

TWILIGHT IN DELHI



TWILIGHT IN DELHI

A Novel by
AHMED ALI

*Delhi was once a paradise,
And great the joys residing here,
But they have ravished this bride of peace,
Remain now ruins and care.*
—BAHADUR SHAH

KARACHI
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON NEW YORK DELHI
1984

1

DELHI envelopes the city, covering it like a blanket asleep, wrapped in a restless slumber, breathing heavily as the heat becomes oppressive in shadows through the by lanes, on the roads, men sleep on bare beds, half naked, tired after the sore day's labour. A few still walk on the other wide deserted roads, hand in hand, talking, and some have pomine garlands in their hands. The smell from the dyes smothered by the heat. Dogs go about sniffing the gutters in search of filth; and cats sink out of shops, and lanes, from under the planks putting out of narrow milk and thrown away.

Heat exudes from the walls and the earth; and the gutters give out a damp sink which comes in greater into an underground canal. But men sleep with their beds over the gutters, and the cats and dogs quarrel over heaps of refuse which lie along the alleys and cross-roads.

Here and there in every mohallah* the mosques spread out like the white breasts of a woman bared, as it were, to catch the starlight on their surfaces, and the minarets point to heaven, indicating, as it were, that God is all high and one.

* Locality

Ahmed Ali's most celebrated novel, cover, title page and first page

Introduction

The Raison d'Etre of Twilight in Delhi

The damage done by colonial powers to the heritage of conquered peoples is irreversible; yet racial memory is a collective storehouse that time and history cannot eradicate. In Mexico and Peru, the Spaniards conquered the vast Aztec and Inca empires in the early part of the sixteenth century, and became the rulers of millions of human beings, sanctified by Papal bulls to convert heathen peoples to Christianity and impose their languages upon them, which the Portuguese also did in Brazil. In Africa, the British, Dutch and Portuguese captured, enchained, baptized and shipped twenty million able-bodied men, women and children as slaves to the Americas, of which only twelve million reached alive. And on the lands they had captured they imposed their rule and languages . . .

When the Europeans came to the Orient, it was to an Islamic World; and they had been awed by Islam since the conquest of Spain, Sicily and parts of France in the eighth and ninth centuries. Islam had come to symbolize for them "terror, devastation, the demonic hordes of hated barbarians," as Edward W. Said says in his incisive analysis, *Orientalism*. "For Europe," he continues, "Islam was a lasting trauma. Until the end of the seventeenth century the 'Ottoman peril' lurked . . . to represent for the whole of a Christian civilisation a constant danger."¹

The British arrived in India at the beginning of the seventeenth century when the Mughals were in power, having been preceded by the Portuguese who came to Calicut in 1498 in search of "Christians and Spices," followed by the Dutch, who sent a fleet to the East in 1595. During the reign of the Great Mughals the British expanded their trade and competed with their rivals the Portuguese, Dutch and French. Their territories were confined to a few miles within the island of Bombay and Madras city, a few factories and warehouses in the Bay of Bengal, with a fortified post set up at Aramgaon about 1625. For fifty years after the death of Aurangazeb in 1707 the English merchants kept away from politics and fighting. Though

First page of Introduction from *Twilight* (New Directions, 1994 edition), written less than a month before author's death

changes in broad smiling with nose and mouth
and clenching clench at all.

changes it. What's wrong with us and with the
real Christian Church at all.

Outside the city, beyond the Delhi area, the
Turkoman State, and opposite the Kotta's, Singh
State, the Old Fort, a new Delhi was going to be
built. The Mughal Delhi had fallen, along with
the splendour of its builder, the King of the World,
Shah Jahan. Now the empire was under another
King, and people still suffered and predicted that the
fall to the "the" builders would come soon. The
foundations laid at these times laid. To keep the
President of Delhi sometimes felt fed up with
his task and with everything said:

O Ballin, Las Ballin
To ball with you Ballin.

Still many loved it with all their united hearts and souls. Truly, the courtiers of Babylon shall find beyond their love for Babel for its citizens:

Let it be a united Mel-Kenn is today
A Q. united in purpose and love to art
Zane. The two

A q m... per vomp ...
 Zu Hydratland; und.
 So leave the lands "Dellai" and go away?

And keep all original tools once they were broken or rusty; New old would be neglected, and allowed to fall in ruin.

fell in victim.
Pascaden knew, & was the "Belle" indeed - was purple,
new things and a new attitude would strengthen. That way
be all right for them, but for the old residents it
was exciting though. She is in a strange purple land
control coming into the city, people from their previous
of habits, and new people. They brought the new
new customs and new ways. The old culture, wide
had been vigorous within the village is the ancient
form, was in danger of annihilation and collapse.
The language, as ^{well as} the Belle had picked it up,
which she gave, ^{and} ^{and} the beauty and magnificence of
her also. Belle would become a city of the dead,

inhabited by purple vireos did not have any birds
any flocks associations with it and its history and
its associated vegetation and climate. But vireos can
not maintain the vegetation of Tundra?

This led to the belief of Miss & Miss friends
and they all felt sorry & worried. But they were
under weather so Miss were kind to help. They were
in the hands of bourgeois, and they were doing as
they pleased, and so and so came and were in
field.

→ There is only one place to live near and near
at home, in this new world, and in the atmosphere
of oldness and wisdom, a world which has
its own and where we can find distinct
after his work.

[illegible]

two lines.

Early in the morning he would go to their
inland (wisdom) to leave the Oram, when he had
to sit on a damp mat lying under, old and torn
at places, under which cowered cattle-women and
other insects. Their men alone: formally children
and boys and girls, others to leave the Oram.
Up there, he would come to know the Oram.
Up there, he would sit, and leave their houses, and

and then ... Good day.

"Zach."

