

## NATIONALISM IN URDU POETRY: A SPECIAL STUDY OF THREE URDU POEMS

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### ABSTRACT

*Urdu literature in general and Urdu poetry in particular, always played its part in generating, shaping and mobilizing the Indian public opinion and defeated thereof all the odds of time and space during India's progressive journey. Accordingly, Urdu literature resisted the British imperialism from its very beginning. However, during 1940's, when British employed in full swing, all Machiavellian, ideological, political and military tools to maintain their imperial permanence in India, thereby dividing Indians on different grounds, Urdu poetry performed well its moral responsibility of generating and mobilizing united public opinion against British rule. Urdu poets fought British Raj by inculcating among Indians spirit of unity, patriotism, and sacrifice. Urdu poetry besides giving a wide space to all forms of anti-British resistance going on in India and abroad, also quickened the pace of freedom movement by mobilizing the public opinion against British Raj. This piece of research therefore, explores the dominant nationalistic trends in Urdu poetry during 1940's by analyzing three Urdu poems.*

**Keywords:** Urdu Literature, Urdu Poetry and Patriotism.

### INTRODUCTION

Literature is a real mirror of any human civilization, reflecting its cultural heritage, evolutionary life, historical phenomena and thought process. Because languages and literature is an essential ingredient in makeup and formation of a societies or a nations. The Indian vernacular literature is also a store house of India's rich past. The role of Urdu language and literature in this regard is dominant, unforgettable and praiseworthy. Urdu literature is a living mirror of India's strong socio-civilizational edifice, rich national heritage and cultural heritage, collective consciousness, and dynamic as well as secular thought process. While encountering the challenges, coming in India's progressive march, with time and space, Urdu writers, poets and journalists have often sacrificed a lot.

Although, the role of Urdu language and literature throughout its course remained constructive and appealing in every cultural process and nation building, but the active and effective part played by Urdu literature through its different genres in freedom struggle of India is memorable and unforgettable.

From the very beginning of the British rule in India, Urdu literature remained anti-British and pan-Indian.<sup>1</sup> Among the Indian vernacular literatures Urdu literature was the first to smell the imperialist intentions of British traders in India. The Urdu poets observed the British attitude for a long time and warned the Indian people about the cunning nature of Britishers. They felt their plus and read the psyche of British imperialists and exposed the same before the Indian people through literary gestures. They warned the Indians about forthcoming imperialist threat and raised her voice against the same but unfortunately the innocent Indian public and luxurious ruling class could not foresee this threat about which Urdu literature had time and again warned.

Urdu gave a wide coverage to every form of anti-British resistance and pro- freedom aspirations and pro-unity efforts. Even some scholars claim that Urdu herself was a “Freedom Fighter” and Freedom Movement”.<sup>2</sup> This literature kept its pace with national movement and contributed it by inculcating among Indians sense of unity, faith, sacrifice, bravery, self-reliance, patriotism, spirit of mature nationalism and generating anti-British feelings. The anti-British propaganda, appeal for unity, avoiding partition and sacrifice for freedom became a dominant trend in Urdu press and poetry during second quarter of twentieth century especially during 1940’s. Hence, to explore, these dominant trends of Urdu literature viz. Nation Making and Freedom Movement of India in general and role of Urdu poetry thereof with reference to Urdu patriotic poetry during 1940’s is main focus of this paper.

### **EXTEND OF PATRIOTISM IN URDU POETRY DURING 1940’S.**

Historico-analytical studies of the Urdu poetry during 1940s reveals that the trends that dominated the Urdu literature were creating anti-British temperament, countering British propaganda, appeal for unity, avoiding partition, maintenance of communal harmony and attainment of freedom. While Urdu press gave a full coverage to these trends, Urdu poetry gave these a full expression. An analytical study of some Urdu poems proves this fact.

<sup>1</sup> Naqvi, Nashir. *Tareekh-e-Azadi mein urdu ka hissa*, edited. Haryana Urdu Academy, 1988, p.15.

<sup>2</sup> Baidad, Iqbal. *Jang-e-Azadi mein urdu ka hissa*, compiled. Bazmi Iqbal Publication, 1998, p.3.

