

ISSUE 5 OCTOBER 2011



LASTBENCH A LITTLE MAGAZINE

With hunger whoever sits on back/their *convo* must go another door
past late night's drinking hours/the time that gets split with stare/don't
get kiss from sentence/so I am telling how naked information danced
on word and tube/one after multiple another stares, looking at frame's
bone/I see earthly alleys, excited before lengthy dawn/whatever outfit
and boots are gathered...



antivirus...
production

featuring...

Rudro Mohammad Shohidullah

Probor Ripon

Sanjib Purohit

Pablo Shahi

Abu Hasan Shahriar

Zillur Rahman

Shuvro Khandaker

Mujib Erom

Anonto Uzzul

Sarkar Amin

with

Antivirus desk

an effort of editorial dance on every possible chance...

Cover images by: *broken window* and *Said R'man*

From the unprotected backbone rising each and every clock, sunshine
bouncing on a green guava's body, and chopped meat reflecting your face

Lastbench Bangla Film Festival Liverpool October 2011

Publicity/Advertisement credits: *Hope Worldwide* and *Spice Lounge*

*'Self' is a structured phenomenon, without 'system' self doesn't exist. Self, like
anything else, is a relative concept, so to explain it we need 'others'.*

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CONTEMPORARY BANGLA POETRY IN TRANSLATION

lastbench

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Editorial byproduct: Peculation of metabolism

I always thought that syntax can be used to manipulate as well as sheathe the pharses, if the tongue is the naked sword than it ought to go inside sometimes. Stop those killings that are only for the sake of variety...

When my four years old daughter was drawing impressions of her hand, wiggly, I gave it the phrase 'Scary hand' as comment and was quick enough to record her reply(lets say, combination of words) on a paper '*what will you do wtih this scary hand? You can't touch it like I am drawing So fairy figure will...is going to catch you, snatch you... 'coz there is so dark no one will be there and running away is always a game...though passing days' objects we can't touch as well*'.

Then I started thinking about the need of present mind in poetry. Present is, rhetorically, always critical, makes you escape from the simple facts, still featuring words from common mouths and giving them metaphoric life, only that much is enough to be called poetry described. And thats just the beginning, because poetry has been showing its haunch, as we considered its flow with a river, to the all hypothetical curves it came across. Everytime its the new present. Remarkable poets of recent years always have huge collective achivements, because of the distance of time, because of the monstrous visual effect that it makes on a certain literary-territory by mingling, but a new present keeps track of only few, those who visible after appearance of the new curve, only them remains *here*, its not a place its an era...

I admit the influence of symbolic cohesion, icons of masking, binding anxiety with writting-scope, etc, such few elements, in my case like any other mind-set has a great input in my view towards acceptance for poetry as a whole. So like a big-head, obviously with some modifications, I too salute, when the *aura of indications rotates in a circle of definitive understanding of the known world, and yet the aftermath of initial notation triggers something else...*conceptual metaphors are the only highlighted centre of this extended new kind of poetry. And I have already admitted the accusation may arise from having such overall-not-absolute view about poetry, such favoritism for contemporary conceptual metaphor theory, so I would just like to mention the fact that my understanding of any particular idea related to technicality of poetry, would not be implemented in Lastbench, however one can only give assurance about the conscious mind...

Poems of Rudro Mohammad Shohidullah

Translated by: *Amit Charkavarty*

Once, sentry of the rainy night

The rain falls as the green kisses of the young lady
Oh green grass! Don't you yearn for the rain to fall upon you!

The light-post is showering, raindrops verbalize on the
shoulder

Of the motor car parked at the brink of the avenue
They linger arms, silently, without any gyration.

Cry of the passenger-less last bus envenoms
this passiveness. You tell me where would I stand,
acknowledge me of one familiar place please! That
napping tree does not call to me for the excuse of enmity.
I can't be that cloud-tender and transparent
Give me two wings to fly away!

A corner of the rain-infected town will give me
A hidey-hole, for she is mine.