And at the first to the first with them
 living, perhaps one after another?
 ... and a small table
 ... and a small table
 ... and a small table

... and a small table
 ... and a small table
 ... and a small table
 ... and a small table
 ... and a small table

... and a small table
 ... and a small table
 ... and a small table
 ... and a small table
 ... and a small table

Still alive to hope like me, and even like dogs,
 at the very first and last.

... and even like dogs,
 at the very first and last.
 ... and even like dogs,
 at the very first and last.

Amos He.

Lucas

38

39



Dillī kī Shām, Urdu translation of Twilight

حادہ کبولا یہ کی نذر - اس ایشیائی میں
 کتاب کی بہت غلطیاں رہ گئی ہیں جن کو
 درکار کہہ رہا تھا - جامعہ دہلی کی ایڈیشن
 میں یہ غلطیاں ختم ہیں لیکن اس کا کوئی نمونہ
 لکھ نہیں پاس میں ہے - بہر حال امید
 ہے کہ اردو میں یہ ناول انگریزی سے زیادہ
 مزہ دے گا -

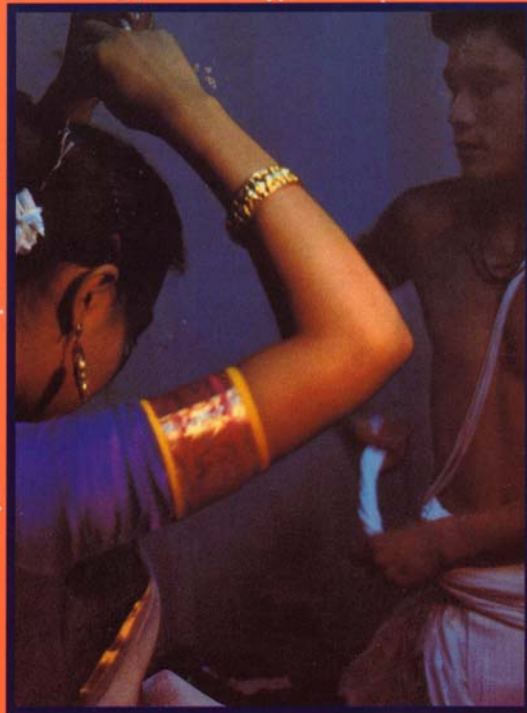
لکھی

۵ جون ۱۹۷۳ء

Inscription in the author's own hand in *Dillī kī Shām*, gift to Prof. Carlo Coppola, 1973

Ahmed Ali

Crepúsculo en Delhi



narrativa *Las otras culturas*

ALCOR

Spanish translation of *Twilight* and first page

La noche envuelve la ciudad, cubriéndola como una manta. Bajo la pálida luz de las estrellas, los tejados, las casas y los callejones duermen con sueño agitado, respirando pesadamente cuando el calor se hace opresivo o recorre el cuerpo como el dolor. En los patios, en las azoteas, en los callejones, en las carreteras, los hombres duermen en lechos sin ropa, medio desnudos, cansados después de la ardua jornada. Algunos todavía caminan por las calles desiertas, cogidos de la mano, hablando; y algunos llevan guirnaldas de jazmín en las manos. El aroma surge de las flores, perfuma el aire hasta varios metros y luego muere, sofocado por el calor. Los perros husmean en los arroyos de las calles, buscando desperdicios; y los gatos salen furtivamente de angostos callejones, de debajo de los tablones que sobresalen de los comercios, y lamen las tazas de loza que los hombres tiraron después de usarlas para beber leche.

Las paredes y la tierra rezuman calor, y los arroyos de las calles despiden un hedor húmedo que se alza en oleadas mayores cuando se encuentran con una cloaca y arrojan su agua sucia a un canal subterráneo. Mas los hombres duermen con sus camas sobre los arroyos, y los gatos y los perros se pelean por la basura que se amontona en callejones y encrucijadas.

Aquí y allá, en toda *mohallah*, las mezquitas levantan sus blancas cabezas hacia el cielo, sus cúpulas se yerguen como los blancos senos de una mujer desnuda, por así decirlo, para recoger la luz de las estrellas en sus superficies, y los minaretes apuntan hacia el cielo, indicando que Dios es altísimo y único...

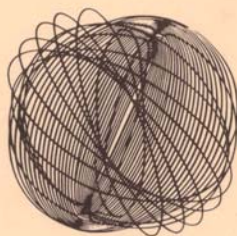
Pero la ciudad de Delhi, construida hace cientos de años, por la que se ha luchado y por la que se ha muerto, codiciada y deseada, construida, destruida y reconstruida, cinco, y seis y siete veces, llorada y cantada, violada y conquistada, pero entera y viva pese a ello, yace, indiferente, en los brazos del sueño. Fue la ciudad de reyes y monarcas, de poetas y narradores de cuentos, cortesanos y nobles. Mas ningún rey vive allí hoy día, y

