

Classic Poetry Series

Zia Fatehabadi
- poems -

Publication Date:

2012

Publisher:

Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

Zia Fatehabadi(9 February 1913 - 19 August 1986)

Zia Fatehabadi (Urdu: زیا فطہ آبادی) (Hindi: फतेहाबादी), born Mehr Lal Soni (Urdu: مہر لال سونی) (Hindi: महेर लाल सोनी), was a renowned Urdu ghazal and nazm writer. He was a disciple (shaagird) of Syed Aashiq Hussain Siddiqui Seemab Akbarabadi (1882–1951) who was a disciple of Nawab Mirza Khan Daagh Dehlawi. He took on the takhallus (nom de plume) of Zia meaning "Light" on the suggestion of his teacher, Ghulaam Qadir Farkh Amritsari.

 Early Life

Mehr Lal Soni Zia Fatehabadi was born on 9 February 1913, at Kapurthala, Punjab, as the eldest son of Munshi Ram Soni, a Civil Engineer by profession, whose family, it is believed, had at some time during the reign of the Mughal ruler, Shahjahan, migrated from Rajasthan to Punjab and settled at Fatehabad, Punjab (PIN Code:143407) near Tarn Taran.

His forefather, belonging to the Kapila Gotra Kshatriya clan, who had then migrated to Fatehabad is yet to be identified, however, according to the available records kept preserved by the Pandas i.e. the Family priests who conduct the Last Rites, at Haridwar the name of Mehr Lal's great-great-great grandfather, Tansukh Rai Soni, the son of Badri Das and was the grandson of Badal Das Soni, and who had visited Haridwar in the year 1773 has been found documented as also are the name(s) of his son, Amolak Ram, whose son, Mool Raj, was the father of Jyoti Ram, and who was also the grandfather of Munshi Ram. Munshi Ram Soni, the son of Tara Chand Soni, was Mehr Lal Soni's father. Whereas Munshi Ram Soni moved from one place of posting to another place his only brother, Durga Das, chose to remain at Fatehabad, where latter's descendents still continue to reside retaining possession of the ancestral house and lands.

Located about 25 km. from Sultanpur Lodhi on the Tarn Taran - Goindwal Road or the old Lahore - Delhi Road, historically known as the Badshahi Road that was originally laid by Sultan Sher Shah Suri and eventually completed by the Mughal Ruler Jalaludin Akbar, is the small town called Fatehabad in the District of Tarn Taran. This town was once the capital of the Ahluwalia Misl prior to the shifting of their capital to Kapurthala. Fatehabad is older than Tarn Taran and Amritsar. It was originally a garrison station, a border fort that is known to have existed from the time of Mahmud Ghazni. Its name Fatehabad is believed to signify the victory of the Ahluwalia Misl against the Khokhars, the ancient resident clan reputed to have assassinated Muhammad Ghorī. The older town which was of strategic importance was frequently visited by the Mughals and the later rulers; it,

therefore, housed the Mughal Imperial Serai (now in ruins the older town having been destroyed by the forces of the Mughal Ruler Jahangir) was the place where the First Sikh Guru, Guru Nanak had penned the Gurubani in praise of Nature.

At the time i.e. around 9.00 A.M on 9 February 1913, when Zia Fatehabadi was born the horoscope cast according to Jyotisa reveals that Pisces sign was rising in the East i.e. in the Lagna or Ascendant, with Venus and Rahu located therein, Saturn occupied Taurus, Ketu was in Virgo, Jupiter combining with Mars was in Sagittarius, Sun and Mercury were together in Capricorn and the Moon was situated in Aquarius sign; moreover Jupiter was in its friendly Leo Navamsa and Mars was in Vargottama. The major period, or Dasa, of Jupiter, which ran its course when he was a child, paved the way for his subsequent fame through Rahu, and Mars supported by Venus, the exalted dispositor of the dispositor of Moon, made him rise in ranks to occupy positions of authority during the course of his service; Venus, the Karaka of Fine Arts, conjoining with Rahu during latter's Dasa made him gain proficiency in a language that was not his mother-tongue. The Moon occupying a sign owned either by Mars or Saturn and aspected by a malefic (papa-graha) generally gives death by fire or a weapon; as ordained Zia Fatehabadi did not survive a surgical operation when the Dasa of Sun afflicted by the maraka Mercury was running its course.