## 1. ANTI-BRITISH RESISTANCE

A study of Josh Malliabadi's revolutionary poetry reveals how much Urdu poetry was active against British rule. Josh honored as revolutionary poet, raised his voice against British rule and mobilized Indian people against it through his magical poetry. He made overthrow of British rule his goal and was ready to sacrifice even his life for the sake of freedom. His call was "My job is to bring change, my name is youth. My slogan is Revolution, Revolution and Revolution". He vigorously inculcated revolutionary feeling in people and prepared lacks of people to destroy British rule. During and after Quit India Movement his poems were sung in public demonstrations by all the people irrespective of caste, sex and religion in many cities of India. However many of his poems were forcibly seized and banned by the British Raj which, are now available in banned literature in national archives of India. But despite the fact hundreds of copies of his poems were reprinted and distributed among people. East India Company Ke Farzandu Se khitab "TO THE SONS OF EAST INDIAN COMPANY" is one such banned poem. The historical analysis of this poem helps us in measuring the extent of patriotism prevailing during 1940's

### ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THE POEM

"EAST INDIA COMPANY KEA FARZANDU SA KHITAB"

"TO THE SONS OF EAST INDIAN COMPANY"

1. *Didn't you ashamed to cry oh traders,*

*Humanity should be at the apex.*

2. *you all say Hitler is a wolf and,*

*that wolf should be killed for the sake of peace and eternity.*

3. *You feel a wind of autumn thwarting the garden of humanity and the humanity in suffocation.*

4. *the hand of the Hitler is at the rein of dictatorship,*

*so the water of swords should be sprayed on the flames of Germany.*

5. *I extremely wonder to hear it in your convention,*

*That you worry about the future of the human race.*

6. *When you came here as traders,*

*Where not you aware about the future of humanity.*

7. *Was not in Indians the spirit of liberty,*

*Tell true , was that not the population of humans.*

8. *Did you remember the story of your extreme cruelties,  
Did you remember that criminal times of the company.*
9. *When you were plundering the carwans after carvanas,  
The wealth of India was being exploited pitilessly.*
10. *You were cutting the thumbs of the craftsmen,  
You were heaping the graves with dead bodies.*
11. *The industries of the India were dying,  
And that death was brought by you.*
12. *Oh God how much seekers of truth they are now,  
Was Shiraj Duala enemy of eternity.*
13. *Did you remember your extortions on the Bagums of Oudh,  
Did you remember the times of Rani Jansi.*
14. *Did you remember the scene of exile of sultan of Delhi,  
And the times of the bloody story of the loin hearted Tipo.*
15. *You came to hold a hungry trembling man,  
Whose heads did you brought before Bahadur Shah.*
16. *Did you remember those extreme extortions,  
Till now of whose witness is a grave in Rangoon.*
17. *That greif of Indians would be fresh in your memory,  
You might be remembering that jallianwala bagh.*
18. *Ask him why is your name shining,  
Dier bloody wolf is still alive.*
19. *That Bagat singh in whose grief heart is still unhappy,  
Did you remember that noose you put in his neck.*
20. *In which conditions did the lovers of freedom remain,  
Ask it from the door and walls of prisons.*
21. *Those who still remember the power of that govt..  
They still feel the sound of the whips.*
22. *Now you sail the boat of peace on sea waves,  
I very much worry why you teach lessons of truth.*
23. *The men of strength do not auction truth,  
They do not endanger the justice.*

24. *Now you stress on morality,  
Perhaps you are not in a strong position.*
25. *Right men are enlightened and fallacious are blind,  
These are the words of weak nations.*
26. *Today you are not perhaps strong enough,  
So why do you not say might is right.*
27. *Why do you say justice is prior duty of man,  
Have you not now the capacity of dividing and suppression*
28. *Since long you stay under the shades of righteousness,  
God forbade did you feel sprain in your feet.*
29. *The sound of cavalry is neither in cities nor in deserts,  
Is not your army in hospitals.*
30. *Every sight of yours now-a-days seek mercy,  
IS your temperament and fate ill.*
31. *When you began suffocating you pretend to die for justice,  
Now you cry for well wishing of humanity.*
32. *You forgot extortions and sing the tune of justice,  
When your own house caught fire, you began to cry.*
33. *It does not suit criminals to make hue and cry,  
Till tomorrow you were yazeed and shimr, now you try to be Hussain.*
34. *Now oh traders it is final,  
Bow your heads before the decree of time.*
35. *The time will now write a new story.  
For whose redness the the ink of your blood is needed.*
36. *The decree of time will not change its direction,  
The death will withdraw but the decree of time will not change.*

### ***Analysis of the poem***

A historical analysis of the poem” East India company ka farzandoo see khitab”, shows that Urdu poets were staunch enemies of the British rule and true lover of freedom. As this poem greatly provided moral and emotional support to Quit India movement its analysis is worth mentioning.

