Dr. Sher Zaman Taizi

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Khurshid Iqbal Khattak is the son of Abdul Qudus (advocate High Court, Peshawar). Born in April 1968, at Jalozai, District Nowshera, Khurshid Iqbal went on to do his MA in Political Science, LL.B and LL.M in England. His works include 

د کانی اونسکی; a collection of short stories published in 1998, 

ش تائفی ناولونه; a play, 

د تائفی ناولونه مزلونه; a critique on Dr. Sher Zaman’s works, 

د کودر گاره; his poetry collection, Pakhto literary essays, book on international relations, various essays on Islamic law, and Dr. Sher Zaman Taizai’s biography.
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Chapter 1

Prologue

It was the best of times at the age of fourteen when the hidden poet in me opened his eyes. Having kept him in the cave of secrecy for about one year, my elder brother detected him and he, being a highly frank and open minded man by nature, drew out that poet in the courtyard of our house. I apprehended snubbing from my father. But he became very happy and took me to the office of the Kamil Pakhto Adabi Jirga, situated at Ghazi Market, Pabbi. Fortunately, a mushaira was in progress at that time. Dr. Sher Zaman Taizi, Qamar Zaman Qamar Taizi, Late Farehan Shaida Baba, Sheeirn Khan Sharbat, Husnul Maab Kakakhel (may their souls rest in peace) and other local poets were present there. I read my Ghazal and won applause. Later on, I realized my appreciation was for the sake of encouragement only. My father who used to call Lala "elder brother" to Dr. Sher Zaman Taizi told him, "from today I devote my this son to Pakhto". The sitting poets greatly appreciated the remarks of my father.

Since those epoch-making moments till this day Dr. Sher Zaman Taizi became my Kakajee and tutor; and I have been obeying that parental order much above my personal creative zeal, to irrigate the sinuous rills of Pakhto literature. During the last more than fifteen years, I have learnt so much from the alma mater of my this ingenuous uncle teacher that this one is my second published book, besides six unpublished.

Dr. Taizi was known to me even prior but in a highly mysterious way since my school days as a student of Eighth class, I had read the first few chapters of his novel "Amanat" but couldn't inch forward due to fearsome scenes portrayed therein. After having admitted to his tutorship, the fear of reading Amanat ran away from my heart but the mysteries of his personality got entangled and entangled as the time passed. Despite the fact that I remained in close proximity with him, I have found it often difficult and some times impossible to excavate something out of his personal life as well as his intellectual beliefs and school of thought from his mute personality. If you ask me why ? I would say, he is every inch an intelligence Officer ; he never wears his heart on his sleeves ! When the Pakistan Study Centre, University of Peshawar, send a letter to me to write a profile of Dr. Taizi, I found it difficult but keeping in view his longstanding relations of being my teacher and uncle, I accepted the challenge with interest and devotion.

My difficulties could be realized from the fact that only two reviews and two references on his famous novel Gul Khan in research works and one each on other four novels, were available to me while about his short stories, plays, translations, research on Afghanistan and criticism plus his personal life sketch, there was virtually nothing to be embanked upon.
Pakhtun intellectual has yet to give up mere verse-making and the literary tradition of Research and Criticism is still a dream in the current Pakhto literature. But in the negligible work that has been done so far, Dr Taizi has been ignored for the reasons best known to the scholars. So the need of literary evaluation of his works was felt by me.

In 1993, I carried out an exhaustive review of Amanat, the second novel of Dr. Taizi, which was published in two parts by monthly Pukhto magazine Khkula, Peshawar. Soon after that I wrote a short commentary on Gul Khan, his masterpiece novel. When his last novel "Wade Onesho" appeared in 1998, I critically reviewed it in detail in daily the Frontier Post, Peshawar. In this way, I developed interest to go ahead with the literary and critical appreciation of his works, particularly his novels. So in 1998, I switched on my work on "Da Taizi da Navaloono Tanqidi Jaiza" in Pakhto and completed it in January, 1999. Thus my own works provided me with a scaffold to write a profile of Dr. Taizi for Pakistan Studies Centre, University of Peshawar. Finally, when it was decided to convert it into a book shape, I had to expand upon some aspects of works and particularly his personal life. While I was trotting in the bulk of his personal files, I was astonished to see that my uncle teacher has kept almost complete record of his personal and academic life. However, I had to ignore some information for certain reasons.

It was also deemed pertinent to interview some of the nearest and dearest friends of Dr. Taizi. I met Qamar Zaman Qamar Taizi, elder brother of Dr. Taizi, a Pakhto poet, Haji Ghazi Khan and Azizullah Khan, both elders of Taizi tribe in Pabbi. I am highly indebted to them. S. Fida Younas, former Charge de Affairs of Pakistan to Afghanistan, has a friendship cum brotherhood with Dr. Taizi for more than thirty years. They have jointly served in the Pak Embassy at Kabul. He was kind enough to provide me with some valuable information. My literary colleagues, Zahid-ur-Rehaman Saifi, Shafiq Ahmad Khattak and brothers, Javed Iqbal Khattak, Assistant Election Commissioner, Swat, and Jamshed Iqbal Khattak, M.A English, all jointly constituted an umbrella of help for me to pen the work. I am grateful to all of them. Prominent Pakhto writer, Dr. S. Chiragh Hussein Shah, the then DHO, who was my neighbour at Karak, not only took keen interest in my work by exchanging views with me regarding the art and life of Dr. Taizi but also encouraged me brotherly by galvanizing my spirit all the time. During the initial typing of the script, my youngest brother, Navid Danish, a student of 9th class, worked with me like my right hand while my wife, too, shared the responsibility of typing. My heartiest gratitude must go to Mr. Hazrat Rehman Advocate (High Court), of Timergarah, Dir who bestowed upon me his personal computer, without which the typing work would have been impossible. I am also greatly thankful to Dr. Fazal Rahim Marwat, who proposed my name to the Pakistan Study Centre, University of Peshawar, for writing a profile of Dr. Taizi, which ultimately sprang up into book form. Finally, I must pay salute to my dear father who guided and supervised me.

Oct.8,2000 KHURSHID IQBAL KHATTAK, KARAK

To my Lala
In early 60s I shifted from my village Jalozai to Pabbi and rented a house in the neighbourhood of Sher Zaman and Qamar Zaman; both the brothers were living together. From the very beginning, they extended to me their hands of brotherhood. Not only I myself but even my parents felt that we were not among strangers. The leading of prayers by my father Maulana Abdur Rashid at Makki Masjid, also became the source of our respect among the people. Although I developed contacts with many notables of Pabbi but my relations with the Taizi brothers always remained specially cordial, intimate and lasting. I and Sher Zaman Lala did our graduation the same year. Then on his advice, I did Pakhto Honours, for which he provided me due guidance. During his service career, Sher Zaman Taizi remained away from his village even then he not only send letters to me but endowed upon me gifts and presents from Chitral, Kabul, etc. He has really proved to be my Lala by working as the superb guide of my three elder sons Javed, Khurshid and Jamshed. When Khurshid joined Dr. SHER ZAMAN TAIZI, it became my dream that he should write his biography. It is a matter of great honour for me that my dream stood realized. Being his tutor, it is indeed the success of Dr. Sher Zaman Taizi. I pray for long life of Lala and more distinguished success of my sons in life. Like Dr. Allama M. Iqbal, I would like advise my posterity to earn name in poverty.

Jalozai. Oct, 8,2000

(ABDUL QUDUS) M.A; LLB; ADVOCATE, HIGH COURT, PESHAWAR.

Creation is an inherent want and quality vouchsafed by nation on the mankind that takes start from sexual urge amidst numerous emotions and thinks. Once bubbled in heart, it grows in imagination and blossoms into such a spring that spreads its fragrance to every nook and corner of the human world. Swimming across the deep blue Ocean of literary expression, the creator explores new islands of thoughts and discovers hidden faces of the earth. Hence, the world of literature creates and recreates life in elucidation of its essence and reflection of its whole. In Arabic, literature means expression of human attitude. It presents thought through language - thought means sense of imagination, opinion, reasoning and other human mind (Newman). It depicts a subject in such an attractive way that it quenches thirst of the man’s aesthetic sense (Hudson). It contains imagination and ideas of intelligent men and women, enjoyed by readers (Broke). Above all, it is that effort of the man through which he corrects his wrongs (Ammerson).

With the dawn of the 20th century, Rahat Zakheli (1884-1963) rose to herald the movement of renaissance, preservation and promotion of Pushto language and Pushtun culture. Rahat took the opportunity to introduce different genres, e.g. novel, short story etc. to Pushto for building a concrete base for Pushto language and garnish it with modern literary trends. Quite fortunately, the renaissance movement successfully inculcated protectionist and modernist tendencies in the rising generation of literary figures. Exceptionally intelligent and bold writers came forward to work on those genres.

Dr. Sher Zaman Taizi is one of those twinkling stars in the firmament of the contemporary literature.
Chapter 2

Life Sketch

Hailing from the Taizi family of Momand tribe, Sher Zaman was born in 1931 in the house of Kator Shah at Pabbi. The matriculation certificate dated the first of November 1948 that he had received from the University of Punjab carries the date of his birth as 3 November 1931. As Dr. Taizi thinks, there may be a difference of a few months on either side, but, definitely less than a year.

When the schoolmaster was not so much aboard in the vicinity of Pabbi, young Sher Zaman used to go to school like a thorough young lad with his satchel on his shoulders. At primary level, he was a student of the Islamia Arbia Primary School, Pabbi. Foundation of that school was the magnum opus of late Hazrat Bacha Khan and Sheikh-ul-Hind Hazrat Mahmood-ul-Hassan of Deoband.

Sher Zaman preferred to get education and did his matriculation from the National School, Pabbi.4 However, he could not continue study due to an inter-family strife, which later engulfed the entire town. The feud started just before the partition and continued for several years. It started with crossfire in the main bazaar between two parties on 5 June 1947, in which a powerful man lost his life. Khudai Khidmatgar Ghazi Khan was then the most influential and powerful man of the town with vast relationship across the province due to his political career. He was the munshi of the Ashraf Bus Service at Nowshera, when there were only two other service companies on the road with only a few buses. That was then the most lucrative and prestigious job. When Ghazi Khan stepped in the feud as an elder of the Taizi family, he sent Sher Zaman, after he took his matriculation examination in 1948, to hold the job. Sher Zaman performed his duty with due punctuality and boosted the business. That earned him jealousy of some old munshis who reported some fabulous stories, including his amorous relations with some anonymous girls, to his Uncle Ghazi Khan. Most of those stories were, in fact, based on his correspondence with some periodicals. Actually that was the start of his literary career, which was just romantic.