The crooning of rickshaw fades away
I am the only sentry of this town,
defending it against the pouring rain.

In a rainy night the virgin wakes up, abrupt
Does anyone wait for anyone on a burning bed?
Does anyone seek the jaded manuscript?
The me from the past keeps awake
As the silent sentry of the rainy night.

Green airborne falcon

Today, in this vernal noon
a falcon will wing away on blue wind for sure.
Let him fly- let him fly away.
Let the widow sand-bed be apathetic

away from the ivory caresses.
Just let him fly- let him fly away.

White eyes on the binocular of vision
will evanescence, deprived of blood.
Just let him fly- let him fly away.
Let him paint a colored mural
over the plumage of tender clouds
Let him grasp the vividness of the sun
Let the virgin star to come for him
with her beloved essence of luminance.

Still sun is dancing upon the green sky
Still a veil blinds our eyes
Let him see the ether of sky
Let him fetch the oxygen of the moon
Let him be lost in a convoluted atom
Let him lend the mars to neighbor's door.

Don't propel your dark arrow
Keep your gray pistol silent
Just let him fly, far above.
Open your eyes and see this green falcon
Will fly away across this universe.

Just let him fly -let him fly away.

Probor Ripon's online social networking status

'Go inside the blue road...
There bloods of wolves are playing the velvet violin...
And me is look like a revolver that's Full of bullets of smoke
from cosmopolitan red cafe...
And u is look like near to love that's mean u r a serial killer
And your watch is breaking the sun...Please baby give me a
cigarette of a colorblind...Sailor...Give me the ocean Then I
will give u the love that has created u to kill the
MAN-MACHINE'

Poems of *Sanjib Purohit*

Translated by: *Farida Majid*

To Mimu

There is still a strand of Mimu's hair
caught in the string of sharp thorns of cactus by the window.
I had seen it sometimes catch the sunlight.

In the intimate light of the candle,
lit during the load-shedding,
who knew that it would glisten up so bright?
How was I ever to know that
a strand of dog-hair could make
your eyes burn so much?

30.04.1998 midnight, for a dog who died

A Pinch of Me

Take a pinch of me
at the tip of your fingers
From a dollop of salt—pick me up—
And then mix well on the platter of love
Not in jest, not to humiliate, nor as luxury,
But in your need.

Take me—and mix well with your rice—
Rice as white as 'beli' blooms
Shed overnight all night
Their scent in my breast
And in the pot spewing steam—
Just take and see—but not too much—
Too much might kill the bloom.

Take me in your hunger and in your demand
Saved in sweat and tears,
Touching the whitish lines
On the chin, on the back
in the salty taste of the whip.

From all this, not all of it,
Not even all of me,
Take just a pinch of me.

A Child's Reader

for Sohail Amitabh, poet and esteemed friend

1.

After that, the tiger did really appear one day.
Village folk saw the tiger waddling towards
The field with its tail hoisted up.
But they did not hear the herd-boy's shouts.
Instead, they heard in the air a flute playing.
They rushed there with their sticks and spears
and were treated with a wondrous spectacle!
The tiger had turned into Uncle Tiger of the herd-boy!

2.

A truant boy once went to see
the Olympic Games of the Animals.
It was just about evening.
The Jury seemed to be facing a problem.
They kept looking at the clock nervously.
To find more about the matter
the boy went forth.

He found the rabbit fast asleep under a bush.
And the tortoise was tickling him
with a dandelion stem trying to wake him up.
Finally the two of them walked out,
shoulder to shoulder, singing aloud,
"We are all Kings."
Behind them was left
the dirty war of Competition.

Translator's note: While translating Sanjib Purohit's poems I have been in frequent consultation with the poet. The purpose of most of those consultations had to do with clearing my confusions about bits of text, grammar, personal references, etc. I hope the English poems, or the fruit of this labor. Will please all poetry aficionados, from the most discriminating to the least demanding.

