



Across the Bridges



Harbhajan Halwarvi

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Translated by Pawan Gulati



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ACROSS THE BRIDGES

The sculpture reproduced on the endpaper depicts a scene where three soothsayers are interpreting to King Suddhodhana the dream of Queen Maya, mother of Lord Buddha. Below them is seated a scribe recording the interpretation. This is perhaps the earliest available pictorial record of the art of writing India.

From : Nagarjunakonda, 2nd century A.D.

Courtesy : National Museum, New Delhi

AWARD-WINNING COLLECTION OF PUNJABI POEMS

Across the Bridges

Pulan De Paar

by

Harbhajan Halwarvi

Translated from the Punjabi by

Pawan Gulati



Sahitya Akademi

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*Dedicated to
Dear Friend Gurdarshan Singh
(Gurnam Singh & Co., Tubewell Engineers)*

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From the Translator

Translating poetry is considered impossible. This is indeed a fact. One cannot express exactly in another language the poetic emotions soaked in the mother tongue. Every poet has a distinct poetic idiom, choice of particular sign, metaphor, music, rhythm and rhyme-scheme. There is poetic craft as well that synergises one's thoughts and spontaneous flow of emotions. The craft of translation can hardly reach that level. Besides, ghazal, a poetic form of Persian origin has a peculiar combination of content and form. There is also a fine musical sense, at metrical craft and assembling of thoughts in a compact manner. To translate them in the same rhythm rhyme scheme, rhythm, music and metre may distort the essence of what a poet wants to convey. These limitations may be noticed in this collection as you read. Please bear with it. These limitations are all mine.

Pawan Gulati
Kotkapura

Harbhajan Halwarvi's Collection of Poems *Across the Bridges*

SUTINDER SINGH NOOR

Harbhajan Halwarvi (1943-2003) is a Punjabi poet whose development of poetry has remained in my notice from the beginning and I consider his poetry different from other poets in some points. I want to initiate my comments on the poetry of this collection with the following lines:

Poetry has penetrated
Tranquilly and unknowingly
Into the maze of deceit
As if
A passenger unknown
Is sieged among the scoundrels
With all his innocence
And modesty of heart
Or a rose crimson
Encircled in stinking air
Poetry is obliged to fight
The battle of its emancipation
Now poetry does not form of symbols
It has become itself
A symbol of common man
Of words simple and unpretentious
With language sans confusion

I mention these lines in such detail because these lines completely reflect his poetic faith and poetic consciousness. He is conscious of the crisis poetry has passed through and the battle it is fighting for its emancipation. When he himself is in the process of creation, he neither wants to produce such poetry nor be surrounded in such symbols which have nothing to do with mass communication. Western poetics had raised some such points about poetry and had greatly influenced modern poetry. Halwarvi is among those poets who opposed that poetics in totality and endeavoured writing poetry against it as well. He favours

such poetry that relates to the common man and contains simple, plain words which have little unnecessary complexity or confusion of word meanings. He wants to keep the aesthetic sense and the red rose intact. He is saying all this with the responsibility of identifying how poetry genuinely exists. The critical consciousness of poetry remains intrinsic with him. That is why, not only does he compose aesthetic poetry unwittingly, but he is also conscious of it.

I am looking for some more points about this conscious side of his poetry. The phase of poetry and ideology that he passed through was not so natural. The identity that ideological poetry made comprised mostly of Pash's poetry. To make one's identity different, it was necessary to be different from him. Halwarvi is different from that peasant language and manifestation. One thing is quite peculiar about his poetry. What poetry he is writing even beyond the times of Naxalite movement, he may not be writing poems about the Naxalite movement or its beliefs, nevertheless, he does not allow his poetic-expression and poetic language to fall into the depression that often afflicted poetry. In this outlook, he remains convinced of futuristic optimism. He talks of nature, universe, its vastness but these symbols evolve from the same creativity:

Rivers are blood vessels
Of muscular mass of earth
Their waters contain
Particles of life
Mirrors of flourished and
Lost generations
Features of civilizations
Never can be separate

Earth, River and Life

This is a representative style of Halwarvi's poetic, expression as well, free from the feel of tragedy and melancholy. Behind it lies that flourishing sense of progressive-consciousness which he does not allow, like many poets, to be crisis-ridden nor leaves it undeveloped. His poetry has a sense of loneliness but I do not consider this separate

from the above-mentioned ideological consciousness. This loneliness delves into his sub-conscious and, therefore, he mentions it repeatedly.

1. In search of celebrations
Again I am surrounded in loneliness
2. Whenever I am absolutely alone
Even then where I am alone

He has written Loneliness-I, Loneliness-II, Loneliness-III about this loneliness. The root sign of loneliness in them spreads from individual loneliness to social context. Before giving more detail, I want to pass through his poem 'Much More' in which loneliness spreads in the form of ignifier.

Flowers are many more
Alone too
Stars are many more
Alone too
Tears are many more
Alone too
Numbers are many more
Alone too
Men are many more
Alone too
Trees are many more
Alone too
Sometimes there is many more
One too
Flower, star, bird, tear'
Alphabet, number, tree, man.

This signifier spreads to nature, man, alphabet and realisation and in this way, loneliness, travelling through signifier, does not remain individual. The beauty of his poetry lies in the fact that one side of his expression is linked with rhyme and the other with intellectuality. This coordination makes his poetry intrinsically complex. Despite its simplicity, this complex poetic innerself is the very place of that poetry.

which he calls 'sans confusion and Symbols do not form poetry'. He was able to evolve a method of loneliness liberating from individuality because he also grasped the situation of talking idealism aimlessly.

He did not link up with desperation owing to the birth of circumstances in this manner. Instead, he did not allow the mentality of dreams to relapse. He has remained in touch in their search constantly.

Sometimes mountains, sometimes jungles
Sometimes seas, sometimes skies
He keeps searching
The lost dreams.

This very situation does not allow love and affection to melt away from his poetry. He fills that loneliness with the metaphor of love :

1. For a long time I keep thinking
We should meet again
Life without meetings
Is completely hollow
Like a small lonely tree
Standing in wilderness
Sans meaning, sans purpose.
2. Like me overtly desperate, oh my loneliness
Let us go where we get recognised

This sensibility of affection and love in his poetry, aestheticism, rhyme, rhythm mingle the most in his ghazals. They shape well in the construction of couplets. Perhaps, that is the reason that a number of couplets of ghazals get imprinted in our consciousness.