Once, Sher Zaman went on his own to a recruiting camp at Nowshera to join the Navy. He was rejected on medical grounds - some defect in his ears. On 15 January 1949, he joined the Army. In order to check desertion and indiscipline in the army, candidates were required to present their parents or guardians to furnish security for their conduct. Sher Zaman did not inform any one of his family, but took along an Afghan named Hazrat Shah, who was running vegetable business at Pabbi beside his father, as his guardian. Thus, he was recruited in the Royal Pakistan Army Service Corps (later re-designated as Pakistan Army Service Corps) as a clerk. The family, particularly his mother, did not approve it and tried for his discharge. But he himself preferred to stay on.
During his basic training at Chaklala (15 January 1949 to 7 March 1950), Sher Zaman was declared ‘marksman’, the highest degree of qualification of a shooter. He was leading his company during the training period and normally assisted his instructors in conducting the range practice of his company. He reminds that once their instructor (a Non Commissioned Officer) and he were conducting the exercise of hand grenade throw. They were inside a walled circle. Recruits came one by one to do the exercise. Sher Zaman handed the grenade to him and instructed him how to draw out its pin and throw it over the wall as far as possible. One recruit pulled out the pin and dropped the grenade inside the circle due to fear. The instructor dived instantly and threw it out. It was a matter of seconds that the three escaped the death.

Sher Zaman played volleyball and football. During the course of clerical training, he was selected for boxing. There was one young Lieutenant also. These two boxers exercised medium-pace run for at least six miles every morning. In the ring, Sher Zaman was normally on the offensive. He knocked down some of his rivals. But, later he resigned from the game for unspecified reason.

Sher Zaman served as Lance Naik Clerk in 1 A.T. Regiment from 1 April 1950 to 12 November 1953. He tried to learn horse riding but could not become a rider. He spent most of his time in this service in Azad Kashmir at Muzaffar Abad and in Titwal sector along the Kishan-Ganga River (later renamed as Neelam River). On 18 and 19 December 1951, he took, and passed, the Pakistan Army Map Reading Examination for Standard One at Muzaffar Abad. At the Centre, he performed the duty of acting head clerk for about two months, although a number of senior clerks had challenged that appointment and lodged protest with the Adjutant.

Then he was posted to a company where he was the lone clerk with a Major. During that period, he enjoyed chasing wild birds and animals, which was not, at all, free of risk. Once he had joined a small crowd of locals in pursuit of a black bear in a thicket in the heights of mountain. Then had to walk down all alone to the road in pitch dark late in the evening. How adventurous his nature was!

He spent sometime at Bannu and Kohat in that capacity and sometime at Peshawar in the regiment headquarters until his posting to the Frontier Intelligence Corps by the end of 1953.

After attending two months course of Intelligence, instead of three months, at Peshawar and Quetta, Sher Zaman secured third position and was posted on 12 November 1953 to the Frontier Intelligence Corps (FIC) as Havildar. The Assistant Director Intelligence (for Afghanistan) who allowed him to join the course after a lapse of one month was Major S. A. Rahman Kaka Khel, the famous playwright of Pushto and the author of "Neemgaray Khob" and "Tarboor Urf Zeba". The Intelligence sub-Bureau at Peshawar was then headed by a Deputy Director (Deputy Inspector General of Police). Sher Zaman attended the Junior Basic Intelligence Course Two in Karachi from 20 July 1964 to 10 September 1964 and declared "Above Average".

In the meantime, the government approved civilisation of FIC and the army ranks were converted into police ranks. Sher Zaman, then Havildar, was given the rank of Assistant Sub Inspector.

In 1967, the Government of Pakistan approved appointment of Sher Zaman as temporary Assistant in the Embassy of Pakistan at Kabul. He was allowed to join the Ministry at Islamabad as an Assistant in that Mission. Syed Fida Yunas, Assistant Director, was appointed Second Secretary. In fact, it was Syed Fida Yunas who had moved and pursued the case to take him along to Kabul. The post was actually ministerial and Sher Zaman was a field worker. Another point was that only a few months before the appointment, he received BA degree (for English only) to meet the basic qualification for the
post. Hence, that appointment aroused a storm in the office against him.

Before leaving for Kabul Syed Fida Yunas and Sher Zaman attended a weeklong briefing at the Intelligence School in Karachi. On 10 May 1967, he formally joined the Foreign Affairs Ministry and assumed the post of Assistant in the Consular Section of the Pakistan Embassy at Kabul on 29 June 1967.

On 26 July 1969, Sher Zaman received Tamgha-e-Difa with clasp Dir-Bajaur - 1960-62 (Medal with 6" Ribbon) for his services in Dir and Bajaur during 1961.

On completion of his tenure as Assistant, Sher Zaman was posted back to his parent office at Peshawar. However, before his departure, the Embassy received approval for his appointment as Persian translator in the office of the Press Attache for a period of four years. Although he had never been a student of Persian, yet he carried out the job. He accepted the offer on 7 October 1970. It is interesting to note that he received his MA Degree (Pahsto) No 3328 dated 23 September 1970 that could qualify his appointment. He joined the office of the Press Attache as Persian Translator on 27 October 1970.

In Kabul, Sher Zaman developed contacts with top leaders of the People Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA: Khalq and Parcham both factions), Jawanan-e-Musalman, Afghan Millat, Shula-e-Javed and other political and religious parties grown wild after promulgation of the 1964-Constitution. Besides, his literary taste and pursuit facilitated his fraternisation with some literary figures also.

Sher Zaman rejoined the office of the Deputy Director, Intelligence Bureau, Peshawar, on 2 November 1974. Here, he noted that some of his colleagues had turned the situation against him. Therefore, he got privilege leave from 14 November 1974 to 13 March 1975 and the leave pending retirement (LPR). Thus, he quit the service as Sub Inspector with a meagre pension on 1 February 1977.

For almost one year, Sher Zaman was jobless - the most difficult time of his life as being head of the family, he was the lone bread-earner. Then, through the courtesy of a friend he was appointed as manager of a leather factory. He was well set and quite intimate with his employers, when he received a call from Syed Fida Yunas, his old officer, friend and benefactor, to join the Commissionerate for the Afghan Refugees (CAR) as Liaison Officer. CAR notified the sanction of the Chief Secretary to the Government of NWFP as regards the re-employment of Sher Zaman Khan as Liaison Officer in Grade-16 in the Afghan Refugees Commissionerate, NWFP, Peshawar, for a period of one year viz. from 1-4-1979 to 31-3-80. His post was upgraded to Chief Liaison Officer in grade 17 with effect from 1 March 1980. CAR was established to look after the Afghan refugees migrating to Pakistan in the wake of the Saur Revolution. It was opened in the Provincial Secretariat on 1 April 1979 with Sher Mohammad Khan Commissioner, Syed Fida Yunas Additional Commissioner and Sher Zaman Ghamzhan Liaison Officer. Sher Mohammad Khan, cousin of Dost Mohammad Khan Kamil, was also known to them, when all the three were in the Pakistan Embassy at Kabul for quite some time.

When UNHCR opened its office in Peshawar in 1980, its first head Robin MacAlpine invited Sher Zaman, and he joined UNHCR as Liaison Officer. In response to his formal application forwarded by CAR, Robin MacAlpine, as Chief, UNHCR Peshawar, informed CAR that they had received the sanction from their headquarters in connection with his (Sher Zaman) appointment and accordingly he was invited to take up that appointment at his earliest convenience. On 1 May 1980, Sher Zaman joined UNHCR as Liaison Officer. This is how the luck favoured him. It was astonishing to note that Sher Zaman Ghamzhan held the office of Protection in UNHCR for almost eight years, although he had never studied law. This job needs International Officer with a degree of International Law at least. Later, his designation was changed to Territorial Officer. In that capacity, he toured the length and breadth of the province and
tribal belt to monitor supply of aids to refugees. In the last, he was given the charge of Kurram, North and South Waziristan - then considered the most dangerous areas due to frequent landmine blast in Kurram agency and bombardment by Afghan bombers along the border. He has many stories of his experience in this field, but he does not like to bring them to record. On attaining the age of sixty, Dr. Sher Zaman Taizi retired from UNHCR on 30 November 1991. During his service in UNHCR, Sher Zaman Ghamzhan received Nobel Peace Prize Certificate for 1981. The next day, he joined daily the Frontier Post, Peshawar, as Assistant Editor.

While Islamia Primary School was the first and National High School, Pabbi, was the last alma mater of Sher Zaman’s regular studies, he did not throw away books from his hand. During the arduous days of tough and challenging service, he kept the time by forelock to keep up his academic studies privately. In June 1965, he took examination of Honours in Pushto under registered No. 115-B/Pa-65 and secured second division. In October 1965, he appeared in the supplementary intermediate examination held under the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Peshawar, for English only and secured 110 out of 200 marks. On 14 July 1966, he was registered as a student of the University of Peshawar against number 66-P-5292. He took BA annual examination under roll number 592 for English only and secured 107 out of 200 marks. In 1970, he obtained MA Pushto Degree in the second class from the Peshawar University under roll number 1705. But he wanted to drink deep from the fountain of knowledge.

From the Area Study Centre (Central Asia), University of Peshawar, Sher Zaman Taizi received Ph.D. in "Central Asian Studies" in 1989. He enrolment number was five. Astonishingly, he wrote thesis on "Afghanistan - A Political Analysis of the Saur Revolution - 1078-86", although he was known henceforth as a Pushto poet and writer. Having remarkable insight in the Afghan politics, Dr. Sher Zaman Taizi is considered an authority on the Afghan Affairs.

Dr. Taizi did not collect certificates and degrees to make his career in the service or any other material gains, but to quench his own thirst of knowledge. While developing his academic career, Dr. Taizi continued his works in various fields of literature, and made marvellous contributions in quantity as well as in quality to Pushto literature. Beside, he contributions to the history of Afghanistan are likely tremendous and valuable.

Dr. Sher Zaman Taizi has earned recognition at international level as well. The Harvard University, USA, included his name as "Taizi, Sher Zaman" on page '39 of 45' in the Working List of Scholars in Central Asian Studies. There are only two other names from Peshawar, Dr. Fazal-ur-Rahim Marwat and Dr. Sarfaraz Khan. It was last updated September 23, 1999. The cover note says; "This is a Working List of Scholars of Central Asia, which is being used in the process of gathering data for the revised edition of the Guide as Scholars of Central Asia. The paper Guide will be available in early December of 1999. Eventually, this information will also be available in an on-line edition of the Guide to Scholars, which will allow flexible searching of database which holds information on the great majority of scholars working in this field world wide."

