

الفاظ کی محفل

# ALFAAZ KI MEHFIL 2024

Select Urdu Poetry with  
English Interpretation



**SATYA PRABHAKAR**

INTRODUCTION BY MOHAMMAD ZAHEERUDDIN

FOREWORD BY UMAIR ULLAH KHAN

بازم ع سحر  
BAZM-E-SUKHAN

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# Alfaaz Ki Mehfil 2024

Select Urdu Poetry with  
English Interpretation

THIRD EDITION

**Satya Prabhakar**





## **CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND PRACTICE**

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# GRATITUDE AND THANKS

*With gratitude to those who made me...me:*

My wife: **Sangeeta**

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# PREFACE

## ALFAAZ KI MEHFIL - 2024

***ishq par zor nahin hai ye wo aatish, ghalib  
ki lagaye na lage aur bujhaye na bane***

*we have no power over love it is a burning fire, Ghalib  
lights up without being lit, and once lit, can't be put out*

- Mirza Ghalib

How I fortuitously fell in love with Urdu poetry is explained in the Preface to the first edition (below). It turned out to be not a passing affliction but an enduring affection.

The response to the first edition was, at least for me, quite overwhelming: in addition to the kind words, so many from around the world have been signing up to receive the daily broadcast of a translation of a new sher.

All this praise, no doubt gratifying, is misplaced. It is like thanking the groundsman for the cricket team's victory. All the credit goes to the hundreds of supremely gifted and astonishingly insightful Urdu poets over the last 300 years who captured every hue of human condition in two lines each.

It takes only a little time to curate and translate a couplet a day, but the response shows that the powerful and transformative appeal of Urdu poetry is universal, cross-national, trans-generational, gender-agnostic. In investing terms, Urdu poetry sports remarkably high ROIC, return on invested capital. My hope persists that you enjoy reading these shers as much as I enjoyed curating them.

I thank my editor Dr. Amir Ullah Khan for being an unfailing cheerleader. I thank Mohammad Zaheeruddin and Dr. Umair Ullah Khan who wrote such loving and illuminating Forewords.

# PREFACE

## ALFAAZ KI MEHFIL - 2023

You must pardon me for I am a rank impostor in the realm of Urdu poetry – with about 18 months of learning for about 15 minutes a day – and here I am with the audacity to release a book on the same.

The prime accused for this high crime and misdemeanor is my publisher Dr. Amir Ullah Khan, an economist/consultant from Hyderabad and an accomplished student of Urdu, who convinced me the charm of a book like this is exactly that: a novice filled with mohabbat for the Urdu sher, making it accessible to other unschooled aashiqs (lovers) just like him.

Well, who am I to argue with an Urdu ustad! And this is how you find yourself reading this Alfaaz Ki Mehfil with its uniqueness: a total lack of either erudition or scholarship, typically the hallmark of any book. Alfaaz Ki Mehfil is the faltering journey of an enthusiastic learner, presented with all its faults, warts and imperfect edges.

This mohabbat for Urdu got lit fortuitously during COVID confinement when my wife, Sangeeta, and I happened to catch an Urdu sitcom Taana Baana on YouTube. The ring of Urdu, just like that of Italian, sounded like music to my ears. I started to learn a few words a day. Soon, I realized that there is a better way: translate Urdu couplets into English and learn the words as part of that process. And, Mashaallah, did I hit a gold mine! The Urdu sher, I realized, is revealing, enriching, transformative, lifechanging.

In many languages and cultures, poets devoted their intellect and creative energies to praise or appeal to the divine, portray royal fiction, translate mythological epics, or in appreciation of nature, mostly.

Not so in Urdu poetry. Mostly agnostic, largely progressive, predominantly secular, unabashedly loving, innately rebellious,

Urdu poets captured the essence of life with all its yearnings, enthusiasms, ecstasies, pathos, pains, struggles, trials, triumphs, and, flowing from all the above, transcendent wisdom.

Urdu poets observed life and captured the feelings and principles that hold true across time and space, both within ourselves and without. They had, for example, more interest in the relaxing, revealing power of a drink than in the imagined comfort of the divine.

Urdu poetry also emerged as the voice of revolt against religious orthodoxy, fundamentalism, injustice, despotism, and tyranny. It powered the Indian freedom movement and then turned its ire against oppression and authoritarianism.

The compelling beauty of the sher is that the poet's learning of a lifetime is distilled and compressed into two short lines, expressed in supremely evocative and rich Urdu, a language synthesized from four remarkable languages: Khariboli (Hindustani), Persian, Sanskrit, and Arabic.

As a student of Zen Buddhism and Stoicism, I found particular resonance with and striking parallels in Urdu poetry for two reasons: one, no axiomatic beliefs (such as God, soul, karma); two, observing life as is and figuring out how to make the best of it.

So, still investing my 15 minutes a day, I have been inflicting the translations of select couplets on my helpless hostages who suffered with a smile and encouraged me nevertheless: my wife, kids, family and friends, especially in RT84, my NIT, Trichy alumni group. Alfaaz Ki Mehfil is this compendium of couplets, curated and translated over the last 18 months. Hope you enjoy reading them as much as I did in compiling them.



## SATYA PRABHAKAR

Satya Vankamamidi Prabhakar is from Machilipatnam, Andhra Pradesh. He graduated with a degree in engineering from NIT, Trichy and completed his M.S. in Computer Science and an MBA in International Finance from University of Florida, Gainesville.

He was recognized as a Distinguished Alumnus by NIT, Trichy. He won the AT&T Cabinet Award & Honeywell Spirit for business and technical excellence.

He worked at Honeywell and AT&T in the US; before that, at Philips and TCS in India. He founded Sulekha with his wife Sangeeta Kshetry and serves as its CEO.

Satya was featured in 500+ media stories and was invited to speak at Wharton, Goldman Sachs, Nanyang U., NITs, IITs, IIMs & ISB. He published 50+ technical, business & general interest articles. He was published by Penguin in its anthology *Black, White and Various Shades of Brown*.

Satya serves on the Board of United Way Chennai and is a Charter Member of TiE. He leads Group e4, a non-profit that supports Indian chess prodigies. His interests include tennis, chess, investing, philosophy, writing, and drumming.

Sangeeta and Satya live in Chennai and have two daughters: Divya, married to Joe Silvestro, and Priya.

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# INTRODUCTION

## YE BHI MERE DIL MEIN HAI

Writing a preface of a compilation of Urdu poetry is a tough task because there's always 'that something' in a sher that words cannot describe. As aptly pointed out by the legendary poet and literary critic, Ahmed Nadeem Qasmi:

***wo jo sheroun mein hai ek sha-e pas-e-alfaaz nadeem  
uska alfaaz mein izhaar nahin hosakta***

*'That something' that is behind words in poetry  
Nadeem, It cannot be expressed in words*

Said Wordsworth, "poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings". It's an irrepressible urge that finds its expression through a poet's pen. Most often, there's hardly an effort, no adornment, not even a sense of deliberation. A powerful thought wakes up in mind and propels the poet's entire thinking universe to culminate in the form of a *sher*. An intense feeling that rises from the depth of one's being, knocks the heart gently and blooms into a *sher*. As Bashir Badr says:

***meri aankhoun mein aansoo ki tar'ha ek raat aajaao  
takalluf se, banawat se, adaa se chot lagti hai***

An evocative sher is what comes out of the heart like eyes welling up with tears at the knock of sadness.

And then there's the profoundly philosophical, intricately psychological or intensely esoteric part of poetry dealing with existential and metaphysical aspects of life, which the poets believe, stems not from their creative soul but beyond. This is the poetry that is often simple on the surface but layered and loaded in meaning, usually full of tropes and allusions.

Said Ghalib:

***aate hain ghayb se ye mazaameen khayal mein  
ghalib sareer-e-khaama navaa-e-sarosh hai***

*These are topics that come from beyond (human consciousness  
i.e. divinity)*

*Ghalib, the scraping of my pen is (in fact) the sound of Gabriel's  
flapping wings*

What appears here to be a simple *sher* is a trope that refers to the belief in Abrahamic religions that the wing-flapping archangel, Gabriel brought to the prophets the divine words, which were only uttered by God's messengers i.e. the words were not those of the messengers. Likewise, Ghalib says that what he expresses in poetry is not his own thought but a divine revelation.

What is interesting, however, is Ghalib's idea that the subjects that he deals with in his poetry come from the Divine, does not per se, make him a Believer. Ghalib could be a Believer in the divine in one instance, a bitter heretic in another, he comes across as an ascetic or a Sufi in one place and a committed atheist ridiculing the very idea of divinity elsewhere. In essence, Urdu poetry renders a poet, a latitude of thought rarely found in other languages.

As Jawed Akhtar points out, unlike most other languages such as Latin and English etc., which started from the Church and therefore, had an inherently religious influence ingrained in them, Urdu started as a language of the streets. It's far too distant from a particular religious, political, ideological, sectarian or communal influence.

Urdu poetry mirrors life in its totality - it's a kaleidoscope that plays every possible and perceptible hue of life, in patterns that are dazzling for human eye and awe-inspiring for human

emotion. As Sah'ba Akhtar said, "Urdu is the dust on the face of a thousand caravans", the language has imbibed and enriched itself with the thoughts, ideologies, beliefs, perceptions and experiences of people across regions, religions and cultures - from places as far and wide as humans exist. Urdu poetry therefore, includes in its expanse all elements of life. It has divinity juxtaposed with heresy, communism with capitalism, unquestioning acquiescence with disregard to the very concept of authority, it has immersive submission and surrender and raging resistance and rebellion.

As Socrates explains: I decided that it was not wisdom that enabled poets to write their poetry, but a kind of instinct or inspiration, such as you find in seers and prophets who deliver all their sublime messages without knowing in the least what they mean.

As evidenced by the above quote, Socrates believed that the poets may not even be aware of their own creative thought or feeling- it just finds manifestation in their poetry with no element of effort. The expression therefore, that is common among poets is, '*sher hogaya*' (sher happened) as opposed to '*sher likha gaya*' (sher was written). This element of spontaneity at times is so overwhelming and prompts a poet to be so prolific in penning down his poetry that he is left completely unaware of his own creation. It's this impetuous reality of poetic creativity that made Ghalib say:

***bak rahaa hun junoon mein kya kya kuch  
kuch na samjhe khuda kare koi***

*Don't know what I blabber out in frenzy  
May no one understand it*

It is this instinctive creativity that made Ghalib oblivious to his own self and made him say:



***hum wahaan hain jahaan se humko bhi  
kuch hamaari khabar nahin aati***

*I'm there, where I don't get to know, Anything about myself*

The logical question therefore is, is poetry a purely impulsive and spontaneous expression beyond a poet's control - can't the craft be learnt, improved and harnessed with effort? The answer to that question is, what can be learnt and improved, is the format - the meter, rhyme, rhythm, musicality of words, the vocabulary, the language, the style - but the soul of poetry is what the intensity of one's thoughts and the depth of one's feelings render. To quote Rahman Faris,

***phir uske baad ataa hogae mujhe taaseer  
mein ro pada tha kisi ko ghazal sunate hue***

*My word was rendered effective thereafter  
I had broken down reciting my ghazal to someone*

A piercing poetic creation is inconceivable without living through the overwhelming and often excruciating reality of a thought or feeling. No amount of artistic excellence can create poetry that hits through one's heart and mind. It's the intensity of one's ability to connect to one's world, both internal and external, that fosters thoughts and feelings, which blow life and aesthetic beauty into one's poetic creation. Without this, it doesn't influence the reader - doesn't arrest one's attention and is mostly dismissed as banal, bland and insipid.

Likewise, a reader has to have the depth and intensity of thought and feeling to be able to relate to and appreciate the poetry he reads. As someone said,

***tujhe apne mein zam karne se pehle sochta hun main  
zara khud mein utar kar naap luun gahraaiyaan apni***

*Before drawing you in  
I think - I should carefully consider my own depth*

Without the depth in the reader, all the profoundness of poetry may completely escape him.

Urdu poetry is a bridge between humans and their emotions - it has the surprising quality of connecting the readers with the ideas, experiences and aspirations not just of others but of themselves. It's often a sher that introduces one to his own thought or feeling buried under the dust of oblivion. As Ghalib says:

***dekhaa taqreer ki lazzat ke jo us ne kahaa  
mein ne ye jaana ke goya ye bhi mere dil mein hai***

And a sher thus, is quick to connect one with oneself. Surprisingly, the connect, at times, is so abrupt and so sudden that it doesn't constitute part of the conscious. As T.S. Eliot once said, 'genuine poetry can communicate before it is understood'. Those in the habit of attending *mushairas* would remember Rahat Indori often asking his audience not to try to understand his *ash'ar* but feel them to be able to applaud.

Urdu poetry takes the reality of established knowledge and from there weaves a reality of its own. The new reality is so uniquely powerful that it leaves its readers mesmerised, wondering whether what they are dealing with is real. For instance, when Iqbal says,

***na ut'tha jazba-e-khursheed se ek barg-e-gul tak bhi  
wo raf'at ki tamanna hai jo le udhti hai shabnam ko***

*The power of the sun, could lift not even a single petal  
it's the dew's passion to rise that lifts it up*

The poet is clearly belying the botanical process of transpiration. He does not accord the sun, the credit of lifting the dew from the petals. He attributes the lift to the dew's desire to rise, bringing in an entirely new gamut of ideas of self-hood and self-adequacy that even the most accomplished of motivational experts would envy.

The law of refraction at work behind the twinkling of stars notwithstanding, the reader's heart explodes with passion when Iqbal says,

***urooj-e-aadam-e-khaaki se anjum sahme jaate hain  
ke ye toota hua tara mah-e-kaamil na banjaaye***

*At the rise of man, stars begin to quiver  
afraid that he would turn into a full moon*

See how Rahman Faris gives an inconceivable dimension to the basic arithmetic reality and leaves the reader entranced with the poetic wonder that he creates. He says:

***ishq wo ilm-e-riyazi hai ke jis mein faris  
do se jab ek nikaalein to sifar bachta hai***

*Love is that subject of arithmetic Faris,  
If you take one out of two, what remains is zero*

Those who have learnt the lesson of love would easily understand that for the two souls bound in love, what is left if one leaves is, nothingness - an emptiness that is impossible to fill.

Another poetic dimension that gives new meaning to the subject of geometry:

***daaera ek tere gird banane ke siwa  
dil ki parkaar ne her zaaviya aadha rakkhaa***

*Other than drawing a full circle around you  
My heart's compass left everything else at half-angle*

For a person in love, the word 'relationship' with the beloved holds a much sublimer meaning. His relationship with the rest of the world revolves around it. And the poet so beautifully brings home the difference with the geometric images of a full circle and a half-angle.

In this second edition of the compilation of Urdu *ash'aar*, Satya Prabhakar has toiled hard to pluck the flowers of different hues and to present to poetry lovers a bouquet that they would cherish - love poetry with the description of the beloved's beauty, the melancholy of hearts lost in love, the sorrow of separation from the beloved, the complaints of the beloved's unfairness and tyranny, poetry that inspires and uplifts, one that is lighthearted and naughty, poetry that deals with divinity, one that questions the mighty and does not even spare the divine.

The astonishing truth is that the author, Satya Prabhakar never formally studied Urdu language or literature, he is not familiar with Urdu script and yet, he is such an ardent fan of Urdu poetry that he virtually walks, talks, breaths and lives it every day of his life. This certainly, is a case study in itself and goes on to explain the magic of Urdu poetry and the spell it casts on thinking minds and feeling souls. As *Alfaz Ki Mahfil* (AKM) subscribers would already know, his 6 O'clock *sher* every morning is what wakes up even the night owls among poetry lovers to read and relish. His selection of *ash'aar* is what resuscitates the wilting hearts, rejuvenates fatigued minds and reverberates the feeling souls.

An accomplished professional and a successful businessman in his own right, Satya doesn't let his limited knowledge of Urdu restrict him put together his choicest picks of *ash'aar* from the ever-blooming garden of mesmerising Urdu poetry. A software engineer by training, Satya uses his linguistic and AI skills to come up with English translations and interpretations of *ash'aar* that even the most seasoned scholars of Urdu poetry find enviable.

This compilation is the result of Satya's obsessive desire to share with readers the magic of Urdu poetry that he finds himself smitten by. It's to prevail upon the people at large, the

beauty of Urdu poetry. Satya sums up his own law of attraction to Urdu poetry in two simple words - '*Irfan*' (awareness / enlightenment) and '*jamaal*' (beauty) - he believes that anyone blessed with a thirst for these two, is destined to fall in love with Urdu poetry. I hope this compilation goes a long way in fostering this thirst in every reader.

## MOHAMMAD ZAHEERUDDIN

Mohammad Zaheeruddin is a graduate in Humanities, Zaheeruddin carved out a career for himself as a Banker with a leading Bank in the Middle East. Having worked in Investment Banking and Corporate Audit disciplines for over two decades.

# FOREWORD

## SHIDDAT-E-TISHNAGI

I am very pleased to write this introduction to Satya Prabhakar's *Alfaaz Ki Mehfil* book of his translation of more than a hundred and fifty selected Urdu couplets. A translator's work has been described as someone who builds bridges between languages- with the literal meaning from the original 'trans'-across; and 'latio/latus'- ferry or bring- and Satya, in his book, manages to bring across the beauty of Urdu very well. In both prose and poetry there is a lot of debt owed to translations - and translators. One can readily applaud Samuel Putnam for his wonderful English translation of Don Quixote, possibly the first modern novel, written by Spanish author Cervantes.

Similarly the *Mahabharata* – translated from Sanskrit and the epic poems of Iliad and Odyssey, translated from Greek, and the *Shahnameh*, translated from Persian (includes the stirring exploits of *Rustom* and *Sohrab*) are other remarkable works enjoyed across the world. *Rumi's Masnavi* – one of the greatest poems of the Persian language, is another example where it was Nicholson's translation in eight volumes that has led to *Rumi* being such an oft quoted poet in all parts of the world.

Urdu poetry has also benefited from very talented translators ensuring those unfamiliar with the language are still able to appreciate the meaning of the *ghazals* and *nazms* of great Urdu poets. An example of a fine translation is how Khushwant Singh preserves the delicate similes in this wonderful quatrain from Faiz:

***raat yaun dil mein teri khoji hui yaad aayi  
jaise viraane mein chupke se bahaar aa jaye  
jaise sehraaon mein haule se chale baad-e-naseem  
jaise beemaar ko be-wajhe qaraar aa jaaye***

*At night your lost memory stole into my mind  
As spring silently appears in the wilderness;  
As in desert wastes morning breeze begins to blow  
As in one sick beyond hope, hope begins to grow.*

I am aware that there are other attempts by experts and scholars of this particular quatrain and my reason for mentioning Khushwant Singh's effort here is precisely to highlight this particular truth- that there will be and should be an encouragement for all translators to carry out their art. Each one will bring out slightly different interpretations, and in their artistry will arrange the bouquet (of words and thoughts) in several beautiful ways. It is the reader who has the luxury of savouring each effort knowing that by getting to sample different translations they are that much closer to the sublime beauty of the original work.