I want to mention some couplets in this context of his poetic-consciousness.

1. Who still on the pages of life shine forth
This sadness and loneliness who I got to have written
2. Stepping from leaves this light is not mine
That which trickles in the courtyard is not mine

Harbhajan Halwarvi's Collection of Poems

3. You are quiet and my silence lies desperate
deep down my chest
Hearing your lovely call, heart will melt again
4. Birds lying asleep in the nest and light smiled
When it awoke at dawn, was found all in tears
5. A light fragrance mingles into breaths as though
A song of slow rhythm is cast into speech.

This sign - system of these couplets is noteworthy. Signs take the shape of sensibility of love, aestheticism, dreams, song, rhythm, which is manifest in its own way in his poems. In this way, we find his poems and rhythmical couplets inter-connected.

Reading *Across the Bridges*, the development of his poetry can be seen in such a movement in which he is more interested in the basic identity of poetry. His uniqueness remains intact among the poets stepping from ideological poetry. Otherwise, many such poets stopped midway somewhere and poetry marched ahead. Halwarvi has identified the pace of poetry as well.

Poems

Across the Bridges

Rivers are blood vessels
Of muscular mass of earth
Their waters contain
Particles of life
Mirrors of flourished and lost generations
Imprint of civilisations
Never can be separate
Earth, river and life

River, be it any
Ganga, Brahmaputra, kaveri
Sutlej, Ravi or Chenab
Never is there a difference
In their waters
Though they have their own flow.
Blood is the same
Humans have their habits different.

Banks shape the course of rivers on land
Water binds them
And keeps them apart too.
Humans on this bank
Humans on that bank
The gap between the river banks
Build some strange attraction
Like magnetic fields.

Those strolling by this side
Desire to go across to the other

Harbhajan Halwarvi

Sometimes arms
Sometimes boats
Sometimes means of bridges
Same is the land
This side and that one
Even then the sights are different.
Hu:mans are same
This side and that one
Even then the features are different.

Bridges build relationships between them
Help the parted ones meet.
Crossing the bridges of relationships
They reach each other's hearts.
Bridges break sometimes
Or wash away in the current.
But bridges are needed always
So human hands build bridges anew.
Strong winds and high tides of water
Have destroyed many old bridges
Let us build some bridges anew.
Let us bridge relationships that
Go from this side to that one.

The Great Diffusion

What if some stars are turned to ashes
What if darkness got a little thicker
The heat of the sun hasn't weakened a bit
Light of the full moon is
Still sacred like ever
The great diffusion of universe remains
Still as it was.

This water of the mirthful stream
Gushes down the stones day and night
Never seems to be dwindling.
In the rear
On mountains afar
Snows keep melting,
Sustain the serene flow of water.

These bodies looking languid
Distraught by hostile times
Still possess as much strength.
If got together at some goal
Can overturn Thrones
Rolling on the wheels of deceit,
Change the features of undesired faces.

Gone are many
The seasons of upheavals
Many more'll come tomorrow

Harbhajan Halwarvi

Spreading to the horizons of ages
These'll shape features always of new man
Whose destiny
Flows constantly like
A river mirthfully serene
From mountains down to the seas.
From seas to mountains atop.

On land their imprints
Form, disappear, again come to shape
How pleasant are landscapes
For them
Seasons pass, ages come to end
They remain enchanting always.
What if some stars are turned to ashes
Still the same as it was
This great diffusion of universe.

Acquaintance

(for Sarwat Mahiudin)

Your people my people
Were all our people
Strange was the country
Strange seemed the place
A short occasion that was
We met
A brief time
And brief was our acquaintance

Our soil is named one
You said
Same is our tongue
Who were those
Who raised fences to separate?
Here lies my town this side of the fence
Across the fence lies your village
Where was lost the bond of soil?
Said I
Human friendship transcends borders all
Unaware, those grievous hands were
That drew lines on the land
Raised dams on the rivers
But in winds, sky and in blood

Could raise no fence.

Wind blows, flowers bloom
Dew falls with fragrance
Countless birds float in the blue
The ears of wheat swarm
Mustard flowers flutter
Rays of the morning sun
Cold beams of stars
Appear pleasant to you,
Look lovely to me.

Bond this much is not so small
This is as well a hue of our acquaintance
Brief is our acquaintance, though
May found the basis of fast friendship.

This much is my desire
That it be yours
No fences could stop then.

What a Relationship (*for 'P'*)

This time again in your town
When I landed
There were shadows of thick clouds
A music of drizzle
And some friendly smiles for me to welcome.
But in my heart, was deep silence
All pervading the thoughts.

In the prime of life was half open
The door of thy heart
Through, a glance was seen for me
Of your damp eyes
Through which
Your melt whispers knocked my heart.
That scarlet hued gate
Was closed for me such,
No hope of its opening
No knock it could cross
No voice escapes out.
All chances of interaction
All occasions were lost
Of tranquil conversation
Like full bloom age.

Under the shade of thick clouds like
Doubts cast in your mind,

Harbhajan Halwarvi

Coming back to your town
Yearning to fill the gap within
Easily I crossed the oceans
Hard to cross but
The gap of a few steps.
You are nothing to me anyway
Nor I to you
What is this attraction, what relationship
I am asking the silence of heart.

Where are You

(for Gurbinder)

When you were along
I only desired
Returning home from the office
Should find you on the threshold
Opening the door,
Eyes filled in waiting,
A light smile on lips.

Often it happened as such
Sometimes if delayed a little
I'd ask, where were you?
Natural used to be your response always
Watering in the rear courtyard
Grass, flowers, plants
The beds of vegetables
What'd you drink
Cold, sherbat or lemonade

Give whatever you desire
With your smile
All fatigue should give way.
Returning home if door opens
a little late
I'd ask : where were you?
Tranquil used to be your response

Picking the clothes from the string
Which were put in the sun to dry
What'd you drink
Juice or coffee or tea?

Give whatever you like
With warmth of love
So all fatigue may subside

At home we talked in the evening
Or set out on short journeys
In the markets, shopping tins and bits
Or purposeless stroll
Yearning to go missing in the crowd
Observing the red of setting sun on the lake
Go knock some friend's door
For dinner
Or to invite them at ours

Then sometimes we walked on long journeys
On hills, rivers, pools, falls,
Parks, gardens, lakes, seas
Devoured the beauty of sights
And faces beautiful
Felt the mysteries of life big and small
Walked together on uneven paths
Strolled in silence
Laughed to hearts, sometimes argued
Punched sharp jibes at times.