Dr. Sher Zaman Taizi worked hard with the Frontier Post for about four years. He prepared, all alone, a full weekly page of the daily on Pushto literature in which he profusely made use terms and references of English literature on the whole, beside translating Pushto literature into English. Thus, he made a chapter, rather a history, of Pushto literature in English, which, of course, need subject-wise sorting and publication for future generation. Pakistan Study Centre, Peshawar University, has done a good job to have placed on record a worthwhile thesis for MA on this page submitted by one of its candidates - Inam. The daily gained added much popularity for this page not only in Pukhtunkhwa, but also in foreign
missions at Islamabad and Kabul, which found rich material on the culture of Pukhtuns. However, there was some pressure on the management from a tiny group of anti-Pushto elements, which received backing of the Chief Reporter Qaisar Butt. At last, Dr. Taizi was forced to quit the job in protest against the extremely callous attitude of the management.

On 1 April 1996, Dr. Taizi got the post of editor of the Cartoon magazine - New Home, New Life - of the BBC Afghan Education Drama Project at Peshawar, headed by John Butt. The magazine was published in two separate editions, one in English and Pushto and the other in English and Dari (Persian). The Project was sponsored by a number of UN agencies and NGOs, including BBC World Service, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNIFEM, ICRC, WHO, UNHCR, UNDP, UNOPS and MCPA. The post was abolished in May 1997. Since then Dr. Taizi has been at home.

Sher Zaman was Ghamzhan before his Ph.D. Now, his nom de plume is Taizi. Two of his young sons, Zaman Khan died at the age of 15 in 1981 and Aimal Khan passed away at 12 in 1990. Many relatives and some nearest friends prevailed upon him to change his pen name Ghamzhan. Hence, he adopted Taizi as his pen name, although he is still popular as Ghamzhan. He has also contributed some valuable articles to press under the cover name of Sheenze. Sheen-Ze is composed of two Pushto alphabets, which, in this case, make abbreviation of Sher Zaman. This created some confusion and curiosity for scholars who took it a name but did not know about the author.

Taizi is the famous family of Pabbi with a heroic history of its own. One of the grand fathers of Dr. Taizi, Habibullah Khan, accompanied four Sikhs to Peshawar. The Sikh mercenaries had made it a practice to force any one coming across to carry their baggage with them. When the party reached the Bara River, Tarnab, Habibullah Baba stood for the prayer. The Sikhs laughed at his religious duty. After the prayer, he managed to take out a sword from the sheath of a Sikh and attacked them. All the four Sikhs fell and died. Habibullah Baba also received injuries. But, he took the way towards Cherat instead of his own village in order to save his family from the wrath. On the way, he embraced martyrdom by succumbing to his injuries near village Spin Khak, where he was laid to rest. Habibullah Baba became a legendary figure in the village. The Sikhs pressed hard for the revenge but after that episode, the people had gathered courage to stand against them. When Hari Singh Nalwa was killed at Jamrud, no Sikh was then ready to remain in Peshawar.
Chapter 3
Incidents and accidents

Sher Zaman Taizi has met several incidents and accidents of which, he still remembers a few. In his childhood, Sher Zaman met survived at least two incidents that he remembers. Once, he had fallen from the top of a tall tree in a water channel. His right ribs received severe impact, but he did not go to bed. On another occasion, he had jumped in ashes of dung cakes left by an ironsmith after he had just done his work. The ashes did not show any sign of life, but they were still fresh. Both feet of Sher Zaman were burnt. He could not even stand for a few days. There was no competent allopathic or homeopathic service in the village. His feet were washed regularly with goat milk.

For over two years (1958-61), Sher Zaman Ghazan stayed at a small border village, Arandu, in Chitral. He used to go out, in company of a friend or two, for hunting or fishing. One day, he was looking for partridges in a thicket, when a black bird dived like a bullet, clinched a snake in its paw from the ground and flew away. It was so close to the feet of Sher Zaman, that he felt the touch of the bird.

In 1961, Sher Zaman, when he was staying at Munda, had joined the company of Assistant Political Agent to a lunch hosted by a tribal Malik at Kulala (Utman Khel area of Bajaur). On return, rivals of the host opened fire on the party. For almost ten minutes the party was under fire in the open before it entered a narrow dale to find a cover. Dr. Taizi says that it was raining and they could not notice where the bullets hit the ground. But many bullets had just missed the targets. On another occasion, he was on leave, when two relative families opened fire late in the evening against each other. Ghazi Khan and some other people including Sher Zaman rushed to the sport. There was a big crowd on the roadside. Only Ghazi Khan and Sher Zaman walked in between the two parties. It was pitch dark. They shouted to close the fire. From both sides, they received warning to go back. But they did not retrace their steps. At last, the fire stopped. And then they saw that there were only two other men, Noor Khan and Hakeem Khan, who had entered the scene from the opposite direction to stop the fire. On the third occasion, a bullet hit the car of Dr Taizi somewhere in the outskirts of Peshawar. The hole was very close to the rear tyre. His wife and some children were also travelling with him. He did not give any impression and continued to drive. At home, he saw the hole, but did not mention it to his wife.

Sometime, in 1981-82, he had fallen from his speedy motorcycle near Sardar Garhi, Peshawar, and got injuries. On another occasion, he and his elder brother Qamar Zaman Qamar Taizi had fallen from the motorcycle late in the evening. Sher Zaman did not feel any shock but Qamar Taizi was badly injured. Fortunately, he received timely treatment and survived. In 1994-95, Dr. Taizi, having taken
some sedative drugs, was driving fast when he crashed his car against the retaining wall of a bridge at a distance of about two kilometres away from his town. The car was battered beyond recognition. He survived, because he was still in state of tranquillity and did not feel pains. However, he could not leave the bed for about two months. Incidents and accidents apart, he had come at least three times under fire.

In 1997, Dr. Sher Zaman Taizi and his wife performed Haj and in 1999 both performed umra. The group during the Haj period, to which they were attached, included Haji Syed Rahimullah Bacha a Spiritual Guide of Aza Khel, Muslim Khan, Bahram Khan and Waqif Shah of Khuderzai and Zeban Shah of Pabbi. Besides, Dr. Taizi, Muslim Khan and Waqif Shah had also taken their wives. On the day, when Hajis moved to Mina, they left women in the camp and went out for orientation. They returned in the afternoon and were preparing for the prayer, when the fire broke out. The group split into two, but they could manage to escape. That fire had killed about 300 people. On return, they found that their own camp had been completely gutted. On return from Mina, the group moved immediately after the afternoon prayer in somewhat organised form to stone jumrat before going to the Holy Ka’ba. One group of men was going ahead and two men, Dr. Taizi and Waqif Shah, were in the rear to provide cover to the women who had been placed in the middle. They could push through their way up to the barrier, which was then closed. There was a surging crowd of millions behind. When the barrier bar was lifted and the crowd moved two faltering women of the group shouted for rescue. Dr. Taizi and Waqif Shah tried to stand for a while to withhold the movement and pressure from behind to let those women get up. In the meantime, their wives stumbled down. They stooped over them until they could rise. Dr. Taizi could not see, but his wife told him that some one called her Hamshira! (Sister) stretched his hand and pulled her out. She also told that there were some people on the ground, which had caused their fall. However, Dr. Taizi himself had some difficulty, with a minor injury on his right leg, in keeping his balance before they were out of the crowd. After stoning jumrat, they rejoined Muslim Khan and his wife. There was no clue of other colleagues. While relaxing for sometime, they saw ambulances and heard screaming sirens.
Chapter 4

Literary activities

In non-literary society and unfavourable circumstances, Sher Zaman Ghamzhan made a way to the bright end of the world of literature through his busy, turbulent and risky life. He proved to be the man of crisis not only in materialistic life but also in the literary life. The tent opened toward the river, glittering in moonlight while skirting around the highland that hid the city from the camp. The fragrant zephyr with imaginary music created by the ecstatic water striking the haughty stones tantalised the dormant talents of Sher Zaman. He was not conscious about his literary taste when he passed the time in drawing of scenery, sketches and portraits, or writing some thing during the night duty when he had nothing to do but look at the telephone set in such a romantic atmosphere of Muzaffar Abad. He used to visit the city and the shrine of Sain Sahili Sarkar at Domel, the other end of the city. Once, he wrote a letter to a newspaper published from Rawalpindi, criticising the rituals at the shrine. The letter was published prominently. A young Syed, who was already known to him, mentioned that they did not have the courage to criticise the mendicants of the shrine, but his letter was very much appreciated by the enlightened people. However, he did not give it any importance, nor he kept copy of that letter.

In fact, Sher Zaman started his literary career at Tall, Dist Kohat (1954-58), when he listened to poetry of Mohammad Din Muqayyed. There was no other poet. Muqayyed was a poor man but a popular poet. The third person who joined their company was Shahwas Khan Shamsher. Spending sometime in the teashop of Aziz Khan, Sher Zaman, at last, proposed to form a sort of association. Hence, Pukhto Adabi Chaman came into being with these three figures. In fact, it was Sher Zaman Ghamzhan who was running the association. He could easily establish contacts with daily Anjam due to his prevailing intimacy with Ajmal Khattak. The daily was owned and published by Usman Azad from Karachi. He arranged publication its edition from Peshawar also. Here, Ajmal Khattak was assigned its editor. Mir Mehdi Shah Mehdi edited one page of Pushto for it. Within a short time, Pukhto Adabi Chaman Tall and Ghamzhan both were known in literary circles across Pukhtunkhwa. In those days the Intelligence Bureau conveyed a warning, through Assistant Director Major Mohammad Hussain Qaisrani, to Sher Zaman that he must not disclose his identity and should refrain from writing any thing against the government and its policies. Actually, that warning had no effect, because he had already introduced himself as Ghamzhan only. His real name and place of origin were almost obscure. Moreover, he was too young to know much about the policies. So, for a long time, he worked in obscurity. His verse and prose were published under the name of Ghamzhan.