While highlighting the importance and beauty of the translator's work it is also important to look at the challenges that are faced by someone taking up the task of 'creating the bridge' across languages. Nabakov, who himself wrote in three different languages- Russian, English and French- summarises the difficulties of translating an author's work after he translated into English Alexander Pushkin's Eugene Onegin which was written in Russian- a novel in verse made up of 389 fourteen-line stanzas (5,446 lines!):

*O Pushkin, for my stratagem.  
I travelled down your secret stem,  
And reached the root, and fed upon it;  
Then, in a language newly learned,  
I grew another stalk and turned  
**Your stanza, patterned on a sonnet,  
Into my honest roadside prose—**  
All thorn, but cousin to your rose.*

(The Art of Translation by Vladimir Nabokov, The New Republic, 1941).

Nabokov goes on to say about the qualities of a good translator: he must have as much talent as the author he chooses. Also he must be well acquainted with the two languages involved and their places of origin and he must..‘possess the gift of mimicry and be able to act, as it were, the real author’s part by impersonating his tricks of demeanor and speech, his ways and his mind’... Certainly an arduous and challenging task this- for the translator.

Some examples to highlight, in the Urdu poetry context, of why knowledge of the language alone is not enough- a good understanding of the religious, historical and cultural background of the poet is also essential, is highlighted in the selections below:

**Religious:**

***ik sarkhushi-e-ishq hai ik be-khudī-e-shauq***

***āñkhoñ ko khudā jaane mirī kyā nazar aayā***

***qurbān tirī shān-e-ināyat ke dil o jaañ***

***is kam-nigahī par mujhe kyā kyā nazar aayā***

- Jigar Moradabadi

The *tasawwuf* poetry, as a genre, is difficult to translate. Here *Jigar’s ashaar* with the references to God in ‘*tiri shaan-e-inaayat*’ and his own condition of ‘*sarkhushi-e-ishq*’ and ‘*be-khudi-e-shauq*’ and the subtle ‘*khuda jaane*’ insert tie it all together as a great example of love for God that is enabling the poet to actually see the Unseen / the invisible. Explaining this in the same brief manner of the *ashaar* in a different language is difficult, if not impossible.



### History:

***be-khatar kuud padā ātish-e-namrūd meñ ishq  
aql hai mahv-e-tamāshā-e-lab-e-bām abhī***

-Allama Iqbal

To understand this couplet one would need to have knowledge of *Namrud* (Emperor Nimrod) and his *atish-e-namrud*; and the story of Prophet Ibrahim and his love for God that enabled him to make the literary '*be-khatar kuud pada*' jump. Again a brief explanation to someone not familiar with the historical context would be impossible.

### Culture:

***qaasid ko pahle humne be minnat kiya rawaan  
saaman-e-jumla aish faraaham kiya yahaan  
aahat pe kaan dar pe nazar thi ke naagahan  
aayi khabar wo paaon mein mehndi laga chuke***

-Unknown

The '*paaon mein mehndi*' cultural reference is a difficult one to explain for those unfamiliar with the pre wedding rituals that spell doom for the unaware poet above eagerly awaiting the arrival of his beloved.

An aside here- the *Hyderabadi/Dakkani* dialect would be a huge added problem to any translator of course! Woe betide the poor translator if very common everyday words like '*parsun*' or '*chup*' or '*baingan*' are introduced by some mischievous poet in their *ashaar*! And worse if terms like '*kisi ke baap ka kya jaara*' which bizarrely may translate (or NOT) to 'who's father, what goes' are used!!

As seen above Urdu poetry presents several challenges for the translator. Another one that the translator faces, in common

with translators of poems of other languages, is the problem when translating the *ghazal*, of trying to maintain the rhythm / metre and the question whether rhyme should be preserved at all? While there can be different views I agree with James Ross (great translator of Persian poetry and translated Shaikh Sadi's poem *Gulistan* in English) - who said "A translation, to succeed, must not violate simplicity on the onehand, nor sink into tameness on the other; and for this purpose a prose translation, even of poetry, is preferable either to rhyme or blank verse." Satya Prabhakar, in his translation of the couplets remains faithful to the original text and conveys simple and elegant meaning of the couplets without venturing into rhyme or verse and thus fulfils Ross's dictum above. An example of this is where he translates Fani Badayuni's couplet (helpfully each translation of a couplet is followed by meanings of difficult / complex words so the reader has a chance to piece together in their own mind the *sherin* in the best way):

***suni hikayat-e-hasti to darmiyan se suni  
na ibtida ki khabar hai na inteha maaloom***

*Heard the story of life but from the middle*

*Don't know how it started nor know where it will end*

***hikayat:*** story, tale

***hasti:*** life, existence

***darmiyan:*** between

***khabar:*** news, information

***ibtida:*** beginning

***inteha:*** ending, finale

Another difficulty with translating Urdu poetry is the question about which gender to use. A few examples here may help in understanding why this may be a complex issue:

***kab yaad meñ terā saath nahīñ kab haat meñ terā haat nahīñ  
sad-shukr ki apñī rātoñ meñ ab hijr kī koī raat nahīñ***

-Faiz

***na gul khile haiñ na un se mile na mai pī hai  
ajiib rañg meñ ab ke bahār guzrī hai***

- Faiz

In the 2 examples above it is fairly straightforward for the translator- the '*tera saath*' and '*tera haath*' can easily translate to 'you beside me' / 'your company' and 'your hand in mine.' However in Faraz's sher:

***shiddat-e-tishnagī meñ bhī ghairat-e-mai-kashī rahī  
us ne jo pher lī nazar maiñ ne bhī jaam rakh diyā***

The '*us ne jo pher li nazar*' is more complex- this could mean 'when she turned away' or 'when he turned away'- however the *saqi* traditionally refers to a female- so safe to use 'she' here#. One could use for support Frances W. Pritchett who in her introduction to translations of Ghalib's poetry states: 'Choosing a gender for the beloved is one of the worst ordeals, when you set out to translate ghazals into English. No matter what choice you make, it can't really be satisfactory. For the purposes of this commentary I have chosen to make the beloved female, whenever a choice must be made. One of the main reasons for this decision is practical convenience: since the lover and almost all other ghazal characters are male, making the beloved female means that she stands out.' This doesn't however quite help where the poet is female- like Parveen Shakir below:

***rasta bhī kaThin dhuup meñ shiddat bhī bahut thī  
saae se magar us ko mohabbat bhī bahut thī  
is tark-e-rifāqat pe pareshāñ to huuñ lekin  
ab tak ke tire saath pe hairat bhī bahut thī***

The '*saae se us ko mohabbat bhi bahut thi*' could translate to both he / she as: ' but (alas) he / she preferred to be in the shade'.

However again there is help from Frances W. Pritchett when she quotes Bekhud Mohani: 'In brief, only this much needs to be said (about gender references in the *ghazal*): that the beloved is the one whom the heart desires, and this is the basic principle. Many verses are such as to present praise of a male (beloved), and many are such as to present praise of a woman; and the largest number of verses are such that both man and woman can be used on appropriate occasions (as the beloved), and both aspects, human (*majāzī*) and divine (*haqīqī*) (love), can emerge. Thus it is that in Persian and Urdu poetry the beloved has been kept ambiguous (*mub'ham*), and ought indeed to be kept just so.'

An example of how Satya Prabhakar deals with the gender reference is in his translation of the following couplet, where the 'be-hijab' reference makes it less ambiguous:

***woh shab ko be-hijab jo mehfil mein aa gaya***  
***kyaa noor tha ki shama ko parvaana kar diya***

-Waheed Allahabadi

*when that evening she came, unveiled, to the gathering*  
*oh, what a glow... that turned the flame into a moth*

***shab***: evening

***noor***: light, luminescence

***be-hijaab***: without a veil

***shama***: flame

***mehfil***: gathering, assemblage

***parvaana***: moth

Mr. Satya Prabhakar is a self confessed, self taught learner of Urdu language and must be lauded for his enthusiasm and hard work as much for his artistry. As readers browse through the book they will be struck by his excellent selection of Urdu couplets. The book itself is a literary fest which does well to highlight the work of Mir, Ghalib, Iqbal, Faiz, Faraz and also gives prominent place to a galaxy of the 'lesser known' poets. This is a

great strength and a mark of Satya's vast reading of Urdu Shaayri. He has successfully managed to convey the meaning of the couplets very clearly and in the process has effectively navigated all the above mentioned complexities in translation. I have mentioned the translator's work serving as a bridge between two languages- in addition, for the novice to Urdu poetry, I think this book will serve as a piton, a useful device to enable the reader to climb uphill and venture into the wonderful heights of Urdu poetry. For the more experienced, expert Urdu reader this book will be a wonderful one to surf through and delight at the many well remembered couplets, rediscover forgotten ones and learn new couplets to add to their own repertoire of Urdu Shaayri - to be able to use at appropriate times and improve the quality of their text and speech. Happy reading!

**Dr. Umair Ullah Khan**  
United Kingdom, 2022  
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## UMAIR ULLAH KHAN

Umair Khan grew up in Hyderabad and is based in UK. He is a Paediatric critical care consultant in Scotland and teaches medical students at the University of Edinburgh. He has a keen interest in Urdu & English poetry and enjoys translating poems in both languages.

# Urdu

## A DELICIOUS PACKET OF INDIAN COOKIES

If Urdu were a packet of cookies sold in a grocery store anywhere in the world, its wrapper would say: "Product of India." And, oh, what a delicious, nutritious packet of cookies!

Urdu is as Indian as Hindi is. Or Bengali is. Read on.

Nearly 50% of the global population speaks one of the Indo-European family of languages of which the most popular are: English, Hindi-Urdu, Spanish, Bengali, French, Russian, Portuguese, German, Punjabi. (Persian and Sanskrit belong to this family too.)

Of the Indo-European languages, about 75% speak a language that belongs to the Indo-Iranian (Indo-Aryan) branch of languages: Hindi, Urdu, Bhojpuri, Bengali, Pashto, Kurdish, Balochi, Gujarati, Awadhi, and, of course, Sanskrit and Persian.

Sanskrit and Persian are the two oldest Indo-Aryan languages. The earliest form of Sanskrit, around 1500 BC, used in the Rig Veda, was first recorded in inscriptions found not on the plains of India but in what is now northern Syria. Mitanni kings of that era there had Sanskrit names: Purusa (man), Suvadanta (given by heaven). The first inscriptions of Persian are from 500 BC from what is today Iran. Both Sanskrit and Persian originated millennia ago, it seems, from the same geographical area of the world in the Middle-East.

Now, fast forward to the 12th century. Kariboli, also a member of the Indo-Aryan clutch, originated in Delhi and surrounding areas around that time within what is known as *Ganga-Jamuna tehzeeb* (culture), a poetic Awadhi phrase denoting the syncretic Hindu-Muslim culture, as reflected in the fused spiritual connotations, forms, symbols, and aesthetics. (Wiki)

Khariboli evolved into a more sophisticated Hindustani, gaining acceptance in the powerful royal courts along with Persian.

Khariboli, the mother, had two daughters, Hindi and Urdu, with two different fathers. Khariboli mated with Sanskrit to conceive Hindi; parallelly, it mated with Persian to produce Urdu. (Urdu, over time, also has absorbed words from Sanskrit and Arabic)

Both Hindi and Urdu, like Bengali, were conceived and delivered in India. Interestingly, both the fathers -- Sanskrit and Persian -- originated a long, long time ago from the same geographical area of the world in the Middle-East.

The grammar, structure of Hindi and Urdu are identical, and so is about 75% of the vocabulary. 25% of Hindi are Sanskrit words and 25% of Urdu are Persian words\*. Urdu developed in military camps -- the word 'Urdu' means a 'camp' -- when soldiers from different geographies lived and fought together.

Hence, Urdu is an Indian national treasure -- just like Telugu and Marathi are -- to be cherished and preserved, particularly for its most amazing poetry and the profound secular wisdom that Urdu poetry uniquely captures.

\* Vocabulary difference examples

<b>English</b>	<b>Hindi</b>	<b>Urdu</b>
test	pariksha	imtehaan
sky	aakash	asmaan
love	pyaar	ulfat
difference	bhed	fark
concern	chinta	fikr
near	paas	nazdeek

# GHAZAL AND SHER

## A FRIENDLY INTRODUCTION

A basic understanding of the structure of a *ghazal* and *sher* adds to the joy of Urdu poetry as it is the most popular form of Urdu poetry. (The following is drawn from various sources on the web and not based on any scholarly research done.)

- The history of a *ghazal* can be traced back to 7th-century Arabic poetry which evolved from *quasida*, an older pre-Islamic poetry, often written as a praise and a plea to the king.
- It then spread to and evolved into *ruba'i* in Persia (now Iran) to South Asia in the 12th century with the influence of Sufi mystics, growing into the current form of the hugely popular *ghazal*. The most popular being the *Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam (1048–1131A.D.)
- The *ghazal* inherited the formal structure from the *quasida* which included adherence to a meter and complying with the *radif*, the ending rhyme of each couplet. This structure A-A-B-A is explained below).
- A *ghazal* comprises between five to fifteen couplets or *ashaar*. What you get from or see, mostly, in *Alfaaz Ki Mehfil* are these couplets drawn from larger *ghazals*.
- The structure for strict adherence is this: A-A-B-A (example below). The two lines of the first *sher* must end with the same *radif* and then the second line of every subsequent *sher*.
- The individual *ashaar* (couplets) of a *ghazal* are independent and can stand alone but are connected, broadly to a unify.



- This A-A-B-A structure of the *ghazal* has become popular in multiple Indian languages, including Gujarati, Bengali, Telugu and others.

Let us look at the first three *ashaar* (couplets) of Allama Iqbal's immortal *ghazal* where ***kya hai*** is the refrain; the *radif*.

*khird-mandon se kya poochhun ki meri ibtida **kya hai**  
ki main is fikr mein rehta hoon meri inteha **kya hai***

what will I ask of the wise as to where I have come from  
my only concern is where I am going from here

*khudi ko kar buland itna ki har taqdeer se pehle  
khuda bande se khud poochhe bata teri raza **kya hai***

I make myself so strong that every turn of fate  
God asks of his child...tell me what is it that you want

*maqam-e-guftagu kya hai agar mein kimiya-gar hoon  
yahi soz-e-nafas hai aur meri kimiya **kya hai***

If I am an alchemist myself, how does it matter where I am  
I obsess in asking myself...what is unique about me

# KEY MOTIFS IN Urdu POETRY

Urdu poetry is not what it seems on the surface. Our enjoyment will be highly limited if we only take the literal meaning of the words and fail to catch their symbolic significance. An understanding of the metaphors is essential to enjoying the *ashaar* (couplets).

Here is a short primer on a few oft-recurring motifs of Urdu poetry and their typical metaphorical import.

## ***mohabbat, ishq, tamanna, arzoo***

- *mohabbat* (love) with its various synonyms – *ishq, ulfat, junoon, unsiyat, qurbat* ... so on – occupies a central role in Urdu poetry as the prime driver of all things great in life.
- To construe 'love' as just romantic love of a man for a woman, or vice-versa, would be silly and highly limiting. Love is for all things around us... people, skills, tasks, activities, even things. Anything that can make the heart sing.
- Without love, joy doesn't exist. Without love, there is no quality in the work we do. Without love, life is effete, meaningless. It is the elixir of all existence. It is the power that propels us forward. It is what causes pain and also what helps us endure it. Love ennobles. It completes us.
- This has a rough parallel to the Zen principle of identifying and becoming one with what we do such that the line between the object and subject is erased. As Robert Pirsig, author of *Zen in the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, implies: ***Love leads to caring. Caring leads to quality. Quality is Buddha.***

- Love is filled with trials and tribulations but also with its share of triumphs. It is endless. Often unrequited and the object of love unattainable.
- *Tamanna* or *arzoo* is the desire, borne of *mohabbat*, to attain the object of affection.

### ***aashiq, yaar, qaatil, qatl, koo-e-yaar***

- An *aashiq* is a lover. The literal meaning is one who is in love with another person. But again, that is a highly constraining interpretation.
- A broader interpretation is one who approaches everything with a sense of tenderness and affection. An *aashiq* has the earnest, ardent, eager mind of a child. For an *aashiq*, life is full of possibilities and endless wishes and things to do. Warren Buffet who said he tap dances to work and wants to retire five years after he dies, is surely an *aashiq*.
- The beloved is often referred to as *yaar*.
- *qaatil* (assassin) is, ironically, the beloved, the one who kills the *aashiq* with her looks, her indifference, her separation (*hijr*), and, sometimes, with the union (*vasl*).
- *qatl* is assassination, the killing; that's correct, this is what a *qaatil* does to an *aashiq*.
- *koo-e-yaar* (lane of the beloved) is the company of the beloved or object of affection.

### ***maikhana, mai, saaqi***

- The *maikhana* (tavern, bar) is a place where the *shaayar* (poet) goes to be transported to a state of ecstasy and blissfulness, blunting the tyranny of rationality, even if briefly. A haven where he can think for himself. Think different.

- The *maikhana* sometimes is used as a metaphor for the world itself.
- The enjoyment of *maikhana* and *mai* (wine) are also seen as ways to thumb the nose at the religious priests who cite drinking as *haraam* (prohibited).
- The *saaqi* (bartender) is the 'presiding deity of this temple of intoxicatedness' and who serves the *mai*. For the poet, *saaqi* is one who listens to his aspirations, agonies and aphorisms patiently with empathy. Symbolically, often, *saaqi* also refers to the beloved or the divine. A life-giver, a *saaqi* offers solace, doles out gifts.

### ***aaina, aks***

- *aaina* (mirror) is the mind's eye, metaphorically, in which we can see ourselves, observe and reflect.
- *aks* (reflection) is of ourselves as we observe ourselves.

### ***chaman, gulzar, gul, viraana, baghbaan, bahaar, barsaat***

- *chaman* or *gulzar* (garden) is life itself or a community.
- *gul* (flower) is the beloved.
- *viraana* (wasteland) symbolizes hopelessness, loneliness, and despondence in life.
- *bahaar* (spring) is rejuvenation, revival of hope, and the arrival of *mohabbat*.
- *baghbaan* (gardener) is used to refer to one who nurtures, helps growth.
- *barsaat* (rain) is used to refer to something good happening.

### ***mehfil, shama, parvaana***

- *mehfil* (gathering, party) refers to life itself and the world.
- *shama* (candle) symbolizes the beloved, a *junoon* (passion).
- *parvaana* (moth) is usually the *aashiq* who is helplessly drawn, yes, to the *shama*. *Parvaana* is typically a *deewana* (innocent, stupid, helpless) who sacrifices for the sake of his love.

### ***hijr, vasl***

- *hijr* (separation): referring to growing apart from the object of affection.
- *vasl* (union) referring to attaining the goal, joining with the beloved.

### ***safar, manzil, qaafile, karwaan, humsafar***

- *safar* (journey) is the journey of life itself, often long and endless.
- *manzil* (destination) is the union with the beloved, the achievement of the goal, often portrayed as an unachievable mirage.
- *qaafile, karwaan* (caravan) is the society, the community in whose company we go through life.
- *humsafar* (fellow traveler) is our companion in life.

### ***zaahid, waeez, mullah***

- The typical *shaayar* (poet) is a rebel, a free thinker, struggling with life surely, given to enjoying a drink now and then, and always fighting with religious orthodoxy and its suffocating constraints and edicts.