Quarrelled, sullen in anger
Soon pleased, tried to please
Walked past many milestones of life
Moved towards the next ones.
Then pounced death abruptly like an eagle
Flown you trapping in its claws.
Ashes remained
Just to be immersed in water
Or a soul mine
Distracted in profound grief
And the hollow hole of my chest.

Across the Bridges

Still returns home from office
Opens the door on my own
Meanders in the rooms in melancholy
Looks for you in the kitchen
You are there nowhere
Nor in the rear courtyard
Where are you
A question comes through my breaths
And keeps lingering in vacuum for long.
Now you never shall respond.

How?

After four quarters of night are over
Appears out from the clock of dawn
Light of the rising sun.
After four quarters of day are over
Hides into the lock of dusk
Light of the setting sun.
If you find any difference between the two
How do you feel?

See eye to eye the violent lion of times
Fearlessly put your hand in its sharp teeth jaws
Return home in winning esteem
With all your being fully intact.
There pounces some pet cat
Bruises your face with her paws.
In hopeless moments of such grief
How do you feel?

Passing through the deserts of hardships
Braving the whirlwinds, storms and sand
When suffocating with dust
Yearn for a gush of fragrance
Go trying to catch in the air
The fluttering red rose
Injure thy palm with thorns.
Bearing such fruit of longing for fragrance
How do you feel?

Across the Bridges

Walking past the sea of sand
You reach an oasis
Soaking, drying in thirst
You hold double palmful of water,
Sitting on the edge of a pool
And find lava instead
Whose blame—of thirst or your vision,
How do you feel?

Cross the thick forests
With courage and perseverance at their zenith
Climb the summits of high mountains
Body though exhausted with utter fatigue,
Blood filled with the ecstasy of victory.
Step into the valleys of soft grass
Then stumble over a little pebble,
Feet get stained in your blood
When you get such reward
Of climbing high mountains
How do you feel?

Loneliness-I

Another, seemingly different
Though a routine morning.
The orange sun spreading its splendour
From the blue to my courtyard.
Eyes intoxicated lightly
In the last moments of dreamful sleep.
Asleep wife and little baby's light breathing
There is flutter of birds in the air
There is aura of dew-incensed trees.
Knocking at the door
Newspapers of today
Carried in store a lot of clamouring news.
How much is scattered around
Seiged in between
Both me and my loneliness.

Loneliness-II

Busy with chores and routines
How much is to be done?
Slow and fast the routine goes on.
In the routine of chores
Something takes shape, something ruins
Every moment.

At times, some moments mirthful
Blow gently like damp winds
Sometimes bitterness hanging heavy
Shadows deep in the mind.

Early in the dawn, at sharp noon
Water flowing since eternity
Never stop.
Meetings, encounters,
Warm smiles, laughters,
Consoles the wavering mind.
All grief subside
With such consolations in life.
Everybody is at his place
In celebrations, at work, in business.
Even then I know not
When, from where
Sad loneliness occupies thoughts.

Loneliness-III

Every evening
Vermillion mingles into the blue
Birds return to nests
Darkness looms, thickens, then
Glitters with the shine of lights
Hunger, thirst of bodies, souls
Yearn for own satiety
Sometimes satisfied
At others, craving satisfaction.
Everything appears calm
Sometimes bitterness scratches
Thoughts, joys
At times the joys of crowds somewhere
At times deserted surrounding somewhere
Eyes confused in them
Try locating acquaintances
At times aura of love mingles in breaths
At times some moments
Thrust in the smoke of hatred.
Moments of life as such
Keep rising, falling
Keep doing something all life
How much we listen
How much we relate
Never be it far
Inner loneliness, silence.

Small Walls

Small minds, small plans
Small men raise walls, much small

When has hindered
Small low walls
A gush of wind
Swarms of fragrance
Line of parrots
Or bevy of virgins.

Small walls can stop not
Eyes tranquil
Gliding afar the horizons
Colourful life-like dreams
Not fast steps walking constantly.

Small low walls
Just exist lowly
Men of small egos
Raise small walls.

Small World

This side of wall
Every thing is visible
Can't know what lies beyond.

This side of wall
My little world
Cloaked in fragrance
Sings in many tunes
Passes through hues manifold
Glittering in light
Even somewhat gloomy

This side of wall
My little world
Beyond the wall
Thrives the whole universe.

Small world is all mine
Universe thriving beyond is mine as well.
The wall between moves slowly ahead
Slowly the universe is entering
My small world.
The side beyond
Is turning in side this one
Facts and mysteries invisible
Bring to my notice
This way my little world
Keeps spreading.

Days of Celebrations

Now these days of celebrations have come
So do not damp eyes
Just think how the journey of so many years
Was undertaken

What if the distances went afar destinations
What if the caravan strayed from their ways
Thieves and wicked have guised the saint's uniform
Do not worry for the day, just pride over the past

We observe the vice dominating the virtues
But this has been the half-century of our own rule
Such opportunities do come rarely in chronicles
Do not mention hunger in the glitter of five stars.

Every day values crunch before our eyes
Perseverance and Faith sway, Truth shudders
Deities and Devils churn the sea together
Do not moan whether nectar or poison oozes out

See this sloth and ignorance as the signs of pride
Save your head and leave the rest to the rulers
Just shout aloud, this is my great India
Have patience and leave hopes on the next century

Now these days of celebrations have come
So do not damp eyes
Just think how the journey of so many years was undertaken.

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Well Enough

We too have marched ahead
The hard journey of half a century
Not covered casually
Not meagre are our achievements
Well enough, instead
What be given to count this moment
The whole world knows

The growth rate of population, good enough
The number of illiterates, good enough
Grief of every miserable, good enough
Hunger of the hungry, good enough

Leftovers of the well-to-do, good enough
Deceit, fraud, falsehood, good enough
Pilgrimages are good enough
The amount of black money, good enough

The donation in the name of faith too is good enough
The five-star splendour of the metro too is good enough
The illusions of our ancient civilisations too are good enough
The steps moving in the rhythms of western tunes too are good enough

The credit of having exploded bombs too are good enough
The battle to defend peace too are good enough
To come to blows in each days
Is the unique glory of joint family.

Across the Bridges

Who says democracy has weakened
It had enough strength yet

Whatever goes on howsoever
Nothing is wrong but right
These are not just temporary claims
Instead, genuine faith.

