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PRESENTS

TWIST OF FATES

Retold and Written by Afzal Shaq
Translated by Alley Boling
Peace Wisher’s

**Twist of Fates**

**Bridging the Gaps**

by

**Nazish Zafar**

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Peace Wisher’s ‘TWIST OF FATES’

BRIDGING THE GAPS

By NAZISH ZAFAR

Afzal Shauq
**Bridging the Gaps**  
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Khyberwatch (www.khyberwatch.com)  
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Tol Afghan (www.tolafghan.com/afzalshauq)

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to the sweet daughter of Afzal Shauq Hadeel Breshna Afzal Khan, A life time chairperson of Farishta Foundation International with a hope that she will continue to keep her father’s sacred mission of love for peace, peace for humanity and humanity towards human’s life.

Hadeel Breshna Afzal Khan  
a cute daughter of eastern papa and western mama

More about Breshna

- http://www.pukhtunwomen.org/node/195
AIMS & OBJECTIVES

Farishta Foundation International aims at:

• Making men share a sole identity as humans, discarding all divisions.

• Promoting love for peace, peace for humanity and humanity towards prosperity of life.

• Promoting art as an effective way of bridging the gaps between east and west.

• Doing the best things in favour of ailing humanity.

• Being global in thinking, with an attitude of will to share.

• Drawing the face of humanity in best possible colours of words.

• Preaching use of a friendly smile as best weapon of war.

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Afzal Shauq, the poet of ‘Twist of Fates’
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FOREWORD

In human history, voices of poets have been doing what swords of rulers failed to do. These voices, chanting ideas of universal nature and attempting at making a difference for the betterment of humanity, need to be acknowledged and conveyed to all.

I was fortunate, to hear one such voice, of Afzal Shauq through translated collection of his poems by Alley Boling. TWIST OF FATES had everything to quench my thirst for good poetry and to satiate my search for splendid of ideas. 333 poems of the book had a variety of themes ranging from alacrity of romantic anecdotes to very serious concern for peace in the world; from quest for an ideal to promoting international brotherhood. Imbued with sincerity, each word, influential and striking, goes straight to the heart. Reading these poems has been a rich emotional and spiritual experience for me. Having absorbed the aura of brilliance radiated by erudite themes, I felt compelled, to write a critical analysis of the book. For doing so, I tried reaching out the mind and soul creating those poems.

My efforts brought me into kind acquaintance of Afzal Shauq directly. Knowing him on personal level turned out to be an even cherishing experience. The barrier of difference of our first languages disappeared and I savored the tale of his life, literary ventures, travels and aspirations, which
I insisted upon him to write for the rest of readers as well. I am thankful to him for his kind acceptance of my proposal and I was able to include his short autobiography in this compilation.

In order to admire, recognize and promote his sincere efforts, I have collected, in this book, critical reviews and comments on the writer by famous literary figures, which beyond my expectation, were countless and all full of praise and admiration. It proves that instead of pinning himself to a specific readership, Afzal Shauq has the ability to color the world in a shade all sensitive hearts and sensible minds can decode.

I take great pride in compilation of this book and having worked upon the creative venture of a poet, who rose from a remote Pashtun valley to international recognition. It is my heartiest desire that all his dreams of peaceful interaction among men come true. I also thank the worthy critics whose works I have translated and collected in this book.

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“I want to be a great man”, I remember, I had replied as a schoolchild when Commissioner of Quetta had asked my ambition, on his inspecting visit to my school. At that time I had no definition of 'great' and I was unable to explain to the commissioner what I actually meant. I was perplexed, but deep inside me the very idea ignited me with a strange energy. But at that day of inspection I had savored admiring remarks of my teacher and an encouraging pat of the Commissioner. 'Good Luck son', the Commissioner had said. I felt beckoned, incited and instigated. But for what? I never knew.

There was none I could turn to or look up to, as I struggled to find a way towards my goal of reaching 'greatness'. 'Be a good engineer or excel in the field of medicine'. I was told by the parents at home and by teachers at school. I felt thwarted and frustrated with their limited and restricted ideas and I continued growing up, confused ,with a vague ambition, but hardly holding back a flood of wild and undirected energy.
In 1969, as I was stepping into adolescence, my vague ambition had become an obsession with me. All the hopes in my young brain would converge on the question 'How do I, with my individuality stand out in the maddening crowd of men around me. At that time, I was busy grappling with the intricate zones of my mind and heart and was yet alienated from the vast span of populous world around me, and least familiar with the divisions and differences on the globe based on religion, color and geography. My only source to connect with the world, in those days was a newspaper of some five or six leaves that reached the small town of Dukki with a day's delay; otherwise, I had to depend upon my textbooks for information whose ages old designs were outgrown by time. Besides, we had a radio at home where I would tune into different international channels and greatly amused myself by learning about the world through that little magic box.

While I spent my mental energies in spinning an ideal face, I, used to exhaust myself, physically, in the game of soccer. I had great passion for the game and was good at it. As captain of the team of Degree College Lora Lai, I was able to earn several laurels for my team.

In the same days, I started discovering in me, a passion for poetry. To my sheer luck, I had acquaintance of Prof. Rab Nawaz Mail, an able teacher and renowned poet of Pashto
and Urdu, to recognize my potential and who granted his ample guidance to me. I learned the basics of art of creating poetry from him. I wrote my first Pashto ghazal in August 1975. Prof. Rab Nawaz Mail not only appreciated and encouraged my juvenile efforts but also directed me towards writing in free verse, which he thought could be far more effective mode of conveying modern ideas to reach majority audience.

I owe my success to his early guidance. Now I was attending 'mushairas' Literary recitation gatherings, usually organized by talented poet Saeed Gohar, romantic poet Syed Kher Muhammad Arif and short story writer, Haji Mirza Khan Pechi. It was there that I was blessed with finding best friends like Sohail Jaffar and Mehmood Ayaz. The three of us kept pouring our ideas in poems under the tutelage of our able teachers. My hazed and vague dreams of boyhood were now taking a shape in the back of my mind. As I poured my heart out on the paper, I was discovering my unconscious mind, a world of dreams and found an image of my ideal. I desperately tried to find that ideal image in reality around me but remained unsuccessful. As a poet, I was rising and winning but in my search, I was continuously defeated; always left wondering 'shall I ever behold the face of my ideal?' I read faces around me, I could even read the veiled emotions behind those faces, I searched, questioned, wondered... but my ideal face eluded.
My first book of poetry 'Shaldaley Amail' in Afghan language of Pashto was published in 1986-87. At that time, I was also doing a programme by the name of 'Amail' from Quetta Radio Station as anchor and scriptwriter. The programme was very popular and had a huge audience. A very successful broadcaster Agha Muhammad Kasi directed the Radio Programme.

'Shaldaley Amail' brought me real taste of success. I won a name as a poet of realities, adding innovative ideas. The fame and success however, did not quench my parched soul. The wound of my desire, that had always kept me agonized, was yet without a remedy.

With growing age and experience, I learned to step out of boundaries that kept me restricted to myself. Not only did I outgrow my personal whims; I learned to grow above geographic and racial boundaries. Now my excursions were tempted by another question; what are the factors and elements that divide, anatomically alike humans into groups, nations and sects?

In 1992 I officially toured Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand and availed myself of the opportunity to closely observe the societies other than mine.

Now, I had chosen tourism as my true vocation. I traveled different countries of the world and carefully recorded my observations and experiences. I tried discovering the factors that part east from the west, ; differ whites from the colored.
I endeavored to solve the mystery of division of humanity into the first, the second and the third worlds. I discovered the devious behavior of the west, in this regard, that works upon the conscious deepening of division. As a result my first travelogue was published under the name of 'Aowa Gama Mazal' in 1996. The literary critics now knew me as a post modernist travelogue writer.

I scheduled traveling to three or four countries each year. 1996 brought me a very memorable and rewarding opportunity of road travel with dozens of international tourists. I was fortunate to observe from very close quarters the culture and the social system of fourteen European countries, England, Wales, Scotland, France, Belgium, Holland (The Netherlands), Germany, Lichtenstein, Switzerland, Monaco, Austria, Italy, San Marino and Spain.

I had a mind-expanding experience of living with people from different parts of the world, getting to know their ways and behavior. I came to understand the gaps between the western world and my own part of the world. I was neither a politician nor a polemist devising slogans and harangues. In my efforts to bridge those gaps, I could only use my creative energies as a poet, transforming my ideas, messages and hopes in poems and verses, with a heartfelt desire that my words touch the millions of hearts around the globe and bring them together. I kept writing poems with a wish that
my ideas become harbinger of a new dawn, a color of peace, a hue of love.

I wondered what can make men aware of their predicament and incite them to work towards the perfection of humanity; in complete harmony with natural laws of mutual tolerance, peace and love.

In 1997, I traveled to Egypt (Cairo) in pursuit of higher education. My sojourn in Cairo brought me the happiest incident of my life i.e. of finding my soul mate. I met very ravishing and immensely talented Dr. Ouahiba Sakani. Impressed with her beauty and intelligence, I was head over heels in love with her. And for once I felt that the eluding face of my ideal had at last taken a shape of her person. Those were very memorable days of my life, when I relished the blessing of completion, rendered by my spouse.

My love tale formed the substance of my novel 'Paroni Makhuna' that was published in 2006. The English translation of which will soon be available. I translated the novel into easy English myself, while Prof. Ernanie-I-Pepito of Philippines has been kind and considerate enough to work at the improvement of the manuscript. Since 2006 the project is receiving final touches by Alley Boling.

In 2003, I finished writing for my readers, my second book of poetry 'Pa Latun Sta Da Sarey'. The book has
reminiscences of lasting images I bore in my mind during my travels; recollections of true love I found in my spouse; reflections of my burning desire to give humanity its perfect shape. It reveals my pain, having to see men in his utmost brutality, and, that too, very ironically, in the name of civilization. I openly gave vent to all my dreams, I had dared to see for the betterment of my fellowmen, and by that time, I had included men of all races and regions into my kinsfolk, my concern. With the publishing of book the literary critics has started calling me, Traveler-poet... Selani

I penned down my travels of Europe into two travelogues 'Mazal Pa Wauro Bandi' and 'Da Lmer Da Kalli Pa Lor' published in 2004 and 2005 respectively. These travelogues are in fact a sociological study of European life and history of English Language in this region rather then merely narrating a simple story of journey as the travelogue writers commonly do these days.

My search, ventures and probe, all lead me to the conclusion that man has revolutionized himself, since his creation but only in a negative way. Where the denizens of the modern world have progressed much outwardly, they have been gradually deteriorating inwardly, reducing themselves to the brutality of animals. Behind the sophisticated face of civilization, lies a corrupted soul with the ugliest of potentials.
Like all sensitive people, I was flabbergasted by the 9/11 incident. In my state of frustration and mental hysteria, I was comforted by the presence of another lover of humanity. I was lucky to be introduced to my American friend, Alice Alley Ann Muhaphay, Alley Boling. She was impressed with my literary approach, innovative ideas and creative skills, and insisted upon translating my poetry into English. She urged the need of bringing out the ideas of universal concern in a language understood by the most around the globe. A voice rising from the east could now echo in the west. A phenomenon that brought me great joy and satisfaction.

At the first stage of the process I translated my poems into simple English myself. Then Dr. Ouahiba Sakani Afzal revised them. Famous freelance Romanian writer Ms. Andreea Sarcani shared her part in composing and compilation. In the last steps Alley Boling finalized the manuscript and translation of my poetry in American English was published in 2006, under the title of 'Twist of Fates'. The book is now available around the world in print and can be found on international sites including

- Khyberwatch, (www.khyberwatch.com)
- Khyber.ORG (www.khyber.org)
- Tol Afghan (www.tolafghan.com/afzalshauq)
Readers can also get the book TWIST OF FATES translated by Alley Boling with direct link as:


I was now recognized as a global poet. My translated works caught attention of readers and critics from the entire world. I was happy my words did not address a particular group of people. They were for all and they reached all. The response and reaction had been overwhelming, beyond my expectations. Above all, by then I had known what ‘greatness’ was all about. It is neither about fame nor about recognition. It is all about knowing one's mind and making a difference... proving one's role in the process of evolution... living not just another life but a life to be remembered by coming generations.

I would like to quote the views and criticism of critics of electronic and print media with a hope that readers peruse this book and involve their acquaintances in the experience, as well. It will make Alley's and my dream of bridging the east and the west true. It will help propagate the message of love and peace to each nook and corner of the globe, we humans share.

I express my gratitude to my best friend Nazish Zafar, a promising young writer, poetess and critic associated with
T.V production by profession, for her contribution in translating the material.

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I, BEING A POET …

By

Afzal Shauq

Revised by Nazish Zafar

'What greatness can human species achieve, if it abides by the truth of its creation'? I woke to a new reality, shedding away all the under estimations, I had in my mind since boyhood, about men. This revolutionized state of my opinion is triggered by the overwhelming response; I received to my poems replete with words of love. Stepping out of regional and racial boundaries I had dared address the globe, making friends like Alley Boling my interpreters and Muse in real sense. I came to know that it is not Pashto or English that made my message a sheer success. It is in fact the language of love that is universally understood. 333 poems of ‘Twist of Fates’ is fraught with my heartfelt desire of spreading love, and hope of inciting peace all over the world. My faith in the greatness of mankind was revived, when my words were received with great appreciation, from people all over the world. I felt myself, the luckiest person on earth to be blessed by a family with members in each corner of the world, all connected and linked with the sole relation of selfless love.
The gregarious nature of man can never let him live in isolation, and then man is doomed to failure when he attempts at deepening divisions. Only those who learn to connect can win. Selfless love would bring peace that in turn assures prosperity. A poet can write of his personal whims, cravings and dreams, in the most beautiful figurative language, teeming with similes and metaphors; but the literature would die with him, if he fails to broaden his vision, expanding to the universal phenomenon of the man.

I was hazed at my mind as a poet, when I was trying to shape a paragon,... a masterpiece of creation, from the mould of my soul only, but as soon as I attempted at directing my creative potential towards Man and sought in this crown of creation in general, an answer to my search for perfection; I was soothed to discover the final remedy, the magic potion of Love.

I was born in the highlands of Pashtun region where emerging voices are destined to die in fading echoes... but my chant of love made its way to the hearts of all valleys and plains, winning me a response I had never dreamt of. It was the strength of my belief in love that gave my words a magic flight. I knew it is the ability to share Love that qualifies man as crown of all creations.

Cunning politics divides men into races, regions, color, sects and groups using hypocrisy and deceit, paving way for wars. The only defense, against this conspiracy, men can adhere
to, is the weapon of love. Men parted from each other, goaded by political slogans, can be brought closer, by bonding them with love. Peace and prosperity of humanity is out of question without cultivation of love in all hearts. It was my faith. And my faith won me a success.

Secondly, it can be the originality of my words that impressed the hearts of my readers. I wrote only what I felt, not considering the demand of the poetic language and trends of the day. I was pouring my heart on paper with complete sincerity. My poems are reflections of my heart, in a simple narration. The force lies in the originality of themes rather than paraphernalia of poetic language.

When a man like me, from a forgotten and remote region can rise and communicate with thousands around the globe in universal language of love; I wonder what miracles can be brought about if men from the advanced world stand up for the cause of humanity, and preach and practice love.

Those who soar high in scientific and economic progress can bring peace to the world by extending a proposal of friendship to those who lag behind. Wars can win the high ups, huge territories and resources, but all would end up in dust if wars continue and a rat race for rule persists. Occupy hearts and not lands. Win love not will. Conquer souls not resources. To save humanity is far better than saving rule.

“A friendly smile is the best weapon of war to fight with.”

Bridging the Gap

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I would sing this song of love in every dale and mountain.. and I would include in my chorus all the sensitive hearts in the world.. I am extremely joyous that my voice was soon joined by those of my friends, who stand with me for the cause of betterment of humanity. My companions like Alley Boling and Nazish Zafar and many others, support my faith and revive my energies.

I plan to work for my cause in a more organized way in the establishing of ‘Farishta Foundation International’ that aims at putting all my dreams to practice. It will be a forum where lovers and servers of humanity would gather and render their part. I aim at bringing creative people together from all over the world. Especially writers and poets whose words carry a message of love need to be brought together and their valuable works are sent to the entire world in different languages.

