

Multifaith Multilingual
POEMS
for
Peace and Togetherness

Editor: Dr. Krishna Kumar



समस्तैः मा ञ्चीतिर्गमय

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PREFACE

'Multifaith Multilingual Poems for Peace and Togetherness' is an epitome of culmination of the project funded by Community Development Foundation (CDF). The anthology contains especially composed poems of seventeen poets of different faiths, ages and cultures. This anthology is a testimony of what can be achieved within a very short time with dedication and team work. Members of Gitanjali Multilingual Circle, as always, and other contributors have really worked very hard with passion to live up to the expectations. The project outline was widely distributed across the country inviting poetic contributions on the theme of peace, harmony and community cohesion. In response Mr. Oz Hardwick of York was the first to send in his contribution in early October 2007 followed by Doris Lawrence of Birmingham. This had a galvanising effect and other contributors joined hands to give momentum to the project.

The anthology displays a fine and unique mix of faith, language, age, race, sex and culture. It contains poems on the given theme to promote *shared values and traditions to augment the spirit of Humanity, Peace, Cohesion and Harmony in the families and the wider community*. The poems are in four different languages and their translation/gist in English is also given for the benefit of the readers. The collection represents poets from five different faiths -Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism and Nirankari. English appears to be the most popular medium of expression for most of the poets in this anthology. The collection has ten poems in English followed by six in Hindi and one each in Punjabi and Urdu. The anthology can boast of its *youngest contributor in Vibhati who is only twelve*. I salute young Vibhati for the sentiments expressed in her poem. Eleven women contributors have outnumbered the seven males writing for the anthology. The professional mix of contributors is also very varied including retired teachers, professional poets -including poet laureate (2003) of Birmingham-, a solicitor, a Consultant Clinical Psychologist, university lectures, social workers, house wives, a Hindu priest and Civil Servants. In essence this anthology really and truly represents the multicultural, multilingual and multi-faith society of the evolving Britain of twenty first century.

Each poem is special in capturing the innermost emotions of different shades. Poems included in this anthology are going to be recited on the 15th March 2008 at the Shree Laxmi Narayan Mandir to celebrate the ethos of community togetherness through multilingual and multi-faith poetry. I expect the poems included in this anthology not be judged for their class and standard but for the sentiments and true feelings displaying sensitivity to such an emotive issue. I hope you will enjoy reading the anthology as much as I have enjoyed its editing and putting it in shape.

I am thankful to Mr.Mahendra Dabhi, President and the entire Management Committee of Shree Laxmi Narayan Mandir for supporting the project and providing the logistic inputs. I am also thankful to Shri Rakesh B. Dubey and Shri Rajat Bagchi of Indian High Commission for their continued encouragement to our work. The project could not have even taken off without the professional support of CDF's management team and would not have been completed without the contributions from the poets whose poems are included in this unique anthology. Lastly, in the name of God I thank each and every one of you who have directly or indirectly contributed to the success of the project.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dr. Krishna Kumar', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dr. Krishna Kumar
Founder Chairman
Gitanjali Multilingual Literary Circle

The Genesis

Gitanjali Multilingual Literary Circle in Birmingham can proudly claim to be the only organisation in the UK providing a formal platform for multilingual creative expressions. Those associated with the group value its inherently tolerant and supportive character in uniting people of different languages and cultures. However, the idea of integrating poetry with faith for better understanding and community togetherness initially came from Mr. Mahendra Dabhi, President 'Shree Laxmi Narayan Mandir' nearly three years ago. This idea lay dormant like a crocus flower until September 2006 when he came across a scheme which could possibly fund such a meaningful project and pointed us in the direction of Community Development Foundation's (CDF) Capacity Building Scheme. Gitanjali Multilingual Literary Circle responded by building on the initial legwork done by Mr. Dhahi and an application for the grant under Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund managed by Community Development Foundation (CDF) was lodged on 31st October 2006.

GMLC's application underwent a rigorous process of scrutiny leading to an advice to scale down the project and to send two references regarding the intended project along with a revised work plan. Following worthy references by Mr. Mahendra Dabhi and Dr. David Earl of UPF (Universal Peace Federation) the application by GMLC found favour with CDF by being one of the 343 out of the 1,200 applications for the grant. Finally, the intentions and efforts of the group and Mr. Dhahi got rewarded and Gitanjali Multilingual Literary Circle (GMLC) was awarded £3,000.00 to pilot the project. The funds were received in June 2007. We are grateful to CDF for supporting our proposal which will go a long way in supplementing our larger objectives. As a part of the monitoring process reports were sent at the end of each quarter to CDF. The project comes to an end in April 2008 when a final report, including the accounts, will be duly submitted.

Reflecting on the nature of the project and willingness and ability of **Gitanjali Multilingual Literary Circle** to take up the challenge, we go back to the genesis of GMLC. The word 'Gitanjali', obviously, conjures up images of Rabindra Nath Tagore and his poetry. However, at **Gitanjali Multilingual Literary Circle**, we associate the name **Gitanjali** with a relatively less known Indian girl who died at the tender age of sixteen leaving behind a legacy of deeply moving poems in English. **Gitanjali Multilingual Literary Circle** was formed, in April 1995, in the UK to celebrate the compelling creativity of her otherwise short life and to provide a platform for creative expressions and for promoting the spirit of love and togetherness. The aims of the group are **“to create cohesion and better understanding between people of all ages of the host community and people of Indian sub-continent through literature culture and religion”**. Gitanjali Multilingual Literary Circle achieves this through a number of activities across the UK and elsewhere. The group meets regularly and the members recite their original poems, discuss literary issues and support literary and cultural activities by joining hands with other individuals and groups in the UK and worldwide. At Gitanjali, we celebrate the spirit of multilingualism. So far nearly 160 multilingual poetry programmes have been organised by GMLC including many at its branch in Nottingham chaired by Jai Verma.

In order that a wider audience benefits from multilingual work collected at one place GMLC is committed to publishing works of its members. So far five anthologies of multilingual poems in various languages with their translation in English have been published. In January 2008 GMLC published an anthology of Hindi poems entitled **“Suraj Ki Solah Kiranen”**. It contains poems of 16 Gitanjali members in various styles of Hindi literature. Introduction for this anthology has been written up by one of the most celebrated Indian Hindi poets and scholars Dr. Kunwar Bechain. The group also takes pride in its achievements in organising International Multilingual Symposium in 2006 and other similar projects like a Hindi/Urdu Kavita Kaaryashaalaa (Workshop on Hindi/Urdu Poetry) in Nottingham from 13th to 14th October 2007 and a Multilingual Story Workshop in 2007 at Aston University in Birmingham. Recently, the group played a leading role in organising VI International Hindi Utsav jointly organised by Aksharam, Sahitya Akademy, ICCR and UP Bhasha Sansthan from 1st

It is in the backdrop of such richness of multifarious activities that GMLC caught on the idea of bringing different faiths together to integrate people and in turn communities. The project fits naturally into the scheme of things with GMLC and comes as a shot in the arm to further its reach and also to harness the good work done by different faiths in achieving harmony. To deliver the project in its right earnest and reach out to the wider community 5,000 leaflets were printed and distributed in August 2007. The leaflet highlighted the project and also gave the deadline for submission of poems and other material. The aim was to invite poetic contributions on the theme of peace, harmony and community cohesion. The prospective participants were asked to submit a maximum of two poems each on the given theme in the language of their choice. Many more people were reached by electronic means as well. As a result of this GMLC is able to present an anthology of Multifaith Multilingual Poems for Peace and Togetherness. The anthology undoubtedly will serve as another milestone in GMLC's journey towards integrating people. It will also provide a new incentive to strive to reach out to more people from different faiths and enlist their participation for harmony and togetherness.

While we dedicate the culmination of this modest work to the little girl **GITANJALI**, we take this opportunity to urge all likeminded individuals and organisations to join hands with us in furthering this noble cause. In the end we express our earnest gratitude to all the members of **GMLC**, its associates, sponsors and supporters in helping us reach where we are.

