



Hri-searching Southasia

Dear All,

This year marks the 30th death anniversary of Faiz Ahmed Faiz, the Subcontinent's most iconic poet. Faiz, the writer of romantic verse, was also a staunch advocate of liberty, equality, and justice in the left political tradition. In November 1984, three decades ago – he may have left his earthly abode – but his poetry continues to inspire and give voice to the marginalised and oppressed across the globe. His words articulate the aspirations; anguish; pain; and suffering not only of the people of Pakistan and the Subcontinent but echo the sentiments of people everywhere. This issue of Hri-searching Southasia pays a small tribute to the memory of Faiz, and his message of humanity and peace. Salima Hashmi, a Lahore-based artist, cultural writer, painter, and anti-nuclear activist – also Faiz's daughter – writes about her discovery of letters between her father and mother. Tina Sani, renowned Karachi-based singer talks about celebrating the resistance poetry of Faiz. We also share links to videos from Tina Sani's live concert in Kathmandu earlier this year. Sani took us on a musical journey embracing Faiz's poetry, accompanied by Iqbal Hussain on the harmonium, Shyam Nepali on the sarangi, Nagendra Rai on the flute and Pramod Upadhyay on the tabla. Celebrated Nepali singer, Avas, enthralled the audience with his opening rendition of Faiz' eternal '*Bol ke lab azaad hain tere*', and well-known tabla player, Sarita Mishra, joined Tina Sani on stage for '*Mori Araj Suno*'.

Please share your inputs and suggestions with us at : contact@hrisouthasian.org

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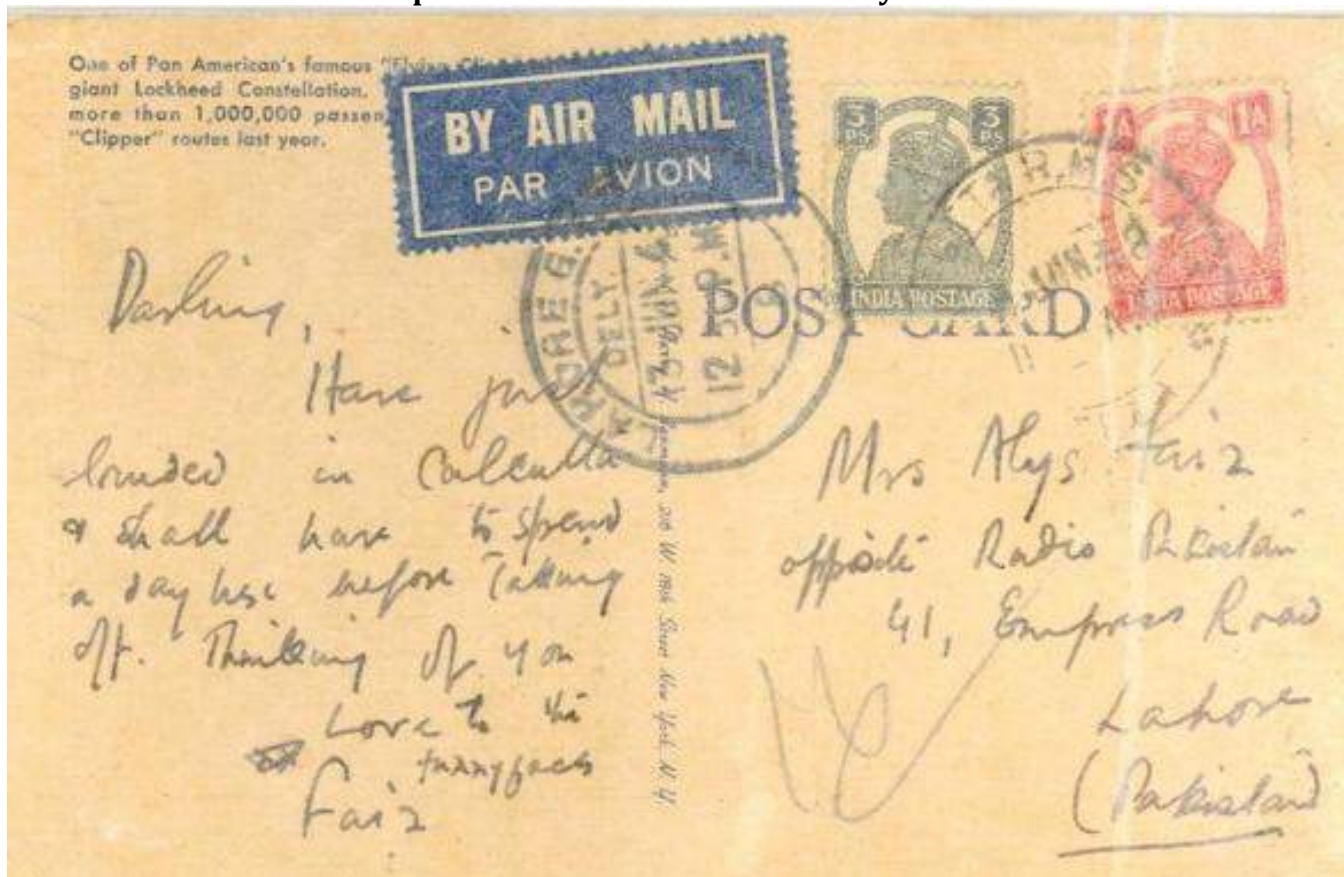
By Salima Hashmi

The daughter of Faiz Ahmed Faiz, the Subcontinent's iconic bard, discovers letters exchanged by her mother and father.

