

DR. BRIJ PREMI

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DR. BRIJ PREMI

HIS WORKS – A REVIEW

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	EDITORIAL	1
2.0	DR. BRIJ PREMI WAS A GENTLE COLOSSUS	4
3.0	BRIJ PREMI'S WORKS—A REVIEW	8
4.0	BRIJ PREMI—A TIRELESS SCHOLAR.....	9
5.0	BEACON LIGHT OF KASHMIR LITERATURE – DR. BRIJ PREMI.....	13
6.0	DR. BRIJ PREMI— VERSATILE LITTERATEUR IN PASSIONATE LOVE WITH KASHMIRIAT.....	15
7.0	BRIJ PREMI—SOME REMINISCENCES	18
8.0	BRIJ PREMI-MY FATHER	21
9.0	PREMI—MY FRIEND AND COMRADE	23
10.0	SHAM LAL AIMA WAS A CREATIVE WRITER	24
11.0	PREMI-AN ANGEL NOT A FRIEND.....	26
12.0	REMEMBERING A FRIEND AND FORMER COLLEAGUE: A SHORT NOTE ON DR. BRIJ PREMI.....	28
13.0	UNDERSTANDING MANTO.....	32
14.0	MANTO AND KRISHAN CHANDER	36
15.0	'MANTO KATHA'—A NOTABLE WORK OF DR. BRIJ PREMI.....	39
16.0	A REVIEW OF MANTO KATHA	41
17.0	BRIJ PREMI'S BOOK PIRATED	43
18.0	BRIJ PREMI'S RESEARCH ON MANTO	46
19.0	DR. BRIJ PREMI'S MOMENTOUS WORK.....	47
20.0	THE FAMILY OF MANTO.....	50
21.0	MANTO AND MEHJOOR, THE POET-LAUREATE OF KASHMIR.....	54
22.0	GHALIB IN THE WRITINGS OF MANTO.....	56
23.0	SOME ASPECTS OF MANTO'S PERSONALITY.....	61
24.0	MANTO-SOME ASPECTS OF HIS ART & PHILOSOPHY	65
25.0	MANTO'S ALCOHOLISM.....	69
26.0	THE PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT IN KASHMIR.....	74
27.0	KASHMIR KE MAZAMEEN.....	79

TABLE OF CONTENTS

28.0 REVIEW.....	82
29.0 CORRESPONDENCE	85
30.0 ABDUL QADIR SARWARI.....	91
31.0 PREM NATH PARDESI-PREM CHAND OF KASHMIR.....	95

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 EDITORIAL

A Genius in his Art

Every one who knows Urdu knew Dr. Brij Premi. He was a genius in his art. His contribution to the fund of Urdu literature and historiography on Kashmir is well-recognized. Dr. Premi enjoyed high status in the field of Urdu literature at the sub-continental level. He was a highly cultured person, possessed great literary taste and scholars liked to interact with him. Abu Syed Qureshi, well-known Urdu scholar and Manto's friend said of him: "Premi's love is immortal. I highly appreciate Premi's firmness of mind and inquisitiveness, his interest and love."

Dr. Brij Premi was a multidimensional scholar and served Urdu literature with dedication. He excelled in all genres----short story writing, literary criticism, research etc. He wrote beautiful prose, and avoided being prolix. Dr. Premi's language was lucid, simple and focussed at the average reader. He disliked use of too many Persian words in Urdu vocabularly, which made it unintelligible to the common people. His usage was always appropriate, suited to the requirement of the situation. He did not have to labour for words. These came spontaneously and effortlessly. His elegance in writing kept the reader glued to it. Imagery in his prose was superb. He gives graphic description, at times relating even the minutest detail and literally transports the reader to the locale\situation he is describing. This is true of his essays as of his travelogues. At the same time there is no element of exaggeration in this. He was down to earth in his writing.

Dr. Brij Premi was a patriot par excellence. He had deep commitment to the welfare of the downtrodden people. Early in his life he came under the influence of Pandit Prem Nath Pardesi, a great litterateur who subscribed to progressive views. Cultural Front played a vanguard role in heralding a renaissance movement in Kashmiri literature. Dr. Premi was influenced by it and also contributed to it. He held Left views and has left for posterity two outstanding works -----A literary biography of Prem Nath Pardesi and history of Progressive Writers' Movement in Kashmir. These two seminal works have a permanent place as rich source material for undertaking comprehensive assessment of the Left movement in Kashmir. His progressive ideology brought him in close contact with big names in progressive Urdu literature----Krishan Chander, Ahmed Nadeem Qasimi, Abu Syed Qurieshi, Salam Machli Shahri ,Ali Sardar Jafri ,Khwaja Ahmed Abbas,Jan Nissar Akhter Dr. Qamar Rais, Prof. Mohd. Hassan, etc. Dr. Premi was also influenced by social realism of Munshi Prem Chand.

Though Dr. Premi contributed much to historiography of Kashmir, his authentic and pioneering work on Saadat Hasan Manto has no rival. There is mounting evidence on how counterfeit academics continue to plagiarize Premi's researches on the great short story writer. Premi was as much influenced by Manto's social radicalism as by his display of pride in his Kashmiri origins.

Dr. Brij Premi loved Kashmir and was deeply rooted in its spiritual and historical tradition. His excellent work on Kashmir's patron saint-poetess Lalleshwari ,on Pir Pandit Padshah ,Martand Ruins and admiration for Shams Faqir,the great Sufiana poet ,indicate this. His love for Kashmir was not contrived but natural. He delved deep in to Kashmir's past to keep it alive in the present. His patriotism and catholicity in outlook were outcome of this.

It is a great moment for Kashmir Sentinel, an institution committed to renaissance task, to bring out a commemorative number, to honour the memory of this great son of Kashmir and Kashmiri Pandit community. Our special thanks go to Dr.Premi Romani ,illustrious son of late Dr. Brij Premi , who worked overtime to get writings of his father translated in time for the issue and also extended cooperation as and when required. We also express our gratitude to Prof. ML Koul, Prof. RK Aima,Prof. HL Misri , Sh. Predhuman K. Joseph K. Dhar, Prof. ML Raina , Sh. MN Kak , Sh. Upender Ambardar . They are distinguished academicians in their respective fields. It was with the spirit of labour of love that they undertook the

difficult task of translation work. Lastly, we thank our guest writers who contributed to this thematic number.

1. Publications of Brij Premi

a) Books :

- i. **Harfi**-Justajoo Joo (Literary Criticism) (1982)
- ii. **Jalwae**-Sadrang (Papers on Literature, Art and Culture) (1985)
- iii. Sadat Hassan Manto-**Hayat Aur Karnamay**. Research and Criticism (1986)
- iv. **Zauq-i- Nazar**- (Literary Criticism) (1987)
- v. **Roshan Charag**- (A booklet for Neo-Literature submitted for publication to S.R.C. University of Kashmir) (1981)
- vi. **Murgbani** (A booklet for neoliterature published by S.R.C. Kashmir University) (1981)
- vii. **Chand Tehreerein** (Literary Criticism and other Articles) (1988).
- viii. **Kashmir Kay Mazameen** (Research Papers and Literary Criticism) (1989)
- ix. **Jalwe Sadrang**- (Second improved and enlarged edition) (1989)

Compiled by Dr Premi Romani

- " x. **Manto Katha**-(Life and Works of Manto (Criticism) (1994)
- " xi. **Kashmir Mein Urdu Adab Ki Nashu Numa**) 1st Ed (1996) IIInd Ed. 2000 (IIIrd Ed. 2005)
- " xii. **Mubahis** (Literary Criticism) (1997),
- " xiii. **Zauq-i-Nazar** (Second Edition) (2000)
- " ix. **Vetshney**, (Kashmiri) 1999)
- " xvi. **Sapno Ki Sham** (Collection of short stories)
- " xvii. **Varasat** (Kashmiri) 2003
- " xviii. **Samad Mir**-An Urdu Monograph translated from Kashmiri text of Moti Lal Saqi, Sahitya Academy Urdu sponsored by Sahitya Academy.

Unpublished works:

- i. **Prem Nath Pardesi—Ahad, Shaksh Aur Funkar**
- ii. **Upendra Nath Ashk Kay Khatoot, Brij Premi Kay Nam**
- iii. **Prem Chand-Ek Nayai Jahat**
- iv. **Brij Premi Kay Khatoot**
- v. A collection of English Articles.

Books compiled: Five manuscripts ready, awaiting publication.

Research papers and articles published in National and International journals; over 250. Research projects and other literary works in hand at the time of demise—A History of Kashmiri Literature-Trends and Traditions in Urdu sponsored by Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art Culture and Languages.

Works compiled on Dr. Brij Premi i. **Brij Premi-Ek Mutala**. (By Dr. Premi Romani). 1993

- ii. **Brij Premi-Shakasyat Aur Fun**.

(By Dr. Premi Romani) 2003

iii. ***Brij Premi Aur Un Kay Adbi Karnamaay***

(By Dr. Chaman Lal) (unpublished)

iv. ***Brij Premi Number (Hareem-i-Naaz)***

Edited by Rahber Jadeed

Awards received:

- i. All India Hindi Urdu Sangam D.P. Dhar Memorial Literary Award, 1976.
- ii. Uttar Pradesh Urdu Academy Award (on Harfi Justajoo (1982)
- iii. Uttar Pradesh Urdu Academy Award on Sadat Hassan Manto Life and Works. (1986)
- iv. Jammu and Kashmir State Cultural Academy Award on ***Jalwae Sadrang*** (1986-87)
- v. West Bengal Urdu Academy Award on ***Sadat Hassan Manto***-Life and Works (1987)
- vi. J&K Cultural Academy Award on ***Kashmir Ke Mazameen*** 1991 (Awarded Posthumously).

2.0 DR. BRIJ PREMI WAS A GENTLE COLOSSUS

By Dr. R.K. Tamiri

Dr. Brij Premi lived for just fifty-five years, yet he left behind a solid legacy in the form of brilliant creative literature, which many would envy. He had his tryst with Urdu literature through short stories. His monumental work on **Saadat Hasan Manto**, the enfant terrible of Urdu literature earned him fame. It also made Manto better known. Dr Brij Premi's literary biography of Pt. Prem Nath Pardesi, an eminent litterateur of yesteryears, is a pioneering work. It has yet to see the light of the day. Dr. Premi was in deep love with Kashmir and took pride in its rich past. This made him explore Kashmir in all its dimensions—Historical, Cultural, Social, Literary etc. His work in this field parallels that of Mohiuddin Fauq, another outstanding historian of Kashmiri origin. Dr Premi had suave temperament and was full of affection for others. He was a gentle colossus.

Dr. Premi's family lived in the ancient locality of Drabiyar, in Habbakadal quarter of Srinagar. He was born on 24th September, 1935, which happened to be the day of Janam Ashtmi. His parents decided to name him Brij Krishan. Sometime independence, the family shifted to Rang Teng, Ali Kadal in a rented accommodation. Dr. Premi had his early education from DAV High School, Srinagar.

Pt. Sham Lal Aima, father of Dr. Premi, was an able teacher and a man of many parts. He was a good short story writer. Such men of literature—Pt. Nand Lal Talib, Pt. Kashyap Bandhu, Pt. PN Bazaz, Pt. Prem Nath Pardesi, etc. would often drop at his house. Dr. Premi grew up in this ambience and imbibed interest in literature. He had his initial grooming under his father. Later, Pt. Prem Nath Pardesi became his mentor.

The death of Pt. Sham Lal Aima at young age of 44 in 1949 came as a major setback to Dr. Premi. He was just 14, but the only eligible member in the family who could succeed his father as the bread earner to take care of two brothers, a sister and mother. Young Premi, who had just enrolled himself as a science student in the college, was recalled back. He was employed in place of his father and served in '**Boy Service**' for two years, before being recruited as a regular teacher. He was posted in Modern School, Amirakadal on a monthly salary of Rs 30.

Dr. Premi saw hard life. He had to take tuition work to supplement the family income. Being a man of literary tastes, he disliked this job. He refers to it in one of his allegories in '**Varasat**'. On another occasion he was transferred to Ompora (Budgam) a village 11 kms away from Srinagar. He used to go to Ompora daily on bicycle, at times even on foot. Excessive cycling affected his health. Dr. Premi earned the respect of his colleagues for being workaholic, efficient and honest. He passed his MA examination in Urdu as a private candidate with distinction. He had already cleared honours in Urdu (1953) and B.Ed. (1960).

As a Short story writer:

His first break in literature came in 1949 when **Amar Jyoti**, Srinagar published his short story '**Aqa**'. He wrote many more stories in other journals and newspapers. '**Sapno Ki Sham**', created sensation in literary circles of Kashmir. Premi became the youngest ever writer to be published in **Biswin Sadhi**. He received over two hundred letters of appreciation. This story was set in rural landscape of Ompora and had many local characters. Famed Urdu writer, late Pushkar Nath Bhat till then had not seen a Karewa. Soon after the publication of this story, he visited Ompora in the company of his friend Dr. Premi to see how a Karewa looked like.

Many more good short stories came from his pen. These include **Lamhon Ki Raakh**, **Mere Bachey Ki Salgrah**, **Tees Dard Ke**, **Khabon Ke Darichey**, **Mansbal Sookh Gaya**, **Ujadi Baharon Ke Ujade Phil** etc. Premi liked the fiction of Ahmed Nadeem Qasmi and Krishan Chander, the doyens of progressive movement in Urdu literature.

Premi wrote over sixty short stories, though less than 25 are available today. He had

mastered the technique of short story writing and wrote elegant prose. He was influenced by PN Pardesi, Tagore and Maupassant. His range of themes was vast and included Romance, depiction of nature and realism. In '**Lamhon Ki Raakh**', he experiments with **Chashme Shavoor** (stream of consciousness) a technique introduced by Qurrat-ul-An Hyder.

Scholars of eminence. Prof. Abdul Qadir Sarwari, Prof. Manzoor Azmi (ex-HoD, Jammu University), Pt. Pushkar Nath Bhat, Shri Moti Lal Saqi etc. have praised his short stories. Prof. Sarwari applauded the language, plot construction and realism of Premi's stories in '**Kashmir Mein Urdu**'. Dr. Azmi was impressed with his characterisation and portrayal of Kashmir's social life. Moti Lal Saqi attributed realism in his short stories to the Marxist influence. Premi's stories were full of life. His admirers were dismayed when he gave up short story writing and took to criticism and research. The issue was taken up by Pt. Pushkar Nath Bhat, his friend. Dr. Premi had no answers.

Premi wrote for daily, **Martand** under name de Guerre of '**Qusheen**'. Dr Premi also guided others. His comments on plays written by Sh. Makhan Lal Kaul, a noted playwright form part of the book titled "**Mayi Manz Chai**". Premi helped MN Kak, his colleague of MP H/S, Srinagar days, in updating the literary magazine **Gaash Augur** (1972-73). The magazine enjoyed good circulation.

Progressive Phase :

Dr. Premi came under Marxist influence in mid-fifties. As per Shri CL Chrungoo, his friend, colleague and comrade, progressive cultural movement of fifties pushed him towards Marxism. Premi was closely associated with Democratic Conference in 1960s and sat on Dharna during 1967 employees strike. His son Dr. Premi recalls, " I first time saw Marx's photograph in my father's personal library, which was full of Russian and Left literature". His close associates included Mr. PN Jyotshi, Advocate, Mr PL Mattoo, Mr Ashok Dulloo etc. Messers Mattoo and Dulloo, alongwith Prof. Bashir Qadiri (former HoD Pol. Sc. A/S College) were part of a club called '**Golden**' of which Premi was the leading light. This was a meeting point for literary discussions. Dr. Premi also enjoyed good association with Prof. M.K. Teng and Prof Ramkrishan of Kashmir University.

During the days of Cultural Movement two literary groups were in existence—**Halqa Alim-o-Adab** at Khanyar and **Anjuman-e-Arbab-e-Zauk**. Mr. Bahuddin Zahid, who too had taste for Urdu literature was quite active with Alim-o-Adab. Meetings used to take place at his home. These were attended by well-known literary personalities—Messers Tahir Muztar, Pushkar Nath Bhat, Wajid Ahmed Andrabi, Hakim Manzoor, Makhmoor Badakshi, Rehman Rahi, GN Firaq, PN Pardesi etc. Premi was Secretary of the Club. The writers would read their *afsanas* (compositions). In one of the meetings a non-Kashmiri writer, created sensation by reading out his '**afsana**' ex-tempore. Kamar Jalalabadi, who later joined films also visited once the club at the instance of Hakim Manzoor. Devendra Satyarthi would join them at times. In Arabab-e-Zauk mainly progressive writers were invited. Subsequently, the literary meetings used to be held in Mahraj Gunj and other interior parts of the city, the purpose being to expose the common people to progressive culture.

Dr. Premi's involvement with the left movement in 1960s left him no time to pursue literature.

During this period he occasionally gave radio-talks. For nearly seven years he wrote very little. During the day he had to attend the professional work, in evenings he was busy with tuitions, meetings connected with party work continued till late hours of the night. This affected his health. Dr. Premi Romani comments, "*Had those seven years not gone waste, my father would have attained great heights in Urdu literature*".

Work on Manto :

He began his dissertation work on Manto as a private candidate in early 1970s. These were the years when he served as District Education Survey officer in Budgam, a job he performed with distinction. His guide was Prof. Hamidi Kashmiri, who happened to be his classfellow of college years.

Brij Premi had two considerations in choosing Manto for his Ph.D. work. One, Manto's forefathers were Kashmiri, Manto was the best representative of creative mind of Kashmir. Secondly, Manto was a virtuoso in the art of short story writing. Premi says, "Manto had a method and a way of his own in communicating himself. I admired his plot construction, the art of characterisation, the subject individuality and the economy of words...The treatment of his topics was excellent, perhaps none could match him....Manto's art is not propaganda and journalism. He was not a poet nor does one come across ornamentalism in his language...He can shake the reader, not by using unnecessary vocabulary but through his sheer style of writing....His essays, letters, pen-sketches, radio dramas and translations are of good standard and show excellence. They are no less interesting".

Elsewhere, he observes, "by temperament Manto was outspoken. He was a writer who worked in hurry. He has written much about himself, but it lacks an organisation and order. It was very difficult to organise all this into a single entity".

Premi had lot of difficulties in working on Manto. The latter was an obstracised writer. His writings were available mostly in Pakistan. It was a stupendous task to procure these. It is a tribute to the patience and edurance of Dr. Premi that he took all these challenges in his stride. He virtually contacted everybody who could tell him about Manto. These include Safia Begum, his wife and Ahmed Nadeem Qasimi and Abu Sayeed Qureishi, Manto's close friends. Qureishi and Manto, both were 'disciples' of **Bari Alig**, a journalist with left views. Manto himself admits that had it not been for Bari, he would have been a criminal, rather than a writer. Premi even identified the person who made Manto turn to Bacchus, that was to ruin the famed writer eventually.

Premi's thesis was approved by two leading luminaries of Urdu literature, one of whom was an outstanding researcher, and the other was regarded as pillar of modern Urdu poetry. Though thesis was submitted in 1976, it took another decade for its publication. Premi's other studies on Manto, **Manto Katha** were published posthumously in 1994. His work on Manto received rave reviews from people like Warris Alvi, KA Abbas, Ali Sardar Jafri, Kashmiri Lal Zakir, Gopi Chand Narang, Khwaja Ahmed Farooqi, Abu Sayeed Qureishi etc. Prof. Mohd. Hassan wrote : **"Till date this work of Brij Premi is the last word on Manto; and for every student of short story writing, this book is worth reading"**. UP (1986) and West Bengal (1987) Urdu Academies felicitated Dr. Premi on his work on Manto. Recently, Dr. Manazir Ashique Harganvi, Professor of Urdu in Bhagalpur University has alleged that Jagdish Wadhawan has copied most of the contents of his **Mantonama'** from Dr. Brij Premi's book.

Dr. Premi joined Urdu Department of Kashmir University in 1977, under the Headship of Prof. Shakil-ur-Rehman. Prior to this he had served State Education department in assignments as Basic teacher, Master, Additional Head Master and District Planning officer.

University Years:

In University, a new world opened for him. He found the environment extremely stimulating for intellectual work. It was here he came in close contact with Prof. Ale Ahmed Suroor, Dr. Shakeel UR Rehman, Mr Qazi Gh. Mohd (of Bandipur), Dr. Hamidi Kashmiri, Messers Quddus Javed (Present HoD of Kashmir University). Many leading personalities of Urdu came to Kashmir to attend symposia or as experts. They included Messers KL Zakir, GC Narang, Qamar Rais, Shahryar, Shamim Hanfi, Jagar Nath Azad, Prof. Masood Hasan, Prof. Mohd. Hasan, Prof. Gopi Chand Aman. Dr. Premi immersed himself in Literary criticism and Research. He had already collaborated with Prof. Sarwari in his field work for **'Kashmir Mein Urdu'**. During that period he had met noted Kashmiri Urdu writers—NL Talib, Padam Nath Ganjoo, Mirza Kamaluddin, DN Nadim, Jiya Lal Nazir, Dina Nath Dhar **'Barq'** Kashmiri, Mir Ghulam Rasool Nazki.

Dr. Brij Premi took great pride in Kashmir's cultural heritage. He would say, "It is an immense treasure. We have to preserve it." This love made him pursue research work on Kashmir. His works on literary criticism include **Harf-i-Justajoo (1982)**, **Zauq-i-Nazar (1987)**, **Chand Tehreerein (1988)**. **Zauk-i-Nazar** includes essays on Manto, PN Pardesi,

Sardar Jafri, Rajinder Singh Bedi, Talib Kashmiri etc. ***Jalwae Sadrang (1985)*** and ***Kashmiri Ke Mazameen (1989)*** reveal different facets of Premi's research work. Commenting about Jalwae Sadrang, Prof. Sabir Aafaqi, a noted literateur says the book has revealed many hidden aspects of Kashmir.

Premi's work on socio-cultural history of Kashmir has encyclopedic dimensions. He has traced history of progressive writers' Movement and Urdu Prose in Kashmir, focussed on urban history, archeological remains, costumes of people, travelogues of Foreign travellers and the life of leading literary personalities. Due to restrictions imposed on wordage by **Birla Foundation** and **the J&K Cultural Academy**, Dr. Premi has not been able to do full justice to the pen-sketches of personalities. His work (still unpublished) on Pt. Prem Nath Pardesi, '**Prem Nath Pardes—ahd Shakhsiyat aur Funkar**', running into 150 odd pages is a monumental work. It focusses on life, short stories, poetry, Mahakama and unpublished writings of the greater literateur. Pardesi had written a novel '**Poti**', which was lost during the turbulent days of Tribal Raid. His *Panch Din*, a reportage of the raid is still unpublished. Ramanand Sagar and Devender Satyarthi, whenever they came to Kashmir, dropped at his house at Malik Angan, Fateh Kadal. As a postgraduate guide, Dr. Premi supervised studies on Prem Chand, Ismat Chughtai, Urdu journalism in J&K and Ahmed Nadeem Qasimi. Dr. Premi during his years at the University has guided 4 Ph.D and 9 MA/M.Phil students.

In his literary career, Dr. Premi remained associated with leading journals—***Ustad, Hamara Ustad, Desh, Gaash Augur, Bazyaft, Sadaf*** all published from Srinagar) and ***Sohale*** (Gaya). He also remained involved with many literary and cultural organisations. His last assignment was '**History of Kashmiri Literature-Trends and Traditions in Urdu**'.

Dr. Premi was intoxicated in his love for Kashmir. About Kashmir he says, "**The place, my place, the place I live in, has its mornings and evenings known for its poetic grandeur, more subtle and sweeter than those of say Benaras, Ayodhya...Where I live is a city through which flows the Vitasta, another form and expression of Parvati, Shiva's consort. This city was so to say brought into being by Shiva for sins to be washed off and ushering in peace and tranquillity**". He used to listen for hours the Sufiana Kalam on rabab. He liked Shams Faqir and the Vakhs of Lal Ded.

His two published works in Kashmiri include '**Vechanai**' (1999) and '**Varasat**' (2003), besides the translation of Moti Lal Saqi's monograph on ***Samad Mir. 'Vechnai***' carries foreword by M.Amin Kamil and Bansi Nirdosh separately. It was reviewed by Moti Lal Saqi and Akhtar Mohiuddin. '**Varasat**' includes *afsana—Saya Geit and Vudai*, translations of Manto's stories-***Toba Tekh Singh, Sher aur Gadriya, Kali Kali, Islah***, allegories on unkept promises, Tuition work etc. It was reviewed by Prof. RL Shant.

Dr Brij Premi's work is slowly gaining recognition. A student of Jammu University, Dr. Chaman Lal completed dissertation study on '**Brij Premi Aur Unki Adabi Khidmat**', under the guidance of Dr. Shoaib Inayat Malik, in 1999.

Due to Dr. Premi's premature death in 1990 (he was an old patient of Diabetes), many of his works remained unpublished. His illustrious son, Dr. Premi Romani, himself a noted Urdu scholar, has rendered great service to Urdu lovers by retrieving and publishing his works. Presently, he is engaged in rendering his Urdu writings into English, to make these reach a wider audience. We need to know Dr. Brij Premi. He has been a greater stylist of Urdu language. His writings form part of Kashmir's Urdu heritage.

****(The author is a Keen Researcher, his field of study includes Oral History, Kashmiri Literature and Folk-Lore. Presently, he is engaged in study of Kashmiri Writers in Diaspora and has worked on ancestry of Allama Iqbal.***

3.0 BRIJ PREMI'S WORKS—A REVIEW

By Prof. Mehmood Hasmi (Birmingham)

Prof. Mehmood Hashmi was born in Ddyl (Mirpur). He has been acclaimed as a great teacher of merit and a scholastic profundity. He worked in different colleges of J&K State and left for Pakistan in 1947. He was associated with broadcasting units at different places in Pakistan.

"Kashmir Udas Hai" is his famous book with some autobiographical elements in it. In addition to it, he has written many short stories and essays regarding different aspects of Urdu literature. He continues to be remembered for his useful contributions to Urdu literature on whose horizon he has left his own imprint. --The

Editor

I liked *"Manto Katha"* really much as one of the books of Dr. Brij Premi. This book will continue to retain its importance and relevance and Premi has really worked hard at it. The letters of Safia Manto are very interesting.

In *"Kashmir Key Maz-ameen"*, the write-up on Pt. Govind Kaul left a profound impact on me. Who knows how many persons of Govind Kaul's calibre are there from Kashmir and whom we had no occasion to know in view of certain circumstances or non-availability of some reputed persons who could excavate some thing more of this treasure.

In Brij Premi's book *"Jalve-e-Sadrang"* letters of Sir Aurel Stein to Ram Chand Bali, such impressions were the result. In *Kashmir Key Mazameen*, the sketch Hamidi Kashmir has been written so artistically and personality of Hamidi Kashmiri comes alive to the reader. After going through this book, the readers will, I am sure, feel prompted to read the write-up again and those who know little about this luminary will be drawn towards knowing more about him. In this write-up, one feels that justice has been done to the standards of writing sketches and the impact is totally positive.

One can't know why this write-up has been captioned as "Friend, Philosopher and Guide". I'd say that it could be better captioned as *"Dost, Phalsaphi and Rehmuna* meaning friend, philosopher and guide.

The write-up on Prem Nath Pardesi pleased and impressed me. Those good old days brought back those memories. I met Pardesi in 1945 and we kept company upto 20th of Nov 1947, a period of real intimacy.

In March, 1945 I had been to Srinagar, Pardesi's stories appeared in newspapers of the state and Maulana Tajwar Najeeb Abadi's (Lahore) magazine *Shahkar'*. While at Sgr, Pardesi had already left an impact on me by his attachment to story writing and the taste for reading. He too wrote stories and critical essays, which appeared in *Adbi Duniya Lahore, Saqi, Delhi, Kitab* (Lahore). Perhaps during those days, one write-up had appeared in Shahkaar and its title was *"Jamaliyati hes"* of Mehdi Afadi.

In *Kashmir Key Mazameen*, the write-up on Prem Nath Dhar was nice. Dhar came to London in 1978 to 1989 and also came to Birmingham with Mahinder Nath Kaul, *BBC TV* producer. He had left for me (two) collections of his stories. It is my ill luck that those collections did not reach me and was thus deprived of going through them. The impact of his some stories continues to be on my mind. This I say quite frankly and freely that Dr. Brij Premi has quite sufficiently proved his artistic worth. He has not only done justice to Prem Nath Dhar but also proved his merits as a critic. His write-up on Prem Nath Dhar and 'A story writer-Prem Nath Dhar- are a matter of pride.

In *Jalva-e-Sadrang*, the essay "Research and Criticism in Urdu in Jammu and Kashmir, is a knowledgeable piece of writing. The title gives an impression that the writer wanted to comment only on those critics who worked within the geographical boundaries of state."

***(Translated from Urdu by Sh. MN Kak)**

4.0 BRIJ PREMI—A TIRELESS SCHOLAR

By Deepak Budki

Urdu literature is indeed indebted to writers like Mir, Ghalib, Iqbal, Prem Chand, Manto and Bedi for their creative and original writings but one cannot undermine the contributions of critics and research scholars like Altaf Hussain Hali, Ehtesham Hussain, Aal-e- Ahmed Saroor, Qamar Rais and the like for exploring the worlds of these writers in depth and preparing the common mind to appreciate them. One such scholar is Dr. Brij Premi who despite meager resources at his disposal explored the intricate world of Manto, a doyen of Urdu fiction. In fact, it took Premi almost a decade to collect data about Saadat Hassan Manto from different parts of the Sub-continent where Manto had either stayed for a short time or lived for a longer duration, especially from across the border i.e. Pakistan where Manto had ultimately migrated at the time of partition never to return to the land he loved the most, viz Bombay, now rechristened as Mumbai. Brij Premi set out to explore the virgin world of Manto at a time when Urdu, Iqbal and Manto had become an anathema in India. The boldness, promiscuity and notoriety attached to Manto, the D H Lawrence of Urdu Literature, had invited the ire of self styled purists in both India and Pakistan.

Brij Krishen Aima was born in a lower middle class family in Kashmir Valley. He lost his father at an early age and had to support his family when he was just fourteen. He joined the Boy-service in the State Deptt. of Education after giving up his education. As a teacher, he suffered as a result of transfers from one village to another. His first pay packet was a meager sum of thirty rupees. Under such circumstances it was but natural that he should join the bandwagon of Progressive writers who were very active at that time.

His first short story "**Aqa**" (The Master) was published in '**the Amarjyoti**', Srinagar. Thereafter his stories appeared one after the other in a number of newspapers and magazines within and without the state of Jammu and Kashmir. He adopted the pen name of 'Brij Premi' and established himself as a short story writer in the valley. He writes about himself, "My literary life as a short-story writer started in the middle of twentieth century. More often than not I used to pour out the pain and anguish of my soul into my stories. Even now whenever my inner agony makes me restless, a story is born. In fact, short-story writing is my first love (**Harfe Just-ajoo**)."

Brij Premi's inner world was no different from the outer world in which he was constrained to live. The peasants, the labourers and the artisans of Kashmir were continuously being exploited by landlords and the capitalists, and consequently rendered poor, starved and penniless. The sub-human conditions in which his brethren lived haunted him day and night and hence he used his pen to depict their plight. He drew inspiration from Prem Nath Pardesi, another progressive writer who was popularly known as 'the Prem Chand of Kashmir'. Apart from Pardesi, Brij Premi was influenced by the great romanticist, Krishen Chander, who had an emotional attachment with J&K State and used to describe its natural beauty in mesmerizing narrative in his short-stories. Ahmad Nadeem Qasmi too had influenced Brij Premi's style to some extent. Notwithstanding, the writer who most influenced Brij Premi in his later life was the bespectacled, Liquor-addict workhorse known as **Saadat** Hassan Manto. The latter had such an impact on his mind that he devoted his rest of life to undertake extensive research on Manto. Premi not only wrote '**Saadat Hassan Manto-Life and works**' and '**Manto Katha**' but also conducted research on several writers of J&K State besides other historical and literary topics. Alas, the cruel jaws of death snatched him away at a time when he was at his productive best.

While talking of Brij Premi I must acknowledge the dedication and devotion of his worthy son Dr. Premi Romani towards his illustrious father. I came to know Dr. Brij Premi through his son only when I was beginning to enter the 'Make believe world of Literature' from that of 'Matter of the fact world of Science'. Romani having noticed my flair for calligraphy asked

me to write the final copies of his father's thesis . We used to sit till late in the night in his house at Ali Kadal, Brij Premi used to give the corrected copy of his thesis which I used to write legibly. However I could not keep my promise to the end due to some personal compulsions and wrote about sixty percent of the thesis only. Later Romani himself completed the rest. However, at the end, I decorated the thesis by drawing caricatures of Manto at the beginning of each chapter. My joy knew no bounds when only after 2-3 months I came to know that Brij Premi had been awarded the Doctorate by the University of Kashmir. Having come to know Brij Premi so closely, I found him an unassuming, soft spoken and a thorough gentleman who had devoted a life time to Urdu literature and Kashmir History. He would not, however, display his knowledge by talking about it every where which was a distinct sign of his humility. He was simple in his life style, coy and modest and showed no signs of promiscuousness commonly attributed to the poets and prose writers.

Abdul Ghani Sheikh writes about Dr. Brij Premi, "Krishen Chander and Manto have a vivid influence on the thought and style of Premi. His choice of words and felicity of his diction are superlative". I do not, however, entirely agree with AG Sheikh. It is true that Brij Premi spent his life time on Manto and his works and one can see the latter's influence on Premi's writing in later part of his life but fact remains that most of the short stories written by Premi had been penned down much before Manto had made any impact on his mind. Though Premi wanted to write stories based on psychology and human behaviour in the footsteps of Manto yet his own gentlemanliness and lack of exposure to what Manto called 'Sewers of society' became a stumbling block for him. There were no brothels to visit in Kashmir, no Saugandhis or Sultanas to keep him company nor were there any Babu Gopi Naths to sacrifice everything for these forlorn castaways. Pushkar Nath, a well-known writer from Kashmir comments, "Those days Manto started dominating the literary scene and slowly Brij Premi got attracted towards him. Though he could not write exactly like Manto since he did not have a similar environment as Manto was beset in, yet he absorbed and assimilated each and every word of Manto and ultimately it all fructified in the form of his thesis '**Sa'adat Hassan Manto Life and Works**'.

'**Sapnoon Ki Sham**', a collection of short stories written by Dr. Brij Premi contains sixteen short stories. Most of them are written against the backdrop of beautiful lush green fields of Kashmir surrounded by blue snow-capped mountains but poverty and exploitation which resulted in pestilence and consumption ultimately take over and expose the delicate moth-eaten fabric of the society. In "**Mansbal Jab Sookh Gaya**" (When Manasbal Dried), a helpless mentally delinquent servant stakes his life to protect the property of his master. In '**Larazte Aansoo**' (Trembling Tears), a man seeking transfer on account of unhygienic conditions is asked by his boss to send his daughter which enrages him and turns him into a Socialist. "**Hansi Ki Maut**" (Death of a Smile) is a story of brave educated and hardworking lady who struggles all her life to support her unemployed husband and the child. '**Bahte Nasoor**' (Festering Sores) comprises three short short-stories or what we now call Mini stories. In the first, Prakash seduces his girl friend and later sells her in Bombay red light area. In the second, a father loses his son for mere four annas which he could not afford. In the third story two friends are compared, one who has acquired riches while the other still remains a pauper.

