**ZAHEER KASHMIRI**

# My Life, My Art*

Some one hundred twenty-five years ago our family branch moved beyond Srinagar, spread across the district of Taran Taaran, and distinguished itself in religious knowledge and excellence. Up until India's partition, great religious festivals were held at the tombs of two of our family elders at Plasor and Galwali in which adherents of all religions and sects participated freely. Religious devoutness was the chief hallmark of our family. From very early on children were expected to perform the ritual prayers, observe the fast and memorize Qur'anic verses. Practically every discussion that took place around the family hearth submitted to traditional authority. Regardless of the complexity of the issue under discussion, the minute a Qur'anic verse or a saying of some eminent religious figure was cited, it effectively ended the discussion, causing everyone to bow his or her head in obeisance.

I was born in this traditional atmosphere. Fear of rational and logical methods of argument was instilled in me; I was instructed to seek guidance for life from age-old traditions and dicta instead.

When I was ten or eleven years old my mother died. My father remarried. My stepmother was not from our family. Although sensible and fair-minded, she was not without bias: she would snitch about my smallest misdeeds to my father who, being an irascible and overly oppressive man, would then subject me to an unrelenting dressing down. I was beaten quite a few times, and as many times kept hungry. Once, overwhelmed by his anger, I even attempted to throw myself from the roof in order to end my life, and once I was even banished from the house. In short, I spent a good part of my childhood in a veritable "Reign of Terror," my mind numbed from excessive tyranny and dread.

My father was initially a constable in the Central Investigation Department but later was promoted to Head Constable. His monthly salary was forty rupees. Consequently, during my early education I experienced

* "Mērī Zindagī, Mērā Fann," from *Savērā* No. 9 (1951?), 52–65.

great hardship and poverty. Except on festival days and fairs, I was always poorly dressed. I usually bought used books that disintegrated in a few weeks, and I never got more than two or three paisas a day for spending money. This contrasted oppressively with my well-off classmates: their books, their satchels, their clothes, their faces—all exuded an effulgent freshness, and their snacks were always tasty and varied. They got much more spending money than I did. Even the teachers experienced something of an inferiority attack when they tested them regarding the lessons.

Ignorance, poverty and oppression totally paralyzed my life clear up to high school. I felt a strange suffocation and hemmed in by relentless fear, death and a lack of confidence, none of which I had the strength to fight. Finally, when I started to write poetry, I felt as though I had found my escape. To avoid the blows administered by external conditions, I took refuge in composing lyrical verse, and to keep safe from the bitter truths of life I started to weave dream-webs around myself.

Back then I didn't imagine that life could be profound or complex. I was still far removed from experiencing either life or the world rationally. My raw, naïve emotions lacked the reflection that comes with age and study. I composed on traditional romantic themes in very light, easy meters and declaimed my poems in local *musha'iras*.

The composition of those days was inescapably informed by my own past and the tragic conditions around me. Naturally the brokenhearted, leisure-seeking protagonist in my poems was none other than myself. Every single line I wrote reflected more or less the feelings of a passive personality. I was looking for the ecstasy of death in the tribulations of earthly love. I had no future. My early work reflects the mental state of a young poet born into an ordinary middle-class family who was oppressed at home and forced to memorize exhausted mantras about the undisputed authority of tradition and the authenticity of time-honored ways so that he might avoid being impudent or rebellious.

The twelfth grade at school was an historic year in my life. I was sitting in Marcido Hall smoking when a young Sikh man entered, came over to me and said in an exceedingly friendly manner, "Comrade!" I was quite taken aback. Until then I had only read the word "Comrade" in books and had also heard that it always spelled some great "danger," but I'd never come across a real, authentic comrade like this. With some difficulty, I swallowed the word the young man had thrown at me and said, "Welcome Sardar Sahib. What brings you here?"

In a whisper he informed me that he was a student at Khalisa College and that he and a group of students from other colleges had come to have a word with me. He asked me to go with him to the hall of Pearl Talkies

because his other companions were waiting for me there. I accompanied him and found about ten students from different colleges waiting, a couple of them even known to me. During our conversation I couldn't escape the feeling that these young men all appeared to be quite "rebellious." They were members of the Student Federation (SF). This was the same Federation whose members were recently fired upon by order of the Congress government of U.P. They wanted me to set up a chapter of the Federation in my own college. Unable to withstand the onslaught of these shrill and "dangerous students," I agreed just to get them off my back.