I hope I will pave a way for future generations to follow. The pain I have been through in having to watch humanity divided and burning in a hell of war, should never be the fate of my children. May the children of tomorrow, reap a richer harvest from the land of humanity. I believe my message will not die with me. A love poet shall remain alive in his words, and a peace-loving father would give his children, his cause of humanity in inheritance. I proudly anticipate the time when my sons Aziz Yar Khan, Ulus Yar Khan (a known international pop singer), Hikmat Yar Khan, Qam Yar

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Khan and specially my sweet daughter Breshna (Hadeel Breshna Afzal Khan) would be walking in their father's footsteps... but I pray for them a path with lesser thorns...

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Critics’ Comments on
Twist of Fates

Compiled and Revised

By

Nazish Zafar

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Afzal Shauq is a shining star. He is a shining star in galaxy of the third generation of the present day Pashto poets and writers. The brave new generation is destined to become pioneer of post-modernism in Pashto literature.

One of their active and productive pals, Afzal Shauq, is anxious to tread that unbeaten path, in the domain of 21st century Pashto literature. He has acquired considerable grasp of the new trends and critical discourses on the Post-Modernism in the Western literature. Well educated and widely traveled in the countries of the east and west, he has closely studied the culture and the way of life of the
countries, he has visited. He has keenly observed the goings on and life style of the countries, having been the centers of the ancient civilization and culture such as, Egypt, Rome, London and Paris. In his travels, Afzal shauq, was fully equipped electronic gadgets of photography and audio cassettes recording. Besides visiting places of historical interest, literary institutions and cultural centers, he had rounds of busy bazaars, markets and parks, capturing and preserving landscapes and sound images, besides recording interviews and chatting with men and women in the streets and institutions.

Based on this pictorial and sonic material, he compiled three creatively conceived and inspiringly portrayed travelogues published in beautifully printed books. He has given frank and thought provoking accounts of what he had seen and heard, in well-written prose, interspersed with poetic pieces, composed on various occasions during his journey. He has also published two collections of his poetry, mostly consisting of prose poems. Another of his prose books is an experimental biographical novel of great literary merit. This novel is written in the perspective of Pharaoh’s era of Egypt, which merges ancient past with the present day space age.

The lead lady character is an Egyptian beauty (Shauq’s wife) and hero of the book is Shauq himself, with fictitious name Sailaney (the traveler). The heroin has been modeled after the enchanting queen of Egypt of yore, Cleopatra, whose
enticing charm has been immortalized by Shakespeare, saying, her infinite variety can be withered by age, nor staled by custom.

Afzal Shauq is lucky enough as 333 of his selected prose poems have been translated to English by a gifted American damsel, Alley Boling, an intellectual, scientist, philosopher and a marvelous muse. A perfectionist, she devoted two long years of her precious multi-task carrier in Georgia, USA, to render into English verse Shauq’s poems, published under the title, TWIST OF FATES. She plans to publish the book in the United States, too. If effectively promoted through media and book launching functions, it is quite possible that the book will hit the best sellers list in that country.

I feel that the plot of Shauq’s novel may have been inspired by his poem, published in the TWIST OF FATES. Here are relevant lines from the poem, titled “Global Sign” (dedicated to Dr. Ouahiba Sakani Afzal, dearest life partner of Afzal Shauq), He says:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Daughter of Pharaoh} \\
\text{Queen of Egypt} \\
\text{For love’s sake} \\
\text{Places her Crown} \\
\text{At the feet} \\
\text{Of Pashtun Caesar}
\end{align*}
\]
The dominant themes of Afzal Shauq’s poetry, as published in the TWIST OF FATES, are love, life and humanity, which though amply dealt with in world literature, yet Shauq gives new meanings and dimensions to these ideas. He has written unique poems in starting, simple but evocative style, which at the same time are shocking, shaking, dazzling, amazing and soothing. He presents love as enriching, ennobling life and cementing humanity. Besides poetry, almost half the world’s philosophy is devoted to these three elements: “Man is born free and has to live freely, without social taboos and restrictions and oppressive legal systems.”

Mankind is the descendant of a single diving couple, Adam and Eve, and must live like brothers all over the globe, turning it into a paradise, lost by their heavenly ancestors. Equality, justice, and universal peace are yearning passion of Shauq. He abhors the idea of a global village…, which is a codename for the enslavement of human being to be fettered by the exploitation might of market economy and technological superiority.

The most perplexing problem facing MAN today is, how to actualize the diction;

*Live and let Live*
As Robert Browning says,

So free we seem
So fettered fast we are.

Shakespeare in Hamlet observes;

For who would bear whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of disprized love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office and the spurns,
The grunt and sweat
Under the weary life.

William Black says,

Life delights in "Life"

A French anonymous song hits the bull's eye;

It's love that
Makes the world
Go round.

Bertrand Russell philosophizes:

Broadly speaking, we are in the Middle of a race between human Skill as the “means” and Human folly as the “end”.

Shauq upholds the enlightened Zoroaster's teaching, as propounded in the scripture Zhand Avesta, about light and
darkness. Light, he says, signifies the Good and darkness, the Evil. Both are at ceaseless war, against each other since time immemorial. It is the light, which will ultimately triumph. Zoroaster preached that Ormazd is the Lord of goodness, Light and Creator of mankind. He identified the deity of darkness and evil, as Ahriman. In Persian language and literature, Ahriman still stands for Satan, while Ormazd has been turned into Yazdan, meaning Allah Almighty. Zoroaster is believed to have lived in the 6th century BC.

Shauq is fully conscious of the complexities of life. He says;

Life is a snake crawling
Life’s path
Twist and turns
And the distances
Are always expanding

Yet, he is optimistic that life will shine with bright light at the end of the dark tunnel. This he portrays in the following lines..

The state
Graveyards
Yet new
Bushes grow
Bringing hope
For new
Life.
About love, Shauq says;

And with love
Culture
Location,
Belief,
All vanish,
This, I believe

Shauq is restless soul, always on the move, in the quest for peace, amity, and universal brotherhood. He years that;

Like travelers of yesterday
It would be my wish
To go to world’s corners
The white flag of peace,
The banner I would carry
Removing all the borders.
And whole humankind
Could join together

And in another two lines, Afzal Shauq, lark of thousands melodies, aspires;

For a white flag
To wave against the darkness.
Now, let us recall prophetic Goete’s dying words… only two words … “More Light”

Ayaz Daudzai
Rawalpindi / Pakistan

Notes:

• Article also published in Balochistan Times on 5/10/2006

AFZAL SHAUQ AS A TRUE HUMANIST

Feelings of Afzal Shauq seem to be the Beats of Hearts

Andreea Sarcani

As an artist, poetess, writer and linguistics expert, I strongly believe in the existence of an universal language, a secret voice that all poets hear maybe all at same privileged time, meant to melt all linguistic all barriers. When it comes to art, even if it is music or literature, I consider we should connect and vibrate to the inner voice of an artistic work and to think of unity, not of differences.

Though I have no knowledge of Pashto, Mr. Afzal Shauq’s native language but the adaptation of his thoughts into English language let me perceived the right sense of Afzal Shauq’s linguistic and poetic terms and the genuine spirit of his poetry, added to the book TWIST OF FATES.
The poetry of Afzal Shauq appeared to me rich, honest, completely lacking any artificial touch. His poems emphasize a well-known statement about art regarded more as a question than as an answer. His themes are sensitive, profound, human, and natural. He speaks of love, as experience, that in spite of all the pain, one should not miss. Then he fears the lacking of spirit of our modern times, he own human nature that reminds more of animal’s instincts than of an enlightening dimension.

If I could think of a motto, for Afzal Shauq’s poetry that would be “Life is sweet struggle” as he mentioned in the following poem with a very much imaginary way being a true poet of dreams… keeping his thoughts advancing…

**Verses of Poems**
*Twist of Fates, Poem No.199*

*I feel spiritual unrest*  
*you are the queen*  
*who holds*  
*state over my heart*  

*Each night brings dreams*  
*the delegation of*  
*sweet feelings*  
*Like the presentation of red lei*

Bridging the Gap  
Khyber.ORG
When morning comes,
The dreams
inspire my writing
in these verses of poems

In Afzal Shauq's TWIST OF FATES the human values system is shaken, your friends might become your enemies. He tackles two major themes. Love and War. They merge, they sometimes play each other's part, and they cannot be separated, like the light and its shadow. They represent the two dimensions of life itself. The humans have two choices to make to love or to fight, to fight for their ideals. Love is also a fight… undefeatable fight between the heart and soul as Afzal Shauq referred to the following poem with an innovative theme…

**The Struggle**
Twist of Fates, Poem No.293

Eternal struggle ...
Me and my heart
always in battle
The issue the same.

I would burn
into the ashes
for the sake of my love.
My heart ...
With a will of its own
Makes its way
to the heart
of every beautiful girl
I happen to meet…

Afzal Shauq describes the tremendous variety of human emotions. We have to bear the Great Misery of life and unceasingly to dream and struggle for a better world. The wish of living in a better purer world lives under the same shelter with the awareness of being a human and having a fragile soul. Here is one of his poems, rooted to the evil egoistic concerns of satanic behavior, owned by the humankind may sensitize the readers to think of the fact he disclosed in following poem.

**The Companion of Satan**  
*Twist of Fates, Poem No.300*

An angel mentioned...
“Look ... the human beings  
trying to look as I do.”

Satan laughed loudly saying ...
“As much as human beings  
look like you...  
I am like blood  
in their veins,
twisting their emotions, 
tempting them to surrender to me.”

Most of his poems are love poems, some of them dedicated to an imaginary woman, some to a woman in flesh and blood, or a woman that he discovers in the begging way of his thirsty heart’s unquenchable desires.

**Begging Heart**
*Twist of Fates, Poem No. 209*

From the fountains
to the river edge
to the sea’s beaches
I present
this begging heart
for love's sake
Uncertain the thirst
Like a dry desert
this heart yearns.
And comes to the water
again and again...

Afzal Shauq fears the cruelty of humans craving for power, he is a conqueror and a surrender at the same time as he expressed in one of his poems “Defeated Soldiers” which may let the readers keep seriously think about his cognitive depth and new-fangled vision with the interesting poetic way he presented. The afore-mentioned Poem is added here:

Bridging the Gap
Defeated Soldiers
Twist of Fates, Poem No. 10

Like the soldier...
with flag in hand
I advanced forth
seeking victory
over your heart.

The first
strike was yours...
I was frozen...
with one quick
sweet glance
those beautiful eyes
taking my heart prisoner.

Instead of
my planned occupation...

I surrendered...
my dreams and feelings
one by one they fell
like defeated soldiers.

Reading his poems, we can hear a voice invoking the divine
justice, because humans are unable to see the Truth. The
restrictions and the customs imposed by the society, the
barriers set between people are the reason for a great wish
for freedom is born. This actually endorses self-centeredness in humans. Some of poems of Afzal Shauq are much targeted and hitting the false egoistic behavior of human kind. However, the one I add here is more touchy to the passion and criteria of faith and justice of new era, he criticizes.

Love and Blood
Twist of Fates, Poem No. 224

"The one
who laughs at you
is your well wisher
but the one who cries
for your damn condition
is your enemy"

This your twisted
criteria of justice
Oh my dear brother...!

By love and blood bound
How can I prove
being so caught up
crying for your terrible life
makes it impossible
for you to hear
the cries of Pashto

Bridging the Gap

Khyber.ORG
What is more then my understanding in the poems of Afzal? Let the time and readers decide for the TWIST OF FATES and the destiny of its author.

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Firstly, I wish to express my state of triumph, awakening and rejoicing when I read Afzal Shauq’s poetry compilation in ‘Twist of Fates.’ Renown as a magnetic Pashto poet, who spent his life in the Pashtoon Valleys, district of North West Pakistan. His poetry, although written in short rhymes, free style versions are yet very impressive, heart catching and as he keeps to his poetic approach in presenting facts. He had composed this poetry gourmet with the use of simple ordinary words to express his themes…. sensitive, profound, human and natural state of being. He praises the Supreme Divinities of love, as an experience; that in spite of all the pain, one should not miss knowing and experiencing true love.
As a passion poet reader, I was able to reflect the opening of the author’s heart in his poems as it spells nothing more than the depth of truth in which he has to offer to his fellow readers. Yet served in a striking, realistic and creative manner. Very appetizing, a mix of mood and flavors to nourish the soul.

While reading the “Twist of Fates”, I reached a state of enlightenment in the stream of being in the actual state of the “Author” himself. I could sense in each and every word of which he composed traveling in continuous flawless motion. What Afzal expanded in his poetries could be otherwise defined as “the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings arising from emotion recollected in tranquility”.

His fountains of poems describe the state of evolution change in heart, mind and action at every different incident of time. Which otherwise we have not the time to reflect. Afzal brings about every ‘contemplation’ we go through in our present day-to-day life. His pure dedications are recitations of what truth holds and what reality counts but because of the human state of mind (ego), we are always static in ‘denial’ or ‘ignorance’ of “the state of feelings which we had just passed through.”

As said in the book’s preface - beyond the age of many other poets, Afzal Shauq holds an awakening soul because he never quits searching, dreaming or writing. Assuring the world to be a better place with his words in it.
“He is great and original, must himself create the taste by which he is to be relished”

At the end of the reading, one would surely get to feel the essence of deep poetry; “Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge, it is the passionate expression which continues to live through every generation, from lush evergreen yet to remain everlasting.

Secondly, Alley Boling deserves credit for her sincere task in translation. Alley Boling, a US citizen, translated twist of Fates containing the English translation of 333 Pashto poems of Afzal Shauq.

The translator’s bio data at the end of the book and her photos with her dog, are essential and attractive additions. They demonstrate that she too is an inborn talented artist like Shauq. Readers would wonder whether Alley has a background which somehow connects to Pashto, or perhaps she took up much time to sit with the author so that he could explain to her the meaning and sense of his poems? In either way, a salutation is due to Alley Boling for her art of translation.

My adoration and salute to Afzal’s broad and global vision to promote ‘World Peace’ in his own devotional ways. As he summarizes, that at the end of which – we are all the same in human needs.

Bridging the Gap                 Khyber.ORG
Afzal Shauq, a poet with a tender heart and an imaginative mind, feels the sorrows of human souls and offers them “hope for peace”. Bearing this essence in mind, he dedicates this publication to aid the Farishta Foundation International towards poor and suffering people of this world.

Splashes of free spirit and oneness with nature; he overflows the river of reflections, floods the ocean of literature where he gently shapes and moulds them into living poetry sculptures.

Well done, shabaas ... to the born Artistic Poet!

“Long Live The Poet! With supreme outlook towards Global Peace” May he grow to live forever with his inspirational heart-felt poetry. He is a PEARL of the nation.

Also from my discovery, I later on knew that Afzal Shauq was also a brilliant travelogue writer as he had written publications in three travelogues series titled Owe Gama Mazal (seven-step journey); Mazal pa Waoro Bande (travel on the snow) and Da Lmar da Kili pa Lor (Towards the village where the sun shines).

In last, I dedicate the following incomplete poem to the one who has been staying in the dreams of poet of ‘Twist of Fates’ …

I dream frequently…..,
heaven, a cloud an angel

Bridging the Gap

Khyber.ORG
wish every heart beat…,
and feel her vibrations…,
from scull to tired feet …,
but if I die before we meet…,
please remember not to forget me…,
though you’ve never known me…,
I hope that you won’t let me…,
leave the earth before you’ve met me…,
cause I’ve always wanted you to get me…,
pet me, and wet me in love’s motion….!
Let love live in affectionate triumph
and deep devotion!
be part of my fantasy,
let’s live in sacred collaboration..
admiring soul and praising her in flames of adoration.

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There was gambling for fate on the day of creation
Some lost, Rahman, and some won good luck

Rahman Baba

I once had a chance to meet Afzal Shauq in Karachi at the office of the weekly Roshan Pakistan, which resulted in our lasting intimacy. It was a monthly meeting of Jaras Pukhto Adabi Tolana, moderated by Tahir Afridi, a focal point in Karachi for Pashto literati from the NWFP and Balochistan, and conducted by Rahman Buneri. Then I knew Afzal Shauq as a good poet, but later on I discovered that he is, in fact, a brilliant writer of travel accounts, having published two
travelogues by the names of 'Mazal pa waoro bande' (Travel on the snow) and 'Da lmar da kili pa lor' (Towards the village where the sun shines).