Pablo Shahi's 'Butcher's school'

Translated by: *Tanvir Ratul*

In childhood's dream story once I role-played butcher, cutting my venomous teeth, reptile tongue and hidden poison of snake-charmer's head I hanged in meat shop. My customers were no other than my neighboring siblings, they bought my water and carbon, spread-ed pain of bladder and flower's breath. My sister cooks bhaji-fried hair pins, instead of wood she uses her two legs and her two hands are spatula...these stories viewed in dream, in our tunnel it doesn't have any existence. Reason is, in our world instead of rice we eat flower and cook flower curry in supernatural mental fire though role-play butcher in dream and sell out own bladders...

Abu Hasan Shahriar's 'Unfinished Scroll'

Translated by: *Tanvir Ratul*

Just before our shallow boat anchored at isle of slope...
For whom we gathered here, that Ganesh-statue yesterday...
Any afternoon you in super market to any syntax-ed images...
He who told you vulture's tale, he never Dhroupadi's....
Those visible aligned buildings, its here one day...
Just-now shuttering the shop bachelor evening on its own..
It doesn't mean that, whenever load-shedding only candle...
After so many days again going to lake so with us some...
Before winter from bird's calender few rainy-days...
whenever noon-time crosstalk debating form, just then...
The need came with job application today, in its eyes that...
This hill's story I surely told you, whose valley one day...
The bridge we just left behind, its nearby somewhere...
Its the image none of us could capture on film, for that so far...

Poems of Zillur Rahman

Journey to Shilaidah

Translated by: *Siddik Ahmed*

The boat starts its journey from mystic poet Lalon's lodging.
This is our first step in Shilaidah's wharf. We, two friends are
on a
van car-ahead country road. We found a pond well guard. We
see a
red building afar. Our steps controlled by emotion. Between
the music
of leaves whose chair fade in and fade out. We know the
answer

Hello, Great poet, is you here or somewhere?
Your nose-blow touch my body
Alas, I can't cross your shadow.

Scarlet Pigeons

Translated by: *Mashiur Rahman Adnan*

Scarlet pigeons are flying from atop the towers of the prayer
house
Towards occidental route
Twilight sky will offer them white clouds
Desert handkerchief will shroud them

Scarlet pigeons will hoist piece flags hither and thither

Bomb blasting and explosive crackings
Are seen in the highways and the battlefields
Northern breeze is replete with pungent smell of gunpowder
Deluge of the tear-dews coming out of the laughing gas
Scarlet pigeons are fluttering from atop of the prayer house

Scarlet pigeons are shattering
The entire entity of white flag!

Set me afloat

Translated by: *Shirajee*

Set me afloat O Current of Time

Let the flame of tomorrow be everyone's driving force.

You've stood beside an abstract painting

The famished girl leaps out

of Zainul's canvas

The youthful suppleness of your melody

has stung the devotee-girl.

When Dali's clock strikes twelve

the persevering girl knows well

after how long morning will break.

The dancing peacock's enchanting plumage in Vrindaban

shall today paint the rainbow vocally

at the hint of monsoon

Sultan's muscular figures burst out of the painting .. .

While the raft was afloat Lokhindar was revived

Satyavan too got a new surge of life with Savitri's patient devotion

The flame of the future is today your driving force

Set me afloat O Time, Time's current.

When chitragupta Summons

Translated by: *Mashiur Rahman Adnan*

We are to submit to Death when Chitrugupta summons

We are to leave behind the buildings coupled with buildings

We are to leave behind the concrete terrace of the pond

Both the demons and the deities will walk in a chorus

Towards the four-dimensional palace of Death

Leaving the faulty confidential report of the Chitragupta

Oh my restless earthy deer! Will you then hold my hands

Amidst the multitude of unknown fellows?

Shuvro Khandaker's self translation

last morning at Dhanmondi Lake

Lemme catch up a breath
Lemme have a sigh
Let this green pencil of mine bleed
Till all the alphabets die
Lemme have a little love
Which I've heard, hasn't gone extinct
But never have for once.
Lemme have a little of that
And a lot more peace n' quiet
For me which are also just some alien words.
Lemme break all the mirrors of the world,
Placed all over n' in front of my eyes.
Lemme just see my face,
Just for once, in your eyes.....
That's all I want
N' then, let this happy man die.