Since being Faiz Ahmed Faiz's daughter has given me privileged access to the family archives, I have become an accidental archivist. In 2009 I embarked upon the Faiz Ghar project to set up a small museum in a house leased to us by a friend and admirer of my father. We commenced sorting through Faiz's belongings, papers and books. It was not a massive collection by any means, owing to his nomadic, rather Spartan, but interesting life, that began on 13 February 1911 and ended on 20 November 1984. My mother Alys was instrumental in saving and sorting what little there was: a smart grey lounge suit, a cap, his scarf, his pen, and a reasonably large cache of letters, certificates and medals.

After my mother's death in 2003 all these things had been packed away in cartons in my house, waiting for just the sort of opportunity that the Faiz Ghar project afforded. Sifting through the papers, I came across a plastic bag containing some scraps. On closer look, I deciphered Faiz's writing, and the unmistakable stamp of the censor from the Hyderabad Jail, where Faiz spent part of his imprisonment between 1951 and 1955 for his role in the Rawalpindi Conspiracy – a Soviet-backed coup attempt against Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan. These few letters were in poor shape, but readable. It is surprising that they have survived at all. Alys and Faiz had moved to Beirut in 1978. On return, all seemed to be in order in the house – except the cupboard, which had been attacked by termites. That cupboard contained Faiz's letters from jail, which were later preserved with the help of Asma Ibrahim, transcribed by Kyla Pasha, and published in 2011 under the title *Two Loves*.

A postcard from Faiz to his wife Alys



Prison poetry

The letters offer a close look at Faiz's correspondence with Alys over the years, especially from prison in the early 1950s. I persuaded the photographer Arif Mahmood to identify and photograph my father's cell, which I remembered, having been allowed to visit it once. The occasion was Eid. The prisoners' families had been allowed into the inner sanctum of Hyderabad Jail, and into the courtyard, where in the centre, stood a courtroom. Faiz's trial had been held there in camera, with no one but the accused, judges and lawyers present; the Rawalpindi Conspiracy Case Act forbade any public access to information about the proceedings.



From his jail cell, on 25 March 1952, Faiz wrote to Alys:

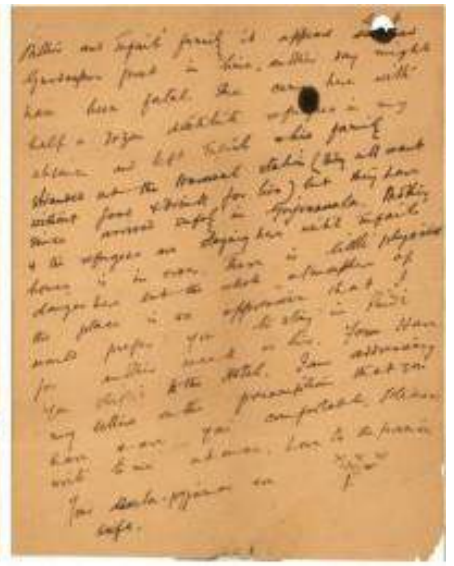
I think pain and unhappiness are distinct and different things and it is possible to go on suffering pain without being really unhappy. Pain is something external, something that comes from without, an ephemeral accident like a physical ailment, like our present separation, like the death of a brother. Unhappiness on the other hand, although produced by pain is something within yourself which grows, develops and envelops you if you allow it to do so and do not watch out. Pain, no one can avoid but unhappiness you can overcome if you consider something worthwhile enough to live for. Perhaps I am becoming pedantic again so I shall leave it.

The weather here is exactly as you left it – only the nights have become a little colder and the days slightly warmer. I am in good spirits and better health and thinking of you and the funny faces with all the love there is in my heart. Kiss the little ones for me. All my love. Faiz

A day after Independence Day, on 15 August 1952, Faiz in all humility wrote about his poetic gift:

Your letter came today. I feel happy today after a mild attack of a blue period lasting over a few days. It must be the weather. It is more like spring than summer. The mornings are vaguely cool and disturbing like the first breath of love and the sun in the early hours brings more colour than heat. In the evening the breeze seems to bring the breath of the sea and the skies seem to close not on drab prison walls but on distant palm-fringed beaches ... And it is said like all beauty that is within your sight and beyond your grasp – like all beauty you know to be an illusion.

Yesterday, we had a change. The prison gateway was festooned with lights, red blue and green and four loud speakers blared forth radio programmes in cracked discordant voices. The lights and colours – the din felt more like Anarkali than Hyderabad jail and for a long time I could not sleep. In the morning I woke up with a strange happiness in my heart and I wrote a poem which I enclose. I was astounded to find that it took me hardly any time at all and I had practically finished when we went down to breakfast. I am still feeling rather intoxicated with it and am beginning to fear that perhaps some day I might end up as a poet after all.



Faiz's poignant letter from 8 October 1952 reads:

Beloved,

This morning the moon shone so brightly in my face that it woke me up. The jail bell tolled the half hour after four. I sat up in my bed and at the same moment Arbab [a fellow prisoner] in the bed next to me also sat up and smiled at me. He went back to sleep at once but I got up and sat in the verandah opposite my cell and watched the morning come. I heard the jail lock open and shut as the guards changed the key and chains rattle in the distance and the iron gates and doors clamp their jaws as if they were chewing up the last remains of the night's starry darkness.

Then the breeze slowly rose like a languid woman and the sky slowly paled and the stars seemed to billow up and down in pearly white pools and sucked them under. I sat and watched and thoughts and memories flooded into the mind.