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Oz Hardwick

Oz Hardwick is a Senior Lecturer in English at Leeds Trinity and All Saints. He has published two books of poems – *The Kind Ghosts* (bluechrome, 2004) and *Carrying Fire* (bluechrome, 2006) – and has read and broadcast his work throughout the UK, Europe and US: *I am involved in creative expression in all its forms – both my own and that of others. As well as teaching creative writing, I am a passionate promoter of literature, co-hosting a spoken word night in my home city of York, running events at Leeds Trinity, and generally getting involved where I can – at time of writing, for instance, we're just building up to the culmination of the annual Leeds Peace Poetry competition. 'Welcome Stranger' is on one level about a particular evening in Turin, but more generally about that core cross-cultural experience of open and generous welcome.*

Welcome Stranger

This is where the bright lights shine,
rain-born and flowing to a foreign sea.

I sit by the river, submerged in song
in unfamiliar tongues. Golden girls
and Fellini boys check reflections,
secure in their beauty, secure in their world.

I will not buy a rose tonight.
My love is far, along Roman roads,
past mountains, invisible in heat haze.

Invited to dine, I share and thank
circumstance that brought me here,
a warmly welcomed stranger, raising
my glass to a solitary rower, bending
to gathering evening and the river's pull.

Carrying Fire

High on the hill, a broken tree
Points to clear stars. Leant to the lea,
Swathed in scarves, the packman strides,
A familiar stranger with the moon in his eyes,
Bearing the season's songs and snow.

Deep in the valley, safe from the blow,
Red candles ignite, illuminate rooms,
Mirror the stars, banish the gloom
As the bearer of gifts fans embers higher:
Now at the hearth; now carrying fire.



Doris A.M. Lawrence

Doris Lawrence has been writing poetry since she was 12 years old. She shared a poetry prize with a French boy at the Oratory R.C. School in Ladywood. After having qualified in shorthand, typing and English She worked in Health Service.

The proof of the Pudding

The proof of the pudding is in the eating.

Its recipe for love is in our hearts

the pudding is in our words.

The proof is when we resist wrongful passions
for these will tear our souls apart.

Stay true to your mind and let your conscience
lead you to greater glory

In kindness and rich in story your life shall be.

So bake your cake with care and love for the proof of
the pudding is when you've won.

HIGHWAYS

The highways of life are roads we all take
What we do with our time in the decisions we make
is a highway of hope or that of despair.
in the highways of life in the highways of care.
Highways may come and highways may go. May the secret of
peace
on all to bestow.
In the highways of life the child will be man.
A truth to behold for no one can plan
what fate has in store for us only the Deity knows.
for man in deep thought and God to propose.
In the highways of life we are sure to meet, the minds of the
good
who challenge defeat.
Like errors in kind or the misunderstood, the rich or the poor, the
old
or the lame: The minds of the good will help all the same.
In the highways of life there is rapture aglow,
through the trill of a song of nature's fine friend
that of a beautiful sunset or a beautiful dawn:
For a magical moment a melody's born.
In the highways of England a richer harvest is sought
through culture and customs on this island's great shore.
A beauty of vision envisaged by England's great fan
a poet and scholar was John Henry Newman.



Vibhati Bhatia

Vibhatia Bhatia was born in Birmingham and currently she is a student at Highclare, a private school in Sutton Coldfield, where she earned a scholarship for music. She has been reciting her poems on stage from the age of five. Every weekend she does voluntary work at Sant Nirankari Bhawan in Wednesbury.

When I saw Baba Ji

When I saw Baba ji through the sky,
He made my heart happy.

When I saw Baba ji through the sky,
He made me smile.

When I saw Baba ji through the sky,
He gave me loads of blessings

When I saw Baba ji through the sky
I felt grateful to see Baba ji

When I saw Baba ji through the sky
He made me feel very lucky

When I saw Baba ji through the sky
I thought to myself wow! Its Baba ji

When I saw Baba ji through the sky
He made everyone precious

When I saw Babaji through the sky
He looked divine

When I saw Babaji through the sky
I saw Nirarkar in him.



Mrs. Kalpana Ganguly

Mrs. Kalpana Ganguly was born and brought up in East Africa where she was a teacher for a number of years. She came to the U.K. over thirty years ago. Apart from being a Civil Servant, she is involved in various community projects. Her love for poetry reigns supreme. She is a founding member of Gitanjali Multilingual Literary Circle, Birmingham and has recited poems on the stage on a number of occasions. Kalpana's poems have been published in a number of anthologies, including The Art Council funded anthology "The Saffron Tea".

DREAM

Congregation

Integration

Globalization

A dream –

A noble dream at that

Congregation –

Compassion

Meditation

Self-realization

No parameters –

No linguistics –

No multi-linguistics –

Just love linguistics –

Silence –

Benevolence –

Tolerance

Makes the noble dream of –

“VASUNDHARE KUTUMBUKAM”**

The integration –

As real as the five elements

Air, Earth, Fire, Water and The Sun.

** the world is one family

COSMIC DRAMA

There is no God says an atheist
There is no light says the blind
I hear whispers from within
I hear the song celestial
I experience my romance divine
Unknown to others –
but only known to myself
I cannot share the joy of love divine
Oh, how I behold the One
Who has given me cosmic dream
My soul calls the atheist and the blind
Come dance with me the dance divine
Let us enjoy the cosmic drama.



Mr. Rajni Roy

Mr. Rajni Roy was born in Tanzania and studied at Hull University and Lincoln's Inn London to get a First in the degree of Barrister-at-Law. He retired from UCE in Birmingham in 1993. Rajni has written and published widely in Law but his passion lies in Bridge and Poetry. He is an active member of Cannon Poets and Gitanjali Multilingual Literary Circle, Birmingham. Rajni's poems have been published in a number of anthologies, including The Art Council funded anthology "The Saffron Tea"

FORGIVE

Forgive them for they know not what they do
That's what he said the persecuted Jew
as he hung there
nailed on a cross
on now revered Calvary Hill.

Well did HE hear?
The father He was speaking to:
I think they knew
and I think the FATHER of
The Jew knew

The Father did not pass the cup
of crucifixion pain from The Son
But left mankind the legacy
and the Miracle of Resurrection

FINDING GOD

When your mind is in a muddle
And you cannot find release
You are caught up in a circle
And you feel there isn't any peace

You will try to come across the border line
And find out just like me
There is no limit to the time
Just an endless grim virtual reality !

You feel unless you talk to some one
You will definitely go mad.
Do as I did, and to God do come
He is the closest friend, that, I have had.

I have found that He is no one's fairy story
Blown up in someone's mind
He is real and full of glory
In Him compassion you will find.

That never-ending Maya's circle
The hopes and fears you feel will not cease
Bring them all to God and you will see
That He can give you moksha, bhakti, or his peace.

He does not mind
Whether you call Him Brahma, Vishnu-Narayana,
Allah or Jesus Christ;
He loves his creations, including mankind:
Once befriended He will be your friend day and night.

You don't have to search for Him
He is with you through it all
And all you need to get near Him
Is to give Him a gentle call.

His answers may not be the ones
You want to hear always:
But in His own infinite wisdom our God works
In many mysterious ways.

He looks on us all as His children
We are all His blessed:
So bring your problems to God, our father/creator:
And let Him do the rest.



Amina Alyal

Amina Alyal is of Pakistani and English parentage. She has a degree from Cambridge and a PhD from York. Her interests are varied, and include cave paintings, ancient civilisations, qawali, opera, folk music of East and West, poetry (of course) in several languages, theatre, the stories people tell each other, gardens, cities, and trees. In fact, she believes humanity resembles many groves of trees, festooned with lights and ornaments, each one decorated differently, but basically all trees. So she is interested in form, the shapes things take, the appearance of things, subjectivity. Her outlook is metacultural, and her poems often explore perspective and communication.