- The words *zaahid* (pious person), *waiz* (preacher), and *mullah* (priestly scholar) are often used as symbols of religious authoritarianism.

***mahtaab, falak, sitaare***

- *mahtaab* (moon) is often compared to or is the beloved
- *falak* (sky) is the universe, life, world, and the unknown
- *sitaare* (stars) is sometimes use to reflect our aspirations

# TAKHALLUS - PEN NAME

One of the interesting devices of a *ghazal* is *takhallus*. *Takhallus* is somewhat like the pen name of the poet, but not exactly.

It is a self-reference used by the poet to address herself / himself in the last *sher* of the *ghazal* called the **maqta**. (The first *sher* of the *ghazal* is called the **matla**)

Some example *takhallus*:

**Ghalib** - Mirza Asadullah Khan

**Firaq** - Raghupati Sahay

**Zafar** - Bahadur Shah II

**Mir** - Mir Taqi Mir

**Shakir** - Ganpat Rai

Let us take the **matla** (first *sher*) and **maqta** (last *sher*) of the famous *ghazal* of Mirza 'Ghalib':

## **matla**

*dil-e-nadaan tujhe hua kya hai*

*akhir is dard ki dava kya hai*

o my foolish heart. what has happened to you  
alas, what medicine for this pain

## **maqta**

*maine maana ki kuch nahi 'ghalib'*

*muft haath aaye to bura kya hai*

i agree 'ghalib' is worthless  
but what's the harm if you get him for free?

***kya farz hai ki sab ko  
mile ek sa jawaab***

***aaon na hum bhi sair karein  
koh-e-tur ki***

why is it necessary that  
everyone gets the same answer

come, let's go explore  
the mountain of Sinai

**Mirza Ghalib**

1797–1869, Agra

<b>farz</b>	duty, obligation
<b>jawaab</b>	answer
<b>sair karein</b>	tour, explore
<b>koh</b>	mountain
<b>koh-e-tur</b>	mount sinai



***jidhar jaate hain sab  
jaana udhar achcha nahin lagta***

***mujhe paamaal raaston  
ka safar achcha nahin lagta***

where everybody goes  
i don't like going there

on the trodden path  
i don't like to travel

**Javed Akhtar**

1945 – , Sitapur (Uttar Pradesh)

2013: Sahitya Akademi Award

2007: Padma Bhushan

**paamaal  
raaston**

trodden, trampled upon  
paths

***kiije izhaar-e-mohabbat  
chahe jo anjaam ho***

***zindagi mein  
zindagi jaisa koi to kaam ho***

declare your love  
regardless of the outcome

let there be in life  
something that resembles life

**Priyamvada Ilhan**

1991, Delhi

**izhaar**

announce, declare

**anjaam**

result

***shahed tu ye na bhool ke  
is zindagi ka lutf***

***milta faqat hai  
zauq-e-tajassus ke baab mein***

don't you forget, shahed,  
that the pleasures of life

are found only at the doorstep  
of the joy of curiosity (to learn)

**Syed Shahed**

1944, Hyderabad, (Telangana)

<b>lutf</b>	pleasure
<b>faqat</b>	only
<b>zauq</b>	enjoyment, taste
<b>tajassus</b>	quest, curiosity
<b>baab</b>	door

***mujhe sahal hogayi manzilen ke  
hawa ke rukh bhi badal gaye***

***tera haath haath mein aa gaya ke  
charaagh raah mein jal gaye***

achieving my goals has become easier  
winds have changed direction in my favor

when your hand did join my hand  
bright lamps lit up my entire path

### **Majrooh Sultanpuri**

1919-2000, Sultanpur (UP)

1993: Dadasaheb Phalke Award

<b>sahal</b>	easy
<b>manzilen</b>	goals, destinations
<b>hawa</b>	wind
<b>rukh</b>	direction
<b>charaagh</b>	lamp

***zaalim ko jo na roke  
woh shaamil hai zulm mein***

***qaatil ko jo na Toke  
woh qaatil ke saath hai***

one who doesn't stop a tyrant  
is guilty of tyranny also

one who doesn't stop the murderer  
is an accomplice in the murder too

### **Sahir Ludhianvi**

1921–1980, Ludhiana (Punjab)

1971: Padma Shri; 2013: Commemorative Stamp

<b>zaalim</b>	tyrant, oppressor
<b>shaamil</b>	to be present
<b>zulm</b>	crime
<b>qaatil</b>	murderer

***zindagi jab bhi tere  
bazm mein laati hai humein  
yeh zameen chaand se behtar  
nazar aati hai humein***

when life brings me to  
your gathering

this earth looks to me  
more beautiful than the moon

### **Shahryar**

1936 - 2012, Bareilly (Uttar Pradesh)

1987 - Sahitya Akademi

2008 - Jnanpith

<b>bazm</b>	gathering
<b>zameen</b>	ground, earth
<b>chaand</b>	moon
<b>behtar</b>	better
<b>nazar</b>	sight

***abhi hain qurb ke  
kuchh aur marhale baaqi***

***ki tujh ko pa ke humein  
phir teri tamanna hai***

there are still some stages  
of nearness left

after attaining you  
i still yearn for you

**Taabish Dehlvi**  
1911–2004, Delhi

<b>qurb</b>	closeness, nearness
<b>marhale</b>	stages
<b>phir</b>	again, still
<b>tamanna</b>	desire, wish

***aankhon mein na zulfon mein  
na rukhsar mein dekhein***

***mujh ko meri daanish  
mere afkaar mein dekhein***

see me not in my eyes  
my hair, my face

see me in my knowledge,  
my thoughts, my concerns

**Fatima Hasan**

1953, Karachi (Pakistan)

**zulfon**

hair, tresses

**rukhsar**

cheeks, face

**daanish**

learning, knowledge

**afkaar**

thoughts, idea, concerns



***ek pal ke rukne se  
duur ho gayee manzil***

***sirf hum nahin chalte  
raaste bhi chalte hain***

when we stopped for a moment  
the destination receded away

it isn't just us that's moving  
the paths are moving too

**Shahid Siddiqui**

1911–1962, Agra

<b>rukne</b>	to stop
<b>duur</b>	distance, far away
<b>manzil</b>	destination, goal
<b>sirf</b>	only
<b>raaste</b>	paths
<b>chalte</b>	move

***aye mohabbat  
tere anjaam pe rona aaya***

***jaane kyun aaj  
tere naam pe rona aaya***

o love, i wept  
at your outcome

not sure why, i wept  
hearing your name today

### **Shakeel Badayuni**

1916–1970, Badayun (Uttar Pradesh)  
2013 - India Commemorative Stamp

<b>mohabbat</b>	love
<b>anjaam</b>	result, outcome
<b>rona</b>	weep

***muddat huyi hai  
yaar ko mehmaan kiye huye***

***josh-e-qadah se  
bazzm charaaghaan kiye huye***

it has been a while since  
i had my friend as a guest

with the gathering all lit up by  
the vigor and zeal of wine

**Mirza Ghalib**

1797–1869, Agra (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>muddat</b>	duration, time
<b>yaar</b>	friend
<b>mehmaan</b>	guest
<b>josh-e-qadah</b>	zeal of wine
<b>bazzm</b>	meeting
<b>charaaghaan</b>	lamps

***zabaan humari na samjha  
yahaan koi 'majrooh'***

***hum ajnabi ki tarah  
apne hi watan mein rahe***

no one here, 'majrooh',  
understands what i say

i remain a stranger  
in my own land

**Majrooh Sultanpuri**

1919-2000, Sultanpur (UP)

1993 - Dadasaheb Phalke Award

**zabaan**

speech

**samjha**

understand

**ajnabi**

stranger

**tarah**

like, similar to

**watan**

homeland

***chupke chupke raat din  
aansu bahaana yaad hai***

***hum ko ab tak aashiqui ka  
woh zamaana yaad hai***

weeping silently day and night  
i still remember

those days of love to this day  
i still remember

### **Hasrat Mohani**

1878 – 1951, Unnao (Uttar Pradesh)

2014: Commemorative Stamp, India

<b>chupke</b>	silently
<b>aansu</b>	ters
<b>bahaana</b>	flowing
<b>yaad</b>	remember, memory
<b>aashiqui</b>	loving
<b>zamaana</b>	age, days

***kis tawaqqo pe  
kisi ko dekhein***

***koyi tum se bhi  
haseen kya hoga***

with what hope  
can i look at anyone else

who can be  
more beautiful than you

**Ahmad Nadeem Qasmi**  
1916–2006, Sargodha (Punjab)

**tawaqqo**  
**haseen**

hope, expectation  
beautiful

***duniya ke sitam yaad  
na apni hi wafa yaad***

***ab mujh ko nahin kuchh bhi  
mohabbat ke siwa yaad***

i remember neither the world's cruelty  
nor my own faithful toiling

i don't now remember anything  
but my love

**Jigar Moradabadi**

1890 – 1960, Moradabad (Uttar Pradesh)

1959 - Sahitya Akademi

<b>duniya</b>	world
<b>sitam</b>	cruelty, injustice
<b>wafa</b>	faith
<b>yaad</b>	remember
<b>siwa</b>	but for, except

***girte hain shahsawar hi  
madaan-e-jung mein***

***woh tiftl kya girega jo  
ghutnon ke bal chale***

only the warrior on the horse  
can fall in the field of war

how can a weakling fall  
that is crawling on his knees

**Azeem Beg Chughtai**

1895–1941, Jodhpur (Rajasthan)

<b>girte</b>	to fall down
<b>shahsawar</b>	horse-rider
<b>madaan</b>	field, ground
<b>jung</b>	war
<b>tiftl</b>	weakling, infant
<b>ghutnon</b>	knees



***raat yun dil mein  
teri khoyi hui yaad aayi***

***jaise veerane mein  
chupke se bahaar aa jaaye***

in the middle of the night  
lost memories of you came to mind

like in a barren desert  
silently, the spring arrived

**Faiz Ahmed Faiz**

1911–1984, Sialkot (Pakistan)

1962: Lenin Peace

1982: Nobel nomination

<b>khoyi hui</b>	lost
<b>yaad</b>	memory
<b>veerana</b>	desolation
<b>chupke se</b>	silently
<b>bahaar</b>	spring

***raushan jamaal-e-yaar se  
hai anjuman tamaam***

***dahka hua hai aatish-e-gul se  
chuman tamaam***

the entire gathering was aglow  
with the beauty of my beloved

just like the whole garden was ablaze  
by the fire of the flower

### **Hasrat Mohani**

1878 – 1951, Unnao (Uttar Pradesh)

Co-Author, Constitution of India

<b>jamaal</b>	beauty
<b>anjuman</b>	gathering, assemblage
<b>tamaam</b>	entire, whole of
<b>aatish</b>	fire
<b>chuman</b>	garden
<b>dahka</b>	heated, reddish glow

***azaab hoti hain aksar  
shabaab ki ghadiyan***

***gulaab apni hi khushbu se  
darne lagte hain***

tormenting often are  
the times of youth

the rose starts to fear  
its own fragrance

### **Badr Wasti**

<b>azaab</b>	torment, punishment
<b>aksar</b>	often
<b>shabaab</b>	youth
<b>ghadiyan</b>	times, hours
<b>gulaab</b>	rose
<b>khushbu</b>	fragrance

***main kya kahun  
kahan hai mohabbat kahan nahin  
raag raag mein daudthi phirthi hai  
nashtar liye hue***

what can i say about  
where love is and where it isn't  
it courses through every vein,  
daggers drawn

**Jigar Moradabadi**

1890–1960, Moradabad (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>mohabbat</b>	love
<b>raag</b>	artery, vein
<b>daudthi</b>	running
<b>phirthi</b>	roaming
<b>nashtar</b>	lancet, knife

***tujh se sau baar  
mil chuke lekin***

***tujh se milne ki  
arzoo hai wahi***

i have met you  
a hundred times, however...

the desire to meet you  
remains just as ever

**Jaleel Manikpuri**

1866–1946, Manikpur (Uttar Pradesh)

**sau baar**

a hundred times

**mil**

meet

**arzoo**

desire

***wafa tum se karenge  
dukh sahenge naaz uthaayenge***

***jise aataa hai dil dena  
use har kaam aataa hai***

will bear faith  
suffer sorrow, endure haughtiness

he who knows to give his heart  
can get anything done

**Aarzo Lakhnavi**

1873–1951, Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>wafa</b>	faith
<b>dukh</b>	sorrow, grief
<b>sahenge</b>	suffer, endure
<b>naaz</b>	pride

***seene mein jalan  
aankhon mein toofan sa kyun hai***

***is shahr mein har shaks  
pareshaan sa kyun hai***

why this burning in the heart  
and storm in the eyes

why does everyone in this city  
seem so troubled

### **Shahryar**

1936 - 2012, Bareilly (Uttar Pradesh)

1987 - Sahitya Akademi

2008 - Jnanpith

<b>seene</b>	heart, chest
<b>jalan</b>	fire, burning
<b>toofan</b>	storm, cyclone
<b>shaks</b>	person
<b>pareshaan</b>	troubled, distressed

***ajeeb saaneha mujh par  
guzar gaya yaaro***

***main apne saaye se kal raat  
Dar gaya yaaro***

a strange incident happened  
to me last night, my friends

i got scared  
of my own shadow

### **Shahryar**

1936 - 2012, Bareilly (Uttar Pradesh)

1987 - Sahitya Akademi

2008 - Jnanpith

<b>ajeeb</b>	strange, weird
<b>saaneha</b>	incident, disaster
<b>saaye</b>	shadow



***kal chauthvin ki raat thi  
shab bhar raha charcha tera***

***kuchh ne kaha ye chaand hai  
kuchh ne kaha chehra tera***

'twas full moon last night  
with all the talk about you

some said it was the moon  
others said it was you

### **Ibn e Insha**

1927–1978, Phillaur (Punjab)

<b>chauthvin raat</b>	full moon night
<b>shab</b>	evening
<b>charcha</b>	discussion
<b>chaand</b>	moon
<b>chehra</b>	face, countenance

***ji dhoondta hai phir wahi  
fursat ke raat din***

***baithe rahen  
tasawwur-e-jaanan kiye hue***

the heart keeps searching  
for those days and nights of leisure

sitting...just enmeshed  
with the thoughts of my beloved

**Mirza Ghalib**

1797 – 1869, Agra

<b>ji</b>	heart
<b>dhoondta</b>	search, look for
<b>fursat</b>	leisure
<b>tasawwur</b>	contemplation
<b>jaanan</b>	beloved, sweetheart

***khushbu-e-hinaa kehna***  
***narmi-e-saba kehna***

***jo zakhm mile tum ko***  
***phoolon ki qabaa kehna***

call it the fragrance of henna  
call it a gentle breeze

whatever wound you get in life  
call it a robe of roses

**Kaif Azimabadi**

1888–1958, Patna

<b>khushbu</b>	fragrance
<b>hinaa</b>	henna
<b>narmi</b>	gentle, soft
<b>saba</b>	breeze, zephyr
<b>zakhm</b>	injury, wound
<b>qabaa</b>	robe

***us lab se mil hi jaayega  
bosa kabhi to haan***

***shauq-e-fuzool-o-  
jurat-e-rindaana chaahiye***

from those lips, am sure  
to get a kiss one day

just needs pointless passion  
and careless courage

**Mirza Ghalib**

1797–1869, Agra

<b>lab</b>	lip
<b>bosa</b>	kiss
<b>shauq</b>	passion
<b>fuzool</b>	pointless
<b>jurat</b>	courage
<b>rindaan</b>	wild, uninhibited

***ujaale apni yaadon ke  
humaare saath rahne do***

***na jaane kis gali mein  
zindagi ki shaam ho jaaye***

let our bright memories  
continue to stay with us

as who knows where  
life's evening might fall

**Bashir Badr**

1935– , Ayodhya (Uttar Pradesh)

1991: Sahitya Akademi

1999: Padma Shri

<b>ujaale</b>	burning, bright
<b>yaadon</b>	memories
<b>gali</b>	street
<b>zindagi</b>	life
<b>shaam</b>	evening

***tu idhar udhar ki na baat kar  
ye bata ki qaafila kyuun luTaa***

***mujhe rahzaanon se gila naheen  
teri rahbaari ka savaal hai***

don't talk about irrelevant stuff  
first tell us how the caravan got looted  
i have no complaint against the robbers  
i have questions about your leadership

### **Shahab Jafri**

1930–2000, Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>qaafila</b>	caravan
<b>luta</b>	loot
<b>rahzaanon</b>	robbers, highwaymen
<b>gila</b>	complain
<b>rahbaari</b>	guidance, leadership
<b>savaal</b>	question

***dard-e-dil likhuun kab tak  
jaaun un ko dikhla duun***

***ungliyaan figaar apni  
khaama khoon-chakaan apna***

for how long will i write of my pain  
maybe i should go show her

my wounded fingers  
and my blood-drenched pen

**Mirza Ghalib**

1797–1869, Agra

**dard-e-dil**            pain of the heart

**dikhla**                show

**ungliyaan**           fingers

**figaar**                wounded

**khaama**              quill, writing reed

**khooon-chakaan**    blood-drenched

***gairon pe karam  
apno pe sitam***

***aye jaane wafa  
yeh zulm na kar***

tyranny for loved ones  
kindness for strangers

o faithful one  
be not so cruel

**Sahir Ludhianvi**

1921–1980, Ludhiana (Punjab)

1971 - Padma Shri

2013 - Commemorative Stamp

<b>gairon</b>	strangers
<b>karam</b>	grace, kindness
<b>apno</b>	loved ones
<b>sitam</b>	injustice, tyranny
<b>zulm</b>	cruelty



***poocha jo un se  
chaand nikalta hai kis tarah***

***zulfon ko rukh pe daal ke  
jhatka diya ki yuun***

when i asked her  
from where does the moon rise  
  
she covered her face with curls  
and tossed them to say...here

**Aarzo Lakhnavi**

1873–1951, Lucknow

**chaand**

moon

**zulfon**

hair, tresses

**jhatka**

toss

***izhaar-e-ishq us se  
na karna tha 'shefta'***

***ye kya kiya ki  
dost ko dushman bana diya***

you shouldn't have expressed  
your love to her, shefta

look what you've done  
turned a friend into an enemy

**Shefta Mustafa Khan**

1809–1869, Delhi

<b>izhaar-e-ishq</b>	expression of love
<b>dost</b>	friend
<b>dushman</b>	enemy

***aagahi karb vafaa  
sabr tamanna ehsaas***

***mere hi seene mein  
utre hain ye khanjar saare***

awareness...pain...loyalty  
patience...desire...feeling

in this my one chest  
plunged have these daggers all

**Bashir Farooqui**

1939–2019, Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>aagahi</b>	awareness
<b>karb</b>	pain
<b>vafaa</b>	loyalty
<b>sabr</b>	patience
<b>tamanna</b>	desire
<b>ehsaas</b>	feeling
<b>khanjar</b>	dagger

