

Pak. U.S. LITERARY INTERACTION

In the era of globalization, It is difficult to agree with Rudyard Kipling's saying "East is east & West is west : both can never meet" . Shrinking distances and fast spreading communication have gathered people at one platform. We must not be ignorant to each other. Ignorance cuts both ways. The Haves should think about Have- not. Though we have different past, yet our ultimate goal is one. The aspirations and feelings of people, all over the world, are alike.

Literature is the window, through which, one can see the aspirations of the people. It is an index of any nation's pride, history, culture and future.

Pakistan & USA have a long history of relationship, expanding on six decades, in terms of Literature and mutual understanding. Pakistan is one of the reliable allays of the USA in the post 9/11 war against terrorism.

There are many areas of common interests between two countries. Literature is one of them. It is a major common source of inspiration between the people of both nations. Future prospects are based on deep research.

No computer can count the number of words people use daily. But some of the words are worth keeping as they have value for their beauty and the way used. Men, in early ages, hacked out in the stones the teaching of their leaders. Today printing presses roll out books, newspapers and magazines. The best of all, that has been saved, we call it Literature.

Many things, printing these days, cannot be called Literature because they have no lasting value. On the other hand, many religious books and Greek Literature, being centuries old, still haunts us. The works of Shakespeare are as popular today as were 350 years ago. Classical Literature is ever lasting.

Perhaps the best words used, in any language, for Literature is the French word "belles letters" which means "beautiful writing." Goldsmith links literature with pleasure. This pleasure is two ways; one on the creators end and other on the

readers end. A creative writer always keep his vision fixed on absolute Good, absolute Beauty and absolute Truth. The world seems always waiting for a creative writer. A great literature is a common heritage of all the communities.

At a time like this, when we are divided and world is threatened with destruction, literature is the need of the hour for mutual understanding. Literary artists have a great function in our society. They must educate the human minds and remove evils for a decent society. U.S-Pak.literary interaction should be enhanced to bridge the differences.

Pakistan came into existence on August 14, 1947. After World War II, a cold war started between two major political blocks Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan, first premier of Pakistan, Preferred to visit U.S. on April 13, 1950. He rejected the invitation from U.S.S.R and criticized communism.

Through various phases and regimes the mutual cooperation between two countries gained acceleration. Every government of Pakistan, political or non-political, seeks goodwill of American leaders. Some people say that Pakistan has paid a very high price of its "friendship" with U.S. Pakistan reliable and strong ally of America in war against terrorism after 9/11. President Pervez Musharaf and Prime Minister Shoukat Aziz have recently visited U.S. Mr. George W. Bush; President of U.S. has also visited Pakistan in March 2006.

This is the time to discover new horizons of cooperation among both the nations. Literary interaction can play a pivotal role on the path of good relations.

American Literature is 'young' as compared to other old ones, i.e. English (UK), Greek, Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit, Chinese and Urdu literature. But its development is very fast. Its development is in multi dimensions. In the history of American Literature, first come the colonial period (1765-1829), Benjamin Franklin is representative of the age of enlightenment. Cullen Bryant, the father of American poetry. Belongs to 19th century. Washington Irying and James Fennimore are prominent fictionists of the age. E.A Poe (1809-49) is an everlasting poet and short story writer. E.D. Thoreau (1817-62) is an essayist and critic of American society. Emerson (1803-42) is an orientalist. Hawthorne is the most modern novelist. Emily Dickinson (1830-86) is a poetess. Mark Twain (1835-1910) and Long-Fellow (1807-82) are major poets of New England. In the second half of 19th century, the local colour movement takes place. Realistic and romantic movements also have their impacts on U.S. literature. O' Henry (1862-1910), Robert Forest

(1875-1963), Henry James (1843-1916), E. Hemingway (1891-1961) and William Faulkner (1897-1962) are also prominent writers of U.S O' Neill (1888-1953) brought a revolution in American Drama. Theodore Driser (1875-1945) belongs to realistic movement.

Ezra Pound (1885-1975) was a teacher, poet and critic. He extended his literary vision out of America. He was a lover of Japanese's HAIKU. It is needed that contemporary American writers should also extend their thoughts and diction to the oriental horizons. Pakistani Urdu has a rich and fertile literature. Urdu is a very flexible to interact with other languages and literatures, particularly that of US.

According to the latest research, the process of emerging a new language, Urdu, started in 8th century in the South Asia. With the passage of time, Urdu has become a Lingua Franca of South Asia, particularly in Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. Population wise, it is considered that fourth major language of the world.