DU MONDE ENTIER

AHMED ALI

CRÉPUSCULE À DELHI

ROMAN
TRADUIT DE L'ANGLAIS
PAR ALAIN DELAHAYE
ET JEAN-BAPTISTE DE SEYNES



nrf

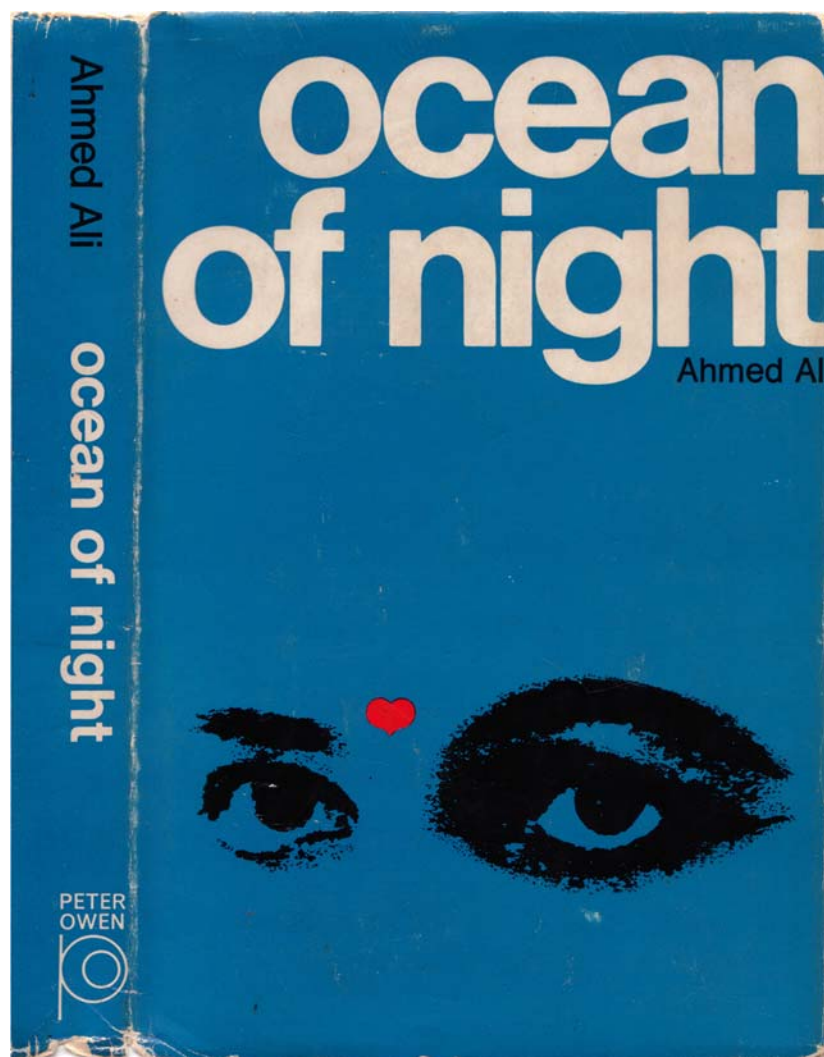
GALLIMARD

French translation of *Twilight* and first page

La nuit enveloppe la ville comme d'une couverture. Sous la pâle clarté des étoiles, les terrasses, les maisons et les ruelles dorment d'un sommeil agité; on y entend des respirations rendues lourdes par la chaleur accablante, qui parfois secoue le corps entier comme un élancement. Dans les cours, sur les terrasses, dans les ruelles, le long des rues, les hommes sont endormis torse nu sur des lits en désordre, épuisés après une journée de dur labeur. Certains déambulent encore à travers les avenues désertes, en devisant main dans la main; quelquefois ils tiennent une guirlande de jasmin. Le parfum des fleurs embaume l'air à leur passage, puis se perd dans la chaleur ambiante. Des chiens flairent les caniveaux à la recherche de détritus; des chats surgissent d'étroits passages ou de sous les estrades en planches des boutiques, et viennent laper ce qui reste de lait dans des bols en terre cuite abandonnés sur le sol.

Les murs et les trottoirs eux-mêmes semblent exsuder une chaleur moite; des caniveaux s'échappe une odeur nauséabonde, encore plus tenace aux endroits où les eaux sales se jettent dans les égouts. Bien que leurs lits se trouvent juste au-dessus de cette puanteur, les hommes dorment à poings fermés, tandis que chats et chiens se disputent les ordures entassées çà et là dans les ruelles et aux carrefours.

De loin en loin, dans chaque quartier, les mosquées dressent leurs pointes blanches vers le ciel, et leurs coupoles



Ocean of Night, dust jacket and last page

reverberated in her mind, and her heart fluttered like a feather tumbling down to earth. 'When love is dead, then what remains?' she thought. 'What remains for men to gather up and say: Look, here's a jewel found in the mud; and pass it round the assembly of the elect? Love, kindness, friendship, that's all that lasts. When hearts unite a spark is lit. This spark expands into a light which sheds its rays and brightens up the darkness of the soul, dispelling all fear of loneliness and thoughts of self. But when souls drift apart they take away with them the means of producing that eternal spark. Only a memory remains, sadder and more beautiful than the call of sex for sex, more tender than the emotion we put into that call....'

She lay clutching her faith within her heart. Gradually sobs began to shake her frame. The flame within the glass flickered in short spasms. Quietly the candle went out. The room was dark. She buried her face in the pillow, and tears began to flow at last....

Personal copy.

Mad. K. K. K. 1964

In the hope that he
will be able to uphold
the right of the writer
for freedom of expression.

K. K. K.
K. K. K. July 1974

Inscription in the author's own hand in *Ocean of Night*, gift to the Editor,
1974

Opening the gate he signalled the chauffeur to enter, and as the car wheeled round presented arms. Driving along the gravel road winding and twisting through the extensive grounds, we came to a halt before the flight of marble steps of the Embassy built on a ten foot high platform, a solid and palatial structure symbolising the pomp and grandeur of the past when ~~interests~~ Khrushchev had ^{interests} in Rattisan during the imperialist days and until Rattisan became independent of ~~the~~ foreign yoke. They still desired, CDA had told me, to get back some of their hold over the country, but Samia had succeeded in ousting Khrushchev by giving ^{Rattisan} aid and more aid, ^{desired} ~~wanted~~ and unwanted, working largely through a system of unsolicited bribes for which a secret service organisation known as the SSO had spread out its tentacles like the suckered arms of the octopus and did not hesitate to buy or