Ghost Wind

These days a ghost wind
Wanders all around
We'd sown wine of grapes
But ripened the colocinth
Now even tortoise
Run faster than hare
Those who walked along
Have lost in which marshland?

Those who marched for the good of others
Themselves strayed
What a misery that had filled in
Our blood drops
Deceit seems to be a value
To be sinful whole is not a sin
Mourning of egos is
Considered a classical Raaga.
People with great guts
Yield after a hollow shout
They call immodesty a candid approach
Entertain in denouncements
With mean glances and ironic laughter
Call themselves multi-dimensional
Leave aside the bread winning
They sell for a loaf.

Feet are constrained
In many silken chains
A long distance was covered

Across the Bridges

Behind the yoke of employment.
We are safe in
Homes and offices
Where walls and walls behind walls
The conspiring talks have befouled
Our breaths whole down.

Evil Jinx

Trains collide
Derail
Vehicles run into one another
Men are killed
And mourned
And it's over.

Leaders come
Crowds throng
Slogans are raised
Speeches are made
Promises are thrown
And it's over.

Friends gather
Do interaction
Exchange glances
Perhaps gauze Something
Go back depressed
And it's over.

Lovers meet
Take off clothes
Empty themselves
Put on again
Say good-bye
And it's over.

Across the Bridges

What's lost
What's gained
Nothing's followed
Human souls are
But Jinxed
And it's over.

Obstructions

Why I became a constant traveller
Like a wayside tree
Journeys undertaken so far
Are numbered
More than the years of my age

Journey was on foot
Roads metalled or unmetalled
Of the town near the village
Or across the seas
Journey of compulsions or hardships
Or a curious ecstasy

Journeys were all
Like basis of my being
Expansions anew of my experiences

Journey and life became identical
Circles of breaths, of moments
Linked to uneven paths as though
Journey seemed to be life

Why cease this circle all of a sudden
Why is there obstruction in this journey
Now yearning silence preserved in
Heart deep down
Like a tree standing by roadside
I watch day and night
Think when I'd move again now.

After the Accident

(for Janakraj Singh)

After an accident
The sense of being alive
Seems much pleasant
The pain of wounds
Remains tolerable
Sympathies of friends
Pour like drizzle
Love for life
Thickens profoundly
Hues of its hustle and bustle
Brighten more
It seems nice again
Attending to little chores of everyday

After an accident
Body rests in compulsion
Injured limbs rejuvenate
To normal as earlier
What we took for granted
The age that escaped

Now look precious
To live, to live more
Is the greatest blessing of the earth.

Both

Sorrows are related to us as
Are comforts.
How dare say just comforts
Should knock the door
Sorrows should avoid even our thresholds?
Both are indispensable
To our being,
Just differ in proportion.

Blessings of life
Define a little more
The profound worth of each other.
Experience and sensibility get mild
The feel of relationship too

Natural is if we identify comforts
Sorrows too not strange.
Both are ours
Like our breaths.

Identity

Speech is same
Words too

To say the same word
You use a word
I, another
And she, some other.
Symmetry and manner
Too differ

Something remains unheard
Something sounds strange
Some get deep down.

This, thus, makes identity
Of yours, mine and hers.

Without End

Considering stretched
More than my potential
They robbed me
Of the limited place of my own

They thought
Now, I'd go dry, rootless
And be over steadily.

They couldn't follow that
The encroached lands are
Always limited.

How can a handful
Carry all the landscapes of earth?
Who can rob somebody
Of the air, all of atmosphere
The whole water of
All resources and rains
The shades of trees and clouds?

Dreams evolving daily
Desires flourishing every moment

Universe is infinitely diffused
What if the places are limited!
Never the borders could stop
The steps that walk constantly.
No place is permanent

Across the Bridges

The pull of new sights is eternal
Their journey continues
Till they breathe last.

Only men of limited thinking
Are happy at places limited.

Doors

Never do close
All the doors
Simultaneously
You shut them yourself
While going out
Until coming back.

Your home is not the only one
A series of homes abound around
It's not necessary they are shut
When you pass along.

The doors of inhabited homes
Often remain open
Men inhabit homes
Relations inhabit men.

If some relations keep breaking
Some new ones keep shaping up.
This constant process
Of breaking, shaping
Accompany the journey of life.
Never break all the relations
Never close all the doors.

Won't Come

I won't come yet
Perhaps you won't be
Anticipating me too.
When you did
You wrote to me often
Come hither sometimes
With some excuse.
A long time has passed
Since we met.
There was no taboo nor compulsion
No hurry
It was a tranquil relationship.
Writing a letter
Meeting sometimes
Bidding adieu amiably
The gaps in meetings
Were little pinching too
The yearnings of desires
Got much deeper instead.
Don't know
When happened, how it happened
The routine of letters stopped
Meetings ceased to take place
And profound yearnings of desires too.
Seemingly small distances
Turned endless
Dim memories

Harbhajan Halwarvi

Strike the thoughts sometimes
How you view it
How you feel it often
For us it seems
The god of love had died.

I'll Come Again

I'll come again.
When paralysed thoughts are
Conscious again
Profound search of lost moments
Awakens again in still eyes.
When wind turns a little cold
When warmth mingles in passions
Depressed mind sees a consolation
A new hope bud blooms on the age.

I'll come again.
When I received some hint
Now you wait for me too.
A little affection that in the days bygone
Some innocent joy of a nice sitting
Something that happened
From my walking to see you
In previous moments
Like a pleasant music of outseason rain
Like the dense fragrance of Raatrani*
Like gay notes of flute in still nights

I'll come again.

* An incense plant

For Some Days

Even in solitude
I'm not alone
Somebody's been sleeping with me
For some days.
Fills my bosom in warm embrace
Soft physical touches beam the breaths
With honeyed vibrations.
When awake
He also wakes with me
Holds a silent dialogue
Asks : where I remained so long
Somebody down the paths
Long ago
Has strayed far back
Cast the consciousness suddenly
For the last few days.

Explosion

Explosions are out after all
Much heat spread in the winds
A burning sensation has crossed out
The atmosphere.
The thick clouds of dust
Rose in the hollow deserts.
The soil is shuddering
A din is resonating
Within and without

Barren lands of mind
Are but much calm
Neither a bit warmth
Nor a feel of cold
A nameless sensation
Hangs in between
A desperate anxiety.

Perhaps for long
There's been no explosion here
Small crackers explode sometimes
And thickens overwhelming calm much more
My land yearns profoundly
For some explosion.

