

dimensions of a woman's life. This resulted in the appearance of a group of assertive women using Urdu poetry as the medium for focusing their injuries, their subservient status and for upholding the rights of women. Most prominent among them are Fehmida Riyaz, Kishwar Naheed, Parveen Shakir, Ishrat Afreen and Ada Jafery. The *muzmun* or the theme of the poems dealt with female experiences in a man's world. They are particularly critical of the social comprehension of women by the obtrusive standard of virtue that predominantly treats women as sexual beings.

Among the five the first four are the boldest while Ada Jafery's protest remains within the bounds of female modesty. The boldest four laid open the injuries of the women for their role as an object for the gratification of man's desire. Thus speaks Parveen Shakir, 'Chehra mera tha nighae unki/ khamosi me bhi uoh baate us ki//mere chehre pe ghazal likhti gayi / sher kahete hui aankhe us ki// shokh lamho ka pata dene lagi/ tez hoti hui saanse us ki //aise mausam bhi guzare hamne/ subhe jab apni thi shame us ki// dhyan me us ke ye alam tha kabhi/ aankh mahtab ki yaade us ki// faisala mauj-e-hawa ne likha/ andhiyan meri aur bahare uski// nind is soch se tuti aksar/ kis tarah kati hai raate uski// dur rah kar bhi sada rahti hai/ mujhko thame hue bahen us ki. (The face was mine but the eyes were his/even in silence the words were his// he kept on scribbling poems on my face /with his eyes uttering the love couplets// indications of intimate moments were coming/from his increasingly heavy breathing//I even spent such seasons/ when the mornings were mine the evenings were his// even in contemplation sometime his condition was such / the moonlight was in my eyes but the desires were his own//the judgment was given by the waves of wind/the storm was mine and the spring was his//often I woke up from sleep with the thought/how was his night spent// even when I am away my state is such / I feel the embrace of his arms around me.)

Urdu was born in Mughal tents. The Mughals spoke Turko-Persian, learnt Arabic. But the locals spoke Hindustani. Persian and Arabic blended with Hindustani. A new language Urdu was born. The Mughals patronised it and started cultivating it as a convenient medium for interaction with the indigenous expression. Although the Mughals perished, Urdu survived and came out of the royal garb. It is now prospering as a modern language. The legacy of Urdu came from the Mughals and its practitioners perpetuate their memories, of Bahadur Shah Zafar in particular. God has in a way fulfilled his wish of Umre daraz or long life. The dead Zafar is not *badnaseebi* or unfortunate when so many speak his language.

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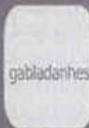


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