'Twist of Fates' is a translation of 333 poems of Afzal Shauq into English, by the American Alley Boling. Most of Shauq's verses are short and in free verse. The poet catches fleeting ideas and puts them in cages of words. For that, he has to put the idea instinctively in any form that he has mastered and in his own style, otherwise the idea would vanish. Aptitude for a particular form is quite natural and personal, almost an inborn attribute of the poet. Afzal Shauq has developed an aptitude for free verse and has acquired the art of articulation in this form.

The particular emphasis Shauq gives to an idea or sentiment is typically accomplished by his conscious deviation from the strict literal sense of a word, or from the more commonly used form of word order or sentence construction. This 'conscious deviation', which led to the growth of figures of speech, is normally hurt in translation due to the cultural gap and differences in characteristics of languages.

Alley Boling deserves to be commended for making this Herculean effort of translation. She is also an inborn artist, like Afzal Shauq. An analogous aspect of the life of the author and that of the translator is that both are highlanders. Although Shauq has now shifted to the plains of the Punjab and has settled in Chaklala, the natural aroma of his rough
country obsesses his mind with its poverty, ignorance and backwardness, and their consequent miseries; where towns’ look like graveyards and where hearts are frozen and humanity is void. In a state of utter frustration the poet says

Had I known
At my birth
Or been asked
By God...
I would have refused
Being born human.

Because he has seen that
Since human’s
Left the forest
To live in cities
Calling it civilization,
More vicious and deadly
They have become.

The spiritless life carries the burden of existence with all the agonies of life, but it shrugs off the end in the hope for a new dawn. When beauty pricks his mind, it resumes 'the struggle -- eternal struggle'.

My heart...
With a will of its own
Makes its way
To the heart

Bridging the Gap
Of every beautiful girl
I happen to meet.

Although, the Shauq's heart is shauq in (fond) of beauty, 'age counts' and he imagines the creases of time, saying:

Girls still look at me
And though they smile...
Their eyes speak
A multitude of words.

Once offering me hearts
No longer, I see
My age revealed
By the creases of time.

I feel my insides
Breaking into pieces.
The hope of the dream...
Vanishes in a cold sigh.

Afzal Shauq, a sensitive poet with an imaginative mind, feels the sorrows of the human being and expresses aptly his feelings in a direct and impressive way. In 'Hope for peace' he says

The one
So cruel
Tolerance lost.
Yet I stay
Holding on
Each storm
So destructive.
Yet I know
With the rain
Lands once parched
Become prosperous.

However, some questions come up in reading the book. One is the number of poems translated; 333. Does it indicate some sort of omen or it is a mere coincidence? The second is the Alley Boling's interest in translating poetry from Pushto. Does she know Pushto and Pushtuns? Or has the author taken time to read and explain to her the meaning and sense of his poems? The third is a suggestion: the source of each poem should have been quoted at its end, so that a reader would not face difficulty in accessing the original.

Dr. Sher Zaman Taizai

The book under review, TWIST OF FATES, is Alley Boling’s English translation of Afzal Shauq’s Pashto Poetry. This book contains 333 short poems with a word of hope by the translator for the meeting of east and west through the bridges or art. In her brief preface to the book she wonderfully sums up the message or the suggestion of this poetry when she says:

“My greatest hope for the readers is that they will open their eyes and realize … We may be from different lands … we may speak different languages … we may have different religious beliefs … we may have cultural differences … but when you get to what is basic in all human
beings; we are all the same. We all smile, laugh, cry, want, love, hunger, thirst, bleed and die.”

While the translation harps on the theme of our common humanity, the poet has been driven in places to also point out common barbarity and brutality; when the greatest Dushman of man, when we also burn, mutilate, kill and destroy and devastation. In poem number 18 titled “Announcement”, the poet proclaims with poignant irony:

Eyes of the dead
lashes veiled
tongues now silent
severed into ..... 
person handing
from branches broken ...
house doors now shut
the city closed
yet they are saying
liberty proclaimed ....

Hasham Babar has compared these short poems to “the bullets of pistol, having an unforgettable effect”. However, these poems appear more like small capsules for all kind of social, political and moral maladies. Like unwelcome medicine they, or some of them, may taste bitter for the time being, but they have the sure therapeutic effect. In all fairness, these poems can be compared to small does of a life saving drugs for the cancer of the ailing humanity. Afzal
Shauq may not be an al-chemist (kimyadan) but he can be compared to a modern day Hakim, a doctor, a specialist practitioner par excellence, with his fingers on the pulse of the ailing, insane humanity and the ultimate remedy that he proposes is more in the nature of dreams, tranquility and love, and not surgery, operation and amputation. His poetry also holds a mirror to humanity in order to see the reflection of its neurosis and become conscious of the sense of guilt and the damage that it has done to itself. And then through the charms (or Janthar Manthar) of his poetry the poet carefully cures the ailing humanity of all the psychopathic diseases. His ultimate solution appears to be the poem # 191 “The White Flag”:

Fading myself
Into different colors
Fond of beautiful faces
Seeking fulfillment
While gathering
All of these colours …
These beauties of life
To find my inner peace
Now wishing
For a white flag
For peace and prosperity
To wave against the darkness.
Afzal Shauq is more of a modernist in his treatment than a poet with progressive predilections. In fact can be compared to the 20th century imagist poets like Ezra Pound and his followers, including T.S. Elliot, who believe in and rely on concrete images to convey what they want to say. Some of these images may acquire symbolic significance. Similarly, the poetry of Afzal Shauq is full of stark, memorable images. Some of his more recurring images can be catalogued as: love, dreams, fire and ashes, death and destructions, war and peace, idols and false gods, blindness and brutality, sweat and blood, sin and retribution, night and nightmares, greed and cupidity, arms dealers and the merchant of death, helplessness and the loss of ideals and honor and so forth.

My only reservation .... Or rather, grouse ... or about the volume under view is that it does not also carry the original Pashto version. It is always exciting and much more revealing to read a translation along with the original, particularly when it spans over such short poems that we have here. Such reading provides a double vision: the exact point of view of the original poet, his choice of form, metre, diction, and the ultimate rendering of the translator, whether faithful, liberal or creative and artistic. I have myself done a great deal of Pashto – English translations. I know the difficulties, the pitfalls, and the apparent impossibilities of particularly Pashto – English verse translation. At times one is almost driven to believe that poetry is simply untranslatable; so much is necessarily lost in the process that
the whole endeavor appears to be point less. This is not my conclusion alone, but great modern linguists like Windowson and Leach would even forbid the paraphrase of poetry as that also but mutilates the essential spirit of it. Examples are, however, there of memorable poetry translation. A classical example is, however, that of Fitzgerald’s translation of Rubaiyat of Omar Khayam. However, through this translation Fitzgerald can be said to have achieved the distinction of creating his own Rubaiyats in English, which, in all fairness is original poetry. A translator by nature either exceeds the mark or misses it. But whatever the quality of a translator, it always a welcome activity. It is all the more welcome for Pashto poetry which has negligible international exposure. Just a handful of what came to be called the Orientalists have paid some attention to it in their endeavor to understand the Pakhtoon and his language. Even they were attracted more to the folklore and some of the sixteenth century classical poetry which sounds more like Persian and Arabic than Pashto. Since negligible modern Pashto poetry has been translated into English, this Twist of Fates stands as a valuable collection and translation of Pashto poetry in English. Let us hope and pray that this volume receives international recognition that it deserves. And let’s hope Alley Boling keeps her Pashto – English infatuation. I am sure, time will reward her for this.

While reading these short poems one is constantly reminded of the Japanese Hykus, those subtle three – line poems
resembling Chinese art with three – petal flower, symbolizing beauty, loneliness, zest for life and the pleasure of being simply alive and there, unmindful of the past and future.

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FOR THE LOVE OF WORDS

I give to Afzal Shauq and “Twist Of Fates”

Melissa Lundeen, USA

Although it is far too often implied, the pen is mightier than the sword well, if this indeed be so, then Afzal Shauq's pen must be more like a lethal dagger. His words though small in their number, loom large in the eye. They pierce the heart so fiercely when they are read. I too must shamelessly confess was a victim of their ferocity like some loving violence speaking out from the pages with a hauntingly humble and beautiful voice. I have had long conversations with Afzal Shauq myself and found him to be sensitive and charming but nothing prepared me for how so very well I would get to know him just from reading his latest book of poems. I feel I know him far better now from that more so than any
conversation we two could ever have had on any given day of the week and for whatever length of the duration. I learned this fact maybe twenty poems into his book. Dear readers, it has as if you can almost taste his disbelief and hope so intermingled as he looks upon his world and ponders the why of it all and with he being not one to squander his words each small meal he feeds the eyes is a banquet to the mind. Upon reading his poems, I have also learned there is romance even in disappointment. Whether reflecting on poverty, war, injustice of one's circumstances or the stark inconceivableness of inhumanity Afzal Shauq lends his words and offers up his own poet's heart to the reader to be accepted or dismissed in the matter.

So many poems stand out in my mind. Number 26 titled ONE QUESTION how it reminds me of the poverty and sadness I faced while visiting India some years ago. How his words universally took me back to a time I could not forget. So many terribly sad scenes poured into my mind from reading just 36 words from this man's hand. That I found to be most powerful to behold.

**One Question**

I ask you
Is survival right?
who is that child?
baby of the streets...
hunger in his eyes
lips cracked and dry
for him no play.
Each day he toils
Seeking sustenance
on the garbage dumps.

In #51 titled ‘LOVE’, I was so moved by a short, sweet, poignant love poem. A clever heart sure piece on how love truly can conquer all. This is a theme no human with a heart in his chest can tire of reading about and Afzal Shauq spun his own gold weave and made that theme fit his words like a loving colorful, hopeful cloak.

Love

Love...
deafens
blinding.
fearless

Love
melts stone
frees souls
expands

Two hearts
evolving
committed
And with Love...
Culture.
Location, 
Beliefs, 
All vanish.
This I believe.

Truly it was so lovely to read #76 titled MOHAMMAD (PBUH) and see no matter what one's religion, it's one's belief system and never dying deep inner hope that helps one get through the worst possible tragedies. How gently he wrote of his reverence for that love that is far, far greater than one's self.

Mohammad (PBUH)

When by cruel time beaten
and I feel myself wounded
Each wound like the flower
blooms in agony...

I feel a breaking inside
like a house into rubble
when earthquakes shake
destroying everything.

Through all these tortures
Before the first tear falls
streaking my weary cheek
YOU reach out to help

YOU
like the Christ
healing my wounds
removing my pain.

While in poem #87 titled DESIRE TO MEET I wondered how could one write of so much aching with so few words was that feat even possible and I laughed through my own heart's tears at the end of it when I realized yes it is!

Desire to Meet

Patience waning
choking my heart
its her...

I grow weary
always waiting
I want...

She plays with me
promise of soon
today?...

Still just new friends
the desire always...
to meet.
Shall I now admit that I wept openly after reading poem #103 titled LADIES OF THE RED SOIL (in their own view) and how it made my own heart burn for any woman mistreated by the men who are supposed to love them most and it was a man who wrote these very words and made me feel united with such women in sadness for their plight. Such poem made me think any human's soul knows this very truth and should feel deep shame for mistreating another human being especially one who loves them and has bore them their children out of love.

*Ladies of the Red Soil*

*(In their Own View)*

*Ladies of the proud nation*
*living on the red soil*
*closed mouth*
*speaking nothing.*

*Lines in their faces*
*express*
*that left silent.*

*If they could but speak*
*surely*
*they would ask men....*
"If I made of flesh
like you
being human

"Answer God
who then
made us different?"

"Man the greater...
Lowly
I have become

Meaningless my life
avoid
without a man"

"You look down at me
so cruel...
yet I am yours..."

How clearly Afzal Shauq showed in his sparse words some very barren truths about men. In his poem #117 titled HEAVENLY PEOPLE OF HELL I could all too easily see the correlation of both Islam and Christianity and how many times wolves come among us like wolves in sheep's clothing. How supposed holy men's deeds appear not so holy if one really examines their words and how they conduct their own lives amongst their people after all they too are but fallible men yet trained in true purity.
Heavenly People of Hell

Submission in God
religions they follow
their actions atheistic...

Sins of the people
ignoring teaching
shall lead to hell...

Hypocrisy in prayers
wishes of their ego
the religion of their hearts.

The beauty and the ache come through so well in poem #120 titled WAR FOR THE SAKE OF GOD (in context with Afghan civil war) as my tears streamed down my face over this man portrayed in this poem's plight. I wondered how can any war be considered holy when God loves all and is on no body's side and when the words Thou shall not kill rings in the soul of any man no matter what his belief's schooling. Is this poem written with merely a man's talent or does it come from deeper within from his flesh battling soul trying to better understand his place in this world and make even a modicum of sense out of it. One would be well moved to read this book and find his own vein of questions that he needs to let flow from within himself.
War for the Sake of God
(in context with Afghan civil war)

Wiling to quench
your thirst...
Jehad..
The holy war
Think you well
before taking the sword
And call for Jehad
Oh brother...!
Fulfill my last desire...
After killing me
take my bloody body
to my grave.
May my promised wife
Your sister
remain unwed
let no henna
touch her hand
And.....
Beware these well wishes
who offered up
this idea of killing
For our common good.
For Pashto religion
will never accept them
As a soldier of God
a true martyr.

I could go on and on about how Afzal Shauq's poems on his homeland and on the wars and the poverty and the manners in which some men butcher up religion to make it fit their own hidden agendas' negatively which affects vast numbers of people but that bespeaks way too much negativity and I do not want to shine a light on that part of Afzal Shauq's great talent. I would much rather end my piece with the wonders and joys of his great ability to encapsulate the ache and ecstasy of the love poem and so I close this article with a copy of one of my favorite poems from Afzal Shauq's book "Twists Of Fates"

**Her Criteria**

*My hand with love
I have offered
will she give me hers?
at my pockets
she looks....
She weighs herself
in money
not my love for her.......

Well, Dear Readers, I do hope I have done my dear friend Mr. Afzal Shauq and his immense talent some justice with this here article of mine. After reading his book, I just
wanted to share with him (and all of you of course!) how his wonderfully insightful words moved, affected and inspired me.

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Web link to article - www.khyberwatch.com
BUILDING THE BRIDGES

Khurram Khiraam Siddiqui

The 8th Color

In sleep's depths
I dreamed...
Scenes of beauty
I gazed upon...
Staring...
Beauties of color appear
I think there are seven...
But to my great surprise
There are eight I see
and the eighth color
among them was me.
The works of eminent Pushto writers have been translated into English in a steady number, though the speed of the translation of Pushto literature is not as fast as in the case of Urdu and Punjabi literature. The reason for this is the lack of good translators having command on both English and Pushto languages. In most of the cases, the translation is made from the Urdu version of Pushto writings. Pakistan Academy of Letters has played a significant role in getting the important pieces of Pushto literature translated into English and publishing them in the bi-annual English literary journal “Pakistani Literature” regularly.


This book comprising of Afzal Shauq’s poems is unique in the sense that it is translated by an American Poetess Alley Boling - a helpful step towards bridging the gap between east and west and conveying the modern sensibility of the sensitive people living in the third world countries. Though
it has its shortcomings too that would not have been there if the poems were translated by a translator having full grasp over Pushto language and literature.

The themes of the Afzal Shauq’s poetry are universal brotherhood, fraternity, love, humanity and intense desire to improve the pitiable condition of the people suffering from poverty, injustice and discrimination. The explorer in Afzal Shauq has led him to various countries of the world and this has endowed his creative spirit with rich experience. That varied and rich experience is amply reflected in his poems. In the translations, the translator Alley Boling who seems to be the best American poetess has tried her best to keep the theme and spirit of Afzal’s poems intact.