Perhaps it was on a morning like this that the moon beckoned to a lonely traveller a little distance from where I sit and took him away into the unknown and the traveller was my brother.

Perhaps the moon is at this moment softly shining on the upturned faces, painless now in death, of the murdered men in Korean prison camps and these dead men too are my brothers. When they lived they lived far away in lands I have not seen but they also lived in me and were a part of my blood and those who have killed them have killed a part of me and shed some of my blood. Albeit they are dead, as my brother is dead and only the dead can adequately mourn for the dead. Let the living only rejoice for the living.

Perhaps someday I shall be able to put this morning into verse and I have threatened Arbab that if I do, he might become immortal by being in it.

Heat and dust

These handwritten letters that my parents exchanged are fascinating repositories of the turbulent times when the British Empire was being dismantled in the Subcontinent. In a letter from 1943 in Delhi, in the midst of the Independence movement, Faiz said:

Darling

Delhi heat is coming into its own with 100 during the day and dust storms in the evenings but the nights are cool. Further heat is being engendered by the discussion, the talk of communal riots etc. I have twice

visited the Imperial Hotel lawn in the evening in company with Morris Jones, and the atmosphere here needs a Voltaire or Swift or some equally great satirist to describe it. Every giggling ninny is a political expert these days and the Foreign Correspondents I bet are having the time of their lives. Woodrow Whatt (the MP) asked me to lunch the other day. He insisted on talking politics and I insisted on talking about Freda Bedi [British-born teacher of English who participated in Gandhi's Satyagraha], so there was a stalemate.



In 1947, the tumultuous year when Partition took place, Alys wrote from Srinagar:

Dearest,

Haven't heard from you yet but Taseer tells me that he had a telegram from Chris to say you have arrived ... The expected disturbances fortunately did not materialise but there has been a new flare-up in the last two days involving 13 deaths. These were however, individual cases ... no general panic. To make up for this there has been a terrible fresh outbreak in Amritsar and conditions there, I am told, are utterly indescribable. The Radcliff(e) Award came up and you must have seen it.

The Muslims have got their Pakistan, the Hindus and Sikhs their divided Punjab and Bengal, but I have yet to meet a person, Muslim, Hindu or Sikh who feels enthusiastic about the future. I can't think of any country whose people felt so miserable on the eve of freedom and liberation. Both morally and politically the British could not have hoped for a greater triumph.

A day later, Faiz responded from Lahore,

Darling

Arrived here safely the day before yesterday. For once, safety has some meaning, for if I had been a Hindu or a Sikh I could never have got beyond half-way. The situation in the West, however, bears no comparison to what has happened and is happening in the East. It seemed so unreal and far away as long as I was in Srinagar, but it has all come back and is far, far worse than anything I

had feared and imagined. From early morning till late evening one hears nothing but tales of horror and even though one ties shut one's mind and one's ears tight against them there is no escape from the horror or tragedy that surrounds one from every side. To be alone and ponder over it all is an unbearable pain and one has conceived a horror of being alone with one's thoughts.

It is difficult to see a path or a light in the gloom but one has to maintain one's reason and one's courage and I shall certainly maintain. I am glad you are not here although Lahore is peaceful for now, it resembles more a deserted wilderness than a populated city.

Faiz on Gandhi

At the height of the Kashmir conflict in 1948, Faiz flew to Delhi for Mahatma Gandhi's funeral. In his editorial in the *Pakistan Times* dated 2 February 1948, Faiz wrote:

The British tradition of announcing the death of a king is "The king is dead, long live the king!" Nearly 25 years ago, Mahatma Gandhi writing a moving editorial on the late C R Das in his exquisite English captioned it as "Deshbandhu is dead, long live Deshbandhu!" If we have chosen such a title for our humble tribute to Gandhiji, it is because we are convinced, more than ever before, that very few indeed have lived in this degenerate century who could lay greater claim to immortality than this true servant of humanity and champion of downtrodden. An agonizing 48 hours at the time of writing this article, have passed since Mahatma Gandhi left this mortal coil. The first impact of the shock is slowly spending itself out, and through the murky mist of mourning and grief a faint light of optimistic expectation that Gandhiji has not died in vain, is glowing.

Maybe it is premature to draw such a conclusion now in terms of net result, but judging by the fact the tragedy has profoundly stirred the world's conscience, we may be forgiven if we may store by the innate goodness of man. At least we can tell at the top of our voice suspicious friends in India that the passing away of Gandhiji is as grievous a blow to Pakistan as it is to India. We have observed distressed looks, seen moistened eyes and heard faltering voices in this vast sprawling city of Lahore to a degree to be seen to be believed.

We have also seen spontaneous manifestations of grief on the part of our fellow citizens in the shape of observance of a holiday and hartal. Let our friends in India take note – and we declare it with all the emphasis at our command – that we in Pakistan are human enough to respond to any gesture of goodwill, any token of friendliness and, last but not least any call for cooperation from the other side of the border. Earlier we have indulged in a bit of optimism – and that for a very good reason. In India, sedulous and we believe sincere, heart searching has been going on ever since the tragedy took place. The Government of India too seems to have at long last realised that they are sitting on top of a volcano. And above all, a small incident in Bombay in which a Hindu mob broke open the office of the Anti-Pakistan Front on Saturday and reduced its furnishing to smithereens is we believe, realisation – thought tragically belated – of the fact that Muslims are, after all, not the sinners – not to say the enemies of India. A large section of Hindus have discovered where their enemies reside and what political labels they flaunt.