چاتال میں کی سنان سے ملاقات اور یادِ وطن

”جب مٹ چکا دور اور دور“ میں نے کہا،
 ”لو یہاں دھرا ہے یاد میں، اے جانِ من، جانِ جہاں
 زندگی ہے یک نفس - اور عمر کہیں
 آتا نہیں کئی ملک کر دیکھنے
 دوستوں کے قافلہ کو خندہ تن ہر دم رواں ہر دم رواں،
 یا سننے کے آواز چرس، اور دور تر ہوتی ہوئی
 خوش کن اس کی وہ صد -“

”جیسا کہ جیسا“ تب کہا کی سنان نے،
 ”عمر کا دھندلہ سانس
 ہستیاں کی سمت پیچھے مائل ہر دان ہے،
 اور وقت کا اٹھنا دھواں
 چڑھ رہا ہے آسمانوں کی طرف
 وسعتیں جن کی محیط و بیکراں -
 درحقیقت زندگی کا انت ہی
 زندگی کا نقطہ آغاز ہے -“

جب خزاں کے زرد پتے منتشر
 ہو چکے اور فضا
 اوڑھے ہوئے تھی ہر بالوں کی سفیدی کی طرح
~~پھر ہر بالوں کی سفیدی کی طرح~~
 ہر کی موٹی ردا،
 اس دم ہوا کی سنان سے
 ملنا میرا تحت اثری -
 ایک ہر مہر کی سرسی پہ تھادہ جا کر نہیں،
 اور غواہی سے کی سنان سے رکھی ہوئی
 اور باغ میں ایک ہر باغ کا جام تھا،
 اور ٹھہرنا تھا سچوں کی آواز میں زیب تن کیے
~~پھر ہر مہر کی سرسی پہ تھادہ جا کر نہیں~~
 ہر بلوں پر نرم دھن میں زمزمہ پر داز کہیں -
 پھر وہی گزرے زمانے کی طرح
 مجھ سے ملنے کو کھڑے ہوتے ہوئے کھینچ لے
 ”کچھ سناؤ دوست احوالِ وطن -
 کیا اب بھی وہ آلود بخارے کا درخت
 جو آگ رہا تھا میری کھڑکی کے قریب
 بول ہی ہے ٹکلی پیر میں؟
 کیا ابھی تک میرے بستر کے سر ہانے پر وہیں
~~پھر ہر مہر کی سرسی پہ تھادہ جا کر نہیں~~
 لٹکی ہوئی میری رباب؟
 کیا ابھی بھی اُس قیدہ بید بچوں پر
 ہوا کرتی ہے بھلی لفظ زن؟“

I MEET LEE SAN IN THE NETHER WORLD AND TALK OF HOME

When Autumn
leaves were scattered
And the fog lay thick
Like greying hair about my head,
I met Lee San in the Nether World.
He sat on the throne-like chair of jade
Drinking out of an emerald cup
Red wine, while maids in silver skirts
Played soft airs on stringed instruments.

“What news of home?” he said
Rising to greet me as in days of yore.
“Is the plum tree by the window still in
bloom?”
Does my lute still hang beside my bed,
The oriole in the twisted willow sing?”

“What boots it, Lee San, to think of
home
When home is dead? One lives
But only once,” I said to him. “No
ghost
Has ever returned to hear
The joys of passing bells and watch
The cavalcade of rejoicing friends.”

“Alas,” said he, “the white stork of
memory
Plies its way for ever winging
On towards the Bamboo Grove, the
grey
Smoke rising into the cloud-free sky.
Life’s search begins when life has come
to an end.”



Lost in the labyrinths of life and the mazes of its shibboleths,
 I asked Li San if ever ^{will} this workshop of the ~~subversives~~ ^{wonder makers}
 Stop and Rest its motion, stop and come undone,
 Time runs in rest of what we in this world call death?

The Master of the Way, the wonder-worker of Illusion, and
 Being and ~~not~~ ^{and} non-being, gestured with his hand and
 "To be or not to be ^{was} is not the question but 'Be'."

And it came to being. So will the wheel
 Come ^{on day of a no return} full circle, ^{the point}
 Expanded to the circumference, the strain
 Unwind and be resumed into ^{its} origin, the painted
 Of earth and sky ~~rolled up~~ ^{up} before the rock
 Rolled up, the earth and sky ~~reverted back~~
 Of earth and sky rolled up, reverted back
 To their original form and shape from which
 They were first created, recreated into nothing,
 Back to nothing out of which they had been made.
 He will have you of right and wrong, motion
 Or cessation of movement, as you were and will be.
 Concentrate good and evil into one simple being
 And it will spread out and disperse until no distinction



Of right ~~and~~ ^{or} wrong remains.

You have yet to pass beyond the known

The known and be unknown ^{only}

The future and the past are ^{only} accumulations
 Of the present, Time and Space of point
 and moment.

In this ~~is~~ a wonder-world of illusion, rejuvenating
 Of the desert in the alps, of the phoenix ^{gilded}
 Of the desert in the alps, of the phoenix ^{gilded}
 Of the nest of the mythical phoenix in the fire,
 The fire is ^{the} Resurrection: to 'Be', and it will come with being."
 Which was a single blast of the trumpet
 in a hour came to be.

h.5.7.6
 11.2.82

First version: 6.9.71

Final version:

31.5.1972

Last corrections
4.8.1972

I DID NOT WISH TO DIE BUT AS THE
SEASONS END SO MUST LIFE AT LAST

Not wishing to die I prayed to the gods,
But time had come

As does the end of seasons.

The ~~cha hua~~ and ~~the~~ ~~plum~~ ~~roses~~, ^{Diffuse their colors,}
~~Leave their stems~~ ^{Scatter in the wind, Dapple the haze}

The peach and plum blossoms ~~have~~

The ground scattered with silent snow.

Driven to a ~~refuge~~ ^{shelter refuge} in shrouded past
By the madness of today

Collecting its ~~schizophrenia~~ ^{odds and ends of paranoia}

Of ~~paranoiac odds and ends~~ ^{of paranoia},

The budding points of regeneration

Still to be nursed to bloom,

I yielded up the ghost

To the ~~unfulfilled~~ blue of heaven.