So far C.E.Biddulph, Evely Howell Olaf Carore are the foreigners who have translated the poetry of Khushal Khan Khattak, while other local translators include Sher Zaman Taizai, Aurangzeb Shah, Aqeela Zaman, Tariq Aziz, Jillani Kamran, Mehmooda Mehtab, Ali Kumail Kazilbash, Asif Furrukhi, Imtiaz Ahmed Sahibzada, Umar Farooq Sahibzada, Mushir Anwar.

Ghani Khan has translated some of his poems himself that are published in the recent issue of Pakistani Literature - a biannual English Literary journal, Pakistani Literature published by Pakistan academy of Letters in a special corner devoted for Ghani Khan.
There is an immense need of good Pushto-English translators who could render the contents of Pushto literature in approximate and quality English translations. It is also observed that those having grasp over Pushto language are not necessarily aware of the equivalent modern English idiom and appropriate grammatical structure.

Afzal Shauq like his predecessors Ghani khan has taken the genre of Nazm to his province and his poems indicate that Pushto Nazm is capable of expressing new and fresh sensibilities in the best possible way. So the poet Shauq un doubtfully has succeeded to express his inner self in very tiny poems having bigger stories. This makes him unique in his style of poetry.

Afzal Shauq is best at his shorter poems which seemed to be a combination of compressed thought and feelings. His terseness makes his poems more poignant and effective and the reader is left to draw some very important conclusion as remarked by one of his senior contemporary poet Hasham Babar that his short poems are like the small bullets having unforgettable effects.

By bringing out this book, Afzal Shauq has made a laudable effort, as it would lead to a better understanding and the recognition of the Pakistani Literature at international level. Means, the translator of Shauq’s poetry Alley Boling who is actually a western poetess and artist has done a tremendous task to bridge up the west to east with her global approach.
So one hopes that more such translated version of Pushto poetry come out so that those who can not directly enjoy Pushto poetry might have at least some idea of this poetry that is rich both in its from and content. Moreover, the best of his expression in poetry is his semi philosophical and indirect touchy approach to the situation or alarming issues. So here is one of very meaningful poems of Afzal Shauq published in the book “Twist of Fates” on page number 38, which may appeal the readers attention towards multiple direction of thinking…

**Defeated Soldiers**
*Twist of Fates, Poem No. 10*

*Like the soldier...*
*with flag in hand*
*I advanced forth*
*seeking victory*
*over your heart.*

*The first*
*strike was yours...*
*I was frozen...*
*with one quick*
*sweet glance*
*those beautiful eyes*
*taking my heart prisoner.*
Instead of
my planned occupation...

I surrendered...
my dreams and feelings
one by one they fell
like defeated soldiers.

Khurram Khirram Siddiqui
Editor, “Pakistani Literature”
Pakistan Academy of Letters ISLAMABAD.

Published in Balochistan Times / June ,16th 2007
It was the first Pashto poetry book of Afzal Shauq “Shladelay Amail”, published in 1986-87 which gave me an inspiration to write in his foot steps. Being a student of Pashto literature, I was fed up with reading the old and typical style of poetry spreading in bulk at that time. I found his ideas very refreshing and his approach entirely new.

Afzal Shauq being a modern poet and travelogue writer fixed a different and heart catching diction of writing and very soon, he became a favorite with learned people. It was difficult for him making a mark among his own people owing to his entirely new ideas originating from his concern for the globe outdoing the rigidity of particular Pashtun sect.
I wrote a complete book on his literary work under the title “AFZAL … AFZAL SHAUQ” and tried to cover his works and art in the best way I could. But since his poetry has been translated by Alley Boling, his worldwide fame being a successful poet… keeps me willing to write more and more about him. Because, the translation of his works in a language of globe by an excellent poetess deserves to be highlighted as a symbol of pride to the proud nation Pashtoons.

**Syeda Haseena Gul**  
Ziarat Kaka Sahib  
Nowshera  
NWFP-Pakistan

Syeda Haseena Gul is Peshawar Radio’s Casual Broadcaster/poetess/Critic and short story writer.

Presented in Book Ceremony of Twist of Fates on 21st September 2006 and also published in daily Newspaper MASHRIQ Quetta on October 7th 2007 and in daily JUNG Quetta on October 12th 2007
I being a new reader of book "TWIST OF FATES" want to say something about the book and the respected writer "Mr. Afzal Shauq".

The book "Twist of Fates" as the name suggest is all about "the twist" which when happen in ones life, completely changes the life and also all the aspects of it ..... I mean,

"Two drops of water, one falls in ocean inside a unio and becomes pearl and another fells in a dirty drain and loses its identity”, It's just a play of fate that, in one moment from a sky a person can fall to ground.
Fate or destiny is something that cannot be defined; every person has different perceptions and thoughts about Destiny or Fate.

According to William Jennings Bryan,

“Destiny is not a matter of chance, it’s a matter of choice; it’s not a thing to be waited for, it’s a thing to be achieved”

Well, every person has different thoughts and perception, so it is very difficult to explain and give such a definition of “DESTINY” which can satisfy each and every person.

In “Twist of Fates” each and every aspect of life is included and defined beautifully with very different approaching way. Mr. Afzal Shauq is seemed to be the poet who experienced all the events he explained in his book.

I being a reader of this book can very well say that “this book is full of all emotions and wonders of life” it has all the surprising facts of life, like “TERRORISM, ALARMING THREAT, HEART CATCHY EMOTIONS, LOVE IN MOURNFUL WAY, DISGUSTING BEHAVIORS OF HUMAN RACE, BRUTALITY and many more parts of life.

Afzal Shauq has beautifully described the realities of life and twisting of fate in life.
For instance, in his one of poems "Broken Branches" he has well explained the pain and sufferings of a worker and inhumane way of labor to earn his daily meal for survival. He made a sketch in his impressive words realizing the readers with a questions that “how a poor labor struggles for his life every minute?” , “how is he exploited by masters and how he pays his blood and sweat to overcome it and even how things like terrorism and anarchy is affecting lives of innocent people?

In the poem “In the Name of God” the poet Afzal shauq nullified the misinterpreted tradition of fight in the name of holy God, while he tried to make the readers sensitized regarding the human beings senseless behavior in the poem “Senseless walls” and there are many poems like “For ever hiding”, “War for the sake of God”, “Hidden face” “Walking Dead”, “Ladies of the red soil”, “In the name of dignity”, “Criminal” and “Murder” he discussed the realities of the today’s life and also condemned the inhumane acts with strong words and mentioned that “humanity is some thing dealing with peace and love”. Means, he considered the “love” as a “best source of peace and prosperity”.

I being a reader as well as fan of his book really appreciate him and his extra ordinary talent and also wish that he may get much more fame being an excellent poet and to get name in higher rank of world fame poets ......GOD BLESS HIM!

Bridging the Gap  
Khyber.ORG
In last, I being his fan am dedicating one of my poems “Love n Affection” to him:

"Lots of days
and even nights passed,
I never had a smile on my face,
and how could I smile?
while
feeling the violence around me,
growing with full pace and passion
and ...
I’m sitting alone and feeling blue....
Thinking of him,
with my eyes full of dew...
In the dark swampy night,
But suddenly
and un expectedly,
he stepped towards me,
I become scared
and started shivering
who is he! as I shouted with fear,
He smiled and added
"don’t be afraid …
it’s me"
buts whom?
As I asked, he advanced...
And wrapped his both hands around me,
Yeah.. He with his twinkling eyes
and sparkling face,
looked into my dewy eyes,
with an enchanting smile,
held my hand
and bent on knees ...
"I’m the HUMANITY,
LOVE, PEACE
and AFFECTION", He said,
"I’m born again
"and I’m back again" ....
Hearing the sweet voice,
My eyes filled with joy
and tears stared rolling my cheeks
and I thought ....
"Oh my GOD!
would the glory, peace and humanity
ever replace ....
the brutality in human world?
Yes angels are always there
to guide the
detract human kind, he added..

Zenny Disuja
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TWIST OF FATES; A BOOK OF FACTUAL POETRY

Esong Joseph Nkamanu

The poet of “Twist of Fates” Afzal Shauq is a philosophically prolific and an evolutionary Writer with broad sense and visions. While Alley Boling is a Great woman born to make a mark. I liked the majority of poems of the book I read on the net without paying a single penny. Therefore, I want to comment on it and appreciate the work with my deepest concerns.

The Poem "THE MUSE” talks about wisdom as an instrument or tool which gives or brings revelations and inspiration in dreams. It departs when the mind is not settled. Wisdom and inspirational manifest when one is in action [motion] because motion brings promotion. The impact created transforms lives. Wisdom and knowledge is always available to those who seek it. It is the most important tool. It gives strength and Boldness. It makes one excels in life and gives you the urge to know more because the more one know the more He/she knows that He does not know.

The poem “BEAUTY PRIDE” talks about people who see or estimate themselves to be too precious thereby too careful to themselves whereby causes pride which in turn depreciates their Honor and causes lack of peace in their
Heart; anxiety for trouble as well as Fear of future Danger which retains worries as result of psychological immaturity.

The poem “THE NATURE OF HUMAN”, “THE HUMAN OF 21st CENTURY”, “WALKING DEAD”, “REVOLUTION OF DARKNESS”, and “THE COMPANION OF SATAN” and many other poems are the true situation of present age and Mr. Afzal Shauq has featured in factual themes and his hopes for betterment in humanity has expressed in poem “WAY TO SENSE” which shows up the poet as a kind human and even a focal point of humanity to teach and guide. I prefer to add his one of best poems done as Haiko down;

Scarce in this life
Happy feelings
Keep staying in huts

Esong Joseph Nkamanu
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A POEM FOR THE POET OF TWIST OF FATES

A Dedication to Afzal Shauq

by

Melissa Lundeen

After reading the TWIST OF FATES
his words
on their expedition over so many pages
how they moved so beautifully
in their crossing of two languages
succinct and deep
are their precious meanings
I found myself awash
in remorse
and powerful empathy
as I wept right along side
those many loves lost
amid insights gained
the hair pin curves of life
woven with hope and disillusionment
all landmarks to a flesh, blood and bone being
gracing time with his mission's journey
is a pleasure just to get to ride
along behind his eyes
with his heart
and through his hand
I uncap my pen to you Afzal
the only way I know how
with this impromptu poem
you are a sunburst off the largest star
man has known
and with but your words
you can not imagine
the subsequent heat that resonates
in the very soul

Written May 24, 2007 1130 pm
Melissa Lundeen, USA
www.postpoems.com/members/melissalundeen
AFZAL SHAUQ; THE TRAVELER POET
AS I KNOW HIM

Nazish Zafar

It was through Alley Boling’s valued translations, that I could relish an entirely new and very joyous experience of being introduced to Pushto Poet, Afzal Shauq’s poetry which to my pleasant surprise, inspite of his being a poet of a regional language, has modern approach and universal appeal, aptly worthy of being translated in an international language, to touch the hearts of millions of people around the globe. Alley Boling in this regard, deserves a great applause for bringing out the true spirit of his otherwise, alien words in the garb of a language understood by the most, including me.
A master storyteller, who prefers doing it in verse, Afzal Shauq’s poetry has all the effects of a theatrical performance, that can warm the audience up, and that can chill them down. But in his case, there is only rise of the curtain and no fall. He leaves his reader with a lasting image to take home and cherish. He is a master director, with a complete understanding of his characters. Be they that of a lover, a beloved, a soldier, a traveler or a man on street.

A poet traveler in true spirit, he ventures forth to discover the colors of life, not through careless ransacking but by making ‘Love’ his guide and mentor. ‘Love’ that bubbles forth from within him as ceaseless energy. What he yearns for is a union of his soul with an equal love force that will give completion and perfection to his creation.

He stands baffled, disillusioned and wondering when his love is answered by a materialistic attitude..

**A Complaint... But To Whom**

*I present songs of love  
Played on my heart’s violin  
But they would rather  
Dance for money …*

He is an ardent lover of beauty, and in ‘Love’, he sees eternal beauty in its perfection. He is ready to cultivate a farm full of roses of beauty on the land of his heart, no matter how
much thorns they bring. Even the melodrama of ‘Spanish Eyes’ can’t keep him from hankering’ after beauty images, like Picasso.

Love, for Afzal Shauq, is not only a source of self-fulfillment and self-completion, but also a remedy to all ailments humanity faces today. He expands the experience of love from the personal territory of heart to the universal phenomenon of Man in general. The worse predicaments of modern man, can be resolved only through cultivation of this passion among all.

**Love**

*Love ….*  
*Deafens*  
*Blinding*  
*Fearless*

*Love ….  
*Melts stone*  
*Free souls*  
*Expands*  
*Two hearts*  
*Evolving*  
*Committed*  
*And with love*  
*Culture,*  
*Location,*

Bridging the Gap
Beliefs,  
All vanish  
This I believe

Combining both beauty and love, his ideal is the ‘Eighth Color’ in rainbow and strangely and ironically, this eighth color is reflection of his own untarnished soul, which he desires to see embodied in another face. The pursuit of his ideal far from looking for physical beauty and luscious love now becomes a highly spiritual and philosophic experience. The face of his ideal, an extension of his own soul, very deeply connected and dear to him, sets him wandering on the strangest of lands. But the ideal prefers 'staying in the dark, always eluding, drawn to darkness, while he stands alone in the light of the day, wishing to disclose.' The distance and the parting is painful enough to drive him to madness.

Madness

Possessed ....  
Ever onward  
This endless search  
Traveling day and night  
Like a fairy prince  
Unseen to the eye  
Tracking after you  
Who haunts my mind.
When his search for the ideal is returned to him unsuccessful, he once again seeks solace in his inner world.

**The Mirror**

*Face of my desire*  
*Always eluding me*  
*Haunting my dreams*  
* Appearing in my thoughts*  
*I always see you*  
*This face similar to mine*  
*I feel so alone ....*  
*Always, so alone ....*  
*So here I stand again*  
*Gazing into the mirror*  
*Seeking some comfort*  
*In the image I can see ....*

Bridging the gulf between the different quarters of the world through his travels and words, Afzal Shauq preaches peace for the sake of prosperity of humanity. To him life lies in peace, and sustenance lies in love. Without peace and love, survival of mankind is impossible. He thinks being a poet and puts his words into action being a traveler.

**Humanitarian**

*A true humanitarian...*  
*is not sentimental*
proposing love
with useless speeches.
but takes action
clearing paths over grown
blocking the good road
helping his fellow men.....

Afzal Shauq, while wandering through different lands in his search, also traversed the deeper tresses of human civilization. He has been a keen observer of evolution, human kind has brought upon itself, in ages. To his disappointment, this evolution has lead to gradual destruction, as it is a heartless adventure of selfish nature of man. He is pained to see how men have divided themselves into the rich and the poor as the economy advanced, how the blood shed and plunder became the order of the day as men ‘cultured’ themselves; How men became ever vicious and deadly as they strive hard for survival. He speaks for the poor, the suffering, the deprived with the compassion of being in their shoes himself.

But his poems, inspite of all the traces of pain and suffering on earth, nowhere become a lament or a woe, where a weak heart mourns and wails. They are ever filled with a hope, originating from his belief in the power of love. He knows and can convince that some day.
Hope for Peace

With the rain
Once parched lands
would become prosperous

With impressive themes, strong imagery, unique style and beautiful diction, poems of Twist of Fates leave me richer at heart and mind. Based upon my experience of perusing this book, I address the poet in these words:

Wither you flee?
The wandering soul!
Captive of the unseen!
You wish to unlock
The heart within you
And those of all you can reach
The cells of scary night
And let all stars fly away
In search of the unknown
You!
Who has trampled
The strangest of lands and seas
Under your feet
Look for your own face
Unable to find
Tear deprived
Shed dreams
In speechless agony
With my best wishes and regards for Afzal Shauq.

Nazish Zafar  
Associate Producer  
Express News TV Channel  
ISLAMABAD  
January, 21st 2008  
nazishzafar@yahoo.com
AFZAL SHAUQ AS A POET

Prof. Zein El Abedin

The Bridge of Peace

This was just a dream
a great ceremony..
an image of the bride
at the marriage of peace
I have within my mind..

The Nashanas sings in English
the music of Mozart..
Gogosh sings in Pashto
Hilton sings in Russian
with Kalsum...
Arab girls danced in Attan
Turks doing Wals
Japanese danced
the rhythm of Belly
to Bolero.

