

Good Evening,

It is a pleasure to be with you. I will recite two of my poems. The first one contrasts the significant world progress in the computer age with the tragic condition of Afghanistan. I wrote the poem when I visited Japan in the spring of 2008 where I was deeply touched by the natural beauty and tremendous technological progress of that nation. An English translation of the poems are also provided for those who would like to follow the content of the poems

My second poem is about the heartbreaking condition of the women in Afghanistan. Although I wrote this piece during the Taliban age, conditions have not fundamentally changed for the majority of women during the past eight years. For instance, from 2007 to 2008, the number of reported cases of violence against women increased from 1,400 to 2,800. This year, the reported cases for the first six months have been over 1,100. The title of this piece is "The Plight of Afghan Women"

The Computer Age

For a long while I have been engrossed by computer games
My heart has been free from love and my head from poetry

From windows to websites
Fascinated by the magic of search engines

My eyes preoccupied with YouTube and my ears with iPods
Like school children I'm merely busy in playing games

Day and night I'm riveted in blogs and chat rooms
In the hot market of searches I'm a head to toe client

Totally lost in the games of daily life
I'm neither copper for the artisans nor gold for jewelers

Thirty years away from my native homeland
That heart of Asia which is my motherland

I'm from the momentous land of Sanaai and Rumi
From the metropolis of Aria, Bacteria, and Arachosia

I'm from the foothills of the Indu-Kafkasus
One who never surrendered to Soviets or another empire

I was nurtured in the cradle of Kabul
I'm neither Hellenic nor Dravidian

While my line of work is not poetry
I'm a flower stem from the garden of Dari poetry

I'm a flower bunch from the garden of wisdom
And a pearl from the love of my mother's heart

My homeland was burnt along with palace of knowledge and poetry
For this I wept for the poor fortune of future poets

Many innocents were slaughtered and many hands and feet were maimed
I always wondered about this judgment and such justice

I take comfort in the lord's plentiful blessings
Free from the worries of profit, loss or any commercial deals

Although I'm engrossed in computer games
Condemn me not for Dari poetry is my essence

Free from any worry whether anyone will hear my pain
I wept from head to toe as I recited these verses

The Plight of the Afghan Women

As the lord created women from earth and water
A new universe was brought into existence

For whatever is here from her presence
From the obvious to the obscure

There wouldn't have been an Eve without the world
There wouldn't have been Jesus without Mary

Observe women's beauty and elegance!
Her skills and capabilities are acknowledged by all

The reverence of Eve and Mary
Known to humankind for all times

Alas that the Afghan women live in profound agony
In hideous condition and heartbreaking melancholy

Living under the tyranny of the wretched
Shackled by the miserable hand of the clergy

Why have you acquired such satanic conduct?
If you yourself part of the human race

How dare you deny and cover the obvious
With your repugnant bread, turban, and machine gun

Listen to the pleas of the deprived and the destitute
Since the best prayer is service to humankind

The right of women is based on belief in the truth
And the words of all scriptures

Go away tyrant and leave us in peace
You are nothing more than the work of the devil

Redeem yourself and follow the road of the truth and salvation!
And heed to the plight of the Afghan women!