Even when Zia Fatehabadi was a college student his was a respected name in the Urdu world. After the publication of his first book, Tullu, which had received some disheartening criticism, he had thought of giving up writing but he was dissuaded by his friends and elders alike. Zia Fatehabadi had started composing Urdu sh'ers and ghazals at a tender age when he was studying in a school in Jaipur.

Zia Fatehabadi's education began in Khalsa Middle School, Peshawar (1920 to 1922), however, he completed his schooling from Maharaja High School, Jaipur, Rajasthan (1923 to 1929), whereafter he obtained his B.A.(Hons) degree in Persian in 1933 and M.A.(English) degree in 1935 as a student of Forman Christian College, Lahore. He was an above average student. As the then editor of the Urdu section of the college house magazine Zia Fatehabadi was instrumental in having got published in the year 1932 the first ever Urdu short story, "Sadhu", written by Krishan Chander who was at that time more interested in English writings of his own and edited the English section. It is also in evidence that Zia Fatehabadi infatuated by a Bengali girl named Meera who was also then studying in the same college, addressed almost all his love-poetry to her. Her name figures unreservedly in several of his writings. In an interview he had once disclosed that she was that very Meera Sen who had actually inspired Meeraji[8](1912-1949) to write superb poems and adopt her name as his takhallus. Krishan Chander, Meeraji and Zia Fatehabadi were good friends. It was

during his college days that Zia Fatehabadi came into contact with Shabbir Hussain Josh Malihabadi and Samdayaar Khan Saghar Nizami and there developed a very close lifelong relationship with them, both influenced as also helped shape his literary life.

In the year 1936 Zia Fatehabadi joined the service of Reserve Bank of India, from which institution he finally retired in July, 1971. In 1942 he had married Raj Kumari (1919–2003), daughter of Murlī Ram Berera of Lahore. Before joining Reserve Bank of India and in search of a suitable employment Zia Fatehabadi had appeared in the interview for the post of Editor in the All India Radio for which post Majaz too had applied; the latter got selected. However, both, Majaz and Zia Fatehabadi, continued to enjoy a close relationship for a long time.

 Literary Life

The poet in Zia Fatehabadi surfaced in the year 1925 under the supervision of his mother, Shankari Devi, with the help of Moulvi Asghar Ali Haya Jaipuri who used to teach him Urdu at home and who also imparted the knowledge of Urdu poetry composition. By the year 1929 itself Zia Fatehabadi had become a familiar name in the Urdu literary circles of those times. He became Seemab Akbarabadi's disciple in the year 1930 and remained true to his ustad till his own death all the time working for spreading Seemab's methods and instructions. He never gave a thought to his own name or fame and sought no favours, honours or public or state recognition. He did not believe in these exercises. He believed that the real worth of a poet's creativity is to be eventually gauged by those who looked into his works in their eagerness to know him better.

"Tullu", meaning Dawn, was Zia Fatehabadi's first collection of Urdu poems which collection was published from Meerut by Saghar Nizami (1905–1983) in the year 1933 when Zia Fatehabadi was as yet pursuing his college studies. Zia Fatehabadi wrote from the heart. He effectively dressed his feelings, emotions, thoughts and his experiences with simple, delicate, sweet - sounding, lyrical, meaningful, easily understood words and phrases, which quality set him apart from the rest and gave him a distinct identity. Therefore, his writings simultaneously touch one's heart and mind making one feel all that he had himself felt. He was equally at ease in the use of various kinds of prose and poetical formats. However, he did not succumb to the practice of uninhibited expression of ideas in open forms as was being done by some of his noted contemporaries who had introduced symbolism in Urdu Poetry.