'**Nanhi Kahanyan**' (possibly the word was coined to mean Mini Stories) comprises two short short-stories. In the first the exploitation of police is exposed while in the second a master kills his servant for not supplying him his wife. '**Ujhri Baharoon Ke Ujhre Phool**' (The Withered Flowers of Wasted Spring) is a story revealed by a madman who loses his wife and child as a result of unemployment and consequent penury and finds his dreams shattered . In '**Yaad**' (The Memories) the narrator keeps watching the oarsman while crossing a river. The Oarsman is lost in his thoughts trying to recollect his love-affair in youth. '**Sharnarhi**' (The Refugee) is a story of a refugee who has lost his father defending his village and is himself crushed mercilessly by a richman under his car. Surprisingly, the

richman is not booked by the police. '**Chilman Ke Sayoon Mein**' (Behind the curtain) is based on fetishism and has a distinct imprint of Manto in its treatment. '**Aansoon ke Deep**' (The Tearful Farewell) is a story of a mother saying goodbye to a dying child.

'**Sapnoon ki Sham**' is a romantic story written in the style of Krishan Chander in which an uneducated woman Saaji falls in love with a village teacher who saves her life. She is later married to another person Salaama. Saaji is drowned in the rivulet flowing by while trying to build a bund on its banks to provide help to her husband. The village teacher offers a wreath of his tears to the deceased while sitting on the bank of the rivulet. '**Mere Bache Ki Saalgirah**' (The Birthday of my Son) is a story of dreams and apprehensions with romantic narrative in Krishan Chander style. The story touches the personal life of the progressive writer who is congratulated by his friends prophesying that '**Mao**' had taken birth in his house in the shape of his child. Needless to say that the writer must have felt proud dreaming his child to be a Mao in the making at a time when Socialism was regarded as the ultimate goal of a civilized society. '**Amar Jyoti**' (The Eternal Flame) is another story influenced by Socialism where a Russian lady honours a dead body by digging a grave for him under the cloud of bullets and canons. Later on she lights a flame on his grave. '**Lamhon Ki Rakh**' (The Embers of Time) is a nostalgic recollection of the narrator's past love affair with Almas. '**Teesein Dard Ki**' (Writhes of pain) is a story of an apprehensive husband who always doubts his wife for her affair during the premarital days. On the contrary, the wife is magnanimous to look after her husband during his sickness unmindful of the treatment meted out to her by him earlier. '**Khwaboon Ke Dareeche**' (A Peep into the Dreams) is a story based on sadism and Voyeurism and has a clear stamp of Mantovian style on it.

As per Abdul Gani Sheikh, "Brij Premi nurtured his writings with his blood and never bothered about the returns from such writings". Moti Lal Saqi is of the opinion that "Premi's stories describe men in bone and flesh. They transgress the romanticism of middle class and venture into the areas of spiritualism and realism together. On the other hand, Prof. Manzoor Azmi believes that "He(Premi) creates stories by describing a chain of events but does not believe in unnecessary conflicts between the events and characters in order to give it a melodramatic effect."

One thing must be admitted here that Dr.Brij Premi picked up his pen at a time when the world of Urdu fiction was dominated by stalwarts like Krishen Chander, Bedi, Manto, Ashq, Ismat Chughtai and Qurratulain Hyder. The centre of activity had shifted to Bombay after the exit of Prem Chand and 'futwas' were being issued by writers' organisations who would not entertain any new comers. Under such circumstances, Dr. Brij Premi had a herculean task to get himself recognized while sitting in a remote corner of India. Further the local problems focussed by him were not considered as mainstream problems of India and therefore overlooked completely. Worse still, his state was the first state announcing land reforms bestowing 'land to tillers' which left no ammunition with the progressive writers of the State. Though the political instability witnessed by the state could have provided raw material to Dr. Brij Premi yet he could neither afford to take sides with such elements who were responsible for creating such instability nor could he afford to subscribe to their subversive politics. It would also mean that he had to stake his job for a cause to which he did not subscribe. But then Dr.Premi sublimated his inner desire by turning towards research work and exploring the maniacal world of Manto.

Coming back to Premi's research on Manto, Premi had to understand Manto's mind in three phases ; first, the socialist Manto, second,the Freudian Manto, and third, the real Manto. Brij Premi had already been groomed in socialism and had studied Russian writers like Gorky, Dostoevesky and Chekhov. He had also familiarized himself with the writings of the french writer Maupassant who left an indelible impression on the mind of Manto. Premi had to learn the basics of psychology and other behavioral sciences to understand the bulk of Manto's stories like '**Thanda Gosht**' and '**Hatak**'. Last of all, Brij Premi had to internalize the pain and agony of migration caused as a result of the division of the country

and understand stories such as '*Khol Do*' and '*Mozelle*'. Nevertheless, Dr. Premi has lived upto the expectations of the Urdu fraternity by documenting the life and works of Manto with deftness and dexterity.

As I said earlier, we lost Dr. Brij Premi at a time when he was in the prime of his life. The best was yet to come from him. Alas, nightmarish turmoil in the valley and consequent migration to inhospitable plains took its toll and snatched us of an inquisitive soul. May God bestow peace up on the departed soul.

****Sh. Deepak Budki is a noted Urdu short story writer and is presently working as Chief Postmaster General, Jammu and Kashmir Circle. Born on February 15, 1950, the writer did his MSc. B.Ed. from Kashmir University and later graduated from National Defence College. He is also an associate of Insurance Institute of India. More than sixty short stories have been written by him till date which have been published in India, Pakistan and other European countries. Reputed Urdu magazine, "Shair" issued a special number (Gosha) on him in September 2005. Two collections of short stories viz "Adhoore Chehre" (Urdu and Hindi Editions) and "Chinar Ke Panje" (Urdu edition) are to his credit till date. Another collection of short stories, "Ghonsla", and a collection of essays on criticism entitled "Asri Tehreerein" are in the pipeline.***

5.0 BEACON LIGHT OF KASHMIR LITERATURE – DR. BRIJ PREMI

By Aseer Kishtwari

Besides being "Heaven on the Earth", the beautiful Valley of Kashmir has proved a fertile soil for giving birth to a number of great writers, critics, poets, historians, researchers, artists, intellectuals, politicians, religious beacon lights and lovers of art, culture and languages. When one goes through the pages of the literary history of Kashmir, it becomes difficult to choose the greatest man of letters. On the basis of his marvellous contribution towards Kashmir literature, Dr. Brij Premi for his attachment with Kashmir and literature on Kashmir can be easily compared with the literary luminaries like Dr. Sheikh Mohd. Iqbal, Brij Narayan Chakbast, Rattan Nath Sarshar, Tribhuvan Nath Hajar, Anand Narian Mulla, Ramanand Sagar, Kashmiri Lal Zakir, Prem Nath Pardesi, Prem Nath Dhar, Shamim Ahmed Shamin, Mohd, Yousuf Taing, Mohd-ud-Din Fouq and Dr. Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Sofi etc.. Dr. Brij Premi, who passed away in 1990 is known for his short stories, authoritative work on Saadat Hassan Mantoo and research papers relating to history, geography, art, culture, languages and literature of Kashmir – his motherland.

During the long years of his life from 1949 to 1990 (A.D.) Dr. Brij Premi has contributed as many as twelve good books written in Urdu and Kashmiri languages and some more compilations are yet to see the light. A good number of his English articles, published in "**Kashmir Today**" of the J&K Information Department are being compiled and published by his dedicated son Dr. Premi Romani, who has surprisingly brought out six books of his great father, on his own initiative. For his excellent literary works, Dr. Brij Premi deserves to be called the "**Pride of Kashmir Literature**" because genius people like him are rarely found in modern Kashmir. Dr. Premi is no more but his writings have made him immortal. The coming generations will continue to remember him, till his treasure of literature is preserved for reading. I have not seen Dr. Premi with my own eyes but the photographs published in his books show him more intelligent, handsome and sharp than his sons especially Dr. Premi Romani. On the eve of 16th death anniversary of Dr. Premi I ventured to pen down a few lines in remembrance of the "Pride of Kashmir Literature" who breathed his last on April 20, 1990 in Jammu – soon after mass migration of Kashmiri Pandits in that year.

Dr. Brij Premi was basically a short story writer in Urdu, who started his literary career with his first short story "AQA" (The Lord) which was published in "**Amar Jyoti Srinagar**" in the year 1949 A.D. "**Harif-e-Justujoo**" was published in 1982, which became his first publication, containing innovative research cum critical articles on Prem Nath Pardesi and other prominent short story writers of Urdu. His second book titled – "**Jalwah-e-SadRang**" came out in 1985 which was forewarded by the well known writer and researcher, Mohd Yousuf Taing. While complimenting Dr. Premi, Taing has said that after famous historian Mohd-ud-Din Fouq, Dr. Premi was the first Kashmiri writer who introduced socio-cultural heritage of Kashmir among the world community. Thus it is clear that Dr. Premi has beautifully and successfully highlighted the Kashmir culture in his aforementioned book.

"**Saadat Hassan Mantoo-Hayat Aur Karnamay**" – published in 1986 – compelled writers like Professor Mohd. Hassan, former Head of the Urdu Department of Delhi University to comment that it was a landmark work on Mantoo which needed no further additions and alterations. It was on the basis of this book that Dr. Premi was accepted as an authority on Mantoo, in the Indian sub-continent and Pakistan. "**Zauq-e-Nazar**", a collection of Urdu articles was published in 1987, in which un-touched aspects of Urdu literature have been artistically explained by the author. Two more books of Dr. Premi – "**Shajer Kari**" and "**Murgbani**", specially written for promotion of adult education got also published in 1987, whereas another of his literary masterpiece "**Chand Tehrain**" (A few writings) came out in 1988. This book carries a travelogue, some "**Nusri-Marsiya**" (Elegy in prose) on Sheikh Mohd. Abdullah, Prem Nath Bazaz, Kashyap Bandhu, Kuldeep Rana,

Som Nath Sadhu etc.. etc.. and articles like Khawaja Mohd Abbas Aur Film, Sadat Hussan Mantoo Aur Film, Upinder Nath Ashq Aur Film, Rajinder Singh Bedi Aur Hindustani-Film, Hindustani Filmoon Key Chand Manzaleen, Devmalayee Kahanyan on Ramayana and Mahabharata and other research articles.

Another well known publication of Dr.Premi – **"Kashmir, Kay Mazameen"** essays on Kashmir containing informative and well-knit articles on the civilization, culture and scenery of Kashmir Valley, came out in lime light in 1989 as was forewarded by Dr.Hamidi Kashmiri, former Vice-Chancellor of Kashmir University. Dr.Hamidi has appreciated the book with an open heart by calling its author as the second "Fouq" of Kashmir literature. Likewise– **"Jammu-wa-Kashmir Mein Urdu Adab Kay Nashunuma"**, duly forewarded by PadamShree Moti Lal Saqi came out to the market in 1992. In view of its demand, Dr.Premi Romani, the compilor, had to bring out three consecutive editions of this important book on development of Urdu literature in the J&K State. Despite of having a voluminous book of Professor Abdul Qadir Sarwari on the subject, the compilation of Dr.Premi was highly liked by the lovers of Urdu language & literature for its better comprehension and easy language.

Shri Moti Lal Saqi had prepared a monograph of **"Samad Mir"** a legend in Kashmiri literature and Urdu translation of the said monograph as made by Dr.Premi, was published by the Sahitya Academy, New Delhi in 1992. Yet another publication of Dr. Premi – **Mantoo Katha"** was brought out by Dr.Premi Romani in 1994 in which some beautiful and important articles on Saadat Hassan Mantoo have been incorporated for the benefit of the general readers. **"Sapnoon Key Sham"**, published in 1995, is a collection of Urdu short stories of Dr.Premi. In his foreward prominent Urdu writers Kashmiri Lal Zakir has rightly said that these short stories were worth reading as the essence of realities of social life have been expressed in a befitting manner. The famous short stories in the said book are – **"Lumhoon Key Rakh", "Hansi Key Mout", Sapnoon Key Sham", "Mayray Bache Key Salgirah", "Ujri Baharoon Kay Ujray Phool", "Manasbal Jub Sookh Gaya"** etc.. The book titled **"MUBAHIS"** (The Discussions), published in 1997 among other articles also contains an interesting article – **"Lumhay Jou Zinda Hain"** which is infact a historical interview of Dr.Premi with Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, on the history, culture, literature and political aspects of Jammu & Kashmir.

"Vatsney" (The critical Appraisal) and **"Virasat"** (The Heritage) are the only two Kashmiri books of Dr.Premi, published by his learned son in 1999 and 2000 respectively. The former book carries articles on the life and literary works of Ghalib, Abul Kalam Azad, Prem Nath Pardesi, Munshi Prem Chand, Bahadur Shah Zafar etc.. whereas Dr.Premi's Kashmiri short stories and other Urdu write-ups have been incorporated in the latter book. The unpublished matter lying with Dr. Premi Romani includes – **"Prem Nath Sadhu – Ahad, Shakhsiat Aur Funkar", "Prem Chand Ek Nayee Jehat"**, numerous articles written in Urdu and English languages and 350 letters of the late writer written by him to his friends, contemporary writers and fans of Urdu and Kashmiri literature right from 1949 to 1990. Credit goes to Dr.Premi Romani for publishing and preserving the literary works of his illustrious father. He has yet to work hard and publish the remaining valuable works as well. It is in this backdrop that all the living writers aspire to have a son like Dr. Romani, who understands the importance of his late father and works with full dedication in publishing the hidden literary treasure left behind by the departed soul.

My good wishes are always with him.

***The author is a prominent and prolific writer, historian, researcher and poet of the J&K State. He has published many books. "Focus on J&K" written in English is a comprehensive work on the updated socio-cultural history of the J&K State. Mr. Aseer is presently working as Director Audit & Inspections and Deputy Director Accounts & Treasuries, Jammu. He is the President of J&K Urdu Forum and General Secretary of Rasa Javidani Memorial Literary Society Jammu.**

6.0 DR. BRIJ PREMI— VERSATILE LITTERATEUR IN PASSIONATE LOVE WITH KASHMIRIAT

By Suraj Saraf

Very first thing that strikes one going through the various literary works by Brij Premi is the wide sweep of the subjects he dealt with and the depth and insight with which he went into them. Then immediately one felt his love for Urdu, the language in which he produced his literary volumes was no less noticeable. Still more one also realised a deep research minded person and an eminent critic and analytical mind behind these works.

The binding thread running through these varied traits of his personality was really Kashmiriat, his great fascination for his bewitching land and its people who in the foot-steps of the big personalities of the millennia old history of the valley enriching so handsomely its culture and life, were now engaged in writing new glorious chapters to keep on those great traditions.

I feel that this factor, his fascination for Kashmiriat and his constant endeavours to develop more and more was the most important in enabling him first to get a good start in the literary field and then helping him to widely diversify his literary efforts dealing with so many subjects. Of course this highly beneficial literary faculty was honed by his hard, rather very hard, struggle to establish himself in life. He was really a self-made man and had spared no effort to advance in life. Thus though he had a very tough grounding serving in various positions in the government yet on and on step by step he ultimately became a reader in Urdu in the Kashmir University. But his real goal on which he seemed to have set his sights, was literary excellence in its varied manifestations viz short stories (which was his first step in the literary field at the age of just 14 when still in school), essays, research, criticism, analytical studies, biography etc.. etc. but if one has had such a prodigious output, it is essential that he had ample input, too. In his case this input involved both study of vast literature and more so the practical study of the life and its problems which he himself encountered much while rising hard way. As professor Shakil-Ul-Rehman puts it in the foreword to Mr. Brij Premi's volume "**Harf-i-Justaju**", "From the very beginning I was much impressed by his seriousness and his deep-seated habit of always learning something or other..... Dr. Brij Premi is slowly and steadily expanding his studies viz history, civilisation, mythology, philosophy, religion; he is imbibing their high points and expressions which, I am sure, would make his future writings all the more attractive....."

By his varied interests not only that the canvas of his critical productions becomes vast but it also becomes more fascinating, or as one of his other intimate colleague-admirer puts it, "Mr. Premi's understanding of life and its problems was highly mature.....He walked about and saw things happenings around with an artistic vision. He occasionally smiled and in that smile one noticed the smile of the critic, an artist and a person who was always prepared to accept new challenges of life, embrace new initiatives and embark upon one activity or the other and everything he understood, flowered and matured in to substational work. His books speak volumes for his artistic talent. Once Dr. Brij Premi himself remarked that he loved to work more under the influence of struggle, which added new dimensions to his endeavours."

While it wouldn't be possible to pen in a small write-up if enormous literary output, even the mere titles of several of his books would-tellingly underscore "his vastly varied literary interests highlighted in them like "**Harf-i-Justaju**" , "**Zauq-e-Nazar**" , "**Chand-Tehreerein**", "**Kashmir Ke Mazameen**" "**Jalwa-e-Sadrang**" (The last awarded by J&K Cultural Academy). All these convey wide spectrum of literary coverage. As for instance take "Chand Tehreerein": it has six write-ups on research and criticism, one as

travelogue, three allegories, two on Dev mala, Five on films, five on Nasri marsea and the last one is a translation or take his "**Jalwa-e-sadrang**". Its first nine write-ups, deal with Kashmir in its widely varied facts viz- history, some prominent people, general living, archaeology, folk songs: next three write-ups deal with urdu development in its different phases in J&K, one on Saadat Hassan Manto and one on a rare aspect of archeology in Kashmir. In "**Kashmir Ke Mazameen**" he goes into the Kashmir Chronicles still deeper in its two write-ups. However, this, book again has four write-ups dealing with "Shakhsiat", four with "Adab" and one with development of journalisim in J&K. So on and so forth.

Second most important aspect of Dr. Brij Premi's voluminous literary output and which is rather the pivot of almost all his writings, is Kashmiriat in its comprehensive sense. There have been virtually countless books on Kashmir but they pertain to its "**Kashmir Janat Benazeer**" image only. Hardly anyone had tried to peep into what actually lay behind this "Janat", how its people lived, what were their peculiar mores and problems. Dr. Premi had tried to focus on those aspects of the "**Kashmir Janat Benazeer**", As stressed by Mr. M.Y. Taing in his foreword to Dr. Premi's book "Jalwa -e-Sadrang", "Dr. Brij Premi has gone through thousands of pages regarding the history of Kashmir and has highlighted in a capsule form some such aspects that new historical and cultural developments regarding Kashmir get focussed on.....this book brings out extremely significant information about Kashmir and he has done it in an unbiased, liberal manner.....old writers on Kashmir were unable to observe the troubles and travails of the people or they did not try to peep into its real burning interior.

Dr. Brij Premi has, however, succeeded in presenting to the world actual prominent image of Kashmir. In this very book, Dr. Brij Premi himself says, "I want to pen in future, too, such articles which bring into sharp relief outstanding features of history, culture, personalities and life in Kashmir". Dr. Hamdi Kashmiri also underscores Dr.Premi's attachment with Kashmiraat , "it is tantamount to his "Ishaq" with Kashmiraat" Dr. Premi is a researcher and a critic, too . A particular aspect of Dr. Premi's writings is that before dealing with a subject of research, he does not limit himself merely to collecting facts and figures but he also fully examines their veracity which makes his research very meaningful. "The way he has tried to bring into prominence real contours of Kashmir with painstaking work and sincerity, is commendable."

This going in-depth in his subject of a research is amply reflected in his book on Sadat Hassan Manto hailed, as the pioneer publication (which had also earlier got him the Ph.D. in Urdu from Kashmir University) on that great exponent of fiction as art in Urdu . This publication has been highly commended both in India and Pakistan. But it would not be out of place to emphasise here that Dr. Brij Premi chose Manto as his research subject not merely, because he had. taken up Urdu as his medium of expression and Manto was such a tall figure in Urdu literature, but much more so because Manto was a Kashmiri and Dr. Brij Premi himself- says in that behalf". Apart from other things, one important reason for my mental attachment with Manto is that "he was connected with Kashmir and was undoubtedly the best representative of the productive genius of this land."

As told to me by his talented son Premi Romani quite a number of his father's unpublished works are under print which inter-alia include a collection of his short stories. I am sure that all these will still more significantly throw light on several other aspects of Kashmir, the land and the people. There must be still large areas to work upon in this behalf for any person as passionately immersed in Kashmiraat as Dr. Brij Premi was.

It was a tragedy that Dr. Brij Premi breathed his last (on April 20,1990) at a comparatively small age of just 55 years less than even the average age that people in India have got now. But perhaps the hard work that he had been engaged in throughout his life contributed much to this added to by another tragedy that a person who had been so madly given to Kashmiriat that he had made it a life mission for himself, had to migrate under highly inimical environs from Kashmir. Now one can only say that it is not the long

life that matters but it is the work done by one which is really important, more so, if it also becomes the footprints on the sands of time. I have no doubt that Dr. Brij Premi's work on Kashmiraat will inspire many others , too, to drive deeply into it, that will be the best memorial to him and most of his writings are very original, which is very admirable factor in any author.

****The author is a scion of well-known Saraf family of Jammu, whose contribution to the cause of journalism is well-recognised. Sh. Suraj Saraf is a veteran journalist and has been writing regularly on literary and cultural topics.***

7.0 BRIJ PREMI—SOME REMINISCENCES

By Dr. M.K. Teng

Brij Premi was the product of the Indian renaissance and the philosophy of rebellion which characterised the time in which he lived the formative years of his life. The community of Hindus in Kashmir was among the first of the Hindu communities in India, which sought its identity in the Indian renaissance and identified itself with the reemergence of the Indian nation and a new social and intellectual commitment to the Sanskrit roots of the Indian civilisation. The Muslims in Jammu and Kashmir like the Muslims in India, rejected the Indian renaissance, because they did not accept the continuity of the Indian history and the civilisational boundaries of unity of the Indian nation. The conflict of ideology was deeper and sharper in Kashmir than it was in the rest of India. Kashmir was a Muslim majority princely State of the British empire in India ruled by a Hindu Rajput prince of the Duggar people of Jammu. Brij Premi belonged to the intellectual tradition which bore the influence of this conflict.

I came in close contact with Brij Premi in 1963, when I returned to Kashmir after the completion of long years of research at the University of Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh, the heart of Hindu India in 1963. Those were the years when the Indian academics were inspired by a new vision of freedom which was total and universal, and which transcended the half-way freedom the liberalist reformism of the Indian national movement espoused. In Kashmir, I found, though not to my surprise, that the new vision of total freedom had already become an inseparable part of the intellectual and academic discourse of the community of Hindus and the Hindu intellectual class had already joined the search for models of change, almost on the same lines, on which the search for models of change was under way in the other parts of India. Brij Premi was a part of the search of the Hindu intellectual class of Kashmir for models of social change-which encompassed economic, social and political change, and which underlined the recognition of total and universal freedom as its main goal. Brij Premi's literary work and research reflect the struggle of the mind of the Hindu community in Kashmir to grow out of its narrow local focus of freedom and identity, its aspirations with the wider aspirations of the nation of India growing out of slavery and foreign dominance.

Brij Premi symbolised the quest the Indian nation was involved in. His commitment to provide an insight into Sadat Hassan Manto was to unravel the temper of the rebellion Manto's work represented. Manto repudiated the identity of a narrowly dated sectarian identity of India. Rightly, perhaps, Brij Premi made the revelation that Sadat Hassan was of Kashmiri origin and a descendent of a Kashmiri Pandit family which had converted to Islam. He brought the rebellion which lay suppressed in the generations of Manto's past, out of its confines to coordinate Manto's outlook with the quest for a national identity which symbolised total and universal freedom. Sadat Hasan's work was a severe reaction against the communalisation of the Indian society and the destruction it brought in its wake, which eventually unfolded in the tragedy of the partition. Brij Premi's research on Manto was primarily aimed to correlate his own search for a national identity which Sadat Hassan had sought to establish.

Brij Premi's short stories, his interest in the history of Kashmir, his work of a literary critic of Urdu literature, in which he excelled, reflected the same quest. Brij Premi, was throughout his life, a Kashmiri Pandit, whose dream of freedom had been shattered by the enforcement of the religious precedence of the Muslims in Jammu and Kashmir and who sought to give expression to his intolerance to oppression.

Brij Premi was a traditional Marxist who did not metamorphose into a communist and a party cadre. He talked to me, though hesitantly, about the broad contours of the Marxist approach to social change. He did not doubt the validity of the principal concepts of

Marxism: the exploitative character of all class-society; the historical necessity of progress of all society from more exploitative forms to less exploitative forms; the role of the exploited and oppressed peoples in the revolutionary moments for change and the functional attributes of the state and its instrumentalities of authority to sustain exploitative forms of class society. Often our discussion, which he always kept at an informal level, centered upon the principal focus of the character of the Indian state. Was the Indian state different from the instrumentality of power that Marx considered the state to be?

The reformist foundations of the Indian state, which during the early decades of freedom were given a more radical content by the leadership of the Indian National Congress, had imparted a new definition to state function in a class society. The emphasis on change in the Indian society aimed at the attraction of class roles Nehru's concept of "socialistic pattern of society" and "full socialism" envisaged and the techniques of social engineering incorporated in the Directives of State Policy—a commitment of the Congress Left, was an attempt to give a new content to state function. Brij Premi, like other Marxists was unsure of Nehru's doctrine of state function in a class-society, yet adhered to it tenaciously like his comrades did. I harboured no illusions about Nehru's claims to convert the Indian state into an instrumentality of reform. Like the other Marxists of the Hindu community of Kashmir, including those who were members of the Communist party and their comrades, Brij Premi did not agree with me, though he did not give expression to his disagreement.

The cadres of the Communist Party of India and the Marxists, followed their own versions of the role of the state in a class-society. Perhaps, Nehru's outlook provided the cadres of the Communist Party and the Marxists, adequate ground to use the instrumentality of the state to radicalise the process of reform in India and adjust the foreign policy of India to the post-war world, governed by a hitherto unknown phenomenon of bipolar contest of power of the Cold War.

The movement for decolonisation, which dominated Nehru's outlook and the anti-imperialist role of the socialist world, converged, at the ideological level, to an identity of national interest of the socialist powers and the colonial peoples of the world, which had emerged from colonial rule. India was the largest, the most powerful and prestigious of the colonial peoples that came to face the internationalisation of the class conflict which followed the onset of the bipolar power relations in the post war world. The Marxists and the cadres of the Communist Party in Kashmir were conscious of this conflict. Jammu and Kashmir was caught up in the Cold War. The northern frontiers of the State, with a part of it under the occupation of Pakistan rimmed the "soft belly" of the southern frontier of the Soviet Union. The progressive writers of Kashmir, Dina Nath Nadim, Pushkar Nath, Som Nath Zutshi, Bansi Nirdosh and Brij Premi, were all involved in this conflict. Bansi Nirdosh and Som Nath Zutshi, who represented the two extremes of the revolt against exploitative society and identified themselves with the down trodden, recognised the sociological necessity of supporting Nehru's reformism, perhaps, out of their intellectual commitment to social change and their strategic role in the conflict over Kashmir. During Brij Premi's time the intellectual culture of Kashmir was conditioned by the stake, the Hindus of Kashmir had in the Kashmir conflict.

The context of this conflict changed in 1990, when the bipolar balance of power came to its end and the Muslims pushed the Hindus out of Kashmir. None of the progressive Hindu writers survived to assess the aftermath. Brij Premi died in April 1990, in the midst of the of disaster the Hindu Community of Kashmir faced. I was in Delhi, living the life of a fugitive.

The Hindus of Kashmir, who formed the main strength of the Marxist flanks and the Communist Party cadres, as noted above, were the product of the Indian renaissance. In contrast to the Marxists and the communists in the rest of the country, the Hindus of Kashmir did not break away from their roots. Most of them did not abandon their commitment to the unity of the Indian nation, its civilisational boundaries and the continuity of the India history. Brij Premi was no exception. His interest in the ancient symbols of the Hindu civilisation, his keen interest in research in the history of Hindu Kashmir and his

rather inexplicable commitment to the Hindu cultural forms, including Hindu ritual structures, is a testimony to his commitment. He found no conflict between the cultural sub-structures of a society and the Marxist concept for change. In fact, he told his son, Premi Romani, without any inhibitions, that there was no conflict between religion and Marxist concept of revolutionary change. In this respect, he was not different from Dina Nath Nadim or Bansi Nirdosh, the two Kashmiri Pandits, who built the tradition of the Indian renaissance into an edifice of social ideology. Perhaps the commitment of the Hindu Marxists in Kashmir to the Indian renaissance formed the basis of their rebellion against all forms of exploitation, including class-exploitation. That is why, secularism, a basic tenet of the Indian renaissance, became an article of faith with them. They were not apologetic about their beliefs and unlike their Muslim comrades, did not seek to legitimise their commitment to Marxism and communism in the theological precedent of Islam and the history of the Muslim Ummah.

Brij Premi carried this struggle, deeper in his consciousness. He was a victim of severe oppression to which the Hindu community was subjected in Kashmir. He was denied his due, in spite of his work and research in Urdu language, which the powers that ruled Kashmir those days had insisted upon to declare as the official language of the State. In the long last, Brij Premi was appointed a lecturer in the Department of Urdu in the University of Kashmir in 1977. For Brij Premi, his new assignment was a dream come true. In the University he was cast into a new context, intellectually more purposeful and creative, which provided a wider opportunity for his research and writing.

In the University, he widened the scope of his research. But he was worn down by the isolation to which the Hindus were exposed in the Jammu and Kashmir State. He could not earn any reprieve from the oppression the Hindu community in Kashmir laboured under due to the communalisation of the Muslim society in Kashmir. He met me often, in the department of Political Science in the University of Kashmir. He was not unaware of my unconventional views on the social and political conditions prevailing in Kashmir. He complained of the sense of deprivation that had overtaken him and the difficulties he faced in continuing his literary work. The oppression, he faced, goaded him to work more closely on his research projects in history and culture because his presentation of the findings of his investigations in Urdu language, tantamounted to the expression of protest against the oppression, the Hindus faced. Inside him, his feelings about the deep spiritual significance of the Hindu religious belief-system, gradually stirred his conscience. The devotion with which he performed the Pooja at the Shrine of Khir Bhawani at Tula Mula in Kashmir, described by the famed Urdu scholar and novelist Kashmiri Lal Zakir, in his scholarly essay on Brij Premi gives a peep into his mind. Brij Premi confided in me that he was unable to accept that the march of history was determined by logic. That assured him the freedom and perhaps, the perspective of scholarship to recognise the intrinsic quality of the Hindu civilisation of India and the Sanskrit content of the history of Kashmir.

****(The author headed the Department of Political Science, University of Kashmir and has authored many books on Kashmir Politics. His seminal work-Article 370 has received international acclaim).***

8.0 BRIJ PREMI-MY FATHER

By Avinash Aima

My thoughts go back to the days, when my father used to go every morning for a walk in the company of my mother in Naseem Bagh, an area surrounded by lofty Chinars. He not only enjoyed the fragrance of cool air, but also turned these beautiful mornings into occasions of literary interactions. Such luminaries—Prof. Rais Ahmed, Mrs. Shakhti Rais, Prof. Shakeel-ur-Rehman, Prof. Manzoor-ul-Islam, Mrs. Manzoor, Prof. Ayub Khan and others, who lived in the Campus quarters at Hazratbal would also be on their morning walk jaunts. On return, Dr Premi would enlighten his family members about the discussions he had with these people.

I also recall how our house at Ali Kadal used to host literary meets. These meetings were attended by scholars—Hakim Manzoor, Moti Lal Saqi, Makhmoor Badakhshi, JL Raina, Pushkar Nath, Rehman Rahi, Arun Kaul, Ghulam Nabi Baba, Wajhi Ahmed Andrabi etc. The meetings continued well past midnight. I too happened to sit in these gatherings but without any interest. My father, after day's business, would meet scores of friends at Habbakadal, conversations would drag on for hours together. My father would also make me attend many poetic symposia and 'shows' in the Tagore Hall, Srinagar.

Once Krishan Chander and his wife Salma Siddique visited Srinagar. My father, an admirer of Krishan Chander met him and discussions on literary aspects continued for many days. Saadat Hassan Manto also came up during the discussions. My father was those days engaged in research work on Manto. The meetings which my father had with Krishan Chander later flowered into a companionship. My father wrote down a memoir based on these interactions. It hasn't been published as yet.

Prof. Shakeel-ur-Rehman had close association with Dr. Brij Premi. He seemed impressed with my father's talent and literary interests. I can still recollect the discussions he held on the cultural heritage of India with my father. Prof. Shakeel was that time engaged in writing a book titled '**Ghalib Aur Hind Mughal Jamaliyat**'. Dr. Shakeel's scholarship left deep impact on my father, it helped him to identify other areas of literature and pursue these with vigour. On my father's death, Prof. Shakeel said, "I have lost an intimate companion of my life and feel weaker in his absence".

Though my father was deeply fascinated by Urdu and considered it as the real vehicle of his expression, yet he did write few stories in Kashmiri and some articles in English.

In his Kashmiri short stories, he projected psychological and social dimensions of the society. For example, in the story '**Vudav**', the protagonist, a female character, while being caught in the whirlpool of disturbed environment, gets obsessed with certain spiritual urges which need to be filled. In '**Pas Az Gadai Chakri**', he paints the picture of an employee, burdened by economic misery. The character is exasperated with the situation he lives in. He has to spend his meagre earnings to fend off the debts, which leaves him little to tide over his existence for the month. He gets visual hallucinations—seeing his creditors waiting for money with tilted noses on the currency notes. The writings portray the psychological trauma of these economically marginalised people. Dr. Premi presents artistically the difficulties poor employees underwent in supporting large families. '**Chaye Geit**' is a stream of thoughts, which have been woven in the warp and woof of realism.

'**Kashmiriyaat**', the social, literary and historical aspects of Kashmir, was very dear to him. Mr. Suraj Saraf, has acknowledged this in an essay on him. Mr. Mohd. Yusuf Teng, in his forward to '**Jalwa-i-Sadrang**' says that Brij Premi, after ploughing through thousands of pages of available material, has presented various aspects of Literary, Historical and Social heritage of Kashmir in a capsule form, in an unbiased way. About the same book Prof. Hamidi Kashmiri observes that it would add new dimensions to research.

Dr. Premi's book '**Kashmir Ke Mazameen**' awarded posthumously by J&K Cultural

Academy (1991) is dedicated to Kashmir. He says, "**I dedicate this book to my native land. If through these writings, if somebody feels my presence I would feel delighted and pleased. The essays have the fragrance of the soil of my land**".

Born in a tradition-bound Kashmiri Pandit family, Brij Premi (1935-1990) loved to read in his early years the adventure novels in the late hours. His father, Pt. Sham Lal Aima, a writer of repute, wrote short stories, which were published regularly in the *Daily Martand*. My grandfather had given an impressive performance, when Pt. Nehru visited the Basic Model School, Srinagar. He rubbed shoulders with such eminent personalities—Kashyap Bandhu, Prem Nath Pardesi, Master Zind Kaul, Fazil Kashmiri, Nand Lal Talib, Dina Nath Warikoo, Dina Nath Mast, Aftab Koul Wanchoo etc. This provided a good ambience for my father to become a writer. Pt. Sham Lal Aima also excelled in writing allegories and pen-sketches.

My father, in his early years, wrote under the pseudonym '**Yugdeep**', to voice his protest against the social evils. His articles appeared in '*Martand*', '*Navjeevan*', '*Jyoti*' etc.

His death was deeply mourned by writers and artists. They sympathised with us in our hour of grief:

Ahmed Nadeem Qasimi (Lahore, Pakistan) puts it as:

"Sad demise of Dr. Brij Premi has left me deeply shocked. Brij Premi was young, but some health problem has removed him from us".

Upender Nath Ashk (Allahabad) says,

"I knew he was diabetic, but this disease is quite common these days and people can live with it for 80/85 years in many cases. But it is also true that death keeps no calendar and who can avoid what has to happen. He had still many projects to complete".

Prof. Ale Ahmed Saroor (Aligarh) says:

"The service rendered by Dr. Brij Premi in the teaching and criticism of Urdu language and literature has a specific place. His book on Manto goes a long way in understanding and analysing this great artist".

Prof. Jagan Nath Azad (Jammu)

"When I was in Europe, I came to know about the sad demise of my dear friend. I was deeply shocked at his demise".