Afterwards I met them a number of times. They belonged to all religions, but what was surprising to me was that during our discussions the Hindu students never dragged in the Vedas to clinch an argument, the Muslims didn't seek authority or evidence from Qur'anic verses, and the Christians never brought in their Bible. Debates were always logical and weighty. In spite of belonging to different religions, they appeared very like-minded. They told me their struggle was not just directed against the wrong kind of traditionalism, it was also against oppression and poverty. Their conversation gave me the pleasant feeling that in their company I might be able to finally rid myself of the tradition-worship of my elders, the oppression of my parents, and even to escape the chronic poverty of my family. As I socialized with them I gradually came to realize that the struggle of the SF was no ordinary struggle, it was poised to bring about a revolution not just in *my* home, but in every home throughout the country.

Around the same time, chapters of the Progressive Writers' Association (PWA) were beginning to be established in every nook and corner of India. The SF told me that those who ran this newly created Association were also members of their group. So I, who had by now been fully transmogrified into a veritable Oedipus, flung all thought of danger to the wind and joined that Association in my search for the truth.

I constantly improved my understanding of societal and imperialistic problems by attending the local study circle of the SF. And not just that, I also learned a great deal about the history of the Indian Congress and the nature of British imperialism. I attended lectures about the communist (socialist) struggle worldwide and came to know about the revolutionary achievements of trade unions and peasant councils. This thought-provoking education gave me both self-confidence and the impetus to change adverse conditions. All this enabled me for the first time to appreciate life as a tangible reality.

When I examined the creative work of the Progressive Writers closely I felt that it was pervaded by a spirit similar to the one that characterized

most of the discussions of the FS study circles. Regret set in over my previous literary efforts and I often thought that everything I had produced up until then was a product of ignorance. It was very remote from life and its realities and bore no resemblance to the real problems of humankind. As a result, I slowly began to press my familiarity with new ideas and concepts into literary molds. This turned out to be a particularly formidable undertaking. It was not easy to veer from the conventions of classical Persian poetry and the practice of Urdu ghazal poets to find suitable stylistic paradigms for the new content. Making the new concepts conform to old literary criteria was a mind-wrenching exercise. If I adhered to my avowed goal, the standard slipped; if I endeavored to maintain the standard, the thought became less scientific. So while one poem read like a raw, untamed expression of patriotism, the other made even new ideas sound old because of an overpowering regard for conventional style.

Although I had a general understanding of "progressivism" at the time, I was still nowhere close to an appreciation of the balance of its dialectical complexities. Luckily Mulk Raj Anand, who was then traveling the country to promote the Association, also visited us. In one of our meetings, I discussed with him at length the nature and essence of "progressivism." The discussion helped greatly to clarify the meaning of the word for me. I understood that "progressivism" was not something that had relevance for a particular place and time. On the contrary, it was all-inclusive and general. First of all, it stood for human progress and had, and continues to have even now, a relationship with every newly emergent, upright power in the world. A literature that reflects upright and beneficial forces—and thereby confers upon them permanent eminence—that prophesies a better future and claims to bring it closer is in essence "progressive."

I had of course understood that progressive literature was concerned first and foremost with human progress, but I still had no clear, complete, and authentic framework of the progressive process. The study circle had no doubt given good instruction at an analytical level, what it had not shown, though, was how to synthesize all the things it had taught me. This is perhaps the reason why, when in addition to composing poetry I —inspired by the many subjects elaborated for me by the progressive writers—started writing short stories and essays, they often lacked basic and realistic details. My stories suffered from a tendency to pontificate, and not just that, they ignored the unity of effect and plot. And yet as time moved along my literary personality began to acquire a distinct shape and blossomed as a consequence of my participation in the informative and instructive meetings of the Association. I started paying greater attention

to thought and style.

The historic year of 1939 made its appearance during this period of my literary apprenticeship. Chamberlain declared war against the Axis powers, and India, in its role as a British colony, became a full participant in it. A UTC had been set up in our college. The scions of *tahsildars*, *zamindars*, and *khan bahadurs* were throwing away their books and leaving for the front to become canon fodder for the sake of their white masters. The arrest of the SF members began. Trade unionists and Congressites were being sent to jail and peasant councils were put under strict surveillance. The noise of war was getting louder by the day whether in the markets, bazaars or in Vice-Regal Lodge. The PWA also didn't escape from the tentacles of this bloody, dramatic worldwide turmoil.