***isi khandar mein kaheen kuchh  
diye hain tuute hue***

***inheen se kaam chhalao  
badi udhaas hai raat***

in these ruins, there are  
a few broken lamps somewhere

make do with them  
for this is quite a sad night

### **Firaq Gorakhpuri**

1896–1992, Gorakhpur

1969: Jnanpith; 1997: India Commemorative Stamp

<b>khandar</b>	ruins
<b>diye</b>	lamps
<b>tuute</b>	broken
<b>udhaas</b>	sad

***gul par kya kuchh  
beet gayi hai***

***albela jhonka  
kya jaane***

what all has  
happened to the flower

what does the  
carefree gust (of wind) know

**Ada Jafarey**

1924–2015, Badayun (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>gul</b>	flower
<b>beet gayi</b>	happened
<b>albela</b>	fun-loving, carefree
<b>jhonka</b>	wind, gust

***dushmanon ke saath  
mere dost bhi aazaad hai***

***dekhna hai kheenchta hai  
mujh pe pehla teer kaun***

my friends too  
like my enemies...are free

i have to see who  
shoots the first arrow at me

**Parveen Shakir**

1952 – 1994, Karachi

<b>dushman</b>	enemy
<b>aazaad</b>	free
<b>kheenchna</b>	to pull, shoot
<b>teer</b>	arrow

***phir nazar me phool mehke  
dil me phir shumein jalen***

***phir tasavvur ne liya  
us bazm me jaane ka naam***

flowers bloomed in sight again  
and, again, my heart lit up

when i imagined again  
going to the joyful gathering

**Faiz Ahmed Faiz**

1911–1984, Sialkot (Pakistan)

1962 - Lenin Peace

1982 - Nobel nomination

<b>nazar</b>	in sight
<b>mehke</b>	bloom, fragrant
<b>shumein</b>	lights
<b>tasavvur</b>	imagination
<b>bazm</b>	gathering (party)

***yaad teri kabhi dastak  
kabhi sargoshi se***

***raat ke pichle pehar  
roz jagati hai humen***

your memory, sometimes as a knock  
and sometimes as a whisper

wakes me up  
in the wee hour, every night

### **Shahryar**

1936 - 2012, Bareilly (Uttar Pradesh)

1987 - Sahitya Akademi

2008 - Jnanpith

<b>yaad</b>	memory
<b>dastak</b>	knock
<b>sargoshi</b>	whisper
<b>pichle</b>	last
<b>pehar</b>	quarter (3-6 am)



***parda-e-lutf mein  
ye zulm-o-sitam kya kahiye***

***haaye zaalim, tera  
andaaz-e-karam kya kahiye***

behind the comfort's veil, what to say  
of this tyranny and cruelty

oh you tyrant, what to say  
of your style of kindness

### **Firaq Gorakhpuri**

1896–1992, Gorakhpur

1969: Jnanpith; 1997: India Commemorative Stamp

<b>parda</b>	veil
<b>lutf</b>	joy, comfort
<b>zulm</b>	tyranny
<b>sitam</b>	cruelty
<b>zaalim</b>	tyrant
<b>andaaz-e-karam</b>	style of kindness

***suroor zikr se masti***

***bayaan se aayegi***

***woh naam loonga toh khushbu***

***zubaan se aayegi***

intoxication comes with  
pleasant thoughts narrated well

if i say that name  
fragrance flows off the lips

**Bekhud Dehvi**

1863-1955, Bharatput (Rajasthan)

<b>suroor</b>	comfort
<b>zikr</b>	thoughts
<b>masti</b>	intoxication
<b>bayaan</b>	narration
<b>khushbu</b>	fragrance
<b>zubaan</b>	tongue, speech

***iqraar mein kahaan hai  
inkaar ki si khoobi***

***hota hai shauq, ghalib  
us ki nahin nahin par***

where is the refusal's fun  
in ready acceptance

so much charm there is, ghalib,  
in her repeated rejections

**Mirza Ghalib**

1797–1869, Agra

**iqraar**

acceptance

**inkaar**

rejection

**shauq**

pleasure, charm

***tum samandar ki rafaayat pe  
bharosa na karo***

***tishnagi lab pe sajaaye hue  
mar jaaoge***

don't place your faith and rely  
rely on the kindness of the ocean

you will die with your lips  
decorated by thirst

**Kaif Azeemabadi**

1937, Hyderabad

<b>samandar</b>	ocean
<b>rafaayat</b>	affection, kindness
<b>bharosa</b>	depend, rely
<b>tishnagi</b>	thirst
<b>sajaaye</b>	decorate

***chaaraagar ne bahr-e-taskeen  
rakh diya hai dil pe haath***

***meherbaan hai vo magar  
na-aashnaa-e-zakhm hai***

the healer, for comfort's sake,  
placed his hand on my heart

he is kind, but he is  
not familiar with my ailment

### **Ahmed Faraz**

1931–2008, Kohat (Pakistan)

<b>chaaragaar</b>	healer, doctor
<b>bahr</b>	for the sake of
<b>taskeen</b>	comfort
<b>meherbaan</b>	kind
<b>aashnaa</b>	familiar
<b>zakhm</b>	injury

***hum aise ahl-e-nazar ko  
suboot-e-haq ke liye***

***agar rasool na hote to  
subah kaafi thi***

for us people of insight  
looking for proof of truth

if there's no prophet  
just the dawn would do

**Josh Malihabadi**

1898 – 1982, Malihabad (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>ahl-e-nazar</b>	people of sight
<b>suboot-e-haq</b>	proof of truth
<b>rasool</b>	prophet, guru
<b>subah</b>	dawn
<b>kaafi</b>	enough

***itna bhi na-ummeed  
dil-e-kam-nazar na ho***

***mumkin naheen ki  
shaam-e-alam ki sahar na ho***

may this heart of little vision  
not remain without hope

it is not possible for this night  
to not have a dawn tomorrow

**Naresh Kumar Shad**

1927–1969, Hoshiarpur (Punjab)

<b>na-ummeed</b>	without hope
<b>dil-e-kam-nazar</b>	heart with little vision
<b>mumkin</b>	possible
<b>shaam-e-alam</b>	realm of the night
<b>sahar</b>	dawn

***apni zabaan se kuchh na kahenge  
chup hi rahenge aashiq log***

***tum se to itna ho sakta hai  
poochho haal bechaaron ka***

they won't open their mouths  
those who love you will say nothing

if it is possible for you, at least  
ask the condition of the poor souls

### **Ibn e Insha**

1927–1978, Phillaur (Punjab)

<b>zabaan</b>	speech, tongue
<b>aashiq</b>	lover, fan
<b>poochho</b>	ask
<b>haal</b>	state, condition



***pa ke ik tera tabassum  
muskuraayi kaayenaat***

***jhoom uttha vo bhi  
dil jeene jo bezaar tha***

just one smile from you...  
the whole world rejoiced

those hearts, weary of living,  
sprung to life to celebrate

### **Jaikrishn Chaudhury**

1904– , Dera Ismail Khan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

<b>tabassum</b>	smile
<b>muskuraayi</b>	smiled
<b>kaayenaat</b>	universe
<b>jhoom</b>	dance
<b>bejaar</b>	weary, tired

***khwaab hi khwaab  
kab talak dekhun***

***kaash tujh ko bhi  
ek jhalak dekhun***

for how long will i see you  
in dreams and dreams alone

if only i could see you  
for real even if for a moment

**Obaidullah Aleem**

1939–1998, Bhopal

**khwaab**

dream

**kash**

if only

**jhalak**

moment

***aap ka dil kya  
mere dil se mila***

***maah-e-kaamil  
sham-e-mehfil se mila***

your heart  
has met mine...like

the full moon shined on  
the evening of the gathering

**Nooh Narvi**

1878–1944, Rae Bareilly (Uttar Pradesh)

**maah**

moon

**kaamil**

full, complete

**sham**

evening

**mehfil**

gathering

***jaadu hai ya tilism  
tumhari zabaan mein***

***tum jhuut kah rahe the  
mujhe eitbaar tha***

is it magic or spell  
that's in what you say

you kept telling lies  
and i kept believing

**Bekhud Dehlvi**

1863-1955, Bharatput (Rajasthan)

<b>jaadu</b>	magic
<b>tilism</b>	magic, sorcery
<b>zabaan</b>	language, tongue
<b>jhuuT</b>	lie
<b>eitbaar</b>	belief, faith

***donon ka milna mushkil hai  
donon hain majboor bahut***

***us ke paanv mein mehndi lagi hai  
mere paanv mein chhaale hain***

it is difficult for us both to meet  
both of us were helpless much  
now there is mehndi on her feet  
and blisters on mine

**Ameeq Hanafi**

1928–1988, Indore (Madhya Pradesh)

<b>mushkil</b>	difficult
<b>majboor</b>	helpless, compelled
<b>mehndi</b>	henna (esp. for brides)
<b>chaale</b>	blisters

***usoolon pe jahaan aanch aaye  
takraana zaroori hai***

***jo zinda hun to phir  
zinda nazar aana zaroori hai***

if principles are under attack  
it is necessary to fight back

if i am alive  
i must act so

**Waseem Barelvi**

1940, Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh

<b>usool</b>	principle
<b>aanch</b>	heat, flame, struggle
<b>takraana</b>	fight
<b>zaroori</b>	necessary, essential
<b>nazar</b>	seen

***wo khaar khaar hai  
shaakh-e-gulaab ki maanind***

***main zakhm zakhm huun  
phir bhi gale lagaau use***

she is prickly, prickly  
like the branch of a rose

i am wounded, wounded  
but yet longing for an embrace

**Ahmed Faraz**

1931–2008, Kohat (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa)

<b>khaar</b>	thorn
<b>shaakh</b>	branch
<b>maanind</b>	like
<b>gulaab</b>	rose
<b>zakhm</b>	wound
<b>gale lagaana</b>	embrace

***baad marne ki bhi na chhodi  
rifaaqat meri***

***meri turbat se lagi baithi hai  
hasrat meri***

even after my death  
my love did not leave me

my desires stay shackled  
to my grave

**Ameer Minai**

1829–1900, Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh)

**rifaaqat**

companionship, love

**turbat**

grave

**hasrat**

desires (mostly unmet)



***woh kehti hai hum unke husn ki  
jhooti taareef karte hai***

***aye khuda bas ek din  
aaine ko zubaan de de***

she accuses me of  
falsely praising her beauty

o god, if only you could give  
the mirrors a voice for a day

**Aale Ahmed Suroor**

1911–2002, Badayun (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>husn</b>	beauty
<b>jhooti</b>	false
<b>taareef</b>	praise
<b>aaine</b>	mirrors
<b>zubaan</b>	voice

***kis ki talaash hai humein  
kis ke asar mein hain***

***jab se chale hain ghar se  
musalsal safar mein hain***

what am i in quest of?  
under whose influence am i?

since the time i left home  
i've been continuously traveling

**Aashufta Changezi**

1956–1996, Aligarh

**talaash**

search, quest

**asar**

influence, effect

**musalsal**

continuous

**safar**

journey

***bahut pahle se un qadmon ki  
aahat jaan lete hain***

***tujhe, aye zindagi,  
hum door se pehchaan lete hain***

for a long time now, i recognize  
the soft sound of your footsteps

oh life,  
i recognize you from afar

### **Firaq Gorakhpuri**

1896 - 1992, Gorakhpur

1969 - Jnanpith

1997 - India Commemorative Stamp

<b>pahle</b>	before
<b>qadmon</b>	footsteps
<b>aahat</b>	sound (of footsteps)
<b>zindagi</b>	life
<b>pehchaan</b>	identify, recognize

***mera zameer bahut hai  
mujhe sazaa ke liye***

***tu dost hai to naseehat  
na kar khuda ke liye***

my conscience is enough  
for my punishment

if you are my friend,  
for god's sake, don't give me advice

**Shaz Tamkanat**

1933–1985, Hyderabad

**zameer**

conscience

**sazaa**

punishment

**naseehat**

advice, counsel

***kal thake-haare parindon ne  
naseehat ki mujhe***

***shaam Dhal jaaye to 'mohsin'  
tum bhi ghar jaaya karo***

the weary and exhausted birds  
offered me this advice yesterday

when dusk falls, 'mohsin',  
you should go home too

**Mohsin Naqvi**

1947–1996, Dera Gazi Khan (Punjab)

<b>thake-haare</b>	weary, exhausted
<b>parindon</b>	birds
<b>naseehat</b>	advice, counsel
<b>shaam</b>	evening

***saadgi toh humari zara dekhiye  
aitbaar aapke vaade par kar liya***

***baat toh sirf ek raat ki thi magar  
intezaar aapka umr bhar kar liya***

please notice my naivete

i believed the promise you made

sure, it was mentioned one night

and i waited for you all my life

### **Saba Akbarabadi**

1984– , Agra (Uttar Pradesh)

**saadgi**

innocence

**aitbaar**

faith

**vaada**

promise

**intezaar**

waiting

**umr**

life

***kis tarah jama kijiye  
ab apne aap ko***

***kaagaz bikhar rahe hain  
puraani kitaab ke***

pull yourself together  
somehow

the pages of the old book  
are getting scattered

**Adil Mansuri**

1936–2008, Ahmedabad

**jama**

collect

**kaagaz**

paper

**bikhar**

disperse, scatter

**kitaab**

book

**'jaun' duniya ki  
chaakari kar ke**

**tu ne dil ki  
vo naukri kya ki**

'jaun' having slaved  
for the work of the world

what have you done  
for what is dear to you heart

**Jaun Eliya**

1931–2002, Amroha (Uttar Pradesh)

**chaakari**

work, often mundane

**naukri**

job, work



***ba-zaahir tujhse milne ka  
koi imkaan nahi hai***

***lekin dil-e-beqarar ko  
yeh khayaal bhi achcha hai***

obviously, there is no  
possibility of meeting you

but for this restless heart  
that thought itself is comforting

**Bushra Farrukh**

1957–, Peshawar (Pakistan)

<b>ba-zaahir</b>	evidently, obviously
<b>imkaan</b>	possibility
<b>be-qaraar</b>	restless, without peace
<b>khyayaan</b>	thought, feeling

***duniya ke har khayaal se  
begaana kar diya***

***husn-e-khayaal-e-yaar ne  
deewaana kar diya***

it made me indifferent  
to every thought of the world

beauty of the thoughts of my beloved  
has driven me crazy indeed

**Fana Bulandshahri**

1929 - 1986, Bulandshahr (Uttar Pradesh)

**khayaal**

thought

**begaana**

indifferent

**husn**

beauty

**deewaana**

crazy

***hum labon se keh na paaye  
un se haal-e-dil kabhi***

***aur woh samjhe nahin  
ye khaamoshi kya cheez hai***

i couldn't get the words out,  
telling her of my heart's state

nor could she understand  
what my silence meant

**Nida Fazli**

1938–2016, Delhi

2013 - Padma Shri

1998 - Sahitya Akademi

**labon**

lips

**haal-e-dil**

state of the heart

**khaamoshi**

silence

***husn-o-jamaal-o-zeest ki  
aaraaishein fuzool***

***ishq-o-junoon ki aag  
jo dil mein jawaan na ho***

the decorations and adornments  
of beauty and living are useless

unless the fires of love and passion  
are young and burning in the heart

**Aleena Itraat**

1964–, Nagina (Bijnor, UP)

<b>husn</b>	beauty
<b>jamaal</b>	beauty, elegance
<b>zeest</b>	living, livelihood
<b>aaraaishen</b>	decorations
<b>fuzool</b>	useless
<b>junoon</b>	passion

***phool they, rang they  
lamhon ki sabaahat hum they***

***aise zinda they ki  
jeene ki alaamat hum they***

we were the flowers, the colors  
we were the freshness of those moments

we lived like  
we were the symbols of living

### **Akbar Allahabadi**

1846–1921, Allahabad (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>phool</b>	flowers
<b>rang</b>	colors
<b>lamhon</b>	moments
<b>sabaahat</b>	freshness, morning
<b>alaamat</b>	signs, symbols

***main aandhiyon ke paas  
talaash-e-sabaa mein huun***

***tum mujh se poochhte ho  
mera hausla hai kya***

i am searching for a new beginning  
in the midst of a raging storm

and you are asking me  
if i have courage

**Ada Jafarey**

1924–2015, Badayun (Uttar Pradesh)

**aandhiyon**

storms

**talaash**

quest, in search of

**sabaa**

zephyr, new beginning

**hausla**

courage, valor

***vo bhi shaayad ro paDe  
veeraan kaaghaz dekh kar***

***main ne us ko aakhiri khat mein  
likhaa kuch bhi naheen***

maybe she will break down  
seeing my blank letter

in this last message to her  
i didn't write anything

**Zuhoor Nazar**

1923–1981, Sahiwal (Punjab)

<b>shaayad</b>	maybe
<b>veeraan</b>	desolate, empty
<b>kaaghaz</b>	paper
<b>aakhiri</b>	last, final
<b>khat</b>	letter

***aye fana, shukar hai aaj baad-e-fana  
us ne rakh li mere pyaar ki aabru***

***apne haathon se usne meri qabr par  
chaadar-e-gul chadaayi maza aa gaya***

oh fana, am thankful that after my death  
she herself came to honor my love

with her own hands she spread flowers  
on my grave...it was so delightful

### **Fana Bulandshahri**

1929–1986, Bulandshahr (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>shukar</b>	grateful
<b>fana</b>	destruction, annihilation
<b>aabru</b>	honor, dignity
<b>qabr</b>	grave, tomb
<b>chaadar-e-gul</b>	sheet of flowers
<b>chadaayi</b>	spread



***ye qayaam kaisa hai raah mein  
tere zauq-o-shauq ko kya hua***

***abhi chaar kaante chhube nahin  
tere sab iraade badal gaye?***

how come this stalling in the path?  
what happened to your will and zeal?

not even four thorns have pricked you  
and all your intentions have changed?

### **Anonymous**

<b>qayaam</b>	standing, stalling
<b>zauq</b>	taste, zeal
<b>shauq</b>	zeal, enthusiasm
<b>kaante</b>	thorns
<b>chhube</b>	prick, sting
<b>iraade</b>	desires, aspirations

***qaasid ke aate aate  
khat ek aur likh rakhuun***

***main jaantaa huun  
jo vo likhenge jawaab mein***

while the messenger returns  
i will keep another letter ready

for i know what  
she would be writing in reply

**Mirza Ghalib**

1797–1869, Agra

<b>qaasid</b>	messenger
<b>khat</b>	letter
<b>likh</b>	write
<b>jawaab</b>	reply

***lahjaa ki jaise  
subh ki khushbu azaan de***

***jii chahta hai  
main teri aawaaz chuum lu***

your manner of inflection is like the  
morning fragrance calling out to prayer

oh, my heart so desires  
to kiss your voice

**Bashir Badr**

1935–, Ayodhya (Uttar Pradesh)

1991: Sahitya Akademi; 1999: Padma Shri

<b>lahjaa</b>	manner, accent
<b>subh</b>	morning
<b>khushbu</b>	fragrance
<b>azaan</b>	morning prayer
<b>chuum</b>	kiss

***safar hai shart  
musaafir nawaaz bahutere***

***hazaar ha shajr-e-saaya  
daar raah mein hain***

journey the only condition  
generous companions many

thousands of shady trees  
line along the path

**Haidar Ali Aatish**

1778–1847, Faizabad (UP)

<b>safar</b>	journey
<b>shart</b>	condition, requirement
<b>musaafir</b>	fellow traveler, companion
<b>nawaaz</b>	hospitable, kind
<b>bahutere</b>	many
<b>sharz-e-saaya</b>	trees of shade

***kabhi jo khwaab tha  
woh pa liya hai***

***magar jo kho gayi  
woh cheez kya thi***

that cherished dream  
you have realized

but, what is that  
you have lost, along the way?