Prof. Qamar Rais (Delhi)

"I cannot express the feelings of dejection my mind is filled with at the sudden passing away of my dear friend, Brij Premi. He had a passion for Urdu literature".

Prof. Shamim Hanfi (Delhi)

"I felt very sad at the tragedy of passing away of Brij Premi. Whenever I would visit Srinagar, I would meet him. He was a cultured and polite person. I would always get pleasure in meeting him".

***The author is son of Dr. Brij Premi. At present he is working as Principal of Camp Higher Secondary School at Muthi, Jammu.**

9.0 PREMI—MY FRIEND AND COMRADE

By C.L. Chrangoo

Dr.. Brij Premi was an Urdu scholar par excellence. Cruel hands of death snatched him soon after his displacement from Srinagar in 1990. This came as a shock to his family, comrades, friends and above all the literary world of Urdu.

He held Marxist views, yet at the same time he was liberal in his outlook and demeanour. The cultural movement of fifties stimulated him to experiment with poetry writing. Soon he left it to take up prose. His grasp of the language turned him into a brilliant writer. His writings began to be published in reputed Urdu journals of northern India. This brought him closer to leading luminaries of Urdu language in the country.

Brij Kishen Aima used to write under the penname of '**Premi**'. The style of his writing was bewitching. His elegant prose, marked by short sentences and rich themes, impressed his friends.

He rose up the ladder in his career the hard way. He had lost his father at an early age and had to shoulder the responsibility of the family. Dr. Premi worked very hard and displayed determination in facing up to the situation.

Dr. Premi submitted an excellent work on Saadat Hasan Manto to earn his Ph.D degree. This brought fame to Premi Ji and opened new vistas in his career. He left behind career in school teaching to join Kashmir University as a Postgraduate teacher. It was here that he made his great contribution to Urdu language and emerged as a scholar of repute.

I was lucky enough to have enjoyed his companionship at many levels—as a colleague, as a friend and also as a comrade. My memories go back to the times when we were comrades in the Teachers Trade Union Movement. I would just recall one instance.

We happened to sit on a dharna at Badiyar during teachers' strike in 1969. The call had been given by **Teachers Association of J&K**, then affiliated to Democratic Conference, a leftist outfit. As active comrades we had to listen to the long speech of Ram Pyara Saraf the preceding night. Messers Krishan Dev Sethi and Ghulam Mohd Malik were also there. We were issued directions by them. Myself and Dr. Premi had to sit on hunger strike at Badiyar under a shamiana, pitched just on the roadside. As the hunger strike was in progress, one of the Srinagar-based leaders of Democratic Conference came and called me in a manner which invited suspicion. He told me that Srinagar wing of Democratic Conference did not contribute to the decision to sit on hunger strike. He argued, "We are not with it. It is like asking alms from a government which we do not recognise at all. Our objective is to achieve the brotherhood of people all over the world from Soviet Union to China." He went on to give me a long lecture on the dangerous goal that he and his likeminded colleagues had embarked upon. This came to be called, "**Peking via Pindi**" thesis. I returned to the tent and conveyed in hushed tones to Dr. Premi what the Democratic Conference leader had said. Though shocked on learning this, Dr. Premi just laughed it away saying he expected this response. He, however, stressed that one should remain firm in conviction. I was highly impressed by Dr. Premi's response and the strength of his conviction.

We sat through the day for hunger strike. For rejecting the '**Peking via Pindi thesis**', we were dubbed as '**Pandit communists**'. Dr. Premi had clear mind and displayed boldness in day to day life.

****The author is an eminent educationist and was actively associated with Kashmir's Theatre Movement***

10.0 SHAM LAL AIMA WAS A CREATIVE WRITER

**The author was born at Rang Teng Ali Kadal Srinagar. Dr Romani started his literary career in 1968. He has authored a number of books on different aspects of Urdu and Kashmiri language and Literature. He received inspiration in the field of literature from his illustrious father Late Dr. Brij Premi-a noted Urdu Scholar, Critic & Researcher.*

Dr. Romani has received a number of literary awards for his contribution to Urdu literature. He is associated with many literary organisations and has written features and serials for Radio & Doordarshan.

By Dr. Premi Romani

SHAM LAL AIMA was a well-known short story writer, a poet of good merit and a good social worker of his time. His name, like many others—Vishwanath Dhar Mah. Jummuvi, Dina Nath *Dilgir*, Tara Chand Saliq, Zanardan Teng Sagar, Sham Lal Wali *Tirath Kashmiri*, Dina Nath *Shahid*, Nand Lal Kaul *Begarz*, Ganga Dhar *Dehati*, Jia Lal Bhan *Barq* Kashmiri etc. remain buried in the debris of time.

He was born in 1899. The family originally lived at Drabiyar, but shifted before 1947 to Rangteng, Ali Kadal. The family atmosphere was well disposed to the pursuit of literature. Eminent litterateurs of the time and others who dabbled in literature would often meet at his house and deliberate on literary themes. Quite early in his life he developed taste for Urdu and Persian literature and passed many examinations in these.

Sham Lal Aima served in the State Education Department. He was a gifted teacher, knew the basics of scouting and took great interest in teaching his students. He served for many years in the Model School, Srinagar. In the company of such luminaries-Prem Nath Bazaz, Prem Nath Pardesi, Dina Nath Warikoo 'Shahid', Ghulam Hyder Chisti, he designed and prepared books for school children. For this work he was applauded by Khwaja Ghulam Saydeen, a great educationist. Sham Lal Aima called students a great treasure and worked hard for them. He evolved and implemented new techniques to make teaching effective. His playway methods created eagerness and curiosity among the learners. During one of his visits to the Valley, Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru was highly pleased with Aima when he watched his performance in the programme and classroom. His consensual approach endeared him to others, he was looked as a good friend and a guide.

Dr. Brij Premi, son of Pt. Sham Lal Aima writes in this book Zauq-e-Nazar in '*Zauk-e-Nazar*', says that Sham Lal and Pt. Nand Lal Kaul Talib, a famous Urdu poet were classmates. It was Pt. Nand Lal Talib who encouraged and helped him to compose poetry.

Some excerpts from Aima's poetry.

Drowned in grief and sorrow how I am
Exchange a glance, lonely I feel
Pangs of sorrow, how these pierce,
My sorrows increase, lonely I feel,
Part the ways, your choice has been,
That warmth of love, it has gone,
Come to me, see how sad I am.
Crying hoarse I have been cruel you are,
Everything drowned in sorrow I ache,
Why so? No mercy you can show?

This is, what one calls, the feelings are frozen.

Pt. Sham Lal was a gifted writer. He wrote short stories and essays. He enjoyed participation in literary meets.

This is what he writes:

The lustful eyes of the bank clerk could not resist the appealing charms of beautiful Lalita

who was contented with the poverty she was destined for. She had learnt to live amidst pang of poverty. She never murmured or complained to anyone. She had a belief that the rich protect the poor. She had a faith that the rich are pure in heart with no evil designs on the poor. The devil had entered into the clerk's ambition of being a tormentor, he sent his own wife away only to fulfill his dirty intentions...but...."

Though his short stories appeared mostly in *The Martand*, he also wrote essays for *Vitasta*, *Ranbir* and *Rattan* (Jammu), *Bahar Kashmir* and *Phool* (Lahore). When his short story 'Gurba' appeared in the *Daily Martand*, it was highly appreciated. The story revolves round a beautiful young woman, who on account of poverty is pushed to do menial job at the house of a bank employee. The latter looks at her with lustful eyes but she disregards his advances. She accepts the poverty as the reality of life and counters all the challenges boldly. The dialogues while conveying pathos look realistic and crisp. They leave behind a profound effect, the woman though engulfed by the situation comes out of the trap laid for her. She does not feel disillusioned. Instead she displays bravery.

Aima wrote many short stories, which include Navratra, Bhagwan Rama. The theme of his stories mostly centered around religious discourses and community festivals. Triumphs and sorrows of life, its dejections and sweetness, and other subjects connected with life were the might of his pen. His strength in art as a short story writer lay in his flow of sequences in stories, plot and sub-plot construction, flow of thought and brevity accompanied by crisp descriptions. He did not resort to jargon. His stories depict social realism, where the characters emerge as live and full of life. Pt. Pitamber Nath Dhar Fani, a poet himself comments: "Sham Lal Aima contributed richly and regularly to the Martand. In editions of *"Nura"* and *"Shivratri"* Sham Lal's compositions reveal him to be a gifted writer. Aima Sahib was a great short story writer..."

"Nura Se Khatab" reflects healthy prose. Certain excellence in prose writing was achieved by him. In this people are called upon to be dutiful and not to deviate from wrong paths. In his other compositions Aima praises Lord Rama who came to fight evil and injustice. About *Navratra*, he writes that it elevates, ennobles and reminds us of our duties. On *Janam Ashtami*, he used to organise programmes and advocated that the people should not deviate from the path of duty. His themes were always impregnated with thought. Prof. Sarwari says, "Aima's compositions reflect his inner feelings. In *Nura Se Khatab*-he runs close to the style of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan..." Aima had written an account of his travels in Gilgat but the manuscript was lost somewhere. Sham Lal Aima was a sensitive individual, who responded to human suffering with urgency.

His contributions to social work was appreciated by members of his biradari. Pt. Dina Nath Warikoo while paying him a moving tribute in his obituary in *Martand* (1-7-1949) recalled these great qualities. Sham Lal Aima died of a paralytic stroke and lived for just 44 years. Had he lived longer, he would have attained great heights in the field of Urdu literature

11.0 PREMI-AN ANGEL NOT A FRIEND

By Moti Lal Saqi

When I heard the bad news about Dr. Brij Premi's death, I was shocked. He died unsung and unwept. No bells tolled for him because all those who knew and loved him were scattered and are still in disarray. Dr Premi's news of departure came as a bolt from the blue to all his friends. He never deserved such a treatment at the hands of nature, because he loved life.

Dr. Premi died a martyr—a martyr due to exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the Valley. He was in deep love with his land and people but was made to say good to it. He suffered in exile not for want of money but simply for breathing space. In his heart he was agonised and succumbed to this agony. This fact shall go down in the annals of times to come that exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from Valley deprived them not only of valuables and belongings but also snatched away some brilliant souls from amongst them like Dr. Brij Premi. Had he not been compelled to leave his home and hearth he would have lived for many years more and could benefit us with his ripe experience and overflowing pen. **What a tragedy, our official and non-official media remained tight-lipped about the untimely death of Dr. Premi so much so that even a condolence was not offered.** This is nothing but the turn of events which speaks for itself. We had heard a lot about the fraternity of pen pushers but all this proved a false dream at least in the case of my angel friend, Dr. Premi who sacrificed his life at the altar of exodus.

Treatment meted out to this noble soul is the alarm of the events that have changed in course of our thinking and approach. All through his short span of life he showered flowers in the way of his friends, colleagues and writers but in turn he was forgotten as if he never existed. Time is the great judge. On the touch stone of time best and pure will show its worth and Dr. Premi will be given his due place in the cultural and literary history of Kashmir. He had carved out a niche for himself in the mansion of our cultural movement and there is none to deprive him of his place come what may? Because sands are sure to settle, glitter shall vanish and base is sure to be rejected.

To me Dr. Premi's death is not simply the death of a friend. It is the loss of a man who was close to my heart. It is the departure of a benevolent angel who was a source of solace and strength for me. For the last thirty five years our friendship stood the test of time and weathered all the storms which came our way..

I know it is not a loss to me alone, there are many people who will remember him for a long time. My personal loss is something greater, something that cannot be made up. His departure has crippled me. I feel my right arm has been cut and sooner or later I have to depart in my crippled state.

Health failed Dr. Premi for the last six or seven years. But his ill health never made him to shun his love and affection for me. He would off and on come from University campus for a chat or to discuss any problem relating to our personal or cultural matters. Though he was not physically fit even then he was full of life.

He was determined to accomplish something more, something novel, which could add to the knowledge of Kashmiriology. It was his earnest desire to complete history of Kashmiri literature in Urdu. He had done some preliminary work in this regard also but merciless jaws of death deprived him the opportunity to accomplish the job.

In his literary pursuits Premi was an infidel. In fifties Mantoo was a symbol of reactionary forces to progressive writers, who were in full command of the situation at that time. Premi on the other hand was all praise for him. He loved Mantoo's diction, treatment and style of story telling. It was this infidelity which led him to select Mantoo and his writings, as the subject for his Ph.D thesis. His love for this great writer knew no bounds. After the completion and publication of his Ph.D thesis which won him a prize also, Premi wrote a

series of articles which appeared in leading Urdu journals and periodicals. He was, of course one of the few scholars who have proved their mettle in the realm of 'Nutoiat'. What Premi thought and believed in fifties came true after seventies when Mantoo was declared undisputed master of short story in the sub-continent.

The sweet memories of the past are the only treasure now left with me. People of my hue and colour are departing one after another. How painful it is that I am left behind to lament and mourn the death of those who sprinkled honey dew on burning soul as and when it was needed. It is not possible at this juncture to recount all that which was shared and what transpired between us. It is the subject that I will tackle at proper time separately. The wound is fresh and pangs pinching. In this atmosphere at least allow me to control my tears, which of their own accord come into my eyes when I think or talk about my best friend. Our friendship was not the alliance of mutual bargaining or self interests, it was an amalgam of heart and thinking.

Dr. Premi appeared on the scene as a short story writer and ended his sojourn as a student and a scholar of History, cultural folk lore, personalities of J&K State. It was his research work which brought him honour and recognition. But this does not mean that he was lacking in any way in the art of short story writing. I remember it very well that his short story '*Sapnon Ki Sham*' appeared in **Biswin Sadi**, it was praised by lot of people and the author received at least two hundred letters praising the treatment and art of short story writing.

Dr. Premi was miles away from self glory and hypocrisy. He was all grace and compassion for those who sought his help and sympathy. This short appraisal is nothing but simply the recollection of some of the things I knew about Premi. I only long to meet him again and enjoy his company for ever. I know my dream will not materialize here, but, I am sure, we will meet again where and when that is the question of destiny and time because I firmly believe in the transmigration of the soul.

****Born in 1936 at Badiyar Bala, Srinagar. Poet, Writer, Historian, Researcher, Translator, Editor and Author of many books in Kashmiri & Urdu languages. Sahitya Academy Award Winner. He was honoured with Padmashree for his overall contribution to literature.***

12.0 REMEMBERING A FRIEND AND FORMER COLLEAGUE: A SHORT NOTE ON DR. BRIJ PREMI

—A.N. Dhar

Dr. Brij Premi is no more with us today, which is a painful thing for he was a writer of tremendous potential and, at the same time, a man of solid achievement. Death snatched him away from us in the year 1990 when he was 55 years old. A dear friend and colleague of mine in the University of Kashmir, I held him in esteem for his wonderful qualities of head and heart. Human and affectionate to the core, he always kept his cool and spoke words of wisdom as a man of learning whenever the occasion demanded. Temperamentally, he shied away from publicity and was a man of few words. Through my occasional conversations with him I found him widely read and very knowledgeable. He was indeed a gentle colossus—judging him on the basis of his literary achievement and the manuscripts he actually left behind unpublished.

Dr. Brij Premi shot into prominence and became a celebrity in the Urdu literary world across the Indian subcontinent with the publication of his outstanding book on Sadat Hasan Manto, based on his doctoral thesis on the eminent writer. The volume has been hailed as a land-mark—acclaimed as the best piece of critical writing on the creative work of Manto as a writer of short stories in Urdu.

Dr. Premi Romani has performed the duty of a proud son in bringing out the memorial volume titled "**Brij Premi Shaksiyat Aur Fun**" that includes numerous critical essays contributed by a host of scholars on Dr. Premi and his work. For accomplishing such a task, he has won accolades from his father's friends, fellow-writers and admirers. Another volume titled "**Varaasat**" includes, Dr. Premi's two short stories in Kashmiri, three Kashmiri prose essays, his Kashmiri translations of some of Manto's short stories and eight critical estimates of Premi's Kashmir volume "**Vechnai**" contributed by celebrated Kashmir writers including Akhtar Mohi-ud-Din, Amin Kamil, Moti Lal Saqi and others. For bringing out this volume too, Dr. Romani has been highly praised and felicitated by many scholars and writers. On going through the two volumes, I got convinced that Dr. Brij Premi will continue to be remembered as an outstanding scholar of Urdu who would have scaled still further heights if he hadn't died prematurely.

It needs to be mentioned here that Dr. Brij Premi came up as a scholar and writer the hardway. He had to face economic hardships in pursuing his educational career. It was long after he secured a first class in M.A. (Urdu) that equipped additionally with a doctoral degree he began his teaching career at an advanced level in the Urdu department of the University of Kashmir. Judging by what Dr. Brij Premi achieved as a writer while he lived and the writings he actually left behind unpublished, there is no doubt that his contribution to scholarship, research and creative writing has been formidable and memorable. So does his son, Dr Premi Romani, deserve kudos for what he has done to glorify the memory of his noble and talented father.

Finally, on going through some of Dr. Premi's writings in Urdu and Kashmiri, I realized what a valuable service he has rendered in writing on Urdu writers in Kashmiri and on Kashmiri writers in Urdu—achieving thereby a cross-fertilization in the realm of letters. I have also been impressed by the flow of his writing in Urdu as well as Kashmiri—I mean the effortless ease with which he writes. And this quality is matched by the lucidity of his style. His use of Kashmiri is specially impressive in as much as he writes with natural ease and keeps to the common Kashmiri idiom, not burdening his writing with words borrowed from Urdu or Persian. I greatly enjoyed reading his Urdu piece, "**Main Yahan Rahtaa Huun**". It chows how rooted he is in the Valley of Kashmir, his homeland, and how proud he feels of his rich cultural heritage as a Kashmiri. The other piece that I would like to mention here is "**Vada Yus Na Poora Gav**". It is a reflective piece of writing that shows Dr. Brij Premi's

skill in handling Kashmir prose. Writing the present note has sharpened my desire and curiosity to read more and more of the beloved writer and friend I had the privilege of having as my colleague at the University of Kashmir during more than a decade of the last century.

****The author has remained Prof. Deptt. of English, University of Kashmir and Emeritus Fellow. He is Editor Shuddhavidya, President Prem Sangeet Niketan and a well-known Writer and Author. Dr. Dhar is also a J&K Cultural Academy Award winner.***

1) Prof. Ale Ahmed Suroor (Aligarh)

Whatever distinct work has been done by Dr. B. Premi in the field of criticism and teaching of Urdu language and literature is well recognised. His book on Manto helps greatly in understanding and assessing a distinguished artist.

2) Abu Syeed Qureshi (Karachi)

'Premi's love is immortal. I highly appreciate Brij Premi's firmness of mind and inquisitiveness, his interest and love.

3) Prof. Khwaja Ahmed Farooqi (New Delhi)

'His genuine love, unbounded candour, his liking for knowledge, and gentleness constitute the greatest wealth'.

4) Prof. Masood Hussain Khan (Aligarh)

'I had a no. of meetings with him in Kashmir and his personality left a deep impact on my mind. He was kind enough to have sent a copy of his book on Manto, which I went through with great interest.'

5) Dr. Tara Charan Rastogi (Guwahti)

'Who is not aware of late Brij Premi's warmth of affection and his high status and stature in the field of literature? He was a multi-dimension writer and served Urdu with dedication. I met him in Srinagar on three occasions. The beauty of his etiquette, sweetness of disposition and cheerful countenance in whatever he did, and his habits and strength of character can be said to be proverbial. To rise to this great stature is not an ordinary thing'.

6) Prof. Qamar Rais:

'He possessed a great literary taste, refined attitude and etiquette)

7) Prof. Shamim Hanfi (Delhi)

'Whenever I happened to go to Srinagar, I would meet him. He was a resolute and cultured person. It was always a joy to meet him!'

Mazhar Imam (Patna)

Death of Brij Premi Saheb is a personal loss to me. It shocked me beyond any description. I was not knowing your present address & therefore could not write well in time. I had personal liking for the deceased. I would always respect his literary activities. His death is a loss to the entire Urdu world. I am with you, your mother and other family members in this hour of grief.

Upinder Nath Ashq (Alahabad):-

I suddenly received the soul-shattering news about the demise of your father, and my beloved friend, Brij Premi. For a moment I could not believe it. I had heard about his being a diabetic. But, this disease of diabetes is common these days, and people, despite having this problem, live up to eighty to eighty-five years. But it is equally true that no one has control over death, and no one can prevent the inevitable. I and the members of my family share your grief caused by this tragedy, and all our sympathies are with you and other bereaved members. May God grant peace to Premi's soul. He had to do a lot of things in the days to come.

Kashmiri Lal Zakir (Chandigarh):

I was immensely shocked to learn that your respected father, Dr. Brij Premi had passed away. You may know, he was my dear friend, and the sad news grieved me excessively. Some time ago, I had received from him a kind and lovely letter I had never believed that he would go away from us so soon. Kindly convey my condolence on this tragic happening to your mother. I even share your grief, and pray to God to grant peace to the departed soul. Haryana Urdu Academy has passed a condolence resolution on the sad demise of Dr.

Sahib.

Prof. Saif-ud-Din Soz:

This news is extremely shocking for me that my dear friend, respected Brij Premi, has passed away in his youthful age. This tragedy has become all the more painful because Brij Premi a person of high stature and fame, died in Jammu far away from his fellow-friends and relatives. I fully share your grief. I advise you to complete his great literary works, in the interest of Urdu, which have remained unfinished because of his passing away. May God give you strength to bear this shock.

**(Tranlated from original by Prof. M.L. Raina)*

13.0 UNDERSTANDING MANTO

By Dr RK Tamiri

I first read about Saadat Hasan Manto in 1973 when I was a college student. Probably, the occasion was his birth anniversary. KK Khullar's tribute published in *'Youth Times'*, that came straight from the heart, bowled me completely. I became 'unabashed' admirer of the great story-teller. Manto was a Kashmiri. His skills in the art of short story writing had few parallels. Lastly, Manto's sympathies lay with the marginalised- the people who lived on the fringes of the society. It was a routine for me to go through Khullar's write-up once or twice a year, upto 1990, when the ravages of the time took toll of Khullar's article as well.

Having grown up without the knowledge of Urdu I had to wait another decade before I could read Manto through Manto. In the mid-eighties, translations of two of Manto's stories appeared in the now defunct ***The Illustrated Weekly of India***. One was by Khushwant Singh, and the other by the flamboyant editor Pritish Nandy. The latter had translated Manto's masterpiece **'Boo'** (The odour), for which the writer had been dubbed as **'the Prince of Pornographers'**. Monsoons (the experience of which was denied to us in Kashmir) formed the background in which the story was written.

It was in 1987 that **'Kingdom and the other essays'**, an excellent translation of Manto's stories by Khalid Hassan hit the book stands in Srinagar. This was my real tryst with Manto. The essays kept me thinking on why was Manto so obsessed with sexuality? Simply to have more readership! Also, if he stood for social change then why did he take up cudgels with the progressive writers. The objective in putting up this short memoir on record is to convey how Saadat Hasan Manto reached my generation.

Nineteens could be called the decade of Manto. Though most of his contemporaries are slowly passing in to oblivion, Manto's relevance continues to grow. In May 1996, **Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla organised a seminar on the life and works of Manto**. It was the first of its kind in the Indian sub-continent. Manto was approached from all dimensions—history, sociology, philosophy, and literature. With the emergence of partition as a new genre in literature, during the past couple of years, some really good stuff has appeared on him. This is bound to help us understand Manto better.

Manto and Literature:

Manto considered literature as something very serious. To him it was **"the pulse of a nation, a community which gives news about the nation, the community to which it belongs, its health, its illness"**. Manto stressed that a writer should not read because that puts an end to his originality. What he should read is the book of life.

He was deeply influenced by Sigmund Freud even though he tries to deny it in his half-serious essay on himself written in third person. Manto said the writer's job was not to moralise or pass judgements. It was simply to examine the physical and moral divisions of society in a detached manner, free from any prejudice. He said, **"...we diagnose diseases but do not run a clinic..."**

Manto wrote what he saw. He would say, "I have no camera which could wash out the small pox marks from Aga Hashar Kashmiri's face or straighten his crooked eye or change the obscene invectives uttered by him in his flowery style". In 1939, he wrote to Ahmed Nadeem Qasimi, his friend and one of the founders of progressive writers' movement: "Whatever the situation I remain restless. I am not satisfied with anything around me. There is something lacking in everything..."

His social criticism was profound and censure of hypocritical attitudes devastating. Writer **Krishan Chander** once said of him, **"He is a harsh surgeon who does not even give chloroform to his patients"**. Manto was totally disillusioned with the society he lived in and attacked its hypocrisy and unwillingness in lending a hand to the oppressed. He was a great believer in man's freedom in a world which had forgotten its own soul.

As a writer he could no longer be surprised by the things people do to each other. He held that **all societies are designed to legitimise our worst impulses and rejects man as a creature who has any ethical sense.** Nevertheless, he retains his humanity and compassion. Mohd. Khalid Akhter, the great humourist, in a tribute says, "...**In prose that was pure as a pearl, he (Manto) continued to prick our dead conscience, shocking us out of our self-absorption, our complacency. He made us see ourselves in his shimmering mirror as we really were. He forced us to think that we could be better human beings...**" Manto told his critics: "**If you find my stories dirty, the society you are living in is dirty. With my stories I only exposed the truth**". He never shirked from exploring the daring themes—Love, Incest, sex and prostitution, shocking Indian middle class out of its wits in the process.

Manto's sympathies lay with the marginalised, the people who lived on the fringes of the society. His work is marked by an overwhelming sense of disaster. His protagonists are either sexually ravaged, morally destroyed or intellectually paralysed.

He detested bourgeois values and the pretentiousness of the respectable. Manto found prostitutes more interesting and pious than the housewives, and pimps honest. He castigated the society which censured the description of a rape scene but not the rape itself. His greatest story '**Khol Do**' is about a woman victim, who during the partition holocaust is raped even by her rescuers.

Yet Manto's writings are not reformist in character. **His works neither prescribe nor proscribe anything.** He makes man in his social setting the centre of all his stories and explores the complexities of human psychology.

He finds a 'whore' better and superior to those who profit from her. Manto said, "**The whorehouse is itself a corpse which society carries on its shoulders. Until society buries it somewhere, there will be discussion about it...**" When the prostitutes of Rawalpindi decided to form a union, Manto was thrilled. He remarked that the prostitutes of Rawalpindi would be in a position to project at least their viewpoint. Manto said, "this would be their own viewpoint, one which would emanate from their brains and be articulated through their mouths." Prostitutes of Lahore's red light areas used to visit his house to relate their woes. His funeral was attended by many victims of prostitution.

Manto and the Partition:

Manto is the only writer among his contemporaries, who turned the bloody events of 1947 into great literature. The stories depict unbearable anguish, trauma and savagery.

The emotional and political, impact of the partition unhinged him. He wrote: "The partition...and the changes that followed, left feelings of revolt in me. I still have them but in the end I have accepted the fearful reality of what happened and have not allowed hope to abandon me". Manto stood opposed to all labeling—whether based on religion, class, ideology, race or colour. He said : "**A human being is just a human being first and last**".

Manto described independence as '**nationalism of mourning**'. About the cultural Chasm, created by the partition, Manto recalls his dilemma:

'When I actually sat down to write, I found my mind divided. In spite of trying hard, I could not separate India from Pakistan and Pakistan from India. The same puzzling questions rang repeatedly in my mind: Will the literature of Pakistan be different? If so, how? Who has claims to whatever was written in undivided India. Will that be divided too?...Will literature also be partitioned?'

'**Toba Tek Singh**', written after Manto came out of the lunatic asylum, is not only a great story on the theme, but also the best ever written. It is the most scathing indictment of the senselessness that prevailed in the subcontinent during partition. Had Manto been given the chance, he could have well chosen the fate of Bashan Singh, his protagonist, for himself. The story has one parallel in the modern European history where philosopher Walter Benjamin, a German Jew, commits suicide (in 1940) on the border between Spain and France. Like Benjamin, Bashan Singh achieves ultimate marginality by dying on the border

between two states, thus opting for neither.

The theme of duality of colonial discourse and despair over fixing identities, as explored in '**Toba Tek Singh**', has fascinated writers, play wrights and historians alike. Dr. Brij Premi has translated this story into Kashmiri. It is included in his collection '**Varasat**'. A few years back there was a move to change the name of the village Toba Tek Singh. The villagers held a protest, and argued: "how can we change the name of the person who gave water to the village".

Susana Devalle, a Spanish historian has compared **Fanon's criticism of colonial discourse with that of Manto.**

Manto intervened in spaces, where historians, social scientists failed to reach. The horror of the partition made Manto to write about violence in a critical and graphic way. He did not resort to pious posturing and observed violence without ideological blinkers or any communal prejudice. Unlike other writers who looked at the violence of the partition as an aberration and turned to the past for hope, **Manto said partition was not an unfortunate rupture in historical time but a continuation of it.**

He hated communalism and communal violence. **Memories of Madness**, his celebrated novel is based on his experience of riots in Rawalpindi. He was pained to see how ordinary, even sane people succumbed to insanity in frenzied times. He displays his ironic wit in his description of a communal riot in **The Garland:**

The mob suddenly veered to the left, its wrath now directed at the statue of **Sir Ganga Ram**, the great philanthropist of Lahore. One man smeared the statue's face with coal tar. Another strung together a garland of shoes and was about to place it around the great man's neck when the police moved in, guns blazing. The man with the garland of shoes was shot, and taken to the nearby Sir Ganga Ram Hospital".

Manto's narrative strategy in describing communal violence in 1947 did not depend on doing a all too familiar '**balancing act**'. He wrote what he saw. '**Thanda Gosht**' has been rated as the best piece of imaginative prose written about the communal violence of 1947.

Manto's World View :

Manto did not involve himself in politics, yet he was well-informed about international affairs. He was critical of US policy towards the subcontinent. In his 3rd letter to **Uncle Sam**, he displays his cutting wit both in chastising US and in taking a Jab at the mullahs.

Manto was anti-war and in favour of liberty. He wrote, 'this atom bomb has shocked me out of my wits. Every activity appears to be meaningless! Soon after US dropped atom bomb in Hiroshima, Manto began appreciating spirituality. Previously, he had said that he was unconvinced about the existence of God.

Manto's migration :

Why did Manto migrate to Pakistan? This continues to baffle scholars. Partition destroyed him both emotionally and personally. Had he continued to stay on in Bombay, Manto would have lived longer. In Lahore he remained jobless all the time and passed his days in persecution, poverty and extreme frustration.

Manto has dropped hints about his migration in '**Saha'e**', '**Murli Ki Dhun**', '**Ashok Kumar**' etc. No single cause could be attributed to the decision, which ruined him completely. He began ruing the decision the day he landed in Lahore. He longed for Bombay: '**That is the city I loved. That is the city I still love**'. Ahmed Rahi, his friend and Amritsar link said, '**Manto began to die the day he left Bombay**'.

Manto's many relatives, including his family had left for Lahore, even before the partition. Secondly, he felt Urdu would have a better future in Pakistan and he would have a larger following there. Manto boasted : '**If one Manto is born in Bombay, another will be in Lahore**'. He had also tried to prevail upon Ismat Chugatai, but she spurned his suggestion. Ironically, when Manto wanted to return to Bombay, he sought her help. She did not reply.

Lastly, Manto was an egoist and quarrelsome by nature, a subject that is being dealt with subsequently. When his film scripts were put aside for those of Nazir Ajmeri, Kamal Amrohi, Shahid Latif and Ismat Chugtai, Manto's ego was hurt. He himself accepts: "When I literally

cut Nazir Ajmeri's story-which was filmed as **Majbur**-and tried to make some changes in it, Nazir Ajmeri admonished both Ashok and Vacha, "Don't involve Manto in such discussions. He is a story writer himself so he can't remain impartial. I thought about that a lot but couldn't understand it at all. In the end...I took a side street and came to Pakistan where my short story **Thanda Gosht** was put on trial."

It could not be denied that there was palpable communal tension in Bombay, as elsewhere. The management of **Bombay Talkies** had been receiving threatening mail. But Upendar Nath Ashk rightly asks: "**Why these had no effect on Shahid Latif, Savak Vacha and Nazir Ajmeri...Manto used this as an excuse to leave. The fact, however, was that Manto could not stand lack of recognition...**"**During his last days in Bombay Manto felt quite lonely.**

Manto's Hindu friends-top actors and directors tried to dissuade him from migrating because they felt film industry of Lahore stood in shambles and had no prospect of revival. Manto concedes that Ashok Kumar sought to convince him that threatening letters were just madness. It will pass".

14.0 MANTO AND KRISHAN CHANDER

By Dr. Brij Premi

Munshi Prem Chand and Sajjad Hyder Yaldrum were pioneers in the field of Urdu short story writing. Sultan Haider Josh, Niyaz Fatehpuri, Sudershan, Majnu Gorakhpuri, Ali Abbas etc. the artists who were the with the '*Angarey Group*', were no doubt influenced by the pioneers. Their emergence saw the transition from earlier themes based on romance and suspense to the articulation of nationalist sentiments. The Indian writers tried to adopt the style of western writers.

European stories began to be translated. The new Urdu short story writing reflected diversity in form and themes, characterisation, background basis of plot, psychological aspects of human life etc. The Urdu short story appeared in a form, where there was intermingling of beautiful ideas with artistic awareness. In 1930, prose emerged as the popular genre of writing in Urdu.

The second phase of short story writing in Urdu starts from 1930. Europe was in throes of turbulence. The Indians wanted to break the shackles of slavery. Gandhi Ji had emerged on the scene and his leadership was well recognised. He started the civil disobedience movement. Urdu short story could not remain immune to these influences. It took up a lead role in projecting social, political and psychological problems. All these found place in '*Angarey*' (1933). Some of these stories had been published earlier in *Humanyun* and some other journals. '*Angarey*' did a commendable job in blazing a new path in literature. The old worn-out themes gave way to new ones which were more solid, subtle and full of life. Experimentation in form, structure was accompanied by including themes related to everyday life. The standard of writing was also upgraded and also incorporated pungent satire. Dr. Rashida Jahan, Sajad Zaheer, Ahmed Ali, Mehmood Alzafar....were associated with '*Angarey group*'. Some of the younger members of the group also had taste for English literature. They began incorporating the revolutionary ideas in their writings and this became the basis of Progressive Literature. The themes were sexuality, religion, society etc.

Saadat Hasan Manto, Rajinder Singh Bedi and Krishan Chander were products of this epoch. They were writers with fresh ideas, and had a distinct world-view and individual style in writing. Till 1955 they constituted the Trinity in the field of Urdu short story writing. Their stories bore a distinctive individual stamp. Though Bedi was not as prolific as Krishan Chander and Manto, yet his writings had the artistic grandeur. Krishan Chander and Manto, who produced gems in literature, profoundly influenced Urdu short story writers.

Krishan Chander wielded a magic touch in his usage of words. His friends and foes alike, appreciated his writing. **Manto's repertoire was not as big but his way of telling a story and the distinctive style captivated the attention of the reader.** Even after the reader had finished reading the story, he remained glued to it. The readers would not leave the story half way.

Unlike Bedi, Manto and Krishan Chander had many similarities. Both were stenographers, who could write their story in one sitting with a style of their own. Both wrote stories, dramas, essays, sketches, film script and screen dialogues. Krishan Chander gained recognition as a novelist, while Manto failed. The former wrote about two dozen novels, Manto could not go beyond one and a half. It was in 1940-41 that Krishan Chander published his first novel '**Shikast**'. This prompted Manto to try his had at writing a novel. Manto was a writer in a hurry. His '*Begar Unwanon Se*' and the incomplete novel '**Takhleef**' are lifeless, boring and below standard. Manto regretted this shortcoming which he had in comparison to Krishan Chander. Manto passed away when he was only 42. Who knows he may have succeeded had he lived longer? After writing '*Shikast*', and '*Doosri Barfbari Tak*', Krishan Chander went on to write around two dozen novels. Krishan Chander's elegant themes and enchanting prose made him a successful writer.

