے سکھ پر
شہر کا شہر بن کر دیا تھا“
Here lies a girl

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Sad Barg, P. 91

²⁶ Ibid p.278

*Who exchanged her sleep for dreams
And passed wakeful nights
Even in her prime youthful time.
Strange and out of this world was her wait
That made her pawn many a city
To the apathetic broker of fate
Only for the joy of a casement ajar.*

Many a critics hinge her power and popularity on her ghazals alone, but after the perusals of such poems one would give equal if not more credit to her pomes (nazms) also.

Parveen's third collection '*Khud Kalami*' (Soliloquy) is dedicated to her son Murad. Her life had now entered a decisive stage. Rapprochement was the farthest thing possible.²⁷ Murad seemed to be the only solace, who assuaged the bereaved in the poet, courtesy her poem '*Teri Mohni Surat*' (Your Lovely Face)²⁸:

”ہاں مجھے نہیں پروا
اب کسی اندھیرے کی
آنے والی راتوں کے
بے اداس رستوں پر
ایک چاند روشن ہے
تری موہنی صورت“

*Yes, I don't care a damn
for the darkness of any kind
On each and every gloomy path*

²⁷ Aaj Kal, p. 13

²⁸ Parveen Shakir, *Khud Kalami*, p. 21

of all the nights to come,
there shines a moon –
(of) your lovely face.

'Inkar' (Refusal) is the last collection published in Parveen's life span in 1990. She had met her fate---finally freed from marital shackles.²⁹ However, she had decided the path she would tread on. She feels very lonely but leads her son to know the world. In 'Apne Beti ke liye ek Nazm' (A poem to My Son) says she:³⁰

” میں اس کذب و ریا
اس بے لحاظی سے بھرتی دنیا میں رہ کر
محبت اور نیکی اور سچائی کا ورثہ
تجھ کو کیسے منتقل کر دوں
مجھے کیا دے دیا اس نے !

مگر میں ماں ہوں
اور اک ماں اگر باپ کو سہو جائے
تو دنیا ختم ہو جائے
سو میرے خوش گماں بچے !
تو اپنی لوح آئندہ یہ
سارے خوبصورت لفظ لکھنا
سدا سچ بولنا
احسان کرنا
پیار بھی کرنا
مگر آئیں کھلی رکھنا !

Living in this world of falsity and hypocrisy
how can I pass on to you
this heritage of love, virtue and truth ?
What the hell did it give me in return ?

²⁹ Aaj Kal. P. 14

³⁰ Parveen Shakir, Indar, p. 45

*But I am a mother
and if a mother gives way to despair
this world would cease to be.
Therefore, my buoyant, optimistic child,
do write on your future tablet
all those beautiful words;
do speak the truth;
render favour to people
and feel free to love
But not without keeping your eyes wide open.*

In other poems like 'EK Mushkil Sawal (A Difficult Question) and 'Basheere ki Gharwali' (Basheere's Wife) she as a social realist, portrays the excesses of the patriarchal society on the fair sex. This 196-page collection consists of 122 ghazals and nazms, and is dedicated to Parveen Qadir Agha.

'Kaf -e- Aina' (Palm of the Mirror), her fifth and last collection published posthumously in 1997, is revised by her sister Nasreen Shakir. There are 65 nazms and ghazals in this 117 – page volume, Some couplets of the poems 'Tumhari Salgirah Par' (On your Birthday) needs special mentioning, where the poet remembers her love. Parveen here seem to be at her few romantic best instances:³¹

خدا کرے تری آنکھیں ہمیشہ ہنستی رہیں
دیار وقت سے تو شادمان گزرتا رہے

³¹ Parveen Shakir, Kaf-e-Aina, pp. 113-114

راستارہ کہیں ٹوٹ کر بکھر جائے
فلک سے تیرا خط کھٹناں گزرتا رہے
میں تیری چھاؤں میں کچھ دیر بیٹھ لوں اور پھر
تمام راستہ بے سناں گزرتا رہے

*May God keep your eyes ever smiling
may you pass cheerfully through the highway of time.
Even though my star breaks into pieces,
may your galaxy adorn the sky.
I thirst for sitting in your shade a while;
No matters I walk there after in the sun.*

If a poem is to be a true poem, it must be read by somebody else besides the author; only then can it prove that it is capable of living its own life, independent of the person who had written. It is here that legitimacy and genuineness of Parveen's poetry lies. Her poems never fell short of readers, for they are so much enthralling and stimulating. Through the magic of her poetry all statements become the truth since they are backed by the power of emotion.

The difference between the love poetry in the old days and modern love poetry will not lie in the power and truthfulness of the emotion. In the past, love – even the greatest love – was always a kind of escape from social life, which was distasteful. But the love in Parveen's poetry is closely connected with her social duties, her work, her struggle for unity. And that is where its new beauty lies. Lyrical poetry is a realm in which any statement immediately becomes

truth. Yesterday the poet said, 'life is a land of smiles', today he said, 'life is a vale of tears' and he was right both times. There is no inconsistency. The lyrical poet doesn't have to prove anything. The only proof is the intensity of his / her emotion.

