

ON BOTH THE SIDES

It was the first year of my job
And the first day at the Pak border
No scowled faces did I notice
No drawn swords,
The crop was being cut on both the sides

You could
Just close your eyes and listen
To the Punjabi folk songs pouring in
With familiar ardour and the movements
Just the same
The wordings and the mannerisms too no different
And you couldn't tell anyone apart
From the colour of the faces,
Only the tractors of different makes.

“New Hujur¹ has come, it seems?”
Enquired the Ranger of the Subedar.
“Sure, Miyan², come; How's life?”
“Allah is merciful, Hujur
The crop is good.”
“And is everything alright?”
I asked
“Definitely, and Hujur,
We must take care of the animals
You must drive yours away,
And I shall chase mine
The ravagers of good crop
Occur on both sides, Miyan
Don't they?”