Perhaps someday I might end up as a poet after all

continued

Faiz's letters were published as part of the Faiz Centennial in 2011, and that same year I visited a jail in Punjab where he had been incarcerated. As children, my sister and I had been given special permission to accompany him right into his cell's yard to see the garden he had planted. On the way, my father pointed out the barracks where Motilal Nehru and Khan Ghaffar Khan had been interned during the Raj. I made the journey to Montgomery jail (now Sahiwal) and retraced my steps. The cell now has a plaque outside it commemorating Faiz (perhaps the only such one in Pakistan!) and as I stepped into the yard, I saw the garden was still there. The grass, the shrubs, the flowers, even the tree was in full bloom, in tribute to Faiz.

~This article is adapted from a presentation at the [first-ever meeting](#) of archivists from across Southasia organised by the Hri Institute in Bangalore., and first published in [Himal Southasian](#), March 2013

~ Salima Hashmi is a Lahore-based artist, cultural writer, painter, and anti-nuclear activist. She is Dean of the School of Visual Arts & Design at Beaconhouse National University. She is the author of *Unveiling the Visible: Lives and Works of Women Artists of Pakistan* (2005), and *illustrator of A Song for this day: 52 poems* by Faiz Ahmed Faiz.

1972 21st at 16th
Dement
The sitting in front of the garden beyond
the line of trees - across hills from
sitting out on the terrace of the hotel
which overlooks the valley. The valley too
is very green, fresh but it looks more
from the top. It is cold here, almost
chilly, & the air is fresh & cleansing
although without the perfume of Kathmandu
flowers. There are flowers here too but they
look dry & less & less happy. I set a
few more fresh water bottles there for
a dead brother of Kathmandu.
Arrived in Kuala Lumpur after a
pleasant flight & I felt strange
& warm as a plane arrived.

1972 21st at 16th
Dement
I met a friend in Kuala Lumpur (I suppose
it was the hotel manager) & that he
will give me just 24 hours before
a transport to my brief assignment
in Kuala Lumpur. The world is full with
no fear of you, soon perhaps
before the letter.
Love
D.
These last pages are
handwritten because
electricity is off at 10 pm
every day.

Verse in the worst times

By Tina Sani

Faiz's resistance poetry is resoundingly relevant in today's turbulent Pakistan.

Often I am asked a very difficult question. Can revolutionary poetry bring change and reform society? They probably ask me this because I am well-known in Pakistan for singing Faiz Ahmad Faiz's poetry. It has been nearly 30 years since I first sang his verses, and I still don't know if I have the answer. Since then, many leaders have come and gone; we have seen two martial law regimes, three elections, and a couple of caretaker governments. The turmoil hasn't ended. But there is never really one single factor that can bring change in society; many things need to tie in to bring real positive change. Poets, writers, artists, painters, actors, musicians, singers, theatre, films and the media - all have their roles to play in changing public opinion. But they are not magicians and it has to be the will of society itself to change.

Faiz's magical words inspired me enough to dedicate most of my career singing such poetry, believing it might strike the right chord somewhere, someday. But can the power of such words move the earth and suddenly make people at the helm of affairs feed the hungry; shelter the homeless; create equal opportunities; end nepotism; erase gender inequality; bring education to all; end corruption and in short perform miracles?

No! Such poetry can be likened to an architect's blue print, a dream, or even a warning or a road map, which can come alive only when coupled with the serious intention of the listener or the reader to make it a reality. This requires perseverance, hard work and focus.

Speaking the Truth

For years I have heard Faiz's words like '*Bol ke lab Azad hain teray*' (Speak, Your lips are free) used by many people as an expression for freedom of speech as it was meant to be. They have been used in political rallies, in protests demanding justice, and freeing the judiciary, in street protests against corruption, in strikes against censorship, in schools by students, by organisations fighting for equal gender rights, television dramas, individuals, political parties fighting to be heard, by media whenever the authorities tried to suppress their voices. It is even an anthem for an NGO in India and I believe, right here in Nepal it was part of a movement against monarchy. I saw this song taking on its own life. But when a choir of about forty children sang it in Lahore at the Faiz Aman Mela recently, I got goose bumps. When children remind us to, "speak your truth, while you still have time", it makes you just want to melt into the ground. In my personal life too, this song always reminded me to be strong and speak up.



Tina Sani

Song bombs

Bahaar Aayi (Spring has arrived) was another such song which I recorded when Faiz was banned on both Pakistan Television and Radio Pakistan, the only electronic media in the country at the time and both state-owned. It was Zia ul Haq's martial law in the country. Although we knew there was nowhere we could air it, we still felt that we must continue recording and working on such poetry.. We strongly believed that one day when these chains are broken and bans lifted, these songs would spread like wildfire and infuse passion and verve in people.



We recorded the song a few months before Benazir Bhutto returned to Pakistan in April 1986. The drive to the studio that evening was a harrowing one, as riots had broken out all over Karachi. Our studio was in a very volatile area, with incidents of people setting tyres on fire on the main road, and so we had to take a narrow parallel street to our studio. For reasons of safety, we stayed overnight at the studio after the recording. It felt very much like a subversive activity, but instead of making bombs we were making songs – a million times more lethal as they had the potential to wake up minds and fire imaginations.

Benazir Bhutto's historical return to Pakistan in 1986 after years of self exile, defying Zia Ul Haq's martial regime, was a heady one. *Bahaar Aayi* was released. The song ran in a nonstop loop on television as Benazir's cavalcade made it slowly through thousands of people lining the streets of Karachi, welcoming democracy home.