Manto and Krishan Chander, both were born in Punjab and started journey in literature from there. Manto was two years elder to him. Both were emotionally drawn to Kashmir. Krishan Chander, though a Punjabi, spent best part of his life in Poonch, amidst its Valleys. This brought Kashmir in his essays and short stories. The beautiful ambience of Poonch, with its mountains, forests, streams, lakes provided the backdrop for his writings.

Manto had been only up to Batote, where he stayed to cure his lungs in the salubrious climate. He never saw Kashmir. His writings have backdrop of Batote and its landscape. We have stories '*Zindagi Key Mode Par*', '*Shikast*' and '*Toofan Kee Kaliyan*' by Krishan Chander and '*Misri Kee Dali*', '*Lalteen*', '*Ek Khat*', '*Teetwal Ka Kuta*' and '*Aakhri Salute*' by Manto.

In their student life, both Krishan Chander and Manto were drawn to 'Red Revolution'. Manto had named his room '*Darulahmar*'. He and his friends talked and discussed about revolution. The centre of attraction in this room was a large life-size photograph of Sardar Bhagat Singh. Manto began calling himself a revolutionary. He had translated Hugo's book and Oscar Wilde's novel '*Veera*', that was about the social revolutionaries of Russia. The intervention of some relations helped Manto escape the long arm of the Police. Everything was hushed up.

Krishan Chander too had actually joined Bhagat Singh's group and was imprisoned for two months. After finishing his studies Krishan Chander continued his pursuit in writing and participating in revolutionary activities. He subsequently joined MN Roy's group, and had an urge to see India free. Later, he was influenced by the Russian Socialist Revolution.

Manto, under the influence of Bhagat Singh, had been reading socialistic literature and propagated revolutionary ideas. He rendered Russian short stories in Urdu and published the first collection '*Aatish Parey*'. His first short story indicates his leanings, its theme is Martial Law of 1919. His literary activities reflect his mastery. It would not be wrong to say that he was forerunner of Krishan Chander, who wrote his first story '*Yarqaan*' in 1936. By that time, Manto's 4 collections of stories had already been published. These were '*Ek Asser Kee Sarguzasth*' (1933), '*Veera*' (1943), '*Russian Stories*' (1934), '*Atish Parey*' (1934). In short story writing the two writers entered through different routes. Manto found his way through translations, while Krishan Chander took to story writing directly.

Krishan Chander's recognition in short story writing was instant, while Manto had to struggle harder. Krishan Chander's romantic themes and poetically rich prose made him more acceptable. Manto had to concede this. In a letter to Ahmed Nadeem Qasimi (February, 1939) he writes :

"I happened to read Krishan Chander's stories. I feel that he is a writer of merit".

Krishan Chander wrote the preface for Qasimi's collection of stories '*Bigoley*' (1941). Manto commented:

"The preface which Krishan Chander wrote to your collection of stories is indeed quite good. Krishan Chander has picked up in writing preface and forward".

Krishan Chander too appreciated the force of Manto's pen. In 1939 he rendered "Sho-Sho" (a collection of Manto's stories) into English. This created good impression. More stories of Manto appeared in Musavir-'*Khushiya*', '*Dewali Ke Diye*'. Krishan Chander was all praise for this work and lauded Manto's talent. He writes!

"I had read his stories before I met Manto. These stories had been written quite powerfully, in unusual ways. I had to accept his merits and wrote to him to convey my impressions",

Krishan Chander included Manto's '*Hatak*' in his '*Naye Zaaivye*'. He comments, "Manto has systematically projected the life of a prostitute and laid bare her sentiments, the soul, the inner and external situation of a prostitute. After going through '*Hatak*' one doesn't have a feeling of malice towards these poor women-the prostitutes. Innocence of '*Sugandhi*' and her womanhood--all these elicit new feelings, those of sympathy. This is the hallmark of a great litterateur".

Manto and Krishan Chander met first time in 1941. Manto had left '*Musavir*' and had come to Delhi to join AIR. Krishan Chander was already working with AIR. Manto was well-known

. The two developed a good rapport. Krishan Chander felt quite sad on Manto's death fifteen years later.

Injustice remained Manto's permanent companion. Krishan Chander raised his powerful voice on this. In "*Khali Botal Bara Hua Dil*", Krishan Chander writes :

"Manto worked very hard, he was disgusted with the society in which he lived. Apparently, he never approved of progressive writers, nor did he lean towards non-progressives. Pakistan or India made no impressions on him. Uncle Sam and Russia also did not appeal to him. His was a restless soul. His highly critical and bitter remarks were the consequence of this restlessness. Though his writings had a caustic touch, yet if his writings are seen in their proper perspective, his sweet and noble intentions become clear. His malice had love, his 'obscene' language contained a remedy, a cover, protection. Though he did not consider it his role to awaken the masses, yet his writings performed this role. In his life he did not get justice, but time won't be faithless. We all feel his loss. He won't come again. What we have lost is lost for ever".

Manto and Krishan Chander worked together in Delhi for two years. They wrote short stories and plays for the Radio, Manto wrote '*Journalist*', '*Jebkutra*', '*Neeley Ragein*' and other good dramas. Krishan Chander's drama '*Sarayi Ke Bahar*' was later made into a film. Their joint endeavour was "*Banjara*", the script for a film. After one and a half years Manto returned to Bombay and again took up the editorship of '*Musavir*'. He also entered the film world.

Krishan Chander too bid good-bye to AIR and came to Poona at the instance of producer Ahmed. Josh Malihabadi and Sagar Nizami were already there. Krishan Chander did not succeed here, while Manto had done better in this field. He too came to Bombay.

Manto and Krishan Chander share a lot, though their ways were different. Manto leaned towards socialism and revolutionary ideas and did good job in propagating these ideas. Later, he moved away from this philosophy but contrary to what some critics say, he never turned into a 'reactionary'. He worked hard to explore the inner recesses of life and was moved by bitter conflicts in it. He came to project subsequently the goodness life essentially carried. Manto artistically projected the bruised psyche of a human individual. Though the range of his themes was narrow, yet he succeeded in doing justice to project the life. His narrative in portraying the human individual had good historical backdrop. His stories came in new form and content. Manto has brevity in his style. His use of metaphors, words, expressions, in making his writing full of life, was spontaneous and effortless. His writing style succeeds in shaking the conscience of the reader.

Krishan Chander has variety in his themes and subject matter. He advocated struggle against injustice, be it at national or international level. Peace, socialism, culture and civilisation, vision for a better life, positive aspects of life, nature etc. come in his literary outpourings. Be it war in Korea, Bengal famine, wars and bloodshed anywhere, Krishan Chander's pen never stopped. He wrote symbolic stories and novels and experimented with new themes and techniques. This made him a unique writer.

Krishan Chander's style was different from Manto. Ali Sardar Jafri calls this romantic style a great achievement. Krishan Chander wielded magic in his usage of words, this is reflected in his writings. Sometimes, one experiences that Krishan Chander shakes the very essence of a story, but the rainbow feeling his usage of words give make his stories immortal. His story displays perfect unity. In 1941 Ahmed Nadeem Qasimi called Krishan Chander **the King of Urdu short story**.

Both Manto and Krishan Chander turn spokespersons of the 'bruised' psyche of man. Their writings indicate how they have been free from any prejudice or bias. No student of Urdu fiction can move ahead without understanding what Manto and Krishan Chander stood for.

*(Translated from original Urdu text by M.N. Kak).

15.0 'MANTO KATHA'—A NOTABLE WORK OF DR. BRIJ PREMI

By Upendar Ambardar

The book titled "**Mantoo Katha**" authored by Dr. Brij Premi is another factual and well documented book on Sadat Hassan Mantoo. Backed up with minutest details, the author reveals in a lucid manner certain unexplored and lesser known facets of Mantoo's life and works, hitherto unknown.

The very first section of the book is intelligible with detailed information regarding Mantoo's family, home, his communist mentor Bari Aleeg and his deep emotional attachment with Kashmir. The migration of Mantoo's ancestors from Kashmir to Lahore and then to Amritsar, where a mohalla of Mantoos existed in the Kocha Vakeelyan is thoroughly traced by the author. The author further reveals that Mantoo's ancestors had abandoned their traditional shawl and Pashmina business and adopted lawyer's profession.

The reader is delighted to know that Mantoo's father Moulvi Ghulam Hassan, a sub-judge by profession had like his son, Mantoo an emotional allegiance not only to Kashmir, his separated 'homeland' but also with its centuries old cultural and historical traditions. Though being physically far away from Kashmir, Mantoo's father did not lose memory of his Kashmiri origin.

Likewise, we also come to know about the Kashmiri origin of Mantoo's wife Safia Begum, who even though a resident of Africa was thoroughly a Kashmiri. Mantoo's limitless love for Kashmir and his assertive feelings about it are also detailed with clarity in the book. Dr. Brij Premi familiarizes the readers with Mantoo's mentor and guide, Bari Aleeg, a committed Marxist, who was greatly influenced by the revolutionary and proletarian ideology of Marx, Engels and Lenin.

As per the author, Mantoo even in adolescence was given to youthful pranks and elements of sensationalism. The unrestrained chats laced with sensational remarks like : "Americans have purchased Taj Mahal and would transport it to America with the help of heavy machinery", "Traffic police of Lahore have been provided with jackets of Ice," "My (Mantoo's) fountain pen nib is made of donkey's horn", would make people gasp in wonder and amazement.

Dr. Premi's indepth research indicates that Saadat Hassan Mantoo had no lure of money but was given to simple living and high thinking. He had also no tendency to camouflage his dealings. The reader also gets to know as to how Mantoo was initiated to drinking by his childhood friend, Hari Singh Amritsari and the circumstances which increased his addiction to alcohol during his stay at Delhi, Bombay and lastly in Lahore. A vivid picture of Mantoo's addiction to alcohol is potrayed by the author, when Mantoo on his death-bed feversighly pleads for a drop of liquor to be put in his mouth to overcome his overpowering thirst for whisky. But the reader gets convinced that Mantoo resorted to alcoholism only to comfort his lacerated heart, hurt by unending chain of misfortunes and unhappy incidents in his life.

Continuing in the same vein, the author in the second section of the book gives a comprehensive account of Mantoo under various headings such as Mantoo as a novelist, Glimpses of Ghalib in Mantoo's work, Mantoo as a translator besides his association with the film industry etc. Detailed information about Mantoo's first novel '**Untitled**' and his next novel '**Takhleeq**' is given in the book. Free use of Ghalib's poetry by Mantoo in his writings is indicative of Ghalib's influence on him. Though Mantoo was not personally acquainted with Shayir-e-Kashmir Mehjoor, yet he was successful in understanding Mehjoor through his inspiring poetry.

Similarly, the book carries letters written by Mantoo himself and the letters addressed to him, which are reminder of the times when Mantoo was actively associated with journalism and film industry. These letters reveal numerous incidents of his literary and personal life and are of lasting literary value. The detailed information provided by the author with regard to Mantoo's translation work provides a valuable insight into his literary excellence.

The book "**Mantoo Katha**", written by Dr. Brij Premi, is supplemented by graphic descriptions and valuable highlights of those aspects of Mantoo's life and works most of which had remained hidden from the public gaze. Besides revealing Dr. Brij Premi's scholarly hold on the Urdu language, the book also exhibits the amount of painstaking efforts undertaken by the author. The book is appropriately titled, thoroughly enjoyable and a hallmark contribution to the Urdu literary world.

16.0 A REVIEW OF MANTO KATHA

By Prof. Qamar

(The author is a top ranking critic expert on Prem Chand Studies, worked as Professor & Head P.G. Deptt of Urdu, University of Delhi, Author, writer, Poet, Intellectual, Journalist, Recipient of many literary awards.)

My first meeting with Dr. Brij Premi took place forty years back when the noted man of letters was in his prime, full of vigour and vibrance. Intellectually, he was associated with the progressive movement that had influenced the younger generation of writers. His main pre-occupation at that time was a study and appraisal of the classical and folk traditions of Kashmiri literature. We had long sessions of interaction on the problems of aesthetics as related to Art and Literature in general and that of Kashmir in particular. It was for the first time that I got a feel of the enchanting verses of Lal Ded through Premi's renderings into Urdu language.

In the truest tradition of the progressive movement, Premi along with many other intellectuals could appreciate and analyse the diverse and colourful aspects of the colourful heritage of Kashmir. A critical appraisal of this facet of the rich tradition is to be found in Premi's writings. **I have no hesitation in pointing out that Premi is next only to late Abdul Ahad Azad in the matter of service to Kashmiri language and literature.**

Incidentally, that was the period when Premi was pre-occupied with his research work connected with his Ph.D thesis on Saadat Hasan Manto. My suggestions that he should undertake a comparative study of Persian, Kashmiri and Urdu poetry elicited immediate approval but Premi had to express his inability to take it up as he was already committed to his work on Manto. His choice was perhaps dictated by the fact that Manto was proud of his Kashmiri background as also of an intimate relationship with Kashmiri cultural heritage that was dear to him. The thesis that Premi produced after putting in his best in terms of research and analytical faculty did not win the favour of the authorities that be because of their indifference, resulting in an inordinate delay in awarding the degree which he deserved without a shadow of doubt. It was a disappointing experience for Premi although **his book on Manto's multifaceted achievements in the field of artistic accomplishment was used freely and unabashedly by some quarters in the subcontinent without even acknowledging the source. In certain cases it was almost plagiarism of the worst type indicating dishonesty and ingratitude.**

Brij Premi was temperamentally a blend of simplicity, uprightness and straight-forwardness. Silent and unostentatious by nature, he did not believe in exhibitionism as is wont with people who know the art of psychofancy. Here was a man who believed in self-denial although he had the capacity to demonstrate his faculties. All the time he concentrated on productive work, writing articles on Kashmiri Art and Culture besides very useful write-ups on the growth of Urdu language and literature in the state. All these invaluable collections have been edited and published by his son Premi Romani.

During this long literary voyage, Premi's research on Manto continued unabated. In this context '**Manto Katha**' stands out as an important milestone. It is remarkable that the collection was the result of untiring efforts made by the author in the matter of procurement of material from different sources. I was consulted in unraveling some of the mysteries regarding a few papers which called for thorough analysis.

It is universally recognised that producing a thesis for a doctorate has a limited frame but to write a critical paper on the subject calls for a subtler study as it involves an in-depth analysis of the influences that might have shaped the artistic genius of the personage under scrutiny.

To write on Manto made it imperative to depend on the sources that had left an everlasting impact on the mind and critical faculties of the writer. Dr Premi was conscious

of his inability to trace out all the necessary material regarding the literary achievements of Manto in the fields of novel, films, letters and translations. The material collected by Premi has found very useful and meaningful utility at the hands of his son, Dr Romani, who has authored a publication on the basis of available facts. The first paper relates to the ancestor of the writer based on priceless findings and evidences collected and filed by Dr. Premi. In his outstanding write-up '**Manto and Kashmir**', Dr. Premi has referred to sources indicating the humble beginnings of the writer. Bari Alig, who happened to be the mentor of Manto, is portrayed as one possessing a colourful personality although nobody had ever before taken the trouble of writing on him. Premi drew his conclusions after a thorough study of the life and contribution of the all-embracing personality of Bari Alig, as described by Manto himself. Similarly Premi has provided very useful and profound information about Manto's association with the film industry as a script writer. It is to be noted with satisfaction that Premi has analysed at great length the influence of Russian short story on the literary accomplishments of Manto.

The culmination of the book is in the form of a bunch of letters written by the readers and critics. The book is the very epitome of all that is brilliant in Premi's prose style as also his vision, simplicity and analytical faculty. He had a clear mind without any cobwebs of confusion in terms of critical faculties and his only aim was to discover the truth. It is tragic that this promising intellectual, a writer and a critic, was snatched from us by the cruel hand of death.

However, it is gratifying that his son, a scholar in his own right, has carried forward the torch successfully, notwithstanding the unfavourable situation created by the unfortunate displacement in 1990.

****(Translated from the original Urdu text by Prof. H.L. Misri)***

17.0 BRIJ PREMI'S BOOK PIRATED

By Prof. Manazir Ashique Harganvi

Jagdish Chander Vidhavan's book I happened to have in 1991 but an occasion to read it was delayed as the book had got mixed up somewhere in my papers. Prior to it, I had come across many comments of admiration on the author's book '**Manto Nama**'.

In "Tarteeb" on Page 03, I could at once call up that this material was there in another book. After going through the book restlessness gripped me and I was forced to get many books (lying in disarray) on Manto as under my guidance a student had been awarded Ph.D on "**Stories of Manto**". Similarities between **Mantonama** and Dr Premi's book '**life and achievements of Manto**' were seen. Dr Brij Premi had already been awarded Ph.D in 1977 by Kashmir University. Major portions of Jagdish Chander Vidhavan's book are from Dr. Premi's book on Manto. Even the text at many places has been pirated word to word, and somewhere through certain clever permutations and combinations, Sh. Jagdish Chander Vidhavan has tried to make it look like the material as his own, though he has not succeeded by crediting the stolen contents into his book, besides making it look like his personal achievement by copying in a clever manner comments of Krishan Chander and Abu Syeed Qureshi. The rest of the author's contents have been taken from '**Manto Number from Lahore**'.

"Dr. Brij Premi, a Srinagar born person got this nourishment in literary activity from Prem Nath Pardesi. Basically Brij Premi was a short story writer, who later shifted to new domain to earn Ph.D from Kashmir University where he was posted as Lecturer in Urdu Deptt. Dr. Brij Premi passed away on 20 April 1990 and by then seven or eight books of Premi were published. Some excerpts and comments"

"The book **Manto-Hayat Aur Karnamey** was highly liked by me".

Ali Sardar Jafri (Bombay)

"Really, you have tried very hard in collecting and updating events and circumstances and presented very admirably through a wonderful style."

Prof. Masood Hussain Khan (Aligarh)

Dr. Premi is one among those who work very silently to bring forth genuine documents. He is one among those Indians, who has devoted himself singularly on Manto. This book on Manto's personality and act is indeed of the standard of a basic reference book.

Prof. Gopi Chand Narang (Delhi University)

In my opinion, at least in India, a book like this on Manto has not been published. He has really prepared an encyclopedia on Manto. I feel, rather confidently speaking, that no serious student working on Manto can ignore this book.

Prof. Jagan Nath Azad (Jammu University)

A book of this nature, a composite book on Manto has not been written so far in Urdu. We will see more work done on Manto, but this book shall have the status of a basic reference book.

Prof. Qamar Rais

Brij Premi after departing from and saying good bye to old concepts has brought before us some important facts in Manto's stormy life. With analysis of historical and fundamental criticism, Brij Premi has presented a bias free account of presentation of facts.

Prof. Hamidi Kashmir

On such a beautiful book like this, I can afford to forget at least my half a dozen novels. Kashmiri Lal Zakir.

Jagdish Chander Vidhawan says:-

Research confirms that Mantoos in the last 18th century or in beginnings of 19th century migrated to Punjab (Page-01).

The text of Brij Premi's book seems to have been pirated with a slight change here and

there, transported into **Mantonama**. Excerpts Khoja Jalal-ud-Din who settled in Amritsar was Manto's grandfather whose youngest son Moulvi Gulam Hassan was married twice and had in all twelve children—four sons and eight daughters and Manto was second wife's son. Manto had three step-brothers who were senior to Manto (Manto Nama Page 23). Brij Premi writes Manto was a Kashmiri Pandit like Jawahar Lal Nehru and Iqbal (Page 24) In the series '**Architects of literature**' in Page 18 Krishan Chander's reference is Manto like Jawahar Lal and Iqbal was in fact Kashmiri Pandit. Citing Krishan Chander's sentence Brij Prem in his book on Page 18 has made this comment. Now Vidawan says-

In Urdu language Manto is referred to as Mintoo or Manto-(**Mantonama** 26-27. Following extract in Manto Nama is exactly like one in Brij Premi's **Book of life and Achievements of Saadat Hassan Manto**.

Manto's house was in Kocha (street) Vakilan in Amritsar and where one could see the house of Hafiz Ullah and outside it there was a well and then a little onwards one saw the house of Abdul Hamed DSP. There was a 'haveli' to the north of which there was Manto's house whose door was on the South and on the right side, there was the way leading to Manto's house. This room was known as Daral Mahar (Manto Nama-Page 31)

This is the text of Abu Syeed Qureshi and Brij Premi uses it in his book on page 35. Near the door,,.... was a writing table and on the right side a small almirah and books that could not be kept in the almirah were on the table along the wall. Manto received his education in Middle and High School and had....(Manto Nama Page 32) Page 32 the full page text. In childhood, once Manto...(Page 23) Refer to Premi's book Page 34) Manto took up editorship of weekly "Musavir" and accepted a job there in the office of this weekly and lived, nearby on the rent of Rs 9.00 a month-the room was in a very bad condition-he was just a Matriculate and that too with a third grade in the examination--

(**Mantonama** Page 107)

Refer to Page 107....the text is exactly similar to Page 59...

Excerpts—Manto was asked his opinion about marriage and Manto had assented---one Malik Hassan was the uncle of Manto's would be wife and was a print assistant in the police department---Manto could not really make up with the meagre salary and was used to a beer bottle--the girl's uncle was in parliament, besides being a social worker!!! Safia's father was killed some where in a scuffle or some dispute--and Safia was brought up by her uncle---unfortunately the financial position of Imperial film company was having a bad patch and the conditions grew worse day by day. Even the allowance in place of pay could not be given and the company's proprietor requested for some assistance---All this has been pirated from Brij Premi's book" **Life and Achievements of Sadat Hassan Manto**".

Excerpts---In all about four to five hundred rupees were spent---Sometimes Safia would appear---and he writes about Safia to his friend Ahmad Nadim Qasmi as---It is not yet a what one calls a perfect marriage---I have been only engaged. My wife is connected to some Kashmiri dynasty. Her father is dead and my father too is dead, she puts glasses as I put...she was born on 11th May the day I too was. Her mother wears glasses as my mother uses---The first letter of her name is also common like so many things to us---Manto shifted to a room on rupees thirty as the rent and pay was rupees forty from "Musavir", just to manage life on Rs 5 a month. Manto kept up the room in the wake of Safia coming to live with him---with him---producer Nana Bai Desai gave him a thousand rupees and eight hundred for his (Desials) Apni Nagar" (Manto Nama Page 110-111) all this has been pirated from Page No: 61 of Premi's book" **Life and Achievements of Sadat Hassan Manto**.

Excerpts—Manto was employed in All India Radio---and began receiving letters from Nazir Ludhanavi, the proprietor of 'Musavir' to come back to Bombay---Manto gave up the job---Shoukat Hussan was some what stubborn and (Manto Nama Page 141) This is a complete piracy frmo Page No: 76 and 77 of Premi's book **Life and Achievements of Sadat Hassan Manto**".

Excerpts—Filmstan took up making a propaganda film. Short story writer of Filmstan, Gyan Mukerjee had written a film story but it was rejected and the work was assigned to

Manto...who worked quietly, with dedication and changed the fundamental texture of the story. The script was accepted and it was put on the screen.

(Manto Nama Page 165)

The above text, quite word by word" completely resembles the contents on Page 82 from Manto-Life and achievements by Dr Brij Premi--I reached Page 165 from Manto Nama and now I didn't dare go ahead readers can well guess how Jagdish Chander Vidavan has prepared his book

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Translated by Sh. M.N. Kak

****(The author is Professor of Urdu at Bhagalpur University).***

18.0 BRIJ PREMI'S RESEARCH ON MANTO

By Prof. Mohd. Hassan

****The author headed the Department of Urdu JNU and edited ASRI-ADAB, well-known literary journal.***

Brij Premi has written a research oriented book captioned "***Life and Works of Saadat Hassan Mantoo,***" which has **an edge over all the books and articles written on Mantoo so far.**

Brij Premi has provided interesting information, after putting in hard labour and describing in minute detail Manto's family, forefathers and his personality which people in general have no idea of. This book is so full of life that it deserves to be published and included in the monthly '*Asri Adab*' again. Brij Premi has effectively analysed Manto's dramas, sketches, short stories and letters etc. He has tried to present in depth and proper context-Manto's thought and art. It is evident that the whole research-oriented work is praiseworthy and it ignores Manto's negative aspects of his bitterness of thought and art. The fact is that Manto steers clear of the unpleasant contradictions of his age and his group. That is the reason why he was popular and among the loved ones and continues to be so, and that again is the reason of his being targeted by critics. **Till date this work of Brij Premi is the last word on Mantoo, and for every student of the art of short story writing, this book is worth reading.**

****(Translated from Urdu By Prof. M.L. Raina)***

19.0 DR. BRIJ PREMI'S MOMENTOUS WORK

“Saadat Hassan Manto-Hayat Aur Karnamay”

By Upender Ambardar

Dr. Brij Premi, a noted Urdu scholar and a writer is a name familiar to a wide circle of Urdu readers. The wealth of written material he has left behind in the form of books, research articles, short stories, essays, literary criticism, allegories besides translations and travelogues is a veritable treasure trove in the world of creative Urdu literature. His wider canvas and literary genius has resulted in remarkable and well-recognised literary works. Infact, his works have contributed immensely to the growth, development and enrichment of the Urdu literature.

"Sadat Hassan Mantoo-Hayat Aur Karnamay" (Life and Works) is one such highly acclaimed literary work of Dr. Brij Premi.

This master piece, which is based on incisive and in-depth research work, has won him the paeans of praise from all shades of the Urdu scholars all over the country. The said book of 375 pages thoughtfully structured in various sections and chapters reveals and shares various startling facts and facets of Mantoo's life and literary works. The author at the very beginning enlightens the reader about Mantoo's Kashmiri descent and his excessive emotional affinity with Kashmir. This fact Mantoo himself proclaims time and again in his writings with a profound sense of pride : **"I am a Kashmiri. Long back my ancestors migrated from Kashmir to Punjab, where they embraced Islam"**.

Mantoo's admiration and adoration for Kashmir is inherent and sentimental, which is corroborated by his revelation in an article: **"I am also a Kashmiri...and I have endless love for fellow Kashmiris"**.

The reader also comes to know that **Krishan Chander**, the legendary Urdu writer and Mantoo's literary companion also endorses it by his assertions: **"Mantoo like Nehru and Iqbal is a Kashmiri Pandit...By his disposition, temperament, features and spirits, Mantoo even today is a Kashmiri Pandit."** Mantoo's Saraswat Brahman pedigree is also affirmed by his wife Safia Begum in one of her letters to the author. As investigated by the author Dr. Premi, the surname 'Mantoo' owes its origin to a Kashmiri word '**Manut**', meaning one and a half seer (a Kashmiri weight measurement). Mantoo's ancestors would take this weight of the produce as levy from the public as a part of the tax collection. As detailed in the book, one of the ancestors of Mantoo namely Khawaja Rehmat Ullah, who dealt in Pashmina and Shawl business is believed to have migrated from Kashmir to Lahore (Punjab) in the beginning of nineteenth century and thereafter to Amritsar where he finally settled down.

It was at Samrala, a place in district Ludhiana where Mantoo was born on 11th May 1912 and also had his initial education. His father Moulvi Ghulam Hassan had twelve issues by his two wives. During his student days, Mantoo envisaged little interest in the studies but somehow managed to pass his matriculation examination from Amritsar. Influenced by progressive literary movement and the ideology of Marx and Lenin, Bari Aleeg, Mantoo's mentor and preceptor was instrumental in moulding his thinking and character. It resulted in the stock piling of a large number of books on Marx, Lenin, Stalin, Gorky, Pushkin, Chekov, October Russian Revolution, Oscar Wilde, Maupassant and Victor Hugo in Mantoo's room, named '**Darul-Hamar**'. The author further mentions that Mantoo's youthful imagination was also fired by the revolutionary conviction of Bhagat Singh, whose photograph adorned Mantoo's room shelf joined by his communist friends, Mantoo's said room was the hub of animated discussions about the great October Russian Revolution and Marxist Ideology.

Though after matriculation, Mantoo enrolled himself for F.A. Studies at Aligarh Muslim University but impending economic constraints and failing health coerced him to discontinue

his studies. After having been diagnosed to be suffering from T.B. disease, Mantoo decided to go to Batote (J&K State) sanatorium for convalescence, where he stayed for three months.

Batote's spell binding natural grandeur, picturesque surroundings and Mantoo's infatuation with a native shepherdess named, '**Bego**' find their reflections in Mantoo's well-known short stories entitled "**Ek khat**", "**Bego**", "**Misri Ki Dali**", "**Mausam Ki Shararat**" and "**Lalteen**" etc.

Mantoo's association with a progressive daily newspaper of Amritsar "**Masawat**" heralded his journalistic career. Subsequently due to the financial stringencies resulting from the death of his father and also out of his flawed relationships with some of his close relatives, forced young Mantoo to move to Lahore, where he joined Lala Karam Chand's newspaper "**Paras**" on monthly wages of Rs forty.

It was during this time that besides compiling translated short stories of Gorky, Mantoo himself translated certain Russian short stories for a special number of '**Alamgheer**' magazine.

Compelled by his economic constraints and indifferent health, the author Dr. Brij Premi lucidly traces Mantoo's journey from Lahore to Bombay at the young age of twenty years. In order to satiate his literary hunger, Mantoo with renewed will and vigour associated himself with different cine periodicals and film companies of Bombay. In January 1936, he started as a columnist-cum-editor in *Nazeer Ludhianavis*' cine weekly "**Musavir**", on monthly wages of Rs forty only and later-on shifted to "**Karwan**", another periodical at Bombay.

His subsequent association as a dialogue writer, with Bombay's 'Imperial Film Company' and later on with 'Film City' and 'Hindustan Cine Tune' is also covered by the author.

During this period, Mantoo wrote the screen play of his first feature film '**Apni Nagariya**', which was based on his own short story '**Keechad**'. The film turned out to be a box office hit.

Mantoo's marriage in 1939 with Safya Begum who belonged to an old Kashmiri family of Lahore but settled in Africa, the birth of his first child Arif in 1940 and his mother's demise in 1940 itself are well documented by the author, Dr. Brij Premi.

Mantoo's disillusionment with life because of his mother's death and his deteriorating health forced him to say good-bye to Bombay and seek employment as a script writer in the Drama section of All India Radio in 1941 on a salary of Rs 150 per month. Urdu legends like Krishna Chander, Upender Nath Ashq, Noom Meem Rashid, Ahmed Nadeem Qasmi, Rajander Singh Bedi and Behnaz Lucknawi were his associates there. During his one and a half year's stint at All India Radio Delhi, Mantoo wrote more than one hundred and fifty radio plays and features, the notable among them being "**Jaeb Kutra**", "**Neeli Ragen**", "**Journalist**", besides "**Intezar Ka Doosra Rukh**". All these details have been revealed with graphic description by the author.

The hurt caused by indifference of his colleagues due to professional jealousy and the death of his lone son Arif in July 1942 compelled Mantoo to quit the job at All India Radio and to shift to Bombay once again on 7th August 1942, where he subsequently joined 'Filmistan', the film company on a salary of Rs 300 per month. It was at the Filmistan that he scripted his first film under its banner by the name of '**Chal Chal Rae Naujawan**'. It was followed by the release of his two more films '**Ghumand**' and '**Mirza Ghalib**'. As clearly indicated by the author, Mantoo was greatly influenced by the poetry of Ghalib, the fact which is collaborated by the frequent use of Ghalib's poetry by Mantoo in his various writings.

His uneasy equation with the management of Filmistan and the rosy picture of better professional prospectus at Lahore (Pakistan) persuaded Mantoo to migrate to Pakistan in January 1948, where his family had already migrated after the partition of the country. There, he again associated himself with the film industry and his first film in Pakistan was '**Beli**', which was followed by his another film '**Doosri Kothi**'.

As per the author Dr. Brij Premi, the enormous devastation, violence and bloodshed

inflicted on the people of the subcontinent in the aftermath of the partition in 1947 forced Mantoo to pour-out his crying soul in his short stories. As reflected in them, he outrightly rejected the narrow minded religious and communal approach of the fundamentalist forces in both the countries. His daringly written post partition literary work in Pakistan is indicative of the view that Mantoo was deeply saddened by the events that followed the partition of the country.

The dreadful realities of the partition of the country are vividly reflected in Mantoo's writings, in which the hard hitting denunciation of the communal forces is quite evident. Mantoo's unorthodox look, coupled with his pragmatic and rational approach is reflected in his short stories like '**Kali Shalvar**', '**Boo**', '**Dhuvan**', '**Thanda Goshat**', '**Khol Doh**' and '**Oopur Neechay Darmiyan**' etc. These creative writings infuriated and antagonized both the colonial English rulers before independence and the Pakistani authorities after partition.

Further, Mantoo's short stories also have a word of sympathy for the downtrodden oppressed and those leading a life of squalor and misery. Mantoo examines the issues related with the common man with sentimental compassion and fearless assertion. His humanistic approach, championing of the cause of the proletariat and his socialist and leftist leanings are quite evident in his writings. Even after his migration to Pakistan, Mantoo did not discard and surrender his secular and progressive credentials. He remained committed to them to the last. As revealed by the author, a combination of successive setbacks, indifference of his close associates at Bombay, uncertainties and insecurities of life and fickleness of the 'Dame Luck' to favour him forced Mantoo to migrate to Lahore (Pakistan).

Undeniably, the book "**Sadat Hassan Mantoo—Hayat Aur Karmay**", is an outstanding work of Dr. Brij Premi. It has rightly been acclaimed by the critics as a magnificent, comprehensive and in-depth research work on the life and works of Mantoo. The book is a valuable addition to the Urdu literature.

****(The author is a Keen student of Kashmir's Culture and Tradition. His pioneering work on KASHMIRI PANDIT DIASPORA IN HIMACHAL PRADESH has been widely acclaimed. He has also translated many Kashmiri and Urdu writers into English.***

20.0 THE FAMILY OF MANTO

By Dr. Brij Premi

There are no two opinions about the Kashmiri origins of Sadat Hasan Mantoo. His father from his externals demonstrably appeared to be a Kashmiri. Dressed in a coat with a buttoned up collar, a Kashmiri-style turban on his head and flaunting a dyed-up beard he would drag the Kashmiri labourers working in the Punjab to his sitting room and lovingly tell them, **'I am also a Kashmiri'**.

In his myriad writings Mantoo too has proudly written about his Kashmiri origins and even accepted the label of 'hato' with all its insulting sting that, feudalistic people low in culture would frequently hurl at Kashmiris. In fact, it never instilled a feeling of inferiority in his psyche. He writes :-

'I am a Kashmiri—a hato'.

All his life he craved for Kashmir.

In a letter he yearns for a life in Kashmir and that emotive yearning was deeply buried in his sub-conscious. He felt it perpetually biting him like a venomous snake and its expression is found variedly expressed in his writings.

It was during 19th century that his family shifted to Punjab. It like many other Kashmiris lived off the Shawlbaf trade. The ancestor of the family, Rahmat Allah, settled at Lahore and later on shifted to Amritsar permanently with the design of expanding his trade. The family continued living at Amritsar for generations together. When Sadat Hasan Manto came to consciousness, Mantoo had set up a separate mohalla for themselves and was known as the Mohalla of lawyers. The reason for such a nomenclature was that the family had taken up law as their profession and had bidden farewell to the shawl-selling vocation.

Maharaja Ranjeet Singh was in ascendancy when the family-ancestor settled at Amritsar permanently. Amritsar had assumed greater importance than Lahore because of the holy shrine of Darbar Sahib. Amritsar had importance because it was a trade centre. Khwaja Rahmat Allah had not confined his economic activities only to shawl, but had started dealing in pashmina too. In his travels Moorecraft has made a special mention of Kashmiris busy in Pashmina trade. Moorecraft writes:-

Amritsar is a shawl producing centre...This industry appears to have been pushed up by Kashmiris who had fled their land due to Afghan tyranny much before the Sikh occupation of Kashmir (Travels).