Ghazal for a girl I know

Words are like sand; words allow misunderstanding,
like a wind fanned, blowing away understanding.

She is less than two years, and speech is beyond her;
but she finds a strand, leading towards understanding.

She has no words, but her hands are loud speakers,
loud as a band; there is no misunderstanding.

Eyes, all ears, swoop after her hands, hearing
her gestures so grand, shouting with understanding.

Eyes kiss, as her hands say which she loves
and make a stand and defy misunderstanding.

Her hands ask to be fed, her hands throw away,
they fly and land, quick as our understanding.

Her hands ask why, rejoice, hide, and show,
a laugh in her hand, Amina, no misunderstanding.

Proteus

The sea emerges, solid and dark,
pitted, metallic, swelling and sinking,
treacherous lead.

Dawn lightens the pavements,
like a theatre brightening after the play:
all the tawdry glamour of the night
revealed as detritus.
A slab of municipal granite, mottled with salt,
flaked with dried tears, rises.

A brash swathe of paint reads:
'God woz ere.'
Who wrote that? Henry V?
- after Agincourt, his Panipat,
his tiny band swamped
slathered in mud
winning against all odds
looking past the longbow
seeing the angels nod. Or Babur
after Panipat, his Agincourt,
overwhelmed
yet clambering out of chaos
to shout victory
surprising
his own small troop
looking past the gun and the bow
hearing the angels' eyes.

Over on the beach,
I see you wrestle with Proteus,
the god who knows.
Mercurial water drops bounce off
his blue-black dolphin skin.
And every time you think you have him
he mutates.



Mrs. Swaran Talwar

Mrs. Swaran Talwar was born and brought up in India, obtained a B.Ed degree from Delhi University and further academic qualification from Birmingham University. She is a retired teacher by profession and has had many prestigious positions in various social and cultural groups. Swaran has worked as a freelance artist for B.B.C. Television. As an amateur poetess she has enjoyed participating in literary activities of Gitanjali Multilingual Literary Circle and Kriti UK. Her poems and stories have been published in various literary books and magazines in the U.K. and India. Currently Swaran is the president of the Indian Ladies Club Birmingham. In July 2007 she published an anthology of poems in Hindi - "Kavita Tum Kaun Ho" which was awarded with Dr. Laxmimull Singhvi Sahitya Prakashan Samman on 16th February 2008 at Indian High Commission London.

Karma Yogi

Lord Krishna You guided Arjuna

to follow the right path of duty

without the desire of reward.

Oh! Lord you the creator

created out of five elements

sky, earth, air, water and fire

our body mind and soul

is your great gift.

The human heart is full of emotions

love, greed, pride and devotion.

Oh! Lord you are an ocean

we are the droplets

you are the endless sky

we are the birds

flying to-wards the mirage of horizon.

Please guide us to follow the right path

Oh! Lord bless us with bhakti (devotion)

selfless devotion and shakti (strength)

to perform our duty

like the great warrior Arjuna.

(Based on the Karma philosophy in 'Gita'

a sermon given by **Lord Krishna** to King Arjuna)

कर्मयोगी

गीता में तुमने ज्ञान दिया
अपना विराट रूप दिखलाया
अर्जुन को मार्गदर्शन कराया
जीवन जीने का अर्थ समझाया।

अग्नि, वायु, जल, आकाश और पृथ्वी
पाँच तत्वों से रचा मानव शरीर
आत्म जीव है अंश तुम्हारा
जिससे बना अस्तित्व हमारा ।

अपनी मायावी माया से
प्रभु तुमने हमको रच डाला
मोह, माया, क्रोध और अहंकार से
मानव हृदय को भर डाला ।

तुम सागर हो हम गागर हैं
तुम आकाश, नहीं तुम्हारा कोई छोर
हम मानव मतवाले पक्षी
उड़ते रहते मायावी क्षितिज की ओर ।

तुम निराकार और बलशाली
हम साकार मिट्टी की काया
है मृगतृष्णा यह जीवन अपना
हम हैं तेरी ही माया ।

फल तूने अपने हाथ लिया
कर्मडोरी हमको पकड़ा दी
प्रभु तुम अब हमें समझाओ
क्या है जीवन का अर्थ
कैसे करें यह जीवन सार्थक ।

प्रभु हमें अर्जुन जैसी भक्ति दो
निष्काम कर्म की शक्ति दो
कर्मयोगी-सा हो अपना जीवन
बनो मार्गदर्शक हमारे भगवन् ।



Mrs Chanchal Jain

Mrs. Chanchal Jain was born and brought up in the Punjab State of India where she completed most of her education. She came to Birmingham in 1966 and gained further qualifications from Birmingham University in 1978. A teacher by profession but has also worked in many other sectors in the U.K. She has been writing and reciting poems from her school days. After joining Gitanjali Multilingual Literary Circle, Birmingham in 2001 her writing has taken a new turn. She is the current Secretary of Indian Ladies Club Birmingham. In the year 2007 Chanchal edited, “Anjali”, an anthology of multilingual poems by Indian ladies residing in the U.K.

Why the War?

Is this the war on terrorism
Or the war for the peace
Is it a holy war?
In the name of Almighty God?
Or the policing
Of the super powers
In the name of humanity

If it is holy and pious
Why feuds, hatred and
Killing of innocent people
In the name of Almighty God
Why fighting to bring peace
Why terrorising in the name of peace

The gulf between
Love and hate is widening
The wall between
The rich and the poor is widening

The discussions
On war and peace
The slogans
“If you want peace
Be prepared for war”
The impressive speeches
Of many religious leaders
The diabolical work
Of many fanatical religious-minded
Dangerous terrorist groups
Is endangering the world peace

The attacks on
Ordinary innocent people
Slaughter of children
Rape of desperate women
Is affecting the family life
The flames of fire
From the burning houses
And the clouds of smoke
From the green fields are
Engulfing the green valleys
Of many nations
The acceleration of the
Production of deadly weapons
By the superpowers
And the sale of the armaments
To the desperate victims of
Famine, hunger and war
And guerrilla warfare
For self-preservation
Is destroying the humanity
And endangering world peace

Nobody will remember
The religion of the dying souls
Nobody will care
For the untimely deaths of dying souls
Nobody will even say prayers
For the victims of war
Then why war and not peace
Why not peace in the name of humanity?

यह युद्ध क्यों?

आतंक के विरुद्ध
हो रहा है युद्ध
विश्व शांति के लिए
हो रहा है युद्ध
भगवान के नाम पर
हो रहा है युद्ध
मानवता की रक्षा के लिए
शक्तिशाली सत्ताओं का
हो रहा है युद्ध।

यदि यह पवित्र धर्मयुद्ध है
तो क्यों हो रहे हैं झगड़े
पनप रहीं हैं घृणा की दीवारें
मारे जा रहे हैं निर्दोष मानव
यदि शांति पवित्र है
तो क्यों बह रही है
रक्त की नदियाँ
क्यों शांति के नाम पर
हो रहे हैं युद्ध।

बहुत बड़ी खाई है
प्यार और नफ़रत के बीच
बहुत बड़ी खाई है
शांति और युद्ध के बीच
बन रही है ऊँची दीवार
अमीरी और ग़रीबी के बीच।

मैंने शांति और युद्ध के
चर्चे सुने, विचार और व्याख्यान सुने
नारे और भाषण सुने
"यदि शांति चाहते हो तो
युद्ध के लिए तैयार हो जाओ"
धर्म के नाम पर
अंधविश्वासी नेताओं के
आतंक के आक्रमण भी देखे।

मैं निर्दोष जनता की
अन्यायी मृत्यु की साक्षी हूँ
बच्चों के अपहरण और
नारी के बलात्कार की साक्षी हूँ
आग की लपटों में जलते हुए
घरों से उठते हुए धूरं की साक्षी हूँ
हरी भरी वादियों के सर्वनाश की साक्षी हूँ।

महान शक्ति शाली सत्ताएँ
अस्त्र-शस्त्र बेच रही हैं
और अमीर बन रही हैं
आकाल और भुखमरी से पीड़ित
निर्धन जनता
घर-परिवार और ज़मीन
बेच रही है
हथियार ख़रीद रही है
और शांति के लिए
युद्ध की तैयारियाँ कर रही है।

इस युद्ध में किसकी हार होगी
और किसकी जीत
इसका कोई अनुमान नहीं
किसके पक्ष में कितनी सच्चाई है
यह मालूम नहीं
धर्म रक्षकों के धर्म में
कितनी खोट है
यह मालूम नहीं
निर्दोष और निस्हाए जनता का
क्या हाल होगा
यह भी मालूम नहीं
तो फिर धर्म के नाम अधर्म क्यों
शांति के नाम अशांति क्यों
और युद्ध क्यों?

वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्

आज विश्व में शांति चाहिए
मत भेदों को दूर हटा दो
मानवता को प्यार से सींचो
विश्व एक है, एक बनादो

वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्

वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्।

सद्बुद्धि की जोत जला कर
ज्ञान-भक्ति की शक्ति लेकर
प्रेमभाव से जीतो सबको
भ्रातृभाव से बाँधो सबको
आज विश्व में शांति चाहिए
विश्व एक है, एक बनादो

वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्

वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्।

धरती माँगे, अंबर माँगे
धर्म, जात, हर देश यह माँगे
नहीं है लड़ना, नहीं है मरना
भेदभाव को दूर हटा दो
आज विश्व में शांति चाहिए
विश्व एक है, एक बनादो

वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्

वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्।

World Peace

The whole world is
Our big extended family
Let's have peace and harmony
In this big extended family

Let's win the hearts of people
Let's nurture humanity with love
Let's light the candle of
Knowledge, hope and unity
And live together
In peace and harmony

The earth, the sky and the sea
Religion, caste or class, colour or creed
Of every nation of the world
Is begging and demanding –

We don't want to fight
We don't want to die
Let's forget our differences
Let's unite the world
With our goodwill and efforts
And live together
In peace and harmony



Mrs. Rama Joshi

Mrs. Rama Joshi was born and educated to postgraduate level in India and worked as a lecturer in English before coming to the U.K in 1968. In the U.K. she gained a further postgraduate degree in Social Sciences. She has worked as a teacher, a community relations officer and a senior lecturer in the education department. She has been actively involved in various community projects. Rama was appointed as the first Asian Justice of Peace in Birmingham in 1973. She has been writing short stories and poems in Hindi since her college days. Her creative writing was revived after having joined Gitanjali Multilingual Literary Circle. Some of her poems have been published in various literary magazines in India and the U.K.

अनन्त खोज

आत्मा से ही हम हैं
मात्र शरीर हम नहीं
पहचान फिर भी
आत्मा की
हमें नहीं ।

शरीर में रह कर भी
आत्मा का स्पष्ट दर्शन
होता ही नहीं
जाने किस खोज में तल्लीन बुद्धि
देख नहीं पाती
परिवेश - आत्मा का ।

ध्येय जीवन का
भूल गये हम
स्वर्य से पहचान
भूल गये हम ।

समय कहाँ ?
समय नहीं है - कह
करते दुरुपयोग इसका
हम मानव !

आत्मा-शरीर में बस कर
देती क्यों नहीं सजगता ?
जागो - उस परम आत्मा के लिये
खोजते जिसे तुम ।

आत्मा को शरीर नहीं चाहिये ?
शरीर तो
बिना आत्मा सम्भव नहीं
तो फिर - कैसे हो पहचान
स्वर्य से
आत्मा से ?

The Un-ending Quest

We are not just 'body'
We have life
Because we have a 'soul'
Still
We remain ignorant of it.

Soul and body
So close – so far
Sheer intelligence fails
We forget our aim
Self-realisation.

We waste time endlessly
Saying
'We don't have time'
This alliance – between
Body and Soul....
Doesn't 'soul' miss 'body' ?
Body can't exist without it

How do we progress
Towards self-realisation?
The endless quest

एक-अनेक

नये साल पर
मिठाई वाले ने दिया कैलेंडर
बाल-कृष्ण का
और
राम सीता का ।

सुपरमार्केट के लड़के ने
कहा मान से
दो कैलेंडर रखे हैं आपके लिये
एक गुरुनानक का
दूसरा महात्मा बुद्ध का
ओम का कैलेंडर दिया
मंदिर वालों ने ।

सारे कैलेंडर
एक ही कील पर
टँग दिये हैं
दिन-त्योहार पर कभी
कुछ अदला-बदली हो जाती है ।

सब देवता प्रसन्न हैं
साथ-साथ हैं
एक ही हैं
सब तो जानते हैं
मैं भी जानती हूँ ।

फिर भी
नये साल पर ।

New Year Calendars

The sweet shop owner
Gave a present
Of two calendars
Showing Krishna as a child
And Lord Rama and Sita.

Supermarket boy
Also saved
Two calendars for me
One of Guru Nanak
The other of Lord Buddha.
The Hindu temple
Distributed Om calendars.

All these calendars
Hang on the same peg
In my house
Move them around
At different festivals

All the gods are happy
They are together
They are all one
Everyone knows this
I know this as well.
Still.....

A Sense of Calm

As a Hindu
I love going into Churches
Like the space, the calm
The emptiness
Look up to see
Beautiful windows
The multi-coloured light
Nod at one or two visitors
Yes – this Holy Person
Cares for me as well !

Light a candle – sometimes
Give some change.
Coming out – ponder
How this space
Could be used – more?
Yes – this emptiness is good
To fill hearts
With love !
Kindness !



Gurpreet Bhatia

Gurpreet Bhatia was born in Birmingham, lived and received early education in Sandwell. Graduated from Kingston University, reading Accounting and Law. Currently he is a partner with Harbans Singh & Co Solicitors a leading Law Firm in the West Midlands. He is an Administrator of the West Midlands Branch of the Sant Nirankari Mission (SNM) assisting with the management of a Community Centre in a Voluntary capacity in Wednesbury. Involved in numerous initiatives he works closely with Sandwell Multifaith, Sandwell Confederation of Indians etc in the promotion of peaceful coexistence, within the local communities. He has assisted in the promotion of Arts by organising Classical Music concerts and poetic symposia . Recently compiled the **Guru Pooja Anthology** a multilingual book of poetry to mark the United Nations Year of Languages. Gurpreet's theme of poetry in English, normally, is spirituality reflecting SNM's objectives of *unity in diversity*.

Little Eyes

My little eyes see your profound enormity
The light so bright, bringing indeed tranquillity
I am blinded by your love, balance and oceanic continuity
To live this way, I am liberated connected to your oneness and eternity
Your strands of brilliance weave a tapestry of unity
Gathering diverse natures, healing the conscience of animosity
Sacred love is summoned in the midst of this creativity
I experience your beauty unveiled – this is Divinity
Every flicker reflects your depth and graceful majesty
Since I witnessed the love of your reality,
This world has become one impressive fantasy
There is only you, my Guru – the formless and the form is true
But the eternal philosopher comments, there is only you, my Guru.



Dr. Bobby Sura

Dr Bobby Sura attends regular worship at the Sant Nirankari Mission, Wednesbury. He is a Consultant Psychologist, and Family Therapist, working both privately and within the NHS. He has a young daughter, and combines family life with pastimes in photography and travel. This poem was written whilst he was in his teens, but continues to be a special story from his life.

Dream of Peace

One night I lay in bed and dreamed,
of paradise with fields and streams,
all around me people danced,
their face aglow, with smiles entranced,
I asked them what this place could be -
“Come with us... and you will see”
Confused, I joined this buzzing crowd,
who joined together and sang aloud -
of a peaceful world - no fights or fire,
and all because of one Messiah !