A few years later, we saw Benazir's government end in much political turmoil, and *Bahaar Aayi* resurfaced on televisions and radios as Nawaz Sharif's government assumed power. A year or two later, another interruption, and this time General Musharraf toppled Nawaz Sharif's government, and *Bahaar Aayi* once again dominated the airwaves.

By then, I had let the song go wherever it wanted to, wondering why *Bahaar Aayi* was invoked whenever a new government came into power. Maybe the people scurrying to find a suitable song for the return of their leaders, found the lines *Bahaar Aayi* apt, signalling the return of their leader in the shape of spring. But Faiz's imminent spring was a warning that times had changed and now that people were better informed, they would demand accountability from all political parties.

So like I said, I let it go ... but not before I saw the most unique interpretation of this poem by someone who decided to stage a dance performance on it Bollywood style with village belles swinging and swaying in the background while the hero and heroine gazed romantically at each other, singing *Bahaar Aayi* with complete abandon. Well, why not - it's less dangerous than using poetry to deceive the common man.

Shaking foundations

Another incredible piece of poetry by Faiz is *Hum Dekhenge* (We shall Witness) – a forceful warning to the ones in power. On behalf of the people, Faiz prophesizes that there will be a day of judgement likening it to the Day of Judgement, using divine metaphors like the earth splitting, mountains crumbling and a trial of fire for sinners.



The first time the legendary Iqbal Bano sang this poem at the Al-Hamra Performing Arts Theatre in Lahore in 1985, she brought the house down. As she sang the opening verses of *Hum Dekhenge* the house broke into a deafening applause. As the Al Hamra Theatre is a state owned facility, the officials on duty that night were nervous as the atmosphere in the theatre was electrifying. People thronged to listen, and as if on cue, the power was cut off. On that most memorable night, the entire hall went dark but that only heightened emotions. The hall pulsated with the thump of feet and claps of the standing room-only audience and Iqbal Bano's powerful rendition shook the very foundations of the building. The singing didn't stop, the audience was in raptures – I was there that night to see the magic happen. This song became an expression for anyone who wanted to warn their oppressors. Most audiences I have sung for in India and Pakistan know it by heart.

A rather amusing moment came when the newly-formed General Musharraf government asked me if I would perform at an event for the General at the Peshawar Governor House. I was in knots, although I wasn't sure what I would sing that evening but I was sure what I was NOT going to sing that evening – Faiz's *Hum Dekhenge*. I went through my usual repertoire that evening, coming close to the end of the performance I asked the General if he had any special requests, and to our absolute amazement he requested *Hum Dekhenge*! Now that completely puzzled me. As I sang I kept thinking, "But it was written against regimes like yours!" and as if that was not enough, the General got up asking for a mike and sang it with me! I must confess that there is something very bizarre about singing his poetry to the very people Faiz warned us against, and even more disturbing that they seem to thoroughly enjoy it.

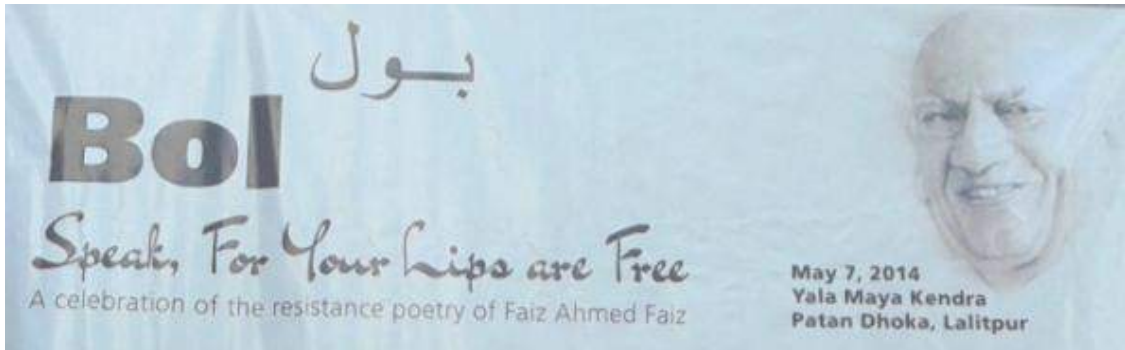
Sometimes, I fear that his poetry is in danger of becoming elitist, especially when I have had to sing it at more glitzy, corporate events, and often after such a performance, I have felt wasted singing for people who left his message behind like a soiled piece of tissue on the floor. But I will keep on singing Faiz and poetry to all: to all leaders, political parties, generals, journalists, corporate(s), multinationals, labour unions, and students. In short, to anyone who will listen to him. Because it's not my place to choose who should and shouldn't listen to this kind of poetry, and like Faiz said:

*Faiz Hota Rahay Jo Hona Hai
Geet Likhtay Raha Karo Bethay*

*Faiz! whatever happens, so be it
You just sit ... and keep writing*

This presentation was made at [Hri's one-day conference](#) in May.

Earlier this year, in May 2014, we had invited the lovely Tina Sani to join us for a conference, 'Reclaiming the Creative Commons: The Southasian Surge Towards Pluralism, Freedom and Democracy'. We also used this opportunity, to organise a concert celebrating the resistance poetry of Faiz. We bring to your videos from this concert.



Renowned Karachi-based artiste Tina Sani drew us into her vision of Faiz Ahmed Faiz, the Subcontinent's most iconic poet. She took us on a musical journey that embraces Faiz the writer of romantic poetry, and the staunch advocate of liberty, equality and justice in the left political tradition. The quintessential internationalist speaking for the marginalised and oppressed across the globe, he was nevertheless grounded in a region marked by competing nationalisms.