After retirement, Sher Zaman Ghamzhan revived the Khushal Adabi Jirgah at Pabbi on 21 June 1979.
Initially, Azam Khan Azam of Kurvai, Pabbi area, had founded that Jirgah in late 1950s, which carried out bustling literary activities in the area. However, it faded away as illness of Azam worsened and he was shifted to Dadar Sanatorium for treatment. After his demise, the Jirgah could not stand long. The Jirgah was renamed as Kamil Pushto Adabi Jirgah, Pabo Seema, in 1982. Contributions rendered by Dost Mohammad Khan Kamil to Pushto literature and history are beyond measurement and expression in words. It was Dr. Taizi who proposed and pushed to rename the Jirgah. It may be noted that there were, at least, three other Jirgahs in the name of Khushal Khan Khattak. So, it was not in any way something derogatory to the great name of the Father of Pushto, Khushal Khan Khattak, but recognition of services of Dost Mohammad Khan Kamil who was the man who had worked hard for about thirty years to reveal almost all aspects of the political and literary careers of Khushal Khan Khattak in form of a comprehensive preface to the voluminous Divan of the Khan. He also reviewed Tarikh-e-Murassa (Jewel Studded History) compiled by Afzal Khan Khattak from the notes of his grandfather Khushal Khan Khattak with some addition. The note of Dost Mohammad Khan Kamil is almost double of the original text of the history. Kamil also highlighted the works of Rahman Baba with his scholastic and elaborate comments, beside other works in Pushto and English.

Pushto poets and students from adjoining villages used to come down to Pabbi and cluster around the towering personality of Dr. Taizi during monthly meetings and mushairas of the Jirgah. Dr. Taizi would speak gently and eloquently on any genre of literature during the meetings. He would face with cool mind volleys of questions from participants. Many would open their notebooks to take down points from the discussion. He maintains attachment with some literary associations such as Malgaree Leekwal, Sarhad Adabi Jirgah Peshawar (renamed Milli Adabi Malgaree), Rahman Adabi Jirgah Peshawar, Rahat Adabi Tolana Aza Khel, Pukhto Adabi Chaman Tall and the organising committee of the Chat Karma Baksheesh Award Swat.

Besides his participation in several literary meetings a month, Sher Zaman Ghamzhan gave due attention to his imaginative as well as research works. This is, probably, the main reason that mystifies his character and confuses writers and readers about his life. Some promising young writers have tried to write some notes on one aspect or the other of his life. It becomes very difficult to explore all aspects with convincing arguments. Thanks God, that Dr. Taizi keeps a good record of his life, and his books in different fields stand evidence to justify the mysterious activities of this versatile genius of the 20th century. For the sake of exploration of some aspects of the contributions of Dr. Taizi to literature as well as knowledge, his works have to be classified for discussion. Since, he is known in Pushto literature more for his novel, we start from here.
Chapter 5

Novels

Novel is a formidable mass, and it is so amorphous - no mountain in it to climb, it is most distinctly one of the moister areas of literature - irrigated by a hundred rills and occasionally degenerating into a swamp. Just as Professor Moulton has observed that "every play of Shakespeare, critically examined, turns out to be a microcosm of the author the creator the plot the Providential Scheme. We have to present literary evaluation of the novels of Dr. Taizi in the light of these statements.

Needless to say, novel was introduced in Pushto in the last quarter of the 19th century. It took start in form of translation. Two novels of Maulvi Nazir Ahmad were translated, one Mara’at-ul-Uroos by Mian Hasib Gul Kaka Khel under the title of Naqsh-e-Nagin and the other, Taubat-un-Nasoooh, by Mian Mohammad Yusuf. Syed Rahat Zakheli is known to have written the first imaginative novel Nateeja-e-Ishq.

But the time when Dr. Taizi rolled up his sleeves for writing novels, this genre was still quite in its infancy in Pushto. His (Gul Khan) was published sometime in 1969 (and not in 1967 as certain research scholars believe), because Maulana Fazal Manan of the University Book Agency (the publisher) and Sher Zaman Ghamzhan (the author, then in Kabul) exchanged a number of letter until April 1969 before its publication. By that time, we had only two novels worth the name, Peghla (1950) of Sahibzada Idrees and Mafroor (1963) of Said Rasul Rasa. Thus novel writing was quite a new trend in Pushto. Unfolding the short history of evolution of Pushto novel, Dr. Azam has put Dr. Taizi at third number among the great novelists - after Sahibzada Idrees and Said Rasul Rasa. He has also discussed the novels of Amir Hamza Khan Shinwari (1950s), but the fact is that both of those novels had not won any literary applause.

Before discussion on Gul Khan, it would be appropriate to put on record the background of its publication. As already explained, Sher Zaman Ghamzhan had received a warning from his parent department, Intelligence Bureau, to take utmost care in writing. An ordinary person might have thrown away his pen and papers to the wind for the bread. But at that young age, he proved to have guts and courage, rather his deep attachment with his mother language, that he continued his writing in prose as well as in verse. His published works clearly manifest that he had not taken any care about the warning. The first novel - Gul Khan - for publication, of which he received proper permission from the same department, presents the very philosophy of Pukhtunism.

The personal files of Dr. Taizi contain his application and approval thereof in this regard.
On 30 January 1967, he submitted an application to the Deputy Director of Intelligence seeking approval for publication of Gul Khan. The atmosphere was quite congenial. The Deputy Director was DIG Police Saghir Anwar, who was himself a man of literary taste with a background of his association with radio Pakistan. The Assistant Director (his immediate boss) was Syed Fida Yunas who later treated him not as a subordinate but as a brother. They still maintain such exemplary relations. The novel was given to Inspector Tehmas Khan (retired as DIG) for his comment and report. He also had literary taste and was quite sympathetic. His note, signed on 6 February 67, reads as:

As ordered by A.D.A. on 30th January 1967, I thoroughly studied the novel captioned 'GUL KHAN' written by A.S.I. Sher Zaman 'Ghamzhan' in Pushto and scrutinised it from all aspects.

This is the first venture of the writer who has built upon a very fine idea of the reformation of Pushtun life, encouraging some good ideas, discouraging the bad ones and laying emphasis and stresses on various customs and rites which are prevalent in the present day Pushtun community. I am hopeful that the reader of this book will be enlightened to a great extent and it will improve the Pukhtun society.

From security point of view as well as political or racial, there is nothing in this book which should ban its publication.

Submitted, please.

The Deputy Director endorsed the note on 18 February 1967 in his own handwriting as; "In view of the fact that it is a purely literary work, no sanction is required for its publication. I have no objection to its being published. Presumably, the matter has not alluded to or drawn inspiration from his association with this Organisation." And then Syed Fida Yunas returned the note to him with a brief note "You may now go ahead with the publication. All the best." The manuscript was then given to Maulana Fazal Manan of the University Book Agency, Peshawar, for publication.

With respect to matter and aim, Gul Khan highlights effectively true and wrong Pukhtunwali and draws a clear line between the educated and the illiterate Pukhtun. Being a novel of high standard by virtue of its simple but colourful rural background, attractive plot, lively characters and lovely scenic beauty, it is, undoubtedly, a valuable addition to Pushto literature within the straitjacket of Pushto novel.

Ibrahim Ataee, an Afghan scholar, has a different view. He criticises Gul Khan. Being highly impressed by another novel of Dr. Taizi, viz. OífjBißeA (Amanat) rattled by him as a masterpiece mainly due to his leftist ideology, Ataee vehemently accentuates that Taizi wants to affix the seal of bourgeois leadership on the proletariat subjugation and exaggerates the noble vision of the capitalist class. He further opines that the didactic element couched in Amanat is more dominating than in Gul Khan.

Ataee has levelled some literary criticism, e.g.:

• The sudden meeting between Mirza Ahmad Khan, the family of Gul Khan and Dr. Parvez looks improbably.

• The death of Gulab in metaphysical way of punishment; it would have been better to occur as a result of court verdict.

• The confession of Nadir Malik regarding his tacit participation in the murder of Gul Khan is also unbelievable.
• Changing the track of life by Mirza Ahmad Khan in the event of a dream too, appears unnatural.

However, in his final judgement, Ataee holds that despite all its pros and cons, the positive elements of Gul Khan are exceed. He adds that though it cannot win the status of a masterpiece, yet it contains enough room for research and analysis.

Dr. Azam has dwelt upon the characterisation of Gul Khan only as the requirement of his Ph.D. thesis. He opines that characterisation in Gul Khan has not got that much attention of Dr. Taizī. To him, Mirza Ahmad Khan, Nadir Khan Malik, Alam Khan, Zarina, Pashmina, Badrai, Gul Khan, Gulab and a few others are the most important characters; among them, the first three, and to some extent, the fourth one, are complete characters. I would disagree with him in this respect. In fact, Gul Khan and Gulab enjoy the pivotal roles. The tale of the novel whirls around them. Gul Khan is the symbol of good and Gulab of evil. The former is not only noble himself but also helps his master Ahmad Khan in bringing about a revolution in the social order on their side, whereas Gulab bedevils the entire society on their side. Similarly, Zarina is another representative character. She possesses laudable qualities of a young Pushtun girl. Her thoughts are mature and her behaviour is sound. Pashmina stands in sharp contrast to her. To sum up its message: it depicts the right and the wrong of the Pushtun society with a hope that the new generation would have to do a lot for national amelioration but with the instrument of education. Professor Preshan Khattak compares this novel with the works of Leo Tolstoy (Russian) and Charles Dickens (British), the topmost novelist of the world. Professor Taqweem-ul-Haq Kaka Khel appreciates that "the story of Gul Khan is a story of Pushto and in the environments of Pushto". He lauds the style of writing as beautiful, meaningful and artistic. According to Sher Shah Tarkhvi, President of Malgaree Leekwal and editor of monthly Khkula Peshawar, this novel might have been published in more than ten editions, but the publisher did not mention edition on any copy. He thinks that the publisher avoids the number of edition in order to dodge not only the income tax department but also to usurp right of the author. Pushto scholars consider it a novel of standard from every aspect. Dr. Taizi himself says that in Gul Khan, he lays emphasis on brushing aside the darkness of ignorance. The overall rating of Gul Khan is that it is a masterpiece.

The second novel of Dr. Taizi is Amanat. It was published in 1971. The central idea of this novel revolves around the class struggle. Motabar, the hero of the novel, takes up the gauntlet to clean the Aegean stable of class discrimination in which he succeeds brilliantly. From social theme in Gul Khan, Ghamzhan moved to ideological theorem in Amanat. Ibrahim Ataee terms this novel a masterpiece.

Mohammad Ibrahim Ataee compares Mamoonai of Said Rasul Rasa with Amanat of Ghamzhan. He says, Mamoonai is subject to romanticism and naturalism, while Amanat is found on realism by unveiling an exploitative aristocratic system. It inculcates the spirit of change in the people. But whether it is his criticism of Mamoonai or Gul Khan as against the appreciation of Amanat, both could not be believed and accepted due to the fact that he has lost much literary subjectivity to his ideological objectivity.