One day before going to the college I was browsing through the pages of the *Hindustan Times*. My eyes caught something and I stopped with a jolt reading: "My services are at the disposal of His Excellency." And below it appeared the name "Dr. M. D. Taseer." Dr. Taseer was a prominent member of our Association and like the rest of us considered the current war imperialistic. People thought of him as a revolutionary. The newspaper in front of me had completely exposed the truth about his "revolutionary spirit." He had metamorphosed into an opportunist, an agent of his white overlords. Once or twice we asked him to authenticate the news but he deftly evaded the issue. A few days later everyone heard him broadcast on the "Berlin News" program from the Lahore station of All India Radio—the worst kind of treason one might say.

Next came Professor Fareed. He was appointed Principal of Islamia College, Jullundar, and piped down. B. L. Kapur lost his speech too the minute he was made Principal of Fazalka College, and Professor Advani turned from a politician into an honorable citizen overnight. Faiz Ahmed Faiz, then secretary of the Association, was irrevocably lost to Hailey College of Commerce. And so, by the time 1941 rolled around the once invincible vanguard of the Association had been totally annihilated and I was taken into custody under the Defense of India Rules, number 38.

At first I was kept in Amritsar prison. Here, I got together with the other inmates and mounted a hunger strike against the violence to which we were subjected by the prison officers, with the result that I was put in solitary confinement. When that ended, I was shuffled around from prison to prison until I was transferred to Borstal Jail at Lahore, which turned out to be a great place for my political education.

At that time this jail had around four hundred political prisoners, among them old freedom fighters, red-blooded revolutionaries, Congressites, socialists, communists, anarchists—in other words, the collective

"dangers" of all of northern India had gathered here. This afforded me the unique opportunity to study the operational politics of each group.

Here I heard stories about Poona's Sitara terrorists and accounts of the Meerut Conspiracy case. I became acquainted with the achievements of Chandra Shekhar Azad and his group and hobnobbed with the veteran bomb-makers of Rawalpindi. I heard accounts of anonymous stalwarts of different revolutionary movements who, indifferent to reward or recognition, quietly sacrificed themselves in pursuit of their revolutionary mission and will perhaps never be given so much as a fleeting mention in any political history. An old guard at the jail showed me the cell in which Das had starved himself to martyrdom. Even though the old man was himself an executioner who had dispatched countless criminals to their death, he couldn't keep tears from wetting his scraggly beard as he gave his eyewitness account of Das's sacrifice.

In Borstal prison we established Kirti—an extremist block drawn from communist and socialist workers. We hoisted a red flag on our ward's tallest tree, and using lime wash, we drew a gigantic hammer and sickle in the open compound where every morning we erupted into a spirited chorus of "The Whole World is Ours!"—so loud and rowdy it shook the whole joint.

The "extremist block" was essentially a study circle. Here, with the help of my companions I launched a systematic study of Marxism. I pored over and discussed dialectical materialism, Marx's philosophy of history and his concept of economics; I familiarized myself with the undying struggle of the communist parties of different countries and analyzed scientifically the causes of the failure of revolutionaries in Paris, Germany and Bulgaria. I attended lectures on the tenacious activities of the Chinese masses and acquired an awareness of the inevitable events produced by the Second World War. The methodical acquisition of modern learning fundamentally altered my personality and my concept of knowledge. I began to look upon the theoretical knowledge acquired at college as completely hollow and qualitatively inferior. Greek philosophy, notwithstanding its great value, began to look poorer in comparison to German materialism. Locke, Bentham, Hume and other English thinkers appeared little more than callow rationalists, and French materialists somewhat mechanistic. Kant's ethical assumptions and Hegel's philosophy of history sounded like little more than trumpeting for, respectively, absurd generalizations and spirituality.

German materialism helped me appreciate not only the basic principles at work behind the universe but also how material forces acted and reacted. It gave me comprehensive and scientific knowledge about social

progress and a realization that Marxism was not merely art but also great science, not theory but action. The obliteration of the capitalist system was as certain as the demise of the dewdrop in the warm rays of the sun; the success of a worldwide communist revolution as assured as the glorious eruption of a colorful assortment of flowers in spring. In the early days of my incarceration one thought that often dogged me was the incomprehensible betrayals of the smartest intellectuals of our time who had worked in the vanguard of the Progressive Writers. Indeed, why did they turn tail? Why could they not face British tyranny for the sake of the country's independence—they who were experts in anthropological sciences?