Parveen Shakir wrote her poems for people especially for '*homo sentimental*'. Her poetry is not directed for some snob of litterateur. After all, 'a carpenter does not make chairs for other carpenters but for the people'. Love, for Parveen, means all or nothing. To her, next to real love, everything else becomes pale, everything else fades away. She had invested everything in love; in turn she expected her partner to invest an equal capital of feelings in the common account. She says:

جو میرے لفظ میں مجھ سے زیادہ بولتا ہے
میں اس کی بزم میں اک حرف زیر لب بھی نہیں

The one who speaks more in my words than me

I, in his association, am not even a letter in undertones

However, only a real poet knows how lonely it is inside the mirrored house of poetry. And Parveen was one.

Chapter IV

Romanticism in the Poetry of Nazik al- Maláika, Furugh Farrukhzad and Parveen Shakir: A comparative Study

Chapter 4

As has been illuminated in the first chapter of the present work that romanticism is both a specific literary movement and a general manner of thinking and writing. Lyrical poems are best suited for it, because romanticism is basically an emphasis on individuality, and the lyric is the ultimate means in direct personal expression. The poet expresses his/her personal reactions to the things he/she sees, thinks and feels. Devoid of a fixed, definite and rigid meaning notwithstanding, romanticism universally proposes absolute freedom, spontaneity, 'sincerity' and a sort of emotional engagement on the part of the poet

Romanticists cultivate imaginative freedom; for them, the world of imagination is more beautiful than the world of reality; the flowers in the dream are 'fairer than waken'd eyes behold'. They tend to express the feelings of man / woman in solitude. They nature a common tendency to be 'inward –turning', and use the language with more freedom and informality. They respond vividly to natural environment. For them, 'imagination' is fundamental, because what matters most in poetry is its truth to the emotion or sentiment. The power of poetry , to them , is strongest when the creative impulse works untrammelled; it is the imagination that uncovers the reality masked by visible things. As William Blake puts : 'This world of Imagination is the world of Eternity '. Further he says: ' One Power alone makes a poet: Imagination, The Divine vision'. The romanticists create worlds of their own and believe that the imagination stands in some essential relation to truth and reality. Alienation is the major romantic

theme, which can be expressed in the form of sickness : melancholia, pessimism, depression, despair and suicide. These forms of expressions of alienation result from the conviction that one's culture has failed; one's life has lost all vitality and meaning and he/she is a surplus in this world. True romanticists do insist passionately on the imagination but with the condition that it should be related to truth and reality. And the three woman poets under discussion, viz., Nazik al-Malaika, Furugh Farrukhzad and Parveen Shakir belong to this mould of romanticists, who no matter how so far have stretched the thread of imagination, have allied it with truth and reality in and around their lives.

Nazik al-Malaika (b.1923), the modern Iraqi versifier's poetry is characterized by the originality of its thematic variations and its use of imagery. Exhibiting a mastery of language and technique, her poetry has a romantic sadness about it. The causes of her sadness lie in the events she lived in. She opened her eyes to life in the wake of World War I. Her youth witnessed the struggle of the Arabs against imperialist powers and its deprave attempts to deplete resources in Arab countries. Then the World War II plagued people with horrors and worries everywhere. It was, therefore, no surprise that the generation between the two wars was haunted with deep sorrow and bitter sense of disappointment. Besides, the untimely death of three family members¹ plunged her into bottomless sorrow, grief and despair. Nazik's first collections of poetry were highly expressive of these feelings. One finds in this poetry that she has remained captive to pain and sorrow ever since her childhood.

¹ Tabanah, op. cit. P. 60

On the basis of details, given in the previous chapter, of Furugh Farrukhzad's life (1935-1967) and works, it is assumed that her poetry is the mirror of her views about her life. There emerges a visage of a very particular sort of person. She was a most inquiring, searching and active person who seems to have committed herself fully to all ventures. Her vitality and constant activity in her brief life span of 32 years (five poetry collections; continuous engagement with paints, brush and canvas; production and acting in films) may, however, have been her only source of happiness, as she was divorced at 19, and had lost her only child to her estranged husband. Moreover, she was deprived of seeing her child, let alone owning the apple of her eyes. In other words, the constant involvement kept her too busy to reflect much upon her unhappiness, though the details of her short life reveal the cruel ironies that she perpetually faced. This is why there is found in her poetry a wave of protest with a tinge of all that the romanticism stands for.

Despite being a learned poet, who lived in anti-romantic circumstances, Parveen Shakir (1952-94), instead of walking on the trodden path of classical Urdu poetry and instead of taking recourse to the vogue of writing the cliché-ridden feminist poems, wrote poems not because they had to be written but because she could not suppress the urge for writing the way she did. She was a poet not by ^{training but by temperament. She could not be} otherwise. And this is why in spite of being in a literally and virtually, prosaic and unpoetical profession as bureaucracy, she remained a poet. Even in post modern times, she wrote poetry which abounded in the salient features of romanticism. She believed in the originality of both matter and manner. Parveen

felt committed to her feelings rather to the ideas more accountable to heart rather than to mind. She is romantic in that she cannot ignore the vast world of her feelings and imagination which, to her, are no less real than the world she inhabits.