While remaining true to the classical style Zia Fatehabadi did not ignore the changing trends as is reflected in his rubiaats, qataas, geets, ghazals, nazms and

sonnets. These compositions exhibit his extraordinary mastery of and command over Urdu language. Zia Fatehabadi's contribution to Urdu language extends over 60 years and is voluminous. The first major collection of Zia Fatehabadi titled Noor-E-Mashriq[20] was published from Delhi in the year 1937 in which his couplet

" Woh dekh mashriq se noor ubharaa liey huey jalwaa-e-haqiqat "

" Majaz ki tark kar ghulami ke tu to hey bandaa-e-haqiqat "

((Come hither and have a) look at the yonder light shining in the East emerging as the glowing Truth

(Now it is time that you too) cast aside your fetters temperamental for you are that very Truth.)

got quite famous.

Though he did not identify himself with any particular group Zia Fatehabadi appears to have belonged equally to all groups that were and his works are a noteworthy contributions. As an essential part of his literary activity Zia Fatehabadi when ever invited did attend poetic symposia and conferences many of which he also happened to preside, a collection of some of his presidential addresses was published titled " Masanad e sadarat se " in the year 1985. However, he did not believe in the theory that poetry is spontaneous for poetry is an amalgam of words and thoughts and thoughts are seldom spontaneous. Zia Fatehabadi died on 19 August 1986 after a prolonged and painful bout with illness. But then, he had once said

" Kyaa gham agar qraar-o-sukun kii kamii rahii "

" Khush hoon ke kaamyaab merii zindagii rahii "

(I grieve not for the lack of unrest or for the lack of peace (in my life).

I am (gratefully) happy to have led (a contented and) a successful life.)

In a way this one couplet (verse), taken from his book "Gard-e-Raah" (Urdu) published in 1963, very briefly sums up what was Zia Fatehabadi in person and in his life. He had himself led a life filled with hope and contentment and he certainly wanted others to do so likewise. These sentiments won for him many admirers. Amongst those who appreciated as well as influenced his poetry were Firaq Gorakhpuri (1896-1982) and Josh Malihabadi (1898 - 1982).

The following Qat'aa e taareekh:-

Jo kar sako na bayaan tum baasurat e alfaaz

Fasaanaa e gham e hasti baachasham e nam keh lo

Zubaan o fikr o takhyul jo saath de na saken

To "dil" ko saath mila kar "gham e Zia sah lo"

:(34) :+ :(1952) = :1986

(If you are unable to find words to express your grief then do so by shedding tears.)

(If your speech, thoughts and intellect are unable to bear that grief then bear the loss of Zia with your saddened heart.)

composed by Sahir Hoshiarpuri in August, 1986 to commemorate the demise of his old friend, Mehr Lal Soni Zia Fatehabadi, was published by Khushtar Girami (1902-1988) in the October 1986 (.10.) issue of the Monthly Biswin Sadi, New Delhi.

 Works

Beginning with the first publication " Tullu " in the year 1933 in all nineteen works of Zia Fatehabadi have come to light. These works include eleven collections of his poetry, one of his short-stories, two of his essays, one of his presidential addresses, three of letters and one biography. Much of his work, including Naats, scattered in various magazines and papers remains unpublished. He certainly was a romantic who spoke about his own love as well as about the limitless eternal universal love spread everywhere but his poems, which are heartfelt and filled with purpose, are set in the ordinary - man's language. Easily understood they compel one to shed the afflicting stupor, pessimism and despondency. They compel a person to look deeply inwards more than outwards, overcome individual inner conflicts and fears, thus gain strength and the confidence needed to bravely face the vagaries of the outer world. His poems invariably provide the much needed and difficult to find solace and simultaneously infuse confidence. This, they do with a soothing touch.

His three books -" Noor e Mashriq ", " Gard e Raah " and " Meri Tasveer ", include Urdu Sonnets that were penned by him influenced more by the many English poets he had had the occasion to study for his M.A.(English literature) Degree than by few of his fellow Urdu poets such as Akhtar Sheerani and Noon Meem Rashid who had also composed Urdu Sonnets.