Now, after systematically studying Marxism, it all became clear as day: regardless of the depth of one's understanding of Marxism, it was very nearly impossible to become a true revolutionary until one had actually participated in mass movements to do battle with the collective interests of the élite, the privileged classes. The Paris commune failed precisely because it was crowded with armchair revolutionaries—the Blanquists. And the frontline of the Progressive Writers crumbled because it too had a crush of upper- and middle-class bohemians loath to step out of their romantic- and dream-cocoons when called on for action.

This quantum of knowledge had a decisive influence on my concept of literature and literary subjects—a light that has never ceased to light my way in the adoption of literary forms. The materialist analysis of history exposed to my view a plethora of social traditions that had been gnawing mankind hollow for centuries. And yet, despite mankind's knowledge of the utter harm and ineffectiveness of those traditions they, being cowardly and superstitious, still clung to them tenaciously. All my poems that rail against such obscurantist social conventions were the product of the knowledge gained through study during that period, and even today this knowledge continues to be my greatest guardian and guide. I opposed unsound national concepts and supported true universalism. I defied organized religion and the frosty concept of divinity as an instrument of exploitation wielded by government institutions; I cast the tangible realities of life in the mold of poetry, exposed the two-facedness of despotic and capitalistic law, and condemned the deterministic nature of fate. On the other hand, I illuminated the bond between nature and man from modern and healthy perspectives and highlighted the indelible struggle of the lower classes.

Although Persian and Urdu poetry is filled with philosophical ideas, it was not easy for me to present this material using new, unexplored structures. The method of our classical poets has always been to present

philosophical ideas directly or most explosively. This was impossible in the new *naẓm*, which in its essence, like the ghazal, does not allow for volatility. If one attempted to present a philosophical idea directly, it didn't sound like a poem but rather the bare statement of a philosophic thesis. So what I did instead was mobilize basic symbols to present complex thought poetically, striving at the same time for the symbol and the details employed in a poem to yield the maximum aesthetic effect. The majority of my poems in this vein are generally both direct and symbolic, and yet sensitive to the literal, visual, auditory, and tactile effects.

I got out of prison in the middle of 1942. My intellectual evolution demanded that the time had come for me to get directly involved in the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat. Accordingly, I immediately joined the local trade union. The position the proletariat enjoys is accorded to no other class in Marxist philosophy. As I established a dialectical link with this group, I couldn't help but be struck by colossal bewilderment: how could the proletariat—a filthy, uncivilized, uneducated people—ever successfully pull off what amounted to a worldwide revolution? At first the question assaulted my mind in its full vehemence. When, however, I observed the proletariat from up close, peeked into its heart, groped into its conscience, I began to consider its revolutionary leadership inevitable for the contemporary world.

I saw workmen toil at machines; I saw them in their mud houses, in markets and fairs; at walkouts and strikes; and how they were *lathi*-charged and gunned down. In the factories they worked on the machines like lifeless, mechanical cogs; in their quarters they writhed from hunger and illness; at fairs and markets they displayed a simple, artless civility. But they were a fiery flame when struck; smiling when clubs fell on them; and when fired upon, they would die, affixing the stamp of longevity on the unity of workers.

They don't have glitzy clothes to put on, posh bungalows to live in, or swank cars to ride, yet they occupy a place at the summit. They are truly great. Teach Marxism to a member of the middle or upper class all you want, for years if need be, but you will probably never succeed in making him a staunch revolutionary. By contrast, a worker, after just a little thought, immediately volunteers to assume the difficult and bone-crushing responsibility of mass revolution and the future of humankind. Revolution is in their blood. They despise every opportunist and believer in reconciliation; they are fighters who kick the Royalists out of Amritsar and Gulzari Lal Nanda from Ahmedabad. If their political awareness ever matures, they are quite capable of blocking the ships of the Dutch imperialists from snatching Indonesia ever again.

I worked in the local, provincial and India-wide workers organizations until 1945. During this time I was twice imprisoned on charges of "creating unrest" and "rioting." In fear because of my political activities, my parents had already thrown me out of the house in 1942. I spent the entire period of my engagement with the workers living in a dingy little room on top of the last roof of the offices of the provincial trade union. The upper portion of the front door of this room had a gaping hole. Even after you had locked it, two rotund men could easily get through the opening at the same time. Many times my books were stolen from my room, and one time some thief who must have been an artist himself made off with two of my oil paintings that hung on the wall. In jest my friends used to call this room "Dr. Johnson's Garret."