Search

They search for melodies
I look for their vibrations
That may set a light thrill
In blood
May bind
Heart-beat with the moments of earth
Every moment
They search for colours
I look for ripples singing in them
That may flood the eyes with
Dazzling brilliance
Light may dawn on consciousness
The universe too gets enlightened
They search for words
I look for meanings in them
That may mingle in breath
Like an aura of cardamoms
There be an impulse in voice
Like water of cascade
Life had no meaning without them.

On a Mountain Slope

I stand in these moments
On a slope of some high mountain
Crowded with calm hustle and bustle
Of tall Trees and small plants
There is solitude here but no loneliness.
Above me stands
The peak of a great mountain
Downwards afar
Spreads a valley green
With hamlets of small homes.
Gushes tranquilly along
A clear serene stream
I have forgotten in these moments
Have I come above the valley
Or down the peak onwards
In these mysterious ecstatic moments
Under my fatigued feet
Lies the slope tranquilly serene
Again I start my journey
Up the rocky high summit
Towards green velvety valley
Scattered downwards.
Can wander about some moments
On stony slopes around
Can fill my breaths
With damp and fresh scented air

Harbhajan Halwarvi

Can attune some song
About these trees companions
The utter diffusion
Of these moments
Presents enough possibilities.

Wait for a Call

This moment
I just wait for a call

Give any name
To the desperation of blood
It may simmer always
Every noon, evening, dawn
Never it gets tired
Nor craves for rest
Water renders it welcome
Winds salute it best
Journey is its beginning
That'll last till its fall.

If paused a little on the way
Got a call again
I stepped on its own
At some unseen lane
Devoured and known
Sights unforeseen
Whatever hidden in directions
I understood all
Whatever right goes wrong
And wrongs becoming right

Soon I'll walk ahead
When I get a call
Some one'll tap the sloth of thinking,
Then the zeal of journey
Will pervade the bosom all

Harbhajan Halwarvi

Some more footsteps
Will mark the dust of road
I will draw my imprint
On the rock of time.

This moment
I just wait for a call.

Flowing Water

Let us go
And touch the flowing water
A long time has passed sitting beside
Stagnating waters in sloth

Calm still water
Has its own magic.
It hypnotises one in rest
Making micro – reflections
It displays many faces
Of surroundings.
Gives tranquil touches
It jolts the memories
Lying in stupor, in sub-conscious
Even then it does not run beyond
A limited phase.

Somewhere afar
Water flowing serene
Attracts time and again
And calls beside one all
It becomes a message
Of journey anew
Or unseen mysterious paths
It does excite to tread

Let us go
And touch the flowing water.

Room, My Home

Inside four walls
Lies a door and a window
A small room
Of an ancient bungalow
Became my new home.

Stepping inside
I wished it welcome
That's a welcome to its host
By the guest
A refuge it turned
For me alone.

Somethings of daily routine
Just some limited things
Some clothes and some books
Still it seems crowded.

Morning I move out for work
Returns late in the evening
But is it merely a shelter?
I don't think so.

The home is one that
Consoles the fatigued one
In its embrace
Simple and incomplete like me
This room too is my home.

Illusions

After having seen
Faces abundant
After having acquainted
Features abundant
I fancied you and understood
I saw and reflected
You will be a suitable match for me
I will be a match for you.

If not you
Then none will do
If not this
Then nothing will do.

But nothing ever happened as such
I laughed at myself
I wept with myself.

Without you, my breaths, my hands
Kept busy themselves in one thing or the other
Without you, my sparks in blood
Kept simmering and surging and withering

After enduring all such for years
When I got tired and fired
I told the winds and my own self
Thinking this about you.

If not you then
Anyone will do for me
If anyone suits you
Without me.

I know not
What happened to you
You know not
What happened to me

For me everyone was inept and inappropriate
In relations like accidents
It was a silent hopeless shriek.

Whatever was needed
Kept coming to me
Whatever was not own
Seemed one's own.

But was lost the one
Whom I kept searching
Hence I kept lighting
Earthen lamps in pitch dark
And kept alive illusions
Of some miracle.

Battle of Poetry

Poetry has penetrated
Tranquilly and unknowingly
Into the maze of deceit
As if a stranger unknown
Is sieged among the scoundrels
With all his innocence
And modesty of heart
Or a rose crimson
Encircled in stinking air.

Poetry is obliged to fight
The battle of its emancipation
Now poetry does not form of symbols
It has become a symbol itself
A symbol of common man
Of words simple and unpretentious
With his language sans confusion.

Sense of awakening
Has come alive in poetry
It is learning slowly
What is the power of craft
What is the craft of power
It has to protect
Innocence and modesty
Of its own and the common man
It has to break open
The maze of deceit.

Prayer of the People

I have experiences manifold
Good, bad, bitter and sweet
Not passed such long life
Casually
But still could not understand
The difference between
The manifest and implicit.

Whom should I pray
If He is absorbed in breaths
Why not offer the same prayer
To one's own self?

The virtues as many of an able man
Should all I imbibe
No bondage be there
Five vices but
Should never come beside.

These are not what
The wise say
Three of those, for me
Entirely different.

Sex is the base of being
Without affection
Relations go astray
Why not one get angry

Across the Bridges

Over deceit and injustice
One learns to be conscious
With them all
I consider not
These three vices at all

I avoid and keep at bay
Avarice and pride
That burden the soul
Three vices are there more
Malice, ingratitude and ignobility.

These should I touch never
Until I breathe
Should this faith sustain
This prayer of the people
Should not go in vain.

Murder

At midnight in the early dawn
The gathering was in thrilling range
In eyes and limbs all mingling
An intoxication strange
Bottles full of intoxication
And wine cups were splashing
Go empty, filled again
No dearth was there at all.

A wine cup at last
Was not filled
And it hurt his ego.
He shot in anger
The pretty young lady
Lay murdered in no time.

Silence spread all across
For sometime
The seasons of celebrations
Went deserted
Pens shuddered, Papers trembled
Drowned deep in anxiety
Questions bosomed in the words.

Blooming mirthfully, blossoms
Gardens full of flowers
Eagle's emptied throat
Instead of a nightingale's song

Across the Bridges

On the murder of an innocent
The world of hues lost balance
In mid-heavens.

But this blue
Does never see
Downwards on this earth.
Everyday many killings take place
Of hunger, grief, cruelty
Weapons fire every moment
On whose orders shots are fired
Where, which innocent person?
Why is he murdered?
The sky in utter splendour
Worry not, know not
What the hell is pervading the land.