Josh wrote this poem at a time when world war second was in its full swing and Allied powers claimed themselves the greatest champions of humanity and projected Axis powers a big threat to human peace and security. Josh criticizes Britishers for pretending to be guardian of humanity and forgot their own criminal past. Then Josh repeats their black past and reminds them of their criminal doings in India. In this poem Josh reminds Britisher's the innocent killings, the extortions, the exploitations, the loot and plunder they did in India. Josh again reminds them the destruction of Indian industries and crafts, atrocities on peasantry, craftsmen, weavers and commoners. He also refers to their policy of divide and rule, intrigues against Indian princes, suppression of nationalist feelings, atrocities, murder of Mughal princes, exile of Bahadur Shah Zaffar, Jallanwala Bhag massacre and other killings. Josh says that actually British suffered heavily due to this war and their position weakened, they in order to gain popular support therefore, gave the call of humanity in danger and save humanity. Josh warns British do not pretend to be guardians of human future, just have introspection of your own black past. He finally advises them to bow before the call of time and the call of the time is end of the British rule. The poem was actually written with an objective to counter the British propaganda as well as ideological tools and expose the British claims, used for maintaining their imperialist permanence and befooling the people on the name of humanity and democracy.

## 2. ENCOURAGEMENT OF FREEDOM FIGHTERS

Although, hundreds of patriotic poems were written, to reinforce freedom fighters and increase the pace of freedom movement during 1940s but it is not possible here to analyze all of them. However, an effective analysis can be drawn from the revolutionary poems of Ali Javad Zaidi . Some of the worthy mentioning patriotic poems are as:-manzeelean,kaidi ki laash, bagawat etc. Here, a critical analysis of his poem “ manzeelean” i.e. stages can give us better understanding of how Urdu poetry encouraged freedom fighters and increased the pace of national movement.

### ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THE POEM

“MANZEELEIN”

“STAGES”

- 1.Thousands of such stages will come,
- 2.Where summers would be full of love,
- 3.Where coquetry postures,

*where buds will bloom on every step.  
where there would be fountains of joy.  
will show, will teach sincerity.*

4. where there will be twisted movements,  
 5. where you will be shown attractive scenes,  
 6. where manifestations will sing every movement,  
 8. but you should not be deceived by them,  
 7. were some colorful scenes of love,  
 9. you will encounter such palaces,  
 10. where every branch is like an arch,  
 11. where in glasses is flowing fire,  
 12. where you will get shadow of comfort,  
 13. where you will get wealth of your wish,  
 14. you will receive a benevolent patronage,  
 15. the goddess of wealth will kiss your feet,  
 16. do not be their target,  
 17. you will come across such valleys,  
 18. where destroyed houses will be weeping,  
 19. where youth will be restless,  
 20. the smoke will rise from colorful houses,  
 21. Where your companions will leave you,  
 22. Where catastrophes will ambush you,  
 23. Where hearts will be decaying in prisons,  
 24. do not stumble due to fear,  
 25. your goal is the goal of freedom,  
 26. you have to connect the broken hearts.  
 27. the shadow of darkness began to increase,  
 28. the atmosphere is dark lit the torch,  
 29. your country is in trouble ,friend,  
 30. not only country but the world is in darkness,  
 31. new construction is in your hands,  
 32. go forward do not hesitate,

where the sight will be the that of colorful tides.  
 where your eyes will seduce you.  
 where waves will rise in every heart.  
 passenger do not stop in the way.  
 will call you from the curtains.  
 where pleasurable flowers will be burning.  
 where breeze is full of dreams.  
 where there is coveted music.  
 where you will get wealth of pleasure.  
 where you will get also governance.  
 every law will support you.  
 the goddess of your conscience will enjoy.  
 passenger does not stop in the way.  
 where you will find only devastation.  
 where perished doors will be sleeping.  
 where every story will be painful.  
 the flames will cling the skirts.  
 where your heart will break .  
 misfortunes will search you like a wild fire.  
 where there will be traps of gallows and snares.  
 passenger do not stop in the way.  
 the goal of fulfillment of dreams,  
 to break the skinners of slavery.  
 go ahead do not stop you steps.  
 enlighten the dark pathways.  
 now victory is in your courage.  
 but it is about to dawn.  
 your fate is in your hands.  
 passenger does not stop in the way.