Messiah, I asked - *What do you mean ?*
Could it be Christ that they had seen ?
Had I trav'd thru time on this warm night,
Might I be blessed with holy sight ?
Ahead, I saw a mammoth crowd,
and followed suite as others bowed,
and as I sat down on the ground,
from the distant stage I heard this sound.

Dear Saints, I heard - *Blessed are thee*
You sit in heaven with Baba Ji,
This man you see dressed in white
Reveals the Lord, with Divine light
This life you lead is very short,
Think deeply of what Jesus taught,
Seek - *if you want to find the Lord,*
Knock, *and opened will be door*

And then I heard another talk,
of the Holy Koran and what it taught,
to trust the Prophet through and through,
If you want to be One with the Truth.
The Holy Granth tells much the same -
build faith in God, and call His Name,
Come humbly to the Living Master,
Gain peace of mind - here and hereafter !
And as I sat and looked around,
in awe at what I had just found,
Muslim and Sikh and Hindu people -
all together - loving and peaceful.
What I could see was Heaven, no less,
All kinds of faiths, in togetherness,
This is religion in its purest sense,
sharing and caring - no barrier or fence.
As I awoke from dreams sublime,
One face remained within my mind,
Hardev, True Master in human guise,
All knowing smile- forgiving eyes
And as I came out of my sleep,
I prayed to God, this image keep,
Forever deep within my heart,
and from it not to be apart.



Mrs. Vibha Cale

Mrs. Vibha Cale is an academician who is settled in West Midlands. She was educated in India and the U.K. and is a Lecturer by profession. Along with many other volunteer roles in different establishments, she is, at present, serving as a College Governor. Vibha is currently the Secretary of Arya Samaj Vedic Mission, West Midlands, in Birmingham. She has been writing poetry in English and also in Hindi since her school days. After becoming a member of Gitanjali Multilingual Literary Circle, Birmingham she got motivated to write in Punjabi as well.

कल्याण

बचपन से सुनती आई थी, बचपन से कहती आई थी
सबका भला करो भगवन्, सबका सब बिधि हो कल्याण ।
आई मन से इक आवाज़, किया भला है किसका आज ?
आवाज़ उसे देते आए पर, करो कर्म जो दे कल्याण ।
मानव से मानव प्यार करे, औ सच्चा पुरुषार्थ करे
और न कुछ फिर वह कर पाए, केवल हमसे न्याय करे ।
अन्तर्मन में जो बैठा है, सबका पथ आलोकित करता
मार्ग चुनो तुम खुद ही ऐसा, जिससे सबका हो कल्याण ।
सद्कर्मों से करो विवश तुम, जिससे सुख हो और सुयश हो
नाम उसे जो चाहे दे लो, सूर्य बिखेरे है प्रकाश को ।
बहुमुखी सब विधि-विधान है, धर्म एक है सब मानव का
स्वच्छ करो तुम अपने मन को, शुद्ध भाव देगा कल्याण ।

Absolute truth is always one and the same,
Learned people call Him by different names
due to his attributes. True God, true
Dharma, true path is one and only one A
man should think right, do right and by the
law of Karma would yield right results. The
poem says, ' O man! think right and do the
right thing not for selfish benefits but for
the benefit of all.' Your conscience is your
true guide, For Sarv Kalyan Do right and
leave the rest to God.



Mr. Parvez Muzaffar

Parvez Muzaffar was born in Bhopal and educated in Delhi. He has a Masters degree in social work from Jamia Central University and further Postgraduate diploma from Dayan Institute of Management. He found literary atmosphere within his family. He came to the U.K. in 1993 and worked in London. Currently he is working as an Assistant Team Manager with Birmingham City Council. Parvez has been composing poems in Urdu since his college days.

روشنی کی تلاش

میں بے قرار ہوتا ہوں
یہ دیکھ دیکھ کر
کہ میرے چاروں طرف
نفرت کے انگارے
بول کے ویران کھیت
بجز صحرا
آنکھوں آنکھوں
پھیلے ہوئے ہیں
ہمسائے سے کیا
اپنے سائے سے بھی گھبراتا ہوں
ایسے میں محبت کا پیغام
کنٹھن کام ہے
مگر یہ فرض نبھانا ہے
محبت کے پھول کھلانا ہے
اس قندیل کو
پھر سے جلانا ہے۔

SEARCH FOR LIGHT

I am frustrated
To see around me
Every where flame of hatred
The bare field of cactus
Barren desert are in many eyes
I am not only afraid of neighbours
But also of my own shadow
As it is to spread message of love
It is difficult task
But, I still need to do my duty
And spread the flowers of love
Light this candle again.

Translated by Nasreen Akhtar

بستہ

ہمارے بزرگ
نقزنی پاندان کی طرح
دل میں بے ہوئے ہیں
جن سے ہم نے محبت سیکھی
مگر اس جا نکاری کو
اپنے اندر کہیں
اتنا نیچے دبا رکھا ہے
کہ نفرت کی راکھ
اڑنے لگی ہے
جو طرح طرح کے نقش بناتی ہوئی
آنکھوں سے
دیواروں تک پھیلی ہوئی ہے
حالانکہ مذہب کے
وہ بول
سچائی، خلوص، محبت
بھرے پڑے ہیں دل کے بستے میں
آج اس کو کھولا
تو آنکھوں سے
دو آنسو ٹپک پڑے
اور میں چل پڑا
اپنی بستی کی طرف ان کے غم بانٹنے۔

BAG

My respected elders
Staying in my heart
Like a condiments tray
From whom I learnt how to give love
But this know how
Somewhere deep imbedded inside me
The ashes of hatred is beginning to escape
Making designs
From eyes to walls
Even though words of religion
Such as honesty, love and affection are already in the bag of my heart
Today I open this bag
And two tears fell out
So I started new journey
And walking towards the community
To share their grief's.

Translated by Nasreen Akhtar



Dr. Umesh Yadav

Acharya Dr. Umesh Yadav, a vedic scholar, was born in Bihar. He has been serving the Arya Samaj for past 27 years. He has provided his services in many cities of India. He had been Principal of Dayanand Brahma Maha Vidyalaya Hisar for 10 years. And now he is a Minister of religion with Arya Samaj West Midlands in Birmingham. He has a double M.A in Hindi and Sanskrit, a B.ED and a Ph.d in Sanskrit(Spirituality of Yajurveda). He has many years experience in performing Vedic rituals and delivering talks on Vedic knowledge.

वैदिक बोध

अगर शान्ति जीवन में चाहो, वेद-शरण को गहा करो ।
ऋषियों का संदेश यही है, सुख मार्ग पर बढ़ा करो ॥
मित्र-दृष्टि अपना कर जग में, मित्र-भाव से प्राण भरो ।
'मित्रस्य त्वा चक्षुषा प्रतीक्षे' मंत्र अर्थ ही अमल करो ॥
संस्कार वह जीव-मूल्य है , पंच यज्ञ जिसका आधार
ब्रह्म-चेतना जागृत होगी, अमृत-रस नित पान करो ॥
सोलह जीवन मूल्यों से ही मानव का होता विस्तार
एक तरीका, एक धर्म है, ब्रह्ममार्ग पर चला करो ॥
दुर्गुण त्यागें, सद्गुण धारें, जीवन के मीठे फल ये ।
'विश्वानि देव' मंत्र गा , भव सागर को पार करो ॥
वेद ऋचाओं के उच्चारण, चेतन मन को शान्त करें ।
'सत्यमेव जयते नानृतं' को, अपने चित में धरा करो ॥
तज असत्य को सच अपनाओ, जीवन को साकार करो ।
शाश्वत सुख की अविचल धारा, ब्रह्म-गंग स्नान करो ॥
मधुमय सब वेदों की भाषा, जो जीवन की शान है ।
ऊँच-नीच का भेद मिटाकर, सबका ही कल्याण करो ॥
'तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथाः' भोग त्याग से वेद कह रहे ।
कर्मों पर आधारित फल पा, अब उमेश 'संतोष' धरो ।