Tina Sani has been singing professionally since 1979. Over three decades later, she can be counted amongst the leading ghazal singers of the day. Sani initiated formal training in classical music with Ustad Nizamuddin Khan Sahib, son of Ustad Ramzan Khan Sahib of Delhi gharana, and later with Ustad Chand Amrohvi. Merging her commitment to the classical discipline with a native love for Urdu poetry, she followed in the footsteps of ghazal maestros such as Khan Sahib Mehdi Hasan, Begum Akhtar, Mukhtar Begum, and Farida Khanum. Tina Sani is the recipient of the 'President's Pride of Performance', Pakistan's highest civilian award in 2003 and in 2011 she received the President of India's award for 'Outstanding Contribution to Music'.

Tina Sani was accompanied by Iqbal Hussain on Harmonium, Shyam Nepali on Sarangi, Nagendra Rai on Flute and Pramod Upadhyaya on Tabla.

Celebrated Nepali singer, Avas, enthralled the audience with his opening rendition of 'Bol ke lab azaad hain tere', and well-known tabla player, Sarita Mishra, joined Tina Sani on stage for 'Mori Araj Suno'.

BOL KE LAB AZAD HAIN TERE | Speak, Your Lips Are Free

Transliteration and Translation by Victor G. Kiernan in 'Poems of Faiz'

bol, ke lab aazad haiN tere
bol, zabaaN ab tak teri hai
tera sutwaaN jism hai tera
bol ke jaaN ab tak teri hai
dekh ke aahangar ki dukaan meiN
tund haiN sholay, surKh hai aahan
khulnay lagay qufloN ke dahaane
phela har ek zanjeer ka daaman
bol, yeh thoRa waqt buhut hai
jism-o zabaaN ki maut se pehle
bol ke such zinda hai ab tak
bol, jo kuch kehna hai keh le!

V.G. Kiernan's poetic translation:

Speak, for your two lips are free;
Speak, your tongue is still your own;
This straight body still is yours'
Speak, your life is still your own.
See how in the blacksmith's forge
Flames leap high and steel glows red,
Padlocks open wide their jaws,
Every chain's embrace outspread!
Time enough is this brief hour
Until body and tongue lie dead;
Speak, for truth is living yet—
Speak whatever must be said.

V.G. Kiernan's literal translation:

Speak, for your lips are free;
Speak, your tongue is still yours,
Your upright body is yours'
Speak, your life is still yours.
See how in the blacksmith's shop
The flames are hot, the iron is red,
Mouths of locks have begun to open,
Each chain's skirt has spread wide.
Speak, this little time is plenty
Before the death of body and tongue;
Speak, for truth is still alive—
Speak, say whatever is to be said.



**Celebrated Nepali singer, Avas, opens with
his rendition of 'Bol ke lab azaad hain tere'**



Tina Sani sings 'Bol ke lab azaad hain tere'

DASHT-E-TANHAAI | In The Wasteland Of My Loneliness

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Dasht-e-tanhaai mein ai jaan-e-jahaan larzaan hai
Teri awaaz ke saaye, tere honthon ke saraab

Dasht-e-tanhaai mein doori ke khas-o-khaak kitne
Khil rahe hain tere pehloo ke saman aur gulaab

Dasht-e-tanhaai mein ai jaan-e-jahaan larzaan hai
Teri awaaz ke saaye, tere honthon ke saraab

Dasht-e-tanhaai mein doori ke khas-o-khaak kitne
Khil rahe hain tere pehloo ke saman aur gulaab

Uth rahi hai kahin qurbat se teri saans ke aanch
Apni kushboo mein sulagti hui madhdam madhdam

Door ufaq par chamakti hui qatraa qatraa
Gir rahi hai tere dildaar nazar ki shabnam

Kis qadar pyaar se ai jaan-e-jahaan rakhkha hai
Dil ke rukhsaar pe is waqt teri yaad ne haath

Yoon gumaan hotaa hai garche hai abhi subhaa-e-
firaag
Dhal gayaa hijr kaa din, aa bhi gayi vasl ke raat

In the wasteland of my loneliness,
O love of my life, lie quivering
wraiths of your whispers,
your delirious lips.

In the wasteland of my loneliness,
there, in the dirt and ashes
of distance, blossom roses
and jasmines of our intimacy.

The warmth of your breath
exhaled, from somewhere close,
smoulders, softly, gently
in its own fragrance,

while glistening,
from a distance, the enchantment
of your glance falls like dew,
drop by drop.

O! the gentleness, my love,
with which the hand
of your remembrance strokes
the cheek of my desire.

While it still may seem
like the first light of our parting,
the day of separation has waned,
the eternal night of union is upon us.

HUM DEKHENGE | We Shall See

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Laazim hai ki hum bhi dekhenge
Woh din jiskaa ke waada hai,
Jo lau-e-azl mein likha hai

Jab zulm-o-sitam ke koh-e-garaan
Rooi ki tarah udd jaayenge,

Hum mehkoomon ke paaon tale
jab dharti dhad dhad dhadkegi,

Aur ahl-e-hukam ke sar oopar
Jab bijli kad kad kadkegi,

Jab arz-e-khudaa ke kaabe se
Sab but uthwaaey jaayenge,

Hum ahl-e-safaa mardood-e-haram
Masnad pe bithaaey jaayenge.

Sab taaj uchaaley jaayenge.
Sab takht giraayey jayyenge.