*Analysis of the poem*

Maanzelean [stages] is a revolutionary poem composed by a great nationalist and revolutionary poet Ali Jawad Zaidi. The poem is divided into four stanzas, each comprising eight verses. This poem is full of revolutionary patriotism. The author has used in this poem all the poetic techniques likes' similes, metaphors, imagery, irony, ambiguity, symbolic language, for encouraging revolutionaries for a full scale revolution. Hence the poem has a deep meaning and is very difficult to understand. However after a critical and comprehensive study one is able to catch the theme.

The poem is actually an appeal to freedom fighters of the time to fight till they liberate the country from British rule. The poet makes aware the freedom fighters about all the possible stages that a freedom fighter may encounter during the process of fighting against the British Raj. In the first two stanzas the poet cautions a freedom fighter about the cunning nature of British Indian rules. He aware him that British rulers can offer him everything in the form of comforts ,joys, amenities, wealth, power, governance and anything he may wish for abandoning the ongoing freedom struggle which at that time was at a decisive mode. But the author warns him not to be deceived by them and not to stop the struggle.

In the third stanza the poet calls up on the freedom fighters ,that during the course of freedom struggle they will have to suffer and face such stages or valleys were they will see death and destruction, gallows and snares, fear and tyranny, swords and guns, ambushes and massacres i.e. all means of fear and harassment. Where they will find themselves alone, despair, helpless, broken hearted and destroyed. But he advises him not to stumble out of fear and not to stop his struggle till they attain the freedom.

In the last stanza the author encourages the freedom fighter in a requesting manner that the country is under deep darkness that the country is suffering due to tyranny, exploitation, humiliation, discrimination, slavery, injustice and mass killing. Now he requests freedom fighters, the future of the country is in your hands. Your courage and determination is the only hope for the country. Therefore, you should proceed towards the goal of freedom and not to stop till independence is achieved from the foreign rule. Therefore this poem was an encouragement and a guide or a roadmap for the freedom fighters of the time.

**3. UNITING INDIA AND AVOIDING PARTITION**

During 1940's British rulers employed in full swing all political, military and ideological tools to divide Indians on different pretexts and to stop the ongoing struggle, for the sake of maintaining their imperial permanence. As a



result whole Indian was in chaos and the socio-cultural fabric of India was being torn into pieces. However, Urdu poets countered this move by working for unity, harmony, freedom and spreading the message of patriotism with love, honor and peace. We find hundreds of Urdu poems on such themes but only one poem have been taken as sample. This poem “PAKISTAN CHAHANE WALU SAY” written by shamim karhani would make us understand the part played by Urdu poetry for freedom struggle, uniting India and avoiding partition.

#### ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THE POEM

“PAKISTAN CHAHANE WALU SAY”

“TO THOSE WHO WANT PAKISTAN”

- |                                                                     |                                                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Tell us? What do you mean by Pakistan,                           | <i>is the place filthy, where Muslims do live today?</i>          |
| 2. Those who were our guides in Islamic faith,                      | <i>are their graveyards in non-Pakistan</i>                       |
| 3. The fire of imputation has burst your chest,                     | <i>tell us; is the land of Ajmer impure</i>                       |
| 4. Has jewel of Islam lost in the valley of infidelity,             | <i>oh; is shah-he- meena buried in impure land</i>                |
| 5. May this eternal green garden live long,                         | <i>is this sacred soil filthy; dust in your mouth</i>             |
| 6. The makhdoom of Islamic faith, who lived among kilar population, | <i>is his tomb in filthy valley</i>                               |
| 7. The tombs of imams at lucknow,                                   | <i>God forbid, are they in impure land</i>                        |
| 8. What you said pained my heart,                                   | <i>is not the piece of land pure, where shrine of Nurullah is</i> |
| 9. Preacher; the flowers that are on the pulpit of masque,          | <i>are they full of dust, full of infidelity</i>                  |
| 10. Oh; you do say this sacred ganga is impure,                     | <i>with whose water Muslim martyrs bathed</i>                     |
| 11. Don't talk of Pakistan if you are a true Muslim;                | <i>this is an insult to predecessors of Islam</i>                 |
| 12. Men of wisdom would not torn country into pieces,               | <i>how can the men of heart see the nation destroyed</i>          |
| 13. If the country will get divided into small states,              | <i>think; the English rule will get re-established</i>            |
| 14. the Europe is under heavy constrains,                           | <i>still, every Arab nation has become slave of England</i>       |
| 15. Do you mean we should get deprived of freedom,                  | <i>and remain divided and slaves like Arab</i>                    |
| 16. Should the sons of Islam wonder from door to door,              | <i>and begin the streets of England</i>                           |
| 17. Should they bent before English their esteemed head,            | <i>who do not prostrate except before Allah,</i>                  |
| 18. Should the devil play with the esteemed turban,                 | <i>which is the symbol of Prophet of Islam</i>                    |
| 19. Whom the Prophet has given honor,                               | <i>should he beg in other country</i>                             |
| 20. The garden for which the beloveds of Prophet sacrificed,        | <i>do you want English to be its gardeners</i>                    |
| 21. Those who seek aggrandizement for fame,                         | <i>that nation gets enslaved one day</i>                          |
| 22. The disheartened Muslim will get scattered,                     | <i>the migration of Muslim will become inevitable.</i>            |