Alas for the inevitable end of the evitable hour

Terminating the ~~unbroken~~ calm

Of the disturbed day's undisturbed dreams,

The eyes longing for the blood-red rose of Yin

Drowned in the unenfolding mists of Yang.

Life's invincible hope

Is sorrow's unevincible dawn.

ISTITUTO ITALIANO
PER IL MEDIO ED ESTREMO ORIENTE

SERIE ORIENTALE ROMA

SOTTO LA DIREZIONE
DI
GIUSEPPE TUCCI

Vol. XXXIX

LA REDAZIONE DELLA SERIE È CURATA
DAL PROF. ANTONIO GARGANO

SERIE ORIENTALE ROMA
XXXIX

ORIENTALIA ROMANA

3

GHALIB

Two Essays
by

AHMED ALI and ALESSANDRO BAUSANI



ROMA
Is. M. E. O.
1969

ROMA
ISTITUTO ITALIANO PER IL MEDIO ED ESTREMO ORIENTE
1969

Colophon and title page

غالب اور مسند جبر و اختیار

الحمد لله

عالم همه افسانه ها دارد و ما هیچ

باقی رہے ہیں اور اس جہاں نالی میں تخلیق کائنات اور حیات دوام کے دائمی اصول کو روشن کرتے اور
 شکر و شہادت لا شعوری کو کھینچ دین میں بہتے رہے ہیں۔ ایک دور آیا ہے ایک دور جاتا ہے
 آج غیر منہدی اور صرفی ترقی کے صنعتی نظام میں مقلد حیات پریشانی حیات میں گم ہو گیا ہے۔ مسائل وجود
 اپنے کی کشش کے نذر اور معاصی نئی حاشی پریشانیوں میں مبتلا معاصرین کی سمت جاتی سے زیادہ
 اہمیت پس رکھے۔ جہاں شکر و سخن و تاریخ و فلسفہ امتیاز فن و فکر، فرق خیرو شر، بے معنی اور بے کار تصور
 لئے جاتے ہیں۔ سیاست نہیں ہے یہ دور فکر و اجتہاد کا نہیں کام کا دور ہے۔ اور کام منقلب صبا سے پیش
 نہیں۔ افکار حاضرہ اس بات کی مہلت نہیں دیتے کہ کوئی فرد پیش سے نظر اٹھا کر افاق سے پرے دیکھیں اور
 وقت حاضرہ کو جو دور ماضی کی طرف نگاہ ہیں ڈالیں۔ یہی راک سیاستی اصحاب فکر الایچے ہیں اور یہی
 دشور ہو گیا ہے۔ اور تاریخ کا فکر یہ سمجھ کر سوچتا رہا کہ عمارت اور نیلہ ایک محدود و پرکھ کر رہا ہے
 جسے آج اور ہندو سو قبل مسیح کے درمیان کوئی مائلہ نہیں رہا اور ہم یورپ اور راجہ داہر کے اصلی
 ولی وارث نہیں۔ ان کے علاوہ نہ ہمارے کوئی آباد و ایجاد آئے نہ سلسلہ ہائے تمدن و تہذیب، نہ
 عقائد مذہبی نہ امتیاز نسلی۔

[illegible]

5

Right from the evening it burns
Low and dim;
My heart has become
A pauper's lamp.

Sunk the bounty, O cloud,
Of the eye bedewed;
Its copiousness today
Is abundant.

Who has the heart to hear
The tale of Mir?
The mood of the company
Is strange and grim.

5. شام سے بجھ گیا سارا راسخا ہے
دل چاہا ہے جبرائیل غفر کا
فیض، اے ابر، چشمِ تیرے ادا
آج دامنِ وسیع ہے دوسرا کا
تاب کسی کہ جو حالِ میر کے
حال ہی اور کچھ ہے مجھ کا

63

Carissing our earthen noise
And uproar rise with ebb and flow
Of the tides, whose secret hand,
O Lord,
Keeps the ocean's passion subdued?

The surging wave an arched eyebrow,
The eye indeed is every double;
And if samson's word is the pearl,
Then someone's ear is the shell.

63 ہر جزوِ آدم سے رکت و انفل اٹھتے ہیں فردشا
کہا کا ہے رازِ بحر میں پارِ نہ بے میں جو کشتی
ابروئے بلج موج ہے کوئی چشم ہے چاہ
موتی کسی کا بات ہے سبھی کسی کا کوشی