The ceaseless struggle of the proletariat endowed my art with vigor and steadfastness. Their immense sacrifices made me realize that lackadaisical literary involvement was not about to help bring the revolution closer. Just as the revolution needed numberless ironclad muscular arms, it also needed as many hot, fiery words. The economic and political war of the proletariat also gave my creative writing a fighting aura. I had noticed that in their encounters with the capitalist, the proletariat dropped all pretence of civility and politeness and attacked frontally with relentless ferocity. This made me realize that if a poet or prose writer sought to liberate art and culture, he needed to use his writing as a soldier's weapon in order to annihilate the enemies of civility and culture.

During that period the All-India Kisan (Peasant) Conference at Bhakna galvanized my literary consciousness. As part of the Conference program a *musha'ira* had also been arranged where I recited a blatantly political poem. At the end of the Conference before an audience of nearly five hundred delegates and local workers, Sohan Singh Josh, Secretary of the Punjab Communist Party, subjected my poem to a relentless critique in the course of his otherwise self-critical speech. Among other things, he said that it would have been much better if the poet had recited this poem before the students of some Lahore girls' college. This comment hurt my writer's pride a great deal. Unable to comprehend the true import of this broadside, I nonetheless firmly resolved to familiarize myself with the Marxist critical method. And so I did. I made it a constant subject of study.

I ventured to understand the aesthetic elaborations of Marx and Engels. I profited from Lenin's theory of reflection (*'aks*) and Gorky's doctrine of socialist realism. Additionally, I also studied a smattering of modern American, English, and Russian critics, such as James T. Farrell, Alik West, Ralph Fox, Codwell, Lehman, etc.

Whatever critical work I read I took notes from it regularly and used

them to write my own essays. In spite of their occasional inadequacies and sketchiness, due mainly to a lack of time, the country's literary circles nonetheless generally appreciated these essays. That's how I started writing in a sustained manner on the subject of literary criticism.

During this time I became conscious of the fact that art, notwithstanding its universal and timeless beauty, was still conditioned by society and time. Classical subjects were not the sole provenance of literature. Equally enduring artistic values could also be created around ephemeral and incidental topics. This thought spurred me on to employ subjects drawn from national and international events. I composed verse on the imperialist period of the Second World War, tried to put the masses center stage, commented on the incomparable bravery of the martyrs of Sevastopol, and wrote poetry about Europe's Red Revolution.

By mid-1945 my personal affairs had become so tangled that I had to leave for Lahore, not so much for the acquisition of art as for a livelihood. Here, I worked as an adviser for film companies and felt like a warrior who had abandoned the Leningrad front and landed in Hollywood to indulge in some third-rate, sleazy romance. There were no longer any working-class people around me; instead I was surrounded by world-class speculators. No *Das Kapital* on the desk but snapshots of naked women. What drove a discussion here were not topics such as human evolution or the philosophy of the collective, but rather production estimates and backstage love affairs.

Before my arrival in this glitzy world I had cherished high hopes of improving our indigenous cinema. A little effort was all it would take to bring out the great potential of films. Storylines that usually focused on characters drawn from the upper and middle classes could also portray the life of the working class. I was under the impression that putting the plays, festivals, dances, and songs of the common people on screen would make them immensely popular, and I used to think that film lingo, which rode roughshod over any kind of grammar, could be tamed to follow strict grammatical rules. When, however, I examined my new environment closely from a practical perspective, all my high hopes evaporated into thin air. The producers were in no mood to disseminate useful and educational ideas. On the contrary, they wanted to sell whatever was popular. The actors as a rule stayed awake late into the night, forever plotting their sleazy machinations to mount surprise attacks on privacies, and dressing room employees were willing to lose everything for a glass of whisky or a fleeting kiss. Moral uprightness was practically nonexistent and every life was bereft of lofty purpose. If anything even remotely reformative was ever mentioned, the usual response was a vol-

ley of loud jeers. Within a few months I accepted defeat and also started selling art in this market of art auctioneers. Whatever I wrote during my association with film institutions was not literature but an affront to literature, not art but business. I take no pride in it; rather I am ashamed.