In rhymes with our nights

not all da crimson moonlit night heists goes down pretty ez n'
cool
well take a breather here
give thy soul a new paint job, a Smokey olive green one
then we shall move on..
WE SHALL MOVE ON TO DISCUSS ABOUT HAPPY SONGS..
happy songs, does anybody owe you anything?
is it possible to forgive n forget?
As seen on TV!.....

EVERY OTHER FORTHNIGHT
THE CRIMSON MOON IS UP,ONCE AGAIN
SOMETHING GOES WRONG
INSIDE MY VEINS....
MAKES ME THIRSTY
LIKE THAT MYTHICAL BEAST...

BEAST AT LAST,
ISN'T THAT WHAT WE ARE AFTER ALL
WE, THE HUMAN RACE THE TOP PREDATORS... ?

THE MOON HOWLS OUT LOUD
I HOWL BACK, LOUDER THAN EVER
EACH TIME, EVERY TIME LIKE THE VERY ANCIENT ONE
IT'S FELL SO GOOD TO BE KISSED
THAT WHEN THE SUN RISES IN THE EAST
IT FIRST RAYS BREAKING THROUGH THE MONSOON
CLOUDS
I SHADE MY FUR N' TURN BACK INTO
WHAT I WAS SUPPOSED TO BE
A POET, A KILLER!

Truth oR Dare!

Blue bird, What about a walk
Will Have some Ice Creams TOO
AT THAT VERY OLD NEIGHBORHOOD PLACE
WHERE IT ALWAYS FELS LIKE BEING AT THE
GRANDMA'S!
AFTER THAT If U STILL WANNA TALK ABT
Culture VS ANTI Culture
ONLY FOR YOU DEAR, I'LL ALSO DO THAT!
BLUE BIRD, ONLY WITH ONE SINGLE RANDOM KISS
WE CAN STOP,
ALL THE FAMINE AND WARS FOR FOREVER AND
BEYOND!
BLUE BIRD
CARE FOR A KISS OR SHALL WE PLAY
TRUTH OR DARE?...

let's play then, the last Russian roulette
Dare it is thEN!
Blue Bird I dare u
'kiSS mE, DiE!

Note: Shuvro usually writes in Bangla, but here he wrote straight in English, though its unclear how straight it can be when writing in a different language than thoughts. Shuvro has the capability to influx the language's delicate boundary between the visible and invisible forms...

Poems of Mujib Erom

Translated by: Kamrul Hassan

Vanity

The vanity that has caused the harm. Oh, call him. Give him the low stand to seat. Entertain him like an honored guest. Dance with him in the flowering forest of honey. Then you will see the vanity is under your control. Now give him the sensation of tickling. Keep him long as a fresh fish in the earthen pot. He is Lord Sri Krishna! The pride that has brought destruction.

Pondering Mujib Erom says – it is him who has quenched the fire. The self-esteem that has caused the damage.

The Tale of Livelihood and Reactions after its Perusal

The train of livelihood is scuttling through my skull.

I would rather call it a horse. But the way Mohin's horse inscribed in Jibananda Das's poetry stamping the pages of poets of both the Bengal, I feel a pity! So, I choose train.

How can I reach you? Where does Krishna play his flute, in which jomuna? The vagrants are talking nonsense, you are Krishna, you are my friend. Are you truly in a sulky mood?

Not the proper way of describing it. I could say it differently. The word 'sulky mood' is also not appropriate. My friends will mock at it. But what can I do? So leave it away.

The train of livelihood does not arrive. Livelihood is the ultimate truth!

I could proceed no further. The Bangla poetry has advanced so far through similar repetition. Amidst such monotony I should not progress any more with a common theme. So let's stop here.

When Erom Speaks of Fables of Erom

I have roamed in various quarters of my village observing the method of farming of a Manipuri women. My poetry is therefore the mud plastered on her shiny thighs. Deep and soft sludge.