**Javed Akhtar**

1945, Gwalior (Madhya Pradesh)

2007, Padma Bhushan

<b>khwaab</b>	dream
<b>pa</b>	get
<b>magar</b>	but
<b>cheez</b>	thing

***ilm ki ibtida hai  
hungaama***

***ilm ki inteha hai  
khaamoshi***

the beginning of knowledge  
commotion

the end of knowledge  
silence

**Firdaus Gayavi**

1954, Aurangabad (Bihar)

**ibtida**

beginning

**hungaama**

commotion, furor

**inteha**

ending

**khaamoshi**

silence

***meri aah ka tum asar  
dekh lena***

***wo aayenge thaame jigar  
dekh lena***

the effect of my sighs  
you just watch

my beloved will come, heart in hand  
you just watch

**Jaleel Manikpuri**

1866–1946, Manikpur (Uttar Pradesh)

**aah**

sigh

**asar**

effect, impact

**thaame**

hold

**jigar**

heart

***jise ishrat-kada-e-dahr  
samajhta tha main***

***aakhir-e-kaar wo  
ek khwaab-e-pareshaan nikla***

that which i thought was  
the pleasure house of the world

at the end, turned out to be  
a troubled dream

**Agha Mohammed Khan Taraqqi ‘Taqi’**

1740–1811 , Faizabad (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>ishrat-kada</b>	pleasure-house
<b>dahr</b>	world
<b>aakhir-e-kaar</b>	at the end
<b>khwaab</b>	dream
<b>pareshaan</b>	anguish, torment



***band ho jaata hai kuuze mein  
kabhi dariya bhi***

***aur kabhi qatra samundar mein  
badal jaata hai***

even a river can get  
trapped and confined in a jar

and, a drop of water can get  
transformed when part of an ocean

**Faryad Aazaar**

1956, Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>kuuze</b>	jar
<b>dariya</b>	river
<b>qatra</b>	drop of water
<b>samundar</b>	sea, ocean
<b>badal</b>	change

***jhuk kar salaam karne mein  
kya harj hai magar***

***sar itna mat jhukao ki  
dastaar gir pade***

what harm is there  
in bowing respectfully, but

don't bend so much  
that your hat falls off

**Iqbal Azeem**

1913–2000, Meerut (Uttar Pradesh)

**jukh**

bend, bow

**salaam**

greeting, salute

**harj**

harm, objection

**dastaar**

turban, head-dress

***koi luqma jo kabhi  
hum ko mayassar aaya  
saath hi daant ke neeche  
koi kankar aaya***

a morsel  
that we obtained with ease  
  
we also found a stone  
under our teeth

**Bismil Dehlavi**

1917–1981, Delhi

<b>luqma</b>	morsel
<b>mayassar</b>	possible
<b>daant</b>	teeth
<b>kankar</b>	stone

***ek usi ko dekh na paaye  
warna, shahr ki sadkon par***

***achhi achhi poshaakein hain  
achhi suurat wale hain***

i could not get to see her,  
otherwise, the streets of the city  
are filled with good-looking women  
in beautiful clothes

**Ameeq Hanafi**

1928–1988, Indore (Madhya Pradesh)

**warna**

otherwise

**sadkon**

streets, roads

**poshaaken**

clothes

**suurat**

face

***hum na maanenge khumoshi hai  
tamanna ka mizaaj***

***haan bhari bazm mein  
woh bol na paayi hogi***

i do not concede silence is  
the temperament of desire

yes, maybe she couldn't  
speak out in a crowded gathering

**Kalidas Gupta**

1925–2001, Sikanderpur (Punjab)

<b>khumoshi</b>	silence
<b>tamanna</b>	desire
<b>mizaaj</b>	demeanor, temperament
<b>bhari</b>	filled
<b>bazm</b>	gathering

***ab naheen jannat  
mashaam-e-kuucha-e-yaar ki shumeem***

***nikhat-e-zulf kya hui  
baad-e-saba ko kya hua***

the lane of my beloved no longer  
has the fragrance of heaven

what happened to the delight of tresses  
where did the morning breeze go

**Abdul Majid ‘Salik’**

1894–1959, Gurdaspur (Punjab)

<b>jannat</b>	heaven
<b>mashaam</b>	smell
<b>kuucha</b>	lane
<b>yaar</b>	beloved
<b>shumeem</b>	fragrance, perfume
<b>nikhat-e-zulf</b>	pleasure of tresses
<b>baad-e-saba</b>	morning breeze

***kis ne sahra mein mere waaste  
rakhi hai ye chaanv***

***dhoop roke hai  
mera chahne wala kaisa***

who has provided a shade  
for me in this desert

how are my dear ones able to  
protect me from this searing heat

**Zeb Ghauri**

1928–1985, Kanpur

2005 - Sitara-i-Imtiaz

<b>sahra</b>	desert
<b>chaanv</b>	shade
<b>dhoop</b>	heat
<b>roke</b>	stop

***wo ek aks ki pal bhar  
nazar mein thehra tha***

***tamaam umr ka ab  
silsila hai mere liye***

that one reflection flashed  
in my sight for just a moment

now for my entire life  
it is a saga for me

**Rajendra Manchanda Bani**

1932–1981, Multan (Pakistan)

<b>aks</b>	reflection
<b>pal</b>	moment
<b>nazar</b>	sight
<b>Thehra</b>	stay
<b>tamaam</b>	entire
<b>umr</b>	life
<b>silsila</b>	saga, chain



***us ne vaada  
kiya hai aane ka***

***rang dekho  
ghareeb khane ka***

my beloved made a promise  
to come

just look at how this humble abode  
has turned so colorful

**Josh Malihabadi**

1898 – 1982, Malihabad (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>vaada</b>	promise
<b>rang</b>	color
<b>ghareeb khana</b>	home of the poor

***naheen shikaayat-e-hijraan ki  
is vaasile se***

***hum un se rishta-e-dil  
ustuvaar karte rahe***

i never complained about  
the separation for this reason

i kept nurturing this  
relationship of the heart with her

**Faiz Ahmed Faiz**

1911–1984, Sialkot (Pakistan)

1962: Lenin Peace; 1982: Nobel nomination

<b>shikaayat</b>	complaint
<b>hijraan</b>	separation
<b>vaasile</b>	reason
<b>rishta</b>	relationship
<b>ustuvaar</b>	nurture

***aqal ayyar hai  
sau bhes badal leti hai***

***ishq bechaara  
na zaheed hai na mullah na hakeem***

intellect is clever  
can change into many forms

poor love  
not an ascetic, nor learned, nor a healer

### **Mohammed Iqbal**

1877 – 1938, Sialkot (Pakistan)

<b>aqal</b>	mind, intellect
<b>ayyar</b>	clever, trickster
<b>bhes</b>	form, appearance
<b>bechaara</b>	helpless, miserable
<b>zaheed</b>	ascetic
<b>mullah</b>	learned, pious
<b>hakeem</b>	doctor, healer

***tumhaara husn araash  
tumhaari saadgi zavar***

***tumhen koi zaruurat hi nahi  
banne sanwarne ki***

your beauty is your adornment  
your simplicity is your ornament

what need is there  
for any other decoration?

**Asar Lakhnavi**

1885–1967, Lucknow

<b>husn</b>	beauty
<b>araash</b>	adornment
<b>saadgi</b>	simplicity, innocence
<b>zavar</b>	ornament, jewelry
<b>sanwarne</b>	decoration, correction

***ahbaab ka shikwa kya kijiye  
khud zaahir-o-baatin ek nahin***

***lub oopar oopar hanste hain  
dil andar andar rota hai***

what use complaining of friends, when  
what's visible and hidden are different

their lips seem to smile  
while they are weeping inside

**Hafeez Jalandhari**

1900–1982, Jalandhar (Punjab)

<b>ahbaab</b>	dear ones
<b>shikwa</b>	complaint
<b>zaahir</b>	evident, visible
<b>baatin</b>	hidden, concealed
<b>lub</b>	lip
<b>hanste</b>	smile

***kaise kahen ki tujh ko bhi  
humse hai vaasta koi***

***tu ne to hum se aaj tak  
koyi gila naheen kiya***

how can i say that  
you have any connection with me

until this day, you have not  
once found fault with me

**Jaun Eliya**

1931–2002, Amroha (Uttar Pradesh)

**vaasta**

connection

**gila**

fault

***dil apni talab mein saadiq tha  
ghabra ke suu-e-matloob gaya***

***dariya se ye moti nikla tha  
dariya hi mein ja kar Doob gaya***

heart was loyal to its desire  
anxious, went to see its beloved

the pearl came out of the river  
but drowned in the river itself

**Shad Azeemabadi**

1846–1927, Patna

<b>talab</b>	desire
<b>saadiq</b>	loyal
<b>suu-e-matluub</b>	for the beloved
<b>dariya</b>	river
<b>moti</b>	pearl
<b>Doob</b>	drown

***ye ehtiyat ka aalam bhi  
kya qayaamat hai***

***pukaar bhi na sake tujhko  
tere naam se hum***

this state of caution  
how calamitous it was

i could not even  
call out to you by your name

### **Sahir Ludhianvi**

1921–1980, Ludhiana (Punjab)

1971: Padma Shri; 2013: Commemorative Stamp

<b>ehtiyat</b>	caution
<b>aalam</b>	world, state
<b>qayaamat</b>	tragedy
<b>pukaar</b>	call



***galiyon ki udaasi poochhti hai  
ghar ka sannaata kehta hai***

***is shahr ka har rahne waala  
kyun doosre shahr mein rahta hai***

the sadness of the streets asks  
the silence of the house says

why do all people of this city  
live in some other city

**Ghulam Mohummed Qasir**

1941–1999, Paharpur (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa)

<b>galiyon</b>	streets
<b>udaasi</b>	sadness
<b>sannaata</b>	silence
<b>shahr</b>	city

***khoob parda hai ki  
chilman se lage baithe hain***

***saaf chupte bhi nahin  
saamne aate bhi nahin***

wearing a fine veil  
yet behind a lattice screen

she doesn't hide completely  
nor does she come in front

**Dagh Dehlvi**

1831–1905, Delhi

<b>khoob</b>	fine, well
<b>parda</b>	veil
<b>chilman</b>	screen, lattice
<b>chupte</b>	hide
<b>saamne</b>	in front, openly

***kuchh to tere mausam hi  
mujhe raas kam aaye***

***aur kuchh meri mitti mein  
baghaawat bhi bahut thi***

something about your weather  
did not suit me well

and in my own soil, perhaps  
there was too much rebellion

**Parveen Shakir**

1952–1994, Karachi (Pakistan)

<b>mausam</b>	season
<b>raas</b>	suitable
<b>mitti</b>	soil
<b>baghaawat</b>	rebellion
<b>bahut</b>	a lot

***ek naya zakhm mila***

***ek nayi umr mili***

***jab kisi shahr mein***

***kuchh yaar puraane se mile***

received a new wound

and found a new life

when in the new city

found some old friends

**Kaif Bhopali**

1882–1926, Faizabad

**zakhm**

wound

**umr**

life

**shahr**

city

**yaar**

friend

**puraane**

old

***ek khwaab ka khayaal hai  
duniya kahein jise***

***hai is mein ek tilism  
tamanna kahein jise***

the thoughts of a dream  
that which we call the world

in this there is a spell  
that which we call desire

**Brij Mohan Dattatriya 'Kaifi'**

1866–1955 , Delhi

**khwaab**

dream

**khayaal**

thought

**tilism**

magic

**tamanna**

desire

***hum ko yaaron ne  
yaad bhi na rakha***

***'jaun' yaaron ke  
yaar the hum to***

my friends now  
don't even remember me

though 'juan' was  
a dear friend of theirs

**Juan Eliya**

1931–2002, Amroha (Uttar Pradesh)

**yaaron**

friends

**yaad**

memory, remember

***jab bhi fursat mili  
hungaama-e-duniya se mujhe***

***meri tanhaai ko bas  
tera pata yaad aaya***

whenever i got respite  
from the commotion of this world

my solitude bent  
towards memories of you

**Aleena Itraat**

1964–, Nagina (Bijnor, UP)

**fursat**

leisure

**hungaama**

commotion

**tanhaai**

solitude, loneliness

**pata**

address

***kuchh ehsaas hain jo  
zubaan par nahin aate***

***kuchh lamhe hain jo  
dil mein hi reh jaate hain***

there are some feelings  
that do not find expression

there are some moments  
that remain hidden in the heart

**Nigar Niazi**

1964–, Ayodhya (Uttar Pradesh)

**ehsaas**

feeling

**zubaan**

tongue, speech

**lamhe**

moments



***mera dil hai ek  
bade se shehar jaisa***

***jis mein ek bhi ghar  
nahi mere naam ka***

my heart is like  
a big, busy city

in which not even  
one house is in my name

**Kamla Das**

1934–2009, Punnayarkulam (Kerala)

1984: Padma Shri; 1987: Sahitya Akademi

**shehar**

city

**ghar**

house

***udaasi shaam tanhaayi kasak  
yaadon ki bechaini***

***mujhe sab saunp kar  
sooraj utar jaata hai paani mein***

sad evening, loneliness, longing  
and the restlessness of memories

the sun sets in the water  
entrusting me with everything

**Aleena Itraat**

1964–, Nagina (Bijnor, UP)

<b>udaasi</b>	sadness
<b>tanhaayi</b>	loneliness
<b>kasak</b>	longing
<b>bechaini</b>	restlessness
<b>saunp</b>	entrust

***dil mein phir se  
wahi dard jaaga***

***baat puraani hai  
ek yaad puraani hai***

in the heart, again  
the same pain awakens

an old matter  
an old memory

**Fahmida Riaz**

1946–2018, Meerut (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>dard</b>	pain
<b>jaaga</b>	awaken
<b>yaad</b>	memory
<b>baat</b>	word, matter
<b>puraani</b>	old

***kya jaane kya likhaa tha  
use iztiraab mein***

***qaasid ki laash aayi  
khat ke jawaab mein***

in my restlessness  
i don't know what i wrote to her

in reply came  
the corpse of the messenger

**Momin Khan Momin**

1800-1852, Delhi

<b>likhaa</b>	write
<b>iztiraab</b>	restlessness
<b>qaasid</b>	messenger
<b>laash</b>	corpse
<b>jawaab</b>	reply

***qaasid naheen ye kaam tera  
apni raah le***

***us ka payaam dil ke siva  
kaun laa sake***

oh messenger, this is not your job  
please be on your way

the message for her  
who can deliver but my heart

**Khwaja Mir Dard**

1721–1785, Delhi

**qaasid**

messenger

**raah**

path

**payaam**

message

**siva**

except

***gharaz ki kaaT diye  
zindagi ke din aye dost***

***vo teri yaad mein ho  
ya tujhe bhulaane mein***

the days of my life  
were thus spent, my dear

either in remembering you  
or in an effort to forget

**Firaq Gorakhpuri**

1896–1992, Gorakhpur

1969: Jnanpith; 1997: India Commemorative Stamp

<b>gharaz</b>	intention, purpose
<b>kaaT diye</b>	spent
<b>zindagi</b>	life
<b>bhulaane</b>	forget

***aafat to hai vo naaz bhi  
andaaz bhi lekin***

***marta huun main jis par  
vo adaa aur hi kuchh hai***

catastrophes they sure are  
those airs and those manners

that style and grace for which i die  
oh, it is something else

**Ameer Minai**

1829–1900, Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>aafat</b>	calamity, catastrophe
<b>naaz</b>	hauteur, pride
<b>andaaz</b>	manner, style
<b>adaa</b>	style, grace

***kis din tum ne rakkha tha  
hinaai haath seene par***

***khuda shaahid hai...thanDak  
aaj tak hum dil mein paate hain***

that day you placed your  
henna-ed hand on my chest

god as my witness, to this day  
i find the comfort in my heart

**Jaleel Manikpuri**

1866–1946, Manikpur (Uttar Pradesh)

**hinaai**

henna-ed hand

**seene**

chest

**shaahid**

witness

**thanDak**

coolness, relief, comfort



***shahr-vaalon ki mohabbat ka  
main qaael huun magar***

***main ne jis haath ko chooma  
vahi khanjar nikla***

i was convinced about the love  
of those in my society

but, the hand that i sought to kiss  
turned out to be a dagger

**Ahmed Faraz**

1931–2008, Kohat (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa)

<b>shahr-vaalon</b>	city dwellers, society
<b>qaael</b>	convinced
<b>chooma</b>	kiss
<b>khanjar</b>	dagger

***hua hai ishq mein kam  
husn-e-ittefaaq aisaa***

***ki dil ko yaar toh  
dil yaar ko pasand hua***

rarely did it happen in love  
such a beauty of luck

when heart loved the beloved  
and beloved the heart

**Anonymous**

**ishq**

love

**husn**

beauty

**ittefaaq**

luck, coincidence

**pasand**

liking

***insha-ji ab ajnabiyon mein  
chain se baaqi umr kaate***

***jin ki khaatir basti chhodi  
naam na lo un pyaaron ka***

insha, spend the rest of your life  
in peace among strangers

the loved ones for whom you  
left your town, think not about them

### **Ibn e Insha**

1927–1978, Phillaur (Punjab)

<b>ajnabiyon</b>	strangers
<b>chain</b>	peace
<b>umr</b>	life
<b>kaaTe</b>	spend
<b>basti</b>	town, village
<b>pyaaron</b>	loved ones

***mohabbat ko chhupaaye laakh  
koyi chhup naheen sakti***

***ye wo afsaana hai jo  
be-kahe mashhoor hota hai***

how much ever they hide love  
none can really hide it

this is a story, unspoken,  
becomes well-known

**Lala Madhav Ram Jauhar**

1810–1889, Farrukhabad (Uttar Pradesh)

**chhupaaye**

hidden

**afsaana**

story

**be-kahe**

unspoken

**mashhoor**

famous, well-known

***phirte ho 'mir' sahab  
sab se juda juda tum***

***shaayad kaheen  
tumhaara dil in dinon laga hai***

o mir, you keep roaming  
away from everyone else

perhaps you have your heart  
set on someone these days?