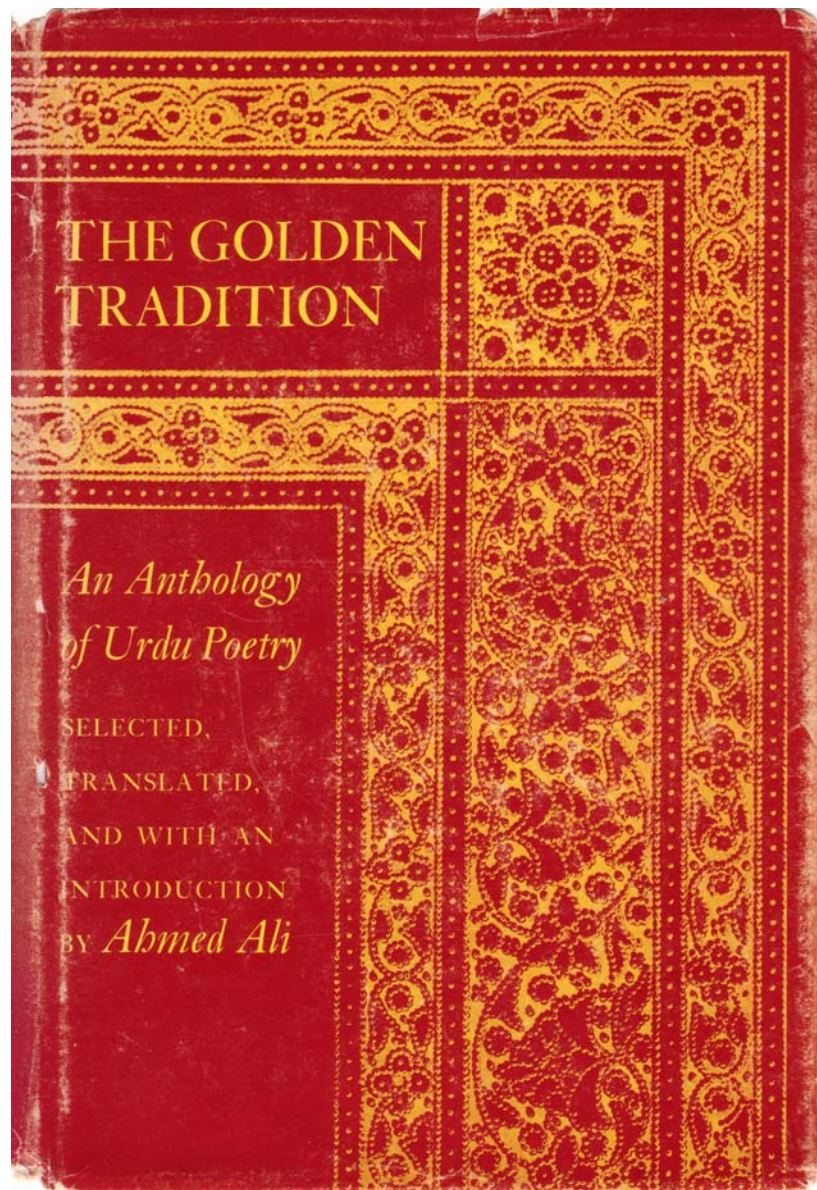
67

A crowd of love's laments
Accompanys my breath.
Even to the other world
I take a tumult with me.

Thus surely is, O Lord,
Some reason for astonishment,
Such intensity of passion
Fills the entire heavens.

What did the morning breeze
Whisper to the rose?
It tore its dress of endurance
To a thousand shreds, O Mir.

67 جاتا ہے اک ہجومِ غمِ عشقِ جی نے سنا ہے
ہفتا ہ لے چلے ہیں ہم کن جہان میں
پارِ بکری تو واسطہ کر گشتی کا ہے
اک عشقِ بھر ہے تمام آسمان میں
بھاڑا ہزار جا سے زبانِ میر پر
تیرا کہہ کر کہم کھر گئے کمال میں



Dust jacket and table of contents, *The Golden Tradition*

CONTENTS

Introduction

1. The Cry of the Gazelle	3
2. The Anguished Heart	23
3. The Molten Flame	55

Poems

Note on the Translations	105
--------------------------	-----

PART I. EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Shamsuddin Mohammad Vali	111
Mir Sirajuddin Siraj	116
Mirza Mohammad Rafi Sauda	118
Khwaja Mir Dard	126
Mohammad Taqi Mir	134
Vali Mohammad Nazir	177
Mir Ghulam Hasan	191
Insha Allah Khan Insha	199

PART II. NINETEENTH CENTURY

Bahadur Shah Zafar	207
Khwaja Haider Ali Atish	212
Sheikh Ibrahim Zauq	217
Asadullah Khan Ghalib	221
Momin Khan Momin	261
Mir Babbar Ali Anis	269
Nawab Mirza Khan Dagb	273

GLOSSARY	279
----------	-----

INDEX	281
-------	-----

✓ V Angitar : THE SHATTERING

In the name of Allah the compassionate and merciful

LF

When this sky is shattered,
When the stars fall off and scatter,
When the oceans cleave asunder
And the graves are overturned, ^{buried inside out}
Then every soul will know its deeds (deserving grace) that
want ahead or (evil ones) that lagged behind.
O man! ^{what made you} ~~what made you~~ ^{create, avoid} ~~avoid~~ your Lord who is compassi-
onate, ^{compassionate,} ~~compassionate,~~ ^{merciful} ~~merciful~~
who ~~made you~~ first created you then fashioned you and gave
you symmetry,
Proportion of limb and joint, according to His will?
And yet ~~But~~ you deny the Reckoning; ~~of His Judgement,~~
But ~~not~~ there be guardians watching over you,
worthy ~~scribes~~ scribes
who know all that you do (and do not do).
Surely the righteous will rejoice,
And sinners be in hell -
To enter it on the Day of Reckoning
And never escape or hide from it!
What do you know of the Day of ^{Judgement} ~~Reckoning~~?
Indeed ~~And~~ what ~~do~~ do you know of the Day of Reckoning? -
The day when ~~no~~ soul will have ^{no} power over soul,
And on that day the Lord alone shall have the say,
(His will be done)!

K/ 28.01

Lomen Fabrics Limited

21, Hyder Ali Road, Karachi-5 Tel: 410733 Cables: Loofab Mills; 232/27 Korangi Industrial Area Karachi.