The world inside becomes all the more important when the world outside proves so callous and corrupt just as a white object looks whiter in a black background. Parveen is sensitive and sentimental. She feels and feels deeply and it is a coincidence that she also has a language at her disposal which is tailor-made for her delicate feelings.

The poetry of Nazik al-Malaika, Furugh Farrukhzad and Parveen Shakir, to a great extent exhibits the salient features of romanticism—the trend has already been discussed to a greater length in the preceding chapters. Their poetry, at least of the initial stage, does show a lot of resemblance vis-à-vis romanticism.

Back to the business, the romanticism, or the romantic themes which have been dealt with to a considerable extent, and recur again and again in the three poets should be short-listed to make a comparative study. Otherwise the voluminosity of their poetic output, and variety and variation in the orbit of romanticism alone would require researches on end. The elements of romanticism, around which the comparative analysis would be made, are condensed as:

- 1) Pain, suffering and loneliness; Pessimism
- 2) Night
- 3) Romantic depression

- 4) Nature with it's exemplifications
- 5) Religion / God
- 6) Rebellion
- 7) Love with its various ramifications.

Pain, Suffering and Loneliness; or Pessimism

Nazik al-Malaika throughout the first phase of her poetic career (*Ashiqat al-Lail* and *Masat al-Hayat*) has remained captive to pain and sorrow. From the days she opened her eyes to life, she saw nothing but gloom and blackness²:

هذه الأُسُطر قد ضمت بقايا سنواني
منذ أن أُلقت بي الأقدار في تيه الحياة
طفلةً ترفوذي الشاطئ عبر النظرات
وترى العالم بحرًا مغرقًا في الظلمات

[These lines embrace remnants of my years,
Ever since fate has thrown me in the maze of life,
As a child looks shadily to the shore,
And sees the world as a sea overwhelmed with blackness³.]

Nazik continues to suffer from sense of loneliness and isolation. Her early pessimism turned her life into a tragedy⁴:

وحدتي تقتلني والعرضاعا
والأسى لم يبق لي حلما جديدا
وظلام العيش لم يبق شعاعا
والشباب الغضّ يذوي ويبيد

[My loneliness is killing me, my life has gone,
Sorrow has not spared me a new dream

² Ashiqat al-lail. Divan Vol-1 pp486-87

³ Tr. Gilgamesh(4-1989) p.32

⁴ Divan Vol. 1 p.491

And no darkness of life not a gleam

And tender youth is withering and being spoiled⁵]

Furugh's following poem 'Andoh-e-Tanhai' (The Grief of Loneliness)

epitomises a life of loneliness and hopelessness⁶:

چون تنهایی سست می لرزد
روحم از سرای تنهایی
می خرد در ظلمت قلبم
وحشت دنیای تنهایی

[Like a frail sapling, my soul trembles with the chill of loneliness.

The loneliness engulfs my heart with darkness.]

Happiness to Nazik was but a myth which consoles the miserable whose wishes are unattainable. Pain is the only fact in this existence which is made only of suffering and exhaustion. She says⁷:

نحن نحيا في عالم كله دموع وعمر يفيض بأسنا وحزنا
تشقى عناهر الزمن اتقا سي بأهاتنا وتخر منا

[We live in a world full of tears and an age brimming over with pessimism and sorrow

Components of the cruel time gloat over our sighs and of us satirize.]

But in the following piece of poetry, Furugh seems to move from the vision of hopelessness and despair to doubt and possible optimism, philosophizing the life. This is the title poem of her collection 'Tavallud-e-Digar', which she finds more akin to her nature and state of mind than the three previous collections. Says Furugh⁸:

⁵ Tr. Gilgamesh. p. 32

⁶ From *Divar*, as quoted in Sadai Shire Imroz. P.56

⁷ *Masat al-Hayat*, Divan. Vol 1 p. 161

⁸ Javadanah. P. 330

” زندگی شاید
 ایک خیابان دراز است کہ ہر روز زنی باز نیلی از آن می گذرد
 زندگی شاید طفلیست کہ از مدرسہ برمی گردد
 زندگی شاید
 ریمانیست کہ مردکی بان خود را از شاخہ میآویزند“

[Life perhaps is a lengthy street where a woman walks
 everyday with her basket.

Life perhaps is a child returning from school.

Life perhaps is a rope, by which a man hangs himself from a porch]

Parveen Shakir's two poems 'Ek Tanha Sayyarah' (A Solitary Planet) and

'Sif ek Ladki' (Only a Girl) convey the same message. The poet feels pangs of
 loneliness and pessimism more in the former poem⁹:

” میری پریشانی کو دیکھ کے
 میری ماں نے میرا نام
 ایک تارے کے نام پر رکھا
 جگمگ کرنا والا

لیکن میری کیمسٹری میں
 ایسا کوئی فلکسٹم نہیں ہے
 جو میری تقدیر کو جھلک کر دے
 میری لالنگ میں اس کے نام کی انشاں بھر دے!