Back in those days Lahore didn't have any literary institution other than the Ḥalqa-e Arbāb-e Ẕauq. For a long time I attended its meetings regularly. I closely examined the creative literature presented there and the littérateurs who produced it, but not for a moment did I allow myself to be influenced by the product or the producer. Diverse trends in form and content were in evidence in this literary circle, all of which inevitably led to Formalism. Most of its major literary men were pessimists who considered the pleasure of death, democracy, and the sexual excitement of the fast-fading international bourgeoisie the pinnacle of art. Much of their literary output was little more than a grotesque mimicry of Western Freudians, and some writers didn't even have a Freud to back them up, let alone have a clear purpose or perception of life. Mentally confused and fuzzy, they attempted to hide their shortcomings in riddles, hoping the reader of their poems would find them amusing. Some even assumed surrealism was the height of poetic art. I cannot recall a single meeting of the Ḥalqa in which I didn't end up ruffling some feathers or stepping on some toe through my outright impertinence. I was always a Marxist in my critical approach and I'm inclined to think that the living philosophy that throbbed within my art did affect some of the participants. As a result, my essay "The Social Backdrop of Urdu Prose," which I had written from a frankly socialist perspective, was chosen as one year's best essay during the Ḥalqa's Annual Conference and I was awarded a cash prize of thirty-three rupees, five annas and six pies.

This was the period of my political and literary bankruptcy. My association with mass movements declined and I gradually stopped reading political literature. The inevitable consequence was the appearance of a cognitive dissonance in my art. If a piece somehow escaped thematic contraction, it fell smack dab into "vanguardism." This period was distanced from life's healthy stimuli. Consequently, my creative pace slowed and I began to incline increasingly toward pleasurable lyricism.

Meanwhile the horrific year of 1947 came upon us. British imperialism auctioned off 400 million Indian human beings to "Muslim Biggies" and "Hindu Biggies" in lieu of the Marshall Plan. Humanity had already been martyred in Bihar, Bengal and Nawakhali, now a bloody and fiery cloud spread through the Punjab. Heer's colorful spinning wheel became her funeral pyre and her Ranjha was buried in his grave at Tarajan along with all of his melodious songs. The Chenab turned red in its snaking course.

The romance that grew along the stretch of five rivers was devastated in no time at all like the marital bliss (*suhāg*) of a widow.

The news of Partition forced my clan to flee Amritsar but they couldn't make it to Lahore intact. One of my uncles and two young cousins were murdered on the way. Back in Lahore the film industry had all but collapsed. The balance of human and social relationships that had molded me in a particular way for such a long time suddenly fell apart. The environment around me changed so drastically that all I could see before me was the death of man or the satanic politics of British imperialism foisted upon me and every nonpolitical Indian and Pakistani.

All the anthropological knowledge I had consigned to oblivion for a while now slowly began to resurface in my consciousness. Once again I threw myself into the study of political literature, making the national and international political forces let loose by the Second World War the subject of my inquiry.

> Eastern Europe turned red immediately following the war. British power folded in Egypt and Palestine. In Asia, the Chinese masses started to administer decisive blows to American interests. Indonesia, Burma, Vietnam, and the Philippines became the arena of the peoples' battles. In India, armed *jahazi* (ship-workers) rose up under the leadership of the Socialist Party. The Army became rebellious in 1946, 1947. Bengal and Maharashtra peasants awakened. The Telangana region started to produce not slaves but gorillas.
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> Watching its colonies and monopolies slip away and internal industrial systems disintegrate, the head honcho of the world's exploitative powers, the Anglo-American block, started weaving its web of machinations against the Soviet Union—the most formidable bulwark of eastern and western mass movements and especially of progressivism. Under the cover of the Balfour Declaration, the state of Israel was established with the ostensible purpose of shattering Arab unity. The federation of Western Europe was founded to put Eastern Europe under blockade. The bankrupted Dutch government was bailed out with massive monetary aid so that it might be enabled to reoccupy Indonesia and provide a counterbalance to the emerging power of Chinese revolutionaries. Through military and civilian intervention, Gasperi's Party succeeded in the Italian elections. Military bases were established throughout the Middle East. For economic exploitation, astronomical military budgets were set up to throw the world into the flames of a third worldwide war.
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> Similarly, the Anglo-American block stirred up religious fanaticism to suppress the peoples' movements in India. They carved up the South Asian subcontinent among princely states, nabobs and landowners, and other moneyed classes, on condition that they would work toward strengthening the British block throughout the world, even after Britain lost its territorial

> power over them. They would increase their economic ties with Britain and its friends and support the Anglo-American block to defeat the progressive forces of East and West."[1]

This study removed my confusion. I felt a surge of renewed strength and freshness and devoted myself to the work of the Progressive Writers' Association. ❑

*—Translated by Muhammad Umar Memon*

[1]It is unclear whether the indented passages are actual quotations, simply thoughts Kashmiri formulated through study, or merely his impressions. —*Tr.*