Bas naam rahega Allah kaa,
Jo ghaayab bhi hai, haazir bhi,
Jo manzar bhi hai, naazir bhi.

Utthegaa 'An-al-haq' kaa naara
Jo main bhi hoon, aur tum bhi ho,

Aur raaj karegi Khalq-e-Khuda
Jo mai bhi hoon, aur tum bhi ho.

Inevitably, we shall also see the day
that was promised to us, decreed
on the tablet of eternity.

When dark peaks of torment and tyranny
will be blown away like cotton fluff;

When the earth's beating, beating heart
will pulsate beneath our broken feet;

When crackling, crashing lightning
will smite the heads of our tormentors;

When, from the seat of the Almighty
every pedestal will lie displaced;

Then, the dispossessed we; we,
who kept the faith will be installed
to our inalienable legacy.
Every crown will be flung.
Each throne brought down.

Only His name will remain; He,
who is both unseen, and ubiquitous; He,
who is both the vision and the beholder.

When the clarion call of 'I am Truth'
(the truth that is me and the truth that is you)
will ring out, all God's creatures will rule,
those like me and those like you.



KUCH PEHLE IN AANKHON AAGE

Translation unavailable

Kuch pahale in ankhon age kya kya na nazara guzra tha
Kya raushan ho jati thi gali jab yar hamara guzra tha

The kitne ache log k jinko apne gam se fursat thi
Sab puchen the ahawal jo koi dard ka mara guzra tha

Ab k to khizan aisi thahari wo sare zamane bhul gaye
Jab mausam-e-gul har phere main a a k dubara guzra tha

Thi yaron k buhtat to ham agyar se bhi bezar na the
Jab mil baithe to dushman ka bhi sath gawara guzra tha

Ab to hath sujhai na dewe lekin ab se pahle to
Ankh uthate hi ek nazar main alam sara guzra tha



KAB YAD MEIN TERA SAATH NAHIN

Translation unavailable

Kab yaad mein tera saath nahi
Kab haath mein tera haath nahi
Sad shukar k apni raaton mein
Ab hijar ki koi raat nahi

Mushkil hain agar haalaat wahan
Dil bech aaein jaan de aaein
Dil walo koocha-e-jana mein
Kya aise bhi hahlaat nahi

Jis dhaj se koi mktal mein gaya
Wo shaan salamat rehti hai
Ye jaan to aani jaani hai
Iss jaan ki to koi baat nahi

Maidaan-e-wafa darbaar nahi
Yaan naam-o-nasab ki pooch kahan
Aashiq to kisi ka naam nahi
Kuch ishq kisi ki zaat nahi

Ye baazi ishq ki baazi hai
Jo chahey laga do dar kaisa
Gar jeet gaay to kya kehna
Harey bhi to baazi maat nahi

MERE DIL MERE MUSAFIR | My Heart, My Traveller

Translation by Hamid Rahim Sheikh



Meray dil meray musafir
Hua phir sey hukm sadir
K watan badar hon hum tum

Dein gali gali sadain
Karein rukh nagar nagar ka
Ke suraagh koi paein
Kisi yar e nama bar ka

Har ik ajnabi sey poochein
Jo pata tha apney ghar ka
Sar e kooley nashenayan
Hamein din sey raat karna

Kabhi iss sey baat karna
Kabhi us sey baat karna
Tumhein kya kahoon key kya hey
Shab e gham buri balaa hey

Hamein yeh bhi tha ghaneemat
Jo koi shumaar hota
Hamein kya bura tha marna
Agar eik baar hota!

Mere dil mere musafir

My heart, my fellow traveler
It has been decreed again
That you and I be exiled,
go calling out in every street,
turn to every town.
To search for a clue
of a messenger from our Beloved.
To ask every stranger
the way back to our home.

In this town of unfamiliar folk
we drudge the day into the night
Talk to this stranger at times,
to that one at others.

How can I convey to you, my friend
how horrible is a night of loneliness
It would suffice to me
if there were just some count
I would gladly welcome death
if it were to come but once.

MORI ARAJ SUNO - DASTAGEER PIR | Hear my plea – O Protector, O Pir!

Translation by Coke Studio Pakistan



Mori araj suno, Dastgeer Peer
Mairee kahun kaa say mein apnay jiya ki pir
Mori araj suno, Dastgeer Peer
Rabba sachiya, toon tay akhia see
Ja oye bandiya jug da shah ain tu
Saadian ne'mataan terian daulataan nenh
Saada naib the ali-jaah ain tu
Ais laaray teh torr kudh puchia eh
Kee ais nimanay teh beetiyaan nenh
Kaddi saar we layee o rab saiyaan
Terey shah naal jag kee kitiyan nenh
Kithay dhons police sarkar dee eh
Kithay dhandhli maal patwaar di eh
Ainj hadaan wich kalpay jaan meri
Jeevain phahee ich koonj kurlaundi eh
Changa shah banayae rab saiyaan
Paulay khaandayaan waar na aundi eh
Mainu shahi naeen chaidi rab meray
Mein tay izzat da tukkar mangna haan
Meinu taang naeen mehlaan maraiaan di
Mein tay jeevain di nukkar mangnaa haan
Meri mannain tay tairian main mannan
Teri sohn jay ik wi gal moran
Jey ay maang nai pujdi tain rabba
Fayr main jawan teh rab koi hor loraan
Mori araj suno, dastagir pir