The Poets of the world
were dancing
some the Fox Trot
others the Polka
and even the Flamingo.
In this global ceremony
There was no differences
People were as one
The air filled with love
Everyone truly related.
As with all dreams,
I open my eyes
to a world in turmoil
Where men view other men
as their enemies.
But it was a wonderful dream.

I would like to comment on the poem above and try to focus the attention of readers towards the poet’s great wish for peace, which has expressed in the poem “The Bride of Peace” published in “Twist of Fates” and he successfully generalized the idea of sameness of humankind living all around the world.

How did he gather the different singers keep singing the songs of other languages they don’t know even, in the music of Mozart and why the Arabic girls make dance on Indian way and Indian on the Chinese way?

I remember, the above question was arose in my mind when I read through the poem and smiled with critically. But after thinking about the theme of poet, I was really surprised and liked the way he did the poem. After getting the idea I understood the idea of poet Afzal Shauq, who wished the humankind be gathered and wish to sensitize the message
sameness to the world keeping their instinctive human behavior in view. That’s why he dreamt if the poets of each language chose their dreaming girls out of their regional boundaries in a symbolic way to prevail and promote the humanity with following rule of happy life “let live and live other” and forget about regional, religious and racial differences. Means, Afzal Shauq here just to proves that every thing in the use of humans and even humankind themselves are same and belong to a God gifted human life. But the dream of peace seeking poet become false when he returns to senses and feels.. that human beings can never be gathered as he thinks or dream. I pay tributes and congratulations to Afzal Shauq for his great poem.

Prof. Zein el Abedin
Mansura city, Egypt
www.postpoems.com
A PEACE WILLING POET

Mohammad Saeed Baloch

Translated from Urdu to English By: Nazish Zafar

Afzal Shauq Intends to Occupy Hearts

I wish, I could appreciate Mr. Afzal Shauq with words, that could truly convey my heart felt emotions and respect for him. Because in a very short period of two years our friendship, I found him a very kind man and a true humanist. Loving every one as he himself is loved by all around him.
He is a man of deep feelings and writes what he truly feels in a very pure way. His ideas are innovative and he knows the skill of capturing hearts through his words.

Since his poetry has been translated into English, he has got international links in the globe and I am sure that he would be widening the boundaries of his conceptual state of love and would reach the hearts of western people. I pray for his good luck and long life.

Mohammad Saeed Baloch
Reporter of Daily ‘JUNG’ Quetta
Reporter for ‘Geo TV’ at Noshki

Published in ‘Adabi Safah’ Jung Quetta on Feb 1st 2007
I’m not a quite competent to do critical conclusion of poetry but I may omit my views being the enthused reader of the poems of Afzal Shauq added to the online book ‘Twist of Fates’, which was recommended to me by one of my friends who writes poetry too.

So I contacted the poet of the book and appreciated his vision for the entire world being a true humanist dreaming for peaceful life for the globe. I found him fair and devoted poet to his cause of peace, what he deems the true way to humans prosperity.
He’s a great dreamer actually and also wanna think unpretentiously as he did here in the one of his heart catching poems I like very much indeed.

Dreams

Dreams..
are what
they are..
not false
neither true..
yet, significant.

Dreams..
like many mirrors
able to show
every angle..
revealing
all of life's faces.

Dreams..
no hiding place
all is stripped
from the mind's eye
allowing
differences to be seen.

Nicole Leon, Dallas, Texas, USA
www.postpoems.com
POETRY FOR PEACE AND LOVE

S. Ehrler Parter

Kudos For Afzal Shauq

A Book’s Title Cover, designed for Afzal Shauq - Zie

I, S. Ehler – Porter (a Graphic Designer) also known as ZIE have had the great pleasure of reading through the work of

Bridging the Gap

Khyber.ORG
AFZAL SHAUQ in different literary sections on the internet. He has the most inspiring poetry I have read quite a long time. He is a great poet and now my good friend too. Though, he wrote his poems in Afghani language (what he calls Pashto) but his books are being translated into English by Alley Boling (Alice Alley Ann. M) and Andreea Sarcani who are quite devoted to his literary work to extend to the world as they did TWIST OF FATE in recent times.

The themes of AFZAL’S verses are unique to the western world, maybe owing to the change of eastern ethos in terms of its norms, values, taboo, customs and lifestyle as well.

Most of the topics covered in his poetry are love, peace and dreams for all humanity turn out to be true. Which is impossible but he seems not to be refrained from his unattainable claim of peace for all. Aside from the above, I found him searches for the ideal woman, threw her eyes, and face of true love. I would love to introduce any one to this great poet for his words mean so much and are from the heart. I love the following small poem of his collection of poetry very much. Let me share with readers too.

**Completion**

*I awoke  
*Sound the sleep ...  
*The whole world  
*was paired off.*

Bridging the Gap  
Khyber.ORG
Every where couples...
But I was one ...
I stood alone
only my shadow
beside me....
Yet the shadow
gave me hope ...
I am in good company.

S. Ehler Parter (Zie)
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Afzal Shauq, a well-known Pashto poet, novelist and travelogue writer, strongly believes in transforming dreams into realities, and he proves his will, both in his poetry and prose. He conceives ideas with an entirely new approach. According to him, human being is his subject matter whom he wishes to see in perfect peace and thus enjoy perfect prosperity. His poetry involves the basic sensory experiences of seeing, hearing, doing and observing.

He seems strolling around the world like a soul without getting a body. He writes in regional language of Pashto but...
addresses the globe. In addition, this approach, according to him, is the demand of writing literature in this age. He started writing in 1975 and to this day he has won a position of an eminent and successful poet.

Alley Boling, an American poetess proved the universal approach of his poetry by condescending to translating his 333 poems in the book 'twist of fates'. The official launch ceremony of the book, conducted by the Pakistan Academy of Letters Islamabad is also scheduled on 21st September 2006, in which eminent literary figures would present their views on the art of Afzal Shauq.

Tariq Shahid
Public Relation Officer (PRO)
Pakistan Academy of Letters
Islamabad

Interview published in Daily ‘Jinnah’ Islamabad / Rawalpindi/ ‘Adab Nama’ on September 6th 2006
Hi Afzal Shauq!

“Good poetry touches heart and inspires brain.” With the same hope, me Ilyse Drost being one of regular members of world wide Post Poems cyber site was surfing for good verses to read and fortunately, found your poems “Announcement” on page 47 and “Heavenly People of hell” on page 161, touched my heart and brain because it fits the present time of mankind … who found busy in state of warfare.
I wanna appreciate your idea and hope you would let me to pass on it to my friends to enjoy and realize the same I do. Here’s my poem dedicated to you..

I am...
the missing piece
of your heart
oh my beloved....!
Whenever
there are questions answered
you
take over the controls.
Beauty's threat
makes me the slave
as I feel know.

The answer to your question about my location is Zeeland Michigan. My real name is Ilyse Drost and my address, if you ever need to write to me just ask me for my street address or join me at my art wanted site.

(Here are the poems (from Twist of Fates/p-47 and p-161) Ms. Ilyse Drost has pointed out. Let me share to readers too … Nazish Zafar)

*Announcements*

Eyes of the dead
lashes veiled...

Bridging the Gap

Khyber.ORG
tongues now silent
severed into...
People hanging
from branches broke...
House doors now shut
the city is closed…. Yet they are saying
liberty proclaimed.....

Heavenly People of Hell

Submission in God
religions they follow
their actions atheistic...
Sins of the people
ignoring teaching
shall lead to hell...
Hypocrisy in prayers
wishes of their ego
the religion of their hearts.

Ilyse Drost
Michigan Zeeland US
November, 29th 2007
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Hi, Mr. Shauq,

Hope you will not mind if my words are little harsh and bitter but I will try to share of my idea … here goes:

**A New Dawn**

It reminds the reader that what ever is happening in your world, always there is something better that will come out of the bad situation u are in at the moment. it's about HOPE…and supposed to be the brightened way leads to souls and hearts.
Broken Branches

Life is cruel, life goes on with or without u, it never stops to allow u to keep when u stumble and fall. u are left alone to pick up the pieces. The idea of this poem addresses the upper and lower classes and there is criticism of the role of rich people towards poor.

Dead Foot Steps

People have to make a difference in their life, make your life worthwhile/meaningful for others and yours. don't just exist, live your life to the fullest or end up like the foot steps in the sand where the wind blows it away. make a good mark no matter how small it may seem, you'll never know it might do a lot of good to others. It's a touchy and very good poem.

Fire and Water

It's compared to having to choose right from wrong, short or long, big and small ... these are parallels in life. there is always a choice that a person has to make in his life time. Poem indicates the extreme of love and hate.

Walking Dead

Like Dead Foot Steps, make life meaningful for yourself and others. But what makes me sensitize is the theme of poem which make me thinking. well done Mr. Poet for the old idea expressing in an innovative style. Appreciate you for it.
Friend or Enemy

Yes, Mr. Shauq, it is difficult to please everybody in this chaotic world. Best to be just yourself. Life is difficult as it is never allow people to influence your decision. Just remain true to yourself is the key. this is what this poem is reaching out to readers.

Wide Open Eyes

These poem brought tears to my eyes. it described the untold sufferings of the less fortunate. the widening gap between the rich and the poor. and how people has become so caught up in their job to even stop, look and listen or admire their surroundings. Well done Mr. Afzal, it is a great poem.

Lonely Moments

The reader is reminded to always aim to reach your goals, not to be sidetrack. Pick yourself up when u stumble.

Hundreds of Faces

To follow ill send you the rest. a good poem showing your way of making friends for satisfying your soul which is based of the desires making you a social activist and searcher for good faces and people as well.
Mr. Afzal Shauq, I will be criticizing your whole poems in the same way to let you know what you did. And what's the value of your thoughts and themes of life?

Good luck and long life my friend...

Luisita Palao
Cavite Town
Near Manila – Philippines
Cell: 639104465804
luisitalouroca@yahoo.com
Mon, 21 May 2007
AFZAL SHAUQ; A POET OF LIFE

Ernanie. I. Pepito

Philippines

Afzal Shauq is my friend and we have been sharing knowledge since three years... means I, being a teacher in English literature and he as a poet.

I have been always inspired of his rich thoughts and poetry and it is my good luck that he respects my poor suggestions while I admit to him at the end of my abilities.

Peace, love, life with new angles, humanity and criticizing the cruel behavior of mankind in present time, brightened hopes and dreams for future are the main topics of Afzal Shauq’s poetry. He presents ideas with his own way of thinking, which may considered by critics ... as fighting against the air OR innovative approach towards the reality.

The themes of Afzal’s poetry are not as easy to interpret as the words he uses for expression. He speaks in easy way but keeps presenting the ideas in a philosophical way, which may keep the readers think of seriously.
His approach is a realistic in deed… pointing out the men. Its behavior and its relations towards WHO CREATES THEM.

Ernanie I. Pepito
English Professor
Manila, Philippines 1200
Knocking Hearts

Dr. Warkaa Saad

Baghdad - Iraq

The poetry of Mr. Shauq makes me cry

I am a doctor and not so much competent in writing on poetry but I like poetry very much to read and enjoy. Thank you for offering me your book, which isn’t, lessen then the memorable gift from your side being my sweet brother Mr. Afzal Shauq!

I can mention here that your vision and approach of thoughts is so realistic, punching and knocking to hearts and souls Mr. Shauq! May God bless you long life. I really like
the way you express your feelings being the hurt soul relating
to a blood shedding soil like my own.

Our situation is the same and I dream for the past of my
country. And your poems make me cry and realize that as I
am also a scary soul of animal world. Always people are
dying for nothing. Same like in your country Afghanistan,
had been happening since decades but for what and who
does? This is a question as you mentioned in few of your
verses.

I read your poems and like sharing them with family and
friends as well. They also like your verses. Specially the
following poem, which make us cry for the glorious past..

Like Animals

living in the city ….
where hearts are hidden
people live in fear
danger on every corner

so many are there
not truly human …
always threatening
like animals

to the jungle
they should go

Bridging the Gap

Khyber.ORG
to live with their kind removed from the city.

Dr. Warkaa Saad
Baghdad – Iraq
I am thankful to both Afzal Shauq and Alley Boling, who allowed me to translate the book TWIST OF FATES in Chinese language as I found it very interesting and impressive.

I further say thanks to the Malaysian Freelance Writer Benita Premchand who appreciated my Chinese translation of the book ‘Twist of Fates’ and she wrote the preface for the book… I completed with the help of my husband.

I am also thankful to Romanian Writer / Poetess and artist, who is a good literary friend of Afzal Shauq and he asked her to design a title cover for my book. So she did it for me.
with appreciation notes for the poetry of Mr. Afzal added in Chinese version (Ming Yun De Zhuan Zhe) means Twist of Fates.

I hope that Chinese readers would like my translation and the poems of my best friend Afzal Shauq, who is really a great poet and he deserves to be appreciated all over the Chinese world…. I dream.

Thanks my best friend Afzal Shauq for trusting me with translating your book in my sweet language CHINESE.

LIULI
Benxi - CHINA.
刘利 中国本溪
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MODERN PASHTO POETRY

Muneeza Shamsie

Alley Boling Brings Modern Poetry Of Afzal Shauq To An Anglophone Audience

The translation of the Pashto poet by the American writer Alley Boling brings modern Pashto poetry to an Anglophone audience. The book is imbued with verses, such as “Cry” which make a passionate plea for Pashto and for Pathans to reclaim their rightful inheritance. There are several romantic poems, including “Lonely Moments’ which comment on a writer’s use of verse to compensate for absence; others such as “Broken Branches”, “The Earthquake of time” and “Blind Justice” revolve around social injustice and the harsh life of poor.

NOTE: ‘the Poems, quoted by the worthy critic in her article are added below’ …… Nazish Zafar

Cry
Twist of Fates, Poem No. 39

Mountain children
the time has come
to end the silence
Sound out
like mountain shepherds
returning with their flock
You are not animals
that have no sense
you deserve a better life.
Yes It is time..
Sweet language of Pashto
Lay claim to respect
with a cry.

**Lonely Moments**
*Twist of Fates, Poem No. 8*

Pen in hand...
I place nib
upon your picture.
there to place
My mark
Upon your face
As I attempt to write ...
Your face vanishes...
and there
I write this verse.

**Broken Branches**
*Twist of Fates, Poem No. 2*

See...
the desert heart
waters its thirst.
Sweat
Blood
Tears...
The Desert demands
and buildings must rise...
Walls to be built.
Blocks formed.
Ill treated
those sweating hard at labor.
The earth runs red
beneath the tree of life...
Workers hanging like sheep
in the desert butchers' shop...
Where droplets fall
and blood flows.
And in this endless cycle...
those that are left behind
with red eyes weeping
leave rivers of tears
mourning those now gone
and the desert ...drinks.

The Earthquake of Time
Twist of Fates, Poem No. 42

I believe
the Lines of fate
vary from hand to hand
each a different destiny

But Why is it
The poor seems
always the great loser
with the earthquake of time

Could it be the lines of fate...?
For the hands of poor
have seen hard work,
and the lines worn
till only dashes remain.

Blind Justice
The one who grievances first is right
Twist of Fates, Poem No. 254

Even though...
They presented to court
the blood stained Knife
The tool of slaying
Leaving the man a corpse.

With all the evidence
There is no conviction
Justice for the dead denied
Shouts arise pleading...
Yet the judge remains deaf.

Muneeza Shamsie
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There is much in my heart to say about the book of Afzal Shauq, which is luckily in English and easily understandable. Otherwise I being the title designer of his few books never understood his language Pashto.