*Analysis of the poem*

The poem “*Pakistan chahane walu sa*” written by shamim karhani criticizes as well as warns those who want Pakistan, about the dark consequences of partition. Because he knew Britishers were aptly using religion as a strong weapon for dividing the nation, and trying to derail the freedom movement which at that time was at its peak. It was the time when country was burning in communal riots, and the common masses were suffering. The loot and plunder, rapes and murders, intrigues and counter intrigues were the hallmark of the time. At the same time Britishers were engaged in dividing India and Indian leaders were busy in power shearing. However the Urdu poets were crying for unity and trying to avoid the partition.

The poet ironically questions those who want Pakistan that what do you mean by Pakistan. If Pakistan means pure land, then is India an impure country. The poet reminds them that their Muslim saints, Islamic guides and their forefathers are born and buried in the same soil! Is this an impure land. See how in these couplets poets reminds them.

- |                                                                |                                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>2. Those who were our guides in Islamic faith,</i>          | <i>are their graveyards in non-Pakistan</i>           |
| <i>3. The fire of imputation has burst your chest,</i>         | <i>tell us; is the land of Ajmer impure</i>           |
| <i>4. Has jewel of Islam lost in the valley of infidelity,</i> | <i>oh; is shah-he- meena buried in impure land</i>    |
| <i>5. May this eternal green garden live long,</i>             | <i>is this sacred soil filthy; dust in your mouth</i> |

The poet again reminds those who want Pakistan that if the people will get divided the English will re-establish their tyrant rule and if the country got divided, the people will become slaves of England. also the future of Muslims would perish for ever they would become wonderers and baggers

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>13. If the country will get divided into small states</i>    | <i>think; the English rule will get re-established</i>      |
| <i>14. the Europe is under heavy constrains,</i>                | <i>still, every Arab nation has become slave of England</i> |
| <i>15. Do you mean we should get deprived of freedom,</i>       | <i>and remain divided and slaves like Arab</i>              |
| <i>16. should the sons of Islam wonder from door to door,</i>   | <i>and begin the streets of England</i>                     |
| <i>17. Should they bent before English their esteemed head,</i> | <i>who do not prostrate except before Allah,</i>            |
| <i>18. Should the devil play with the esteemed turban,</i>      | <i>which is the symbol of Prophet of Islam</i>              |
| <i>19. Whom the Prophet has given honor,</i>                    | <i>should they beg in other countries</i>                   |

The poet also foretells that the future of Muslims would perish forever and they would become wonderers and baggers.

22. *The disheartened Muslim will get scattered, the migration of Muslim will become inevitable.*

The poet warns Muslims not to fall prey of British trap and fight for united India. Hence Urdu poets tried to unite all the for united India and avoid the partition

## CONCLUSION

Urdu language and literature has played an active and positive part not only in cultural processes and in nation building but also in freedom struggle of India. The part played by Urdu poetry during freedom movement is unforgettable and inseparable. This piece of research work was therefore conducted with a view to impress upon the researchers and historians to explore hither to unexplored Urdu sources for proper and holistic understanding of freedom movement of India. So as to bring forth the role played by Urdu literature for and the sacrifices offered by Urdu writers, poets and journalists to freedom struggle of India.

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