Tearing the sticks from coconut leaves my mother makes a broom, in the month of *Bhadra*, our yard is smeared with cow dung – mother will spread paddy seeds on that lawn for drying. The flower of cow dung blooms at the tips of that broom. With its touch, with the new seeds, the words of my poems roll on that yard smoothed by my mother.

Every morning my sister makes cow-dung sticks with affectionate touch. Burning those everyday we do not cook food but the colourful makeup of my poems. In the evening my father creates a spiral of fume burning rotten straw to drive away the mosquitoes, so that, his favorite cows can sleep at night in peace – my poems are nothing but that smoky affection and hazy dependence.

That river bank. The snake-charmer girl used to walk along it. The floating river. Multi-coloured glasses in the hand of that suntanned damsel. She, the *bejoni*, wears the *Sharee* in her own way, in a special technique – in those soft hands the coloured glasses quivered in a special pattern, my poems has learnt that language in my own special way.

In a cold winter night when a child enjoys the warmth from fire kindled with hays and spreads that comfort reliance – my poem is the shivering of that fiery child. The real life reared up in an abode of indifference. And the dark-complexioned damsel who plucks tea leaves, she who fills her cane-basket with life beautiful – she cannot be anything else except the imagery of my poems.

Anonto Uzzul's 'An outcast'

Translated by: *Shawon Paul*

Where will I go? Better, burning the feathers of the wing
I would walk under the sky in different guise!
Yet panic-clash;
The fire that I set on wings, burnt the feathers,
Will it burn out without burning any other things?

If the golden paddy fields burnt away
Wheat or potato fields
Grasses will burn down too after trying its best to survive.

One day the fire will go out in the rain-water
Empty fields will remain under the sky-
Homeless farmers, cows and cowboys.

Poems of *Sarkar Amin*

Translated by: *Tushar Ahmed*

After my death it will rain'

If I just wish the sky
wont fall into the drain
squeezing between two fingernail killing is impossible too.

Thats why I let it go, its now walking...
I know, after my death it will rain.

My lost poem

Few of mine poems got lost.
I feel alot cry, remembering them.

Those poems may be unnecessary dead
 small children like
In heaven's garden
Playing around.

Back cover manifesto: appropriate words always have the additional accommodation for quietude against reproach, reprimand and requiem from critics, and it doesn't like ass kissing either.

We have come far enough, we have had gathered enough evening among us to talk about the requirements(?) to be extension of poetry, as we do not prefer to wonder around the same kind of expressions; identifying difference between literary tones and choosing few among a lot certainly requires explanation. So, here is two *para* to begin and end with for this issue...

We are allowed to question about any faith and it's behind...
So, Read . On the name of your beloved...

Changing usual-arrangement of words or idioms to please reader-favourite form or to create gimmick with no apparent purpose is not innovative or creative at all, its sloppy *post-modernism*, though knowingly creating suspicion about the 'logical-order' of words is not alone in terms of already experimented poetical behavior. Most remarkably, we might not aware of all, still each word contains its own origin, history, overlapping culture and usages related to this subversive effect, each word strongly identifies and engages with particular socio-cultural subjects, reconfiguring these in unique ways to represent social traditions and mediate on the relationships between contemporary and occult, new gadgets and arcane rituals; it might sound compound, after all, word is the smallest unit in poetry. Translating phrases have plenty obstacles, missing grammatical perfections in prepositions, losing appeal of the verb in result of that etc, are just problems to begin with, as well as improper utilization of all intact grammatical part or the added extra bit. How to select righteous synonyms, how to join the magnetic relay of sound and word taking on a journey of inspired poetical happenings while having a sloth attitude towards grammar, is always the basic question. In order to communicate, semi-literate approach is sometimes far better than introducing an alien-idiom. This endless battle between analyzing the strategy to represent and the demands from so many descendent of one single word, exploring both the physical and emotional meanings of the term is the delicate membrane of the transformed text, like any art form its the ironic tensions between the choice of material and subject matter...

L a s t b e n c h

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