میں اپنے سوچ سے
 ہزاروں لوزی سال کے فاصلے پر ہوں
 کائنات کی بے انداز وسعت میں
 ایک تنہا سیارہ ہوں!

[Seeing my brows,
 my mother named me after a star.
 A brilliant one.
 But my chemistry has no magic
 That could lighten up my luck
 And adorn my brow
 With the silver dust of his name!

⁹ Khud Kalami. Pp141-42

*I am thousands of light years
Away from my sun
In the vast extent of the cosmos
I am but a lonely planet.*

Parveen Shakir admits in the following piece that the sorry state of her existence in life is due to her gender. Her 'self' is negated at the cost of social customs and boundaries, and it pains her¹⁰:

”اپنے سرد کمرے میں
میں اداں بیٹھی ہوں
نیم وادریکوں سے
نم ہوا میں آتی ہیں....“

میں نہیں مگر کچھ بھی
سنگ حل رواجوں کے
آہنی حصاروں میں
عمر قید کی طنز
” صرف ایک لڑکی ہوں “

*[I am sitting lonely in my chilly room;
Gusts of clammy wind come through the casement ajar....
But alas, I'm nothing but a mere girl
sentenced for life
in the iron wall of ruthless customs.*

Night

The poet in Nazik does not feel the bliss of peace unless she is in the attire of her isolation from people. She loves the night which embraces her with its darkness¹¹:

لیس اِلَا الحزن ممشی فی کیانی
وَأَنَا فی ظلمة الليل الصدیق

¹⁰ Khushboo. P 92

¹¹ Divan Vol. 1 p549

(*There is nothing but sadness creeping into my self,
when I am in the darkness of my friend, the night.*)

Furugh portrays the night coupled with the state of loneliness. There is a yearning to free oneself from the night¹²:

دلگرفته است
دلگرفته است
بیرایوان می روم و انگشترانم را
بر پوست کشیده شب می کشم
چراغهای رابطه تاریکند
چراغهای رابطه تاریکند
کسی مرا به آفتاب
معرفی نخواهد کرد

[*My heart is heavy, O so heavy.*

I move to the porch, and

Extend my fingers over the stretched skin of night.

The linking lamps are dark, O so dark.

No one will introduce me to the sun]

Night symbolises hopelessness and despair for Furugh in the poem 'Juff'

(The Couple¹³):

شب می آید
و پس از شب تاریکی
و پس از تاریکی
چشمها
دستها

¹² Iman Biyawareem bi Aghaze Fasl-e-Sard. Saday Shire Imroz. P32

¹³ As quoted in Sutunhai Shir-e-Nau p.101

و نفسہا و نفسہا و نفسہا
و صدای آب
کہ فرو میریزد قطره قطره از شیر

[Night comes ,
and after night, darkness
and after darkness
eyes
hands
and breathing and more breathing
and the sound of water
which drips drips drips from the faucet.]

Like Nazik, Parveen too finds confidant in night which shares her grief¹⁴:

” گہن کو اپنے تن کا نوشتہ جان کے ، میں نے
روشنیوں سے سارے ناتے توڑ لیے تھے
رات کو اپنی سکھی مان کے
اپنے سارے دکھ بس اس سے کہہ کے
جی ہلکا کر لیتی تھی “

[Taking eclipse to be the destiny of my body,
I had severed every tie with light.
Accepting night as my only friend,
I used to confide in her
and feel relieved.]

Romantic depression

Following the readings of English romantic poets, the trend of romanticism found in Nazik a fertile land where it allowed seeds of sadness to swell and buds

¹⁴ Khushboo p.260

of blueness to blossom. The romantic depression squeezing Nazik harshly, as

she says¹⁵:

رحمك يا أيدى الكآبة ما الذى قد كان منى
ماذا جنيت لتعصرى قلبى وأصلاسى ولحنى؟
أبداً تمدين الجناح على ضيالاتى وفتى
و تلوّنين مشاعرى بسواد آهاتى و هنرى

[Oh hands of depression have mercy on me

What did I do that you squeeze my heart, dreams and melody?

You always spread your wing on my visions and art

And colour my feeling with the blackness of my sorrow and sight.]

On the other hand, Furugh, disenchanted by her inability to win love, gives

the out let to her depression by saying¹⁶:

من آن شمعیم که باسوز دل خویش
فروزان میکنم ویرانه ای را
اگر خواهم که خاموشی گزینم
پریشان میکنم کاشانه ای را

[I am the candle that,

by burning its heart, illuminates a ruin.

If I prefer to be silent,

I destroy the haven]

¹⁵ Divan Vol.1 p. 613

¹⁶ Asir p. 35

Parveen Shakir hardly grumbles or finds fault with the destiny , as she loses her love. She suffers without lamenting. And that is her forte. Romantic depression notwithstanding, exalting her love, she says¹⁷:

کمال ضبط کو خود بھی تو آزماؤں گی
 میں اپنے ہاتھ سے اس کی دلہن بجاؤں گی
 سپرد کر کے اسے چاندنی کے ہاتھوں میں
 میں اپنے گھر کے اندھیروں کو روٹ آؤں گی
 بچھا دیا تھا گلابوں کے ساتھ اپنا وجود
 وہ سوکے اٹھے تو خوابوں کی راکھ اٹھاؤں گی

[I too would test my ultimate patience:
 I'll decorate his bride with own hands.