Amanat teaches us to build up a revolutionary society, which must stand above the class distinction, where peace and prosperity prevails on socialistic political foundation. However, it could be subjected to criticism on the point that how Motabar and Janana are living together without nikah (marriage bond), despite the fact that they are not in the prohibited degrees to each other. Dr. Taizi explains this in a single word - 'commitment'. However, the answer is not legally tenable because under Muslim personal law it is unwarranted, but it is a piece of literature with many favourable arguments. Under the heading of Intellect: The exercise of the mind: Creative thought: Imagination, some meanings,
e.g. ideality, conception, thought, imaginative exercise, flight of fancy, play of fancy, uncontrolled imagination, romance, fantasy, extravagaza, rhapsody, exaggeration etc. suitably stand in favour of the idea of Dr. Taizi.

A renowned Afghan poet and short story writer, Mohammad Siddique Psarlay, in his comment on "Da Amanat Khawand (The Trust Owner)", reminds the time when he knew nothing about the author but enjoyed reading of the novel that he had purchased several times in Kabul. He expresses his surprise as; "Apart from a limited number of real and experienced writers, many of those who have earned fame as writers by unfair means have not even reached that stage where this young artist stands. They have been introduced by invisible hands, whereas he has not yet been introduced duly." The novel was introduced by Habibullah Rafie in Aryana journal, Kabul, Dalv-Hoot 1350 AHS (Jan-Feb 1972) and by Zafar Khel (it is probably not the real name or penname) in daily Zeray published by Pukhto Tolana Kabul on 23 Hamal 1351 (12 April 1972). In the meantime, Information and Foreign Offices Islamabad raised objection over its circulation in Kabul. The Ambassador called for explanation from Sher Zaman Ghamzhan, who, in response, submitted copies of those introductory notes, published in government publications.

(Rahman Koroona) is the third novel of Ghamzhan and the first detective novel in Pushto as mentioned in the preface by Professor Afzal Raza. Dr. Azam has ignored both Amanat and Rahman Koroona but Ibrahim Atae did not miss them. He reviewed this novel also. In this comment, too, Atae has swerved from literary approach and bogged down himself in the Communist phraseology. He says that the story of the novel emerges from tribal feudalism and enters the fibre of urban bourgeoisie, which breathes with real evens in the presence of legal system. However, this novel is full of dramatic elements and thrilling actions. The culture of vagabonds has been depicted vividly in this novel. The story and purpose of the novel is not new; it pertains to the tussle arising out of wealth, land and woman - oriental disputes, but its detective touch is quite conspicuous. Barialay and Zarlakhta, the central characters, change their physical complexion, costumes and even way of life so as to defend themselves from their common enemy. As the story inches forward and intelligence officers start chasing them and their two colleagues, curiosity and suspense are created; the sea-saw which they play with the intelligence officers is also very impressive. It looks that Barialay and Maula Bakhsh are trained detectives.

Regarding (Ghunday), the fourth novel of Dr. Taizi, Kazi Sarwar comments; "The book Ghunday can be aptly described as a laudable literary-cum-social contribution in putting across what its eminent author had to say all that which to my mind was never said before in such a lucid style. It dramatically highlights the perpetual conflict raging between the forces of goodness and evil, beautiful and ugliness, truthfulness and falsehood in a society bedevilled by feudalism, exploitation, drug-nuisance and worst of all arrogance, contradiction, self-deception, conceit and fraudulent practice. The central idea of the novel Ghunday is a faithful and sincere interweaving of how satanically innocent souls are led astray leading to painful misery quite often total ruination."

"It is a pungent satire on lascivious great Khan whose pernicious machination and aims pave way to an impending danger to the peaceful social environment. The obscenity, which is being spread like jungle fire by a vindictive young dancing lass and her mother, has been narrated brilliantly. Ghunday, a main protagonist of the novel, is a mute character that interlinks both the sub plot and main plot. The philosophy of both the ageless poets - Rahman Baba and Khushal Baba - has been realistically infused into the main positive characters. These characters have been delicately coloured with heart sweeping fragrance of realism." The author superbly scans and boldly demonstrates causes, events and effects of
degradation of social values, which grow in the climate of compulsion of the need and moral digression of the wealth. He unfolds many heart-wrecking and pathetic events of debauchery of men of means in lucid and fluent style that sound credible and real. The subject is not new but the way it has been tackled refreshes it with quite new and unique shades that would hardly fade away from the mind the reader. Ghunday introduces a new facet of the mysterious world of intelligence, i.e. their venomous instruments of blackmailing enshrouded in moral cataclysm, always at work in the esoteric international network. Besides, its scenic beauty steals the sense. The reader feels to be moving about like a character of the novel in lush green high mountains where springs flow down in cataracts and fruits grow wild amidst tall trees and thick bushes. Dr. Taizi builds up the scene in such a way that makes a clear picture in the mind. As a master of pun, he has invented some compound words - about thirty in number - in this novel.

The latest, i.e. the fifth novel of Dr. Taizi is (Wade Onesho) i.e. the marriage that did not take place, hereinafter mentioned in abbreviated form as Wons. Before reviewing this novel, it would be better to trace back the origin of this particular genre.

Many categories of the novel became recognisable in the 18th century, including the didactic novel, in which theories of education and politics were expressed, and the Gothic novel, in which the element of horror is created by the use of supernatural phenomena. One of the most enduring genres in the English novel is the comedy of manners, which is concerned with the clash between characters formed by particular cultural and social conditions. Jane Austen is considered by many to be the unchallenged genius of the genre.

Encyclopaedia Britannica CD-97 Single-User Version describes Gothic novel as European Romantic, pseudomedieval fiction having a prevailing atmosphere of mystery and terror. Its heyday was the 1790s but it underwent frequent revivals in subsequent centuries. It is called Gothic because its imaginative impulse was drawn from medieval buildings and ruins. Such novels commonly used such settings as castles or monasteries equipped with subterranean passages, dark battlements, hidden panels and trapdoors. The vogue was initiated in England by Horace Walpole’s immensely successful Castle of Otranto (1765). His most respectable follower was Ann Radcliffe whose Mysteries of Udolpho (1794) and Italian (1797) are among the best examples of the genre. A more sensational type of Gothic romance exploiting horror and violence flourished in Germany and was introduced to England by Matthew Gregory Lewis with The Monk (1796). Other landmarks of Gothic fiction are William Beckford’s Oriental romance Vathek (1786) and Charles Robert Maturin’s story of an Irish Faust, Melmoth the Wanderer (1820). The classic horror stories Frankenstein (1818) by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley and Dracula (1897) by Abraham Stoker, known as Bram, are in the Gothic tradition but without the specifically Gothic trappings.

Dr. Sher Zaman Taizi has the credit of introduction the Gothic novel to Pushto, but without the specifically Gothic trappings as Frankenstein and Dracula. But, this novel differs from them also some other aspects. It is purely an imaginative work with living character of the dreadful Saidan Shah. Dracula was the Count of Transylvania who rises in the night after his death to prowl in search of a human prey and suck his/her blood as the vampire, and then goes to his coffin. In Frankenstein, Dr. Frankenstein creates a man from limbs cut from bodies of those people who had just expired. The limbs of different people do not reconcile in that single body and make the creature a monster who, at last, kills his creator. The tragic outcome of this novel is that the readers also killed Dr. Frankenstein and gave his name to his creature.

The romantic title Wade Onesho tells a horrendous and hair-raising story of magical, supernatural and
superstitious phobias. For this book, renowned cartoonist and artist Zahoor has drawn an excellent portrait to depict the devilish look of Saidan Shah. The most important and astonishing fact related to this novel is that it has been written within the longest span of twenty-four years. The preface written by Professor Afzal Raza bears the date of 23 March 1974 and that of Professor Preshan Khattak has been dated 1 October 1977. Dr. Taizi himself admits in his note - Gratitude - that he deemed it necessary to go through novels, short stories and other informative books, and also watched some films on the subject in search of mysterious aspects related to the world of black magic. He also collected some relevant news, comments and essays from dailies and periodicals that he could get, and listened to stories from those who believed in them. He adds that the more he piled up the material, the more the situation stiffened and got knotty. However, there are not only events in which Dr. Taizi was interested. He has also studied history, various cultures and geography of places to make a global itinerary for movements of the hero. The sum total is that this is a proper research work.

Professor Afzal Raza writes, "This book is strange in the sense that for the first time such details of magic, hypnotism and mesmerism have been put forward in Pushto. Dilating upon the crisis of social identity that has affected Saidan Shah, Preshan Khattak considers the work an eye-opener and suggests reformation of the rotten social order, as we know numerous educated people facing similar crisis and take the same way. But, he does not agree with portrayal of the wrong doings of Saidan Shah in Germany. However, he records his deep concern about the oppressed and agonised spirit of Zarpari.

The negative forces of the social order denounces Saidan Shah, a man of exceptional qualities, due to the fact that his father was a poor cobbler and that he had participated in the independence movement as a red shirts. For this very reason, he is rejected for many jobs and dismissed from few. His father affectionately advises him to be patient but under the burden of heavy shock, he kills his father, writes a letter wherein he confesses his guilt and runs away to Germany. There he spends the life of a vagabond for some time, but then finds a menial job in a hotel. Ultimately, a magic master, Dr. Hazel Hurtz, dupes him, takes him to his magical den and trains him there. After becoming a great magician himself, he comes back to his country with a view to liberating the soul of a Pushtun girl, Zarpari, from the evil spirit by way of magical incantation. But an intelligence detective operation is launched to arrest him. The operation ends with success but not according to the plan that had been prepared in a meticulous secret exercise by a small group of intelligence officers, headed by Haidar Zaman. Saidan Shah could not be arrested. He falls to see an amulet. The amulet is worn around the neck by a character Qabil Shah who himself does not know about it. Such is the complexity of suspense that Dr. Taizi has created masterly. The dream of this magical fool to marry Zarpari is, thus, smashed.

"The theorem of Dr. Taizi's novel under review is that the magic is a satanic occupation and as such it diminishes, rather fully washes away, the faith and its implication? Dr. Taizi condemns magic at numerous places in his novel as an anti-religious phenomenon. Religion is God given guide for the human community, hence invincible, whereas magic is an art based on mysterious power of imagination, superstition, ephemeron and concentration. When faith starts tumbling, magic, superstition, fetishism and animism push society into the narrow cul de sac of ignorance and waywardness. Where men of exceptional qualities like Saidan Shah go all perverted, the entire society feels dithered. The writer refers to the Holy Quran as the strongest force, which the art of magic can never face." The religious-type English writers use the cross to subdue to devil.

Another aspect of the novel is that of national integration. The character of Zarpari personifies the positive element of the Pushtun culture, whereas the evil spirit that has overtaken her body signifies
the tragedy of social injustice that leads to disintegration and political turbulence having befallen the Pushtun community for centuries.