**Mir Taqi Mir**

1723–1810, Agra

**phirte**

roam around

**shaayad**

perhaps

***azeeyyat museebat  
malaamat balaayen***

***tere ishq mein humne  
kyaa kyaa na dekha***

torment, travails  
accusations, calamities

in your love, what all  
have i not experienced

**Khwaja Mir Dard**

1721–1785, Delhi

<b>azeeyyat</b>	torment, vexation
<b>museebat</b>	trouble
<b>malaamat</b>	blame, accusation
<b>balaayen</b>	calamities

***khanjar chale kisee pe  
taDapte hain hum 'ameer'***

***saare jahaan ka dard  
humaare jigar mein hai***

the dagger plunges into someone  
and i am the one to suffer, ameer

the pain of the whole world  
is gathered in my heart

**Ameer Minai**

1829–1900, Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh)

**khanjar**

dagger

**tadapna**

suffer, writhe

**dard**

pain

**jigar**

heart

***apni taraf to main bhi  
naheen huun abhi talak***

***aur us taraf tamaam  
zamaana usi ka hai***

until now, even i wasn't  
on my own side

and on that side  
the whole world was her's

### **Ameer Imam**

1984–, Sambhal (Uttar Pradesh)

2018: Sahitya Akademi Yuva Puraskar

<b>taraf</b>	side
<b>talak</b>	till
<b>tamaam</b>	all, entire
<b>zamaana</b>	world



***yahaan libaas ki qeemat hai  
aadmi ki naheen***

***mujhe gilaas baDe de  
sharaab kam kar de***

here people respect the apparel  
not the man

give me a bigger glass  
you can reduce the wine

**Bashir Badr**

1935– , Ayodhya (Uttar Pradesh)

1991: Sahitya Akademi; 1999: Padma Shri

<b>libaas</b>	apparel, attire
<b>qeemat</b>	price, esteem
<b>gilass</b>	glass
<b>sharaab</b>	wine, liquor

***tu ise paimaana-e-imroz-o-farda  
se na naap***

***jaavedaan, paihum rawaan  
har dam jawaan hai zindagi***

do not measure it by the  
standards of yesterday and tomorrow

constantly flowing every moment...  
life is forever youthful

### **Mohammed Iqbal**

1877–1938, Sialkot (Pakistan)

<b>paimaana</b>	standard
<b>imroz</b>	yesterday
<b>farda</b>	tomorrow
<b>naap</b>	measure
<b>javedaan</b>	life
<b>paihum</b>	flowing

***maazi ke samundar mein aksar  
yaadon ke jazeere milte hain***

***phir aao waheen langar daalein  
phir aao unhen aabaad karein***

in the ocean of the past, often  
islands of memories are found

so, come, let's anchor here  
so, come, let's dwell here

### **Firaq Gorakhpuri**

1896–1992, Gorakhpur

1969: Jnanpith; 1997: India Commemorative Stamp

<b>maazi</b>	past
<b>samundar</b>	ocean
<b>aksar</b>	often
<b>jazeere</b>	islands
<b>langar</b>	anchor
<b>aabaad</b>	populate, dwell

***bulandiyon pe pahoonchna  
koi kamaal nahi***

***bulandiyon pe teherna  
kamaal hota hai***

there is nothing great  
in reaching the heights

but staying there...  
yes, that's remarkable

**Ashok Sahil**

1955– , Muzaffarnagar (Uttar Pradesh)

**bulandiyon**

peaks, heights

**kamaal**

desolation

**teherna**

staying

***is seena-e-veeraan mein  
khilaaye na kabhi phool***

***kyon baagh pe itraati rahi  
baad-e-saba hai***

in this desolate heart  
having never bloomed any flowers

why does the fragrant morning breeze  
show off in the garden?

**Jaikrishn Chaudhury**

1904– , Dera Ismail khan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

<b>seena</b>	chest, heart
<b>veeran</b>	desolation
<b>khilaaye</b>	bloom
<b>baagh</b>	garden
<b>itraati</b>	show off, flaunt
<b>baad-e-saba</b>	morning breeze

***go barasti naheen  
sadaa aankhen***

***abr to baara maas  
hota hai***

the eyes do not  
always shed tears

but the clouds are there  
all year long

**Gulzar**

1936–, Dina Jhelum (Punjab)

**abr**

clouds

**maas**

month

***saahil ke sukoon se  
kise inkaar hai lekin***

***toofan se ladne mein  
mazaa aur hi kuchh hai***

who will refuse  
the comfort of a safe shore  
but the joy of fighting a storm  
is something else

**Aale Ahmed Suroor**

1911–2002, Badayun (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>saahil</b>	shore
<b>sukoon</b>	peace, comfort
<b>inkaar</b>	refusal, rejection
<b>toofan</b>	storm, cyclone
<b>mazaa</b>	fun, joy

***akbar dabe naheen kisi  
sultan ki fauj se***

***lekin shaheed ho gaye  
biwi ki nauj se***

akbar was not subdued by  
the army of an emperor

but he was martyred  
by the lament of his wife

### **Akbar Allahabadi**

1846–1921, Allahabad (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>dabe</b>	vanquished, subdued
<b>sultan</b>	emperor
<b>fauj</b>	army
<b>shaheed</b>	martyr
<b>nauj</b>	lament



***be-dam huye beemar  
dawa kyun nahin dete***

***tum acche maseeha ho  
shifa kyun nahin dete***

the restless have fallen sick  
why don't you offer a medicine

you are such a good healer  
why don't you cure their illness

**Faiz Ahmed Faiz**

1911–1984, Sialkot (Pakistan)

1962: Lenin Peace; 1982: Nobel nomination

<b>be-dam</b>	short of breath
<b>dawa</b>	medicine
<b>maseeha</b>	healer, messiah
<b>shifa</b>	healing, cure

***ye kisi naam ka nahin hota  
ye kisi dhaam ka nahin hota***

***pyaar mein jab talak nahin tuute  
dil kisi kaam ka nahin hota***

it is not worth mentioning  
not does it belong anywhere

until it breaks for the sake of love  
this heart is of no use anywhere

**Ibn e Insha**

1927–1978, Phillaur (Punjab)

**talak**

till

**pyaar**

love

**tuute**

break

***allah tujhe rakhe  
mahfouz hawaadis se***

***aye kufr tere dum se  
aaraish-e-imaan hai***

may god keep you safe  
from calamities

oh disbelief, your breath  
itself an adornment of faith

**Waseem Barelvi**

1940– , Bareilly (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>mahfouz</b>	safe, protected
<b>hawaadis</b>	calamity
<b>kufr</b>	disbelief, denying (of God)
<b>dum</b>	breath
<b>aaraish</b>	decoration, adornment
<b>imaan</b>	faith

***tujhe paane ki koshish mein  
kuchh itna kho chuka huun main***

***ki tu mil bhi agar jaaye to  
ab milne ka ghum hoga***

in my attempts to gain you  
i have lost so much

even if you become mine  
i will be sad about it

**Waseem Barelvi**

1940– , Bareilly (Uttar Pradesh)

**koshish**

attempt

**paane**

to get, to gain

**ghum**

sad

***tum ne kiya na yaad  
kabhi bhool kar humein***

***hum ne tumhaari yaad mein  
sab kuchh bhula diya***

even by mistake, you did not  
ever think of me

but i have forsaken everything  
just lost in your thoughts

**Bahadur Shah Zafar**

1775 – 1862, Delhi (Last Mughal Emperor)

**yaad**

thought

**bhool**

mistake

***duub kar paar  
utar gaye hain hum***

***log samjhe ki  
mar gaye hain hum***

it is by first diving in and drowning  
that i was able to cross the river

and here people are thinking  
i was dead

**Naresh Kumar Shad**

1927–1969, Hoshiarpur (Punjab)

**duub**

drown

**paar**

cross

**samjhe**

understand

***saara hi shehr uske  
janaaze main tha shareek***

***tanhaiyon ke khoaf se  
jo shakhs mar gaya***

the entire city joined  
in the funeral procession

of the one who died  
afraid of loneliness

### **Anonymous**

<b>shehr</b>	city
<b>janaaze</b>	funeral procession
<b>shareek</b>	participant
<b>tanhaiyon</b>	loneliness
<b>khoaf</b>	fear
<b>shaks</b>	person

***hans ke farmaate hain  
vo dekh ke haalat meri***

***kyuun tum aasaan samajhte the  
mohabbat meri***

looking at my condition  
she asked, smiling,

why, did you think loving me  
would be that easy?

**Ameer Minai**

1829–1899, Lucknow

**hans**

smile

**farmaate**

ask, inquire

**haalat**

condition

**aasaan**

easy



***makaan sheeshe ka  
banvaate ho 'aazar'***

***bahut aayenge patthar  
dekh lena***

you made your house  
with glass, 'aazar'

just watch...  
many stones will come at it

**Kafeel Aazar Amrohvi**

1940–, Amroha (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>makaan</b>	house
<b>sheeshe</b>	glass
<b>banvaate</b>	make of
<b>patthar</b>	stone

***jo bhi de de wo karam se  
wahi le le 'naadir'***

***munh se maango to  
khuda aur khafa hota hai***

whatever is given to you in kindness  
you accept jus that 'naadir'

if you were to ask for more  
god will get even more angry

**Naadir Shahjahanpuri**

1890 - 1963, Shahhajanpur, (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>karam</b>	grace, kindness
<b>maango</b>	ask
<b>khuda</b>	god
<b>khafa</b>	angry

***tujhe kaun jaanta tha  
meri dosti se pahle***

***tera husn kuchh nahin tha  
meri shaayari se pahle***

who knew of you  
before my friendship

and your beauty was nothing  
before my poetry

**Kaif Bhopali**

1882–1926, Faizabad

<b>dosti</b>	friendship
<b>husn</b>	beauty
<b>shaayari</b>	poetry
<b>pehle</b>	before

***thi wasl mein bhi  
fikr-e-judaai tamaam shab***

***woh aaye to bhi neend  
na aayi tamaam shab***

even in union  
the fear of separation all night

when my beloved comes  
sleep escapes me all night

**Momin Khan Momin**

1800-1852, Delhi

<b>wasl</b>	union
<b>fikr</b>	concern, fear
<b>judaai</b>	separation
<b>tamaam</b>	entire, all
<b>neend</b>	sleep

***mohabbat ke liye dil dhoondh  
koi tootne wala***

***ye woh mai hai jise rakhte hain  
naazuk aabginon mein***

for love, seek a heart  
that is fragile

this wine is meant for  
delicate goblets

### **Mohammed Iqbal**

1877 – 1938, Sialkot (Pakistan)

<b>mohabbat</b>	love
<b>dhoondh</b>	search
<b>tootne</b>	breakable
<b>naazuk</b>	delicate, fragile
<b>aabignon</b>	glasses, goblets

***zakhm jhele, daagh bhi  
khaye bahut***

***dil laga kar hum to  
pachhtaaye bahut***

many wounds i bore,  
many scars did i sustain

getting my heart entangled  
i regretted a lot

**Mir Taqi Mir**

1723–1810, Agra

<b>zakhm</b>	wound, injury
<b>daagh</b>	scar
<b>pachhtaaye</b>	regret, repent

***khuda tujhe kisi  
toofan se aashna kar de***

***ki tere bahr ki maujon  
mein izteraab nahin***

may god familiarize  
you with some storms

the waves of your sea  
seem a little too calm

**Mohammed Iqbal**

1877 – 1938, Sialkot (Pakistan)

<b>khuda</b>	god
<b>toofan</b>	storm
<b>aashna</b>	familiar
<b>bahr</b>	sea
<b>maujon</b>	waves
<b>izteraab</b>	restlessness

***tarq-e-taalluqaat pe  
roya na tu na main***

***lekin ye kya ki chain se  
soya na tu na main***

in breaking up  
neither you nor i did cry

but with peace  
neither you nor i can sleep

**Khalid Ahmad**

1944–2013, Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh)

**tarq-e-taalluqaat** renouncing relationships

**roya** cried

**chain** peace



***aata hai daag-e-hasrat-e-dil  
ka shumaar yaad***

***mujh se mere gunah ka hisaab  
aye khuda, na maang***

the painful scars of unmet desires  
keep coming to my mind

don't from me also ask, oh god,  
an account of my sins

**Mirza Ghalib**

1797–1869, Agra

<b>daag</b>	scar
<b>hasrat</b>	unmet desires
<b>shumaar</b>	count
<b>gunah</b>	sins, crimes
<b>hisaab</b>	count, account

***zulm aur jahl pe  
israar karoge kab tak***

***aql or fahm se  
paekaar karoge kab tak***

how long will you persist with  
this injustice and ignorance

how long will you procrastinate...  
relying on reason and understanding

**Ali Sardar Jafri**

1913 – 2000, Balrampur (Uttar Pradesh)

1997: Jnanpith Award

1967: Padma Shri

<b>zulm</b>	crime, injustice
<b>jahl</b>	ignorance
<b>israar</b>	persist, be obstinate
<b>aql</b>	intellect
<b>fahm</b>	belief, understanding
<b>paekaar</b>	rely

***kab talak azmat-e-aflaak ke  
gun gaaoge***

***azmat-e-khaak se inkaar  
karoge kab tak***

for how long will you keep singing  
praises for heavenly gods

for how long will you keep denying  
human greatness

**Maataam Fazl Mohummad**

1815–1897, Hyderabad (Pakistan)

<b>azmat</b>	greatness, magnificence
<b>aflaak</b>	heavenly body
<b>gun gaana</b>	sing praises
<b>inkaar</b>	refuse

***aagahi karb vafaa  
sabr tamanna ehsaas***

***mere hi seene mein  
utre hain ye khanjar saare***

awareness...pain...loyalty  
patience...desire...feeling

in this my one chest  
plunged have these daggers all

**Bashir Farooqui**

1939–2019, Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>aagahi</b>	awareness
<b>karb</b>	pain
<b>vafaa</b>	loyalty
<b>sabr</b>	patience
<b>tamanna</b>	desire
<b>ehsaas</b>	feeling
<b>khanjar</b>	dagger

***ho mohtaseeb ki khair  
uncha hai usi ke naam se***

***rind ka saaqi ka mae ka  
khum ka paemaane ka naam***

may god (or critics) be blessed  
it is because of them

the drunkard, wine-pourer, wine  
cask and goblet have gained fame

**Faiz Ahmed Faiz**

1911–1984, Sialkot (Pakistan)

1962 - Lenin Peace

1982 - Nobel nomination

<b>mohtaseeb</b>	inspector of virtue
<b>khair</b>	welfare
<b>rind</b>	reveler, drunkard
<b>saaqi</b>	wine-pourer, bartender
<b>mae</b>	wine

***mera khuda mujhe bas  
itna motabar kar de***

***main jis makaan mein rehta hoon  
usko ghar kar de***

oh god, make me  
a trustworthy person

and the house in which i live  
make it my home

**Iftekar Arif**

1943– , Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>motabar</b>	reliable, trustworthy
<b>makaan</b>	house
<b>ghar</b>	home

***mazhabi behas main ne  
ki hi nahin***

***faaltu aql mujh mein  
thi hi nahin***

in religious debates  
i did not participate

useless smarts  
i did not have in me

**Akbar Allahabadi**

1846–1921, Allahabad (Uttar Pradesh)

**mazhabi**

religious

**behas**

debate

**faaltu**

useless, pointless

**aql**

intelligence, intellect

***ranj se khugar hua insaan to  
mit jaata hai ranj***

***mushkilein mujh par padi itni ke  
aasaan ho gayee***

if a person gets accustomed to grief  
then grief disappears

so many difficulties have come upon me  
that it has become easy to bear them

**Mirza Ghalib**

1797–1869, Agra

<b>ranj</b>	grief
<b>khugar</b>	get accustomed to
<b>insaan</b>	human
<b>mit jaana</b>	erase, disappear
<b>mushkilen</b>	troubles, difficulties
<b>aasaan</b>	easy



***jab se mein chala huun  
meri manzil pe nazar hai***

***aankhon ne meri  
meel ka patthar nahi dekha***

from the time i started walking  
my sights were fixed on the goal

my eyes didn't notice  
the milestones along the way

**Bashir Badr**

1935, Ayodhya (Uttar Pradesh)

1991- Sahitya Akademi

1999 - Padma Shri

**manzil**                    to stop

**nazar**                     sight

**aankhon**                eyes

**meel**                      mile

**patthar**                 stone

***raagon mein daudte phirne ke  
hum naheen qayaal***

***jab aankh hi se na Tapka to  
phir lahoo kya hai***

that which courses through veins  
i don't much care for

if it doesn't drip from the eyes  
how can it be blood?

**Mirza Ghalib**

1797–1869, Agra

<b>raagon</b>	veins
<b>daudte</b>	running
<b>qayaal</b>	satisfied, convinced
<b>Tapka</b>	drip, drop
<b>lahoo</b>	blood

***jis khait se dahqaan ko  
mayassar naheen rozi***

***us khait ke har  
khosha-e-gandum ko jalado***

that field where it is not possible  
for the farmer to make a living

burn down every  
stalk of wheat of that field

### **Mohammed Iqbal**

1877 – 1938, Sialkot (Pakistan)

<b>khait</b>	field
<b>dahqaan</b>	farmer
<b>mayassar</b>	possible
<b>rozi</b>	living
<b>khosha</b>	stalk
<b>gandum</b>	wheat

***mastaana saath mere  
roti phire hai bulbul***

***gul se jo dil lagaa hai  
abtar hai haal us ka***

drunk and free, the nightingale  
cries and roams around with me

with the heart set on the flower  
and in a wretched, broken state

**Mir Taqi Mir**

1723–1810, Agra

<b>mastaana</b>	drunk, carefree
<b>roti</b>	cry
<b>phire</b>	roam
<b>bulbul</b>	nightingale, singing bird
<b>gul</b>	flower
<b>abtar</b>	broken, wretched

***na taDapne ki ijaazat hai  
na fariyaad ki hai***

***ghuT ke mar jaaun  
ye marzi mere sayyaad ki hai***

neither permission to writhe  
nor to voice a prayer

my captor's wish is for me  
to suffocate and die

**Shaad Lakhnavi**

1805–1899, Lucknow

<b>tadapna</b>	to suffer, tremble
<b>ijaazat</b>	permission
<b>fariyaad</b>	prayer
<b>ghut ke</b>	suffocate
<b>marzi</b>	wish
<b>sayyaad</b>	captor, hunter

***arz-e-ahvaal ko  
gila samjhe***

***kya kaha main ne  
aap kya samjhe***

describing my condition  
sounds a complaint to you

i say one thing  
you construe something else

**Dagh Dehlvi**

1831–1905, Delhi

**arz**

submission, petition

**ahvaal**

condition, state

**samjhe**

understand

***phool ki khushbu  
hava ki chaap, sheeshe ki khanak***

***kaun si shai hai jo teri  
khush-bayaani mein nahin***

fragrance of flowers,  
rustle of breeze, tinkling of glass

what is not there  
in the beauty of your talk

### **Unknown**

<b>phool</b>	flower
<b>khushbu</b>	fragrance
<b>chaap</b>	imprint, mark
<b>sheeshe</b>	glass
<b>khanak</b>	tinkling
<b>shai</b>	thing
<b>khush-bayaani</b>	eloquence

***kab woh sunti hai  
kahaani meri***

***aur phir vo bhi  
zabaani meri***

when did she listen  
to my sorry state

that too when i  
narrated it myself

**Mirza Ghalib**

1797–1869, Agra

**kahaani**  
**zabaani**

story, sob story  
narration



***jo ghazal aaj tere  
hijr mein likhi hai woh kal  
kya khabar ahl-e-mohabbat ka  
taraana ban jaaye***

that poem written today  
on separation from you

who knows...could become a song  
for those in love tomorrow

**Ahmed Faraz**

1931–2008, Kohat (Pakistan)

