

Classic Poetry Series

Qateel Shifai
- poems -

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Qateel Shifai(24 December 1919 - 11 July 2001)

Aurangzeb Khan or Qateel Shifai (Urdu: اے قاتیل شیفائی) was a Pakistani Urdu poet. Qateel Shifai was born in Haripur, Hazara Division, British India (now Pakistan).

 Career

He adopted Qateel Shifai as his pen name in 1938 under which he was known in the world of Urdu poetry. "Qateel" was his "takhallus" and "Shifai" was in honour of his ustad(master) Hakeem Mohammed 'Shifa' whom he considered his mentor.

Due to his father's early death, Qateel was forced to quit his education. He started his own sporting goods shop. Being unsuccessful in his business he decided to move to Rawalpindi, where he started working for a transport company and earned about 60 Rupees a month.

In 1946, he was called to Lahore by Nazir Ahmed to work as the assistant editor of the monthly 'Adab-e-Latif', a literary magazine published since 1936. His first ghazal was published in the Lahore weekly 'Star', edited by Qamar Jalalabadi.

In January 1947, Qateel was asked to pen the songs of a film by a Lahore based film producer. The first film he penned the lyrics for was "Teri Yaad". After that there was no looking back and initially, after working for some time as assistant lyricist to some of the famous poets/lyricists of the time (c.1947-48 to 1956-57)[2], he eventually became a regular film lyricist and won numerous awards in due course. Many of his poem collections were published, one amongs them being "Mutriba" which got him the highest literature award in Pakistan.

To raise the standards of ghazals in films has been Qateel's primary contribution to Urdu poetry. This was already started by Tanvir Naqvi and Sahir Ludhianvi, but perpetuated and concluded by Qateel Shifai. By using simple words and a larger amount of Hindi, Qateel brought Urdu poetry closer to the masses. He established a certain standard to ghazals in films and gave them a certain respectability.

Qateel Shifai worked on numerous ghazal albums with Jagjit and Chitra Singh, as well as with Ghulam Ali to name a few.

 Legacy

Over 20 collections of verse and over 2,500 songs for Pakistani and Indian films were published. His poetry has been translated into numerous languages including Hindi, Gujarati, English, Russian and Chinese.

Qateel Shifai received the 'Pride of Performance Award' in 1994 for his contribution to literature, 'Adamjee Award', 'Naqoosh Award', 'Abbasin Arts Council Award' and 'Amir Khusro Award' in India.

Qateel Shifai produced a film in his mother language—Hindko—in 1970. It was the first Hindko film which was named "Qissa Khwani". The film was released in 1980. He died on 11 July 2001 in Lahore. The street on which he lived in Lahore has been named Qateel Shifai Street after him. There is also a sector of Haripur city that has been named after him - Mohallah Qateel Shafai.

His poetry is included in the masters' level syllabus in many universities in Pakistan and India.

Par Letii Hai Raat Judaaii Kii

Qateel Shifai

Apane Haatho.N Kii Lakiiro.N Me.N Basaale Mujhako

Qateel Shifai

Apne Hotho.N Par Sajaanaa Chaahataa Hui.N

Qateel Shifai

Bechain Bahaaro.N Me.N Kyaa-Kyaa Hai Jaan Kii Khushbuu Aatii Hai

Qateel Shifai

Charaag Dil Ke Jalaaon Ki Iid Ka Din Hai

Qateel Shifai

Dard Se Meraa Daaman Bhar De Yaa Allaah

Qateel Shifai

Ye Mojazaa Bhii Muhabbat Kabhii Dikhaaye Mujhe

Qateel Shifai