The Undivided

Before the dawn of civilisation
All waters and lands were undivided.
After the rise of civilisation
Lines struck the land
Spreading and shrinking.
In the course of time
These lines became boundaries
Then boundaries turned borders.

Divided in pieces
Fields, mines, deserts and forests
Course of rivers and mountains
Oceans spread afar.

Divided the men of nature
States formed, then countries
And nations took place.
First, tools were made for a living
Then weapons to conquer others
Nations confront again and again
Centuries after centuries
Became chronicles of wars
Blood of both sides
Spilling at the same place
Creates a sense different
On either side
Warriors and martyrs of one side
Are other's foes and cause of ill will.

Across the Bridges

When will efface
Lines drawn on land
When will be undivided again
All lands and waters of this globe
And men of nature?

The Unawares

Fields are fields to grow crops
Not to spill human blood.
For dense groves of trees
Are these mountainous peaks
Not for heaps of corpses.
There be in valleys
Gardens flourishing and bearing fruit
Not the smoke and smell
of burning ammunition.

Who should prevail over those
Who cause untarnished fate?
Knowing all this
Who pose to be unawares nevertheless?

A Repeat Journey

There was a time
The close ones would ask
Why I was always on toes
On journeys long.

Now is time
I ask myself everyday
Why not stepped on ever
A journey long
Why has shrunk my journey
From this town to another?

There is my home in one town
Job in another
When I go from here to there
When I return from there to here
Vehicles in bad shape
Run on pot holed roads
Trees also run backward
Roads too.

Both sides do I reach
Both sides I depart
Don't know
Whether I'm going
Or coming
I'm repeating
A short journey
For many a day.

None

In search of hustle and bustle
Again I'm surrounded in loneliness
Drizzled in the desert
Like a thick cloud
What should I say to those
Who ask whither have I gone?

Let my surrounding should inhabit
Sometimes this way
There be a delicate dialogue
Of water in the light
Of fire in the dark
Of shadows in the scorching sun
Of warmth in the cold
Voice should be like a song
Come crossing the quiet
When I say my own
Should have her response
Such should be enjoyment
That shatter the spell of solitude.

When hear a little knock
I ask who is there
Nobody is outside
It's just the wind
Knocking at the door.

Much More

Flowers are many more
Alone too
Stars are many more
Alone too
Birds are many more
Alone too
Tears are many more
Alone too
Numbers are many more
Alone too
Humans are many more
Alone too
Some times there are many more
Alone too
Flower, star, bird
Alphabet, number, tree, man.

Helpless

Somebody cherished me
Lovingly
I cherished you and you, some other
Somebody wrote me a letter
I wrote to you and you to some other
Somebody knocked at my door
I knocked yours and you, some other's
Somebody touched my hand
I touched yours and you some other's
Somebody smiled at me
I smiled at you and you at some other
Somebody sent me fragrance
I sent to you and you to some other
All this
Never came back
From somebody to you
From you to me
From me to some other
Even while living
How helpless we are!

Alone

Whenever I'm absolutely alone
Where am I alone even then?

I have with me great many words
Formed in shapes and features different
How much they say and tell about
Seen-unseen, known-unknown.

Whenever I'm absolutely alone
Besides me remain memories manifold
Of faces of features different
Of incidents cherished, untarnished
Of opportunities availed and lost
Of moments, spent in joy and enjoyed
Of beauty devoured and endeavoured.

Whenever I'm absolutely alone
I listen to the steps questioned
Of journeys undertaken so far
Of journeys still to be made
Memories encircle me around
Of hues, aura of landscapes.

Whenever I'm absolutely alone
Far from home and its bits of comfort
Thoughts of wife and child accompany me
With all their small interactions
Demands, aspirations, laughters and moans.

Never, nowhere I'm alone
Whenever I'm absolutely alone.

Now Again

This I have been thinking for long
We should meet again

Life without meetings
Is absolutely empty
Like a small deserted tree
Standing in wilderness
Sans meaning sans purpose.

When we'd meet
Our relations would form base
Of mutual faith
Of a deep yearning of life
Of flying across bonds
Without feathers
Of a thick bond of warm breaths
Of something to hear
Of something to say.

Forgetting all botherations
We played games through meetings
Bodies sometimes mingle
And sometimes mingled
And souls did confluence.

Across the Bridges

This series of forms manifold
Of many hues and melodies
Where have gone these melodies and colours
Senses slumbered and passions paralysed?

Let us fill some thrill in blood
Aura in breaths
Let us find some excuse
And meet again.

Faith

What on earth keeps happening
Naturally or unnaturally
Water flows down stones
And sand lies in water
What comes before, what after
This remains a mystery.

The line of time never retreats
Always marches ahead
Body, life, age and time
All tied in a thread
So much seems to be similar
Even so strange.

When stops waters of seas
Never dot the winds
Incidents pass
Turning little griefs and comforts
Not a difference in this or that
Whose tale should I relate?

I fill meanings in words
Hopes and despair along
I'm learning rhyming poems
So exercises through
Sometimes something will come out
This much is my faith.

Thick Shade

Yesterday I felt the crow of wait perching on heart's eves
Today I observe your thick shade in my courtyard.

Should pride on the way your steps did pace
Should bosom thy aura of breaths in embrace.

Again flow'd in current the dried *Jhana of passions
Swimming in, I feel drowning, drown and then swim again.

The time is holy when friends do meet
The soul is lucky when hearts do meet.

It doesn't matter which village or town
The musings of mind never see place or time.

Such is a lucky moment when the dear ones I recall
Vibrations resonate blood, seven melodies call.

I should write a warm song in words pure
And then devote their shine to your name.

*Jhana — a river of Punjab.

Song

Like me, overtly desperate, my loneliness
Let us go somewhere we get recognised.

Let us sit and share sorrows beside dense trees
Let us find some fire from the ashes of past
Let us unfold the countless layers of memories.

Nobody responded when I kept proposing attachments
Why so long is the company of detachments
Not a glance fateful is blessing us.

There be yearning in glances, love in voice
Should come someone gently and touch us nice
Let us send her invitation again today.

Like me, overtly desperate, my loneliness
Let us go somewhere we get recognised.

Ghazals

Ghazal

My musings keep folding the pages of mine age
Something's lost where eyes keep searching that phase.