To avail peace in life one needs to under shelter the Vedas. This is the message of ancient saints. Following the eye of friends, be the master of feelings of friends. The meaning of the mantra should be incorporated in daily life. Values of sacraments are based on five great Yajnas(holi deeds) i.e. (Sandhya-Brahma Yajna), meditation of God (Dev Yajna-Agnihotra), sacred fire, (Pitri-Yajna), Obeying parents, (Atithi- Yajna) and obeying learned guest arriving at your door without fixing date and time. The person who comes with fixing date and time is not **Atithi**. To pay regards to your friend and relatives is your duty not holi deed but if you pay your true service to the learned persons who come without fixing date is your holi deed. **Bali vaishva dev Yajna**- protection of other speices by providing food and water will awaken conciousness of God to make available for you divine nectar. The human life is surrounded with sixteen rituals (Sacraments) right from impregnation to cremation. It demonstrates one system and one divine faith of righteousness. To enjoy the sweet fruits of life chant the hymn **Vishwani Deva**- climb the tree of thoughts. Put in your life the sweet vibrating sounds of the mantra-**Satyameva jayate**. To achieve eternal peace and happiness bath in the divine river. Vedas explain all sweetness of life i.e. no one is high or no one is low. Finally Vedas say work towards your needs and the greed enshrined in the mantra - **Tentyakten bhunjithah**.



Julie Boden

Julie Boden was born in Sutton Coldfield, England. She continues to live in the Midlands area but travels nationally and internationally conducting poetry workshops and reading her poetry. Poetry has been Julie's passion since childhood but she has also worked as a teacher, an educational advisor and as an hotelier before dedicating herself to poetry for the last ten years as a professional poet. Julie has been a Birmingham Poet Laureate (2002-3), a Fellow of Hawthornden. She continues to be Poet in Residence at Symphony Hall in Birmingham. Her poetry is broadcast on a variety of well known literary programmes on Radio 3 and 4. Her poetry has been set to music, performed in concert halls and recorded for television. Julie initiated many innovative projects around poetry and Pontefract Press has published five of her anthologies. She co-edited an anthology of poems of 24 women published by Heaventree Press in 2007. *Aheenthi*, a selection of Julie's poems translated into Gujarati by Adam Tankavari was published in 2006. Julie has conducted readings and poetry workshops in India for SAMPAD and for the British Council. This work is continuing to receive appreciations in the UK and also India.

Postcards from Nairn
(to Jessica)

Saturday

Dear Jessica,
Here upon the white-light beach of Nairn
where sea turns deep in blue to meet the sky,
I think of you and wonder if you can recall
a time before your name had christened and
reclaimed you. Do you still hear the
Watchmans echoed whisperings relaying
all those prayers that called your birth?
Can you feel the imprint of the hand that
rolled you gently down a hill to split your shell
upon this rock called Earth?

Sunday

Dearest Jessica,
Before Daddy wrapped you safely in the
blanket of his world and joy burst his walls
at your becoming or visitors who came to see you
swam inside the deep pool of your eyes,
as you held your Daddys finger in your
innocent vice - the device that you now
know as hand ; before Mummy breathed
the scent of your two thumbs - 8 perfect
fingers - can you remember the song of the sea?
Can you? Or do you need a shell to hear what
is and was and always will be fathoms deep
inside you?

Monday

Dear Jessica,
The sun shining down upon this sea at Nairn
shows the silver-blue of happenings and it
wonders at the woman youll become and it
wonders if, kicking off a tucked in sheet to
watch your ten toes wave or rolling on this
picnic rug of earth, you see the lamb-clouds
grazing on your field of birthday sky.
Can you rock upon the rhythm of the waters
of the womb or has this world, so soon, laid
down its claim and found new ways to frame
you?

Tuesday

Dear Jessica,

Today, upon this beach, a boy in yellow shorts runs out with his green kite held tightly in the hooping of his hand - As the wind takes it up he laughs as he shouts, *Look at me. See my kite*, and he pulls on its strings as a voice in the sky - much too small to be heard - tells the wind, *I am bird. Why must I be a puppet at this tiny specks command?*

Dont let the bully-boys rule you or the man who is sure he is wise shout out his truths to train, to contain or to tame you.

Wednesday

Dear Jessica,

All day upon these sun blessed dunes footsteps kick out stars to shine the nights of new horizons; evenings hold the waters of the footprints that have pressed a damper sand.

Thursday

Dear Jessica,

I wonder if youll see these words.
I wonder if one day you'll find a way to read beyond these words, if you will answer questions we have yet to understand.
A Peter-Pointer finger traces out the letters that will celebrate your birthday then I dig their deeper channel with my hand.

Friday

Dear Jessica,

Our suitcases are packed. The evening beach is empty and our journey home is planned. The sky has seen your message now and every year the breeze will come again to tell you of these *Happy Birthday* wishes etched in sand.

Grandpa Killoch's Alchemy

Grandfather, in your garage block there were many doors but none could bar us. “Nothing,” you said, “can harm you.” As I watched you there in your waistcoat - its watch upon a chain, “Be Discreet,” you said, “let your left hand feel Life's secrets.” I was two. Too young some say to understand. You pressed a liquorice wheel inside my hand and as you talked that day I chewed upon the liquorice as it turned itself around. It was dark. It was sweet. “We know of many things that are not learned in books, my child,” you said, “Now, listen... eat.” My black stained hands held out a bright blue moon. You smiled, “Ah, Men” and then you sighed, “Amoun”.

From A Sunday Morning a sequence of seven poems written in response to sitting for the Birmingham Laureate
Portrait by Graham Kershaw

Call Down the Colours

Call down the colours
seal her in gold
bring down the light
guard and enfold
her with light
love and calm.
Tell her she's warm
sheltered from harm.
Call down the strength
of the light
that will arm her
and keep out the night;
centre her white.

Cover her gold
and call on the light.
Keep out the pain
of the room that is cold.
Her strength is in violet
her refuge is gold.

Call on the rainbow
call down the star
channel the power
of the light from afar.
Be strong in the calling
and make her to rise
from a bed that lies far
from her far away eyes.

Chisel her granite
drill through her steel.
Pull down the light
and remind her to feel
for the truth of the colour
the hue and the tone,
the seed of her strength
that is calling her home.

Let acceptance and knowledge
Bring strength for the fight.
Centre her white.

Her gift lies in violet's intuitive ray
the cure is within her
and growing each day.

When strength is depleted
the mind cannot hold
its balance from tilting.
Cover her gold.

Safe in the warm
protected from cold
love strengthens within her.
Cover her gold.



Mrs. Daljit Nijran

Born in India and having moved to the UK in September 2005 after marriage, Daljeet is currently settled with her husband, son and in-laws. Daljeet has had a passion for poetry from a young age. In order to increase her considerable skills that includes being a First Class Law Degree graduate and a practising barrister, she has decided to take her hobby to a new level.

Quickly after coming to the UK, she joined a Multilingual Society named Gitanjali, whose meetings she regularly attends. Her appreciation for her work as a poet from fellow members, family and friends has led her to make the decision to publish her writings so they can be enjoyed by a much wider audience.