<b>ghazal</b>	poem
<b>hijr</b>	separation
<b>khabar</b>	news
<b>ahl-e-mohabbat</b>	people of love
<b>taraana</b>	song

***rahte the kabhi jin ke dil mein  
hum jaan se bhi pyaaron ki tarah***

***baiThe hain unheen ke kooche mein  
hum aaj gunahgaaron ki tarah***

in whose heart i was once present  
like i was more dear than life itself

today i am sitting in her street  
like a common criminal

### **Majrooh Sultanpuri**

1919-2000, Sultanpur (UP)

1993 - Dadasaheb Phalke Award

<b>jaan</b>	life
<b>kooche</b>	street
<b>gunahgaar</b>	criminal

***ye to naheen ki tum sa  
jahaan mein haseen naheen***

***is dil ko kya karoon  
ye bahaltaa kaheen naheen***

it isn't that there aren't in this world  
others more beautiful than you

but what to do with this heart  
it is not pacified anywhere else

**Dagh Dehlvi**

1831–1905, Delhi

**jahaan**

universe

**haseen**

beautiful

**bahaltaa**

pacified

***sau sau ummeedin bandhti hai  
ek ek nigaah par mujh ko***

***na aise pyaar se  
dekha kare koyi***

with every glance  
hundreds of hopes arise

wish not anyone look  
at me with loving eyes

### **Mohammed Iqbal**

1877 – 1938, Sialkot (Pakistan)

<b>sau</b>	hundred
<b>ummeeden</b>	hopes
<b>nigaah</b>	glance
<b>pyaar</b>	love

***afraad ke haathon mein hai  
aqwaam ki taqdeer***

***har fard hai millat ke  
muqaddar ka sitaara***

the destiny of the nation  
lies in the hands of its people

every person is a pointer  
to the fate of the nation

### **Mohammed Iqbal**

1877 – 1938, Sialkot (Pakistan)

<b>afraad</b>	people
<b>aqwaam</b>	country
<b>taqdeer</b>	destiny
<b>fard</b>	person
<b>millat</b>	nation
<b>muqaddar</b>	fate
<b>sitaara</b>	pointer, asterisk

***har ik shikast-e-tamanna pe  
muskuraate hain***

***woh kya karen jo  
musalsal fareb khaate hain***

at every broken dream  
they smile

what can they do who  
always suffer deceit

**Raaz Muradabadi**

1916–1982, Moradabad (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>shikast</b>	broken
<b>tamanna</b>	dreams, desires
<b>muskuraate</b>	smile
<b>musalsal</b>	continuously, always
<b>fareb</b>	deceit

***khwaabon par ikhtiyaar  
na yaadon pe zor hai***

***kab zindagi guzaari hai  
apne hisaab mein***

no control over dreams  
no power over memories

when has life ever  
transpired on my terms

**Fatima Hasan**

1953– , Karachi (Pakistan)

<b>khwaabon</b>	dreams
<b>ikhtiyaar</b>	control, authority
<b>yaadon</b>	memories
<b>zor</b>	power
<b>guzaari</b>	transpired, passed
<b>hisaab</b>	account

***ye mujhe chain  
kyun nahin padta***

***ek hi shakhs tha  
jahaan mein kya***

why can't i  
find peace ever

why, was she the only  
person in this whole world?

**Jaun Eliya**

1931- 2002, Amroha (Uttar Pradesh)

**chain**

peace

**shakhs**

person

**jahaan**

world, universe



***waqt ki aandhi mein bhi  
roshni ka diya jalta raha***

***mera qalam mera saathi  
mera humraaz banta raha***

even during the storms of time  
i kept lighting the lamp of brightness

my pen remained my friend,  
my confidant all through

### **Zehra Nigah**

1936 – , Hyderabad

<b>waqt</b>	time
<b>aandhi</b>	storm
<b>roshni</b>	light, brightness
<b>qalam</b>	pen
<b>saathi</b>	friend
<b>humraaz</b>	companion, confidant

***kahin wo aa ke  
mitaa de na intezaar ka lutf***

***kahin qubuul na ho jaaye  
iltijaa meri***

by coming, hope she wouldn't ruin  
my pleasure of waiting

hope she doesn't accept  
my pleas for her to come

### **Hasrat Jaipuri**

1922–1999, Jaipur (Rajasthan)

<b>mitaa</b>	destroy, ruin, erase
<b>intezaar</b>	waiting
<b>lutf</b>	pleasure
<b>qubuul</b>	accept
<b>iltijaa</b>	plea, prayer

***seekhe hain mah-rukhn ke liye  
hum musavvari***

***taqreeb kuch to  
bahr-e-mulaqaat chaahiye***

i learned to paint for the sake of  
the moon-faced ones

something is needed  
to gain an acquaintance

**Mirza Ghalib**

1797–1869, Agra (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>mah-rukhn</b>	moon-faced, beautiful
<b>musavvari</b>	painting
<b>taqreeb</b>	approaching, proximity
<b>bahr-e-mulaqaat</b>	to meet

***mere hone mein kisi taur se  
shaamil ho jao***

***tum maseeha nahin hote ho to  
qaatil ho jao***

be mine and be present  
in some way

if not as my savior  
at least as my assassin

**Irfan Siddiqui**

1939–2004, Badayun (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>taur</b>	manner, fashion
<b>shaamil</b>	to be present
<b>maseeha</b>	savior
<b>qaatil</b>	assassin

***ilaaj-e-dard-e-dil tum se maseehaa  
ho nahin saktaa***

***tum achchha kar nahin sakte  
main achchha ho nahin saktaa***

the cure for my heartache  
oh messiah, is not possible

you can't help me  
nor can i get better

**Muztar Khairabaadi**

1865–1927, Khairabad (Uttar Pradesh)

**ilaaj**

cure, treatment

**dard**

pain

**maseehaa**

messiah, savior

***mere rashk-e-qamar tu ne pehli nazar  
jab nazar se milaayi...maza aa gaya***

***barq si gir gayi kaam hi kar gayi  
aag aisi lagaayi...maza aa gaya***

oh my envy-of-the-moon...when our  
eyes met the first time...'twas thrilling

lightning came down and did its job  
it lit a fire such that...'twas so thrilling

### **Fana Bulandshahri**

1897 – 1986, Bulandshahr (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>rashk-e-qamar</b>	that which even the moon envies (beautiful)
<b>qamar</b>	moon
<b>rashk</b>	envy
<b>nazar</b>	glance, sight
<b>barq</b>	lightning
<b>maza</b>	fun, thrill

***paamaal kar ke poochte hain  
kis adaa se wo***

***is dil mein aag thi?  
mere talve jhulaas gaye***

after trampling me  
she asks amusedly

was your heart on fire?  
for my soles are seared

**Agha Shayar Qazalbash**

1871–1940, Delhi

**paamaal**

trample

**adaa**

style

**talve**

soles

**jhulaas**

seared, burnt

***maqbool ho na ho  
yeh muqaddar ki baat hai***

***sajde kisi ke dar pe  
kiye ja raha hoon main***

whether accepted or not  
it is a matter of fate

but at someone's doorstep  
i am prostrate in prayer

**Josh Malsiani**

1884–1976, Malsian (Punjab)

1971- Padma Shri

<b>maqbool</b>	to be accepted
<b>muqaddar</b>	fate, luck
<b>sajde</b>	prostrate in prayer
<b>dar</b>	door, gate



***kal chauthvin ki raat thi  
shab bhar raha charcha tera***

***kuchh ne kaha ye chaand hai  
kuchh ne kaha chehra tera***

'twas full moon last night  
with all the talk about you

some said it was the moon  
others said it was you

### **Ibn e Insha**

1927–1978, Phillaur (Punjab)

<b>chauthvin raat</b>	full moon night
<b>shab</b>	evening
<b>charcha</b>	discussion
<b>chaand</b>	moon
<b>chehra</b>	face, countenance

***duniya jise kahte hain  
jaadu ka khilona hai***

***mil jaaye toh mitti hain  
kho jaaye toh sona hai***

that which is called life  
is but a bizarre toy

what we get is dirt  
what we lose is gold

**Nida Fazli**

1938–2016, Delhi

2013 - Padma Shri

1998 - Sahitya Akademi

<b>duniya</b>	world
<b>jaadu</b>	magical, bizarre
<b>khilona</b>	toy
<b>mitti</b>	dirt, mud
<b>sona</b>	gold

***chala jaata huun hansta khelta  
mauj-e-hawaadis se***

***agar aasaaniyaan hon  
zindagi dushvaar ho jaaye***

i keep moving, laughing, playing  
with waves of calamities

if it is too easy  
let life become troublesome

**Asghar Gondvi**

1884–1936, Gorakhpur (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>mauj</b>	waves
<b>hawaadis</b>	calamities
<b>aasaaniyaan</b>	things of ease
<b>zindagi</b>	life
<b>dushvaar</b>	difficult, arduous

***mauquuf hai kyuun  
hashr pe insaaf humaara***

***qissa jo yahaan ka hai  
to phir tai bhi yaheen ho***

why postpone the verdict  
of justice until after death

whatever account is of here  
let it be settled right here

**Mahboob Azmi**

1919–2010, Mizwan (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>mauquuf</b>	postponement
<b>hashr</b>	day of judgment
<b>insaaf</b>	justice
<b>qissa</b>	account
<b>tai</b>	settlement

***minnat-e-chaara-saaz  
kaun kare***

***dard jab  
jaan-nawaaz ho jaaye***

who will  
plead with the healer

when pain  
itself is life-giving

**Faiz Ahmed Faiz**

1911–1984, Sialkot (Pakistan)

1962: Lenin Peace

1982: Nobel nomination

<b>minnat</b>	plea
<b>chaara-saaz</b>	healer
<b>dard</b>	pain
<b>jaan-nawaaz</b>	life-giving

***ho kabhi to  
sharaab-e-wasl naseeb***

***peeye jaoon main  
khoon hee kab tak***

hope i'll be fortunate to  
enjoy the wine of union

for how long do i  
keep drinking blood

**Jaun Elia**

1931–2002, Amroha (Uttar Pradesh)

**sharaab**

wine, liquor

**wasl**

(sexual) union

**khoon**

blood

***apne diye ko  
chaand bataane ke waaste***

***basthi ka har charaagh  
bujhana pada humein***

for me to shine my lamp  
as the moon

i had to snuff out  
all the other lamps in the city

**Jaleel Aali**

1945–, Amritsar (Punjab)

<b>diya</b>	lamp
<b>waaste</b>	in order to
<b>basthi</b>	city
<b>charaagh</b>	lamp
<b>bhujaana</b>	to extinguish

***hazaar barq gire  
laakh aandhiyaan utthein***

***wo phool khil ke rahenge  
jo khilne waale hain***

a thousand lightning struck  
many more storms came through

those flowers will keep blooming  
that are given to blooming

**Sahir Ludhianvi**

1921–1980, Ludhiana (Punjab)

1971 - Padma Shri

2013 - Commemorative Stamp

<b>hazaar</b>	thousand
<b>barq</b>	lightning
<b>aandhi</b>	storm
<b>khilna</b>	to bloom, blossom



***le de ke apne paas  
faqat ek nazar toh hai  
kyun dekhe zindagi ko  
kisi ki nazar se hum***

all we have  
is a viewpoint

why should we see life  
from anyone else's perspective

**Sahir Ludhianvi**

1921–1980, Ludhiana (Punjab)

1971 - Padma Shri

2013 - Commemorative Stamp

<b>faqat</b>	only
<b>nazar</b>	view, perspective
<b>zindagi</b>	life

Contributed by **Dr. Priti Udhay**, Chennai

***aaj gumnaam huun toh  
faasla rakh mujhse***

***kal phir mashhoor ho jaaun toh  
koyi rishta nikaal lena***

i am an unknown today  
so keep some distance

tomorrow when i become famous  
you can find a relationship with me

### **Anonymous**

<b>gumnaam</b>	anonymous, unknown
<b>faasla</b>	distance
<b>mashhoor</b>	famous
<b>rishta</b>	relationship

Contributed by **Ritu Jain**, Chennai

***ye kaisa nasha hai  
main kis ajab khumaar mein huun***

***tu aa ke jaa bhi chuka hai  
main intezaar mein huun***

what is this intoxication  
what is this strange dizziness

you had come and gone  
and i am still waiting

**Muneer Niyazi**

1928–2006, Hoshiarpur (Punjab)

<b>nasha</b>	intoxication
<b>ajab</b>	strange
<b>khumaar</b>	also intoxication
<b>intezaar</b>	waiting

***aahat si koyi aaye to  
lagtaa hai ki tum ho***

***saaya koyi lahraaye to  
lagtaa hai ki tum ho***

if i hear a soft tread  
it feels like it's you

even if a shadow flutters  
it feels like it's you

**Jaan Nisar Akhtar**

1914–1976, Gwalior (Madhya Pradesh)

<b>aahat</b>	light sound
<b>lagtaa</b>	feels like
<b>saaya</b>	shadow
<b>lahraaye</b>	waving

***jabeen par saadgi, neechi nigaahen  
baat mein narmi***

***mukhaatib kaun kar sakta hai  
tum ko lafz-e-qaatil se***

innocence on face, eyes lowered  
dulcet softness in voice

how can anyone address you  
with the word 'assassin'

### **Hasrat Mohani**

1875 – 1986, Mohan (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>jabeen</b>	forehead, face
<b>saadgi</b>	innocence
<b>nigaahen</b>	eyes, sight
<b>narmi</b>	softness
<b>mukhaatib</b>	to address
<b>lafz (alfaaz)</b>	word (words)
<b>qaatil</b>	assassin

***yan lab pe lakh lakh  
sukhan iztiraab mein***

***wan ek khamoshi teri  
sab ke jawaab mein***

millions of words  
in turmoil on my lip

and your reply for them all  
is just silence

**Sheikh Ibrahim Zauq**

1790–1854 , Amritsar (Punjab)

**lab**

lip

**sukhan**

spoken words

**iztiraab**

in turmoil, agitation

**khamoshi**

silence

**jawaab**

answer, reply

***jaise sahraaon mein  
haule se chale baad-e-nasim***

***jaise beemar ko  
be-wajh qaraar aa jaaye***

like the gentle breeze  
flowing through the deserts

like how the sick  
unexpectedly get relief

**Faiz Ahmed Faiz**

1911–1984, Sialkot (Pakistan)

1962: Lenin Peace

1982: Nobel nomination

<b>sahraaon</b>	deserts
<b>haule se</b>	memory
<b>baad-e-nasim</b>	gentle breeze
<b>beemar</b>	sick
<b>be-wajh</b>	without reason
<b>qaraar</b>	peace, relief

***bulbul ki tarah  
shor machaate hain raat din***

***jo aashna-e-lazzat-e-  
dard-e-nihaan nahin***

like birds, they  
make noise, night and day

those who are not familiar  
with the sweet pangs of separation

**Brij Narayan Chakbast**

1882–1926, Faizabad

<b>bulbul</b>	nightingale
<b>shor machaana</b>	make noise
<b>aashna</b>	dear, beloved
<b>lazzat</b>	taste
<b>nihaan</b>	separation



***keh raha hai shor-e-dariya se  
samandar ka sakooth***

***jis mein jitna zarf hai  
utna hi wo khaamosh hai***

the calm of the ocean says  
to the noise of the river

(s)he that can contain a lot  
remains that silent

**Abdul humeed Adam**

1910 – 1981, Talwandi Musa Khan

<b>shor-e-dariya</b>	noise of the river
<b>samandar</b>	ocean
<b>sakooth</b>	calm
<b>zarf</b>	contain
<b>khaamosh</b>	silence

***achchha ye karam hum pe  
tu sayyaad kare hai***

***par noch ke ab qaid se  
aazaad kare hai***

strange is this favor  
you do to me, my captor

first you tear my wings  
and then you set me free

### **Rifat Sarosh**

1926 – 2008, Bijnor (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>karam</b>	favor
<b>sayyaad</b>	hunter, captor
<b>par</b>	wings, feathers
<b>noch</b>	clip, tear
<b>qaid</b>	cage
<b>aazaad</b>	free

***aql se sirf  
zehn raushan tha***

***ishq ne dil mein  
raushni ki hai***

reason just  
lit up the mind

love filled my  
heart with light

**Naresh Kumar Shad**

1927 – 1969, Hoshiarpur (Punjab)

<b>aql</b>	intellect, reason
<b>sirf</b>	only
<b>zehn</b>	mind
<b>raushan</b>	light up
<b>ishq</b>	love

***kisi ka ahd-e-javaani  
mein paarsaa hona***

***qasam khuda ki ye  
tauheen hai javaani ki***

seeking to be virtuous  
while young

by god, it's an  
insult to youth

**Josh Malihabadi**

1898 – 1982, Malihabad (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>ahd-e-javaani</b>	age of youth
<b>paarsaa</b>	virtuous
<b>tauheen</b>	insult

***usii ko kahte hain jannath  
usii ko dozakh bhi***

***wo zindagi jo haseenon  
ke darmiyaan guzre***

that is called heaven  
that is also hell

life that is spent  
among the beautiful

**Jigar Moradabadi**

1890–1960, Moradabad (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>jannath</b>	heaven
<b>dozakh</b>	hell
<b>haseenon</b>	beautiful, beauty
<b>guzre</b>	spent

***hum aah bhi karte hai to  
ho jaate hai badnaam***

***woh qatl bhi karte hai to  
charcha nahin hota***

even if we sigh a little  
we are harshly censured

when he commits murder  
there isn't even a murmur

**Akbar Allahabadi**

1846 – 1921, Allahabad (Uttar Pradesh)

**aah**

sigh

**badnaam**

disrepute

**qatl**

murder

**charcha**

discussion

***andaaz apna dekhte hain  
aaine mein woh***

***aur ye bhi dekhte hain  
koi dekhta na ho***

she looks in the mirror  
to check herself out

she also looks to make sure  
no one's looking

**Nizam Rampuri**

1819 – 1892, Rampur (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>andaaz</b>	style, mannerism
<b>aaina</b>	mirror
<b>dekhte</b>	to see

***maloom jo hota hume  
anjaam-e-mohabbat***

***lete na kabhi bhool ke hum  
naam-e-mohabbat***

had i known the  
consequences of love

even by mistake, i wouldn't have  
uttered the name of love

**Sheikh Ibrahim Zauq**

1790 - 1854, Delhi

**maloom**

to know

**anjaam**

consequence, result

**bhool**

mistake

**mohabbat**

love



***aghyaar kyun daakhil hain  
bazm-e-suroor mein***

***maana ki yaar kam hain  
par itne to kam nahin***

why are strangers allowed  
in our gathering of joy

yes, our friends are few  
but not so few

**Ismail Merathi**

1844–1917, Meerut

<b>aghyaar</b>	stranger
<b>daakhil</b>	allowed, permitted
<b>bazm</b>	gathering, party
<b>suroor</b>	joy, ecstasy
<b>yaar</b>	friend

***bahut haseen sahi  
sohbaten gulon ki, magar***

***wo zindagi hai jo  
kaanton ke darmiyan guzre***

the company of flowers  
is indeed beautiful

but that is life which  
happens amid thorns

### **Jigar Moradabadi**

1890–1960, Moradabad (Uttar Pradesh)