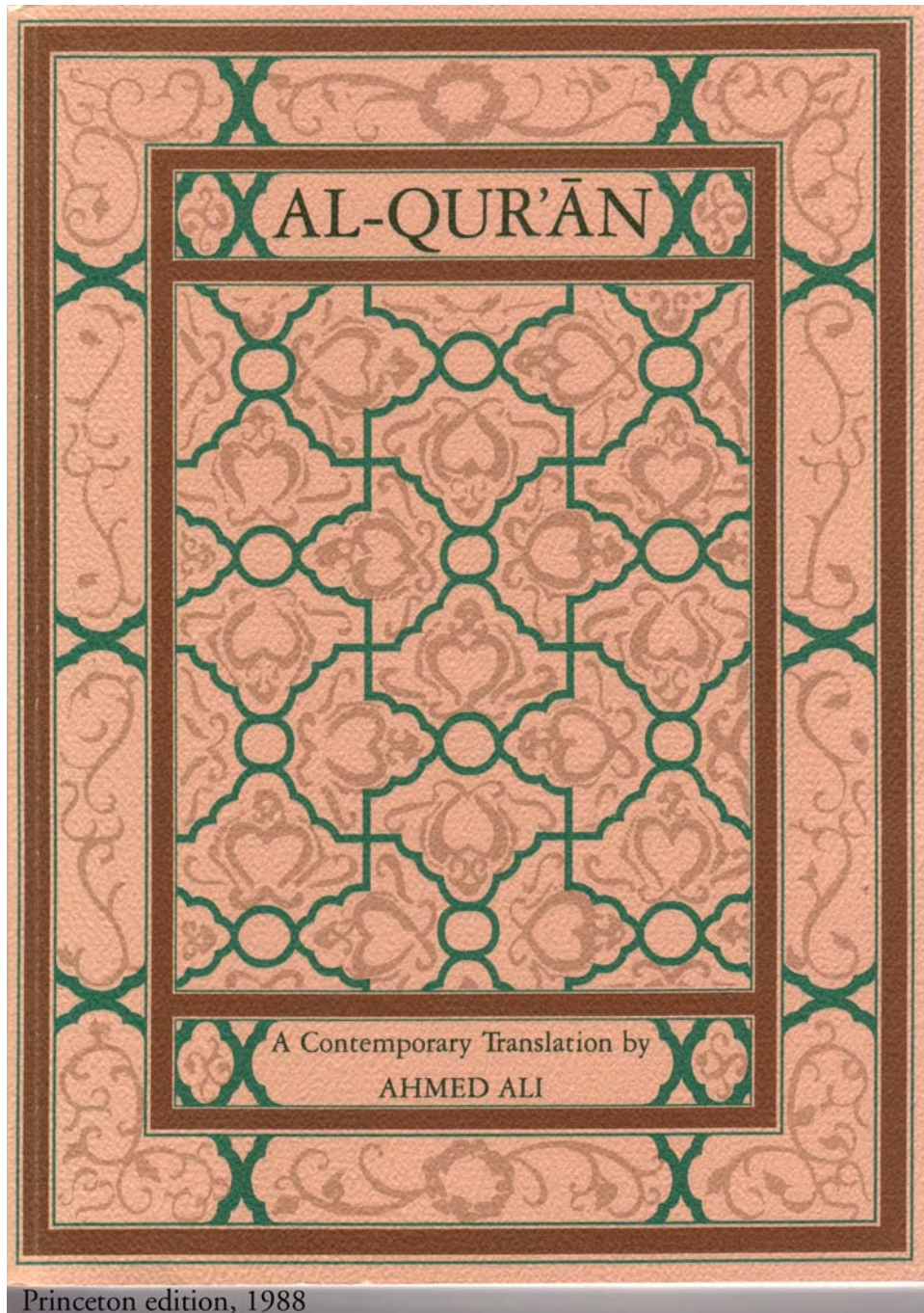
AL-QUR'ÂN



a contemporary translation

Ahmed Ali

First edition (Karachi: Akrash, 1984)



Princeton edition, 1988

82 The Splitting

Al-Infītār: Makki

In the name of Allah, most benevolent, ever-merciful.

WHEN THE SKY is split asunder,
 2. And the stars dispersed,
 3. When the oceans begin to flow,
 4. When the graves are overturned,
 5. Each soul will know
 what it had sent ahead
 and what it had left behind.
 6. O man, what seduced you
 from your munificent Lord
 7. Who created you
 then formed your symmetry,
 then gave you right proportion,
 8. Shaping you into any form He pleased?
 9. Even then you deny the Judgement.
 10. Surely there are guardians over you,
 11. Illustrious scribes
 12. Who know what you do.
 13. The pious will surely be in heaven,
 14. The wicked certainly in Hell:
 15. They will burn in it on the Day of Judgement,
 16. And will not be removed from it.
 17. How can you comprehend
 what the Day of Judgement is?
 18. How then can you comprehend
 what the Day of Judgement is?
 19. It is the day when no soul
 will have power to do the least for a soul,
 and God's alone will be done.

Al-Infitar

حَفَرٌ
 بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 بِأَمْرِ رَبِّكَ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

لَمَّا سَاءَ لَمَّكَتْ
 وَلَمَّا الْكَوَاكِبُ انْتَفَرَتْ
 وَأَلْمَسَتْ جُزْأَتُهَا
 وَأَلْمَسَتْ جُزْأَتُهَا
 عَمَتْ لَفْسٌ عَاثَقَتْ وَأَعْرَضَتْ
 يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَرْءُ إِنَّا سَأَلْنَاكَ بِرَبِّكَ الْكَرِيمِ
 الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ فَسُبْحَانَكَ قَسَمًا إِنَّكَ
 لَبِئْسَ الْفَعُولُ
 عَلَّمَكَ الْقَلَمَ
 وَلَمَّا عَلَّمْتَكَ الْقَلَمَ
 كَرَّمَ مَا عَلَّمْتَ
 يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ سَائِقَتُهُمْ
 إِنَّ الْآخِرَ لَكُلِّ شَيْءٍ خَيْرٌ
 وَلَكِنَّ الْكَافِرَ لَكُلِّ شَيْءٍ جَحِيمٌ
 يَصْطَرِّفُهَا أَيَّ تَرَفٍّ أَوْ ذِي
 وَمَا مَشَرَ يَمْعًا يَصْبِرُ
 وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامِ
 قُسُوفًا أَدْرَاكَ مَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامِ

يَوْمَ يَكُونُ لِكُلِّ نَفْسٍ عِلْمٌ بِمَا كَانَتْ تَعْمَلُ

526

Karachi: 2nd February '86

My dear humans,

I am sorry for replying to your letter so late. I was caught ~~up~~ in a whirlwind of urgent work which so burdened the mind that I could not find a breathing space for anything else. The most trying was the preparing of an index for the new edition of the Quran translation, for the inclusion of which a last-minute urgent call was made by the Secretary-General of OIC who seems to be interested in the translation — how much, will be known possibly when and if he does something practical to promote it which, he professed he will do.