Shauq’s poem have a series of stories inside which has dominantly circled on Gham-e-Duran and Gham-e- Janan but he tries to overcome these tragedies and repeatedly presents the only solution he thinks is the PEACE. Which may never happen in the human beings life because the MAN “Insaan” is selfish with having satanic desires to fulfill in cunning way since he had unfortunately been declared the superior in living creature as Azfal Shauq himself mentioned here in the poem:
In the Name of Dignity

Small the Issue
by God …

In appearance
human beings,
but by nature
brutal animals

Not keeping our heads
like the ancient savages
with enemy’s skull cups
we drink their blood

His romantic poetry is also impressive. Here the following poem “UNKNOWN BELOVED” taken from the “Twist of Fates” page No.117 is quite enough to be proved him as an Allah Wala poet of “Gham e Jannan”:

Unknown Beloved

How long the wait
for the beloved
yet unknown to me

Long has she stayed
at home in my heart
like God himself

Bridging the Gap
Dreams in Afzal Shauq’s poetry have been dramatically highlighted in sense, as the reality itself seems unproven dream. He talks about some things, which may occur in future but when and how? This is the only repeated question in his whole poetry … needs to be satisfied.

Hopes, beauty, blind love and trust in love, inspiration from human and geographical nature and struggle are the main subjects to address.

In addition to all, he criticized the worsen situations and behavior of human beings who are found in state of fighting and hate. As he wrote in context with Afghan civil war and also worried about the adverse after effects and threats to humanity. (Twist of Fates/ page No.164).

**War for the Sake of God**  
(In Context with Afghan civil war)

Willing to quench  
your thirst ...  
Jehad..  
The holly war...  
Think you well  
before taking the sword  
And call for Jehad

Oh brother...!  
Fulfill my last desire...

Bridging the Gap
After killing me
take my bloody body
to my grave.
May my promised wife
Your sister
remain unwed
let no henna
touch her hand.
And...
Beware these well wishes
who offered up
this idea of killing
For our common good.
For Pashto religion
will never accept them
As a soldier of God
a true martyr.

The poet of Twist of Fates Mr. Afzal Shauq seems to me a broken person with hurt soul. Because there are a lot of poems found in the book of his poetry which are indicating his dreams, thirst and desires to be fulfilled… for his fully completion. That is why he intends to be perfect at all his ends and struggles to own every thing what is lost. The following poem is one of the them.. (Twist of Fates/Page No- 389)
Completion

I awoke
Sound the sleep ...
The whole world
was paired off.
Every where couples...
But I was one ...
I stood alone
only my shadow
beside me....
Yet the shadow
gave me hope ...
I am in good company.

Prof. Tehmina Afzal
Chairperson, Department of Fine Arts
Government University College
Faisal Abad / Pakistan
tehminafzal_786@yahoo.com
FEW WORDS FOR AFZAL SHAUQ

P. Osuji

Sharing Effects of Poems

Like your peace and love chasing dreams, thoughts, issues and looking for new dawn to come. Great verses to stimulate brains of readers in different directions. Love your talent yeah.

I feel that I have shared more time with you than ever I read your poems. I know there are many occasions that are more special and moments in our lives that will surprise and bring us closer being writer and reader.

P. OSUJI, Kaduna – Nigeria, osujip@yahoo.com

Bridging the Gap
GOOD POETRY

F. Cisse Seko

Hey the poet of twisting fates…!

Your poetry is blessing that my entire being is very thankful for it. I feel that you are made to love, listen, care, understand, and work through all times in your life and I feel inside it sharing all feelings… great task.

Your ideal is my soul mate and nothing, and no one else feels more right than you!! I love your words and verses eternally and unconditionally.

I wish if you more than words can say to your searching love will reach any distance and fly to be in your dreams and heart each evening that make you satisfactory spiritually.

I believe and have faith in you words. Lol

Love Always ya,

F. Cisse Seko
London
cisseculibaly@yahoo.com
Sharing Words

Dr. Mathew

Few Words to Dear Afzal Shauq and Alley Boling

I certainly share the admiration for Afzal Shauq’s and Alley Boling’s joint work on the subject of twisting of destinies … done in the book ‘Twist of Fates’

I am about to stick my neck out on a limb now. I have to be sincere to my self after reading his whole book again and again and then be able to write more. I think that the world have something to be proud of the positive thinkers like Mr. Afzal Shauq and his friend Alley Boling, who have wished to bridge the gaps between east and west as mentioned in the back cover of book ‘Twist of Fates’.

Bridging the Gap

Khyber.ORG
If there is any one human being who deserves credit for a job well done it's none other than Afzal Shauq. He has really written great things and I respect him a lot.

Afzal Shauq’s tremendous achievement of the book ‘Twist of Fates’ did more to improve and help the readers understanding nature of human in our present global ... means, the world today.

It is an ironic Twist of Fate. Afzal Shauq is certainly worthy of the word "hero" and I hope that my comments here are not just words from the mount but words from the mind and heart of a man who truly honor and respect literature

Dr. Mathew
VGC Lagos State, Nigeria
Phone:+2348083924026
infoservice04@yahoo.com
Thu, 28 Feb 2008
JUST TO ADMIT A FEW WORDS

Felicity.L . Bostdorf

Email plus Chat

Dear Afzal

Your poetry is beautiful, your use of imagery is wonderful, you feel as if you are seeing what it is that you have written. It flows wonderfully from line to line. I love the use of emotion. You can really feel what it is that you are trying to get across. Truly a wonderful piece of literary work.

Your work really is great. You really are an amazing writer a true genius.

Your work really gives the reader a look into your mind and another extra ordinary works, you thought ever.

You can really tell how they feel about humanity and people as a whole. Your dreams are perfect.

Like your will of peace and humanity ties to be closer.

You put much questions in poetry… like it too but difficult to answer.

Felicity.L . Bostdorf, San Antonio USA
captain_felicity@sbcglobal.net

Bridging the Gap

Khyber.ORG
The short poems of Mr. Afzal Shauq, as contained in the Twist of Fates, are really life stories of men and women around the globe. While written from his own experience and general observations, one can identify himself / herself in several of Mr. Shauq’s poems.

There are poems about the joys and triumphs of human life - celebrating love with family, friends and loved ones, living in peace and harmony with fellow men and women, having friends in times of trouble, and becoming one with God and the rest of the world. There are poems that speak of the cries of many – the need to love and be cared for; the pains
of betrayal of trust, separation and death; and the anguish of being in the state of sin. Some poems move us to reflect on our own love of country and our views about the ills of society. There are poems about dreams and beautiful tomorrows and a lot more.

Because of the simplicity of the poems in terms of their form and style, the book would be a good reference material for both the beginners and experts in poetry writing. Since the book is a collection of 333 poems, it is recommended to read few related poems at a time to fully appreciate and internalize the messages these poems convey.

**Engr. Phlorita A. Ridao**
Roales St., Rosary Heights
Cotabato City,
Philippines
phlorita@yahoo.com
Fri, 29 Feb 2008
SOUL CARING WORDS

Doria Vandrake

A praising email to the poet of ‘Twist of Fates’

Well I'm reading your poems these days and I'm nearly in tears they are wonderful with the pure intention of expressing life in words that causes my mind to ponder and my heart longing for more to be realistic. Yea, I am always had and reading yours thoughts and trying to overcome with joy.

Well lets see … ah yes, I was just reading the poem "Sleeping Moments" and I could relate to that particular poem, it made me realize your words can paint a picture far better than a brush. Your artwork is your poems they are what makes you an artist.

Many people say that poems are the best way to express feelings, character and how one thinks. I have read many poems but none have ever touched my soul the way yours did. Your words caress my soul and awaken my curiosity for searching the unknowns of mankind. You nurture my young mind feeding my hungry brain the wisdom that only you can give. Thanks.

Let me tell you,,, Another one is "Cause of Inspiration" that is so tender like a young lamb nestled in my bosom.
Yours poems, they seduce my heart and I forsake all that is around me. I am drawn to your words as a moth to a flame. I want to be consumed. No one has ever expressed human kind the way that has captured my attention the way you do. Your words will visit me in my dreams and I shall be filled with happiness.

For a period of time words were over used to define life, but now you have broken that curse and painted such a masterpiece life itself has taken a liking to you. Young writers will marvel at your beautiful work and by inspired to look at like life from within and not as just a way to live. You took the simple things and peeled back the blank covering to reveal a magnificent view of life.

I will try to write more about yours poems and let you know if I am quite able to interpret … yea, I wish if I could write the way your artistic poems deserve.

Doria Vandrake
Florida US
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TWIST OF FATES CREATES POWERFUL SNAPSHOTS

Julie Gatuhara

An English Poetess

I enjoyed the poems added to ‘Twist of Fates’ because there are some powerful images created in the poems that taking hundreds of hidden faces to be unveiled.

The pure brilliance of the poet of the book heals the hurt souls of humanity with some new medicated ideas. The shattered world he is living in is making him as a sensitized observer and anyone who ever had his heart broken, can just captures such feelings.

I love the images and atmosphere created and can this man create an atmosphere!!

He manages to take life’s drama and emotions and creates powerful snapshots.

These images echo the truths we all seek to understand about ourselves and the world around us.

There are also some darker issues that are well handled in poems with great poetic techniques. I appreciate his symbolic and visualized themes that let the readers to realize about the issues he discloses.

Bridging the Gap

Khyber.ORG
Human Evolution really speaks volumes about the cruelty of mankind. The poet of ‘Twist of Fates’ over viewed the world’s miserable sides successfully and Alley Boling, has also undoubtfully translated his verses with great concerns.

Others stumble to handle such topics but Afzal Shauq brings them to us with grace and dignity.

When reading his work, one can almost imagine that peace could enfold our world.

His desire for bridging the gaps between mankind are very apparent throughout the book.

I believe this book is truly for the blind people of the world to open their eyes that they might see.

This is a meal of a book, a veritable feast for the heart and soul.

Julie Gatuha
Medway, Kent,
England
juliegatuha@yahoo.com
POETRY OF STEALING HEARTS

M. Mehdi Riahi

Never die that one, whose heart is alive with love
…Hafiz

“TWIST OF” his muse… You start the poem and then your mind become submergible in couplets. In that time, you see the words on the wing and two boat’s oarage in your hand. The light of fanal attracts your attention and in this moment you understand that you become one subdue of “FATES”.

It’s not a long time that I know Mr.Shauq but I feel a deep cordiality with his poems. He knows that how use the words. His mind’s muse can steal away hearts. One of the advantages of his poem is that the couplets do not prisoner in demagogic beautiful motto and can say their idea liberally.

In the last you wake up tomorrow’s morning by first blaze of sun and see you huge the TWIST OF FATES whole of night.

M. Mehdi Riahi
Tehran IRAN
persi.1986@yahoo.com
3/17/2008
I have not had the opportunity of reading through the entire enchanting expanse of the vistas offered by Afzal Shauq’s poetry due to personal reasons and the time-scale. However, I have skimmed through the pages and whatever got my attention was a miracle in itself. Perhaps this is what he himself prides in.

Am I
Mozart
incarnate
writing words
I should first acknowledge that even the shortest of his poems allow immensity of vision into words. The voice although bleak is an echo of a tormented mind that no longer can withstand the onslaughts of time and is breaking barriers through generations of acceptance of the vice and the sordid. I feel one with him as this enables me to peep into the reality of the painful stance that his sensitive soul is in. cry again is the emblem of breaking off the shackles of wasted soul of human beings under the burden of endless strife during the ages.

Cry

You are not animals
That have no sense
You deserve a better life

(p.69)

and

Yes it is time
Sweet languages of Pashto
Lay claim to respect with cry
There is certain rebellion in his tone at times. Is this for the awakening of his fellow humans or his own admonition of what he allows to happen, helplessly around him?

*For my life here*
*is a grave yard*
*of a once proud nation.*
*Where the way of life*
*is humans burying*
*by hand.*

(p.119)

From a man so engrossed in a kind of aversion from the injustices around him all of a sudden seems to be caught in the age long passionate moment of his beloveds’ encounter whereby he does not ask for more but is entwined in the charm.

**Hidden Face**

*Down cast eyes*
*the hearts window*
*the mirror of love*
*refusing to be seen.*

(p.142)
He does not hesitate for a moment in his final submission to his love’s beauty and grandeur

*Madness is this love
which drives me
to sanity's brink.*

There is one thing of grave importance that I cannot help noticing; Afzal does fling with his thoughts a bit. Although throughout his love poems, I find him relishing the chastity of woman form but then cannot hold when at the sharp edge of lusciousness—thus making him human

**Acts of Cruelty**

*Flashing her deceptive smile,  
I see lust in her eyes...  
With the tip of her tongue,  
she moistens her lips...  
So I respond and smile*

(p.152)

Reading any piece of literary art, I am always seeking some moment of deviation from the ordinary. I find this fulfilling at several stages in his poetry. Like dreams that could allow a slumber soft or carry us to worlds fantastic, he has a strong, steadfast grasp of his ground

Bridging the Gap
**Dreams**

Dreams...
No hiding place
all is stripped
from the mind's eye
allowing
differences to be seen.

(p.173)

It is ever so daring to speak of the horrors and the images reflecting due to certain dark period in any civilization. The trick is to judge all with a word that lashes more painfully than the stick-plus it requires courage and a heart of rock. The title ‘animals—but on two feet’ is a remarkable courageous attempt blazing fire in any soul

*But upon second look...*
you are more animal
like the brutal men
from days gone by
who drank blood
ruthless in action...

Similarly the pungent sarcasm of Right and Wrong cant be ignored at any level

*Today's madness*
* killing play*

Bridging the Gap

Khyber.ORG
sacred war
Bullets flying
People dying
This in the name of God…

(p.178)

Quite amusingly, I should very honestly admit that I am more than overwhelmed with one thought. I do not happen to be a feminist but they way Afzal Shauq goes past the prejudices of his gender makes me kind of believe in him.

Beloved ....
struggling like a man
when you look at me
I want to fight
for women rights
though I am a man.

(p.292)

Any piece of creative writing is a proof and fruit of great thought, response to stimulus when it is in surplus or even when there is none. Afzal Shauq has sometimes maneuvered words for his ease and at times resided with the very simple code of language that makes it accessible.

I should hereby not fail to thank the translator Alley Boling, of his poetry who has enabled the non-speakers of Pashto to comprehend what the real poet himself aimed at. Her effort
is profoundly appreciated and of course, had it not been the power of her pen and the insight of her imagination, we would have been deprived of this wondrous experience.

**Riffat Nazir Ahmad**  
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London  
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Press Releases & Reports
Regarding Launching
Ceremony of
Twist of Fates

Ceremony held at Pakistan Academy of Letters, Islamabad on 21st September 2006
Hashim Babar, Dr. Sher Zaman Taizai, Dr. Tariq Rehman, Iftikhar Arif and Afzal Shauq at The Launching Ceremony of ‘Twist of Fates’
A famous senior Pashto poet and writer Mr. M.R. Shafaq and other participants listening the views of Eminent literary critics’ during the occasion of Book ceremony of ‘Twist of Fates’ on 21st September 2006 at PAL, Islamabad.
Eminent Pakistani Scholar Dr. Tariq Rehman is Commenting on the TWIST OF FATES during it’s Launching ceremony at Pakistan Academy of Letters on 21st September 2006
Haseena Gul, a famous Pashto critic is presenting her paper on Twist of Fates at PAL Islamabad on 21st September 2006.

Eminent Pashtoon Literary figure Dr. Sher Zaman Taizai is presenting his views on the TWIST OF FATES during its Launching ceremony at Pakistan Academy of Letters on 21st September 2006.
(a) Mr. Iftikhar Arif, Chairman, Pakistan Academy of Letters
Commenting on the TWIST OF FATES during it’s Launching ceremony at PAL on 21st September 2006

(b) World wide know Poet Mr. Iftikhar Arif, Chairman, Pakistan Academy of Letters is reading through the book TWIST OF FATES during it’s Launching ceremony at PAL on 21st September 2006
A famous Pashto Poet Mr. Hashim Babar, presenting his comments on the book ceremony of TWIST OF FATES at Pakistan Academy of Letters Islamabad on 21st September 2006

Dr. Tariq Rehman   Iftekhar Arif   Hashim Babar

Bridging the Gap   Khyber.ORG
AFZAL SHAUQ; A POET, MODERNIST
PASHTO POET

Masood Aslam

Press Reporter: Daily ‘Pakistan Observer’ Islamabad

Islamabad – Afzal Shauq belongs to that group of writers and poets who have pioneered post – modernism in Pushto poetry and literature. Critics and writer Ayaz Daudzai made these remarks on the launching ceremony of “Twist of Fates” translation of Afzal Shauq’s Pushto poems.