Handing him over to moonlight,
 I will come back to my light-less room.

My being, too, I had spread with roses;
 I'd collect the ashes of my dreams when he rises.]

Nature

Nazik's tendency to confide to nature by describing some of its scenes like the sunset, the sea, the night, the rain etc, is another sign of romanticism¹⁸:

جلسۃ انا جس کون المساء
 وارمق لون الظلام الحزین
 وأرسل أغنیتی فی الفضاء
 وأبکی علی کل قلب غبین

¹⁷ Khushboo pp. 213-14

¹⁸ Divan Vol. P 577

أصيح إلى هسات اليمام
وأسمع في الليل وقع المطر
وأناات قمرية في الظلام
تغنى على البعد بين الشجر

[I sat confiding to the silence of the evening
Having a glance of the sad darkness
Sending my song through the space
And crying over every weak heart
Listening to the whispers of the doves
Hearing at night the sound of rain
And wailing of a turtledove in the dark
Singing from afar in the tree.]

Though not confiding to Nature the way Nazik did, Perveen Shakir by virtue of her sheer imagery creates a romantic scene out of nature---the moon--- which makes out the theme of her various poems. *Khushboo* (Fragrance) is the only word which seems to have appeared more than 'moon' in her poetry¹⁹:

چاند کی آخری تاریخیں تھیں
کنج چمن کی خوشبو بھری تاریکی میں
اس نے دیے کی لو کو اونچا کیا
اور میری آنکھوں میں جھانکا
پھر ہمیں کسی دیے کی ضرورت نہیں رہی

[Those were the last days of moon's journey.
In the sweet-scented darkness of the garden retreat
he raised the wick of the lamp
and looked deep into my eyes.
We needed a lamp no more.]

¹⁹ Inkar p. 182

Parveen in the following poem creates a scene out of nature vis-à-vis her feelings²⁰.

” یہ حسین شام اپنی
ابھی جس میں گھل رہی ہے
ترے پیرہن کی خوشبو
ابھی جس میں گھل رہے ہیں
مرے خواب کے شگوفے
ذرا دیر کا ہے منظر!
ذرا دیر میں اتنی پر
کھلے گا کوئی ستارہ
تری سمت دیکھ کر وہ
” کرے گا کوئی اشارہ

[This sweet evening (of ours)
— in which is dissolving
the scent of your dress,
in which is blooming
the buds of my dreams
— is but only a fleeting sight!
Shortly on the horizon
a star will appear
Looking at you it will
make some signal.]

Such portrayal of 'nature' is hardly found in Furugh's poetry, which is for the most part nothing but her giving expression to what she underwent through, what she yearned for, and to some extent what she felt. Imagery is by and large lacking. Either she seems to be talking of amorous subjects or deeply immersed

²⁰ Ibid p.21

in grief and loneliness. In the following poem 'Anduh Parast' (sorrow-worshipper)

she prefers autumn to spring²¹.

کاش چون پاییز بودم ، کاش چون پاییز بودم
کاش چون پاییز خاموش و ملال انگیز بودم
برگ های آرزو هایم یکایک زرد می شد
آفتاب دیدگانم سرد می شد

[I wish I were an autumn, I wish I were an autumn,
I wish I were a quiet and melancholic autumn,
The petals of my desires were turned yellowish, and
I wish I would have been blinded.]

Religion /God

Happiness, to Nazik al-Malaika, is no more than a mirage. She spent long years of disillusionment with religion and went on roaming in the valleys of worry and woe and streets of soreness and sorrow. Finally in God she sees a saviour from her persistent sadness and tragedy²².

فلنلذَّ بالإيمان فهو ختام الـ يأس والدمع والشقاء المرير
بسمع الأعين الحزينة تن أدمعها الهامرات في الدبحور

[Let's resort to faith, the end of despair, tears and devastating misery

²¹ Divar, quoted from Sadai Shir-e-Imroz. p.46

²² Masat al-Hayat. Divan Vol.1 p. 236

It will wipe off the sad eyes the falling tears in the night.]

Whereas Furugh Farrukhzad having been deceived many a time, ^{be} seems to/disillusioned with desires in 'Dar Barabar-e-Khuda' (Face to Face with God).

The representation of a desperate and longing mood in this poem is typical. She asks God²³:

از دیدگان روشن من بستان
شوق بسوی غیر دیدن را
لطفی کن ای خدا و بیاموزش
از برق چشم غیر دیدن را

[From my eyes snatch

The eagerness to run to another;

O God, have mercy, and teach my eyes

To shy away from the shining eyes of others.]