Reached the din of town, out from the quiet of jungle
The same quiet keeps speaking still in the gaze.

Like a letter unwritten I'm bereft of words
The sadness of face keeps unfolding mysteries of heart these days.

Ask my thirst how much water down the eyes
It lets spill and how much keeps in cage?

I'm like stagnant water of a pond from the surface
The inner desperation keeps measuring up always.

Ghazal

Knew not such should be the goings all life
Flowers on one palm and the other has embers.

Whenever set on a journey, age blessed as such
There'd be sand under feet and star above head.

You'd suit each side, each situation
Your dreams will be undirected like you.

When I initiated my offer I did not know
Amid the silence there be her response.

Something was fascinating just not and now an empty glance
Colour balloon'd have flown a little and then exploded

It is the season of launches camping at harbour
Now the waves'd be higher and banks be deeper.

Even now one has to keep the being intact always
Though there be weapons double-edged before eyes.

Ghazal

Every time of what crime I undergo punishment
After losing you I lose myself

From afar look intact both mirror and reflection
Break in a moment even at my slightest touch of finger tips.

This side is indifference, that side silence
Legend of pangs is too long which side should I go relate?

Gone are the seasons, gone are the celebrations
Neither is warmth in the sun nor cold the shades

The dirty water of age has mingled in musings
You should recognise me, just this much I expect

Take me in thy embrace and see me
Before I go, disappear even from your musings.

Birds of desire take a high flight
Strong are the wings if high are the winds.

Ghazal

Why is the wind silent whom I have dared call
Again without response I have extended a proposal.

There are smiles, poses and warm calls
But no acquaintance where I'm sitting enthralled.

What're these that still glitter on the pages of life
The gloom and loneliness who I got to write all.

As the stage passed, my own self kept melting
What things I lost on this journey tall.

If not stars in this gloomy night, glow worms'd do
I've scattered the splinters of my simmering being

Friends're wishing kudos on my victory
I have got a drop of poison down my throat.

Knew I'd never ever get her response
Why I've related the pangs of separation.

Ghazal

The light that reflects stars is not mine
The flute that wakes melodies in breaths is not mine

The light that slips down the leaves is not mine
The light that spills down the courtyard is not mine

This that bears out of heart, that which reaches the heart
Mirth this's mine, mirth that's mine.

I've splashed in life time and again
Life that splashes in full is not mine.

The direction I passed has hues all dim
Tranquility that charmed weathers is not mine.

Experienced I moments like griefs manifold
The moment that could turn lasting fragrance is not mine.

Here a desire and meditation, zeal and sense as well
Ecstatic indifference of semi numbness is not mine.

Ghazal

Relations have crumbled like sand, no acquaintance is there
What to pride on others when not pride ours.

It's better a company of the other half blesses in time
It remains incomplete but souls do not match

If not a bond of minds deep in minds of each other
Bond of bodies into one is not any acquaintance.

Once he thought he'd get things to upheavals
Now he lacks even this strength if he could join a broken dream.

Who has made possible getting salvations in life
If affection survives renunciation, then it's no salvation.

Ghazal

Every moment of life will go in waiting for a soft beam
In gloomy nights these will burn like oil lamps.

When you are quiet a desperate silence lingers in me
Hearing your lonely whisper heart'd melt again.

My yearnings will calm down as breaths touch me thine
You are fragrance, your spell will sway over this as well.

Yet acquaintances are fresh, features'd go dim then
I'd not remain like now, you too'd change a lot.

How this age like suffered in inhibitions
Who's escaped time, we too'd be cheated as well.

This is the practice of life, coming alone, going alone
At value as much mingles into the other

This my wonder of experience will live after I go
Before turning into ashes this'll be cast in words.

Ghazal

I desire my lips should touch thine fire
Today I want taking you in my embrace.

The names of all relations got very old
Which relation should I name to call you.

Mind says from a kiss of your forehead
I can search my lost shadow

The life that passed without living, sans you
I should get you write some words on its pages.

I kept limping in my sun, heated up gasping
Why your thick shadows remained illusive afar.

Still there is long journey we could cover together
So many paths wait for footsteps.

Please dedicate a whisper of love to me today
For your sake I'd offer millions of prayers.

Ghazal

Leave you, I can't even see your shadow
Why then something is happening to my mind.

One who yearns to break all bonds for salvation
Even he desires the embrace of affectionate arms.

You are misty, you're faded, all your hues gone dim
Some filthy mirror are cursing a fair face.

The body much decorated in shine many hues spread
Just think how you'll remove the inner gloom.

Man who knowingly got seized in the thorns of path
He was just testing his confidence as such.

Ghazal

Neither in day nor at night, at dusk or in dawn
Untimely met my confidants whenever did they meet

Is it age or some journey of circles
When passed on, met some more circles.

Distances were long enough, rocky were the paths
Lights were just dim but dense were the glooms

Whenever he was sighted, was there afar on horizons
When reached there, the horizons went farther

Every type of din was around me day and night
I could not hear thy whispers that could turn a song of breaths.

Love lorn hearts, numerous passengers of life
Some faces also met soaking in ill will.

Bird slept in the nest, light did smile
When awoke at dawn, tears were flowing.

Ghazal

Separately, they kept drowning, swimming
Those with me kept travelling.

When could strangers be ours own
When strangers remained attached to homes.

My association and here was an old one
Still many curtains of secrets remained.

They spent life like non-entities
Who kept sacrificing lives for you.

How the separation was endured all life
How these pangs were undergone.

Calling balm, they had put salt
Even so wound mine kept healing up.

Glow worms could respond only to the night
They kept fearing the light of days.

Ghazal

He feels sad at the deceit of relations
Then gets hopeful for the moment of despair.

Watching love strings straining, he gets upset
Becomes a solace for a distraught mind.

Pours on the drought his land like a dense cloud
Seeing water he becomes a smouldering thirst.

The notes of flute appear light, dew drenched
Thinking all this, he becomes just a realisation.

He keeps waiting for some tranquil voice every moment
He becomes himself faith for these voices.

Ghazal

The thirsty stopped seeing waters serene
When touched he sensed a poison liquified.

It was green and flourishing life like tree
Though storms blew and extremes did befall.

The guilty is strange, the judge stands amazed
Still he breathing after drinking so much poison.

Your glances always watch games of marbles
How could I show the waves of my heart stream?

Knew not yet when gets normal
Know not when desperations come beseizing

How many were griefs, still the village was great
Countless problems are here, even so the town is pretty.