The launching ceremony took place at Pakistan Academy of letters Islamabad and eminent scholar, social scientist and linguist Dr. Tariq Rehman presided over the ceremony, Chairman PAL Iftikhar Arif, Hashim Babar, Dr. Sher Zaman Taizai, Dr. Qabil Khan Afridi and Hasina Gul also spoke on the occasion. A message of Alley Boling who has rendered the translation of poems of Shauq was read by Khurram Khirram on the occasion.

According to Ayaz Daudzai, Afzal Shauq is anxious to travel across the world and is keen to unfold the beauties that lay scattered in different parts of the world. Beside visiting places of historical import, his interest in photography has also enhanced his power of observation.
His poems are thus based on the pictorial and sonic material he has composed these beautiful poems.

The book contains 333 short poems, most of which circle around humanity, hope and higher human values. Dr. Tariq Rehman in his presidential speech said, Pushto is an ancient language with glimpses of beauty and chivalry that dates back to hundreds of years old civilizations and one can have those glimpses recurring in Afzal Shauq’s poems. He called the Pushto language a sign and a symbol of rich Pushto culture and through translation of Pushto works one can watch the changes being taken place in the people who speak this language from closed quarters.

Dr. Tariq Rehman said in the age of globalization people and communities are coming closer to each other and thus the translation of regional literary works into major languages like English will further serve to promote understanding between the people and population of one region to the other.

Dr. Sher Zaman Taizai said Afzal shauq is well known name in Pushto literature especially in travelogue and short poems. His poems through brief yet carry wisdom and deep insight with the image of free thoughts as free as Shauq’s verses itself and Alley Boling, the talented translator of his poems also seems to be guided or much inspired from his innovative and global poetic vision. Iftikhar Arif, Chairman Pakistan Academy of Letters said its not easy to translate a
piece of literature without losing its essence and the translator has to have command on the both languages and their usage. Alley Boling has got that distinction that he has luckily succeeded in rendering the translation with same music and rhythm that was there in the Pushto literature.

(Published in Daily “Pakistan Observer” Islamabad on September 24th, 2006)
TWIST OF FATES; BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN EAST & WEST

Abu Raheel

Press Correspondent: ‘Balochistan Times’ Quetta

Quetta - In a time when there seems to be an unbridgeable gap between the east and west, two writers have come together to show the world through art bridges are built.


Afzal Shauq was born in NWFP and did his Masters from the University of Balochistan, Quetta in Sociology. He has also been associated with radio Pakistan Quetta.

He is well known freelance writer having experience in social issues, he is also author of six books in Pashto language. He is one of prominent literary figures of the region and got much respect from the people of Pashtoon valleys both in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

THE WEST: Alley Boling, from the United States, driven by her desire for the English speaking world to understand all

Bridging the Gap
people share the same feelings desires and dreams dedicated herself to translating Shauq's poetry.

IT is the writers' hope, though a TWIST OF FATES, may place us on opposite sides of the world, the art of poetry will bridge us together.

(Published in “Balochistan Times” Quetta / July 30th 2006)
THE LAUNCHING CEREMONY OF TWIST OF FATES

Press Release

Daily ‘Pakistan Times’ Islamabad

Islamabad – The launching ceremony of Pashto language poet Afzal Shauq’s poems English translation “Twist of Fates” took place at Pakistan Academy of letters Islamabad and the eminent scholar, and linguist Dr. Tariq Rehman, who presided the ceremony called the book as the bridge between the regional language to the major one and congratulated both, the American Alley Boling and the Pakistani Pashto poet Afzal Shauq on their successful work.

Famous Pashto writer Dr. Sher Zaman Taizai, who was the chief guest of the occasion added that Afzal Shauq is one of well known poets and travelogue writers in Pashto literature and is famous for his deep and innovative thoughts to present in short poems.

Dr. Qabil Khan Afridi, who contributed much to English and Pashto literature said that the translation of poetry to other language is difficult to handle but here I appreciate what English translator Alley Boling did to Afzal Shauq’s free Pashto verses which can be relatively easy then ghazal type poetry.
Ayaz Daudzai, Afzal Shauq is anxious to travel across the world and is keen to unfold the beauties that lay scattered in different parts of the world. Beside visiting places of historical import, his interest in photography has also enhanced his power of observation and his poems are thus based on the pictorial and sonic material he has composed these beautiful poems.

Chairman PAL Iftikhar Arif, Hashim Babar, Dr. Sher Zaman Taizai, Dr. Qabil Khan Afridi and Hasina Gul also spoke on the occasion. While a message of Alley Boling who has rendered the translation of poems of Shauq was read by Khurram Khirram on the occasion.

(Published in Daily “Pakistan Times” / 24th September 2006)
ART & LITERATURE ONLY TRUE PATH TO PEACE: BOLING

Schezee Zaidi

Press Correspondent: Daily ‘The News’ Islamabad

Islamabad: “Art and literature is the true path to peace, which is not bound by rules of politics and warfare. It is my hope that the world is exposed to the literature of other countries; it would become evident to all that people everywhere are the same. We want hunger, love, and die … and when cut, we all bleed.”

American poet Alley Boling expressed these feelings at Pakistan Academy of letters Thursday while speaking at the launching of her English translated version “Twist of Fates” of Pashto poetic collection by Afzal Shauq. As she talked about her experience and aspiration about art and literature, she said, “I hold on the one dream, if we join together using our talents, we can achieve great good.”

Eminent scholar and expert Dr. Tariq Rehman chaired the launching ceremony, while Dr. Sher Zaman Taizai was the chief guest. Speakers sharing their views about the translation, found the book as a meeting point of East and West through poetry of Afzal Shauq.
Iftikhar Arif, Chairman Pakistan Academy of Letters said the book translated by the American poet is a unique and helpful step towards bridging the gap between East and west, conveying the modern sensibilities of the sensitive people living in the third world countries. He said the themes of Afzal Shauq’s poetry are universal brotherhood, fraternity, love, and an intense desire to improve the pitiable condition of the people suffering from poverty, injustice and discrimination.

Stressing he immense need to have a qualified translators who could produce good translations of the regional language literature, he said that PAL has played a significance role in getting a large number of important literary works from Pashto and other Pakistani regional languages in to English and publishing them in bi-annual English literature Journal “Pakistani Literature” regularly.

Among other speakers, Dr. Tariq Rehman, Dr. Sher Zaman Taizai, Dr. Qabil Khan Afridi, Hashim Babar, Ayaz Daudzai and Hasina Gul paid rich tributes to both the poet Afzal Shauq and the American poet Alley Boling for her enriching and enigmatic translation. They also expressed the views that as literature has no borders and boundaries, it can be used as the medium of harp the theme of common humanity, and help obliterate all kinds of discrimination.

(Published in Daily The News Islamabad / September 22nd 2006)
ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF PASHTO POET’S WORK LAUNCHED

Sher Baz Khan

Press Reporter: Daily ‘Dawn’ Islamabad

Islamabad, September 21st: “Twist of Fates” an English translation of verses of Pashto poet Afzal Shauq by an American writer, Alley Boling was launched at the Pakistan Academy of Letters here on Thursday.

Ms. Boling has tried to bridge the widening gaps between the Pakhtun civilization and that of America by translating the works of Shauq that provide a mirror to the dreams, aspirations, nature and culture of Pakhtuns.

The ceremony was also kicked off and heated debate over the translatability of poetry from one language to another especially from Pashto to English.

Pakistan Academy of Letters Chairman Iftikhar Arif said translation could never be a substitute for the original work but still an unavoidable means of transporting knowledge from one language to another and that was what the academy was up to.

Most of the literary critics, who spoke on the occasion, also appreciated Ms. Alley Boling for doing the great job of
translating from a language she did not know. In fact, first the wife of author and then the author himself had tried to make Ms. Boling understand the true spirit of his (Afzal Shauq) work and to translate it in the best possible manner.

Writer Hasham Babar said if a translator failed to perform the aesthetic function it could be called a bad translation no matter how well the form was preserved and he also appreciated the poetry of Afzal Shauq and work of Ms. Boling being the translator.

Writer Dr. Sher Zaman Taizai said most of the 333 verses of Afzal Shauq translated by Ms. Boling were short and in the form of free verses as cared little about style while catching fleeting ideas and putting them in the cages of words.

In her (Alley Boling) emailed message, which was read out during the ceremony, Ms. Boling said it was a matter of great honor for her to let the Americans see a world beyond their own world. She said it was the responsibility of writers to bring cultures and civilizations closer.

Writer Ayaz Daudzai said that the brave new generation was destined to become pioneer of Post Modernism in Pashto literature. He said the poet (Afzal Shauq) was anxious to tread that unbeaten path in the domain of 21st century Pashto literature and he successfully proved to be the leading Pakhtun literary figure, having the ability to address the
globe through his missionary ideas for peace, life and humanity in his own and unique way of thinking.

Scholar Dr. Tariq Rehman, Dr. Qabil Khan, Khurram Khirram and poetess Haseena Gul also spoke on the occasion and appreciated the work done by Alley Boling under the book’s title “Twist of Fates” which is the translation of Afzal Shauq’s poetry from Pashto to English language.

Afzal Shauq thanked the participants and Ms. Boling and hoped that the translation of his work would help in introducing Pakhto literature to new cultures.

(Published in Daily Dawn Islamabad/September 22nd 2006)
TWIST OF FATES LAUNCHED

Fazal Sher

Press Reporter: Daily ‘The Nation’ Islamabad

Islamabad – The speakers at book launching ceremony were unanimous in their views that translation of poetry from one language to another, especially English is necessary to promote culture and understanding of other nations.

The event was the launching of poems of Afzal Shauq translated under the name of book “Twist of Fates” in English by Ms. Alley Boling, US citizen.

Shauq was born in the valleys of the Pashtoon region of North West Frontier Province. He attended Balochistan University where he received his master’s degree in Sociology. Being professor, he gave lectures on Sociology in different Universities of the country from 1983 to 1986.

Speaking on the occasion, Hashim Babar, a literary figure, said that translation of poetry from one language to another is imminent for advancement of a language “If we translate poetry to other languages a large number of people will understand our culture and language that will pave the way for development”, he added.
He said that it is a common view of the critics that poetry and its aesthetics can be reproduced in another language and culture if the translator has ability to make appropriate accommodation. “If a translation fails to perform the aesthetic function it is in my eyes a bad translation, no matter how well the form is preserved”, he added.

Babar said that word to word translation may be judged faithful in form, but it is failure in terms of the performance of functions. Hashim said that the main reason due to which poetry translation poses more ties than prose translation is that the poetry stresses more on its aesthetic quality while prose emphasizes more on meaning. He said that the translation of poetry might not be compared with original language because it must echo the original, a translation, in a piece of creation.

Hashim said that in translation, the original poet and the translator belong to different cultural groups and they speak different languages. So the translator needs the help of some one, who is a familiar with both languages and cultures and who is willing to play the role of intermediary between them he said. In last, he also appreciated the translator of Twist of fates, which is the collection of Afzal Shauq’s poems translated by Alley Boling with her best of understanding and capability and he also translated a poem of Afzal Shauq “FRIEND OF HUNDREDS” in Pashto as “Da Salo Yar”.
Dr. Sher Zaman Taizai, Ayaz Daudzai, Dr. Tariq Rehman, Dr. Qabil Khan Afridi, Mr. Khurram Khirram, Haseena Gul and Mr. Iftikhar Arif, the Chairman Pakistan Academy of Letters also addressed the book launching ceremony of Twist of fates, and appreciated the work of it’s poet and translator in different angles.

(Published on 22nd September 2006 /The Nation Islamabad)
Pashto is one of ancient languages and is an important pillar of the civilization of Pakhtoons. The famous scholar and professor Dr. Tariq Rehman, who was presiding the session of book ceremony of TWIST OF FATES at Pakistan Academy of Letters Islamabad added and continued to admit that the Pashto poetry of Afzal Shauq which has been translated into English is, no doubt, rich and the best example of globalization and it proves that the people living all around the world can connect and associate with one another.

Dr. Sher Zaman Taizai, the chief guest, at the occasion mentioned in his speech that Afzal Shauq has contributed much to Pashto literature being a travelogue writer, a poet and a novelist and his work is valuable as quality literature. Specially his short poems are very impressive and attracted quick fame owing to innovative subjects and deeper meaning.
Iftikhar Arif added that the translation of a literary material from one language to another is not easy but in case of Twist of Fates, the translator has successfully tried to keep the rhythm of free verses of Afzal Shauq and he believes that the themes have been portrayed in a style very close to original works as well. A poor translation can mar the original essence of poetry. He said, he is himself, not adept in Pashto language but is impressed with the views of bilingual critics who believe in the successful translation by Alley Boling.

Hashim Babar appreciated the task of Translator, while Ayaz Daudzai titled Afzal Shauq as a bright star of Pashto literature and Dr. Qabil Khan Afridi said that the translator of the book has stressed on the humanity and necessary links between men in her email note to the organizers of this ceremony. And she has tried to bridge the gaps between east and west while translating the poetry of a Pashto poet. He appreciated the translation. Haseena Gul, a lady critic also shared her views about the book and liked the work done by the author and the translator of the book.

(Published in Daily ‘Jinnah’ Islamababd/Rawalpindi/ p-2 / on 22nd September 2006)
The future of Pashto Language is Satisfactory & Bright

People of the World Becoming Closer Due to Globalization

… Iftikhar Arif, Dr. Tariq Rehman

Pashto, being an ancient language, carries a lot of weight in importance and the linguists have to accept the fact. Translation of Pashto poetry into English in TWIST OF FATES has proved that world is advancing towards the globalization and the distances are being shortened between east and west. Dr. Tariq Rehman hoped that this book would make the distances even invisible. Similarly, Iftekhar Arif appreciated the work of Alley Boling and laid stress upon the need of translations of works like those of Afzal Shauq, carrying global appeal.
Dr. Sher Zaman Taizai, the chief guest also appreciated the translation of Pashto poetry into English. While Hashim Babar, Dr. Qabil Khan Afridi, Haseena Gul and others too, commented on the book and appreciated the work and congratulated Afzal Shauq for his success in access to the western world.

(Published in Daily ‘Express’ Islamabad/p-2-city/ on 22nd Sep: 2006)
“Pashto is not merely a language of communication but a pride of Pashtuns as their identity.” Dr. Tariq Rehman, the Professor from Qaid - e- Azam University Islamabad added these words, while presiding the book ceremony of Afzal Shauq’s Pashto poetry translated into English under the name TWIST OF FATES organized by Pakistan Academy of Letters Islamabad. Dr. Sher Zaman Taizai was the chief guest of the session and Dr. Qabil Khan Afridi, Hashim Babar, Haseena Gul, Khurram Khirram and other critics presented their views on the translated work of Alley Boling and appreciated her skills as a translator. Which she has used very constructively in order to bridge the gaps between the different parts of the world. Afzal Shauq, the author and poet of Twist of Fates thanked all the critics and emphasized on the need of translations in order to bring divided people together.
closer to each other and thus working upon the prospect and dream of true globalization.

(Published in Daily ‘Nawa – e – Waqt’ Islamabad/ on 23rd September 2006)
TWIST OF FATES LAUNCHED

Press Reporters

Urdu Daily Newspapers

Translated from Urdu to English by Nazish Zafar

While he laid stress upon the importance of Pashto language, being very ancient, Dr. Tariq Rehman, who was presiding the launch ceremony of Afzal Shauq’s translated poetry TWIST OF FATES, also appreciated the translation of Alley Boling. Dr. Sher Zaman Taizai, the Chief Guest, Iftekhar Arif, Hashim Babar, Haseena Gul, Dr. Qabil Khan Afridi and other critics have commented on the book and appreciated the task of translator and poetry of Afzal Shauq.