Depiction of some original locations and names of characters apart, there are some relevant words, which have been defined and explained, e.g. necromancy, mesmerism, voodoo, zombie, carnival, etc. The very etymology with annotations of the words Munich, Rasputin, Trichmir, with meanings of local terms and phrases as kijasu and dangar can not be overlooked.

In Wons, the detective colour is very bright and arresting. Details of performance of intelligence agencies, the way they thrash out modalities of masterminding and executing an operation, courage and, above all, the alacrity of mind it requires, have been put before the reader unveiled with captivating power of speech.

Searching for such like literary works in English literature, the most thrilling one is The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, a drama written by Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593). Marlowe was reputedly a secret agent for the government. In 1593, he was denounced as a heretic. As described in his life sketch, Dr. Taizi was a member of the Intelligence Bureau for almost 23 years. He is a religious man but so liberal that even many of his admirers have doubts about his belief. He criticises the corrupt clergy also in Ghunday and Wons. In this research works (The Saur Revolution, being discussed latter) he has elaborated his idea about the religion. As the plays of Marlowe are characterised by beautiful, sonorous language and emotional vitality, so are novels of Dr. Taizi. Although a visible line can be drawn between the two but an assiduous study of Dr. Taizi’s novel evinces that is inclusive of national awakening and religious reformation as contrasted to Doctor Faustus, which is exclusively biographical in nature.

Commenting on Wons, Shafique Ahmad Khattak remarks that Dr. Taizi has paid heed to the caste system that prevails in the Pukhtun society. He adds that the trading class is treated like those in Hindu society. However, Ms Irum Iqbal reviewed the novel in Urdu having formed the opinion that the main subject is mysticism. She criticises some events and aspects of the work. For instance, why Saidan Shah kills Head Master Riaz, who had provided him with a job? One can answer this question from the text of the novel that Riaz had dismissed him from service for narrating a magical even in the classroom. But when she asks that if an evil spirit has been living for four hundred years, how can it dies, and that, too, so suddenly, we should give it some weight, if not to answer it! Similarly, she points out that the body of Rasputin was cremated, how its skull remained and Hezl Hurtz offered drinks to Saidan Shah in that!

E.M. Forster has an answer to these queries and many others. He recognises such elements as one of the aspects of novel under a technical name fantasy. Forster says, It implies the supernatural, but need not express it. Often it does express it? such as the introduction of a god, ghost, witch into ordinary life, or the introduction of ordinary men into no man’s land. Fantasy, Forster, maintains, asks us to pay something extra. In fact, the supernatural requires the reader to suspend his disbelief, which Miss Irum did not! As the Forsterian aspect of the novel, fantasy is at peak in Wons, where we see how and why a society, due to its soci-economic weakness, loses one of its genius members to the world of black magic.

Gul Khan is considered a masterpiece of Dr. Taizi in Pakistan whereas Amanat was declared as such in Afghanistan. I have reason to believe that Sons can also be graded as a masterpiece. Firstly, its canvass is highly extensive and the theme is greatly exhaustive, international politics and relations buttressed by appropriate historical testimony have found deep expression with literary embellishment. Secondly, it outcries for the long awaited social change in Pushtun society. Needless to say, it is social change, which bails out a nation from miseries and allows it into the domain of a civil society. Thirdly, it gives
an outline history of Pushtuns to plead its case for socio-economic prosperity and political solidarity. Fourthly, it emphasises the need for eradication of cast system prevailing in Pushtun society. Peoples like cobblers, carpenters, washermen, barbers, blacksmiths etc. are looked down upon, they are not respected. Pushtuns cannot make any progress unless this apartheid is done away with by granting due honour to these people. Last but not the least, it is a masterly commentary on the human psychology.

According to Professor Preshan Khattak, had such a novel been written in English or any other language, Ghamzhan would have earned the name as that of Dickens or Tolstoy. It is interesting to note that Ghamzhan expressed with profound confidence the later theories (of Leo Nikolayevich Tolstoy; 1928-1910) of ethics and morality recommended non-participation in an passive resistance to evil, in Gul Khan, when he was, probably, not yet 40, whereas the diction of the novel is as florid and fluent as of that of Charles Dickens.

In preface to David Copperfield, Charles Dickens disclosed that the said novel had been completed in two years, whereas Dr. Taizi completed his novel Wons in twenty four years. Dickens says, no one can ever believe this narrative in the reading more than I believed it in writing. The same impression can be gathered from the foreword to Wons, whereas in preface to Rahman Koroona, Sher Zaman Ghamzhan has elaborated this fact concretely. Again Sir Arthur Quiller elucidates, But in Pickwick, it hardly ever occurs and, therefore, to all happily fit persons the suspension of disbelief, to adopt and shift Coleridge's dictum from verse to prose. In Wons, too, we have to assume a temporary suspension of disbelief during its reading its reading to believe in the Phantasmagoria that the author has created with superb diction.

So far techniques are concerned, Dr. Taizi is the master of all aspects of novel. In the art of story telling, he knows that daily life is practically composed of two lives the life in time and the life by values. He is very scrupulous in sequence of time in story and emphasises values in characters. He superbly transplants characters by their creation and acclimatisation through understanding. Though he flattens people in novels but with strong moral fortissimo makes them capable of roundity, e.g. the ability of Kharo and Kontara (Amanat) to move up for defence of their Pushtun honour and Noor Jamala (Ghunday) when Karkana becomes an apotheosis for her. His plot construction contains essential element of mystery that deepens suspension, arouses intelligence and memory. But like others, his plot, too, fights losing battle with characters; consequently, the characters pull on their life and run out of his hands. For example, Haidar Zaman defeats the plot in Ghunday and enters Karketch (a play), and then Wons.

Prophecy is an accent in the novelist voice. In the opinion of Forster, prophecy demands two qualities: humility and suspension of sense of humour. While comparing two novelists George Eliot and Dostoyevsky, he says that the latter is a prophet and the former is a preacher. We can draw parallel lines of comparison between Mitya and Zeegrawar (Rahman Koroona) at the time of their execution, Saidan Shah (Wons) at the time of killing his father, Nadir Malik (Gul Khan) during his last days of life and Bawar Khan and his son at the time when they stand completely exposed to the society. These characters amply reveal the prophetic spirit of Dr. Taizi. In such an accent of his voice, we hear songs of Khushal and Rahman, with the message of national integrity and spiritual awakening.

A writer or an artist works primarily for his own time, great artists overstep their age to the mind of timeless humanity, such solitary spirits born out of due reason must wait until the whirligig of time brings in a temper of mind with which they are sympathetic. Without any exaggeration and cosmetics, this is true in case of Dr. Taizi. Prominent Afghan critic Mohammad Ibrahim Ataee says that he knows the art of novel writing. Similarly, another leading Afghan poet, writer, intellectual and researcher Habibullah Rafie recognises his status as such. His socio-religious revivalism in Wons and socio-political
prosperity in Gul Khan are ahead of time whilst socio-ethnic cataclysm in Ghunday, bitter traditional family feud in Rahman Koroona and class struggle in Amanat belong to contemporary realities of the society. Men like Dickens are valuable reformers; they have no notion of confining books to a library shelf. On the basis of the above discussion, Dr. Taizi is no less a writer than Dickens he is the Dickens of Pushto novels.
Chapter 6

Poetry

Pushtuns give much heed and importance to poetry. Dr. Sher Zaman Taizi has expressed his emotion and sense in poetry also. It may be noted that the poetry of Dr. Taizi has some strange aberration from traditional ways and styles that could hardly be explained. He does not exercise any sort of hypocrisy in expression of his ideas. Although, he follows figures of speech precisely, yet some pleasurable strangeness glitters in the lines.

So far the poetry of Dr. Taizi has appeared in two books; (Warsho, 1981) and (Soma, 1994).

Warsho has been divided into five parts. The first part contains poems on different subjects. In this part, somewhere he talks to the Holy Quran, sometime mourns the tragedy of Karbala, then addresses scientists and taunts them that they may be bring miracles but social inequalities also deserve not to be lost sight of. Some springtime thoughts, romantic ideas and appreciation of nature can be observed in poems like those of Lokhara, Da Pachae Khawand, Mahal, Shpelae, Guldasta and Sparlay. In the poem captioned 1957, he avails of the opportunity to review the war of independence launched a hundred years back against the British Raj in India. The same years, composed a poem on Haqqania at Akora Khattak, the famous seat of religious learning of Pukhtunkhwa. However, the most impressive poem in the first part is Sala (Counsel) - a blank verse. Its satire is gnawing and scathing, saying:

O Crazy, O lover of Pukhto!
If you want your language
Be respected and liked,
Join hands and kill it!
Call it what you like,
Murdered or martyred!
But, it must die.
Be buried with full honour!
Give alms and charity!
Build a comely concrete grave n it!
Don’t leave the graveside,
Chars and Bhang!
O Crazy! O lover of Pushto!
I offer you this counsel,
With all my best wishes

The British Broadcasting Corporation (Pushto Service) arranged the Frontier Caravan to have an extensive tour of Pukhtunkhwa and celebrate its 10th anniversary. Gordon Adam led the Caravan with some members of the Pushto Service including Gauhar Rahman Gauhar and Safia Haleem. On 16 February 1992, it entertained invitees with light refreshment and presentation of synopsis of the Pushto programme starting with the first announcement of Pushto Service followed by a presentations in different fields; news, comments, art and literature. In the field of literature, it had picked up a part of a poem of Dr Sher Zaman Taizi of the Frontier Post.

The participants included chief minister Mir Afzal Khan, Khan Abdul Wali Khan, Begum Wali Khan, Bashir Bilour, Fareed Toofan, Malik Nadir Khan Zakha Khel, Afrasiab Khattak, Afghan Consul Abdul Qayyum, some journalists, writers and poets. It was this poem (Counsel). BBC compensated Professor Sher Zaman Taizi

The second part of Warsho carries tributes to some literary and religious figures including Rahman Baba, Khushal Khan Khattak, Maulana Abdul Qadir and Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani. The selection of figures for poetry puts some light on the mode of thinking of Dr. Taizi, i.e. he is a Pukhtun Muslim. This is an ambiguous term which has two meanings, (a) the Muslim who is a Pukhtun, (b) the die-hard Muslim. The practical life of Dr. Taizi provides full justification to both the meanings.

The eulogy in respect of Khushal Khan Khattak, he says;

Beyond the stars, he rode the horse,
Neelab of his imagination knew no bounds,
He convinced the world of the taste of Pushto,
Introduced Pushtun across the globe.