Further in the same poem she admits that she has lived a loving and amatory life. When confronted at all posts with deception and fraud which led to broken-heartedness, Furugh makes prayer to God to liquidate her lust²⁴:

آه ای خدا که دست توانایت
بتیان شهاده عالم هستی را
بتهای روی و از دل من بستان
شوق گناه و نفس پرستی را

²³ Asir. P. 143

²⁴ Ibid. p 143

[O Lord, O Lord, whose powerful hand
Established the foundation of existence,
Show your face and pluck from my heart
The zest for sin and lust]

Parveen Shakir, in the other hand, unlike Nazik and Furugh did not give way to utter pessimism. Her sufferings do not precede to grousing and statement of dissatisfaction. She remained a believer and is satisfied with the destiny. However, after bearing a baby, she shares with the 'Creator of the cosmos' her ecstasy (for barrenness is considered to be the curse to have befallen on women). An optimist Parveen says:²⁵

کائنات کے خالق!
دیکھ تو مرا چہرہ
آج میرے ہونٹوں پر
کیسی مسکراہٹ ہے
آج میری آنکھوں میں
کیسی جگمگاہٹ ہے

اس حسین لمحے کو
تو تو جانتا ہوگا
اس سے کی عظمت کو
تو تو مانتا ہوگا
ہاں۔ تراگماں سچ ہے
ہاں۔ کہ آج میں نے بھی
زندگی جنم دی ہے!

Creator of the cosmos!

Look at my face

What s silvern smile on my face

What a glorious glow my eyes have got...!

You must be aware of this memorable moment;

You must be realising the magnitude of this time.

Yes, you are right:

I two have a given birth to a life]

²⁵ Khud Kalami, pp. 22-23.

As has been illuminated while dealing with the works of Parveen Shakir in the previous chapter, she admittedly, wrote subjective poems for the most part, nevertheless, she could not keep her eyes shut to the grim realities outside. She has talked of the plight of women in general. She has dealt with finesse the social relations. In a doctrinal poem entitled '*Sindh ki ek Beti ka Ayne Rasool se ek Sawal*' (A Question to the Prophet by a Daughter of Sindh), Parveen has transcended time and space and talked of the society, after the last prophet's advent, which made an ideal society from all quarters. Then she laments about the erosion of humanity and virtue in the present society.

Rebellion:

Nazik al-Malaika's collection '*Shazaya wa Rimad*' represents a turning point. Though wrote it at 25 and still influenced by romanticism, she became attracted to other motives, which left their marks on her poetry. These motives were represented by symbolism surrealism and existentialism, which put an end to her highly sentimental reaction to scenes and events surrounding her to be replaced by insightful analysis and fathoming the recesses of that self and the observing of its subconscious changes. Nevertheless, she maintains her romantic sad vision. A thread of existentialism started penetrating the self of the poet. And Nazik becomes less obedient to her fate and more rebellious.²⁶

و اُبكى .. و اُبكى .. فدمع لرهيب
 يحتمل روصى و يُذوى المنى
 تحذ بنى هيرتى فى الوجود
 و اصرخ من ابنى : من انا

²⁶ Shazaya wa Rimad, Divan vol II, p. 50.

فمنيت عيوننا تمبت الدموع
 وقلبا يهتد ان يطعننا
 وروحا تحترق فيما يريد
 فمحي الظلام وعاف النسا

[I weep and weep, my tears are flames
 which destroy my soul and enfeeble wishes
 Torturing me is my confusion about the existence
 And I scream out of my pain; who am I
 I was granted eyes in love with tears
 And a heart that likes to be stabbed
 And a soul not knowing what it wants
 So it loathed the darkness and abhorred the light.]²⁷

Furugh seems to cross all borders of rebelliousness --- an attitude so overpowered her that the title of her third collections is 'Isyan' (Rebellion). She appears completely disenchanted. In the poem 'Isyan-e-Khuda' (Divine Rebellion) she, annoyed with the state of affairs, deprecates the world:²⁸

نیمه شب در پرده های بارگاه کبریاى خویش
 پنجه خشم خروشانم جهان را زیر و رو میسرخنت
 دستهای خسته ام بعد از هزاران سال خاموشی
 کوهها را در دهان باز دریاها فرو میسرخنت

[At midnight behind the curtains of my own great hall
 My angry, rough hands would turn the world upside down
 My weary hands, after thousands of years of silence,
 Would throw the mountains down into the open mouths of
 the sea]²⁹

Further she makes a rebellious claim ---- loud and clear, in the same poem:

²⁷ Tr. Gilgamesh, p. 35.

²⁸ Javadanah p. 312.

²⁹ Tr. MEMWS, P. 301.