In the meantime the printing, cover etc. of a volume of the short stories — THE PRISON HOUSE — which have never appeared in book form in English, took away a great deal of energy. The volume is now ready and with the binders. I will post you a copy as soon ^{as} the Binder delivers the first lot.

While these two things were going on simultaneously, OF RATS & DIPLOMATS was received from Delhi, full of so many errors, omissions and misprints that I am quite ashamed of it. ~~But~~ "Dawn" having heard that the book has been published asked for publishing extracts from it, which they are ^{now} doing in their weekly magazine section. We have had to have it recomposed for the Pakistani edition which will come out in March, a copy of which also will be sent to you, even though I had asked Orient Longman to send you, and other friends, a copy each, to be charged against my Royalty account. But there seems no coordination, or orderliness in their organisation, and surely no interest in the books they publish...

A copy of the Quran translation was sent to your friend for review within a fortnight of the receipt of your letter asking me to do so. He received the copy, and wrote a letter from Islamabad (where he had come to attend a Soviet ~~and~~ conference) saying that he had not written a review so far, but will let us know when he had done so... I had actually thought that you were going to review it yourself. I don't know about your friend. You should ask him, and remind him about it. And if he really writes, please send me a copy. He had seemed indifferent — but I may be mistaken.

Three of the Editor's personal letters from Ahmed Ali

Even though I have written to Carlo, I have not heard from him at all. I had asked him about his book, and later sent him a copy of the "Statement ~~which had been~~ the organisers of the London PWA "Jubilee" had issued which falsified the history, background and even the Manifesto of 1936, and makes Mulk Raj Anand "the sole surviving FOUNDER" of the Progressive Writers' Association! It is a purely communist document and makes PWA not have been a Communist Writers Association. Are you in touch with Carlo? Please ask him what he is doing about it. With love and best regards to your wife and all good wishes
 Yours Ahmed Ali

P.S. I see Richard Aldrich was asked to see him, and he brings with him a letter to the effect and please -

To open cut here

ENCLOSURES NOT ALLOWED

Sender's name and address

Ahmed Ali
 21-A Faran
 Hyder Ali Road
 Karachi - 5

Second fold here



البریدہ
 AÉROGRAMME



Dr. Muhammad Umar Hemon
 5417 Regent Street
 Madison, WI 53705

U.S.A.

To open cut here

30th Nov. 1986

My dear Mohammed Umar,

I gather from Richard Adams, who is poised to add two additional wings to his own two Dostoevskian ones by getting married twice here and THERE within one month between now and then, that you have been much too busy with your annual Conferences and seminars to have any wind left in your postal sails. I do hope they are filling out again now that all that merry-go-round has ceased, and have had time to look at the adventures-misadventures of Sourirade Soutarna in the briny stormy Samia-Kharoson Sea of the not-too-well identified geography of his diplomatic escapades.

I hope you and the family are all well.
With all good wishes

Yours
*Amad Ali

6th March 1987

My dear Ramon,

Thank you for your letter, and finding time from all your onerous duties to write it. In my anxiety not to lose the vast few friends still left, I had perhaps overlooked completely your worries and anxieties and the mounting pressures of developed countries racing down electrically towards their economic ruin and enslavement of their citizens in the iron webs of bread and butter and survival. Old age, alas, is selfish.

I am glad your friend, Dr. Poonwala, has sent you the draft of his review of the Quran translation. If there is anything in it worth quoting on the blurb of the new edition, please send the extract. Otherwise let time do its work in time. I will send you a copy of the OUP when it comes out. But the ~~first~~ ^{next} edition, which, I hope, will be definitive, has to await funds for printing. I am still adding notes to bring out the ~~the~~ many hidden and dialectical as well as scientific significances of many ayahs.

It is most kind of you to offer to find time for locating T B Irving's 'selections from the Noble Reading.' Dad managed to locate it and has sent a xerox copy, though he has not succeeded in obtaining that journal of the Muslim Association.

At the moment, however, I need ^{more} two other essays unobtainable here. One is an essay by H. H. Anniah Gowda, entitled 'Ahmed Ali's Twilight in Delhi (1940) and Achebe's Things Fall Apart (1958),' published in Half-Yearly, Vol. XXI No. 1 (1980), 11-18. The other is

Interpretation of the novels of Ali and Hosain in
S. C. Faruq, The Fire and the Offering: The English-
language Novel of India, Writers Workshop,

Calcutta, 1977, vol. 1, pp. 220-228.

I am happy to hear of Asim's and Anis's academic
progress, and grieved at the pain it causes
to educate them, and the additional burden
you and Nakaso have to bear. I know how expensive
it is, ~~that~~ for which reason my children have
suffered, even and Dad worked in America to
get whatever education they have managed to get.
But this will pass — as all passions. With love, Ahmed Ali

— first fold here —

ENCLOSURES NOT ALLOWED

Sender's name and address

Ahmed Ali
21-A Faran
Hyder Ali Rd.
Karachi-5

— second fold here —



ایروگرام
AEROGRAMME



Dr. Muhammad Umar Noman
5417 Regent Street
Madison, WI 53705

U. S. A

— To open cut here —