In the times of Rahmat Allah Pashmina-weaving was a profitable business. After him his family expanded the business limit with lot many efforts. Khwaja Jamal-ud-Din, the grandson of RahmatAllah, expanded the business beyond the precincts of Amritsar to Lahore and Bombay. But, by this time the English had consolidated their rule and their intervention had caused a set-back to the Indian handicrafts. Pashmina-weaving too came under the adverse impact. The Mantoo-family also got crisis-ridden and by and by the family wound up its trade and diverted to legal profession.

Khwaja Abdul Gani son of Khwaja Jamal-ud-Din was the first to divert to the legal profession and he came to be an appeal-writer. Second son, Khwaja Miya Assadullah, duly studied law and rose to be a lawyer and earned a fair name as a good lawyer at Amritsar. But, major than this, he earned his name for service to the Muslim community. He had deeper sympathies for the Muslims and wanted Muslim boys and girls to be properly initiated in religious education. This sentiment he disseminated even in the Muslim elite of the city. He set up the Muslim Anjuman for the welfare of Muslims and founded a M.O. High School of Muslim learners. It was here in the same school where Sadat Hasan Mantoo was initiated in formal education. Mian Asaad Ullah acted as the general secretary of the Anjuman nearly all his life and earned the respectable name of Ustad Jee' from his contemporaries in view of his discerning abilities and community sentiment. The tradition

goes that at Amritsar two alleys carried the names of Mian Assad Ullah Vakil. Jamal-ud-Din's third son, Mian Habib Ullah, was an attorney and his fourth son, despite all efforts, could not pursue the legal profession. He was pious and religious minded and held propagation of Islam as his fore most duty. It is said about him that he was extremely fearless, honest and sensitive as a person and perhaps he was the first among Muslims who lectured on the greatness of Islam and countered the Christian preachers and propagandists. What he did was of far-reaching consequences. This alone did not satisfy him. He issued religious journals which focussed on the reality of Jihad and research on Islam. He studied the Bible carefully and gained expertise in it. The breadth of his studies helped in a large measure to fulfill his religious obligations which he deemed very much as sacred.

The youngest son of Molvi Jamal-ud-Din was Molvi Ghulam Hassan who happened to be the father of Sadat Hasan Mantoo. He was a Munsiff by vocation and later on rose to be a sub judge. Like his ancestors Molvi Sahib was equally religious and literally followed all rituals and obligations. He passed away on 3rd February 1932 at the ripe age of seventy. At the time of his death Sadat Hasan was just twenty. Molvi Ghulam Hassan was married twice. From his first wife, Jan Bibi, he had nine issues in all. Three sons were Khwaja Allah Mohammad Hassan, Khwaja Sayyid Hassan and Khwaja Salim Hasan out of whom the first two sons had studied higher levels of law for Bar-at-Law. Both of them had shifted from Amritsar to Lahore during the repressive days of martial-law. It was during this very period when a famous political leader and freedom fighter of undivided India, Saif-ud-Din Kitchloo was framed up in the notorious Amritsar conspiracy case. Dr. Kitchloo had Kashmiri origins and was closely related to the Mantoo family. Khwaja Mohammad Hasan and Khwaja Sayyid Hasan pleaded his case. The former was the assistant editor of a law journal and the latter was Vice-Principal of the Lahore College. Both the brothers performed their duties with dedication and honesty for years on end and afterwards sailed for Africa where they set up an independent legal consultancy '**Hasan** and **Hassan**'. The consultancy gained lot of reputation for providing legal services. Meanwhile, Sayyid Hasan had to sail for London in connection with a legal case involving Privy Council. There he cultivated contacts with the Fijian Muslim League to the invitation which the Mantoo brothers decided to run their legal consultancy business.

That is how they settled in Fiji and pursued their legal profession. Before settling in Fiji they practised law at Bombay for a short time. Manto has made a mention of it at many a place, though not directly. A character of Mantoo, Ram Khalan, lists the name of Sayyid Hasan as Saayid Shallam Balishter.

The legal practice of Manto Brothers flourished in the Fiji Island. By and by they started interacting with the spectrum of the Fijian society. Sayyid Hasan was appointed as the senior member of the Legislative Council and exercised influence over the Fijian politics and administrative affairs. It benefited the Fijian immigrants in a large measure. Al-Haj Mohammad Hasan was a pious and religious-minded person. His observation was that the Fijian Muslims were only statistical Muslims indifferent to Islam. He got the holy Quran translated into the local dialect and throughout his stay in the Island he preached and propagated Islam.

Saddat Hasan was a shade different from his brothers. He was born as a rebel. He was neither a believer nor pious in terms of religion. He had his own, characteristic views about life, religion and ethics. While comparing Sadat with his brothers Krishen Chander jots down—

'He has seen his elder brother-wearing a Shariat-dictated beard, believer, pious and Namazi Musalman. Manto is all that has nothing in common with them. He respects his elders, but does not love them. In matters of courtesy, ethics and world-view he was entirely different from them and traversed a separate trajectory contrary to them and therefore had abandoned his home right in his childhood'.

Builders of New Literature:

Mantoo lived the stark bitterness of life. In his childhood days only he had lived the

hideous miseries of life and had borne the harsh temperament of his father. He had also tasted the love-lessness of his brothers. Mantoo had keenly observed the nudities of life in contrast to his brothers whose scholarship was limited to religion and law. He respected his brothers but was in no way emotionally involved with them. His brother, Sayyid Hasan, had stayed with him at Bombay and was unhappy with the manner and style of his life and had judged him as a 'stray'. Mantoo has depicted it fearlessly and for this he has earned disdain both from his admirers and critics.

He writes:

"They in reality had spent their lives within the parameters set by law-books. They fought and pleaded for cases all through their tenor of lives in Lahore, Bombay and Fiji and South of Africa. They are unaware of the tinsel world of Bollywood and know little about its lovers and beloveds. That is why they took to their heels and took refuge in the Khilafat house" (Noor Jehan).

Molvi Ghulam Hasan's second spouse, Choti Begum, was Mantoo's mother. She hailed from Kabul and bore the name of Sardar Begum. It was from Kabul that her family had migrated to Lahore. Sardar Begum was an orphan and was married to Hidayat Ullah, but the marriage was not a success. It was at Lahore that she was again married to Molvi Ghulam Hassan. She bore him three issues. Sadat Hasan was the male child. As per Anis Nagi Molvi Sahib had a respectable position in the government but was not very prosperous. In the family his second marriage was more or less disliked.

It is already put that Mantoo's father, Molvi Ghulam Hasan had multiple issues. He had retired by the time Sadat was to be reared and looked after. Because of his meagre resources Choti Begum's two issues, Sadat and his sister, Nasira, had to bear the brunt of it. They failed to get required education and bring-up. Sadat failed in the Matric examination several times and finally passed in third division. It is interesting to note that he failed in the subject of Urdu.

Mantoo's mother was a noble and mild-mannered lady. She had got married to Molvi Sahib at such a stage in life when he had lost the vigour of youth and was economically not very prosperous. After his demise she somehow managed the home. It is said that she knew the skill of embroidery. After Mantoo had been in Bombay she too had joined him there. In fact, her daughter and son-in-law were also there in Bombay. After Mantoo was married she had continued to live with him. A letter from Ahmad Nadim Qasimi reveals that it was there, that she breathed her last in June, 1940.

At the behest of his mother Mantoo was married in a Kashmiri family long settled in Africa. The father of his spouse, Begum Safia, had been a police inspector in Africa. Mantoo himself has described their Kashmiri roots. He wrote to Ahmad Nadeem Qasimi in a letter:-

'My wife belonged to a Kashmiri family settled in Lahore'.

Mantoo's married life lasted just for sixteen years. He had four issues, one son and three daughters. During this short span Safia Begum had to face many ups and downs of life. The three years of adversity period of Mantoo's life severely impacted the bring-up of her children. But she never grumbled. She informed the writer-

'I am fortunate that I spent my life with a great literateur and by God's grace. It was all through a good life. He deeply loved me, my daughters and other kinsmen. Our life in sum was a happy venture'.

Safia Begum passed away at the age of sixty-two years. Mantoo's male child, Arif, could not live beyond a year. His three daughters, Nikhat, Nuzhat and Nusrat are still living.

The candle of Mantoo's life got extinguished on 18th January, 1955. He was a stormy petrel.

****(Translated from original Urdu text by Prof. ML Koul)***

21.0 MANTO AND MEHJOOR, THE POET-LAUREATE OF KASHMIR

By Dr. Brij Premi

Mehjoor wrote poetry in Kashmiri. It was he who gave new direction to Kashmiri poetry and made it rise to the pinnacles of grandeur and glory. He lent new touches to traditions. The poetry of this period brought the reader close to life, and also one comes across the themes of romance. Mehjoor gave language to the needs of his times. He depicted beauty and romance in his poetry and at the same time highlighted the sufferings of his people groaning under feudal tyranny.

With the burning embers of his verses, he sharpened the sensitivity of his people and created an awareness in them about the centuries old exploitation they were subjected to Mehjoor's voice lent strength to the people's protest. Mehjoor did not believe in slogan mongering. In his protest there is intensity, fire that stirs up the people. He never compromised on the beauty of his art. Instead he created new relevance for his poetry through elegance in style. He used his art to communicate the truth. Through his brilliance Mehjoor was able to reach people and their feelings found voice in his poetry. This made him immortal.

In the third decade of 20th century, Mehjoor sent translations of his two compositions *Posh-Motey Janano* (you-my prince of flowers) and *Greest Koor* (The peasant girl) to great poet Tagore. The colours/hues of the rainbow fauna playing games, the intoxicated gait of the deer, the dark and penetrating shadows of the lakes, the agony of the beloved at the pangs of separation, the ethereal expressions of love-all these impressed Tagore. These two poems reflected the beauty of nature, tranquility of soul and the serenity of beauty. To Tagore all these things were first love. Mehjoor came to earn the sobriquet of '*Wordsworth*' of Kashmir. In his early comments, one feels the strength of Mehjoor's poetic gifts and his recognition by the eminent poet. Subsequently, the Kashmiris became aware of Mehjoor's literary genius and this earned fame for Mehjoor.

As years rolled by, Mehjoor's poetry crossed geographical barriers and its beauty and fragrance reached other parts of the sub-continent. In these compositions there was new vision about the dreams of Kashmir. Mehjoor gave voice to the agonies and sufferings of his people. One comes across strong annoyance expressed by the poet on the prevailing situation. His songs reflect the exploitation by the ruling class and the anguish of the sufferers. These moved many people, to whom otherwise poetry never appealed. Sadat Hasan Manto, a Kashmiri himself, was profoundly influenced by this poetry of protest. Manto expressed : **I haven't seen Kashmir but Kashmiris have. I regret that I haven't seen Mehjoor.**

Kashmir was Manto's great weakness. That he couldn't see Kashmir pained him much. He had been to Batote once, where he had come after having been sent out of AMU as he was declared to be a patient of tuberculosis.

Kashmir interested Manto, because his ancestors hailed from Kashmir. About five generations back his ancestor Khwaja Rahmatullah like many others fled Kashmir during Sikh rule and settled down in Lahore. His grandson Khwaja Jamal-ud-Din came to Amritsar to live. He never forgot being a Manto and took pride in his Kashmiri origin. "In Kashmiri Manut means a weight equal to 1½ seer". Manto said : "I am a Kashmiri". "I too am a Kashmiri and love Kashmiris". "I am a Kashmiri-my ancestors were Kashmiris. After migration we came to Punjab". This is the reason Manto always turned emotional at the very mention of Kashmir. This sentiment made him write stories-***Bego, Ek Khat, Misri Ki Dali, Lalteen, Teetwal Ka Kuta, Akhri Salute.***

It has been mentioned that Manto's ancestors felt prompted, rather forced to leave their birth place due to tyranny of Sikh rule. This always haunted Manto that Mehjoor never thought of leaving his land as he decided to bear with the exploitation. As Mehjoor

continued to live there, he was able to raise the voice of protest. Manto appreciates Mehjoor.

"I feel shocked that my ancestors migrated. It is really something to put up with sufferings. Exile has a romance of its own. Mehjoor stood up to it and remained close to the ground. He never thought of migrating. He remained there, he remained a part of the place he belonged to. (Shair-i-Kashmir Mehjoor).

Partition of the country was a tragedy Manto. He never reconciled to it. It was his strong belief that hearts can never be partitioned on the basis of religion and politics. "What happened later I don't know. Which actually is one's government was never understood by me".

(Ganjei Farishtey)

When relations between India and Pakistan became strained, Manto felt restless. The shocks he experienced found echo in his stories. In this background one can feel the agony of a person who loves humanity.

"I couldn't separate India from Pakistan".

(Ganjei Farishtey)

As relation between the two countries grew more tense, Manto took refuge in remembering Mehjoor. He felt that Mehjoor's songs had the healing touch and could heal the bruised wounds. The spontaneity and sweetness of his songs eschews malice and hatred.

"I wish Mehjoor were alive!"

Had he been living, who would have thought of Dr. Graham. He could admonish Jawahar Lal Nehru and Khwaja Nizam-ud-Din (both Kashmiris). A Kashmiri, be he a Hindu or a Musalman, is a Kashmiri. You are Nehru, he is Nizamuddin. Both are Kashmiris. It is a different thing none of you have lived there. The reality is that you have Kashmiri psyche. You can't afford rice and shalgam to be kept away from your food. Let you swear...that you will live in love with one another.

(Shair-e-Kashmir)

This essay was written by Manto on 19 Nov. 1952.

There is no similarity between Manto and Mehjoor. To look for it is futile. It is true that they were restless and yearned for freedom of the country. Both raised protest over exploitation of the people. Their pens gave forceful expression to this voice. Both subscribe to brotherhood and communal harmony. They were equally opposed to exploitation of religion for political purposes. Kashmir is the land of both. After independence Mehjoor's expression turned somewhat critical. He resorts to satire. Manto misapproves what he sees after landing in Pakistan and in the series '**Chacha Sam Ke Naam**' he displays his anguish with all his vigour. His expression and its style are pungent. He scorns the system, which made his country an appendage of Western capitalism. One can hardly find romance in writings of Manto but one can see depiction of hard realities of life. The 'romance' in Mehjoor's compositions had profound effect on Manto. He writes.

"Migration is an important element in the poetry of both of us. I don't know what we have got out of it. After reading Mehjoor in translation, I can say with authority that the migration in his poetry of romance proved to be source of immense pleasure for me".

Manto had not studied Mehjoor much. The translations, at times faulty, could not provide him a full insight into Mehjoor. Had he got the opportunity to appreciate his poetry in original or through good translations, I am sure Manto would have definitely enjoyed the loftiness and beauty of what Mehjoor wrote. He could even perceive that Mehjoor's pen was mightier than him.

***(Translated from original by Sh. MN Kak)**

22.0 GHALIB IN THE WRITINGS OF MANTO

By Dr. Brij Premi

Ghalib and Manto are colosusses of two different segments of literature. The two are not bound in any relation of time and space. One is a 19th century poet and the other 20th century storyteller. The two figures had different professional family backgrounds, yet they had an amazing relationship. The creative fires in Ghalib had catalyzed him as a personality of mazed layers. This was what made an egoist and anarchist that Sadat Hasan Manto was to bow his head in awe to Mirza Assad Ullah Khan Ghalib. Ego was writ large over the personality of Manto. It was the rampart of his strength and it was what fault-lined his personality. His undiminshable ego lost its lustre to Ghalib's luminous aura of greatness. His frequent mention of Ghalib in varied ways conveys the reality explicitly.

In matters of temperament Manto was akin to Ghalib. Both had bohemian traits. Ghalib occasionally never hesitated from drinks which he borrowed and Manto also enjoyed swishes of drinks by putting his art on sale or by robbing pockets of others.

Ghalib says:

'Mai Se Garaz Nishat Hey

Kis Ru Siya Ko'

Ik go na Be Khudi Mujhe Din Rat Chahiye'

Possibly as happened with Ghalib Manto also took to drinking as a pleasure. But with passage of time it became a compulsion for hurling himself into oblivion. In the last days Ghalib was neck-deep in economical and mental crisis and drinking would mean a **wavy** haze of forget fulness for him. The last days of Manto were equally painful and agonizing. His intellectual capacities had petrified and wine alone was the support-plank. Both shared the pains and anxieties of life and rued the prevailing system that made them bite away each moment of life from the jaws of death. Gaddar (rebellion of 1857) left Ghalib a broken reed and the 'angst' looming large in the surroundings is expressly communicated through his letters. Manto lived the tragedy of partition and the degrading fires of communalism that raged furiously. His stories and essays written during this dark period demonstrably convey his internalised poignance and agony. Both the artists convey the events that were happening and the agonies that were rending their cores in their characteristic lucid style. The tale that they weave is about a world reduced to a sapless desert.

Manto as a terrific egoist critiqued the greatest of the great. He snapped contact with Nazir Ludhianvi, editor of the weekly '**Musvir**', as he sensed diminution in his sense of reverence for him. He gave up his services in All India Radio where his dramas were scissored at the behest of Upendra Nath Ashk a story-writer and never saw the gates of filmistan which gave him bagfuls of money at the suspicion of Ashok Kumar, his actor-friend, planning to filmise story-lines of Nazir Ajmeri, Kamal Amrohi and Ismat Chughtai. All this was beyond his tolerance level. His personal benefits he never minded. On his way to Calcutta Ghalib broke his journey at Lucknow. His well-wishers were keen to arrange for his meeting with the Prime Minister of Awadh. But the meeting could not materialise because Prime Minister showed reluctance to exempt him from payment of call-money. He even kicked away a teaching job in a Delhi college as he fell insulted by secretary of state, Thomson, for not receiving him at the gates of his mansion. Nothing better can testify to his integrity and sense of self-esteem. Both were egoists to a fault though egoism was equally their strength.

The complexities of Ghalib's sensibilities and experiences are concealed in tinted veils of joys and sorrows. His metaphors are pregnant with a world of meanings. Manto also in his stories seems to give expression to complex layers of human pains and pangs and inner turbulence. Ghalib is a poet, but his intellect is not away from the '**dastan tradition**'. In his leisure he was interested in the study of '**dastan**'. His metaphors have a hang of '**dastan**'.

Mantoo's stories have episodic beauty and episodes do not lose their sparkle. For both close bonding of word and meaning matters. In fact, in their respective realms both are sovereign. Though a poet, Ghalib is a prose-writer too and has been rightly estimated as the founder of modern prose. He is inimitable. Mantoo falls in the same line of Ghalib. His themes, technique and language are not imitable. Ghalib's experimental layers are complex and profound. So are Mantoo's. The very intellectual and emotional proximity that Mantoo had with Ghalib made him to admire and love

Ghalib as an icon. Mantoo was born after 40 years of Ghalib's demise.

Sometimes one is surprised about Mantoo's fascination for Ghalib as he had no bent for poetry. His mention of poets and their poetry is rare. In 1945 he told Majruh Sultanpuri, a modern poet, that he had no love lost for gazals. Yet at the same time Mantoo labours at Ghalib's gazals, quotes him frequently and employs his verses as allusions with a view to enhancing the intensity of his semantics. In 1940 he made a resolve to write a film script on Ghalib and devoted himself to the study of Ghalib. In a letter to his friend, Ahmad Nadim Qasimi, he writes

'I am studying Ghalib these days. I intend to write a film script about him. Though material is scarce, yet whatever is available will do? **Mantoo's Letter P 163.**

He continued with it for quite some time. Around 1943 he took to writing a script about Ghalib. The letter that he wrote to Ahmad Nadim Qasimi in April 1943 hints at it.

'I am writing two scripts. One is about Ghalib'.

Letters of Mantoo, P 144

But his script could not be filmed. During his stay in India his dream could not materialise. After he migrated to Pakistan Sohrab Modi, a film director, utilised his script for filming and Rajendra Singh Bedi wrote dialogues for it. It was recognised as a successful Mantoo film.

Mantoo has made an apt use of Ghalib's verses in a number of essays and sketches, mainly for satires without injury to the theme and subject to sharpen their pointed effect. The verses are absorbed in the subject frame-work and seldom stand out as not being in tune with the context. Some examples :-

1) Ghalib was a poet of Urdu. A century ago he had mused-

Huye Mar Ke Ham Jo Ruswa, Huye Kyon Na Garake-e-Na Kahen Janaza Utha, Na Kahein Mazaar Hota'

The poor man had no fear of life because from cradle to grave he was a model of humiliation in the world. He had no fear but was extremely sure and confident. That is what made him to desire to die by drowning in the river-waters. There would be no bier and no grave-yard. I wish him to have taken his birth in your land. You would lift his bier pompously and build his mausoleum in the style of a sky-scraper. Had you condescended to act out his desire you would have prepared a tank for his body to remain sunk and visitors would throng to see it as people do in a zoo.

2) Cloth is a costly item. Poor people after death don't get even a shroud. Those who are living are in shreds. Mentally ruffled I thought of setting up a nude club.

What will they live by— rattled me as a worry. Each other's nakedness! Eyes taking a morsel of it will leave it there in disgust there. There is desolation. There is grinding poverty. There is irritation. Dear uncle appreciate.

Fifth letter to Uncle Sam

3) You must have noticed a verse on the hotel-walls

Dar-O-Deewar Pe Hasrat Se Nazar Karte Hein

Khush Raho Ahle Wattan Hum To Safar Karte Hain

If poor, it will certainly injure the core of your heart writing on walls

To Ghalib's memory he dedicated his "***Ganjay Firishtey***", a collection of his pen-portraits, which amply demonstrates the fact of his resemblance to a vanity-ridden poet like Ghalib. He was so much impacted by him that under his spell he made a frequent mention of him in all his works. Mantoo had learnt the secret of brevity of words from Ghalib only. It

is no exaggeration to put that Ghalib was his real master. Had it not been so a rebel and stormy-petrel like Mantoo would not have been extremely courteous and respectful to Ghalib.

4) A verse of Ghalib

**'Pakde Jate Hein Farishton Ke Likhe Par Naahak
Aadmi Koyi Hamara Dam-e-Tehreer Bhi Tha'**

Those writings on walls cannot be models of writing—Hence arresting people does not arise. This is why the wall-writings and wall-paintings have not suffered the state repression and intimidation.

Writing on walls

5) Ghalib says

**Mein Hilata To Hun Un Ko Magar Ae Jazba E.Dil
Un Pe Ban Jaye Kuch Aisey Ki Ban Aaye Na Bane'**

It means that this verse would not have found place in his anthology had he hated un-invited guests. Ghalib depicts 'I invite her but I like her coming to me uninvited on any pretext'. The reality is that un-invited arrival is more pleasurable and sumptuous than when she arrives on invitation. It is beyond one's ken why people scorn un-invited guests. It can be said that Ghalib had said it about beloveds whose un-invited arrival is thrilling. You have forcibly tagged this verse on to guests. Let it be so.

It is how many verses of Ghalib have cropped into Mantoo's writings. In him there are themes that are inspired by Ghalib's verses.

a) Ched Khuban Se Chali Jaye Asad

b) KuchNahi Hey To Adawat HiSahi

c) Sar Khujata Hey Jahan Zakham Sar Acha Ho Jaye

d) Lazat-e-Sang Bandaz-i-Taqreer Nahi

f) Zahmat Meahar Darakhshan

It is already said that Mantoo, was an egoist and his entire life kept on simmering in the fires of egoism. Upender Nath Ashok in his book '**Mantoo, My Enemy; writes—**

Mantoo's escapism is because of his egoistic temper and the secret of his greatness lies in his egoism. He was given to flattery. He would read out Ghalib's verses to Mukerjee though a boor averse to delicacies of poetry. It does not detract from Mukerjee's greatness. He had no second in his art. Ghalib appreciation was beyond him'.

It is evident that Mantoo, ran away from field of life when his egoistic sense was not gratified. Not an escapist he would stake everything at the altar of his ego. He would harness all his faculties. Finding the path prickly he would slip away by the by-lane to escape from humiliation, disgrace and exposure. The defeat of his irrepressible ego was the cause for his escape from his home. Amritsar, Lahore, Bombay, service from the All India Radio and Filmistan in Bombay. The period that Ashq mentions is the golden period of Filmistan where Mantoo ruled his roost as a boss, To keep his airs Mantoo would not drag his feet from indulgence of Mukerjee. He used verses of Ghalib for such indulgence. This is the reason that he loved verses of Ghalib and the store of such verses was full with him. Hearing verses of Ghalib people dance into ecstasy and those who do not make a sense of the verses never express disappointment. Ghalib and his poetry are a craze. Mantoo used it to the hilt.

Mantoo did much more than this. His essays about Ghalib are available in a good number.

Ghalib and Chodvi (an essay on Ghalib) is like a feature in the essay form based on the letter of Hatim Ali Mehar Mughul children are strange. They kill the woman they love...I too in the craze of my youth loved a Domba-girl and have kept her in a condition of death!

On the support of a Ghalib's letter he writes—'Kotwal was the enemy and magistrate was not known. Feud was waiting for a chance and stars were in adverse stations. Despite magistrate being the officer of Kotwal and with respect to me he turned to be a subordinate of Kotwal and ordered my incarceration?

Mantoo writes :-

Some of these references for a story writer can help in preparing the map of Ghalib's romantic life and the triangle of perpetual love gets formed by 'you, the tyrannical dombini and the Kotwal?'

On these references Manto has woven an essay and this very essay is the plank of film on Mirza Ghalib.

b) Mirza's life in Agra

To map out Mirza's youth this is a feature-cum-essay highlighting his kite-flying, adventures with Kanwar Balwan Singh and his chess-games. It is crowded with a host of characters like Umrao Jan. Mullah Abdul Samad, Khwaja Ghulam Hasan, Nawab Allah Baksh and many others. It also spotlights Mirza's life-aspects at Agra. Manto has put it in his own characteristic manner.

c) **Ghalib and Govt Service** This theme presents Ghalib's appointment in Delhi College. Manto commences it this way—

'The house by the side of late Hakim Mahmood Khan's mansion in the backyards of a mosque is that of Ghalib. You had said about it.

**'Masjid Ke Zer-e-Saya, Ek Ghar Bana Liya
Yeh Banda-e-Kamina Hamshye Khuda Hein'**

No harm in taking you inside the house. It is late in the night. Mirza's house will surely be abuzz. Though not that abuzz, Munshi Shiva Narayan is present.

The episode of Ghalib's service in Delhi college is made a mention of. The full threads including that of Thomson are picked up. The kicking off the service on the trifle plea of Thomson not showing him any respect is dramatically delineated.

d) Mirza Ghalib as an invitee at Hashmat Khan's Mansion.

It is an essay lightly written in an epigrammatic style based on an episode about Ghalib, Hashmat Khan and characters of Chodvi. Hashmat Khan's over-bearing mannerism is drawn in a fascinating manner.

e) **Drinks borrowed:** Manto in this essay has described the relations between Ghalib and Mathura Das, Ghalib's state of indebtedness and court proceedings in the court of Mufti Sadur-ud-Din. Ghalib's verses are interspersed in this essay to add to its fascination.

It will not be apt to give a de-tailed account of numerous verses of Ghalib that Manto has used in his works. But it is certain that his writings other than his short-stories are replete with them.

It is already commented that the plank of egoism and self centered bent was shared equally by both the stalwarts. In Ghalib egoism raises its head in the form of superiority complex and in Manto too superiority complex is expression of the same character-trait.

Some Examples: a) *Hein Aur Bhi Duniya Mein Sukhan Var Bohut Ache*

**b) 'Aaj Mugh Sa Nahi Zamane Mein'
Kehte Hai Ki Ghalib Ka Hein Andaz-e-Bayan Aur'
Ada-e-Kaas Se Ghalib Hua**

Hum 'Sukhan Faham Hein 'Ghalib Ke Taraf Dar Nahi'

Sadat Hasan Manto was an artist of the same tribe. It can be exemplified by the following quote—

'I was a short story writer of the entire country of Hindustan. Now I am a story-teller of Pakistan. There are a number of publications to my credit. People love and respect me. In India there were three law-suits filed against me and in Pakistan one law-suit is pending decision for quite sometime!

A Letter to Uncle Sam

The trumpet-sounding epitaph that he used to give to his admirers as an autograph supports the thesis of his superiority complex.

Epitaph: Here lies Sadat Hasan Manto buried. All the secrets and subjects of his stories too are buried in his bosom. He is still thinking under the tons of earth that he is a great story writer.

To Ghalib's memory he dedicated his '**Ganjay Firishtey'** a collection of his pen-portraits,

which amply demonstrates the fact of his resemblance to a vanity-ridden poet like Ghalib. He was so much impacted by him that under his spell he made a frequent mention of him in all his works. Manto had learnt the secret of brevity of words from Ghalib only. It is no exaggeration to put that Ghalib was his real master. Had it not been so as rebel and stormy-petrel like Manto would not have been extremely courteous and respectful to Ghalib.

****(Translated from original Urdu text by Prof. M.L. Koul)***

23.0 SOME ASPECTS OF MANTOO'S PERSONALITY

By Dr. Brij Premi

When Mantoo came to consciousness, he found himself in an environment which had all the rigours of suffocating discipline. Being a strict disciplinarian his father was miserly in showering his love on him. Absence of love and indulgence transformed Sadat Hasan into Mantoo. His marked features of fret and fume and extra ordinary egoism made up the deficiencies brought about by loveless environment pervading his family. In his later years Sadat Hasan had to face difficulties galore. Nobody balm his festering wounds. His friends too misunderstood him. Such ordeals in life had turned him into gold. Though obdurate in his demeanor, yet he had live sensitive chords for empathy with others. Such lusture of his integrity was visible all through his life—When he was an ordinary editor, when he was a petrel in literary and film world and when in utter penury in Pakistan he put his creative works on sale for paltry sums. He never lost his stature as a model of large-heartedness and integrity. A sketch of his integrity is drawn by Hamid Jalal in his essay '**Mantoo Mamoo**':

'In Bombay he had a medium type of flat, but the flat would always be crowded with guests. He hosted them well. In case guests would be more in numbers than the net-bearing beds, he had no hesitation to sleep on floor. Sometimes the available floor-space would not suffice the guests present. He would spend the night on wooden planks lying on way to toilet underneath the roof. Mantoo would not even make a mention of it to anybody'.

Mantoo purchased high-quality goods and was so large-hearted as to distribute them among his friends and admirers. He was ailing and hence would consult well-known specialists. He would advise others also to consult good specialists and help them with money to be paid to doctors. He carried his servant to his doctor and paid his hefty fees out of his pocket. The doctor was so much impressed that he accepted only half the fees.

He was a sensationalist by temperament. Some of his ways astonished people beyond measure. Such sensational ways dotting his life created a puzzling environment. When a student he had riveted attention for his romantic ways from his contemporaries and friends and had earned sobriquet 'Tommy'. Dissemination of rumours was his hobby. Each rumour would be unique and one has to accept his sense of innovativeness. Some rumours are like:

Americans, have purchased the Taj and are shifting it to America through machines.

In Lahore traffic soldiers have been provided with Jackets of Ice.

My fountain-pen is made of the horns of a donkey. Alongwith some of his friends Mantoo had formed an organisation. The organisation was named as 'organisation of idiots'. It would lobby for astounding causes. Its members would talk out strange dialogues.

What is your nib about this pen?

What is your button about this shirt?

As per Krishen Chander Mantoo was in the habit of pulling out a rabbit from his hat and he would do it efficiently. When his film '**Eight Days**' was being filmed, his famous story '**Boo**' (smell) was accused of obscenity and warrants were issued to him. A famous comedian of the day, V.H. Desai, was acting in his film. Mantoo was tricked by the idea of appointing him his pleader. He wanted to create a sensation, but his dream could not fructify because of film-shooting inconveniences.

Mantoo heralded his literary career with sensationalism. He directed the publisher of his stories to prepare such a dust cover for the work that its mere look should instigate the viewers to abuse him. His stories created a storm everywhere. The progressives labelled him as reactionary and reactionaries dubbed him as progressive and godless. He was denounced as a dirty mind given to obscenity. To de-addict him he was put in chains in a mental asylum. When out of mental asylum he spat out a meaning full sentence—

'Out of a small mental asylum I am going into a vast mental asylum?'

Mantoo was outspoken to a fault. He never played fraud on his conscience and called a spade a spade in his conversations, literary conferences and speeches that he made. His 'sketches' were seriously objected to. His friend and famous litterateur, Ibrahim Jalis, once told him:

'Manto! You turn your gaze on to the literary highway and notice the mile-stones that you have set up Babu Gopi Nath, Toba Tek Singh and Mozael. And now you are earning your bread by auctioning the lives of your friends in open bazzars.'

Such formal statements matted little for him. He never believed that all human characters after death were to be sent to laundry where from they would return clean washed and hung on the peg of God's mercy. Not a painter, but a photographer he drew pictures as they were, same to same. That is why he told his things relentlessly. There were controversies about his writings when he was alive. He cared too hoots for his critics and continued to portray things truthfully as he felt them. His temperamental swings are no less remarkable. His studies clearly highlight his world-view. He writes in **'Ganjay Farishtey'**.

'In his reformatory there are no shampoos and creams, no machine for hair. I am unaware of pressing hair into curls, art of adding layers of gloss and lustre. The squint of Agha Hashar is beyond me to straighten. I could not iron out the creases of my psyche and I could never compel my friend, Shyam, not to derogate bad women. In his work **'Ganjay Farishtey'** even the angels have been scathed and I have done it neatly and dexterously'.

All his life Mantoo was not habituated to a linear path and always deviated from it. From his childhood to death, from his translations to his satires, stories and essays one can observe, deviational curves. He never accepted and trod beaten tracks. He always took to untrodden tracks. Contrary to his contemporaries and predecessors he flouted all that was traditional. Iconoclasm was his instinct. He wrote psychological and pornographic stories with the design of revolting against tradition and beaten tracks and people dubbed them as obscene. He considered it heresy to tread those tracks that were dotted with flag set up by others. His themes were inconceivable and highly original. In this behalf a reference can be made to a letter he had posted to Ahmad Nadim Qasimi:

'Enough has been written about women strictly observing the pledge of fidelity to one husband and noble-hearted widows. Such themes are fruitless. Why not fearlessly describe a woman who is locked in the arms of another man and her husband unreactive sees himself being cuckolded while sitting in his room. Life should be depicted as it is not as it should be.

His style was unique. As per him he never wrote stories and in fact stories happened to him. Whenever he had to write a feature about any topic he would start typing it without preparing any script. He needed no special environment as an incentive to write a script. In fact, as a matter of routine he would weave a story. Sometimes, he would get caught up in a serious creative pang. He writes **'story is in my pocket, not in my head. I am unaware of it. I wrack my head for a story and go on smoking non-stop. Still the story does not develop and emerge out. Then tired and disgusted I lay like an infertile woman'**.

Mantoo was not happy with his creations and was never in a position to determine his goal-post. Such dis-satisfaction troubled him all his life. He wanted to do something tangible in life. But when unable to do something original giving him a sense of success he would take to 'hangamers'. He would be a loser and that was increasingly frustrating for him. He called his life a wall which he plastered off with his sharp nails and sometimes it came to him that he built an edifice upon the broken and clipped away materials. His feeling was that his personality was different from his flesh and bone frame. But people never appreciated his reality. He wanted to do a lot but when found the avenues blocked and cluttered, he would feel disgusted and low in spirits. He would be a victim to repressive suffocation and that would throw him into utter mental confusion. His state is explicit in a letter he wrote to Ahmad Nadim Qasimi.

'A heaviness hangs on me. A strang fatigue overwhelms me. I know why it happens. But it has multiple factors that never allow me peace and satisfaction I am totally alienated. There is lack in everything, discontent looms large...I want something other than what I have'.

Mantoo was truthful to a fault. This aspect of his character is glimpsed in every aspect of his art. His views were at variance with the views of his friends. Yet he knew how to make friends and live out the friendship faithfully. His short span of life is exemplified by numerous happenings which are a testimony to his absolute truthfulness, contradictions galore failed to eclipse it.