A REVIEW OF TWIST OF FATES

Helen Goodway & Hameed Qaiser

Editors Tadeeb International

14-North View Street, Keighley
West Yorkshire, BD20 6AD England
www.tadeeb.com

Helen Goodway & Hameed Qaisar

“He is a man driven by his dreams. He seeks dreams, but I respect his endless search for that perfection. When he speaks of his homeland and his people, one can feel the love and pain of this author ‘Afzal Shauq’. He knows the true meanings of devastation and loss”

(Alley Boling)

(Published in ‘TADEEB International’ Vol No.4-5, Oct–Mar 2006-2007, Issue4-1, p-34)
Comments of Readers on “Twist of Fates”

Recorded from the Internet against the Online E-Book available on Different International Websites, mainly on

- Khyberwatch
  (www.khyberwatch.com)
- Khyber.ORG
  (www.khyber.org)
- TolAfghan
  (www.tolafghan.com/afzalshauq)
what makes me impressed is the way of dramatic themes and diction of poems. And Alley Boling actually seems a great interpreter and promoter of eastern thoughts too. She seems keenly willing to project the ideas of Afzal Shauq to the brains of different sections of people living in the globe and make them think of equity being true humankinds. Congratulation to both of the successful book’s presenters.

Sonia Khan, Gulshan Iqbal, Karachi

The Pashtoon’s region would have that much talent hidden in the valleys of Rocky Mountains. I never ever thought about it but thanks to the American writer Alley Boling, who unmask a poet with an international poetic vision. Salute to this person for his rich poetry.

Dr. Sher M. Zamrialay, Sharjah, UAE

I cannot explain the words to appreciate the poems of Afzal Shauq. Because I am basically a graphic designer in textile but most of poems of his poetry appeal me to read again and again.

Ayesha Ikram, Faisalabad, Pakistan
(On line Comments) … Great poems. I enjoy as my own dreams, thoughts, feelings and voice of my inner self. Long live and best of luck Mr. Shauq.

Muhammad Saeed, Karachi, Pakistan

(On line comments) … Love to read through your poems again and again. And I feel your thoughts being in love with some one who cares for peace as you do repeatedly. My great concerns to your ideas and wordings you did in a sophisticated way of writing.

Zimba Ochie, English Professor/Writer, Senegal, Africa

(Email) … Few or terms are amazing and un conceivable but most of topics covered are expressed in a moderate and heart catching tracks of poetry, which maybe interesting to readers. As a whole, I like the work Alley Boling dear did being a translator of Twist of Fates.

Vena Richard, UK Based US Student, vena_mena@yahoo.co.uk

(Email) … Hi Mr. Shauq. Most of your poems are meaningful and done in a great way but there are still some poems that are creating confusion and do not make any sense. You being the poet of poems may disagree with my
point. But if I was the translator, I could have done your poem ‘IDEAL’ as follows:

**Ideal (Re-Translated)**

I asked some one
at the village fountain,
where you could be you found.
She strangely looked at me
And said..
Man “you seem to me mad
Because the girl whom you seek
she's known as a fairy...
and fairies never
keep staying in villages
go and see her in fairy land”

Hope you like it.

Linda, FeatherWriter@aol.com

(Email) … Sorry, I don’t like poetry but my friend Shimon recommended me ‘Twist of Fates’ to read and it’s true what he said about the book… it’s interesting and I liked it. Congratulation Mr. Poet.

Christy Shina, Rome, Italy,
christy_shina@yahoo.co.uk
(Email) … I like the book TWIST OF FATES but most of topics and terms are new and I do not understand well. Any way the work is great and few poems are so impressive and interesting to read.

Omer El Eman, Shamesani, Amman, Jordan

(On Line Comments) … Could be more better if the original poems in Afghani language were printed beside each one done in English. The diction of poetry and ideas are not bad but debatable. It’s good initiative from the side of west to east. I appreciate A. Boling.

Suleman Zakir, Gulbahar Colony, Karachi

(Email) … Better to present the famous poem of Stella Weaver to praise your thoughts, feelings and ideas and the efforts of Alley Bolling.

Hope you like it.

A Pearl in My Heart
By Stella Weaver

My deserted dream of passion
Crawling between earth and heaven
Safe toward my love and honor,
Has infolded a bright lover
How noble in admission,  
The author of lust affection!  
How infinite in faculty,  
The mystery of loyalty!

Expressing my full gratitude  
Having ignored the solitude  
In desire to heaven’s breathe  
Sealed with kiss and happiness

Csilla Takacs, Hungry,  
csillako74@yahoo.com

(Email) … Mr. Poet, I am terrible at writing. My messages to you will not be eloquent, or pretty, but they will be honest and sincere. You seem to be a great person, a loving soul, with great ideas as a poet. I read your verses and I think we have much in common, and I am keen to share ideas with you.

Katherine Katie, USA,  
kt51685@yahoo.com

(On Line comments) … Dear friend! I read few of your poems. I am inspired and appreciate the translation of Alley Boling. This is just a fast opinion. Please don’t mind. I will do more comments when read the whole book.

Doris J. Pinard, US, dorisjp40@yahoo.com

Bridging the Gap  
Khyber.ORG
(Email) … I am busy with new project of teaching, but never forget about surfing on net to read good short stories and poems as I hunt your book and found it interesting. Thanks, Alley Boling and Afzal Shauq for such a great poetry.

Noel, US, superduckub@yahoo.com

(On Line Comments) … No way to run as you wish in your poems, but life is like that it’s going on. Any way, love your feelings Mr. Afzal.

David Delly, North Carolina, US, David_delly@gmail.com

(Email) … Dear Afzal and Alley, I read your poems as I promised. Love your poetry. It is interesting for me, because I like good poetry but I am not good in English. So sorry but my words only here if can make you happy. I respect you both for great job.

Monica Cantillo, Lecturer, Colombia University, Colombia, juanitacantillo@yahoo.com
(On Line comments) … No way to ignore the facts, Alley Boling has proved it and made your poems famous in globe. I appreciate her.

Nenny Maryam, Manila, Philippines, nennettenstc@yahoo.com

(On Line Comments) … Like few poems in ‘Twist of Fates’ and I think, credit goes to the translator who did them in interesting way.

Jesus Ticona, Film-Maker and Writer, JTicona79@hotmail.com

(On Line comments) … I am still reading your book Mr. Afzal. I’ll write more on it but for the time, let me say. I am impressed of your poetry. That is all.

Monica Jess, A Student from Georgia, monica_jess_01@yahoo.com

(On Line Comments) … Interesting poetry, but few poems are based on anti humanity. Its ok, poems are ok as a whole.

Manisha Silval, Nepal, manisha_mausam@yahoo.com
(On Line comments) … I am basically a painter and an artist but love to read good poetry and I think, your poems are heart catchy.

Veronica Martino, Argentina, www.veronicaspainting.com

(Email) … I am a student, but good poems attract me and the poetry of Twist of Fates is amazing and new to me. Good luck Alley Boling and Mr. Shauq.

Juli Uloma, Nigeria, jelijeli102@yahoo.com

(Email) … Like the poems ‘Walking dead’ and ‘It was you’. Go on Poet.

Claudia, Short Storywriter, USA

(On Line Comments) … So impressive and attracting ideas. Hmmm like it.

Dr. Sylvia, Rome, Italy

(Online Comments) … Thanks for giving me the link to read the ‘Twist of Fates’. Me, my family and friends like poems, especially ‘The Nature of Humans’ and ‘Sign of Love’.

Sakina Shaikh, India, gri_n_g30@yahoo.com

Bridging the Gap Khyber.ORG
(On Line Comments) … Sorry for my bad English but I would say that I enjoying your poems a lot. I am artist, and hope you will also visit my site, I studied at the Pompeu Fabra University. I was introduced first time in Medial and Digital Art, and with Gabriel Brncic.

Teresa Carrasco, Madrid, Spain
trs_carrasco@yahoo.com

(On Line Comments) … Great poems indeed. I promise, I will let my friends and family to read your poetry too. I am really inspired of your poems. Thank You very much for sending me a copy of book free of cost.

Maya Khan, Multan Road, Lahore, Pakistan

(On Line Comments) … Wish if I could write like you and Alley Boling do. Really like and love to read your poems.

Simona, Romania,
minosy_mino@yahoo.com

(Email) … No you cannot ignore ‘Twists of Fates’, it grabs, rekindles and provokes your thoughts and emotions at the same time. Inspires you to action and to listen to that voice we all know so well.

Anne Mwangi, Nairobi, Kenya
annemwangig@yahoo.co.uk

Bridging the Gap
Some New Poems of
Afzal Shauq
SOME NEW POEMS OF AFZAL SHAUQ

Nazish Zafar

‘Twist of Fates’ is only a beginning of introduction of Afzal Shauq to the readers of English language, his later works in Pashto are being translated. I too had the pleasure of translating some of his poems into English.. those he had written during my research on his works. I have included these translations in this book to the delight of readers.

Like all his poetry, these poems too are saturated with originality and uniqueness of ideas.

Man was doomed to constantly bear the sweet enmity and guised hostility of Satan. Sons of Adam fail to learn anything from the mistake of their father and succumb to his evil designs. Afzal Shauq shares the grief of Adam at his defeat at hands of Satan. The villainy of Satan against man is an exhausted idea in literature, still the approach of the poet involving a fine pictorial quality, brings a fresh life to this idea. This poem of Shauq, although a short one, has quality of an epic in it, with grandeur of theme and characters. Shauq made shrieks of a wounded Adam almost audible.
Poem No. 1; Satan Wins

He beheld
his uncountable children
in front of him
as Adam woke from his sound sleep
he felt like
bowing down to earth
in gratitude
for the pride
of having borne them all

But this act of humility
was soon checked
by a roar of satanic laugh
a sound of bitter mock
tearing his ears apart
awe struck...

Adam turned around
and his eyes found
none
but progeny of his sons
Habil and Kabil
to his disbelief
carrying the children of Satan
on their shoulders
Adam
dismayed
shed his pride
that very moment
and looked at the skies
with torn eyes
as a sigh escaped his gasped lips

He surrendered
accepted his defeat
at the hands of
his eternal enemy
Satan..

God being silent witness to that

From Afzal Shauq’s Pashto Poem ‘Da Abaitan Barey’, Translated by Nazish Zafar

Since men shedding away, the honor of being created in God's nature, preferred tutelage of evil forces, the tasks of Satan were made even easier for him. Man followed his footsteps, indulged in debauchery of sin, he himself became Satan incarnate.
Poem No. 2; Devils of New Era

Since
men in modern times
had armed themselves
against the evil
and
had stepped in
the field of battle,
instead of
cutting the necks of
some targeted enemy
they were stoning mirrors
for the Evil
the devilish culprit
was a face
none other
than that of men

Afzal Shauq’s Pashto Poem ‘Shaitan’, translated
By Nazish Zafar

Afzal Shauq at times wants to escape his sensitivity that keeps him under constant pain of awareness. He wonders how people around him could remain unaffected while he suffered the pain of knowing and feeling human predicaments all the time. The following poem is once again
an open-ended question, a peculiar style of the poet that is always very thought provoking.

**Poem No.3; Me or the World?**

I wonder  
if people around me could escape  
by the hand of chance or by their own designs the pain of seeing things out of the circle of self interest

then why me a poet a traveler was doomed to see things in entirety of whole world with men in it

and then having to bear at my individuality an absence of me within my body
Shauq's encounters with Gods are always very interesting. He finds Him above him, around him and within him all at the same time. He like a spoiled child takes liberty of addressing HIM the way he pleases and putting all the questions in front of him without hesitation in sheer expression of love. Following few poems (No. 4, 5, 6 and 7) of his repartee with God, instantly strike the minds of readers and set them wondering of knowing the creator afresh.

Poem No.4; What to Name?

Oh Almighty Allah!!
You
the creator
and a face of my soul too
how on earth
I could imagine
your presence at a place
other than a mosque
and to my surprise be found
some where
in the heart of south east Asia’s
temples of Hindus
where an enchanting
but un shouldered face 
resembling you 
that I had been searching for 
since my soul came into being 
and since my first infant cry 
would itself be found 
preaching 
the Stone made gods…

\[
\text{Afzal Shauq’s Pashto Poem ‘Charta Kafir Khu Neh shwam? ’ translated by Nazish Zafar}
\]

Poem No.5; Almighty Allah

YOU  
being my true beloved  
live so deep in me  
and make such integral part of my soul

That  
whenever  
I praise your name  
I share the pride  
of being praised  
myself

\[
\text{Afzal Shauq’s Pashto Poem ‘Azima Khudaya’, translated by Nazish Zafar}
\]
Poem No.6; Question Mark

My faceless God!
the Greatest and Mighty of all!
you deserve all the pride
with this huge universe
at your command

then what on earth
I wonder
made you choose
my heart so little
as your abode

Afzal Shauq’s Pashto Poem ‘Raz Ao Ka Niaz?’
translated by Nazish Zafar

Poem No.7; Behind the Reality

When ever
I try to negate and suppress my inner self
reducing it to some petty level
in my own esteem

the door of my heart
is angrily knocked at
as if there is some one
unknown..
who makes it a point
that I realized
that I am
not the one as I think of me myself
but a being more than that
a soul
granted for my being
face of God

Afzal Shauq’s Pashto Poem ‘Fannah Fillah’,
translated by Nazish Zafar

Most striking of all still are the love poems. Poet's heart keen set on his beloved, wait for her steps to touch the ground of his heart. The following short, symbolic poem is a beautiful expression of a desiring heart in love. Poet adorns his heart with idols knowing that his beloved, an idealist, a seeker of perfection of beauty is likely to visit such a place.

Poem No.8; My Friend Hindu, I Muslim

I know
that neither I believe in
the re-birth of man
in some other lives
nor the life
itself is a tree to catch leaves
every new spring
But still
my Muslim heart like a temple
keeps the idols of different Bagwans
for the sake of a hope
that you being the worshiper
may visit it some day

Afzal Shauq’s Pashto Poem ‘Yar Mi Hindo ..
Zeh Musalman Yam’ translated by Nazish Zafar

As lover he makes a pleasant amalgam of seriousness and frolic of whole affair. The emotional thrill is often stated with the calm of a stoic. He surrenders his soul to the will of his beloved.

The following poem is replete with a firm belief in the power of true love. He permits his beloved to leave him but has a faith that they still are inseparables as the souls have joined up as one. The manner of addressing the beloved ironically combines a sense of indifference and emotion of deep love, in a very interesting way.

Poem No.9; To You!

Honey ..!!
when ever
you wish to detach from me,
Just go on
trample my neck
under your feet
and pull my name
along with the soul,
you are attached with

Afzal Shauq’s Pashto Poem ‘Sta Pa Nameh’
translated by Nazish Zafar

‘Off Line Message’ is a poem with a very modern approach involving the most modern means of communication. Not only the subject involved but the very style of the poem qualifies it as representative of new dimensions in poetry.

Poem No.10; Offline Message

Hey you...!
You know the one
who is supposed to be
your second half,

How come?
I asked the one
who was faceless
even to herself
But
it was her
who kept emphasizing
these same words
with dream like
sweet echo ..
and when
the very next morning
I got up
with some mixed feelings

The first thing
I saw in the mirror was
a strange
but very pretty girl,
who kept drawing her facial features
with the creases of
my time worn hands
While
the second thing
which has
trapped me
in a series of thoughts..
was the same
dreamy sentence

Which was amazingly
left by that very same HER

Bridging the Gap
Afzal Shauq’s Pashto Poem ‘Off Line Message’
translated by Nazish Zafar

Afzal Shauq, in the following poem claims that if he had known the price he will have to pay in his search of an ideal face, he might have given up his efforts. But I believe souls like his are destined and designed to wander in the desert of this life to find drops of water and when they fail at finding some, they'll attempt at discovering the seeds of rain...to be sown... and wait for fruition... they would be doomed to dive deep into the most perilous of oceans and cull for themselves priceless pearls... even if they were told the risks of losing their own self...in the way.

Afzal Shauq would complain of pain he endured at the hands of this materialistic world, for it would go unaware of a sensitive heart's desires. But he never exhibits a sense of ennui at this indifference. He finds himself deeply concerned with life and men around him.

So instead of feeling detached he attempts at giving vent to his disappointment not without a hope of being heard some day.
Poem No.11; Face for Sale

If only
by some chance
I had an idea
that I will lose my own face one day
in search of an ideal face

I would have never
displayed my being
in the show room
of this material world
for sale

Afzal Shauq’s Pashto Poem ‘Bazari Sehra’
translated by Nazish Zafar

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