It is an undeniable reality that Taizi has versified in a nutshell to highlight achievement of the Father of Pushto in political and literary fields.

Use of exceptional and rare similes evinces depth of knowledge of Dr. Taizi about the figures of speech with poetical acumen. He walks with the time and makes good use of scientific achievements in his prose and verse. Just consider the following line:

In search of beauty, in the Apollo of love,
I forget the start, what to say of the end.

Jens Enevoldsen has translated an ever-florescent line of Rahman Baba as:

There is no community,
Of the hermit and the Khan,
How should Aziz Khan agree
With Abdul Rahman!

This line symbolises Aziz Khan as the oppressive feudal lord. With reference to this line, Dr. Taizi denounces the prevailing class discrimination, as;
In the Garden of Love, grown by Rahman,
I forget every Aziz Khan of the world.

As many as 75 quatrains are included in the fourth part of Warsho. Among them are some metrical translation of some Rubayiat of Omar Khayam and some verses from Piam-e-Mashriq and Zaboor-e-Ajam of Allama Iqbal. The last part contains a versified travel account in which Dr. Taizi records memories of his travel from Kabul to Kandahar and Quetta and back to Kabul in 1968. With more than 120 lines, it introduces his other companions, historical references, natural relief and climatic condition with many other shades. It also discusses the rhyme scheme also. If I am not wrong, this is the only travel account in verse, although it is short.

Sher Shah Tarkhvi, editor of monthly Khkula (Pushto), Peshawar, has written a comprehensive comment on Warsho. He says, Warsho is the imaginative work in verse of that idea that has been given to Pushto literature by the invaluable assets in the name of Gul Khan, Rahman Koroona and Amanat and has multiplied resources of literature.

Professor Mohammad Nawaz Tair, then Director Pushto Academy, Peshawar, in his comment on Warsho for radio, says, Ghamzhan has developed a particular and rosy style that he maintains in prose as well as verse. He has a singular style of writing and particular mode of thinking. He writes ghazal as well as nazm. It seems that he is not only a good poet of conventional nazm, but his blank verse is also very forceful, worthwhile and tasty due to the subject matter and depth of thinking. It seems that Ghamzhan has more inclination towards reformation and mysticism, because his every nazm has a particular objective. Professor Tair is not satisfied with the standard of ghazal in Pushto. According to him, there are only a few poets who have earned fame and recognition in this field. However, he picks up Ghamzhan as an exceptional case whose ghazal is passionate with deep thought and elegant style. He comments on the versified travel account of Ghamzhan as: This poem has been composed in the background of historical events with many allusions to history. It refreshes the mind of the reader with past glory, replete with bright and admirable examples of sacrifices that our forefathers had offered for propagation and evolution of Islam.

When we turn the pages of Soma, we realise that, with the passage of time, the effulgence of poetical deviation and variation of Dr. Taizi culminate to romantic lyricism. That is the reason that Soma is an anthology of Ghazal, which is romantic by nature. This inverse trend makes him unusual and exceptional. In Soma, amorous feeling and thought run altitudinous.

The very name of Soma is a mystery. Prominent researcher Mohammad Parvesh Shaheen highlights the nature and history of Soma with conventional justification of its existence. He writes: this ancient religious plant is named in Sanskrit as Soma, in Avesta as Homa and in Pushto as asmania, barara, oman and bandakay. In Regved and Avesta, it has different definitions and appreciation. It is a holy and respectable plant from which alcoholic drug was extracted; synonym to rapture and delight. According to him, a lot of research has been conducted in this plant. Avesta shows that its birthplace is Swat. However, Dr. Taizi himself considers it a myth of the past, as he alluded to it in a line as,

Drunk with glories of the past,
Taizi searches Soma in mountains of Pukhtunkhwa.

Here he wishes peaceful and romantic atmosphere in Pukhtunkhwa as it has been described in the legend related to Soma. Ahmad Ali Kohzad as has recorded the legend:
During the time of Regved, the juice of hill plants was called Soma. According to traditions, a bird (eagle) had brought that from Sky, and it grew in mountains of Manjwan. Aryan women and girls used to collect its white or pale juice in moonlight in mountains, and mixed that with water, milk, butter and honey to make a delightful tonic of it. That was offered in the name of different deities. Mostly the people of noble class used that drink. Due to its substantial qualities of delight and rejuvenation, that plant was regarded as a Divine gift by Aryans and treated as a deity. That custom continued in the area now called Afghanistan until the end of Avestian era.

Encyclopaedia Britannica describes Soma as an unidentified plant, the juice of which was a fundamental offering of the Vedic sacrifices in ancient Indian cult worship. The stalks of the plant were pressed between stones, and the juice was filtered through sheep's wool and then mixed with water and milk. After first being offered as a libation to the gods, the remainder of the Soma was consumed by the priests and the sacrificer.

It was highly valued for its exhilarating, probably hallucinogenic, effect. The personified deity Soma was the "master of plants," the healer of disease, and the bestower of riches.

The Soma cult exhibits a number of similarities to the corresponding haoma cult of the ancient Iranians and is suggestive of shared beliefs among the ancient Indo-Europeans in a kind of elixir of the gods. Like haoma, the Soma plant grows in the mountains, but its true origin is believed to be heaven, whence it was brought to earth by an eagle. The pressing of Soma was associated with the fertilising rain, which makes possible all life and growth. In the post-Vedic classical period, Soma is identified with the moon, which wanes when Soma is drunk by the gods but which is periodically reborn.

Let us see and enjoy how Dr. Taizi appreciates different attractive colours of his beloved:

My heart along sustains your cruelties,
Who else can carry stones and sand in muslin sheet.
Listen to some couplets on the mole of the beloved:
Mole, an ambushed soldier in eyebrows,
Strikes on the plane of vision.
Mole between they two eyebrows,
Look like a Khattak dancing with two swords.

Then he lauds tall stature, blonde hair etc. as:

On her tall stature, fair cheeks, spreads the blond hair,
Or, embers glow on maple tree in the autumn.
Tighten braids of thy hair, lest it should awake,
Sleeping memories in the cradle of my heart.
Being a seasoned poet, he knows the art of pun.
Sweetheart, sweet is thy name, sweetens my mouth.
Sweat is my life that I hold up my breath.

Captivatingly, he conjures up the painful universe of a mad lover as:

Even the vast desert holds it breadth,
When a thorn twists in the food wound of the mad.
Chapter 7

Drama

Dr. Sher Zaman Taizi also tested his literary muscles as a playwright. Two of his serial plays, viz. Teendak and Karketch, and a few assorted plays have been telecast from Peshawar TV centre. Both the serial plays contain a true detective touch. He has not published these plays so far. In book form, we have his one play Gulpana.

Like other works of Dr. Taizi, Gulpana, too, is praiseworthy piece of good fiction. It lays stress on need to eradicate the evil of class distinction and the curse of ignorance. It invites us to channelise our efforts to bring a meaningful social change. Dr. Taizi intends to say that peaceful and prosperous society is that which is literate because those people understand each other and their mutual problems, and are able to devise ways collectively to solution. The language of dialogues is objective and fluent, the portrayal of characters original and the environment real. Besides, the story of Gulpana emerges, runs and reaches the conclusion in a locality, which is rich in scenic beauty. In this context, it can be brought at par with Gul Khan and Ghunday.
Chapter 8

Short Stories

Dr. Taizi has written many short stories. He lost a notebook that contained his short stories. Then he collected those published from time to time in dailies and periodicals, added a few, and published them in a book under the title of Shpelae (The Flute). This book contains the shortest short story under the title of "The Field", in the following three sentences:

Sultan Bacha was killed.
Mir Bacha was sentenced to transportation for life.
And that field for which the two brothers were fighting was taken by others.

There are several comments and reviews on this book, but those written by Habibullah Rafie, Tahir Afridi and Gul Mohammad Baitab are worth mentioning. All of them have specifically discussed this story. Rafie says, The first one is the briefest and shortest story, but he (the author) has encompassed in it the basic and the longest tragedy of Pukhtuns. This story covers one page, not full page even but half a page, even less than half a page, i.e. only five lines. The title of the story is Patay (the field)? these lines are in fact a story of the whole life of Pukhtuns? Similar views have been expressed by Tahir Afridi and Gul Mohammad Baitab also. Tahir Afridi advises Dr. Taizi to take the modern course of fiction.

One of the stories - Lewanae - was published in English under the title of The Madwoman in daily the Frontier Post, Peshawar, on 30 April 1994, and monthly The Busy World International, Peshawar. It was selected and included in the brochure published by the Pak-India Peoples Forum For Peace And Democracy in Peshawar under the caption of Peace and War for the 4th Convention On Peace held at Peshawar from 21 to 22 November 1998. Another of his stories Faisla (The Judgement) has been translated and published in Urdu in several magazines and anthologies of short stories. Like his other works, his short stories are also in a different style. As G. M. Baitab has points out, these stories are related to the every day life. They do not give any impression of being imaginary work. For this very purpose, one of his stories had been rejected and returned by the editor of a Pushto monthly with a note, asking for assurance that the story and the characters were not real.
Chapter 9

Criticism

Dr. Sher Zaman Taizi have reviewed many books for the weekly page of the Frontier Post, Peshawar. These books include books on almost every genre of literature as well as on history and social sciences. Having studied his comments and criticism on a vast variety of fields and genres, one has to acknowledge that Dr. Taizi is really a great scholar and critic. In a monthly meeting of Milli Adabi Malgaree in Peshawar, he said that criticism does not have its own principles but thrives on foreign principles. This commented astounded the participants. They wanted its elaboration. Dr. Taizi elaborated the point in very simple worlds. Any genre under criticism is reviewed in the light of the principles of that particular genre. In criticism of a short story, principles of the ghazal can not be applied. That discussion was meaningful but brief and has been put on record by the said association. However, it transpired that Dr. Taizi is not a traditional critic but an academic critic. A student of literature can learn much from his book reviews that have appeared in the Frontier Press (1992-95). Although is own concept does not admit that a good critic does not become a good poet. Only a man of rare qualities can master both these qualities, such as Khushal Khan Khattak. In view of various comments on his poetry and his comments appeared in book reviews and in form of prefaces to a few books, his own concept personifies him as an exceptional case.
Chapter 10

The Frontier Post

Dr. Sher Zaman Taizi joined the Frontier Post, Peshawar, as assistant editor on 01 December 1991. In that capacity, he gave more attention to projection, propagation and development of Pushto language and literature. He published profiles of literary figures, covered activities of literary associations and introduced and reviewed Pushto books. His stories and round ups first appeared on the city page (page 2). The encouraging feedback moved the management to consider publication of a weekly page on Pukhto literature. Although, it was a gigantic task, Dr. Sher Zaman Taizi accepted the assignment. That job needed at least four qualified persons, but he worked all alone to do it. The first weekly page appeared on June 19, 1993.