Mantoo started his every writing with a number 786. If by chance he forgot to put the number he would destroy his writings even though fully written out. He would again try it, but that would be next to fake. His acquaintances thought him weak kneed in conviction. The reality is that Mantoo was not a superman.

He was a man with all shortcoming and failings and there in lies his grain of greatness. Like all ordinary lays Mantoo acquired riluets and beliefs from his environs, which in no case were narrow and myopic. He was given to drinking. Yet in his drunkenness he was not indifferent, oblivious to his religious beliefs. Once glittering function of music and dance was held at Paro Devi's residence which was attended by all gliterrating including Ashok Kumar. All were drinking to the last dregs of it. Paro sang out *thumris*, *gazals* and lyrics. In the end a *naat* was sung to mark the finale of the function. Mantoo was dead drunk, yet he said—

'Paro Devi, it is a *mehafil* of Joy and drunkenness. Better no mention be made of Prophet'.

Mantoo never mulled over religious issues seriously but he was in spiritual love with Islam. When I drew the attention of the famous novelist and story-writer, Krishen Chander, to this aspect of Mantoo's life, he commented—

'Mantoo never said namaz regularly, but fact about him is that he refused to listen anything (derogatory) about Islam'.

His writings are away from any religious imprint. He always revolted against all barbarities committed in the name of religion. His literature about communal clashes surpasses all literature about it produced by other litterateurs of India or Pakistan. Every writing of Mantoo denounces hatred, myopia, murder and blood-shed. The scene of history '*Sahae*' is put as under—

'Don't say one lakh Muslims and one lakh Hindus were killed, but say two lakh human beings were killed. Muslims must have thought that Hindu religion has been exterminated through the killing of one lakh Hindus. But Hinduism is still a living creed and will be so even in future. Similarly, Hindus must have lustily cheered that Islam is dead through the killing of one lakh Muslims. But Islam did not suffer even a scratch. Fools are those who hold that religion can be extirpated through bombs and bullets. Religion, faith, dharam, belief and conviction have a place in the recesses of one's soul, not in the physical frame. All these put together cannot be slaughtered through knives and bullets.

Mantoo was never affiliated to any political party. It was so because he refused to be tied down to a disciplinary order. His life-story testifies to his superiority complex that was perpetuated in him by the life happenings and circumstances he lived. His weaknesses and failings had created a void in him which he filled in through superiority complex. This is why he was a victim to egoism. All stories that he wove have the impetus of his terrible sense of ego. This very ego kept him away from politics. In his formative years he was influenced by revolutionary ideas. More than this he lost interest in politics because the politicians were given to trickery and deceit.

Mantoo believed that a politician was a professional who preserves his own interests at the cost of public service.

He writes in an essay—

'I have no interest in politics. Leaders and medicine sellers are on the same wave-length. The two pursue the same profession. Medicine-sellers and leaders, both use the

prescription of others?’

Survey of his early life establishes him as a staunch socialist. The room in his house was labelled as 'dar-ul-ahmar' where many a dream of revolution were woven. His room had a photograph of Bhagat Singh dangling from a wall. He wanted to be a terrorist. The translations of Oscar Wilde and Doctor Victor Hugo and Gorky, stories of *Atish Paray*, his essays on Russia and Red Revolution, Banjara and *Keechad* type film stories go a long way to establish his socialistic ideological bent. He even called himself Comrade Sadat Hasan Mantoo. But his self centredness and ego created enemies for him and his admirers were forced to scathe him severely. But the fact remains that they could not formulate a generalised view about him. A time came when he (Mantoo) as a lover of Gorky and socialist poetry wrote against them out of spite and anger.

Despite his extreme egoism Mantoo was a great humanist. He was an exponent of realism. Like his contemporaries he never presented the bitter realities wrapped in coloured and glossy layers. He believed that black and white were to be presented as the same—no gloss, no wrappings to be wrought. See his statement—

'Go through my stories if you are unaware of the times we live in. If you can't bear with my stories, it points to the unbearableness of the times?

At the time of partition tragedy Mantoo was in Bombay. Partition had petrified him. He was never convinced about the partition of the country into India and Pakistan and considered himself as an inheritor of the sublime Indian heritage which was jointly shared and lived by both Hindus and Muslims. Mantoo represented those numberless people who upheld India as a whole as their country and land. Mantoo in his writings has ripped open this artificiality of partition. The division that had created a new dominion though a reality could earn his emotional allegiance. In his essay '**Murli Ki Dhun**' he puts—

'New name had metamorphosed this entire tract of land. I knew entirely nothing about it, self-rule what it can be never came to me as concrete idea?

It was all chaos and confusion. People were mad and euphoric. The concept of one civilization and one culture stood totally shattered. Corpses piled up in the name of sacredness of Hinduism and Islam. Rape became rampant. Children lost their laughter. Mantoo describes the insanity and animality of men in the sub-continent like this:

'India became free. Pakistan was just born free. But man per se in both the dominions was in chains, a slave, slave to religious bigotry, slave to insanity, slave to animality and barbarism'.

To live such frightening and perilous times was a matter of strength, courage and wisdom. What more can declare his greatness and sublimity than the fact that he kept the flame of humanism burning through the ocean of fire and brimstone and murder and bloodshed. He was determined and unshakable like a granite.

***(Translated from original Urdu by Prof. M.L. Koul)**

24.0 MANTO-SOME ASPECTS OF HIS ART & PHILOSOPHY

By Dr. Brij Premi

It was Munshi Premchand who first lit the lamp of short story in Urdu literature. The light of this lamp was further extenuated by authors like Sajad Haider, Niaz Fatehpuri and several others. By replacing abstract notions and concepts with issues of real palpating life these people brought some kind of freshness to this genre. Prem Chand took the concept of short story from Western literature and acclimatised to the Indian conditions. He not only brought national or subcontinental issues into the craft of Urdu short story but also gave it a substantial degree of realism. He also gave it a special focus and emphasis in contemporary Indian literature. He gave a new direction to Urdu literature by composing '*Kafan*' a masterpiece of short story, towards the final phase of his literary career.

In the third decade of the 20th Century when Prem Chand's fiction was touching new heights, the short stories of "**Aangare**" appeared on the scene and progressive movement in Urdu literature also got started. Consequently Urdu short story took a new turn and several new faces appeared on horizon. Among these the names of three writers, namely, Krishan Chander, Rajender Singh Bedi and Saadat Hassan Manto are quite noteworthy.

These writers opened a new chapter in the history of Urdu fiction. It was the good fortune of Urdu literature that it got services of a very gifted writer like Manto soon after Prem Chand, who took the art of short stories to new and yet undiscovered frontiers.

Manto was a rebel right from the start. In his childhood he had experienced deprivation and want at home, things that became part of his early consciousness. He had a stern father who did not love him. He was thus bereft of love, affection and sympathy at an early age, and this was later reflected in many traits of his personal life. When he was admitted to Muslim High School at Sharifpora in Amritsar he showed several streaks of rebellion and stubbornness in his character. These reached a climax during his stay at Hindu Mahasabha College. Here he caught the attention of his contemporaries and classmates through various acts of omission and commission and nonconformity and was nicknamed as "Tommy" by one and all. During his school days the Head Master at Muslim High School had grown sick of his waywardness and pranks. He, however, appreciated Manto's extra-ordinary intelligence. Manto was, however, at the same time quite fond of study too. Posing as headmaster's son he would sometimes borrow books from the local book-shop and after reading sell these books at lower prices. The headmaster would pay for the borrowed books from his own pocket while Manto would spend the money acquired on cigarettes, boasting "I do not smoke any cheap cigarettes".

Manto's actions were strong and unique. From childhood till the end of his life he adopted an unconventional response to things which was distinctly his own. His unique individuality was reflected in every thing he did including all his literary works. The experience of deprivation in childhood, father's early death, the indifference of his near relatives, cold response from his friends etc. all had a deep impact on his psyche and very early in life he became aware of the hollowness of human relationship. A hole had in fact crept into his very being which he tried to fill in different ways. It was because of this that he abandoned the beaten track in the field of literature and took pains to depict his own individuality in a truly extra-ordinary body of work.

In his childhood Manto would sometimes be seen in the company of certain juggler Alla Rakha by name and walk barefooted on live burning red hot coals on the jugglers show. He never even once moaned or winced in pain while doing this. Behind this remarkable feat his highly individualized psyche played a great part. It was an indication of the future course of his life. As a writer, later in his life, he deliberately deviated from the accepted ways, always exploring and breaking fresh grounds in whatever he did. All his life he had to traverse fiery deserts. As an artist he kept walking on fire. The great heights of his fame as a writer were equally matched by accounts of great notoriety he attained in his personal life.

In his childhood Manto expressed his inborn imaginative skill by spreading rumours in the town. These rumours would grip and excite the imagination of his listeners. Some of them would run like this :

1) Americans have purchased the Taj Mahal which they are now exporting from this country with the help of huge machines.

2) The traffic police in Lahore have been provided jackets of ice.

3) My fountain pen is made from the horns of a donkey etc.

Manto had also made an association of like-minded boys which he named "**Association of Fools**". The objective of this union of minds was to bother people with strange and incredible events. To quote an instance, Manto would accost people with questions like what is your nib in comparison to this pen? Or what are your buttons in comparison to this shirt" etc.

Manto began his literary career with a controversy. When he published the first collection of his stories entitled "**The short stories of Manto**" his explicit instructions to the publishers were that he should design such a cover for his book as would annoy and shock the public. The publication of Manto's stories did, infact, raised great hue and cry. Progressive writers were quick to label him revisionist while the conservatives condemned him as a progressive. Many cases were filed against him in the courts for the contents of his stories. He was accused of writing pornographic trash. To rid him of his addiction to drinking, he was sent to an asylum but on his release from there he could not help exclaiming "**From a small mad-house I have now come to a bigger lunatic asylum**".

One of Manto's greatest weakness was his plainspeaking. He always called a spade a spade. He was ever ready to sacrifice all before the voice of his conscience. He did not believe in whitewashing the characters of the deceased. He explained this idea of his in these words: "In my court there are no make-up kits, no shampoos, and no ghangoos. Use of cosmetics is unknown to me. It was not possible for me to correct the squint in Aga Hashar's eyes. I could not iron out Miraji's dirty linen. Nor could I prevent my friend Shyam Kumar from calling immoral woman as Saahlian".

Manto was a great artist. From his childhood till death or from his early translation work to the composition of his most accomplished stories, from writing of critical articles and reviews to the crafting of his dramas, Manto never walked upon an easy path. He opened new vistas in every field. The reason behind the writing of his psycho-sensual tales was raising banner of revolt against the traditionalists who had labelled his work as pornographic. Ali Sardar Jaffri while noticing this trait in his work remarked : "Manto's short stories take the form of a prayer from the guilty conscience of the Indian Middle Class. This is the reason why Manto is a much maligned author. Great fame and popularity are not earned by mere effort, for this one most possess real talent and Manto has a surplus of genius".

Humanism was Manto's greatest faith and belief. It was never a matter of expediency for him. He knew that all religious slogans had a strong undercurrent of bigotry in them which was exploited by vested interests for their own selfish ends. Manto attacked the cunning and hypocrisy of these groups by stating in his story "Sahaye":

"You should not say that a hundred thousand Muslims have died or a hundred thousand Hindus. Rather say that a hundred thousand human beings have died. After killing a hundred thousand Hindus, Muslims must be thinking that Hinduism is dead. But Hindu religion is still kicking and shall always remain so. Similarly, after killing a hundred thousand Muslims Hindus must have blown their trumpets that Islam is finished.

But the fact is that Islam has not received the slightest hurt, not even a scratch. The people who consider that religions can be eliminated with the power of guns are damn fools. Religion, faith, beliefs etc. don't reside in the bodies of men but in their souls and these things can never be destroyed by bullets and knives".

The partition of the country was the greatest tragedy of Manto's times. It really shattered Manto in the deep recesses of his heart.

He could not reconcile himself to the division of the country. Although he migrated to Pakistan, he still considered himself a part of grand Pan-Indian cultural tradition to which he had been born. During the partition as the dead bodies piled on all sides, and brutality and crimes against women and children became rampant, Manto felt flabbergasted.

In a strong fit of disgust he wrote: "India has become free. Pakistan has also acquired freedom right from its inception. But men continue to be slaves in these two so-called free countries. They are slaves to prejudice, to fanaticism, to bestiality and to savagery and barbarism".

Manto was undoubtedly a great artist. The greatness of his art was shown in the manner in which his works opened new doors of perception. It was a different matter that some traditionalists labelled his fiction as voyeuristic and mere trash. Sensitive critics, however, discovered some finest specimens of literary art and craft in the body of his work. But the fact remains in his fiction Manto was exploring many social and intellectual issues that had afflicted the subcontinental society of those times. He was applying the knife of his sharp pen as an author to the sores that had infested and engulfed our collective consciousness. It is true that the choice of his subjects in fiction was somewhat limited. But one must admit the manner and skill with which he handled these unique subjects. Manto's art was neither journalistic nor propagandist. In an age when progressive movement in literature with its issues relating to farmers, labourers, class struggle, social inequalities and revolution etc. were reaching a climax, Manto really chose a separate path for himself after having travelled with the progressives just for a short while. Manto's art and craft of fiction was also different from others. It was highly individualistic. He never favoured poetic prose of flowery language in his work. The diction he used was calculated to shake the very foundation of his reader's conscience.

Manto was opposed to didacticism in art. In the portrayal of his characters, he never favoured a particular school of philosophy or thought. That's why one cannot really pigeonhole him in any way. He was first and foremost an artist. It is true that he sometimes expressed his views on a number of issues in his articles from time to time. But his stories are unique in that they are different from the rest of his contemporaries. Manto's craft of fiction is a virtual class in itself wherein he doesn't seem to take sides, come what may. It is indeed the greatness of his art that he exposes and explores the human psyche in all its vanity with such great clarity. Most of Manto's characters are pimps, prostitutes and lewd men and women. But when these so-called wayward creatures enter the world of Manto's fiction, they come alive before us in their nakedness, revealing both good and bad elements in their make up. These characters shatter the veneer of so-called respectability of middle classes. Referring to this trait in his writing Krishan Chander has commented: "In his observation of life Manto melted himself like a wax candle. He is the only Urdu writer who drank the poison of life with such avidity and then described its taste and colour to us in great detail." Manto, the first Urdu writer who looked at pimps, prostitutes and other such immoral men and women with human sympathy and made them the subject of great literature. Manto was a free thinker who never ever supported the manifesto of a political party. And for this trait in his character he had to pay a very heavy price.

The great speciality of Manto's fiction lies in the freedom he allows his character to fully grow and develop themselves. Take any of his characters, be it Mango of "*Naya Kanoon*" or Sughandi of "*Hatak*" or Ishwar Singh in "*Thanda Gosht*" or the pimp in "*Khushia*", or Sakina in "*Khol Do*", or Bishan Singh in "*Toba Tek Singh*" or the Jewess in "*Mozail*", all these people are unique individuals. All these characters also grip our attention with a tremendous power and it is through their unique personalities that the magic of Manto's fiction is woven around our heads. To sustain this effect Manto not only crafts appropriate plots but also works hard on the beginning and ending of his stories. Manto is very much conscious of words and their meaning. With his unique narrative style, he infuses a new life into his fiction. Every word in his narrative is at its proper place. If you remove a sentence here or there from it the entire edifice seems to crumble and become lack lustre and even lifeless. This is also true of the

beginnings, middles and endings of his stories. Whatever be the theme of his story the pattern of events at the start, the climax and the conclusion are always perfect from the artistic point of view.

The language used by Manto never consisted of mere empty works. It takes something of the colour and force of real palpitating and throbbing life. The reader is not merely delighted by his words usage. On the other hand he feels a strange heat and warmth rising in his bones, which helps in building the necessary atmosphere. This is true of all his stories. Here are a few examples of this unique style of writing.

- 1) The abusive language stuck like some cloth in Mary (Nara)
- 2) Small drops of perspiration appeared on his narrow forehead like slow squeezing of cottage cheese in Muslin cloth (Khushia)
- 3) She was now barely fourteen. But from her face it seemed she had moved ahead leaving her body far behind (Pehchan)
- 4). She shrank in a manner a bundle of silk cast aside after being opened (*Misri Ki Dali*)
- 5) This Ashok Kumar is a strange figure. He makes love on the screen as if he were taking cast or oil (Sajdah)

The prose of Manto is worthy of envy. Sometimes his irony and sarcasm are razor sharp. At other times his descriptions pierce the deep recesses of the reader's heart. His style can also look innocent and pure like a virgin.

The art of Manto's characterization is also matchless. He weaves the incidents and events in his story in such a manner that the personalities of his characters emerge in their full bloom. If Manto's fiction is great for his great mastery over the craft of fiction, it is also noteworthy because of his art of characterisation. It was Manto who after Prem Chand kept the flag of Urdu fiction flying with his excellent art of characterisation.

The fact of matter is it was he who made Urdu writers realise the great importance of characterization in the art of writing fiction. Manto's characters all belong to the same kind of world which we ourselves inhabit. He has taken his people from everyday life and put them in a particular environment to highlight their uniqueness and enrich their individuality. This indeed is the greatness of a true and genuine artist.

In the great gallery of Manto's art we have a galaxy of prostitutes, pimps, sexually starved men and women, sexually mature and immature people, depressed and dejected lovers, lunatics and criminals, free thinkers and fundamentalists of all faiths and hues. These people come alive before us in all their fullness and reality. Manto never forces his own personality or personal views upon his character. On the other hand he depicts them on their terms with all their strengths and weaknesses. It is this that places him on a higher pedestal of art than the rest of his numerous contemporaries.

****(Translated frmo original Urdu text by Prof R.K. Aima)***

25.0 MANTO'S ALCOHOLISM

By Dr. Brij Premi

Manto became addicted to drinking in his early boyhood at Amritsar. At that time he had become friends with the scion of a rich family, Hari Singh Amritsari by name. Later he got in touch with some such companions who loved to drink and gamble. During this period Manto was trying hard to pass his F.A. examination and had failed to get through for 2 years. In college he would remain busy with things that were clearly naughty and mischievous. The difficult atmosphere at home would also disturb him considerably. Because of his continuous unsuccess in the examination all his plans had become awry. He was now disgusted with studies. Therefore, there was a need for him to find some new avenues when he got in contact with spoilt rich brats like Hari Singh, it was natural for Manto to indulge in drinking. In the neighbourhood there was also a thriving gambling den. Mentally and emotionally frustrated young Manto found some relief in gambling activity. But the sport of gambling could not satisfy him. Saadat was an exceptionally ambitious lad. He had aspiration and dreams galore though he experienced numerous disappointments and obstructions. Under such circumstances he would go astray and sometimes even get caught up in a mess. At times thoughts of rebellion caught his imagination. On other occasion he occupied himself in some kind of versification. Imaginary beloveds haunted him in his thought. Referring to those days Manto himself wrote.

"That was the time when I lived in a state of aimlessness. My mind would always be restless. A sort of confusion gripped me so intensely that I was ready to taste anything, however, hard and bitter it might be".

The company of spoilt rich brats did not however appeal to Manto for long. He would visit graveyards and several dens of vice and indulged himself in alcohol and drugs like charas and cocaine. In this state of mental and spiritual anguish he had a close brush with the seamy side of life which provided him with a vast and rich treasure of experience about life and its realities.

During his student days Manto had to face great financial difficulties. His father had married twice and as such he had several children to look after. He had paid proper (special) attention to his children from first wife. As a result, after his father's death, Manto's mother was left with only meagre resources to bring up her two children. Thus right from young age Manto had witnessed shadows of poverty and penury in his home. This feeling thus became a part of his consciousness and the circumstances of his life further intensified the feeling of his misery and helplessness. It was then that habit of drinking came to him as an escape route from the difficulties of life he was faced with. Manto himself writes on this:

"Our financial condition was already quite grave, circumstances around us were very depressing. Our sources of income had shrunk further. In order to forget my worries **I drowned myself in drinking.** I would often remain away from home in the company of my drunkard friends. These people had not even the slightest inkling of any art or literature".

During this time Saadat Hassan Manto's restless soul had found a new escape route. The late Mr **Bari?** had found some sense in Manto's restless madness of those days and even co-operated with him. Manto returned his courtesy by naming his own room as "**Darula Hamar**" (The Abode...) wherein for hours and days together they would indulge in fantasies about revolution. In this room Mr Bari and his three obedient disciples, namely Hassan Abbas, Abu Syed Qureshi and Manto would draw up a world of schemes for making a better world. Mr Bari would call this the group of "**free thinkers**". The various schemes that came out from his brain would represent a philosophy of life which he incidentally labelled as 'DaraLahamar' school of thought. That was the time when the concept of the progressive

group of writers had not yet seen light of the day. Manto's room in those days was littered with the books of Russian authors. Manto had begun writing under the pseudonym of "**Comrade**", "**Mufakir**" and "**Witnam**". During this very time he also suffered from severe chest pains. As he did not have money for medical treatment, he started taking cheap country liquor. Under the circumstances he considered this as the best possible treatment for his chest trouble. A full bottle of liquor would always be there in 'Darula Hamar' placed on the uppermost niche in the wall, judiciously concealed from direct view by a hanging calendar. While drinking, the bottle would be hidden under the low writing desk in the room. In his last days when Manto had become a recognised alcoholic, he would hide the bottle under the commode of his toilet and sip from it from time to time by making the pretence of visiting the lavatory.

The friendship of Mr Bari (Alig) however proved quite useful for Manto. Manto himself admitted this in so many words saying that it was Mr. Bari who put him on the road to becoming an author. It was under his advice that Manto with the help of a dictionary took up the translation work of Victor Hugo's famous work "**Last Days of a condemned Prisoner**".

In the beginning whenever he faced difficulties in translation work, he would resort to drinking, thinking that this would unlock his mental faculties.

Manto's addiction to drinking grew as he moved to Bombay and Delhi. After his migration to Pakistan drinking however, became his biggest weakness and ultimately proved fatal to his life. In 1940 when Manto came to Delhi as an employee of All India Radio, on his first meeting with Krishan Chander he offered the latter a drink. Krishan Chander who had professed himself to be a great lover of drinking was floored only after taking the first cup. At this he delivered a long lecture to Krishan Chander impressing upon him that it was very important in an author's life to drink wine. Krishan Chander has himself described this event in detail. Here is an extract:

"I was floored soon after I had taken the first peg. I did not go for the second round. Manto also did not insist upon it because he had noticed my condition. I confessed that I was drinking alcohol for the first time. At this Manto began to count many blessings of wine. **The taste of sin, he said, lies in wine.** One can discover feminine mystique here. There is essence of art and literature to be found in each cup of wine. Above all, wine is a source of liberation too. My dear, how long will you keep behaving like a Pandit? After all, you are going to produce literary works and not teach school children. You have to go close to life. You have to experience sin, you need to have close encounter with death. You have to taste sorrow. And this you cannot do without drinking. So long as you do not take Solan Whisky No: 1, you shall not be able to write any worthwhile stuff".

From the above it becomes clear that the habit of drinking which he acquired in his early youth from his wayward friends and which at a later stage he had used as anodyne for his chest pain had now become an inseparable part of his life at Delhi. Now he would drink not just for the heck of it but to discover the taste of literature, beauty of women and the beauty that is in life. And this is a fact too that under the influence of wine he wrote some stories which are master pieces of Urdu literature. According to Safia Begum, Manto's wife, at this time Manto, in fact, wrote for wine not as in early days when he drank only to write. In a letter Manto's friend Dewan Singh described his Delhi days thus: "When he was in Delhi he would drop in at my residence almost every day. If he came at noon, he would drink beer. But when he come in the evening he liked to drink Brandy with me. I often wanted that like me he should not drink more than one peg. But Manto always crossed the limit".

At Bombay and Delhi Manto's earning was substantial so that it was never a problem for him to buy his drink. But after migrating to Pakistan his economic condition became very bad. All the promises made to him were broken. He was reduced to penury. In Bombay friends had hurt him. In Pakistan he felt completely disillusioned. The blood bath witnessed during the partition of the country had shattered his psyche. Despite accepting Pakistani citizenship he held the common heritage of Indo-Pak culture dear to his heart. When he

expressed these sentiments in his fresh writings in Pakistan he was viciously attacked. This compelled him to drink heavily and eventually it killed him. This great artist and fighter had lost the final battle of his life before wine. He was devoid of any will to live.

Manto usually drank in the evenings and would sometimes get tipsy though he himself regretted that he never got sufficiently intoxicated. In the last days of his life, he would however, remain drunk for all the 24 hours of the day. First thing he would do after getting up from bed was to look for his drink. He had lost interest in all other activities. Fear of family members made him hide his bottle behind the leaking commode in the lavatory. It was here that he from time to time took his drink secretly, free from the gaze of others. Hamid Jalal has described this situation thus "Uncle Manto would drink from the bottle itself that had been concealed somewhere behind a dripping commode in the toilet. It was impossible for him to curb his constant craving for alcohol".

While excess alcohol was running like poison in his veins, the power of his pen was getting depleted. But he could not really stop his urge to write. He began writing stories on an almost daily basis. Wine which once upon a time had expanded the frontiers of his mind was gradually killing him by inches. Thus the stories he wrote in the last phase of his life are worthless. They were written just for wine. These stories lack both in art and craft. In his book Mohammad Assad Ullah writes "Safia (Manto's wife) says that earlier, she would read the works of Manto only. But the stuff that he writes now is just trash. It tarnishes his image as an author. He now writes only to buy his drink. I do not get even a single penny from his current earning".

Another excerpt from Mohammad Assad Ullah's book "A tonga would be brought. Its destination was Maktaba carvan, the house of Chowdary Hamid, MA philosophy. At the approach of the tonga Chowdary would take out twenty rupees. He would give these to Manto after taking a story from him. After saying salams to him Manto would direct the tonga to English wine House. He would buy a bottle of liquor for 13 and a half rupees. He would pay a rupee to the tongawalla, buy Capstan cigarettes for a rupee and also some raddish for 8 annas".

Manto's short stories of that time were hardly any stories. The real Saadat Hassan Manto was already dead. The Manto that had once upon a time blazed the literary circles with his genius as a writer had become a helpless creature due to his excessive addiction to drinking. His creativity and its sources had dried up. In the last days of his life when Naresh Kumar Shad came to see him, Manto instead of offering hospitality to the visitor demanded some money for him to buy wine. Later in a broken voice he confessed", I am sorry that instead of extending my hospitality to you, I made you to spend some money on me. By God, this Saadat Hassan Manto is a wicked man".

After Pakistan was established, Manto's migration to that country really proved fatal to his life. The increasing communal tension in Bombay, the impact of Hindu communal politics on film industry and the threatening letters challenging the very basis of his integrity as a human being, the hope of a brighter future in Pakistan compelled the humanist Manto to leave India. But the idea of Pakistan after he reached there completely disillusioned him. On this subject he then wrote:

"I do not know whether my homeland is India or Pakistan. I also do not know whose blood it is that is being shed mercilessly everyday. Where were those bones cremated or buried, whose flesh it was that was torn by kites and vulture. Hindus and Muslim were getting killed at an alarming rate. How were they dying and why were they dying? All these questions had different answers.

There was a separate Indian answer and a separate Pakistani answer as well. There was a British answer too. But if somebody questioned the truth of these answers, there was no answer at all. Some said the answer lay in the mutiny of 1857. Others said that East India Company was to blame for the present carnage. Some people would go further in the past and blame the Mughal dynasty. Every body was going back while the murderers and arsonists were advancing everywhere."

Humanism was Manto's only religion. For him Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Jews etc. were all one. This was the reason why in his fiction all his characters belonging to various religions looked so real and life-like. But having said this, Islam had a place of deep respect and reverence in his heart. He never began a writing without 786, a numeral sacred in Islamic thought. Although he was fond of drinking yet even under the influence of wine he never remained indifferent to the Islamic faith. Once he attended a singing and drinking spree at the house of a film actress Paro Devi's home. Many film personalities of the day were drinking with gay abandon. Paro sang many thumries, gazals and other songs and at the end began singing a naat, a devotional Islamic hymn. Manto, even in his state of drunkenness objected to this item saying: "Paro Devi, this is a meeting of pleasure seekers. A drinking party is on here. It would be better if you do not touch the subject of holy prophet in your songs here".

After settling in Pakistan, Manto was not able to write anything for a pretty long time. Then he began writing articles on some light subjects. Later, his mental block got lifted for some time and masterpieces like "**Thanda Gosht**". "**Toba Tek Singh**", "**Khol Do**" poured out from his pen in quick succession. But this did not satisfy Manto. His economic position became worse. Despite hard work, he could not improve his living standards. The members of his family became resentful. He pulled on for some time with the support of his in laws which hurt his ego considerably. Realisation dawned upon him that he was living an abject life. All this goaded him to drink very heavily with terrible consequences for his creativity. Now his stories originated directly from his pocket rather than from his heart and soul. His wife insisted that he should give up writing and take up some other job to earn a living. At this Manto's drunkenness grew at an alarming speed. To cure him of his addiction he was even sent to an asylum for a short period of time. But on being released from this place he exclaimed, "From a small mad-house I have now come to much bigger mad house."

Now Manto could not live without liquor. The massive addiction to drinking had ruined his health. He had become extremely weak. He was hospitalised a number of times where under medical treatment he was brought back from the brink. But after every recovery he would again resort to drinking. During this time his most favourite daughter fell ill with typhoid. Money was urgently needed for her treatment and there was not a single penny with him. Manto raised a personal loan. But he purchased whisky with it instead of medicines for his daughter. His addiction to drinking had literally paralyzed his sensibilities. Even when he decided to quit drinking, some of his friends would make him break his pledge by making him drink again. These people, according to Maulana Salahuddin Ahmad would then make this boast, that they had been drinking with Saadat Hassan Manto.

Manto's nephew and brother-in-law, Hamid Jalal has written in an article that one day some people had discovered corpses of a woman and her young daughter in Gujrat (Pakistan). Earlier they had been abducted from a bus station. About half a dozen men had ravished them. Their clothes were badly torn. Their bodies were frozen with cold. This incident shocked Manto a great deal. He wanted to write a story on this tragic happening. But before doing so he drank quite excessively and this proved quite fatal to his health.

A day before his death, Manto went round the entire city of Lahore. He joined his friends over some banter in a restaurant. When he returned home in the night, he vomitted blood. Probably his liver had burst. The doctor was called in. He give him some injections and advised his immediate hospitalisation. But Manto interjected "It is too late now. Don't take me to the hospital. Let me remain here in peace". Manto was certain that his time in this world was up. He was now waiting for death to come with great patience and calm.

In this state, he said "I have three and a half rupees in my pocket. Add a little money to this sum and buy me a bit of whisky". Subsequently, he was given a drink. As he lay dying in the ambulance he asked for a pint of whisky for the last time. A spoon of whisky was then put in his mouth. It had not yet gone down his gullet when he lost consciousness and then his eyes closed for ever. Hamid Jalal writes : "On his death bed Manto asked for nothing except liquor. He knew it for long that alcohol was his enemy number one. It was the angel

of death whose force or power he could not avert now. Uncle Manto was completely helpless. But since his temperament was basically that of a rebel, he revolted against death with this last act."

****(Translated from original Urdu text by Prof. R.K. Aima)***

26.0 THE PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT IN KASHMIR

By Dr. Brij Premi

In India the progressive movement in literature witnessed a formal start in the year 1931. Within a short span of a few years, the movement struck its roots in almost all parts of the country. Notwithstanding the fact that Kashmir was neither a Urdu language zone, nor was Urdu, the mother tongue of Kashmiris; yet the local writers adopted and patronized it to ventilate their feelings. In the light of this fact, it is futile to dig for any specific trend in Urdu literature in Kashmir during this period. However, when the progressive movement spread its tentacles throughout the country by surmounting all the barriers of colour, creed and language; the Kashmiri writers did not remain immune to its affects.

At the same time, events of far-reaching consequences were emerging on the political front in Kashmir. Muslim Conference, which was the largest local political party was converted into the National Conference and its leadership went into the hands of a broad-minded person like Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah.

Non-Muslims were also enrolling themselves in it. Instead of communal preference, the political agenda formulated by it was nationalist one and it drew its inspiration from the Indian Freedom Movement. At the same time, Kashmir also registered its protest against the oppressive and exploitive mechanisms of the then rulers. Under the leadership of National Conference, a sustained campaign against subjugation, poverty and social imbalances had begun, the echo of which was also observed in the then poetry. One could also perceive the traces of revolt in the poetry of Mehjoor, Azad and Dilsoz around this time.

Apart from other things, the progressive writers organisation in its very first Lucknow declaration asserted: "We desire new Indian literature to focus on hunger, poverty, social injustice and subjugation, which are the basic problems of life." It was not a mere coincidence but the need of the hour that a movement against the 'Jagirdhari' system had begun in Kashmir under the leadership of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah. Besides other things, the issues of hunger, social imbalances, exploitation and subjugation were on the forefront. At this very time, the literary Urdu circles were witnessing the emergence of Prem Nath Sadhu Raunak as a budding writer. He later on succeeded in establishing his credentials in the literary circles of the subcontinent under the name of Prem Nath Pardesi.

Pardesi was the first short story writer of Kashmir. In his initial stages of writing, he due to Tagore's influence would resort to romanticism. But the portrayal of social reality in Prem Chand's work, the injustice perpetuated by the exploitive forces, the advent of progressive movement and the emergence of the local political events convinced Pardesi for the first time that a better part of his life had gone waste. This he himself acknowledges : "This transformation was such that it not only opened new Vistas for me but also gave a new ideology to the nation. I felt that if I did not align myself with this ideology even now, my short stories are useless and the future historian will never forgive me. Being in government service, I could not join the National Conference, but in disguise I could make the public aware about subjugation, poverty and exploitation through my short stories."

(Short Story Allahabad No. 8)

Pardesi not only started writing against this exploitation but in association with his few friends established a literary organisation under the name of "**Halqae Arbab Zauk**". This organisation came into existence in early 1940s'. This organisation had no connection with '**Halqae Arbab Zauk**' of Lahore but there was a hell of difference in ideologies between the two. The access of the young writers of Kashmir was limited to the house of Prem Nath Pardesi, where literary meets would take place. The active members of this organisation included P.N. Pushup, Prem Nath Dhar, Qaisar Qalandhar, Som Nath Zutshi besides Mirza Arif Beigh and others. It was here that short stories were read, poetry was recited and discourses were held. It was the direct outcome of the progressive movement by virtue of

which they had come together. But this process did not last long and the organisation disintegrated. In spite of this closure of 'Halqae Arbab Zauk', the literary roots did not dry-up. During this time, the famous film producer and director and a noted progressive short story writer Ramanand Sagar, a native of Kashmir came into close contact with Pardesi. During his brief stay outside the state, he had formally aligned himself with this movement. He persuaded Pardesi to open a branch of progressive writers organisation. It is no overstatement to say that Prem Nath Pardesi and Ramanand Sagar played the same role in consolidating the progressive movement in Kashmir as was done by Sajad Zaheer and his friends in other parts of India. The same has been acknowledged by Pardesi himself: "Immediately on his arrival after two years, Ramanand Sagar met me. He asked me to establish a branch of the progressive writers organisation. Eventually, we both joined hands together to mobilize the native progressive writers and established an organisation, which exists even today". These were the same progressive writers, who were associated with 'Halqae Arbab Zauk'. This is how progressive writers organisation was launched formally. The organisation operated from Pardesi's house and gradually its influence extended. The progressive poets and writers from outside Kashmir, by their participation in the meetings of the organisation, cheered-up the young talent. This helped in the growth of the movement. The functioning of this small organisation took the shape of a full-fledged literary movement in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Those of the basic problems which were mentioned in the progressive writers first declaration again became the subject of deliberations.