1959 - Sahitya Akademi

<b>haseen</b>	beautiful
<b>sohbaten</b>	company, association
<b>gul(on)</b>	flower(s)
<b>kaant(on)</b>	thorn(s)
<b>guzre</b>	passes, transpires

***rehzan hai mera rehbar  
munsif hai mera qatil***

***sehlu toh qayaamat hai  
kehdu toh baghaawat hai***

the bandit is my guide  
the judge is my assassin

if i endure, calamity  
if i speak out, mutiny

### **Anonymous**

<b>rehzan</b>	robber, bandit
<b>rehbar</b>	guide
<b>munsif</b>	judge, arbitrator
<b>qatil</b>	assassin, murderer
<b>sehlu</b>	tolerate, endure
<b>qayaamat</b>	calamity, tragedy
<b>baghaawat</b>	mutiny, revolt

***allah agar taufeeq na de  
insaani ke bas ka kaam nahin***

***faizaan-e-mohabbat aam sahi  
irfaan-e-mohabbat aam nahin***

if god doesn't give guidance  
man is not competent

grace of love is common  
but not love's enlightenment

**Jigar Moradabadi**

1890 – 1960, Moradabad (Uttar Pradesh)

1959 - Sahitya Akademi

<b>taufeeq</b>	guidance
<b>insaani</b>	human
<b>faizaan</b>	grace
<b>irfaan</b>	enlightenment

***wahi phir mujhe  
yaad aane lage hain***

***jinhin bhoolne mein  
zamaane lage hain***

i once again started  
remembering that

which has taken me  
a lifetime to forget

**Kumar Barabankavi**

1919 - 1999, Barabanki (Uttar Pradesh)

**yaad**

memory, remember

**bhoolna**

forget

**zamaana**

life

***daagh duniya ne diye  
zakhm zamaane se mile***

***hum ko tohfe ye  
tumhein dost banaane se mile***

i got the scars from the world  
and the wounds from life

the few gifts i got  
from having you as a friend

### **Kaif Bhopali**

1917 - 1971, Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh)

<b>daagh</b>	scars, injuries, stains
<b>zakhm</b>	wound
<b>zamaana</b>	life
<b>tohfe</b>	gifts

***dil ko rafiq ishq mein  
apna samajh na 'zauq'***

***tal jaayega ye apni balaa  
tujh pe daal kar***

in love, don't mistake your  
heart to be your friend, 'zauq'

it will dump its troubles  
on you and flee

**Sheikh Ibrahim Zauq**

1790 - 1854, Delhi

**rafiq**

friend

**ishq**

love

**tal**

escape, flee

**balaa**

troubles

***ishq ka zauq-e-nazaara  
muft mein hai badnaam***

***husn khud betaab hai  
jalwa dikhaane ke liye***

love gets a bad rap needlessly  
for the pleasure of watching

though beauty herself is impatient  
for her splendor to be seen

**Asrarul Haq Majaz**

1911 – 1955, Barabanki (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>zauq</b>	delight, joy, pleasure
<b>nazaara</b>	scene, panorama
<b>muft</b>	for free, needlessly
<b>husn</b>	beauty
<b>jalwa</b>	splendor, luster



***le gaya cheen ke kaun  
aaj tera sabr o qaraar***

***beqaraari tujhe ai dil  
kabhi aisi to na thi***

who has snatched away  
your peace and calm

oh restless heart...  
you were never like this

**Bahadur Shah Zafar**

1775 – 1862, Delhi (Last Mughal Emperor)

<b>cheen</b>	snatch, pull
<b>sabr</b>	patience, endurance
<b>o</b>	and
<b>qaraar</b>	calm, peace, tranquil
<b>beqaraari</b>	restlessness

***haan woh nahin khuda-parast  
jaao wo bewafa sahi***

***jis ko ho deen-o-dil azeez  
us ki gali mein jaaye kyun***

yes, she is not a believer  
yes, she is unfaithful too

if you so value faith and heart  
then why keep going to her street

**Mirza Ghalib**

1797–1869, Agra

<b>khuda-parast</b>	believer in God
<b>bewafa</b>	unfaithful, disloyal
<b>deen</b>	faith
<b>azeez</b>	precious, rare
<b>gali</b>	street

***sun raha hun abhi tak  
main apni hi aawaz ki baazgasht***

***yaani is dasht mein zor se  
bolna bhi akaarat gaya***

i keep hearing just  
the echo of my shouts

in this desolation, it is futile  
no matter how loud i scream

### **Abbas Tabish**

1961 – , Lahore

<b>aawaaz</b>	voice, shout
<b>baazgasht</b>	echo
<b>dasht</b>	desert
<b>zor</b>	loud
<b>akaarat</b>	futile, useless

***dekha hai kis nigh se  
tu ne sitam-zarif***

***mahsoos ho raha hai  
main gharq-e-sharaab hun***

the way you threw your  
glance at me, you tyrant

makes me feel like i am  
drowning in wine

**Abdul humid Adam**

1909 – 1981, Gujranwala (Pakistan)

**nigh**

glance

**sitam-zarif**

oppressor

**mahsoos**

experience

**gharq**

drowning, sinking

**sharaab**

wine

***nakhuda, maujon ki is  
narm-khirami pe na ja***

***yahi maujein to badal jati hain  
toofanon mein***

o sailor, don't be fooled  
by these gentle, graceful waves

they turn violent  
during a storm

**Syed Nawab Afsar Lakhnavi**

1909 – 1981, Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>nakhuda</b>	oarsman, sailor
<b>mauj</b>	wave
<b>narm</b>	tender, soft
<b>khirami</b>	graceful gait
<b>toofan</b>	storm, cyclone

***main phool chunti rahi  
aur mujhe khabar na hui***

***wo shaks aa ke  
mere shahr se chala bhi gaya***

i kept picking flowers  
and i didn't even know  
that he visited my city  
and left too

**Parveen Shakir**

1952 – 1994, Karachi

<b>phool</b>	flower
<b>chunti</b>	pick, select
<b>khabar</b>	change
<b>shaks</b>	person
<b>shahr</b>	city

***kabhi sayyaad ka khatka hai  
kabhi khauf-e-khizan***

***bulbul ab jaan  
hatheli pe liye baithi hai***

sometimes the fear of the hunter  
or, concern of coming autumn

the nightingale waits, afraid,  
holding its life in its hands

### **Mah Laqa Chanda**

1768 – 1824, Aurangabad

<b>sayyaad</b>	hunter, captor
<b>khatka</b>	apprehension, anxiety
<b>khauf</b>	fear
<b>khizan</b>	autumn
<b>bulbul</b>	bird
<b>hatheli</b>	palm

***har ek pal ko dhoondta  
har ek pal chala gaya***

***har ek pal guzar gaya  
banaake dil pe ik nishaan***

each moment passed by  
while in search of a past moment

each moment passed by  
leaving a mark on the heart

**Hasan Kamal**

1943 – , Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>pal</b>	moment
<b>dhoondta</b>	in search of
<b>guzar</b>	pass, spent
<b>nishaan</b>	mark



***safar mein dhoop to hogi  
jo chal sako to chalo***

***tum apne aap ko khud hi  
badal sako to chalo***

enduring the harsh sun of the journey  
those who can keep going, keep going

if along the way, you can figure out  
how to reinvent yourself, keep going

**Nida Fazli**

1938-2016, Delhi

**safar**

journey

**dhoop**

heat from sun

**chal**

moving, walking

**badal**

change

***yaqeen mohkam, amal paihum  
mohabbat fateh-e-alam***

***jihad-e-zindagani mein  
hai ye mardon ki shumsheerein***

firm principles, relentless action,  
love that conquers the world

in the battle of life  
these are the swords of the warrior

## **Mohammed Iqbal**

1877 – 1938, Sialkot (Pakistan)

<b>yaqeen</b>	belief
<b>mohkam</b>	firm, strong, stable
<b>amal</b>	hard work, labor, hope
<b>paihum</b>	continuous
<b>fateh-e-alam</b>	conquering of world
<b>jihad</b>	struggle, esp. spiritual
<b>shumsheerein</b>	swords

***hai aaj ye gila ki  
akela hai 'shahryar'***

***tarsoge kal hujuum mein  
tanhai ke liye***

your complaint today is  
you are lonely, 'shahryar'

tomorrow in the crowd,  
you will long for solitude

### **Shahryar**

1936 - 2012, Bareilly (Uttar Pradesh)

1987 - Sahitya Akademi

2008 - Jnanpith

<b>gila</b>	complaint
<b>akela</b>	alone
<b>tarsoge</b>	long for, pine for
<b>hujuum</b>	crowd
<b>tanhai</b>	solitude, loneliness

***jo main sar-ba-sajda hua kabhi  
to zameen se aane lagi sadaa***

***tera dil to hai sanam-aashna  
tujhe kya milega namaaz mein***

when i was prostrate in prayer  
i heard a voice from the ground

when your heart itself is the beloved  
what will you get from this prayer?

**Mohammad Iqbal**

1877-1938, Sialkot (Pakistan)

<b>sar-ba-sajda</b>	prostrate in prayer
<b>zameen</b>	ground
<b>sadaa</b>	sound, voice
<b>sanam-aashna</b>	beloved
<b>namaaz</b>	prayer

***marz-e-ishq jise ho  
use kya yaad rahe***

***na dava yaad rahe  
aur na dua yaad rahe***

what can he remember  
one afflicted by love

neither the medication  
nor the blessing

**Raaz Allahabadi**

1929 – 1996, Allahabad

<b>marz</b>	dieses
<b>ishq</b>	love
<b>yaad</b>	memory, remember
<b>dawa</b>	medicine
<b>dua</b>	praying

***hazaar baar zamaana  
idhar se guzra hai***

***nayi nayi si hai kuchh  
teri rahguzar phir bhi***

a thousand times has  
the world passed by here

even then, your (love's) path  
seems new every time

**Firaq Gorakhpuri**

1896 – 1992, Gorakhpur

<b>hazaar</b>	thousand
<b>zamaana</b>	world
<b>guzra</b>	passed through
<b>nayi</b>	new
<b>rahguzar</b>	path

***ye zard zard chehra  
ye laghari badan mein***

***kyaa ishq mein hua hai  
ai 'mir' haal tera***

your face so pale  
and body so frail

what love is it, 'mir',  
that got you to this state

**Mir Taqi Mir**

1723–1810, Agra

<b>zard</b>	pale
<b>chehra</b>	face
<b>laghari</b>	weakness, frailty
<b>badan</b>	body
<b>ishq</b>	love
<b>haal</b>	condition

***arz-e-niyaaz-e-ishq  
ke qaabil nahin raha***

***jis dil pe naaz tha mujhe  
wo dil nahin raha***

no longer worthy  
of the blessings of love

the heart i was once proud of  
that heart is no more

**Mirza Ghalib**

1797 – 1869, Agra

<b>arz</b>	entreaty, supplication
<b>niyaaz</b>	blessings
<b>ishq</b>	love
<b>qaabil</b>	worthy
<b>naaz</b>	pride



***is saadgi pe kaun  
na mar jaye, ai khuda***

***ladte hain aur haath mein  
talwar bhi nahin***

who wouldn't lay down his life,  
oh god, at this innocence

she fights but without  
a sword in her hand

**Mirza Ghalib**

1797 – 1869, Agra

<b>saadgi</b>	innocence
<b>ai khuda</b>	oh god
<b>ladte hain</b>	she/he fights
<b>haath</b>	hand
<b>talwar</b>	sword

***ishq se tabiyat ne  
zeest ka mazaa paya***

***dard ki dawa pai  
dard-e-be-dawa paya***

from love did my being  
find the joy and fun of life

found a cure for pain  
found a pain without a cure

**Mirza Ghalib**

1797 – 1869, Agra

<b>ishq</b>	love
<b>tabiyat</b>	disposition, condition
<b>zeest</b>	life
<b>mazaa</b>	fun, joy
<b>dard</b>	pain
<b>dawa</b>	medicine

***tum se pahle wo jo ek shakhs  
yahan takht-nasheen tha***

***us ko bhi apne khuda hone pe  
itna hi yaqeen tha***

before you another man  
was the ruling king here

who was just as convinced  
that he was god himself

**Habib Ahmed**

1928 – 1993, Hoshiarpur (Punjab)

2009 - Nishan-e-Imtiaz

<b>pahle</b>	before
<b>shakhs</b>	person
<b>takht-nasheen</b>	ruling emperor
<b>khuda</b>	pain
<b>yaqeen</b>	belief

***na kisi ki aankh ka noor hoon  
na kisi ke dil ka qaraar hoon***

***jo kisi ke kaam na aa sakey  
main wo ek musht-e-gubaar hoon***

am not the light of anyone's eyes  
nor offer comfort to any heart

could not be of value to anyone  
was just a handful of dust

### **Muztar Khairabadi**

1865 – 1927, Khairabad (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>aankh</b>	eye
<b>noor</b>	light, shine
<b>qaraar</b>	peace, comfort
<b>musht</b>	fistful
<b>gubaar</b>	dust

***samjha liya fareb se  
mujhko to aap ne***

***dil se to pooch lijiye  
kyun be-qaraar hai***

with some trick  
you explained it to me

but please ask my heart  
why it is still restless

**Lala Madhav Ram Jauhar**

1810 – 1889, Farrukhabad (Uttar Pradesh)

<b>samjha liya</b>	made to understand
<b>azal</b>	eternity
<b>fareb</b>	trick, deception
<b>pooch</b>	ask
<b>be-qaraar</b>	restless

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## KHAT-E-ARZOO

*tum aao gulshan-e-lahore se chuman bardosh  
hum aaye subh-e-banaras ki roshni le kar*

*himalaya ki hawaon ki taazgi le kar  
aur us ke baad yeh poochenge kaun dushman hai?*

you come bearing the beautiful fragrant garden of lahore  
we will bring the bright morning lights of benares  
with us taking in the fresh breeze of the himalayas  
and then we ask: who is the enemy?

***Ali Sardar Jafri***

The shers in *Alfaaz Ki Mehfil* stand as testimony to the priceless treasure of Urdu and Urdu poetry, shared by India and Pakistan. Here's hoping that the two countries find their lost bonds and make them richer, stronger. May they, together, realize a world of greatness in culture and commerce, arts and letters.

And, may, in that glorious world, a thousand flowers of Urdu *shaayars* bloom, helping us understand and appreciate life in all its pain, beauty, and joy.

*tu sirf dashna-e-nafrat hi laharaata raha  
tu ne kabhi dushman se lipat kar nahin dekha*

you have only been waving this dagger of hate  
you haven't tried ever embracing your enemy

***Ahmed Faraz***

# BAZM-E-SUKHAN

The *Bazm-e-Sukhan* (An assembly celebrating Poetry) is a weekly gathering of a diverse group united by its love for Urdu poetry and prose. The *Bazm* started in December 2018 and was held every Wednesday at Hyderabad's iconic cultural sake, *Lamakaan*, through the year and till March 2023.

When COVID- 19 closed down public spaces, the *Bazm* moved online. Since then, the weekly session has been held every Tuesday at 10:00 pm IST.

A group that now consists of about 150 people spread worldwide tunes every week to listen to and share their favourite Urdu poetry pieces. The prime audience is a bunch of folks who enjoy literature, are entertained by subtle turns of phrase and like to discuss art. They find accomplished Professors of Urdu who help them understand difficult words and translate unfamiliar idioms. Young software professionals recite lines from their favourite poets and get appreciated by some senior aficionados who bring in their memoirs and share their memories of age-old mushairas and poetry sessions.

We now are back with our in-person events, hosting the *Bazm* every second Wednesday each month at *Lamakaan*.

The *Bazm* also publishes anthologies, the first being an iconic account of a life lived in poetry in the Policy force by a retired Director General of Police, R. P. Joshi. This book is available online at [www.cdpp.co.in](http://www.cdpp.co.in) and can also be ordered at Amazon.

## CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND PRACTICE (CDPP)

The Centre for Development Policy and Practice (CDPP) is a research institute that works on development concerns and contemporary public policy challenges.

Working with a team of research professionals and expert consultants, under the guidance of eminent public intellectuals, CDPP conducts research studies, develops policy papers, publishes a peer reviewed quarterly Journal and hosts Conferences, Seminars and Workshops.

## DIGITAL EMPOWERMENT FOUNDATION (DEF)

DEF is a Delhi-based nonprofit organization working towards empowering people to gain access to better healthcare, education, skills and livelihood opportunities through digital literacy and digital tools. The organization's main focus is to make technology easily accessible to the masses, to empower women, youth, persons with disabilities and the elderly through providing functional digital literacy, media literacy, and digital up-skilling across agriculture, micro and nano-business, health, education, livelihood, and entrepreneurial skills. Over the last 20 years, the organization has been actively engaged in digitally empowering local communities through its 1,500 Community Information Resource Centers. These centers are supported by a widespread network of 10,000 digital foot soldiers located across 24 states and 135 districts in rural, tribal, marginalized and unreached areas. DEF has directly impacted the lives of more than 30 million people including people from below the poverty line, women, artisans, youth, persons with disabilities, and the elderly.

## A-CODE

A-CODE is an effort of finding ways to enhance collaboration among civil society organizations working in different sectors, and advocating a more pivotal role for the arts in social change. The collective would have several priority issues that cut across the work of civil society organizations and that define and indicate social change.

## LAMAKAAN

Lamakaan is an inclusive cultural space and Trust that promotes and presents the best of arts, literature, theatre, debate and dialogue with a commitment to being open and accessible. As an independent organisation, Lamakaan encourages those hosting events to also work towards independence from corporate and government funds as a sustainable way of achieving independence from their agenda. As result, we do not host programmes that are sponsored by any businesses and governments, also we do not accept any donations cash or kind from government or corporate organization's.

Satya makes Urdu poetry learning fun and easy! His choice of shers cuts across multiple themes vividly exposing various nuances in Urdu Poetry. Every day I eagerly wait for my dose sher from him! My Urdu is much better thanks to Alfaz Ki Mehfil!

**Dr. Rayasam Bharath**

Satya's dedication, passion and discipline is peerless. His 6 am shama turns AKM subscribers into defenceless but at the same time powerful parwanas. The friendly banter that follows is something I look forward to with immense pleasure and insatiable curiosity.

*Aapka wabasta, Satya, urdu zubaan se lam-yazal / javedaan rahein.  
Ek sher aapke naam toh banta hain.*

*Pii ke jiite haiñ jī ke piite haiñ  
Ham ko raghbat hai aise jiine se*

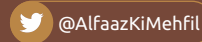
**Shobhana T.**

*Satya jo hai urdu ka, sachcha hai pujaari  
Alfaaz ki mahfil hai, ash'aar ki phulvaari  
Kyun hind mein urdu ki, mohabbat na rahe jaari  
Alfaaz ki mahfil jo, satya ne sanvaari*

Every day a she'r appears – a trigger for a discussion of mystic thought, a song of love, a banner of resistance, a call for change, an appreciation of beauty, the hypnotizing music of words, a glue of communal harmony, the voice of the people – exploring the full range of the irresistible power of urdu shaa'eri.

**Syed Shahed**

WhatsApp **Yes** to **+91 63812 93765** to subscribe.



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