Covering long distances he reached the place
Enemies say: get lost; Friends say : stay on.

Ghazal

Everytime you invite and then consider me a guest
Remove all barriers unhesitatingly and not show just favours.

Why bitter desperation keeps thee straying day and night
Is your courtyard hollow like wilkin mine.

Despite your many efforts, neither hunger was satiated nor thirst
Why then so much is gathered in the house unnecessarily?

You call it resurrection, he gets happy and feels proud
One who was all right now appears dishonest.

Who comforts all odds and preserves like tress
Why he feels sometimes hopeless and lifeless.

Wandering about on uneven lands isolated and desperate moods
Some call it a big curse, I find it a blessing.

No difference for a sage, of being a big or a small
One is one's own servant and own king as well.

Ghazal

I have treasured up the shadows till now of one
When could I see that delicate bosom?

I mailed them somewhere, they reached elsewhere
Now ages have passed in hesitation since I mailed a letter.

Just I'll return immediately what I could ask of her
Just if she smiles and says 'a nice welcome'

Some observe faces, some can see garments
None can peer through the griefs deep down the hearts

Mountains sometimes and jungles Oceans or skies blue
He just keeps wandering somewhere in search of lost dreams.

Neither journeys were over nor deserts Neither shade yonder nor water
No solace is there for those who are tormented by love.

We mingled in blood ourselves, an unending desperation
Never will they rest, these sons of Adam.

Ghazal

Too difficult has become friendship
Too easy has turned animosity
What sort of man was he once
What sort of one now has he become.

A lot more is not as it was earlier
None is bereft of this reality
The darkness of night has got thicker
The lights have turned more dim.

There is din of instruments out of tune
Clumsy sounds pour out of the throat
Whose notes echoed in hearts that flute
Now has broken and disappeared.

We left home boldly, heads aloft
The shame was lying in ambush in front
Which stink we were surrounded in
We had cherished enjoying fragrance.

We thought life is just along
But saw it was roaming elsewhere
How come it was separated so?
We have yet to know how it happened.

Ghazal

Neither they look like dear ones nor like well wishers
Even so they went on calling we are your friends.

Facing many odds we held high our self-respect
Thus, keep cursing the ones like the sycophants.

We have often lost, you've always won
Why then thy moans appear like those of the vanquished?

Fibs confront many a times behind the curtain of truth
We are given word like planned deceptions

What is wrong if seasons of mind keep changing
Sometimes they are like gasps and at other like laughter.

My way of narration is just different
Others may have such griefs as I do relate.

It is not so late if you write some words of love
Many pages of age remain yet unwritten.

Ghazal

Without a response I keep suffering pangs of talking alone
Without replies I keep sending message through winds.

Perhaps I might get a clue of that lost companion
Thinking all this I kept walking till the next turn.

Thick smoke should sometimes emit light and glow
I should keep simmering such, I should keep burning.

Who's erased the words of friendship surreptuously
She should avoid me, I should avoid her as well.

I should be like steel in the face of life's odds
Whenever melt, showing mellow down in a song.

Ghazal

There be deserted land or pitch dark throng
The path will become where we pass along.

Coming across a cool stream I'll quench my thirst
I won't demand even a draught from ponds strange.

It did not poison, it did not storm
How long the priggish ones will go on stinging.

There is no account of favours nor be a reply
You still laugh dumbly and feign coughing.

Consciousness is a flute and thought is like a rainbow
Only those should come to us who cherish dipping in colours.

Ghazal

One's own self is appearing non-plussed
Don't decorate loose colours on the face.

Don't embrace such consolation
As becomes a dark dungeon for life.

What acquaintance we did experience
Neither we met whole heartedly nor we bid adieu.

It is good you are now satisfied
Please pray the same for me.

There is much closeness in bodies
Why then are distances in minds?

How come she disappeared and where?
*Neither was a stream on the way nor an earthen pitcher.

It is a bit fragrant, a little bitter
Where from has come flowing this wind.

* The reference here is of Sohni, the heroine of Punjabi legend who tried crossing the river Chenab on an earthen pitcher and drowned.

Ghazal

Let us meet again separated from time immemorial
Like those ones in love
Like a string of relationship
Gets strong steadily.

One should get comfort cool and the other gets warmth
Like frozen fingertips touch a bowl of hot milk.

A dim fragrance should mingle in breathes as such
As a Song of dim melodies mellows in the sounds.

The voices warm of someone echoing in the memories again today
Like a music melodious of the first rain of the season.

Numerous griefs and comforts sped our threshold
Numerous years of age have passed in hurry.

Ghazal

Why should I lose peace of mind and waste time?
Sitting in the company of the senseless, I should not talk sublime.

I have known this too from my long experience
Where should I keep quiet and with whom have dialogue.

Often I forget you in daily chores
In leisure, in moments of solitude some times I do recall.

Looking backward is a bad habit in a journey
I should look ahead should, improvise such rhyme.

I should throw a handful blossoms so should scatter around
I should inhabit just a corner of this desert, stretched up.

Indian Institute of Advanced Study
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Date 14.12.14
Shimla

Something remains unheard
Something sounds strange
Some gets deep down

“Identity”

Poetry has always been associated with a passion and with a potential to enter into the realm of one's existence in order to disturb it, mould it while also simultaneously producing a certain aesthetic, a certain pleasure. The ornamental words in Harbhajan Halwarvi's poems also does the same by creating a beautiful poetic world with a style which is simple yet arresting. Loneliness, love and nature are some of the themes which have found lucid expression in this Sahitya Akademi Award-winning collection *Across the Bridges* originally published as *Pullan De Paar* in Punjabi. Thus all that comes out through the language of Halwarvi ossifies into a realm some of which is *unheard*, some of which *sounds strange*, yet some of it *gets deep down*.

Born in 1943, in Ludhiana, Punjab, **Harbhajan Halwarvi** is a poet and journalist. Author of books like *Paun Udas Hai*, *Pighle Hoe Pal*, *Cheen Vich Kujh Din*, *Yadan Mither Desh Dian*, Halwarvi is also the recipient of Shiromani Punjabi Patrakar Award from the Government of Punjab in 1990.

Pawan Gulati is a lecturer in English in Government Inservice Training Centre, Faridkot (Punjab). A prolific translator, he has translated from Punjabi into English the poems of Sukhvinder Kamboj, Manga Besi and Amarjit Singh. He has also translated several works from English into Punjabi. His recent work is *and the Sea*.

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