گر خدا بودم، ملائک را شبی فریاد میکردم
 آب کوثر را درون کوره‌ی دوزخ بجوشانند
 مشعل سوزنده در کف، گله‌ی پرہیزکاران را
 از چراگاہ بہشت سبزتر دامن برون رانند

*[If I were God, I'd summon the angels one night
 To boil the water of heaven in the furnace of hell,
 And with burning torch in hand drive out
 The flock of ascetics from the green pastures of heaven]*

In Nazik's rebellion, there is lamentation of what fate 'bestowed' upon her. There is no hue and cry and tall claims as it is very much there in Furugh's rebellion. Furugh here is a complete free thinker, rather a nihilist. Or to say it bluntly, an infidel and heretic. As far as Parveen is concerned, hers is a moderate stand --- neither lamentation like Nazik nor nihilism like Furugh. Unlike Furugh's ranting and Nazik's chanting, Parveen makes a rather simple complaint:³⁰

” اے خدا
 میری آواز سے ساری چھین کر
 تونے ساینوں کی بستی میں کیوں مجھ کو پیدا کیا“

*[Depriving my voice of its charm,
 my God,
 why did you create me in the land of serpents]*

Love

After reading Nazik's poetry intently, one would realize two crises that she suffered from for a long time. The first one is related to the problem of death, disappointment and pain. Hundreds of pages have been devoted to poetry

³⁰ Khushboo, p. 317.

dealing with this subject. The second crisis lies in the poet's limited freedom in directing her emotions manifestly; the poet is passionate and very eager to equal love. Though throughout her poetry collections, her love affairs, if it be said so, often end with defeat, nevertheless in her poems, 'Awwal al-Tariq' (Beginning of the Road) and 'Da'wa ila al-Ahlam' (Invitation to Dream), she seems to show some hope in love.

Nazik reached the climax in expressing the changes in human relations in her poems 'Al-Shakhs al-Thani' (The Second Person) and 'Al-Zair al-lazi lam Yaji' (The Visitor who never Came). The latter poem ends as:³¹

ولو جئت يوماً - وما زلت أو شراً إلا تجيء -
 تجف عبير الفوايح الملون في ذكرياتي
 وقصر جناح التخيل وأكتأبت أغنياتى
 وامسكت في راحتي حطام رجائي البرى و
 وأدركت أنى أهدبك حلماً
 وما دميت قد جئت لهما وعظماً
 سأعلم بالزائر الفخيم الذى لم يجئ .

[And if you come one day (it's better that you don't)

The fragrance of the flowering world would leave my memory

The wings of wonder would be clipped and my songs sad

My hands would hold the fragments of any innocent hope

I love you as a dream

If you come as flesh and bone

I still dream of the impossible

'The visitor who never came'.³²

³¹ Qararta al-Mawja Divan Vol II P. 331.

³² Tr. Gilgamesh p. 29

The above lines remind Samuel Beckett's Waiting for Godot in which Vladimir and Estragon are seen waiting for an elusive Godot who may never come.

Nazik's love poetry consists of discontent, fatigue, overburden, deprivation, fear, illusion, defeat, escape, yearn, tears, depression, confusion and fragmentation. Her poetry is at the same time a female one, quite warm, intimate, full of yearning, anxiety and innocence. In a poem

'Ba'da Am' (A Year After), she says.³³

مَرَّ عَامٌ لَمْ تَكْتَمِلْ عَيْنِي الظَّرْمُ أَيُّ بَرُوبَانِ لَمْ يَخْفَ قَطْرِي
الذَّبَابِي تَمَرْتَبِعَهَا الْأَيَّامُ فِي بَطْنِهَا الْبُهْلِ الرِّيْبِ
وَأَنَا لَهْفَةٌ وَشَوْقِي بَزْدَا دُورِي فِي عَاصِفٍ مِنْ لَهَيْبِ
ظَمًا لِلْحَيَاةِ مَمْلَأٌ إِحْسَا سِي وَنَارٌ فِي دَمْعِي الْمَسْكُوبِ
وَشَطَايَا كَأَبَةِ رَسْمَتِ فَرْقِ جِينِي غَلَالَةً مِنْ شَحُوبِ

[A year has passed and my thirsty eyes for you remained quenchless, my frowning remained severe.

Nights are followed by days running slow, boring and monotonous.

Yearning for you, my longings grows greater and my soul amidst rage and blaze.

A thirst for life overwhelms me and fire burns my dropping tears.

Fragments of depression covered my face with paleness]³⁴

Here the poet keeps on waiting for her love, sad and gloomy. It shows how strongly her inner self was influenced by that love. There are, however, two views---contrary to each other---among Arab researchers regarding her love

³³ Ashiqat al- Lail Divan Vol. 1. Pp. 620-21

³⁴ Tr. Gilgamesh. p. 39

poetry. For example, Jalal al-Khayyat, in modern Iraqi poetry, believes that 'more or less, the whole theme is purely imagined, because there is definitely no lover.'³⁵ The researcher doubts that there is real love affair in Nazik's life, which would express the life experience. On the other hand, Yousif al-Saigh, in 'Free Verse in Iraq,' believes quite the opposite. He highlights that 'Nazik's love poetry deal with a real experience'. The poet seems 'confined to her memories of a bygone unsuccessful affair.'³⁶ Another researcher Majid al-Samarrai, in 'Nazik al-Malaika: The Troubled Wave', sees eye to eye with al-Saigh. The poet 'remained for quite a long time a prisoner of her emotional frustration and disappointment. Nazik was represented in her own poetry... thus, her poetry was true and highly expressive of her own feelings'. However, at the inattentiveness of her beloved, in 'Mashghul Fi Azar' (Busy in March), she says.³⁷

ينام الورد أو يلهو
 ويبسم في المرى ليل نير أو ينتشى صبح
 سواؤ ذاك أو هذا ، جيبى ، أنت مشغول
 سدى منى أوتار تصلى وتراتيل
 على مكتبك البارد تنكبت بلا أفلام
 وتسرق روحك الأرقام
 وعند رتاجك المسدود ترتد الموابيل
 وقد أظلم ، وقد أبلى ، وأسر في الرجى وأنا
 سواؤ... أنت مشغول.