As mentioned earlier the meetings of the organisation would take place on the first day of every month at Pardesi's house. But with the spread of its sphere of influence and the increased interest shown by the literary people, the venue of the meetings shifted to the halls of Biscoe School and S.P. College. The proceedings of those meetings were published in '**Navyug**', a newspaper edited by Nand Lal Wattal and subsequently in a weekly '**Nizam**', published from Bombay. At this time, Rajander Singh Bedi, Khwaja Ahmed Abbas, Balraj Sahni, Devinder Satyarthi and many other progressive writers and poets arrived here and participated in the meetings of the organisation. Prem Nath Pardesi, Som Nath Zutshi, Ali Mohammad Lone, Sallahudin Ahmed, Kanwal Nain Parvez, Professor Mahmood Hashmi, S.N. Kanwal, Qaisar Qalandhar, Mohinder Raina, Hamid Fitrat and Dr. Nazurul Islam are the notable local writers and poets, who were associated with this organisation. This organisation remained active till 1948 and proved quite affective. At this time, Ramanand Sagar wrote many short stories, which were put to debate in these meetings.

Pardesi also wrote a few of his famous short stories, which had the then regime's exploitation as the main theme. '**Khutbay**', '**Kagaz Ki Jandiyen**', '**Juvari**' are the notable short stories, which were read-out in different meetings of the organisation. In October 1947, Pakistan at the behest of the British imperialists sent armed infiltrators into Kashmir. These were the days, when the Dogra rule was on its last legs. The weak forces of Maharaja Hari Singh capitulated against the onslaught of heavily armed invading forces, who were experts in guerilla warfare. The Maharaja ran away leaving behind his helpless subjects in lurch and the government came into the hands of the people, whose leader was Sher-e-Kashmir, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah. The infiltrators were forced to flee with the help of Indian army and it was a turning point in our history. The infiltrators by coming close to the city limits of Srinagar had snatched peace and harmony of the people. A reign of loot, plunder, death and destruction was at its peak.

Under these circumstances, besides external defence, maintaining internal peace and confidence was necessary. As such a small force by the name of National Militia was formed, whose one wing named as Cultural Front comprised of intellectuals, writers, poets and enlightened youth. It is pertinent to mention here that most of those enrolled in the National Conference were progressive minded youth. For this, '**Naya Kashmir**', the manifesto of the National Conference is a proof in itself. However, Khwaja Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq and Moulana Mohammad Sayeed, who occupied a place of prominence in

the National Conference, consolidated the cultural front movement. Initially, the front functioned from **the Coronation Hotel** (presently **Kashmir Guest House**). It was here in the rooms of this hotel that the early soul-stirrings songs were composed, Guns were distributed and training imparted to the intellectuals, writers and poets, who owned their allegiance to this front. With the guns on their shoulders, they would guard during nights and compose new songs during the day time.

Pardesi was the first to offer his services to the front. **'Step by step, we will march ahead and fight on the front'**, a famous song of him then, was on everybody's lips at that time.

'Swali' and **'Mujahid Sherwani'**, the dramas written by Pardesi during this time were staged by National Cultural Front and became instantaneous hits. The cultural front became very popular in a short span of time. Its theatre wing (which was following **'Ipta'** line), staged Mehmood Hashmi's drama **'Kashmir Yeh Hai'** and **'Choudan Golien'** of Khwaja Ahmed Abass, in addition to Pardesi's dramas. The theatre wing included Dina Nath Nadim, Mohan Lal Aima, Usha Kashyap, Khurshid Jallaudin, Sumitra and Santosh Lakhwara, Achala Sachdev, Sheela Bhatia, Sher Jang, Raj Bans Khanna, Durga Singh, Girdhari Dhar, Pran Kishore and others. These plays proved fruitful for our stage and the theatre movement. With the emergence of the extra ordinary political situation, this front was disbanded. On similar lines, the state Cultural Congress came into being.

It comprised of three sections, that of writer's and poets (writer's section), theatre artists' section, and painters section. The writers section was known by the name of **Progressive Writers Association (P.W.A.)**, which was headed by Khwaja Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq. This organisation in addition to being practically a part of the Progressive Movement, was also working actively as its unit. Being disciplined to its objectives, it was pursuing its programme vigorously.

A large number of intellectuals were associated with it, the notable among them being Peer Abdul Ahad, Ghulam Rasool Renzu, Peer Giasudin, Noor Mohd., Moti Lal Misri, Pran Nath Jalali, Badri Nath Nishat and Madhusudhan Kausar. The senior writers and poets included Shair-e-Kashmir Mehjoor, Aasi, Master Zinda Koul and amongst the younger generation, almost all the prominent writers, poets and artists were involved with this organisation; the notable among them being Dina Nath Nadim, Rehman Rahi, Amin Kamil, Mohinder Raina, Noor Mohammad Roshan, Aziz Haroon, Zaib Kamran.

Arjun Dev Majboor, Akhtar Mohiudin, Som Nath Zutshi, Ali Mohd. Lone, Qaisar Qalandhar, Bansi Nirdosh, Nand Lal Ambardar, Prem Nath Premi, Dina Nath Almast, Deepak Koul besides Tej Bahadur Bhan etc.

The hot discussions would take place in the weekly meetings of the organisation. The participants would include not only writers and poets but also the intellectuals and educationists. It is a fact that the critical and the creative trend was not extremist in nature but the situation was the same as was prevalent in the initial stages of the progressive movement everywhere. Through these meetings, the Kashmiri and Dogri literature drew new inspirations. A realisation dawned that the revolutionary ideas and changing intellectual perceptions can best be represented in the local language, and mother tongue only. As such, it found its outlet in Kashmiri, Dogri and Ladakhi creative writings, which in turn enriched these languages.

It is apt to state that the present distinguished Kashmiri writers and poets, who were associated with this organisation, used to write in Urdu language earlier. Urdu was the creative language of Nadim, Rahi, Kamil, Akhtar, Nirdosh, Deepak, Tej, Som Nath Zutshi and Ali Mohd. Lone. At this time, the legendary Hindi progressive writer, novelist and a critic Shodan Singh Chouhan was the moving spirit behind this organisation, who perhaps under the directions of the central organisation was camping here. Under his guidance, the activities of the organisation attained new heights. The renowned artist Sheela Bhatia was associated with the theatre wing. Ali Sardar Jaffari, Dr. Ram Vilas Sharma, Dr. Salamat Ullah, Zia Ahmed, Kamal Ahmed Sidiqqi (who latter-on worked in the Radio Station here),

frequented the organisation's meetings as and when present here. In this way, under a fine formulated guide line, not only was the movement run but the literature too got a flip.

The year 1953 once again witnessed a new political turn in Kashmir. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah was arrested. Under the leadership of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad and Khwaja Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq, the new government undertook various new initiatives.

The name of **All State Cultural Congress was changed into State Cultural Conference**. Now the writers and poets from Ladakh and Jammu were more actively associated with it. This movement impressed upon to write in the local languages in order to garner the local support. It was realised that the expressions can be conveyed effectively though the mother tongue.

In order to gain public confidence, the second important consideration was to present the problems of the people in their own languages.

In consequence, it created a wealth of creative literature in Kashmiri, Dogri and Ladakhi languages.

It can be said with certainty that in the absence of this movement, perhaps our local languages would have not attained such a tremendous growth. The theatre wing of the organisation, which was apart of **'Ipta'** increased its activities greatly. A young poet, Abdul Gani Namthali and his friends did a pioneering job in making the commonman well acquainted with the revolutionary Kashmiri poetry. Namthali was a native of Namthal, Chadura. He was recognised as a public musician and was known as local **'Paul Robsan'**.

As and when he would sing in his sweet voice in tune with his music, the atmosphere would reverberate with the revolutionary affect. The author himself was a witness to such countless mesmerizing performances in the rural belt at that time.

The attempt to create a public movement through culture, poetry, literature and art is a historical fact. During this time, the organisation also published a few booklets, the notable among them being, **'Gaye Ja Kashmir'**, **'Vuja-Mal'** (lightening) and **'Soan Gaevun'** (our songs).

Dina Nath Nadim was a torch-bearer of this movement. Nadim's writings attained phenomenal dimensions when he shifted to writing in Kashmiri from Urdu. He was a pioneer among the Kashmiri poets of the time. Fact is that Nadim gave a new dimension to the Kashmiri poetry. His experimentation with the trends and contents in this language will always be remembered with appreciation. A major portion of his poetry exhibiting revolutionary and rebellious trends are in the form of free verse. He was the first to write the first sonnet and first opera in Kashmiri.

Nadim greatly utilized the form of the folk songs in his poetry, which at times was greatly influenced by the poetry of Chakbast, Ahsan Danish and Josh. But after his association with the progressive movement, he wrote on novel themes, which opened new Vistas in Kashmiri literature.

At this time, Som Nath Zutshi, who earlier worked as Secretary of Progressive Writers Organisation, shifted from Urdu to Kashmiri language. Basically, he was a Urdu short story writer. Around this time, he wrote **'Yeli Phol Gash'**. In this way, his short story along with Nadim's first short story **'Jawabi Card'**, enjoy a prime place in Kashmiri language. Akhtar Mohiudin too was associated with the organisation at this time. Akhtar was an acknowledged Urdu short story writer and his short story **'Pandrich'** was an award winning entry in one of the Urdu short story contest. He also started writing short stories in Kashmiri. His compilation of short stories **'Sat Sangar'** was the first compilation in Kashmiri language, which won him the Sahitya Academy Award. Rahi, Kamil, Firaq, Roshan, Ranjoor were outstanding poets, who due to the diversities of themes and by their experimentation with the trends carved-out a niche for themselves in the Kashmiri literature. The organisation also started publishing a periodical **'Kong Posh'** (saffron). In the initial stages, it had two sections: Urdu and Kashmiri. But later-on during the time of cultural conference **'Kong Posh'** was published separately in both Urdu and Kashmiri languages. Based on progressive ideas and convictions, one more periodical **'Azad'** which was edited by Badri

Nath Nishat and Madhusudhan Kosar, was published.

After some time, these publications ceased to be published but their contribution in the enrichment of progressive movement can never be overlooked. A number of organisations came into existence at that time. '**Halqae Adab Khanyar**' is worth mentioning. Even though, these organisations were not associated at the administrative level with the Progressive Writers' Organisation, but the kind of literature presented and the nature of discourses held, had the objective to develop and expand the progressive ideology.

During this time, the young artists of the cultural conference and other organisations who made their presence felt included Umesh Koul, Ghulam Nabi Khayal, Chaman Lal Chaman, Makhan Lal Baeqas, Muzaffar Azim, Farooq Budgami, Shahid Budgami, Moti Lal Saqi, Brij Premi, Pushkar Nath, Hakim Manzoor, Manzoor Hashmi, Autar Krishan Rehbar, Tahir Muztar, Shankar Raina, Taj Begum, Nirmala Kusum, Ghulam Nabi Baba, Rashid Nazki, Ayub Betab, Bahudin Zahid, Badurudin, Shamim Ahmed Shamim, Hari Krishan Koul, Farooq Nazki and many other artists. A few among them are presently well-known Urdu and Kashmiri writers and poets, enjoying national fame.

The first declaration of the Progressive Writers Organisation (of India) asserted "The objective of our organisation is to free the literature and the fine arts from the grip of fanatics and make it a representative of people's aspirations, hopes and struggle so as to pave way for the bright future, for which the humanity is striving for presently. We Indians claim to be the inheritors of the proud cultural legacy...We through the organisation will represent those aspirations, which will show a new and better way of life to our nation."

The declaration of All State Cultural Conference also reaffirmed the manifesto of the first conference of the Progressive Writers' Organisation with a few amendments: "We declare that our culture, our nation and the public life is dear to us. We also declare that the cultural heritage left behind by our ancestors will be preserved by us at any cost. By enriching further these traditions, we will formulate a better life. We also declare that for promotion of art and literature, the betterment of public life is necessary. Fine art and literature have always represented the aspirations and feelings of the people. Only that art has flourished, which has remained aligned with the concerns of public life..." (Bi-Monthly **Kong Posh** Urdu Number 1).

Both the declarations are similar in nature and represent the same line. After 1957-58, this movement gradually slowed down and lost its original grandeur. This situation developed in the overall progressive movement of the country. The progressive movement in Kashmir has remained a prominent literary movement. It had taken an integrated and unified shape in Kashmir and it set new milestones not only for Kashmiri but also for Dogri and Ladakhi literature. For this very reason, nobody from the field of literature can overlook the historical and beneficial role of this movement.

****(Translated from original Urdu by Sh. Upender Ambardar)***

27.0 KASHMIR KE MAZAMEEN

By Prof. Jagan Nath Azad

I had long been convinced about Dr. Brij Premi's educational and literary skills. But after going through his book "**Kashmir Ke Mazameen**", I discovered one more facet of his personality. I found that Brij Premi was not only a writer, but a historian too, and as a historian he never lost sight of research.

Our writers have not contributed much in the fields of poetry, short story, novel, drama, literary criticism, and other subjects. Dr. Brij Premi's book "**Kashmir Ke Mazameen**", carries details about Martand (architecture) and Surya Mandir (culture).

Bernier Aur Kashmir (history) points to this important aspect of his multifaceted personality. I would, moreover, regard his fourth article on Govind Kaul as a blend of history and literature.

Besides culture and history the book, on the subject of personalities, includes four articles and five articles on literature and what is common among these topics is beautiful prose-writing, what we call Readability, which is becoming rare by the day.

There are four essays on the subject of personalities, first is about Govind Kaul, as already mentioned above. Besides this, there are articles on Prem Nath Pardesi, Prem Nath Dhar and Hamidi Kashmiri.

Articles of these writers are, no doubt, connected with their personalities. It is natural that one can't read and understand the literary works of a writer by separating these from his personality. To write about a person in such a way that the personality of the writer and his literary work may be well mixed is a difficult job. Brij Premi has easily overcome this difficulty. The credit for this goes to his effusive style of writing.

There are four articles in this book under the title of literature. These are **Lal Ded Ki Shairi** (poetry of Lal Ded), **Mantoo Aur Shair Kashmir Mehjoor** (Mantoo and the poet Mehjoor of Kashmir), progressive literary movement in Kashmir and Urdu in Kashmir. The last article of the book is related to journalism in J&K State.

We, Urdu knowing people, have certainly heard Lal Ded's name, but are not conversant with her work. Brij Premi in his article has not only made the readers aware about Lal Ded's excellent poetry, but has also included the Urdu translation of her Kashmiri poetry in his article, thereby removing the lack of communication between Lal Ded's works and the readers who do not know Kashmiri language. This way such readers will not only get at the quintessence of her poetry, but will also taste and enjoy the sweetness of her language and the poetic gift.

"Mantoo Aur Shair Kashmir, Mehjoor" is a very distinct and peculiar subject. Apparently there seems to be no connection between these two great writers. There is no link or contact between the two. But Brij Premi has revealed the truth in this article that the biggest link between the two is provided by '**Rooh-e-Kashmir**' (the soul of Kashmir), the soul which informs both. And then Mantoo himself remarks:

**"I have not seen Kashmir, but Kashmiris, I have seen
But alas! I have not seen Mehjoor..."**

For Urdu knowing people like us it is such a reality of which we knew nothing. I knew that Mantoo loved Kashmir excessively, but that he yearned to see Mehjoor was something I had no knowledge of.

In the same way, his article on Hamidi Kashmiri-whom people like me know closely and are his friends--provides us such information about which we had absolutely no knowledge.

I have been living in Kashmir since 1948, and between 1948 and 1977 I resided in Srinagar. I often had the occasion of meeting Hamidi Sahib in literary gatherings, poetic symposia, and at the University in his department at the Iqbal Institute. He might have paid a visit to my residence or met me in my office at the Press Information Bureau. But I met

him a number of times at his residence. But the following fact became known to me through Brij Premi's book.

As a result of his being formally associated with the progressive movement a subtle impact of the movement on him is discernible in his stories.

It was my ignorance that right from the beginning I had supposed him to be against the literary progressive movement.

"Kashmir Main Taraki Pasand Adbi Tehrik" (Progressive literary movement in Kashmir) is a very important article in the book. No historian who writes the history of the Progressive Literary Movement, can ignore this article. If he does so, he can't do justice with his subject. This article is a mirror through which we can see the literary activities of people like Prem Nath Pardesi, Peer Abdul Ahad, Gulam Rasool Renzu, Peer Giyas-ud-Din, Noor Mohammed Asi, Moti Lal Misri, Pran Nath Jalali, Badri Nath Nishat, Madhusudan Kausar, Shair-i-Kashmir Mehjoor, Arjan Dev Majboor, Soom Nath Zutshi, Master Zinda Kaul, Amin Kamil, Ali Mohammad Lone, Qaisar Qalandar, Mohinder Raina, Aziz Haroon, Habib Kamran, Bansi Nirdosh, Nand Lal Ambardar, Prem Nath Premi, Dina Nath Almast, Deepak Kaul, Tej Bahadur Bhan, Firaq and other Urdu and Kashmiri writers; their literary activities were directly associated with the progressive movement in the field of literature. This topic is such a significant chapter in the Literary Progressive Movement in Kashmir, without which the literary progressive movement in India can't be said to be complete.

There is a critical review of late Professor Abdul Qadir Sarwari's book **"Kashmir Main Urdu"** (Urdu in Kashmir) which has appeared before us in the shape of a detailed piece of scholarly research. Brij Premi has presented himself before us in this article as an authoritative research scholar.

Brij Premi regards late Abdul Qadir Sarwari as one of the great and responsible critics and research scholars of the subcontinent whose every moment of life was spent in the service of Urdu knowledge and literature. But instead of his great reverence for Sarwari Sahib, he has not overlooked the factual inaccuracies of the latter, but has fulfilled his duty as an impartial researcher. In this context, a few examples may be cited here as under.

"At one place Sarwari Sahib describes the pseudonym of Prem Nath Pardesi as Allama Sidiqi Sanbawi and at other places the same false name is given to Dina Nath Dilgir. The novel **'Taziana Abrat'** written by Nand Lal Begaraz, while toeing the line of Rattan Nath Sarshar, has been called a collection of articles. He has written a lot on Sahibzada Mohd. Umar Noor Illahi's "Natak Sagar" and other dramas, but does not make any mention of his commendable work **Amanat's Indersabha'** which the editors have, for the first time, divided into scenes and acts and given it a superior shape. While talking about the Urdu Short Story in Kashmir, he gives prominence to Prem Nath Pardesi and forgets Charag Hassan Hasrat, whose collection of short stories--**"Kele Ka Chilka"** and other short stories had been published long ago in 1927. While talking of short story writers, he writes about only a few short story writers of that period whose material he had taken from the files of Martand. He ignores Jammu completely. He also does not make mention of the upcoming short story writer of that time, Prem Nath Dhar. There is also no mention of the short story writers of the same period, namely, Gulzar Ahmed Fida, Kausar Seemabi, Akhgar Askari, Kaif Asraili, Abdul Aziz Alai, etc. who were showing extraordinary skills in the art of short story writing in the forties of previous century. When we come to novel writing, we find mention of only Narsinghdas Nargis's **'Parbati'**. There is absolutely no reference to Pardesi's novel **"Poti"**. He does not make any mention anywhere of the famous expert on linguistics, Dr. Sidheshwar Verma's book **"Aariyayi Zabine"** (Aryan languages). There is also no reference to Quadrat Ullah Shahab and Abu Syeed Qureshi. Who rendered service to Urdu from outside Kashmir around this period. Instead he makes a mention of Mathradevi, Radha Rani and some leaders of the state in respect of the publication and popularization of Urdu prose, when we know that these persons had nothing to do with Urdu prose writing. It appears that whatever he got from the columns of newspapers, he went on including it in his book, without any specialization in research. We don't find any reference to any period

in this volume of Sarwari Sahib's book. It can't be said with certainty as to which the beginning of the period he is referring to, nor do we get any idea as to the limit of its expansion. From chronological point of view, those writers and poets whose mention should have been made first, have been placed towards the end of the book. He includes in the third volume of his book the works of writers and poets till the end of the sixties of the year of Independence and of those who spent their time in serving Urdu as writers or poets. Sarwari Sahib brings to light, as a diligent researcher, a number of memorable works. But here again he has misrepresented things at several places. He has given pre-eminence to a write-up which he has found in a paper or a journal, which is the speech of a leader whose report is published in a local newspaper, or some official report got published by some government officer".

The article on "**Jammu Kashmir Ki Sahafat**" (Journalism in J&K) is likewise criticism and research-oriented. It is the misfortune of Urdu literature that when Brij Premi's scholarly work was on its way to touch the peak, he left us for good. Had he not gone so soon, he could have been bracketed as a researcher, after sometime, with Dr. Gyan Chand, Malik Ram, Mohd. Yusuf Teng. Dr. Aslam Farukhi, and Tanveer Ahmed Alvi. But God willed otherwise. It is the irony of fate that Premi, who has given us the following beautiful piece of prose, as a writer of promise is not with us :-

**Kashmir is my birth place, Kashmir is my mother,
I am in love with every atom of its soil,
Under its blue sky,
In its rustling ambience of nature
How many hues there are!
How much of fragrance!
And how much of light**

one wonders at this bewitching beauty.

"I have just tried to gather a handful of such splendour fragrance and colour and give myself up to it, and describe it.

But my words have melted away, as it were, before this terrible intensity of this beauty, splendour or fragrance."

Hamidi Kashmiri writes, in glowing terms, about Brij Premi's deep attachment with his land of birth.

"Brij Premi's association with Kashmiriyat clearly points to his love and attachment to Kashmir.

He has revealed many concealed aspects of this peculiar subject and as true son of the soil, he has been, for a long time, bringing before the world the greatness of his motherland. He is, according to Khaleel-ur-Rahman Azmi intimating the people of Kashmir that he is one among their own. After exploring Kashmir, Brij Premi is in the process of a result-oriented survey about his own self.

The way he unravels the hidden aspects of the pre-eminence of the Kashmiri culture and literature, with diligence and dedication, makes evident his own liberal mindedness, open personality, patriotism and humaneness. That very Brij Premi left Kashmir for Jammu as an oppressed migrant and in Jammu itself lived nearly as a helpless person and in helplessness left this world may be, he had this line of Ghalib on his lips-

**Mara Dyare Gaer, Main Mujko Watan Se Dhoor
(I got killed in a strange land
Away from my motherland'.**

*(Translated from original by Prof. M.L. Raina)

***The author was an Internationally recognised authority on Iqbaliyaat**

28.0 REVIEW

"Jammu-o-Kashmir Main
Urdu Adab Ki Nashu Numa"

Author: Brij Premi

Publisher: Ruchna Publications Naseeb Nagar, Jammu-1992

Reviewer: Prof. R.N. Kaul, Chinore, Jammu

Paying a tribute to his friend and patron, Earl of Southampton, Shakespeare wrote in one of his sonnets:

**So long as men can breathe, have eyes to see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.**

Though physically Brij Premi is no more with us, his soul still lives with us. This is due to his passionate and dedicated service to the cause and spread of Urdu in the J&K State. Urdu, being rich in subtle thought and possessing an equally rich vocabulary (especially in its poetry) it is bound to grow and prosper on the sub-continent of India and as such Brij Premi's name shall always be associated with it.

Many an erudite scholar has written on the life and art of Brij Premi. These are Gulam Rasool Nazki, Qamar Jalalabadi, Rehman Rahi, Amin Kamil, Motilal Saqi, Nayeem Siddiqui (Pakistan) Shahid Budgami, Farida Kaul, Margoob Banahali and others. Possessing not even a smattering knowledge of Urdu, I am aware how audacious it is for me to attempt a review almost like the proverbial fool who rushes in where angels fear to tread. Yet I do let a wider public know about Urdu and about Brij Premi's contribution to it; two, Premi himself wrote many articles on Urdu in English; three—I share with Brij Premi love for natural beauty of the Happy Valley, love for its rich heritage in terms of culture and literature and above all love for Kashmiriat; four—I have been a proud teacher of Premi in the college.

Before I proceed, let me quote from "**The place where I live**" by Brij Premi:

"Where I live is known for centuries as the paradise-founded by Kashyap Rishi-where I live is the place which gave birth to mystics and poets like Lala Ded, Sheikh Noor-ul-Alam. Habba Khatoon, Rasul Mir, Paramanand, Mehjur....This is the place whose water and air flowed in the veins of Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr. Iqbal, Chakbast and Sadat Hassan Mantoo...'

But certainly Brij Premi loved Urdu and its literature more with a passion and dedication rarely found. Possessing the twin characteristics of creative artist and critic, he conducted research and study, so vast and detailed that in a short span of time he was able to present the remarkable book "*Jammu-o-Kashmir main Urdu Adab Ki Nashu Numa*", that is, evolution of Urdu in Jammu and Kashmir. He covers the entire gamut right from the Dogra rule to the present day, thus not only making the common man familiar with the language and its rich literature but also provoking him to go to the originals. He gives evidence of a literary historian who approaches his subject with an objective, rational and scientific attitude. He surely was opposed to autarchic rule of the Dogra rulers, but he points out how grateful the lovers of Urdu in the state should be to Maharaja Ranbir Singh and Maharaja Pratap Singh who encouraged the growth and popularity of Urdu. Maharaja Ranbir Singh got Persian, Sanskrit and English classics and manuscripts translated into Urdu and without hesitation declared Urdu as the state language, of course, giving Kashmiri, Hindi and Dogri their due status. Brij Premi lauds the creative artists in Urdu but at the same time regrets that some of them made deliberate attempts to Persianize Urdu, thereby making it unintelligible for many readers.

No critical historian of any literature worth the name can be truly objective without relating the times to their creative products. That is what Brij Premi has done precisely. The times to which writers like Prem Chand Munshi and in our state like Prem Nath and Prem Nath Dhar and others younger to them belonged were indeed pre-independence and post-

independence times-times exciting and stirring. Struggle for freedom from British imperialism in India and in the state of Jammu and Kashmir against the Dogra autocracy was in full swing. Epical in its quality the heroes and leaders of the freedom movement like Gandhi, Nehru, Abdul Gaffar Khan and Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah possessed epical dimensions. Naturally no young and sensitive artist could resist the impact of this struggle because for them it was the beginning of freedom from poverty and exploitation of the downtrodden:

Bliss it was in that dawn to be alive

But to be young was very heaven.

So sang young William Wordsworth about the French Revolution. And, so, as Brij Premi rightly points out, our short story writers mainly chose their themes to paint vividly the sufferings of the peasants and labourers of the state. It is clear how Premi connects the growth of Urdu short story to the social and political milieu of the times. And before we mention what critical remarks Brij Premi has made in detail about these writers it is important to know what role Urdu journalism played in the process. In fact, no literature has flourished especially in its infancy without the essential infrastructure of newspapers, journals and printing press. Maharaja Ranbir Singh provided the press while Mulk Raj Saraf gave the first Urdu newspaper **Ranbir** to the people of the state. In it and later on in **Akhbari Aam, Vitasta, Martand, Hamdard** etc. not only began the appearance of articles on political and social themes, but short stories and critical articles on literature made their appearance. The progressive movement and progressive literature began to be propagated through newspapers and in journals which soon followed the dailies and weeklies. Progressive cultural front was organised soon after attainment of independence. Brij Premi notes in the book under review that the short story in the state became the artistic mouthpiece for alleviating the sufferings of the exploited sections of the society.

In the field of the short story Brij Premi notes with gratitude the sources from which the writers who nourished this genre received their inspiration. Of Prem Chand, Sajad Hyder and then of the journalist-poet-scholar Munshi Mohammad-ud-Din Fouq he makes special mention. Naturally, Prem Nath Pardesi, and Prem Nath Dhar are discussed in greater detail. Pardesi's "**Duniya Hamari**", Dhar's "**Kagaz Ka Vasudev**" and "**Nilie Aankhen**" are specially mentioned. Naturally after partition, the themes of bloodshed and exodus received greater attention and Ramanand Sagar's "**Insan Mar Gaya**" became a national craze. Writing under the impact of the communist ideology, short story writers gave this art a new dimension as already said. On the literary firmament were seen new stars like Somnath Zutshi, Ali Mohammad Lone, Akhtar Mohi-ud-Din, Ved Rahi, Brij Premi, Hari Kishen Kaul and Gulam Rasool Santosh. This as Premi points out, the artistic and aesthetic side of the short story became subservient to what can be called a mission.

Premi notes, however, that after 1965, the content and technique of the short story in the state underwent a change. Impact of science and technology was felt and the writers went into themes psychological; the inner mind of man began to be explored; conflicts were discussed through the characters and man-woman relationship too received attention. Mention is made of a new generation of writers in the genre under discussion, prominent among them being Omar Majid, Kishori Manchanda, Shams-ud-Din Shamim, Virendra Patwari and others. Brij Premi pursues the study to the latest times. The evolution of Urdu literature and its forte the short story in our state, continued its march with yet a fresher content and a novel technique. Anand Lehar, Anis Hamdani, Somnath Dogra, Jan Mohd. Azad, Ashraf Ansari with others have blazed yet another trail.

Brij Premi succeeds in his purpose of critically outlining the evolution of the short story in the J&K State. Though aware of the limitations of space he nevertheless give a fairly adequate information about his subject. He talks about the political and social contexts, the role of newspapers and journals and educational institutions and especially of the J&K Cultural Academy in helping Urdu blossom into a noble and effective medium to satisfy the aesthetic tastes of the people in general. He creates interest for the original works by giving

glimpses of personal lives of writers, their privations, their joys and sorrows and above all their love for Kashmiris and Kashmiriat, not ignoring the aspirations of the people of Jammu and Ladakh.

The novel in Urdu did not progress so well as the short story. Brij Premi attributes it to lack of newspapers prepared to publish novels in serials. He, however, fails to point out another reason: during the period of fast social and political changes, people would have no patience to sit long over a novel. Yet at a later stage, the craft of fiction started evolving itself to mature art, especially after 1960 where Pardesi's aborted novel "**Poti**" and Ramanand Sagar's classic "**Insan Mar Gaye**" provided the lead, the novel was to grow in the hands of Narsinghdas Nargis, Thakur Punchi, Sofi Mohi-ud-Din, Farooq Renzu, Jan Mohd. Azad etc. It however failed to attract attention because it focussed only on social problems, seldom going deep into human psychology.

Since drama in Urdu made a late appearance, having its origin in wandering groups of entertainers, Brij Premi does not justifiably devote too much space to its evolution. Though some troupes did perform in the state and dramas of Aga Hashar Kashmiri, Betab Benarasi, Talib Banarasi created interest in writing of drama, it were Mohd. Umar Noor Illahi and Dina Nath Warikoo who proved pioneers in the field. Finally the impetus to this genre came through Radio Stations in Srinagar and Jammu. The radio plays by Prem Nath Pardesi, Akhtar Mohi-ud-Din, Som Nath Zutshi, Ali Mohd. Lone. Thakur Punchi and Shabnam Qayum were well-written and equally well-presented. The coming of the TV too has helped the growth of drama in Urdu.

Naturally the growth of criticism in Urdu receives detailed attention of Brij Premi. This genre of literature helps the growth of a language and its literature in a country. It is critics who are the propagators of literature. In the columns of newspapers and journals and in the form of books critics offer appreciations of the works of art, thus making the wider public familiar with these; they offer guidelines for enjoying a piece of literary art. And when a critic happens to be a creative artist at the same time, criticism becomes much more helpful. Though rarely so in the western world, in the J&K state the two have co-alesced. In our state the pioneers in this field were Mohi-ud-Din Fouq, Mohd. Umer Noor-Illahi, Abdul Ahad Azad, Nandlal Talib, Prem Nath Bazaz etc. Yet critics like Salamullah, Shamim Ahmed Shamim, Dr. Aziz Ahmed Qureshi, Dr. Hamidi, Ali Mohd. Lone and a host of others have done equally well in making Urdu Literature read and enjoyed by a wider public.

In Jammu especially pioneering work was done by Dr. Shyam Lal Kalra by presenting to the people his book "**Angrezi Rehjanat**" outlining the influence of English criticism on Urdu criticism. Brij Premi also mentions and rightly so, the critical works on Urdu literature by eminent critics like Prithvi Nath Pushp, Mohi-ud-Din Qazi, Gulam Rasool Nazki, Moti Lal Saqi, Asad-Ullah Wani, Premi Romani, Yusuf Salim, Majid Mazmar etc.

Moti Lal Saqi in his brief foreword to the book under review notes that before this one on the evolution of Urdu in the J&K State, one by Dr Abdul Qadir Sarwari had already appeared. He writes, "The book written by Dr. Sarwari cannot be overlooked. But very few people will be acquainted with the truth that Premi rendered great help to Dr. Sarwari in preparation of the book and this help is creditable....I can speak on personal knowledge that Premi deserves appreciation for his dedicated and sympathetic care with which he collected material for Dr. Sarwari's book".

I need not repeat that Brij Premi has rendered a yeoman's service to the cause of Urdu in the state. Let me conclude by quoting from Prof. Ale Ahmed Saroor:

"The remarkable work that Dr. Brij Premi has done for Urdu literature and Urdu criticism is creditable".

***The author was Professor of English and also served as Controller Examinations, University of Kashmir. His published works include—Sheikh Abdullah, Lal Ded. He has also been involved in Literary Criticism.**

29.0 CORRESPONDENCE

From Begum Safia Mantoo

Lahore

6-4-1968

My dearest Mr. Brij Premi,

I got your letter sometime back. I apologize for I couldn't reply in time. It is difficult for me to answer many questions that you have asked. The reason being that I am not interested in reading and writing. This creates hurdles. In spite of this I will tell you a couple of things that I know.

I understand that you love Mantoo. That is why you want to know everything about him. It pains me to think I don't get any money, from his writings. Mantoo's books are published in Pakistan and India. Yet I don't get even a single paisa.

What to write about him?

He has left one thing for us—name and respect. I am very thankful to him for this. I know that this letter will disappoint you. Circumstances force me to do this. I would write if I got money from his writings. But I am not a writer. Besides, why should I write when nobody cares for him?

Many persons suggest that I write about Mantoo. I have told you that I can't write. I am not competent enough to do so. I am an ignorant woman but lucky to have lived with a writer. It was wonderful life. Mantoo loved me and children. We spent excellent days together. Everybody was unjust to him. He had never thought of leaving India. Some months before the partition he got a letter from the Filmistan Studio. That letter broke his heart. Believe me he did not tell me this for a long time. He trusted Mukherjee and Ashok Kumar and was proud of them. How could he have told me that a notice had been served to him! After that he drank more and more. His heavy drinking knew no limits. The result was his death. I came to Pakistan first and he came in January 1948. He came here a very sad man. His health had deteriorated.

But he went on writing. He produced one short story a day. He wrote till his death. I don't know much about his books of short stories. People say that he wrote on everything. It will be better for you to come to Pakistan, buy his books and find out the answers to your questions. I can't buy the books written by my husband because that will give me pain. This letter of mine will disappoint you but I can't do anything else for you. I am sending you the genealogy of Mantoo's family.

*Please contact Agha Khalish Kashmiri (he edits the weekly **Musavir**) if you have more questions. He was a close friend of Mantoo. You may write to Ismat Chughtai, too. I have her address. She will be able to tell you something about Mantoo. You have asked me about the house that I live in. Well, it was we who bought it. My share and that of my daughters was very less. Our share is further divided among sisters and Iqbal. With God's grace and the blessings of my brothers we were able to buy this house, otherwise we would have been paupers. The government of this country pays us a pension of three hundred and fifty rupees. Very less! My brothers contribute the rest of the money. I pass my time nicely. My mother lives with me. I pray to God that they bless me. I close this letter with the hope that it is of some help to you.*

May God bless you! My daughters convey their regards to you.