Mulla Wajhi (d-1571) is considered the father of Urdu prose while Wali Dakhni (d-1707) is the father of Urdu poetry. Both legends belong to Dakkan School of literature. Lakhnao School of literature is proud of its trend making poets, Aatish, Mushafi and Mir Anees. With the advent of Fort William College (1801) Urdu language stepped into the modern age. Dr. John Gilkrist compiled grammar and dictionary of Urdu Language for the first time. He was able to do this, though being a non-Indian, because his native language, English and Urdu have the same Semitic base. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan of Ali-Garh, with his devoted companions, Hali, Nazir and Shabli did a lot for Urdu language and literature. First major interaction of English and Urdu took place in the age at Ali-Gar University. Abdul Khan Azad and Muhammad Hussain Azad are representatives of romanticism. Prem chand and several others started a progressive movement in 1936. It was pro-communism.

Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938) was a western educated philosopher poet of South Asia. He dreamt of Pakistan. He is national poet of Pakistan. There are many organizations in Pakistan and abroad serving for Urdu language and literature. Lahore school of research and Karachi school of research have done a great service for Urdu language and literature. Moqtedra Qoumi Zuban (national language authority), Anjuman Taraqi Urdu, Iqbal Academy and Academy of Letters have national and international repute. Rahim Yar Khan school of literature keeps a

rich literary and cultural heritage, Having its roots to Upshnad Era, 1000 years o;d.
The writers of these lines belong to this area.

U.S- Pak.Literary interaction is two way interactions;

U.S. to Pakistan and Pakistan to U.S.

- a) American literature has been introduced at graduation and post graduation level in more than 26 public universities of Pakistan. The number of students (regular or private) is approximately 10000 per year. This number is doubled if private universities are included in this study.
- b) A full course (100 points) of American literature is introduced in the national level competitive examinations (CSS) which is conducted for selection of civil service of Pakistan.
- c) English newspapers in Pakistan are regularly publishing the thought-provoking articles of American Laureates. Art Buchwald, Noam Chomsky, William Kohan and several others are read with interest in Pakistan.
- d) U.S inspired curriculum has been introduced at under graduate level, "A" level and "O" level studies in Pakistan.
- e) Examination system of Pakistan has also been changed according to that of U.S (September to April session) since the Education Calendar of 2006-7.
- f) American Laureates frequently visit Pakistan. They participate in many literary programs organized by public and private organization.
- a) Pakistan was lucky enough to have Mr. Ahmed Shah Patras Bukhari as its first Ambassador to United Nations in 1948. He was a great literary personality and as educationist. He played a dynamic role for literary interaction of the two countries. Prof. Hameed Ahmed Khan, Vice

Chancellor of the Punjab University Lahore also visited U.S. in early 1950's. Fulbright Foundation has sponsored a lot of scholarship for Pakistani students & scholars, to this extent that President J.WBush had to say:
"The largest numbers of Fulbrighters are from Pakistan"
(Outreach, April 2006).

- b) A great number of Pakistani scholars are writing literary articles in AmericanMagazines. Prof. Anwar Syed, a Pakistan national of George Washington University is one of its examples. More research is required in this area.
- c) Many literary magazines are published in U.S. by Pakistani immigrants. The weekly "Pakistan Link" and "Urdu Times" are popular literary magazines being published from five big cities of U.S having vast readership. This area also needs research.
- d) Literary seminars are conducted by Pakistani-American on different occasions. A remarkable seminar has been held to appreciate the literary works of Iftikhar Arif, Chairman Academy of Letters Pakistan, in March 2006. Many well known writers from Pakistan participate and address such seminars. A valuable data can only be collected by a research program.
- e) Literary Recitation (Mushairas) are interesting, useful and powerful literary activities. Such "Mushairas" have proved their importance for enhancing literary interaction. Many prominent Pakistani poets visit U.S. to attend such literary recitations (Mushairas). Pakistani immigrants enjoy such activities and harvest social interaction also.
- f) Books, Journals and Booklets are being published by Pakistani immigrants, though for literary purposes only but these interact vice-versa in both the societies. A research based data will act as a catalyst for literary interaction.

The world has witnessed a mass destruction after 9/11 incident. The present world is divided into many controversial groups based on vested interests.

Let us try the people to interact through literature. Literature has always been an ambassador of peace and prosperity. The wounds can be healed by literary interaction.

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