 Other Interests

Zia Fatehabadi was a man of many tastes and abilities. He was not a professional poet. For over thirty-five years he had served Reserve Bank of India with great distinction. He was a keen observer of economic trends, development and change. Zia Fatehabadi was also very good at Mathematics, proficient in Persian, English and Sanskrit language and grammar. He was a keen student of Hindu astrology i.e. Jyotisa, and was deeply interested in the study of the Upanishads

and the Rig Veda. He subscribed to the Advaita School promoted by Adi Sankara. Zia Fatehabadi imparted this part of his knowledge and exclusive experience to his eldest son, Ravinder Kumar Soni, as is reflected in the latter's three books titled In Search Of True Happiness, The Illumination Of Knowledge, and Planets and their Yoga Formations.

In his aforecited book, In search of True Happiness, on page 215 Zia Fatehabadi's son writes that a comparative study of the horoscopes belonging to the male members of his branch of Soni family has revealed (a) that all those individuals who did not have the lords of the 9th and the 10th houses occupying a quadrant or a trine from the Ascendant or Natal Moon did not prosper regardless of their efforts and levels of education nor those who had the lord of the 4th or of the 7th afflicted experience domestic peace, and (b) that Munshi Ram Soni, his eldest son, Zia Fatehabadi, and the latter's eldest son, eldest grand-son and the eldest great grand-son, all five, had at their time of birth Venus situated in its exaltation sign Pisces in a quadrant from the Ascendant with the lord of the 9th house also in a quadrant in a friendly or in its exaltation sign either aspected by or conjoining Jupiter. He is of the opinion that such like studies of family horoscopes are bound to open new grounds for research in the field of Jyotisa.

A Strange Kind Of Madness Has Charmed My World

A strange kind of madness has charmed my world.
My hopes aflame they now shiver and shake;
I have waited too long for my love to return -
That I have gone to sleep in a foolish way.

Zia Fatehabadi

Aaene Ke Saamne

Zia Fatehabadi

Aankh Se Aansoo

Zia Fatehabadi

Ak Kiamat Meri Hayat Bine

Zia Fatehabadi

Apni Mera Se

Zia Fatehabadi

Aye Hum...

Zia Fatehabadi

Ayza Talbi

Zia Fatehabadi

Azad Zindagi Hai

Zia Fatehabadi

Bahkia Bahkia Hua

Zia Fatehabadi

Bar Zameen Ashar Agha Shair

Zia Fatehabadi

Better To Listen

Better to listen to the tale than talk of love;
If this be awareness, then I must lose it;
If that cannot make my heart rejoice freely
Better than such a laughter is to shed silent tears.

Zia Fatehabadi

Birhan Ka Geet

Zia Fatehabadi

Chup

Zia Fatehabadi

Devi

Zia Fatehabadi

Dhoka

Zia Fatehabadi

Dil

Zia Fatehabadi

Dubkani

Staying concealed, from behind a curtain someone has watched
The congregation of my longings and desires (grow) ,
Have done so in the manner that has caused my sighs
To bring alive my heart wherein I have frantically sought to find
Reflected that face which I have failed to locate anywhere else
Be it in a garden or in a desolate place or a crowd.
Even though the Sun and the Moon keep alit this world day and night
Yet my own world stays surrounded by pitch-black darkness
(I ask) who has forced my helpless heart to lose faith?
Who has deeply wounded my feelings pricking them with sadness?
Who has after obliterating my body come to own my soul?
That my youth has caused me to suffer endless grief.
Come, end this game of hide and seek and reveal yourself
And show me for once your bright and radiant self.

Zia Fatehabadi

Dunia Mere Najar Se Tujhe Dekta Rahe

Zia Fatehabadi

Ek Lutera

Zia Fatehabadi

Fankar

Zia Fatehabadi

God Created By Religion

God created by religion and its followers no longer exists;
That miserable God born out of necessity does not exist;
He who had for long befooled man with promises of Paradise,
That God created by the ignorant does not exist.

Zia Fatehabadi

I Have Yet To Tie Sprayed Strands Of Present's Tale

I have yet to tie sprayed strands of Present's tale;
I have yet to hear the sound of the nearing Future;
O Time! Do halt a while allowing me to pick up
The colourful lost memories from a corner of my heart.