S. Inam-ur-Rahman, a student of Pakistan Study Centre, University of Peshawar, carried out research in 1996 on contribution of Dr. Taizi to daily the Frontier Post. In introduction, Inam writes: a weekly page of Pukhto literature of the daily Frontier Post, Peshawar, took regular start on Sept. 19, 1992 with a view to giving a bird’s eye view of the subject matter, and the significance and value of this page, in this thesis an attempt has been made to accomplish the task by dividing the whole range in the following topics:

- Profiles of writers, poets, playwright, artists, singers and musicians,
- Reviews of books and magazines,
- Articles and comments on various fields and forms of literature, historical events, cultural heritage, literary figures,
- Activities of literary associations,
- Translation of short stories and poems,
- It was also deemed necessary that views regarding this contribution of a few distinguished readers should be obtained in order to reach a convincing conclusion.

In this 180-pages thesis, the learned researcher concludes that the contribution is enormous in quantity and excellent in quality. This contribution, he maintains, is very useful to students of literature in general and of Pukhto literature in particular. It has also made available a good deal of authentic
and interesting information on cultural, political and historical background of Pukhtuns for students of Pukhtuns history and culture.

In brief, the contribution of Dr. Taizi to the development and promotion of Pukhto language and its literature, through the Frontier Post, is remarkable, unprecedented and exemplary. Within such a short span of time, this one weekly page introduced Pukhto as an old and rich language to the educated people as well as to the world abroad.
Chapter 11

Translation

Translation especially from verse to verse is a challenging literary task. But Dr. Taizi has no match in this field. He has translated Pukhto poetry of Mohammad Hasham Zamani, an Afghan poet. The name of the book is Polar Bear. About the quality of Taizi’s translation, Zamani writes in the acknowledgement: No doubt there are much cultural and life-style differences among cultural units of the world and due to this it is very difficult to carry the real sense and form of one language into another. And it is most difficult in poetry. In spite of this difficult task the translator has done his best to carry and reflect the sense and form of the Pukhto poems into English as much as he could. The translation was published in April 1982. Some poems of the Polar Bear were translated into some other languages of Europe and published in press media.

Dr. Taizi has translated some other works. Among those is one titled Abad Khan: The Last Ring Of The Chain (Kamil Pukhto Adabi Jirgah, Pabbi, 1988). It was translated from the Urdu, which had been compiled and published by Anwar Khan Diwana.

Besides, Dr. Taizi has translated hundreds of essays, articles, short stories and poems which have been published in the Frontier Post, Peshawar, and other magazines such as Pakistani Literature of the Academy of Letters, Pakistan, and monthly the Busy World International published from Peshawar.
Chapter 12

Afghanistan

So far, we were enjoying the imaginary niceties and fragrance of the literary works of Dr. Sher Zaman Taizi. When we turned to his academic works, we were puzzled to see how thorough and patient he was in the dull and dry field of research! Not less a political analyst and scientist, Dr. Taizi is an expert on the Afghan affairs. He has earned his Ph.D. for research on the Communist Revolution in Afghanistan that took place in April 1978. The thesis, submitted to the Area Study Centre, University of Peshawar, is titled The Saur Revolution 1978-86, A Political Analysis. It was published by the Frontier Post Publications in 1991 under the title of The Saur Revolution 1978-86. It was sold out within a few weeks. It would not be irrelevant to review the thoughts of Dr. Taizi about the Afghan crisis.

Exuberantly traced out, the raison d’etre of the Communist Revolution was enmeshed in complex socio-political, religious and historical factors. Starting from the age of Timur Shah (1773-93), Dr. Taizi substantiates his arguments with reference to major historical events as to how ruthlessly the elements of religious change were curbed by the 3-M troika, Malik, Mullah and Monarch. Dr. Taizi further argues that the geo-political strategy of British India and Craziest Russia was followed more acutely by the Socialist leadership, which sank deeper and deeper in socio-political conflict inside the boundaries of Afghanistan. But for one or the other reason, the quest for change continued to increase with the passage of time. An educated group of young Afghans emerged, which derived inspiration from Amanullah Khan, the progressive King of Afghanistan. The group was forming the middle class and building the hard core of administration, and thus raising a platform against clergy. In 1947, they formed an association in the name of Wikh Zalmyan at Kandahar, and then shifted to Kabul. Thanks to palace intrigues, Sardar Daud encouraged political overtures of students of Kabul University. An association namely Kuloop-e-Jawanan took shape. Babrak Karmal joined that, while Noor Mohammad Taraki became a member of Wikh Zalmyan. These associations levelled ground for organised political struggles, which survived throughout the political razzle-dazzle. The leftist socialist elements got propped up both externally as well as internally. Thus in 1965 the PDPA (Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan) came into being. After 13 years, the PDPA emerged political victor and reached the pinnacle of power.

After a thorough, informative and academic, discussion, Dr. Taizi concludes that the change which occurred in Afghanistan in April 1978 (corresponding to Saur 1357) was a revolution by all means and not a coup d etat.

Within two months of the Revolution, he adds, the PDPA leadership realised that it was premature.
Moreover, infighting ensued in the ruling party. But the common man was still unaffected. He writes:

"The change in Kabul was not a matter of concern to the common Afghan. The Saur Revolution did not arouse any reaction. The call of political and religious leaders did not receive any response until the traditional life of the people was disturbed by the over-enthusiastic revolutionaries, their brutal arrogance and rude methods."

Spelling the details of external reaction to the Afghan crisis, Dr. Taizi highlights that capitalist world wanted to play Islamic fundamentalism against Communism. In this respect he quotes Brezezenski, the National Society Advisor of the Carter Administration as having said that: Islamic fundamentalism can stop Communism. Thus the CIA started backing Mujahideen to bleed Russians.

Regarding Pakistan, he says that by opting for launching opposition to the Soviet Union for violation of the accepted international forum, it (Pakistan) closed every option for herself, but to depend upon USA for her security needs as well as making any headway in the Afghan crisis.

Dr. Taizi has drawn a well thought-out and logical conclusion. Some of his predictions he articulated at that time have proved correct. For example, he said the USA has no interest in Afghans and Afghanistan. Their main objective is containment of Russia. Soon after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the USA distanced itself from the Afghanistan crisis. Now the situation has drastically changed, from help to hate; they abhor Afghans as terrorists.

Col. (Retd.) M. Y. Effendi has aptly analysed the literature created on Afghanistan during this time. Having discussed the books published outside Pakistan, then those published in Pakistan, he comes down to Pukhtunkhwa. As regards The Saur Revolution, Col. Effendi says, a doctoral thesis The Saur Revolution: 1986-86 by Dr. Sher Zaman Taizi is a unique document as he sympathetically evaluated the Afghan revolution and showed apprehension about the rise of obscurantism among the Mujahideen forces. He was hold to do this, when such line of thinking was considered anathema among the majority of Pakistan’s intelligentsia and in the official quarters. In the same class, we have Mr. Afrasiab Khattak, Dr. Fazal-ur-Rahim Marwat and Dr. Adil Zareef who are far-sighted scholars, and have developed a deep empathy with the Afghan struggle for peace.

As we have discussed in the part of literature, Dr. Sher Zaman Taizi has expressed well his prescient quality here in the political science also. What he had predicted in The Saur Revolution in 1986 is happening exactly in that way (2000 AD).

Dr. Taizi has also analysed subsequent political events in three different treatises published by Area Study Centre (Central Asia), University of Peshawar.

Two of them are titled as Afghanistan: From Najib to Mojaddedi 1986-1992. The third is captioned as Afghanistan: The Clash of Interests. In the last mentioned treatise he highlights how Afghanistan became a battleground of conflicting interests among Saudi Arab, Iran and Pakistan. During this tug of war, the Taliban phenomenon appeared on the political scene, who took hold of Kabul in September 1996. He argues that like the double-edged sword, the movement of the Taliban has been causing much damage to Islam as well as to patriotism and nationalism. Being Sunni, mainly from the Pukhtuns areas, their force is considered a front against the Shia sect and non-Pukhtun ethnic groups?. He concludes thus: The situation in Afghanistan needs serious and honest approach for restoration of peace. The fire raging in Afghanistan is now warming the enthusiast spectators also, and is spreading each and every moment in each and every direction. Pakistan, Iran and Tajikistan are
right on its way. They should, therefore, think more to extinguish the fire inside Afghanistan, rather than fanning it, and let the people have a sigh relief.

The fourth treatise that Dr. Taizi has contributed to knowledge was published by Area Study Centre under the title of Afghanistan: Two Governments and Three Capitals. Most of the information in these booklets has been collected from the print media in Pakistan. These four booklets together make a continual history of Afghanistan since 1986. The students of the Afghan affairs with other sources of information can make good use of these booklets.

Dr. Taizi compiled a book in English on Osama bin Laden also, which is being considered for publication by the Area Study Centre.

In this field, another remarkable achievement of Dr. Taizi is translation of the book of Abdul Samad Ghaus, captioned The Fall of Afghanistan An Insider Account, into Pushto. Danish Kitabtun, Qissa Khwani Bazaar, Peshawar published it in 1999 under the title of Suqut-e-Afghanistan. Samad Ghaus was a deputy foreign affairs minister during the regime of Daud (1973-78). He confirms most of the information contained in The Saur Revolution of Dr. Taizi.

Dr. Taizi has also translated a book of Dr. Hassan Sharq from Dari (Persian) into English, which is being published by the Area Study Centre, Peshawar. Dr. Sharq has written this book under the title of Karbas-posh-ha Pa Brehna. He was an accomplice of Sardar Daud in the coup d’etat staged in 1973 against King Zahir Shah. He had served as Prime Minister in the regime of Daud.

This brief biography of Dr. Sher Zaman Taizi reveals that he is not only a prolific writer but also an all rounder. He has set up a mission for him and work with missionary zeal to achieve that mission. He has chosen literature to convey the message of mutual understanding and tolerance, education and enlightenment, peace and love, to his people, which would definitely lead them to national integrity and on the right path of Pukhtunwali. According to him, this is more durable and effective than the political and religious demagoguery. Therefore, he is quite optimistic about the bright future of Pukhto and Pukhtuns.

However, this is not the end, but an effort to put something on record about the mysterious figure of Dr. Sher Zaman Taizi and his works. There many other matters that he has written but not yet been published in book form.