ਹੋ ਕੇ ਵੀ ਹਨੇਰਾ ਇਥੇ ਚਾਨਣੀਆਂ ਰਾਤਾਂ ਮਾਂ
 ਬੱਤੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਇਥੇ ਇੰਨੀ ਲੋਅ
 ਬੁਢੇ ਹੋਏ ਮਾਪਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਕੋਈ ਨਾ ਸੰਭਾਲਦਾ
 ਉਠ ਜਿੰਨਾਂ ਕੋਲੋਂ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਨਾ ਖਲੋ !
 ਆਦਮੀ ਦੇ ਹੱਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਇਹ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਦੁਹਾਈ ਦੇਵੇ
 ਇਥੇ ਬੜਾ ਕੁਝ ਦੇਵੇ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੀ,
 ਦੱਸ ਕਿਹੜੀ ਬਾਈਬਲ ਜਾਂ ਗੀਤਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਏ
 ਦੇਵੇ ਖਾਣ ਲਈ ਗਾਵਾਂ ਮੱਝਾਂ ਮਾਰ ਨੀ !
 ਪੈਦਲ ਕੋਈ ਚੱਲਦਾ ਨਾ, ਰਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਪੁੱਛਦਾ ਨਾ
 ਨਾ ਪੁਛੇ ਕੋਈ, ਕੋਣ ,ਕਿਥੇ ਚੱਲਿਆ
 ਮਿਲਦੀ ਨਾ ਜਗਾਂ ਇਥੇ ਗੱਡੀਆਂ ਖੜਾਉਣ ਲਈ
 ਥਾਂ ਮੰਦਿਰਾਂ ਮਸੀਤਾਂ ਕਾਫੀ ਮੱਲਿਆ !
 ਮੇਰੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਵਾਲਾ ਕਿਤੇ ਭੋਲਾਪਣ ਦਿਸਦਾ ਨਾ
 ਉਝ ਸਭ ਕੁਝ ਬੜਾ ਹੈ ਰੰਗੀਨ ਨੀ
 ਉਚੀਆਂ ਇਮਾਰਤਾਂ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਨਾ ਟਿਕਾਣਾ ਇਥੇ,
 ਪਰ ਸਾਹ ਲੈ ਸਕੇ ਨਾ ਜ਼ਮੀਨ ਨੀ !
 ਗਾਲਾਂ ਮਾਵਾਂ ਭੈਣਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਦੇਣ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਵਿਚ
 ਸਭ ਭੁੱਲ ਜਾਦੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਜੁਬਾਨ ਨੀ,
 ਸਭ ਕੁਝ ਦੱਸਦੇ ਨੇ ਕੈਮਰੇ ਜੋ ਲਾਏ ਹੋਏ
 ਪਰ ਦੱਸਦੇ ਨਾ ਕਿਥੇ ਇਨਸਾਨ ਨੀ,
 ਆਪਣੇ ਪੜੋਸੀ ਲਈ ਸਾਰੇ ਪਰਦੇਸੀ ਅਸੀ
 ਵੱਖਰਾ ਹੈ ਇਥੇ ਦਾ ਜਹਾਨ ਨੀ !

Khat

The poem expresses the wider difference between the Indian and Western way of life. It explains that in Western culture no body bothers to look-after their aged parents. The Government in this country does a lot for its people and the human rights are widely recognised but these humans do not mind eating innocent animals who cannot protect themselves in law courts. In the end the poetess comments about the CCTV security system that tells everything but cannot tell where the human beings are lost in this life.

ਮੇਰਾ ਮੁਲਕ

ਬੁਝੇ ਹੋਏ ਤਾਰੇ ਤੇ ਮੈਲੀ ਜਿਹੀ ਸਵੇਰ ਵੇਖ
ਮੇਰੇ ਮੁਲਕ ਦੇ ਵਿਹੜੇ
ਜਾਤਾਂ ਪਾਤਾਂ ਦਾ ਹਨੇਰ ਵੇਖ
ਪੁੱਛਾਂ ਰੱਬ ਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਗੱਲ,
ਆਉਣੀ ਕਦੋਂ ਉਹੋ ਕੱਲ,
ਜਦੋਂ ਮੁੱਕ ਜਾਣੀ ਹੱਟੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਜਹਿਰ ਵੇ,
ਜਿਥੇ ਐਸੀ ਅੱਗ ਵਿਕਦੀ ਕਿਹੜੇ ਕੋਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਰੱਬਾ ਉਹੋ ਸ਼ਹਿਰ ਵੇ!

ਰੋਜੀ ਰੋਟੀ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਜਿਥੇ ਜਾਤਾਂ ਨੇ ਪਿਆਰੀਆਂ
ਧਰਮਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਂ ਤੇ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਫਿਰੀ ਜਾਦੇ ਆਰੀਆਂ,
ਕਿਥੇ ਗਈਆਂ ਮਾਵਾਂ
ਜੋ ਕਰਨ ਦੁਵਾਵਾਂ
ਕਿਉ ਤੱਤੀਆਂ ਇਹ ਲੋਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ ਠਹਿਰ ਵੇ,
ਜਿਥੇ ਐਸੀ ਅੱਗ ਵਿਕਦੀ ਕਿਹੜੇ ਕੋਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਰੱਬਾ ਉਹੋ ਸ਼ਹਿਰ ਵੇ!

ਜਿੰਨਾਂ ਸਿਰਾਂ ਤੇ ਨਾ ਛੱਤ ਉਹ ਸਵਾਲ ਪੁਛਦੇ,
ਸਾਡਾ ਕੋਣ ਅੰਨਦਾਤਾ ਭੁੱਖੇ ਬਾਲ ਪੁਛਦੇ,
ਕਿਥੇ ਮੰਗੀਏ ਜਵਾਬ,
ਕੋਣ ਰੱਖਦਾ ਹਿਸਾਬ,
ਕੀਹਦੇ ਕੀਹਦੇ ਉਤੇ ਵਰਿਆ ਇਹ ਕਹਿਰ
ਜਿਥੇ ਐਸੀ ਅੱਗ ਵਿਕਦੀ ਕਿਹੜੇ ਕੋਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਰੱਬਾ ਉਹੋ ਸ਼ਹਿਰ ਵੇ!

Mera mulk

In this poem the poetess expresses her worries about her country, asking God when her country will be freed from hatred, racism, inhumanity and corruption. She questions God as to why people in her country keep destroying their souls for money. At the end she describes how the children feel when they have to sleep under the sky without any food.



Dr. Krishna Kumar

Dr. Krishna Kumar was born and educated in India and the U.K. He has been writing poetry in Hindi since 1954. In April 1995 established Gitanjali Multilingual Literary Circle in Birmingham with a view to improve harmony within the people speaking different languages. Dr. Kumar has published three anthologies of Hindi poetry and edited three anthologies of multilingual poems, including their translation/gist in English, of Gitanjali members. Dr. Kumar initiated many novel programmes to promote Indian culture and languages in the U.K. He is the recipient of many honours and awards in the UK and India. In 2005 he conceived and implemented “International Multilingual Symposium IMS 2005”. Dr. Kumar organised 22nd International Ramayan Conference in Birmingham in September 2006.

अग्नि का तांडव

शान्ति उठती जा रही है
क्यों जगत से
सद्भावना के बीज
क्यों मिलते नहीं ?
बांझ सी क्यों प्यार की
धरती पड़ी है
स्नेह-ममता-एकता के
वृक्ष क्यों
फलते नहीं ?
सभ्यता के नाम पर ---
सब बंट चुके हैं
धर्म के सिद्धांत से भी
कट चुके हैं
बंद वातायन सभी है
द्वार पर साँकल लगा
बैठे अभी हैं ।

अग्नि का तांडव
छितिज पर हो रहा है
और इंसाँ चैन से
सोया पड़ा है
हैं घरों में वह सुरक्षित
सोचता है ।
अग्नि का तो व्याकरण
सीधा-सरल --
दृष्टि में उसकी
सभी हम एक हैं ।

भाई-बहन
माता-पिता सा
विश्व इक परिवार है
और सबको साथ में
रखता अकेला प्यार है ।
है नहीं आतंक की कोई जगह
सब मानते हैं
ठोस कुछ करता न कोई
आज यह भी जानते हैं ।
हैं पुरातन ग्रंथ सारे, कह रहे
'सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः
सर्वे सन्त निरामयः
सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु
मा कश्चिद् दुख भागभवेत्' ।
यह सनातन धर्म की पहचान है
वेद मंत्रों में समाहित ज्ञान है ।
है चुनौती
आज के संसार को
है चुनौती
आज के इंसान को
किस तरह इस सोच का
विस्तार हो
औ विचारों में नहीं
टकराव हो
विश्व मानवता बढ़े संसार में
प्यार पा कर प्यार का
निस्तार हो ।

FIRE “TAANDAV”

Why
Is Peace on the wane?
Why
The seeds of compassion sterile remain?
Why
Is the land of Love lying barren?
Why
The trees of love, care and harmony
No blooms sustain?