Hear my plea – O Protector, O Pir!
O Mother, to whom do I describe the anguish of
my soul?
Hear my plea – O Protector, O Pir!
O True Lord – well, You had said!
Go, oh servant! King of the world, are you
Our bounties are all for your benefit
Our viceroy and of exalted rank are you
After this assurance, did you ever take notice
What has been happening to this poor wretch
Did you ever bother to inquire, O Lord Master
What the world has done to your king
In one place, there is the menace of police and
state
In another, there is cheating over money and land
My very being aches to the bones in such a way
As the Koonj (crane), caught in the snare, shrieks!
A fine king, you have made, O Master!
Keeps bearing the humiliations of shoe-beatings
I don't want kingship, My Lord!
I just ask for a piece of bread, honourably-earned
I have no desire for palaces and mansions
I just ask for a corner to subsist in
Heed me and I will heed you
I swear to You that I will never refuse a single
command
If this bargain is not acceptable to Thee, O Lord
Then I shall go and get some other Lord
Hear my plea – O Protector, O Pir!

**MUJHSE PEHLI SI MUHABBAT MERE
MEHBOOB NA MAANG**
| My Love, Do Not Ask From Me The Love We
Shared Before

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Mujh se pehli si muhabbat mere mehboob na maang
Maine samjhaa tha ke tu hai to darakhshaan hai
hayaat
Tera gham hai to gham-e-dehar ka jhagdaa kyaa hai
Teri surat se hai aalam mein bahaaron ko sabaat
Teri aankhon ke siwaa duniyaa mein rakhkhaa kya hai
Tu jo mil jaaye to taqdir nigoon ho jaaye
Yoon na thaa maine faqat chaahaa thaa yoon ho
jaaye
Aur bhi dukh hai zamaane mein muhabbat ke siwaa
Raahatein aur bhi hain vasl ki raahat ke siwaa
Anginat sadiyon ki taareeq bahemaanaa tilism
Resham-o-atlas-o-kamkhwaab mein bunvaaye hue
Ja-ba-ja bikte hue koochaa-o-baazaar mein jism
Khaak mein lithade hue, khoon mein nehlaaye hue
Jism nikle hue amraaz ke tannooron se
Peep behti hui galte hue naasooron se
Laut jaati hai udhar ko bhi nazar, kya keeje?
Ab bhi dilkash hai tera husn, magar kya keeje?
Aur bhi dukh hai zamaane mein muhabbat ke siwaa
Raahatein aur bhi hain vasl ki raahat ke siwaa
Mujh se pehli si muhabbat mere mehboob na maang

My love, do not ask from me
the love we shared once before.
If you were here, I always thought
life would shine, eternally.

We share our grief, so why argue
over the sorrows of the world?
Your countenance is the assurance
of perennial spring, everywhere.

For what is the worth of this world
but the sight of your eyes?
If only I found you, the fates
would be enthralled.

This wasn't how it should have been,
except that I wanted it to be;
there are more sorrows in this world
beyond the anguish of love.

There is more to happiness
than the relief of reunion;
the blight of dark magic
of years beyond counting,

while draped in silk,
satin and brocade; everywhere,
in alleys and marketplaces,
young flesh is up for sale.

Dragged in the dirt,
bathed in blood, bodies
emerge from furnaces
of pestilence.

Pus flows untapped
from leaking ulcers.
My eyes can't look away,
what should I do?

Your beauty still allures, but
what can I do?
There are sorrows in this world
beyond the pleasures of love.

There is more to happiness
than the relief of reunion;
so my love, do not ask from me
the love we shared once before.

RAAT YUN DIL MEIN | At Night

Translation by Agha Shahid Ali in 'A Rebel's Silhouette'

Raat yun dil mein teri khoyi hui yaad aayi,
Jaise viraane mein chupke se bahaar aa jaye,
Jaise sahraon mein haule se chale baad-ae-
naseem,
Jaise bimaar ko be-wajaah qaraar aa jaaye

At night my lost memory of you returned
and I was like the empty field where
springtime,
without being noticed, is bringing flowers;
I was like the desert over which
the breeze moves gently, with great care;
I was like the dying patient
who, for no reason, smiles.



Beginning with Raat Yun, Tina Sani goes on to sing Nahin NigaaH Mein Manzil

NAHIN NIGAAH MEIN MANZIL TO JUSTAJOO HI SAHI

Transliteration and Translation by Kanwarpreet Grewal

Nahin nigah mein manzil, to justajoo hi sahi
Nahin wisaal mayassar to arzoo hi sahi
na tan mein khoon faraham, na ashk ankhon mein
namaaz-e-shauq to wajib hai, be-wuzoo hi sahi
kisi tarah to jame bazm maikade walo
nahin jo baada-o-sagar to haa-o-hoo hi sahi
gar intezaar kathin hai to jab talak ai dil
kisi ke wada-e-farda ki guftagoo hi sahi
dayaar-e-gair mein mahram agar nahin koi
to 'Faiz' zikr-e-watan apne rooh-ba-rooh hi sahi

The aim does seem distant, but I can still
maintain the desire,
Meeting her may not be in my destiny but I
can keep wishing to meet her

Blood no longer flows in my body and my
eyes have been drained of tears,
But I can still keep doing the prayers of
love, though the prayers may not be as
pure/proper

The tavern must keep rejoicing and hosting
people,
So what if there is no wine left, let the
tavern be full of laughter and loud noises

I agree that waiting is difficult, so I suggest
that while we wait,
Let's recall and discuss the promises made
by the beloved for the future)

In this strange land I have no friends and
confidants,
But "Faiz", I can keep discussing my beloved
country and thinking about how wonderful
things will be there

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