**Your Sister
Safia Mantoo**

From Begum Safia Mantoo

Lahore

18-12-1976

My dearest Mr. Brij Premi,

I got your letter, I am sorry for not replying in time. My mother was ill. I too was unwell. With the grace of God we are fine now. Guests kept on coming. I have two sisters—one lives in Karachi and the other lives in Rawalpindi. They too were here. One of my two daughters lives in Karachi and the second one lives in Rawalpindi. They had come. This is the reason that I couldn't reply your letter earlier. I hope you will excuse me for this. I did not reply your other letters too. Mr Brij, I am not good at writing letters. I have to work hard at a letter. I am not used to writing because I am not a literati.

I am happy to know that you have been awarded Ph.D for having worked on Mantoo's life and works. Please accept my congratulations. My sisters too convey congratulations to you. May you succeed in life! May God fulfil all your desires! In your letter you have asked me to send you a photograph of Mantoo and me. Sometime back Ismat Chughtai came here. I gave her the photograph to be handed over to you. I have her address. Ask her to give you the photograph. What should I write about myself in letters? I have spent my life in a nice way. You desire that I write about my children. With the grace of God my three daughters are happily married. My eldest daughter lives in Karachi, The middle one lives in Lahore and the youngest is in Rawalpindi. Mantoo had three elder brothers. They are dead. His three sisters (two are step-sisters) are alive. Mantoo's real sister is called Apa. Her name is Nasira Iqbal. Mantoo never used the words 'step-sisters'. In fact he forbade me from saying so.

Hamid Jalal's mother was his sister. She is dead. My youngest daughter is married to the son of Hamid Jalal and is known as Shahid Jalal. Nazir Ludhianavi and Rafiq Ghaznavi are also no more. I don't get any royalty from Mantoo's books. This pains me. My husband served literature. And many people are making money out of this. I get nothing. This is unjust. I close this letter here. I don't know what I have written.

I pray for you.

**Your Sister
Safia**

From Sardar Dewan Singh Maftoom

My Dear Mr. Premi,

I got your letter, Mantoo was my close friend. In Delhi he came to my place everyday. During day time he drank beer and in the evenings he drank liquor. It was drinking that killed him. I wanted him to have a small doze of liquor. But he was uncontrollable. These are the answers to the questions that you have :

1. I know nothing about his family and ancestors.
- 2) Perhaps his wife lived with her mother in Lahore.
- 3) He was a Muslim but I have never heard him say anything about Islam. He was a Muslim the way

I am a Sikh. He leaned towards communism.

- 3) He was a born short story writer and an essayist.
- 5) I don't consider his writings pornographic. He described human feelings and emotions. I was a witness in the court of law when there was a law suit about pornography in his writings.
- 6) Perhaps he started his career in radio in 1926. Those days he lived in Hassan Building near the Kashmiri Darwaaza.
- 7) I don't consider him a journalist because he was not interested in politics. A journalist must necessarily be interested in politics.

I will inform you before I come to Srinagar in Summer. I have your name and address.

**Yours Sincerely,
Dewan Singh Maftoom**

From Krishan Chander

My Dear Mr. Brij Premi,

I thank you for appreciating my writings and achievements. I am very happy to know that you are working on Saadat Hassan Mantoo. I am always ready to help you in this. Please read my ***Adab Ke Naye Memaar*** published by Maktab Jamia, Bindi Bazaar, Bombay. You will find answers to many of your questions. Apart from this, get in touch with other writers of the progressive Movement if you want to know more about Mantoo. Feel free to write to me, too.

I pray for your success in the literary work you have taken up.

**Yours Sincerely,
Krishen Chander**

From Majrooh Sultanpuri

Bombay,

22 October, 1976

My dear Mr Brij Premi,

I got your letter of second October yesterday i.e. 21st of October. It had been kept in the dead letter post office all these days. This punishment was inflicted on us because the address had been written in Urdu which is not our national language. This is how poison works. I don't know when the politicians will understand this simple affair.

I came to Bombay in 1945. I had been writing poetry for four years. I met Mantoo those days.

Anyhow, one day I went to his home to pay a courtesy call. When we met he said to me, "Recite a verse". I recited a ghazal. He said, "I don't like ghazals". I was very junior to him in age and due to the lack of knowledge suffered from lack of self-confidence.

So I kept quiet. If this thing had been told to me this time I would have said, "Respected sir, you have said nothing about the art of poetry".

I know only this much about him.

**Yours
Majrooh Sultanpuri**

From Salaam Machli Shahri
A Satara
Pindara Road, Delhi
12-5-1967

My Dear Premi,

I got your letter of May the first. I am delighted to learn that you are working on Mantoo for you Ph.D thesis. Mantoo was a short story writer and I am a poet. Writing brought me closer to him. We liked each other. On his death I wrote a poem which was published in a literary journal. I can't recall the name of the journal.

My observation of Mantoo is that his love did not border on foolishness. He was a very heavy drinker. (Compared with him Akhtar Sheerani, Majaz and Meeraji were ordinary drinkers). He dressed himself in the choicest clothes. He was a simple man even in the family affairs. As a conversationalist he had his peculiar style. He knew how to rebut his opponents. It was drinking that defeated him. He talked about intoxication, ecstasy, women, profligate men, goons, hoodlums, drinking and imaginary revolutions. In his short stories Mantoo is like a doctor who diagnoses the disease and cures the patient. He shocks the readers. As a writer he performed his role very well. I think it is this that gave him fame.

Yours Sincerely,
Salaam Machli Shahri

Ahmad Nadeem Qasmi
28 September 1989
Respected Premi Sahib,

I am really sorry for the delay in writing to you. I had actually to inform you about inclusion of your write-up "**Saadat Hassan Manto and Russian literature** in the next issue of "**Fanoon**" and this will appear ending October. I'll be sending you a copy, God willing. The book authored by you "**Manto-life and achievements**" has not reached. I am really eager to go through it. I can't understand what must be done. Manto was a great writer, besides being my friend. Manto's letters I have published in the form of a book.

...After 1948 Manto could not write from Lahore and I too from there. I'd come from Peshawar. In 1948, Manto happened to be with me for two nights. I was associated those days with Peshawar radio. One evening, I served him whisky and a good bottle would cost Rs 50 to 60. Manto also used to say, "Qasimi. I owe you rupees sixty. Had you too partaken, it would be something different. An unnecessary burden it was on you, I can feel, but I shall...he would never stop a reference to it. It is a different story that he was not at all happy as far as money was concerned. I would ask how he could do it, a person whose monetary condition was so poor...he could not and why I...should have accepted it.

Yours
Ahmed Nadeem Qasmi

Allau-ud-Din Mazhar,
Maktaba Jadeed
Printers, Publishers, Book sellers
Dear respected Brij Premi Jee.

Adab, Your expression of reverence for Manto is worthy of appreciation. May God give you strength and nobleness to your intentions! Long back was published "**Urdu Adab**", only two volumes were issued. It had to be closed down. As pointed out by you much has been

written on Manto. Manto Number of "**Naqoosh**" and "**Naqsh**" from Karachi were also published.

May be you have seen these two volumes. Abu Qureshi's book "Manto" must be gone through. Mumtaz Sheerin's critical essays in '**Mayaar**' and Manto's artistic achievements also deserve mention. The books can be helpful. If possible, you can also contact editor of "Naqoosh" and this can help you to know more.

One essay has been written by Ismat and Krishan Chander. This is important to go through. Both of them were very close to Manto.

I hope you will consider what I have said.

Yours sincerely
Allamud-Din Mazhar.

Naseer Anwar
Karachi

Dear Premi,

It has really been a long chain of hardships-bone breaking struggles, I have passed through. I couldn't really find time to write to you and for all this I request to be excused.

I am sending two volumes of "**Savera**". I would have liked to send your other publications, write ups in other magazines, but couldn't really do it. Whatever, I could, I am sending.

In "**Savera**" Hanif Rai had attempted to write some thing in form of a write-up. Ismat Chughtai had been very severe with her sharp and literary remarks. I haven't the copy of Ismat's write-up, which I could send. If possible, get a copy from Bombay after writing to her. Or, you can have it from some library after ascertaining the date of this publication. This write-up will be immensely useful.

One thing more. Manto was not admitted to a Mental hospital in connection with insanity, if you call it like that. The reality is that in Lahore, in Mental hospital, there are some de-addiction centres. He was admitted to ensure that he could give up liquor.

My book '**Moj Sarab**' under publication is almost complete. I don't like it to be given to a publisher, even if some advertisement about that had appeared in "Naya Idara". If financial conditions allow, I'll get it published myself.

You are living in a real Paradise and life here is really not so good. May God help that we breath freely in a very fine and harmonious atmosphere. My "Salam" to every particle, everything of Kashmir.

Yours
Naseer Anwar

Abdul Qadir Sarwari
Himayat Nagar
Hyderabad (Deccan)
Dated 25/2/1968

Dear Brij Premi

Yesterday, I received the telegram regarding success of Wasiq, so kind of you. I do not know why the result of Nikhat is not out. I am leaving this place for Srinagar on 6th March. I will be at Jammu on 8th. I shall stay at Jammu till 10th March and will leave for Srinagar by 11 O'clock bus. Nikhat's leg is fractured and she is in bed for the last two months. I pray to God that you are doing well. May God help you and shower blessings. Whenever I happen to visit a library I always look for a book on Manto. Here I got a book from (Asifia) library. The book is titled "Jenaze" and it is a collection of essays of Manto. The compositions are of a dramatic form as death of Chengez Khan, death of Taimur, death of Cleopetra, Death of Napoleon, death of Babur, death of Shahjahan, death of Tipu, death of Rasputin. In

"Humayun", January 1938, I happened to have seen his story **"Naya Qanoon"**. A clerk told me that in **"Nigar"** and some other journals, there are many write-ups on Manto. I have talked to him and you too can, if you need, have a list of these essays...

In Asifia a list of more books is mentioned below.

Talakh Turush and *Sheerin, Khali Botleyn* (stories) *Zahree-e-hilal* (collection of dramas, stories and essays) *Surkando Ke Peechey* (stories), *Bees Gair Mutbua Kahaniya* Twenty unpublished stories) *Ismat Chughtai* (Biography) *Ganjey Fareshtey, Noor Jahan, Saroor Jahan, Yazeed, Phansi* (Translation Victor Hugo), *Veera* (Translation of Oscar Wilde).

Every body is fine. Praying for your welfare.

Your well wisher
Abdul Qadir Sarwari
***(Translated by M.N. Kak)**

Mr. Brij Krishen Aima,

The wife of the Russian Ambassador, Mrs. Syrodeeva is coming to the Department of Urdu on May 30 at 2 0'Clock. She has worked on Manto. You should come without fail and try to meet her. Even if you have to take leave, take half day's leave. Perhaps, she is going back the day after. You may not find such an occasion again.

—Abdul Qadir Sarwari
29/3/1968

30.0 ABDUL QADIR SARWARI

By Dr. Brij Premi

It was 1962. Zoor Saheb had passed away, Prof. Abdul Qadir Sarwari had donned the mantle of the Headship of the department of Urdu, Kashmir University. Around this time the post of a college lecturership had been advertised. Sarwari Sahib was on the selection panel as an expert. I too had appeared for the interview and was quite hopeful of getting selected since I had secured distinction in my postgraduation, and also there were not many contenders. I had fared well, but my name had been dropped. This compelled me to see Sarwari Sahib. Those days he used to wear an english suit with a felt hat on his head. In my meeting I referred to the interview. Sarwari Sahib took time to recollect. With all the humility, he expressed regrets for my non-selection. He said political pressure had worked against my selection. He, however, gave me few words of reassurance saying, "I feel satisfied with your talent. God willing, next time you be hopeful".

Many more occasions came. Sarwari Sahib continued to be called as an expert. As usual I was denied the chance everytime. Meanwhile, the Department of Urdu established a Research Wing. I was a candidate herein too. In spite of Sarwari Sahib, I was not enrolled for Ph.D I felt bitter and started hating Sarwari Sahib. He worshipped the rising sun and was too timid to resist political pressures. Who would care for me? Neither I had the patronage nor the resources. Sarwari Sahib kept on trotting out lame excuses. People continued to get admission, I was ignored everytime.

By now I had come closer to Sarwari Sahib. He had turned sympathetic and shared my interests in Urdu literature. During this period his two books "**Do Bhai-Do Adeeb**" and "**Kashmir Mein Farsi Adab Ki Twarikh appeared**". He undertook a research project and wanted to write a comprehensive history of literature particularly that of Urdu , in Kashmir.

As Prof. Sarwari began his project, the chapter on '**the History of Persian literature**' became too unwieldy to be included in the book. It had to be published as a separate volume. The history of Urdu literature in Kashmir came out in three volumes.

When I got admission for Ph.D after some years, a fear haunted me that Sarwari Sahib would spoil my career. One day, he all of a sudden turned up at my home and informed me that my job had been done. I started receiving lot of affection from him. Hamidi Sahib was my guide, but Sarwari Sahib continued to help me in my research work for some time.

I maintained regular contact with Sarwari Sahib for the next six years. I was not on the staff of the Department of Urdu, but had to visit the department quite often in connection with my research work. Weekends and Sundays I spent in the pleasant company of Sarwari Sahib. He was working on his project-**Literary history of Kashmir**, and was looking for the relevant source material. I had the privilege to visit many places with him in this connection. I came to see great researcher in him-how he would handle moth-eaten old files of newspapers and visit the aged writers and poets and their families. He retrieved the precious material from ravaged manuscripts, which otherwise would have faded into oblivion. Sarwari Sahib would patiently dust off the papers he was handling. His perseverance was unmatchable. It was during this fieldwork that I met people like Kashyap Bandhu, Maulana Saeed, Nand Lal Talib, Amar Chand Wali, Padam Nath Ganjoo, Kamal-ud-Din Shaida, Dina Nath Nadim, Jia Lal Nazir, Dina Nath Dhar, Jia Lal Barq, Ghulam Rasool Nazki, Jia Lal Kaul, besides scores of writers and poets of merit. On these tours, Sarwari Sahib would affectionately tell me, "*Aima, you have become my conscience keeper*". This made me feel humble.

While Prof. Sarwari engaged in conversation with people, my job was to jot down the notes of the conversation. Then he would rearrange these to put them in his own style. Old files of newspapers of Kashmir, particularly those of *Daily Martand*, proved of much help to him. For nearly two months we kept on visiting the Martand office at Sheetal Nath. While

turning the old files, Sarwari Sahib would often exclaim, **"the contribution of Martand surpasses all other newspapers of the place"**. **"Sheetal Nath"** weighed heavily on his mind. He would tell his friends, "I and Aima Sahib are on a pilgrimage of Sheetal Nath these days". For hours he would seem lost while going through the back issues of Martand. He would dust off the files and sift out the material needed. This was an exhausting job. We would then go to refresh ourselves with some tea in the nearby tea stall. He would have anxious moments whenever I would be late.

To Sarwari Sahib self never mattered. He had come from faraway Hyderabad. His children-Fazal, Wasik and the little daughter stayed with him to pursue their education, and lived in the spacious 46, Jawahar Nagar quarter. Probably due to some problems, his wife and other family members had stayed back at Hyderabad. The life style of Sarwari Sahib revealed that he had virtually renounced the family life. He was all the time busy either writing or reading. Whenever I visited him he was seen writing with a big cigar held in his mouth and cup of black tea on the table. He ate little and used to say, "In these times one has to take care of the digestive system".

Sarwari Sahib was not too conscious about the dress he wore. Initially, he used to wear english suit with a felt hat on his head. Later, he switched on to black Sherwani, Pyjama and Woollen Gandhi cap. He always had a hand bag with him, in which he carried everything- from vegetables to precious manuscripts. Sarwari Sahib also had an old car, which he used to drive himself. He used to drive at snails' pace as the engine of the vehicle would often break down. After some time he disposed off the car.

Sarwari Sahib used to lose his temper and burst into fits of anger. He would then lash out at the students and the staff of his department, and often make their 'incompetence' the excuse for this. If somebody was courageous enough to retort back Sarwari Sahib would then soften and try to placate him.

Peevish behaviour was probably the result of his aging, but at other times his patience and endurance had few parallels. He suffered from allergy and was often seen scratching the affected parts. One day, while on his way to home in the University bus, he was seated alongside a senior professor. The two were having a heated argument over some topic. As the itch became troublesome, Sarwari Sahib desired to scratch the affected part. As he began scratching, his professor friend reminded him, "Sarwari Sahib, this is my leg."

Sarwari Sahib observed fasting and offered prayers with regularity. He would carry his children alongwith him at the time of offering prayers. As per his servant, he used to get up in the wee hours and recite the holy Quran. He had strong faith in God and never cared about his self-interest. It is also true that he would compromise with the times. He was a workaholic to the core.

Qutub-ul-Nisa, a close acquaintance of him from Hyderabad describes him as, **"a successful professor, a competent administrator, seeker of truth and peace, who like his students and friends in the field of Urdu, a down to earth person...He has the potential of bending time in his favour.** With great sagacity and intelligence, he would set the things right and the difficulties would seem a non-issue. He counters the difficulties with courage and strength (Naqoosh, Lahore, Shakshiyat, No. Page 550)".

Abdul Qadir Sarwari was born on August 19, 1906. His father Haji Mohd. Sarwari had received a little share from his mansab. Of his ancestors, one of them had a Kashmir link. He had come to settle in Delhi from Arabia. His descendants during the reign of Aurangzeb migrated to Deccan. Many of Sarwari Sahib's ancestors had fairly good acquaintance with Arabic and Persian languages, besides religious literature.

Sarwari Sahib had his early education in Madrassa Mansab Daran and also attended the religious school, Makbara Zaman Khan Shaheed. He passed his M.A. and LL.B from Osmania University. In 1926, Sarwari Sahib was appointed as Lecturer Urdu-Persian at his Alma maters. For a while he headed the Urdu, Persian and Arabic deptts. at *Mellore* University. In 1947 he returned to Jamia Osmania again to head the department of Urdu. In 1963, after his retirement, he joined as Head of the Urdu, Persian Deptt. of J&K University. He

continued to perform these duties till his last days.

His special field was research. He had strong hold on the language and was a good translator and a poet. Sarwari Sahib, during his professional career had close association with luminaries like Dr. Mohi-ud-Din Zor and Maulvi Abdul Haq, regarded as father of Urdu literature.

Sarwari Sahib's publication include *Duniya-e-Afsana* (1926), *Jadeed Urdu Shairi* (1929), *Kirdar Aur Afsana* (1935), *Duniya Ke Shahkar Afsane* (1934), *Phool Ban* (1939), *Shihraj-e-Sukhan* (1939), *Kuliyat-i-Siraj* (1940), *Siraj Aur Uski Shairi* (1941), *Zuban Aur Ilm-e-Zuban* (1956), *Do Bhai Do Adeeb* (1965), *Kashmir Me Farsi Adab Ki Tareekh* (1968), *Urdu Ki Adbi Tareekh*, *Kashmir Mein Urdu* (3 volumes, 1981-1984). His other published works (from Jamia Osmania) are:

Osmania Mein Urdu Maktoobat Ki Tafili Phirist,

Qisa-e-Be Nazeer, *Murah Allah Sarar* and *Mehtab-e-Sukhan*. These works have opened new vistas in the field of Urdu poetry and literature.

Sarwari Sahib had great interest in short stories. His publications '*Duniya-e-Afsana*' and '*Kirdar Aur Afsana*', based on criticism and Research of short stories, are regarded as pioneering work in the field. The short story writing in Urdu had lagged behind in matching western standards and artistic expressions. Around this time Jaleel Ahmed Kidwai, Manto, Prof. Mujeeb, Kh. Manzoor Hussain Sal Ahmed, alongwith Abdul Qadir Sarwari introduced translations of western short stories in Urdu. Even before the progressive movement in Urdu was born, Sarwari Sahib published his '*Tarajim*' in 1934. This work put before the students of Urdu the techniques and experimentation of European authors in the field of short story writing.

A comprehensive review of Sarwari Sahib's literary activities exceeds the scope of this essay. I would confine myself to his last publication-*Kashmir Mein Urdu*, and its ethical beauty. He toiled hard for six years and was able to finish the work during his lifetime. He was keen that he should see through its publication. University had closed for the winter vacations. Two days before he had to leave for his hometown, he took me along to the Normal Press and stayed there to see that all the three volumes were bound well. Then we proceeded to J&K Cultural Academy office at Lal Mandi to deposit the manuscript. Mr. Mohd. Yusuf Teng congratulated him for accomplishing the job well. He added, "The office is closed today. Please take the trouble of visiting again tomorrow. I would try to get it reviewed at the earliest and make arrangements for its publication." When we reached near his quarter, Prof. Sarwari said, "Did you hear Aima Saheb that he will get it reviewed. Who will review my book?" His confidence stood shattered. I felt puzzled. The manuscript was deposited the following day and Sarwari Sahib proceeded to Hyderabad. Soon after he returned, he breathed his last. His great dream, to see the publication of this work in his lifetime, remained unaccomplished. It took Cultural Academy many more years to see the publication through.

Sarwari Sahib's great contribution was that he was the first researcher to put the record of Urdu in Kashmir in a chronological order. He exhumed many a vital 'literary corpses', which lay buried. Before him, no real work had been done in this field. He not only rendered services to Urdu literature, but also 'Kashmiriyat' (Kashmir Studies). Any serious venture on Urdu in Kashmir cannot overlook Sarwari Sahib's work. The first volume of *Kashmir Mein Urdu* serves as the backdrop and lists the achievements in the field of literature of different languages of the state. Originally, he intended to title the first volume as '**History of Kashmiri Literature**'. Second and Third volumes record Urdu writings till 1970, in a concise and systematic order. Mr. Mohd. Yusuf Teng observes, "More than criticism, it is a work of history. The work reflects both, at times there is detailed discussion too. Sarwari Saheb has travelled back beyond the past and illuminated many aspects through his explorations." The work does have few shortcomings. At places he goes into unnecessary detail and exacts the patience of readers. Nevertheless, it stimulates our curiosity. The work

reflects his sound understanding and broad vision.

Sarwari Saheb was a great scholar and an outstanding researcher. He was affable teacher and a guide. His correspondence that he had with me during my years of research work throw ample light on this (The Correspondence would be published separately--**The Editor**)

Postscript: That year (his last year) the winter was quite harsh and the vacations had been extended. The University had to re-open on March 12. Sarwari Sahib returned to Kashmir one or two days earlier. As usual he visited the department on the day University re-opened, and attended to the work. One of the employees, Mr. Beig recalls that on that day Sarwari Sahib appeared unusually cheerful. He interacted with lot of people amiably. While he was on way to home at Jawahar Nagar, he took ill and was rushed to the hospital. In spite of the best efforts put in by the doctors, he could not be revived. Sarwari Saheb felt that death was near. He was worried who will wipe the tears of his children and what would be their fate as they had come with him to take examinations.

Sarwari Saheb remained conscious till his last moments. One of the employees of the department who was at his bed side said his last words were "O, Allah". Before I could see Sarwari Sahib again, he had departed from this world. He was buried in a small graveyard near Jawahar Nagar. One of his ancestors hailed from Kashmir. It was probably Sarwari Saheb's love for Kashmir that Kashmir accepted him in its bosom.

****(Translated from the original Urdu text by Shri Prediman K. Joseph Dhar)***

31.0 PREM NATH PARDESI-PREM CHAND OF KASHMIR

By Dr. Brij Premi

The people of Kashmir are known for their sharp intellect, scholarship, artistic imagination and creative potential from times immemorial. They have shown their worth in the varied fields of philosophy, art and literature. Our contribution to Sanskrit, Persian, Dogri, Urdu, Hindi and English languages proves our grip not only on the medium but also the depth on the philosophical, poetical, theological, historical and other subjects alike. During the 20th century Urdu became a powerful medium of expression, after it became the court language in 1889 but in the absence of a local paper (which started from early thirties) it was difficult to express oneself. It was at this juncture in early twenties, before the publication of any paper from Kashmir, that some dailies and weeklies provided opportunity to the young talented writers of Kashmir to express themselves. One such weekly journal was **Akhbar-i-Aam** of Lahore, edited by Pandit Gopi Nath Gurtu. It started reserving some columns for the publication of News and Views about Kashmir. This gave philip to the young budding writers of the Valley. Prem Nath Sadhu **Raunaq**, a man with a promising pen, began sending his poems to this weekly. The publication of his poems encouraged him to put his zeal and zest in his writings. It was Raunaq, who in later years assumed the pen name of "Pardesi" and dominated the field of Urdu short story in Kashmir.

Raunaq came from a middle class family. His grand father, Pandit Sahaj Koul was a high-up in the Dogra hierarchy. He had as such accumulated lot of wealth and estate, but this wealth did not last long. Soon it slipped away from his hands. Consequently his son, Pandit Mahadev Koul had to seek an ordinary employment in the state department of Dredge and Floods. This being a temporary service, Pandit Mahadev Koul soon found himself out of job and finally breathed his last at an early age. Raunaq was in his teens then. He had barely passed matriculation and took his college education for a short span of time. In order to provide livelihood for his family he had to bid farewell to education. In the beginning, he took employment as an agent with a lawyer, then he shifted to a railway agency for sometime. It was some years later that he succeeded in securing employment in the state customs and excise department as Sub-Inspector, where he served most of his life. In this service, Raunaq was posted to remote corners of the state, which provided him an opportunity to visit many places and study the masses from close quarters. These tours helped him to understand the suffering of the people under the Dogra autocracy. This ultimately changed the entire course of his thinking and motivated him to portray the real life of the people.

Prem Nath Raunaq started his writing career by composing poems and writing stories for children. His earlier poems were published in "**Vitasta**", Hamdard, Ranbir and Akhbar-i-Aam of Lahore during the early thirties. But he felt soon that his real field was not poetry. He, therefore, tried his pen in prose. For a long time he retained his pen name Raunaq but abandoned it in later years when he wrote short stories and "*Adbi-i-Latif*". He wrote a lot from 1932-1938 but all these writings contained romantic characters divorced from the hard and naked realities of day to day life. Not only the scheme of plots but the characters and the dialogues also, were alien. It was the same time, when Munshi Prem Chand, Sajjad Hyder Yeldaram, Sudhershnan, Majnu Gorkhpuri and Niaz Fatehpuri had created a stir in the work of Urdu fiction. Prem Chand though an idealist had smoothened the ground for realism though he himself continued to be an idealist for a long time. Barring Prem Chand all other writers were writing with romantic flavour. The translation of Tagore and his style also had created a stir in the contemporary fiction. Pardesi flourished in this atmosphere. He was fascinated in the beginning by Tagore in his poetic prose and subsequently by Prem Chand. This finds an echo in the earlier *Adabi-i-Latifs* and short stories. *Dekate Geet*, *Pujari*, *Milnay Kay Din*, *Do Ankhay*, *Birhan Kay Geet*, *Phool*, *Sazish*, *Nabeena Gakiayar*, *Ban Malla*, *Aprinay*

Chand Say, etc. are some of such writings to quote. This form of writing is exclusively reflected in Adab-i-Lateef technique and is predominantly influenced by Tagore.

The style and the content is rich with his emotional touches decorated with a deep sense of aesthetics. Writing about this form, in one of his letters in response to my queries Sh. P.N. Bazaz, a reknowned author and journalist, recalls those days:-

"He showed me a number of short stories almost all of which were unpublished. They were one and all romantic in character with nothing in them corresponding to real life, the actors were invariably non-Kashmiris and their field of activity was outside Kashmir."

Pardesi's such writings are not all waste. One can very well visualize, Pardesi in making. He language is simple, his style is chaste and his imagery is fertile. One may not find ruthlessness of life in these themes but one enjoys the intensity of emotions expressed in a wonderful style. These prose pieces, though strictly not short stories, have definitely the fragrance of the stories. These are stories without a definite plot scheme but with thoughtfulness and something sublime in them. Surprisingly, Pardesi has not included such writings, some of them marvellous compositions, in any one of his collections.

Pardesi's creative genius found full expression in the columns of '**Vitasta**' edited by Sh. P.N. Bazaz and '**Martand**' of Sanatan Dharma Yuvak Sabha. These papers, especially '**Martand**' which came into existence in 1935, very soon dominated the field of journalism in Kashmir during its early years. Its special numbers earned a great name in the whole of Northern India. During these years of making, Pardesi like Prem Chand and Saadat Hassan Manto, wrote under many fictitious names. Some of the names were *Raunaq*, Prem Nath Sadhu, Sadhu Kashmiri, Babu, Ullama Illat and Balak Ram Bari. He took an anti-government stance and wrote some columns of '*Vitasta*' and '*Hamdard*' permanently. Since he was a government servant, he never wanted to be exposed but all the same he acted like Prem Chand and contributed his bit to the freedom struggle of Kashmir. In one of his letters addressed to me, Sh. P.N. Bazaz writes:-

"Pardesi was anxious that his production of a political nature should not be divulged to the authorities or political leaders. He had complete confidence in me and I never let any one know the identity of the author of any article, play or short story even though I incurred displeasure of the authorities and top leaders by their publication".

These writings earned him and the papers a great name. It is in the stories written during this time that one is amazed to find the fertility of his creative genius. He wrote inexhaustibly and wove stories of different shades. This entire period is influenced by the earlier writings of Prem Chand, whom he considered his Guru. Most of these writings bloom with colour, romance and thrill, no doubt that these writings at the same time speak of immaturity and deficiency in craft of story weaving. Besides writing for '*Martand*' and other journals outside the state, he virtually edited the special and Sunday editions of '*Hamdard*'. His range of writing, besides stories and *Adab-i-Lateef*, was spread to the literary discussions, book reviews and articles on social reform. This included caricatures and comments on contemporary politics and state administration. All this was, however, being done earlier and the progressive movement in Urdu literature had not taken its birth till then and the struggle for freedom and secular character had not taken shape in Kashmir. It is on this account that one feels immaturity of content in this period in Pardesi's writings. The entire field is dominated by romantic background and one feels that it has no relevance to the life and sufferings of the common masses. These writings simply amaze and do not infuse any revolutionary fervour. The entire process is unearthly and speaks of the stories of the unknown worlds.

The first collection of his short stories '**Sham-e-Saher**' reveals such themes '*Rajo Ki Dalli*', '*Parcel*', '*Man Ka Piyar*', '*Jaikara*' '*Santosh*', '*Sulakhun Kay Peechay*', '*Sacha Dost*' etc. are some of the stories which need mention in this context.

Pardesi had seen many ups and downs in his life. The untimely death of his father had put

him to penury and he was compelled to take-up employment. This poverty and want gave him an insight in understanding the problems of poor people. The Dogra autocracy had made the life of the people meaningless under the strain of exploitation. The blood stained hands of feudal system had tightened its grip on the administrative set-up, resulting in exploitation, nepotism, illiteracy, unemployment and economic disparity amongst the people. In 1938, National Conference emerged under the leadership of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah. The freedom struggle received inspiration from the national movement and achieved new dimension. Maharaja Hari Singh's government in the beginning had shown some democratic aptitude but he was soon overshadowed by his unwise advisers. The result was the democratic rights were denied. Masses were burdened under heavy taxation, higher cost of living, illiteracy and backwardness.

Pardesi during this period had toured the entire state in the capacity of Sub-Inspector of Customs and Excise and had obtained first hand knowledge of the people. He had also widened his knowledge and vision after studying the progressive literature and classics of different languages. He learnt a good deal about Gorky, Chekov and Maupassant also. Pardesi felt for the first time that all his writings were waste. He had heard the whisper of the changing tide and it was at this time he felt that he had not been honest in his writings. He confessed his shortcomings as under :-

"I cannot be proud of what I wrote from 1932-1938. I could not visualise what my duties would be as a writer of short stories, the duties towards my beloved country-the same country whose 400 million masses remained enslaved for 4 centuries and whose roots had been hollowed in poverty and exploitation". (Behte Chirag).

But the thinking of Pardesi had been undergoing a change for many years. Before the beginning of the freedom struggle in Kashmir he was swayed by the realism of Prem Chand. In 1933, '*Angarey*' was published. This was a new voice with new ideas—A voice choked with emotions and anger. Pardesi makes a frank confession of his being incompetent and far from honest in the following words:-

"Then Angarey, the first book of progressive writers was published. I felt that whatever I had written was sheer waste. There was nothing except romance in it. I enlarged my study and read the Indian and European authors, whose every word revealed anger, grief and revolution against the old social order, which had worn out by now. This was a new voice, which had echoed in India after Russian revolution and which had awakened the people". (A letter to Siddiq Begum, a well-known progressive writer)

Soon the progressive movement started in India, which gave a new dimension to the Urdu fiction. The period of purposelessness, sick romanticism, formalism and mere imaginative art was over. In sharp contradiction to this attitude problems of common man, purposefulness of values, economic disparity, hypocrisy and exploitation of haves over have-nots found the main theme in the stories of Pardesi and he began to be called '**Prem Chand**' of Kashmir by his readers. Pardesi by his extensive and keen observation translated the true spirit of his time in to his literature.

The second collection of Pardesi's short stories was '*Duniya Hamari*', which appeared in forties. It has an introduction by Rajinder Singh Bedi. This collection seems to be different from his earlier works and is devoid of cheap sentimentalism and romanticism. The content of these stories is rich thematically and the treatment is conspicuously different. These stories reveal his social consciousness. The understanding of human behaviour is vivid. The style is different, simple and lucid. Pardesi does not seem to waste words, nor does he use the ladder of similies and metaphors. He weaves his stories in very simple words and leaves the conclusion to the reader. In his style and treatment of the subject, he seems closer to Saadat Hassan Manto. He maintains unity of impression and grip over the story by his brevity. He is neither a social reformer nor a political orator. His '*Kargar*', '*Osool Ki Duniya*',

'Vapsi', etc. are some of the great examples of this period.

Pardesi was a great lover of his land. He was conscious that his contemporaries living outside the state had always considered Kashmir as a playground of cheap pleasure. Prominent among such writers was Krishen Chander and Aziz Ahmed who in the name of painting Kashmir had always distorted the real picture of this land. It is for this reason chiefly that we find very seldom the description of 'heaven on earth' - the water falls, the rivulets, the springs, mountains and meadows. Instead he portrayed the 'horrible' pictures of Kashmir. He portrayed the life of starving and toiling masses-the underprivileged, the artisans and craftsmen, the exploited '*Hatos*', the peasants, the boatmen and the ordinary poor people, with their small dreams and aspirations, who were destined to live the life of misery and perish in the wilderness. His stories woven with complete confidence and dexterity, with honesty and truth spoke of the struggle for freedom from the shackles of Dogra autocracy. In order to continue his struggle, he lashed out at the system under the pen name of '*Balak Ram Bari*'. His third collection '*Bahtey Chirag*' was compiled after his death. This collection is the true representative of Kashmiri character and bursts out with the feelings of revolt-revolt against naked exploitation, conservatism and like his Guru, Prem Chand awakens us from deep slumber of ignorance, backwardness, and religious fanaticism, '*Kutbah*', '*Kagaz Ki Jhandiya*', '*Tawari*' '*Khoon Aur Kikay*', '*Jahan Sarhad Milti Hai*', '*Junjuna*', '*Bahtey Chirag*', '*Karigar*' '*Dhool*', '*Uglay Saal*', '*Devta Kahan Hain*', '*Salesman*' etc. are some of the stories worth mentioning.

Pardesi was a master craftsman of storytelling and story weaving. He maintains the element of interest from the beginning till end. His technique is neither abstract nor symbolic. He maintains unity of impression with compactness of situations, characterization and mental behaviour. In his later years, he, however made certain experiments with regard to his technique. In fact, Urdu short story in India underwent a strange process of evolution and Pardesi could not escape this influence. The use of similies and metaphors is vivid when compared to his stories written earlier. The language is better.

Pardesi was a great traditional short story writer. He synthesized plot, scheme, purposefulness and interest into one entity. He is not a propagandist but a genuine writer and hence he does not possess journalistic attitude. He is aware of the psychological factors too and paints it in broad social spectrum. It is for this reason that we find simple and complex characters in his art. He was a great writer. Had he lived a full life, he would have given more realistic pieces of art with full responsibility and artistic insight.