³⁵ Gilgamesh p. 37.

³⁶ Gilgamesh p. 37.

³⁷ S hajarat al-Qamar. Divan Vol. II. Pp. 474-75

باور افک، واکبت علی الملتب مقتول
ألا فلتسط الأواراق والأقلام

[Sleep the roses or wake,
Smiles along a distance a tender night, or flushes a morn.
That or this, all the same: You're busy, Love!
To no end for me, the prayings of strings and the chanting of hymns.

On your cold desk you bend without dreams and figures steal your soul.
At your firmly-bolted door all songs return.
I may laugh. I may weep, wake up the night or sleep,
all the same ... busy you are
with your papers, and love lies on the desk slain.
O, down with paper and pen!³⁸

Parveen Shakir takes the same theme this way.³⁹

ٹوٹی ہے میری نیند مگر تم کو اس سے کیا
بچتے رہیں ہواؤں سے در تم کو اس سے کیا
تم موج موج مثل صبا گھومتے رہو
کٹ جائیں میری سوچ کے پر تم کو اس سے کیا
ادروں کا ہاتھ تھا جو، انہیں راستہ دکھا د
میں بھول جاؤں اپنا ہی گھر تم کو اس سے کیا

[I have lost my slumber, but hardly you care!
Let the air current knock my door, and hardly you care!
Like a waft of breeze, you keep on wandering,
And the wings of my thought be slit, hardly you care.
Hold others hands and guide them
And I forget my own house, hardly you care]

On the other hand Furugh feels lonely on the indifference of her love:

”واہن منہم
زنی تنہا“

³⁸ Gilgms. P. 25

³⁹ Khushboo p. 95

در آستانه فصل سرد
سرگردان

[And it is I
a lonely woman
roaming
at the threshold of cold season]

Furugh finding her dreams shattered and disappointed by the negligence on the lover's part, could not keep her cool and denounce the lover himself and his duplicity.⁴⁰

گریزانم از آن مردم که با من
بنظر همدم و یک رنگ هستند
ولی آندم که در خلوت نشسته
به دامانم دو صد پیرایه بستند

[I avoid the people who, apparently, are friend and sincere;
But in privacy they bind two hundred ornaments to my stole.]

Accepting her fate and inability to win love, Furugh in the following piece of 'Wida' (Farewell), decides to sever the relation by going out of it, though with a heavy heart:⁴¹

میرم خسته و افسرده و زار
سوی منزلگه ویرانه خویش
بخدا میبرم از شهر شما
دل شوریده و دیوانه خویش

[Tired, dejected and wounded
I am going towards my ruined house;
By God, I am carrying away from you
My frenzied and love mad heart.]

⁴⁰ Asir p. 20

⁴¹ Asir p. 53

Parveen Shakir, on the other hand, even after finding her relations tattered and dreams shattered long ago, does not cease to remember him in good spirits, in the following short poem entitled 'al-Wida' iyya' (Adieu),⁴²

” وہ جا چکا ہے
مگر جدائی سے قبل کا
ایک نرم لہجہ
ٹھہر گیا ہے
میری ہتھیلی کی پشت پر
زندگی میں
پہلی کا چاند بن کر“

[He has gone
But one soft moment
Just before separation
Has stayed for good
At the back of my palm
As the first crescent
Of my life]

Parveen, contrary to Nazik and Furugh, has exalted the separation:⁴³

” بہت یاد آنے لگے ہو
پھر دنا تو ملنے سے مڑھ کے
تمہیں میرے نزدیک لانے لگا ہے
میں ہر وقت خود کو
تمہارے جواں بازوؤں میں پگھلتے ہوئے دیکھتی ہوں
مے ہوٹ اب تک
تمہاری محبت سے نم ہیں“

[Your memory haunts me more.
Much more than the meeting

⁴² Khud Kalami p. 71

⁴³ Khud Kalami p. 151

*The parting has brought you closer to me,
For all the time I find myself
Sweating and melting in your hustly arms.
My lips as yet are moist with your love.]*

To give a summing up, Furugh and Parveen seem ^{to} be more close to each other than either of them to the third poet, Nazik, or vice-versa. In her third collection '*Khud Kalami*', Parveen has written 'a poem for Furugh Farrukhzad'. The poem is a satire on the patriarchal system in which Parveen holds Furugh's intrepid and undaunted stance in both poetry and life high.

Conclusively, Nazik al-Malaika has remained captive to pessimism till late in her poetic life; Furugh Farrukhzad's poetry, by and large a reflection of her short but eventful life, often traumatic, bears a wave of protest vis-à-vis the romantic features; and Parveen Shakir is a confessional poet par excellence with a beauteous diction.

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