Divided stand the people
In civilization's name;
Devoid of
Goodness of faiths,
Keeping vents of conscience slammed,
Within chained doors they remain.

Unaware of the “Taandav” of Fire,
On the horizon afar,
People lie in slumber,
Fooled that
Safe inside they are.
While Fire has a simple calculation,
For its victims
It makes no exception.

Like brothers, sisters, mothers and sires,
World is a family if one desires,
Held together
By love's aspires.
That “Terrorism” has place none,
All agree and all are one,
But to fight its might,
Nothing solid is done.

All the ancient scriptures say:
'Be happiness on all, and
All be without any disease,
All have good vision and wisdom, and
Be all suffering free'
This is recognition of a Universal Faith,
Wisdom in the ancient scriptures laid.

Let there be a challenge thrown,
To the entire humanity not to a man alone,
To let this thought be grown,
Without a conflict known,
Allowing humanity to expand,
Rich in love and,
By exchange of Love and Love alone.

श्रद्धा औ विश्वास हमारा

अपने घर में
कब रहता है
अब उसमें
केवल आपस का
पल-पल का झगड़ा पलता है ।
दीवारें हरदम रोती हैं
सर ऊपर की छत रोती हैं
पाँव तले की
धरती भी तो तड़प-तड़प
आँसू बोती है ।

क्या से क्या हो गया
जगत का
जहाँ स्वार्थ
केवल बढ़ता है
खुद की साया से डर-डर कर
अपनों को अपना छलता है ।
मानवता दम तोड़ रही है
जीवन-मूल्यों की सुकुमारी
चौखट पर सिर फोड़ रही है ।

श्रद्धा औ विश्वास हमारा
धीरे-धीरे लुप्त हो रहा
इसीलिए जग का हर प्राणी
जल मुट्टी में पकड़ रहा
सूरज की स्वर्णिम किरणों को
वह हाथों से मसल रहा ।

हर प्राणी के
हर जीवन का
मात्र एक उद्देश्य रहा है
साध्य और साधक का मिलना
भक्तिभाव का ध्येय रहा है
इस पथ पर जीवन के चल कर
सबको ही सुख-शान्ति मिली है
औ समाज के उद्यानों में
मानवता की कली खिली है ।
यह परिभाषा रामराज्य की
तब सुराज्य ले कर आएगा
शान्ति और सुखमय जीवन से
भूमंडल भी भर जाएगा ।

OUR REVERENCE AND FAITH

Deserted,
This abode
Now only breeds
An ever going squabble.
Walls ever lament,
Roof over the head sobs,
The wreathing ground underneath too,
Does tears shed.

What ever has happened,
To the people today.
Only selfishness thrives.
Frightened of their own shadows
They deceive each other.
Humanity is dying
Morality knocks
Its head on the doorsteps.

Our reverence and faith
Is gradually vanishing.
People now try and catch water,
And crush between their palms
The golden rays of the sun.

Salvation has always been
The life's aim.
That's what prayers are for.
Following this in the journey of life
People get solace and tranquillity.
Humanity
Blooms all around.
Good governance then
Will realise "Ramrajya",
And in the Cosmos
Will instil
Peace and Tranquillity.



Mrs. Saroj Srivastava “Swati”

Saroj Srivastava “Swati” was born in Lucknow (UP) India and was awarded a Gold Medal in M.A. (Hindi Literature) from Lucknow University. She went on to obtain her M. Phil from Delhi University. She was the first Hindi and Culture Officer at the Indian High Commission London from 1984 to 1989 and during this period she initiated many projects which are now bearing fruits. Saroj has won many awards including Premchand Kahani Puraskar, Millennium Poetess Award and Rupambara Awards etc. In addition to publication of a number of academic papers, she has published two academic books- “Bhoomi Sabki Dard Sabka” and “Course Guides for B .A. Hindi Literature”. She has also published two anthologies of Hindi poems and short stories – “Urti Ret” and “Seepian Aur Shankh”. Her hobbies include writing, travelling, photography, music and flower decoration etc.

आखिरी पल

समन्दर के किनारे
देखता हूँ उस रोशनी को
बाँट दिया है जिसने
पानी को,
हज़ारों हज़ार हीरे
जगमगा जाते हैं
हर लहर के साथ
छहरते जल कणों में
गुजरती हुई रोशनी में नहा कर,
रोशनी पीले धनुष की तरह
लेटी है समन्दर की
नीली सतह पर -

एक जहाज दूर से
करीब आता आता जा रहा है,
जहाज के साए से दूर,
देखता हूँ जल सर्पों के गुच्छे को,
चाँद की रोशनी
चमकती है उनकी
सफेद रुपहली खालें,
बदल जाती हैं धीरे-धीरे
नीले, काँई लगे मखमली अंधेरों में ।

इन सबसे दूर,
किसी नीले समन्दर के
आगोश में
तैर रही हैं अनगिनत लाशें
युद्ध के कांटों से बिंधे
हम लोग
एक पीड़ा में
एक ही भंवर में -
वे भूल चुके हैं
कि पहली किरच किसने चुभोई,
पहली आग किसने लगाई,
एक भय के समन्दर में
थारे इनके दिल अब
मौत के अंधेरो में खो रहे हैं,
और पीड़ा के एहसास ने
उन्हे आस-पास ला दिया !

सरोज श्रीवास्तव

Akhree Pel

The poems begins with a man enjoying the beauty of the seaside only to further reflect on the victims of war on some other shore of the ocean. From appreciating the beauty of his view, he switches to ponder about the dead and the dying and ultimately their last moments in life where they share the same feeling.

A feeling where there is no thought of enmity as to who started the killings first but a shared feeling of fear for death which brings them together

माँ और शांति

माँ -

तेरे पास वह सब कुछ था
जो उनके पास नहीं था,
उन्होंने तुझसे
बहुत-कुछ छीना
फिर भी,
तेरी सुशान्त
सौम्य प्रकृति में
बहुत कुछ शेष था

बहुत कुछ शेष था
उन्हें अपने खालीपन का
एहसास दिलाने को
घृणा के घिनौने स्पर्श से,
बौनी आँखों से तेरे
अन्तरतम की गहराई को
नोच फेंकने की
गर्हित अभिलाषा से,
रक्त रंजित
हाथें से
तेरा स्वत्व तुझसे
छीन लिया -
मनवता का हर
व्यथा पर उपेक्षित
दृष्टि डाल
उन्होंने तुम्हें अपमानित किया
मैंने देखा है

इतिहास के पृष्ठों से
इस सबको,
जब धृतराष्ट्र ने, कंस ने,
अशोक और सिकन्दर ने
हत्यारों और आतंकियों ने,
युद्ध की लालसा में डूबी
हर उस शख्सियत ने
मान, मर्यादा, प्यार और शांति
का अपमान किया
जिसे तेरी ममता के
खून से अपनी प्यास बुझानी थी,
बर्फ और बरिश की
परवाह किए बगैर
तेरा लहू बहाना था,
फिर भी, तूने उन्हे शरण दी
क्योंकि आज भी तुझे
उनकी ममता भरी
दस्तक का इन्तज़ार है ।

सरोज श्रीवास्तव

Maa aur Shanti

This poem personifies the motherland as a mother, Where both are self-giving.

The poem likens a child's mischief to the various imperialists that have tried to rule the world, causing grief to humanity and taking away from the motherland.

Ultimately the poem closes by depicting the forgiving and loving nature of a mother that always takes her children back and shelters them.