Zia Fatehabadi

Inqilab E Bahar

Zia Fatehabadi

Iztirab

Zia Fatehabadi

Jawaani

Zia Fatehabadi

Judayi

Zia Fatehabadi

Khud Seri Ke

Zia Fatehabadi

Let Me Gather In My Folds

Let me gather in my folds the withered blooms;
And mourn the nightingale's wonderous demise.
I have to bid farewell to spring that gave delight;
Only then can I welcome the arrival of fall.

Zia Fatehabadi

Maanjhee

Zia Fatehabadi

Main

Zia Fatehabadi

Manaa Hain Lia

Zia Fatehabadi

Mehmaan

Zia Fatehabadi

Meri Duniya Hai Veeraanon Ki Duniya

Zia Fatehabadi

Muhabbat

Zia Fatehabadi

Muhammad

Zia Fatehabadi

Naalaa E Narsaa

Zia Fatehabadi

Nae Rat

Zia Fatehabadi

Nayaa Saal

Zia Fatehabadi

On One Side There Lies The Hated Desert Of Sin

On one side there lies the hated desert of Sin,
And on the other is the blooming spread of Faith.
Time moves on at its own pace,
Life keeps testing Man at every place.

Zia Fatehabadi

Pour Me The Wine

Pour me the wine, for the prime of life is brief;
Pour me the wine for the world is affected by rise and fall;
Pour me the wine for in each spark is the solar brilliance;
Pour me the wine so as to inebriate this world.

Zia Fatehabadi

Quatrains Of Zia Fatehabadi

Zia Fatehabadi

Rubaiyat

Zia Fatehabadi

Shaadi

Zia Fatehabadi

Shab O Roz Rone Se

Zia Fatehabadi

Shair Sajade Main

Zia Fatehabadi

Soch Ka Safar

Zia Fatehabadi

Tamasha Hai Sab Kuchh

Zia Fatehabadi

The Shroud That Covers My World I Must Remove

The shroud that covers my world I must remove;
The darkness and the light they are here to roost.
O Tavern-keeper! I swear by the wine you serve
I shall surely return to your folds one day.

Zia Fatehabadi

The Sky Is Covered By Dense Clouds

The sky is covered by dense clouds;
The atmosphere is intoxicated even now,
Although the evening has turned into night, I find
Her hair remain unknotted as before.

Zia Fatehabadi

The Story Of My Life Is Full Of Grief

The story of my life is full of grief;
It is neither tellable nor to be spoken about.
Within the furnace that is my forlorn heart, O Zia!
Is hidden a fire, hungry and quiet!

Zia Fatehabadi

Umeed

Zia Fatehabadi

Wake Up For It Is No Longer Dark

Wake up for it is no longer dark, a new day has dawned;
Lifted are the covers that hide things from your view.
Time is now ripe for divinity of man to take control,
So open your eyes to behold a wonderous sight!

Zia Fatehabadi

What If The Entire World Opposes Your Good Intentions?

What if the entire world opposes your good intentions?
What if time and again you are made to suffer pain?
O Zia! Be patient for that would help unlock
Those doors that were once shut upon you.

Zia Fatehabadi

While Departing From This World

While departing from this world there is no need to grieve
For they alone find happiness who have suffered grief;
Those who have sacrificed their lives in the quest of life
They alone are remembered by those who live.

Zia Fatehabadi

Why Not, I Say, Should You Not Try And Know

Why not, I say, should you not try and know
About that which a fettered heart easily cannot?
What is separation, what does it mean? Why ask me now?
Try spending a day in wait for the one you love.

Zia Fatehabadi

With Arms Spread Out

With arms spread out, he longingly pleads;
There being no other alternative he relies on fate;
Ignorance and delusion continue to afflict man,
Grant him the insight he badly needs.

Zia Fatehabadi

Without Darkness

Without Darkness where will you find the all-revealing Light?
How long will you continue to build castles in your dreams?
In breaking free from earth's grip you have succeeded -
But can you ever escape from your blind devotion to Faith?

Zia Fatehabadi

Yaad

Zia Fatehabadi